

## Eyes: the window of the soul



**O**N THE PREVIOUS PAGE, WE LOOKED at how changing body position can make a difference to the apparent relationship between people in a montage. But body language is only one way of explaining a relationship: far more subtle – and just as effective – is eye contact.

The photomontage artist often has to work with mugshots of politicians and celebrities, or images from a royalty-free collection. The subjects will usually be gazing straight at the camera, and probably grinning inanely at the same time. It's of little help when combining two or more people within a scene.

Here, we've taken a happy couple and moved their eyes around from frame to frame. Nothing else has been changed, and yet the entire expression alters with the position of the eyes. The six examples here are just a small part of the infinite range of expressions that can be achieved by simply changing the eyes.

**1** When they're gazing directly at the camera, the couple are engaging with the photographer – but not with each other. Turning their eyes so they're looking at each other makes them appear much more as if they're in a relationship.



**4** There are several ways to express boredom. One method is to have the eyes looking up and away, as hers are in this shot; another is to have the irises slightly high in the eyes, so it makes the lids look a little closed – a sure sign of tedium.

**2** The angle can make a big difference. Moving both their eyes down just a fraction makes them look sad, as if they're about to be parted: they seem to be subject to forces beyond their control.



**5** When they're looking out of the frame, both people look less happy in their situation. She's looking to his left, with a faraway look – her mind is certainly elsewhere. He, however, is more interested in the girl who's just walked in the door.

**3** Looking away from each other, and down, makes them look as if they're having second thoughts. It appears as if they're both wondering if this relationship is a good idea: what's certain is there's little love left between them.



**6** The distinction between boredom and desperation is a subtle one. Her eyes are looking down, making her appear despondent and trapped; by moving his even higher in his head, he appears totally fed up.



### HOT TIP

To change the direction a character's eyes are looking in, you need to create two new layers – one for the eyeball, and one for the iris: make a clipping mask for the iris with the eyeball, and you can move it around within the eye. For more about working with eyes, see page 230.