This image comes from a compilation of balloon photographs. The overlaying theme is based on childhood, as the piece features a young girl. The black and white portions are meant to emphasize the idea of the past. The colored portions highlight interesting elements in the image which deal with reflections. One central aspect of the image involves hands. There appears hands reaching, holding onto and letting go. In a way, growing up means experiencing all of these.

Two kinds of photography were used to take these photographs. The colored portions, which consist of exploding and moving balloons, were photographed in strobe lab. The set up involved a digital camera with a four second exposure and a sound trigger which set off a strobe light as a balloon popped. Black and white portions were taken with a Nikon FM10, developed in the dark room and later scanned.

In total, the image consists of eight independent photographs spliced together along with some original Photoshop drawings to smooth out transitions. Elements were cut out, resized and enhanced to fit the overall composition. I’m pleased with the level of coherency in the background considering the amount of photos that were used to create the scene. I’m especially happy with the center string of balloons, which is in fact a combination of three photos.

To achieve good blending of photos and layers, I employed many aspects of Photoshop. In particular, I utilized the smudge, paintbrush and eraser tools as well as the adjust opacity, brightness, contrast, hue and saturation options.

Reflections of the child’s face are superimposed onto the strobe lab pictures. The central exploded balloon features the face mirrored and split in two. The idea behind this was to suggest that when the balloon was whole, the complete reflection could be seen.

I chose to mirror the primary composite image and feature two distinct colors. For the colors, I decided upon one cool and one warm to contrast one another. I felt this made the image more interesting, and suggested different emotions to the observer. I liked the symmetry and sense of reflection in the mirrored look. Additionally, I am intrigued by the resulting central heart-like shape surrounding the unsettling shapes of the tree branches. This juxtaposition also proposes different emotions to the observer. My aim is to incite personal reflection by challenging the observer with perhaps conflicting emotions.

Overall, I’m satisfied with the composition. I feel it challenges the observer to question the piece without being overly confusing. An integration of fun and seriousness works well to convey the idea of reflections on childhood.