



018

REGULARS

EYEWITNESS  
ROME

## Sistine seconds

In our monthly photo column, Nicolas Ruel reveals why he only needs eight seconds to get the perfect picture

**PAINTERS START WITH** a white canvas – I start with a city and take a few pictures, play with the angles. The 8 Secondes project started in Paris after a show in 2007. I saw some interesting light, so decided to impose a challenge, using an eight-second shutter speed. I set the camera to one exposure and focused on the subject, then moved the camera to a second subject and that's how I ended up with two subjects overlaid in the same image. There's no Photoshop involved – all the movement and double exposure is made in the camera.

**If you look in the centre you can see the famous image of God**

"This image was taken at the Sistine Chapel in Rome. I spent an hour there and saw this guy sitting on the ground, looking at Michelangelo's ceiling – if you look in the centre you can see the famous image of God and the hand. It's my favourite picture from the trip because of the shadowy figure. I like to have people in the shots, because it means the image is always changing. It poses questions: is the guy going to move in those eight seconds?"

"In the beginning, I was going to do eight cities for the project. I'm now doing 50. By the end it will be nine or 10 years' work. It's worth it though. The world is very small, but at the same time it's really big, so you need to take the time to do it." See the entire 8 Secondes project and more of Nicolas Ruel's work at [nicolasruel.com](http://nicolasruel.com)

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLAS RUEL

019