

Schiller, Jakob. "What Hundreds Of Filters Do To Classic Landscape Photos," **WIRED**, March 13, 2015

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IMG_2242, from Range: of Aperature Masters of Photography (with camera app filters), 2014

[Penelope Umbrico's](#) work is to classical photography as hip hop is to soul, blues and jazz music: a giant remix.

It starts with her using an iPhone to take photos of classic images of mountains shot by the likes of Henry Cartier-Bresson and Edward Weston. Next, she chooses from the many photography apps on her iPhone and runs her photos through almost every filter. She'll process her photos several hundred times. From 19 original photos, she's created 6,000 images for [Range](#).

"I wanted to get the photographs far enough from the original but still wanted a reference," she says. "Sometimes that would take 15 minutes and sometimes that would take three days."

Some of the apps she uses frequently include [Afterlight](#), [Plastic Bullet Camera](#) and [Pixlr-o-matic](#). She's particularly drawn to filters that create the illusion of light leaks and chemical burn effects that look like film. The photographers whose work she appropriates were technical perfectionists, and she likes the juxtaposition. "I found it ironic that we have this nostalgia for analog mistakes but none of these photographers would have allowed those mistakes into their work," she says.



Moving Mountains, from *Range: of Aperature Masters of Photography (with camera app filters)*, installation for Aperature Foundation, 2012

The project and corresponding [book](#) is a technicolor mashup of old and new photography, harkening to the masters while having the punchy "pop" of Instagram. Umbrico chose to re-photograph mountains because they represent stability, while photography, she feels, is the opposite. New technology—like her iPhone and the apps she uses—has the genre in constant flux. "Photography is always changing, but I do think right now is a particularly amazing moment," she says.

Beneath the technical details, the project is designed to make a statement about the “masters” of photography. While artists like Cartier-Bresson and Weston are icons, she feels the idea of labeling someone a “master” is fading. There are so many types of photography these days that it’s hard to declare any photographer a defining leader of the medium.

“At this moment I think the idea of the master has really been deflated,” she says. “Everything is based on intention and context these days so there is no inherent masterly quality.”