



# LENSWORK

Photography and the Creative Process • Articles • Interviews • Portfolios • Fine Art Special Editions

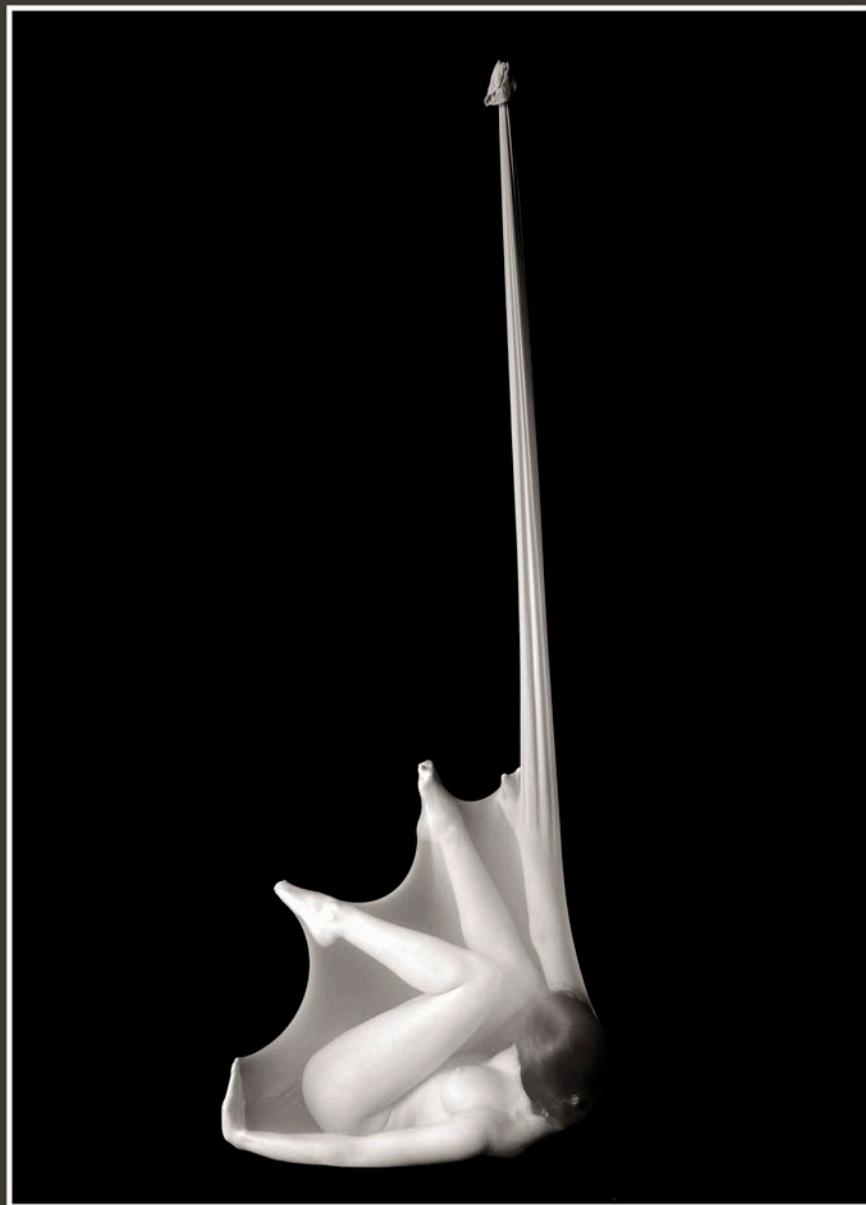
No. 106 May - Jun 2013

## Portfolios

Scott Hendershot  
Brooks Jensen  
E. E. McCollum  
Gary Nylander  
Gary Pullar

## Editor's Comments

*Creative Seeing*



# LENSWORK 106

May – Jun 2013

*Photography and the Creative Process: Articles • Interviews • Portfolios*

Brooks Jensen & Maureen Gallagher, Editors



**Scott Hendershot**  
*from Webster, New York*



**Brooks Jensen**  
*from Anacortes, Washington*



**E. E. McCollum**  
*from Fairfax, Virginia*



**Gary Nylander**  
*from Westbank, British Columbia, Canada*



**Gary Pullar**  
*from Pymont, New South Wales, Australia*



**The LensWork Road Show**  
*2013 Schedule*

*Editor's Comment by Brooks Jensen*

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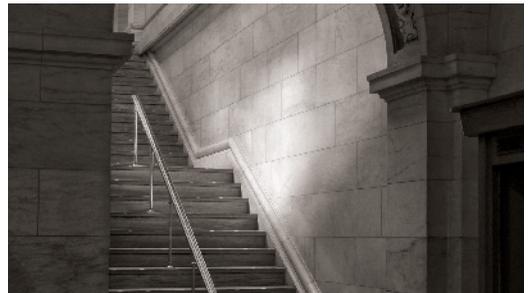
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Additional color portfolios appear in *LensWork Extended #106* featuring Farhiz Karanjawala and Andrea Stone

# 2013 ROAD SHOW

*Announcing the*

## **LensWork Road Show & Seminars for 2013**

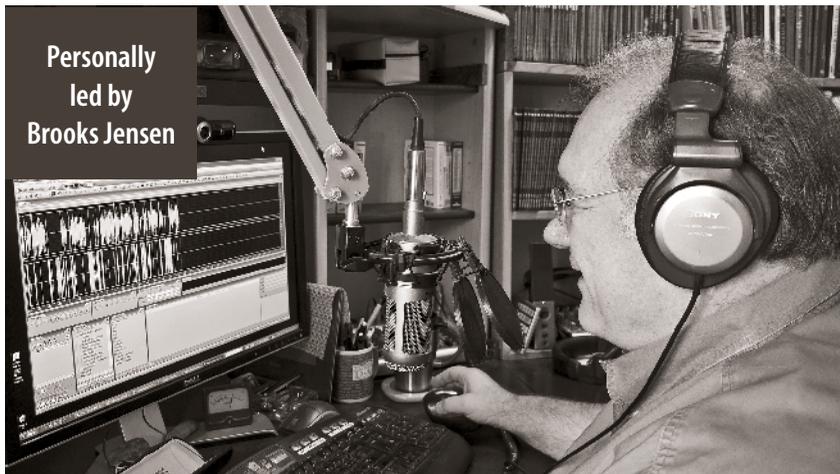
As publishers, we've learned a great deal over the last 20 years about producing work and finding an audience for it. In these **unique half-day seminars**, we'll share with you practical and proven ideas that you won't find in the typical camera-technique photography workshop. From developing your project to finding your audience — take your photography to the next level!

**Unique  
Seminars,  
Practical  
Ideas**



Learn from **Brooks Jensen**, photography's most respected and prolific publisher, podcaster, writer, and author. An accomplished educator and speaker, he has authored five books on photography and the creative process, four workshops on disc, and broadcast over 800 podcasts since before podcasting was even called podcasting! He's also the editor of our award-winning publication, *LensWork*.

**Personally  
led by  
Brooks Jensen**



### **We're traveling to you!**

With most photography workshops, the cost of travel, lodging, and meals is higher than the cost of the workshop itself! We're making these seminars time/cost efficient for you by hitting the road ourselves — see locations and dates on the opposite page.



# 2013 ROAD TOUR SHOW



**Sign-up Now and Reserve Your Space**

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Seminar Topics and Details  
on the Following Pages

**Half-day Seminars \$95 each**  
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**Also, in development, 2013-2014 dates TBA:**

Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Cincinnati,  
Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit, Jacksonville, Indianapolis,  
Kansas City, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York,  
Orlando, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Providence, Raleigh/  
Durham, Rochester, St. Louis, Washington DC, and more.

## **Tour #1**

**Saturday-Sunday**

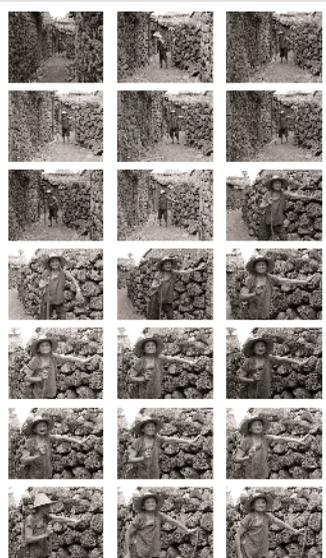
<b>Seattle</b>	March 30-31
<b>Portland</b>	April 13-14
<b>Sacramento</b>	April 27-28
<b>San Jose</b>	May 11-12
<b>San Francisco</b>	May 18-19
<b>Los Angeles</b>	June 1-2
<b>San Diego</b>	June 8-9
<b>Phoenix</b>	June 22-23
<b>Albuquerque</b>	June 29-30
<b>Austin</b>	July 13-14
<b>Houston</b>	July 20-21
<b>Dallas</b>	July 27-28
<b>Denver</b>	August 10-11
<b>Salt Lake City</b>	August 17-18

**Seminar Topics and Details on the Next Page ►**

# HALF-DAY SATURDAY SEMINARS

Saturday morning

## Projects ~ *Editing, Sequencing, and the Finishing Touches*



### Topics in this half-day seminar include:

- Moving from a pile of prints to a project idea
- Selecting and editing images for your project
- The length of a project and audience expectations
- The power of Lightroom collections and projects
- Distilling to the essence of the idea
- Titles for your project
- Parts of a project that you need to develop
- Key images and icons for your project
- Beyond the images — becoming a storyteller
- Determining the best media for your project
- Sequencing for screen presentations
- Sequencing for book presentations
- Now that the project is finished, is it really finished?
- Strategies for projects with more than one medium
- Finding new projects buried in your existing work
- Finishing touches that complete the project

Saturday afternoon

## Image & Text ~ *Ideas, Examples, Strategies, and Artist Statements*



METAL SCRAP SALVAGER

Voluntary Street

1988

© 2013 Lenswork Road Show Seminars

### Topics in this half-day seminar include:

- Thinking outside the mat board
- The goal of text and image combinations
- Writing tips for photographers (i.e., non-writers!)
- Print titles, project titles, and finding just the right words
- What to avoid in the text that accompanies your images
- Various forms of text and their strengths and weaknesses
- Tips on how to start the writing process
- Writing so people will read it
- Keeping the audience engaged
- Editing, editing, and then more editing
- How to write an artist statement for your project
- The 10 deadly mistakes to avoid in your text
- Text for audio presentations (aka *scripts*)
- Collaborations and how to make them work
- Lots and lots of examples

# HALF-DAY SUNDAY SEMINARS

Sunday morning

## Photographs Off the Wall ~ *Folios, Chapbooks, and Keepsakes*



### Topics in this half-day seminar include:

- The birth and evolution of the folio concept
- Layout and design of folios, chapbooks, and keepsakes
- Die-cut, hand-cut, and pre-made folio enclosures
- Templates, adaptations, and flexibility
- Printing strategies
- The “French-fold” design for one-sided printing
- Strategies for two-sided printing for chapbooks
- Working with inkjet roll paper and de-curling
- Designing for image and text combinations
- Art paper, cover stock, and other materials
- Scoring, folding, and forming
- Production logistics that make it easier
- Tips for hand-sewing your chapbook or keepsake
- Small projects, large projects, and sets
- Working in series and annuals
- Lots and lots of samples on hand for you to review

Sunday afternoon

## Finding an Audience for Your Work

*Marketing, Distribution, Publishing, and Web Strategies That Work*



### Topics in this half-day seminar include:

- The three key strategies to build an audience
- Finding your audience
- Strategies to keep them coming back
- Levels of involvement
- The all-important “Next Step”
- Selling and pricing strategies for your audience
- Developing media that make sense for you
- An inside look at the gallery world
- Collectors, selling, gifting, and your long-term goals
- The Five Buying Questions
- The unvarnished truth about the book business
- How to get your work published in magazines
- Emails, newsletters, and postcards
- Publicity strategies
- Website strategies that work
- Review events like Houston FotoFest, Photolucida, etc.

# EDITOR'S COMMENTS

## *Creative Seeing*

In the twenty years of publishing *LensWork* — during which I've interviewed hundreds of photographers — perhaps there is no more inspiring story about the creative process than the one told to me by the late Oliver Gagliani. I think of it often and will take this opportunity to share it.

Oliver had been invited by no less a person than Ansel Adams to be a guest instructor in one of Adams' famous Yosemite workshops. As I recall the story, Oliver had never been to Yosemite before and was looking forward to his first visit there. In eager anticipation, on his way out of town he stopped by the local camera store to stock up on supplies he might need for photographing while in the park. On a lark, he decided to buy a few rolls of the then-new film Kodak Technical Pan, a special purpose, high contrast black-and-white film.

When he arrived at Yosemite valley, he explained, he felt he was *supposed* to be compelled to photograph the grand landscape that so prevalently surrounded him. Instead, he couldn't take his eyes off the camping tents nearby. Evidently, these large, canvas tents were occasionally damaged by bears — or tourists — which then needed to be repaired. Many of the tents were covered with patches, erratic sewing patterns, and occasional fanciful drawings. The more he looked, the more he was intrigued — and compelled to photograph *them*. Because the gray canvas tents had been patched with similar gray

canvas cloth using black thread, he immediately realized that normal photographic techniques would produce gray, flat, uninteresting photographs. But, AHA! — the Tech Pan high contrast film might do the trick! And indeed, it did. Oliver humorously referred to this body of work as his “Yosemite pictures” in which there is nary a tree, nary a rock, nary a vista — only abstracts made through his creative vision of these rather mundane tent patches converted through his exquisite craftsmanship into true works of art.



*(Tent patch) 86-54-A, 1986 by Oliver Gagliani*

In a word, Gagliani showed us all what it is to be an artist — to see creatively rather than with pre-programmed eyes; to creatively solve the production and technical problems with experience, daring, and hard work; and most importantly, the willingness and conviction to follow one's own path in spite of the pressure to follow the herd.

As I say, for me this example from Gagliani has been a guiding light. I can't help but feel that every time I let go of *the expected* and forge my way through the underbrush of indecision and fear and plunge into the unknown, that Gagliani is smiling down at me from that Great Dark-room in the Sky. Even if he isn't, it helps me to think that he might be.

For example, when I was recently visiting the canyon lands of southern Utah, I felt a palpable pressure to aim my camera at the grand landscape. It's everywhere! Like the seductive sirens that plagued Odysseus, it lures us into making yet another lovely shot that could easily decorate the ubiquitous color calendar. I felt woozy. From time to time, I did succumb. Then, Gagliani's tents would call to me from the depths of my creative soul and I would turn my camera and my attention away from the cliché and take a deep breath. You may think I am writing with a flair of embellishment, but I am not. I would literally turn away from the scene I've seen a million times and fight my way back to my own vision. This same scenario repeated itself a hundred times in the 10 days I was photographing in Capitol Reef.

If you doubt me, I challenge you to do one simple test. Do a Google search for "Capitol Reef" and then click on the "images" button to see some of the gazillion images of Capitol Reef posted all over the Internet. I just did so as I write this and found the first black-and-white image on row 104 — that would be image number 800-and-something, calculating an

average of eight images per row in my browser view. I should also add that of those first 800 or so images, there were lots and lots of fine photographs of the beautiful landscape — mostly indistinguishable from one another. I certainly do not mean to insult the work nor the photographers who made them, and I would even grant that many, many of them would qualify as admirable art photography. My point is not to diminish their accomplishment, but rather to point out how thoroughly unnecessary it is for me (or you) to make more of these obvious ones. Unless you want to. Just because it's fun.

The creative path, however, is — if we choose to engage it — more challenging than that. I dare not venture further down the path of pontificating about the motivations of making art lest I slip into bombacity. I will, however, simply state that for me — following the lessons from Gagliani — the artmaking process is a personal one in which I try to explore and express something that is, I hope, a bit more ... well, *personal*. For reasons that admittedly quickly approach a self-centered conceit, I just can't find much motivation in making photographs that look like everyone else's; I would like to think that I have something unique to offer, something that comes from *me* rather than from the cultural zeitgeist. The self-centered part of being an artist is that we proceed with the unfounded confidence that what we are doing that is so personal is also important to others. Faith abounds.

It's almost impossible to discuss these kinds of things without, at some point, resorting to pictures as examples. I am very reticent about publishing my own work in our magazine for obvious reasons. The last time we did so was in 2007 in *LensWork* #70 as examples of abstract photography; before that in 2001 in *LensWork* #37 as an adjunct to an *Editor's Comment* in the previous issue, and for the first time in 1996 in *LensWork* #15, an issue that focused on image and text. Perhaps you will indulge me once

every five or six years if we do so to illustrate a point under discussion. In this issue, we are including my work from Capitol Reef as an example of trying to see creatively, beyond the obvious — in short, to see with our own eyes.

First, I wouldn't go so far as to say my interpretation of that landscape is *unique* — no doubt someone, somewhere has probably done something similar and maybe even better. I'd love to know — and I guess that's part of the point. In spite of the fact that I feel I'm pretty plugged in to both the historic and contemporary photographic scene, it is simply impossible for anyone to know with certainty whether or not work exists that is similar to one's own. All I can say is that I'm not consciously familiar with any work that looks like the work I did at Capitol Reef. Actually, I have great faith that there must be *some* images out there because nothing is truly new under the sun. What I *can* claim is that the process of seeing those rock formations and interpreting them in the way that I did was an expression of my vision — and what more do we need on our personal creative path than that?

Next, I should explain that my photographs are not by any means an attempt to stylize my work solely for the purpose of being unique. That is to say, I didn't think, "How can I do this differently than anyone else?" Such thoughts never enter my mind. Instead, I approach such places with an alternative set of questions: *How do I feel about the place? What does this place nudge me to think, remember, fantasize? What is my reaction to what I am experiencing and how can I best express that in a photograph?* If I'm lucky, the resulting photographs begin (and maybe conclude with) answering these questions. The result may be visually similar to someone else's work because we might respond to the place with the same emotions. That seems entirely reasonable, perhaps even expected. I would feel strangely disconnected if

my interpretations were so entirely unique as to be the only person on the planet or throughout history to see it this way. Being unique is not the virtue; seeing creatively and being true to our own vision is the goal.

As a third component of the process, it has become a habit for me to think about all of this from a slightly different perspective, too. I may feel, think, remember, fantasize, or react, but *so what?* What will my experiences offer to a viewer of my artwork? Here is where the cheese meets the cracker: If the experience is entirely personal, entirely self-directed, entirely and solely *mine*, it simply won't make a worthwhile art project. I love my cat with the depth of a committed pet owner, but my passion for my cat won't mean a thing to you — and I probably can't convey that affection in any meaningful photographic way. So, don't look for me to pony up a cat portfolio. In order for a personal experience to make interesting art, it must have some element of universality which allows viewers to connect to the work. Often — either in the field or back home — that is the core of "working the project." I try to find a point of view which I can share with an audience that is both true to my experience, and offers a point of access and connection for them. In this body of work from Utah, the feelings I had in the field were all about time — on a geological scale, and how that time intersects with time at the speed of light. The title of the portfolio, *Light... Glorious Light*, is the invitation; the artist statement is the glue that I hope holds the work together, and binds the viewer to the images. It is this verbal/universal point of view that hopefully changes these images from "what I did on my summer vacation" to an emotion/thought/experience others can relate to as a work of art.



# LIGHT... *Glorious* LIGHT



by  
*Brooks Jensen*

Brooks Jensen

*This complete project — with additional images not seen here in the print edition of LensWork, as well as an audio interview with the photographer — can be found in LensWork Extended #106.*

From the depths of space, the Sun launches its energy pulses from every millimeter of its surface, casting bits and waves of itself in an ever-growing sphere of energy. This moving sphere is formless, perfectly invisible, moving, waiting, searching. For some 16 minutes it traverses the cold and empty regions of space until it encounters some object that makes that energy manifest — a particle of atmospheric dust, a dusty photographer's warm skin, or the massive, silent face of an ancient, dusty wall of rock — and suddenly there is *light*.

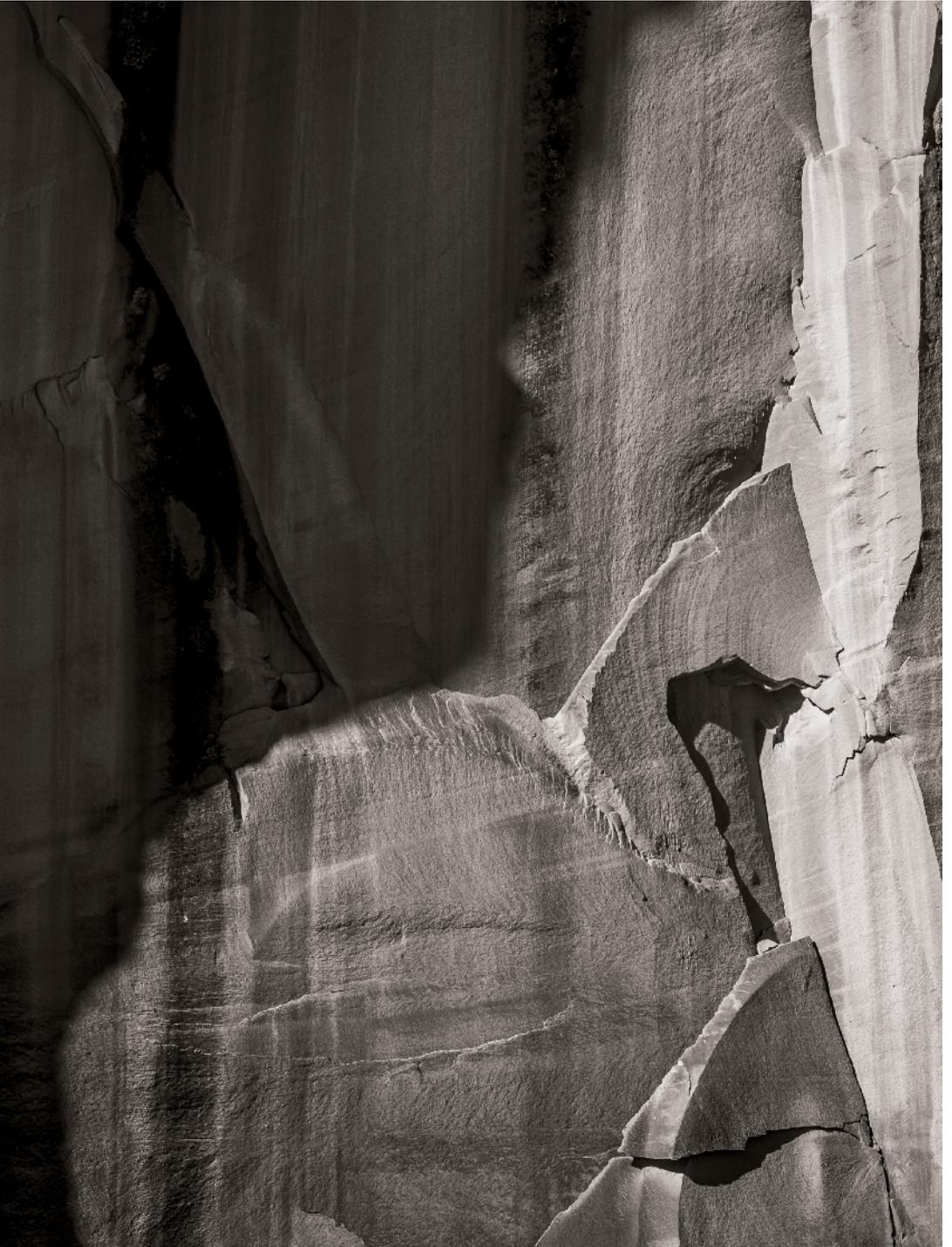
For reasons I cannot explain, I have always found this encounter between the dark object and the invisible energy, this mystery that creates *light* out of *nothingness*, one of the greatest mysteries of life. How is it that *dark* and *invisible* can combine to make brilliance, shape, tone, texture — and even life itself — spring into existence? Imagine this: if suddenly the Sun blinked out, in sixteen short minutes everything on our planet would become invisibly dark; if suddenly the Earth mysteriously vanished, the Sun's energy would continue on its travels through the interstellar space, perfectly invisible, uninterrupted, traversing 186,000 miles every second. What a miracle we behold in each moment of vision, when chance collisions make manifest such glory!

Standing in the canyons of Capitol Reef in southern Utah, the Sun passed overhead in that long arc of late summer. In the stillness of the moment, I watched the face of rock change from shadow to light, and in the process reveal surfaces in sensual detail. I felt the cosmic dance — the spinning Earth in orbit around Sun, the arrival of energy that began its 93 million mile journey just minutes before *the encounter* — and could not help but feel I was witnessing a miracle in each moment. Ancient rock, standing for eons with only the erosion of grains of dust, measured in decades or millennia — meeting energy from the sun, so young as to be immeasurable in the time of a cosmic scale.

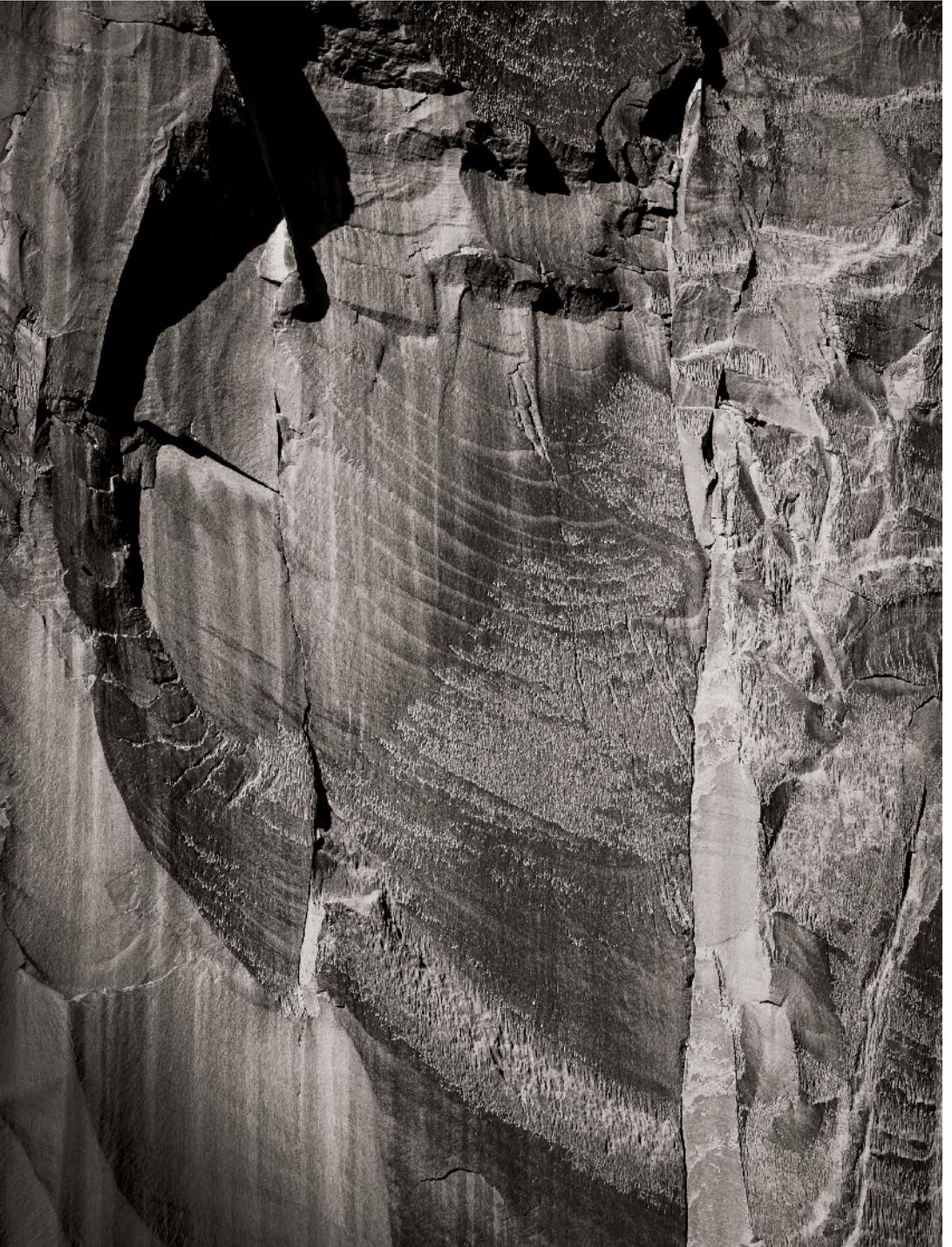
It was light ... *glorious* light; thus is life ... *glorious* life.















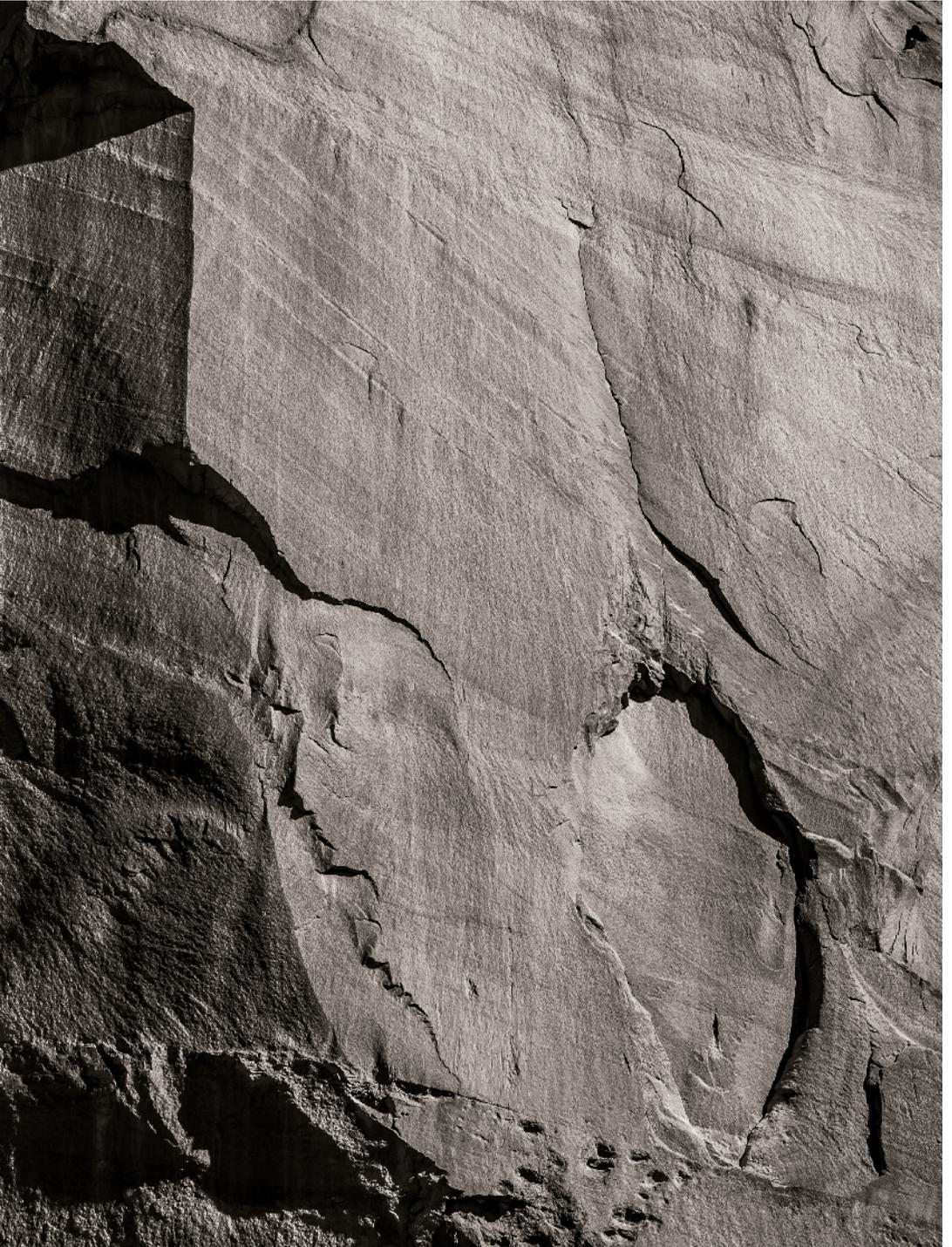
















This project began with my own relentless curiosity: I just had to see what was behind the weathered walls of the Cowichan Bay Shipyard. Born and raised an hour south of the shipyard—in Victoria, on Vancouver Island, B.C.—I loved to hangout on the wharf and walk the docks between the hodgepodge of weathered fishing, gleaming pleasure, and funky houseboats.

Cowichan Bay Shipyard was established by a local entrepreneur in the mid-1800s for the purpose of turning out row boats to rent to fishermen. Since then, the shipyard has been a part of the seaside fabric of this community—and continues in the time-honored tradition of repairing and restoring wooden boats. Our close association to Washington State brought many famous people. John Wayne used to keep his boat at Cowichan Bay. He was probably the most frequent famous fisherman seen in the area. His buddies, Bing Crosby, Bob Hope, and others all came here to fish with him. At that time the bay was the center of salmon fishing on Vancouver Island. Although Cowichan Bay has been one of my favorite photographic haunts for all things nautical, I had never been inside the weathered walls of the shipyard. I would discover later that this was an itch I just had to scratch.

In 1979 I moved to the mainland from Vancouver Island. I still return frequently, although it now takes me the better part of a day to get there. During one visit in 2002 I took the opportunity to approach the owners of the Cowichan Bay Shipyard and ask if they would permit me to photograph inside their building. I was hesitant, as this is a working shop, but Grant and Melodie welcomed me and I was thrilled, at last, to cross the threshold of a building that held such mystery for me. The natural light—softly poring through large paned windows—washed the interior with the most extraordinary light. The combination of wooden boats, old hand tools, and my view camera just seemed to work; it was like we were all focused on craft more than expediency.

After completing a fair amount of work, I put the project away for about three years. In 2006, however, the itch returned; I knew I had unfinished images to make. Since then, I have photographed at the shipyard every year—usually in October, when I take a few weeks to visit family on Vancouver Island. The building has changed hands, and is now owned by artist Arthur Vickers (brother of artist Henry Roy Vickers), and his wife Jessica. Once again, I have been given full access to wander around inside and photograph at-will. If I happen to have my head buried under the dark cloth when they're done for the day, they'll just ask me to lock up when I leave.

I now wonder why I had any hesitancy in the beginning. In fact, I feel as though my work and I have been woven into the history of this place—which is not only unexpected, but an honor.



**Gary Nylander** (Born 1958, Victoria, BC, Canada): Gary has worked as a newspaper photographer since the age of 18. For the past 30 years he has been a staff photographer at the *Kelowna Daily Courier*. He states, “In addition to my daily newspaper work, I have pursued photography as an art on my days off and holidays. I enjoy shooting in black and white with 4x5 and 8x10 view cameras.” Gary has received numerous awards and special recognitions in photojournalism, which include seven Canadian Press Picture of The Month awards and the 2003 News Picture of The Year from Canadian Press. His work is also in the collection of the Harvard Art Museums in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Gary lives in Glenrosa (a suburb of West Kelowna) in British Columbia, Canada.

# THE COWICHAN BAY SHIPYARD



by

GARY NYLANDER

Gary Nylander

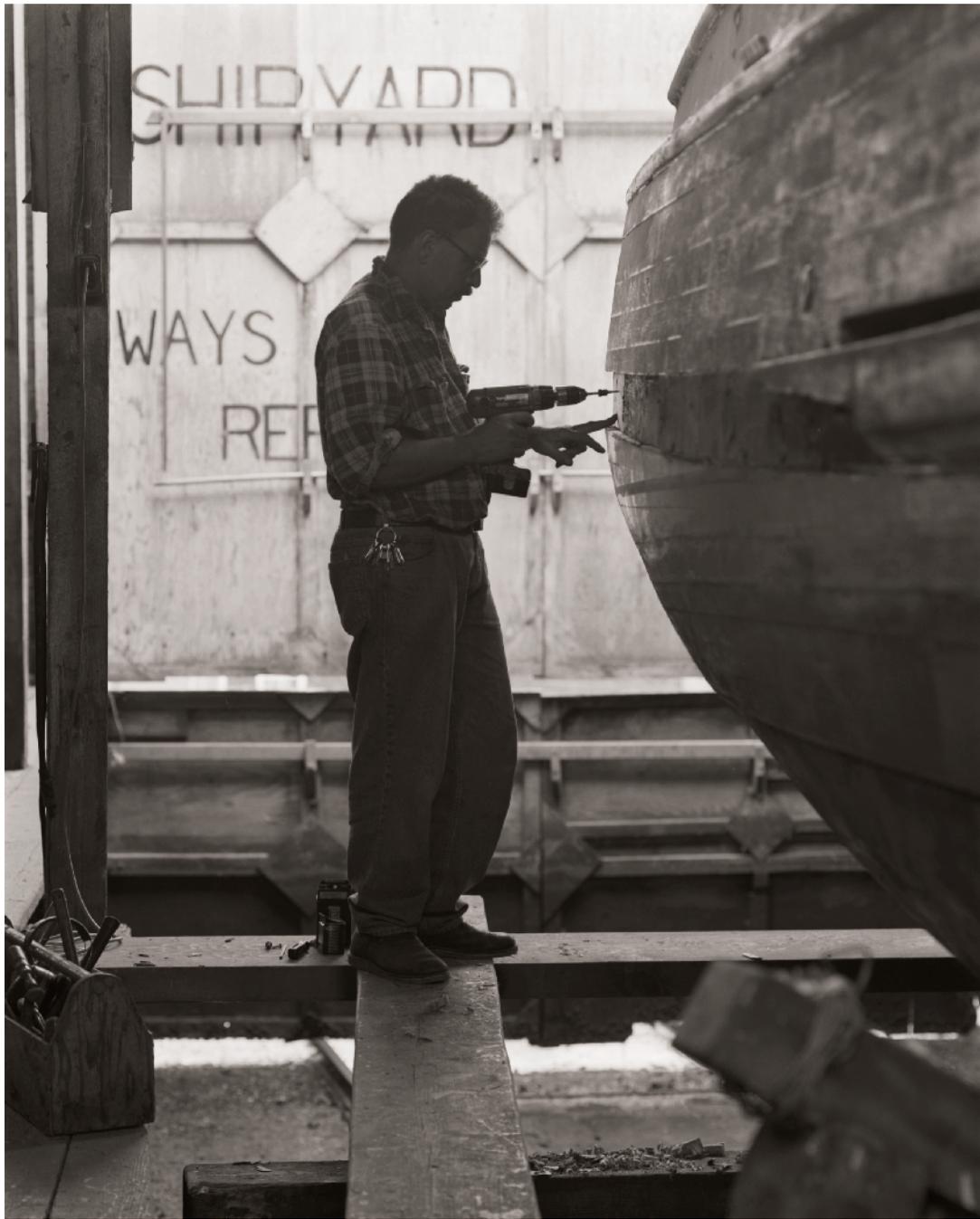
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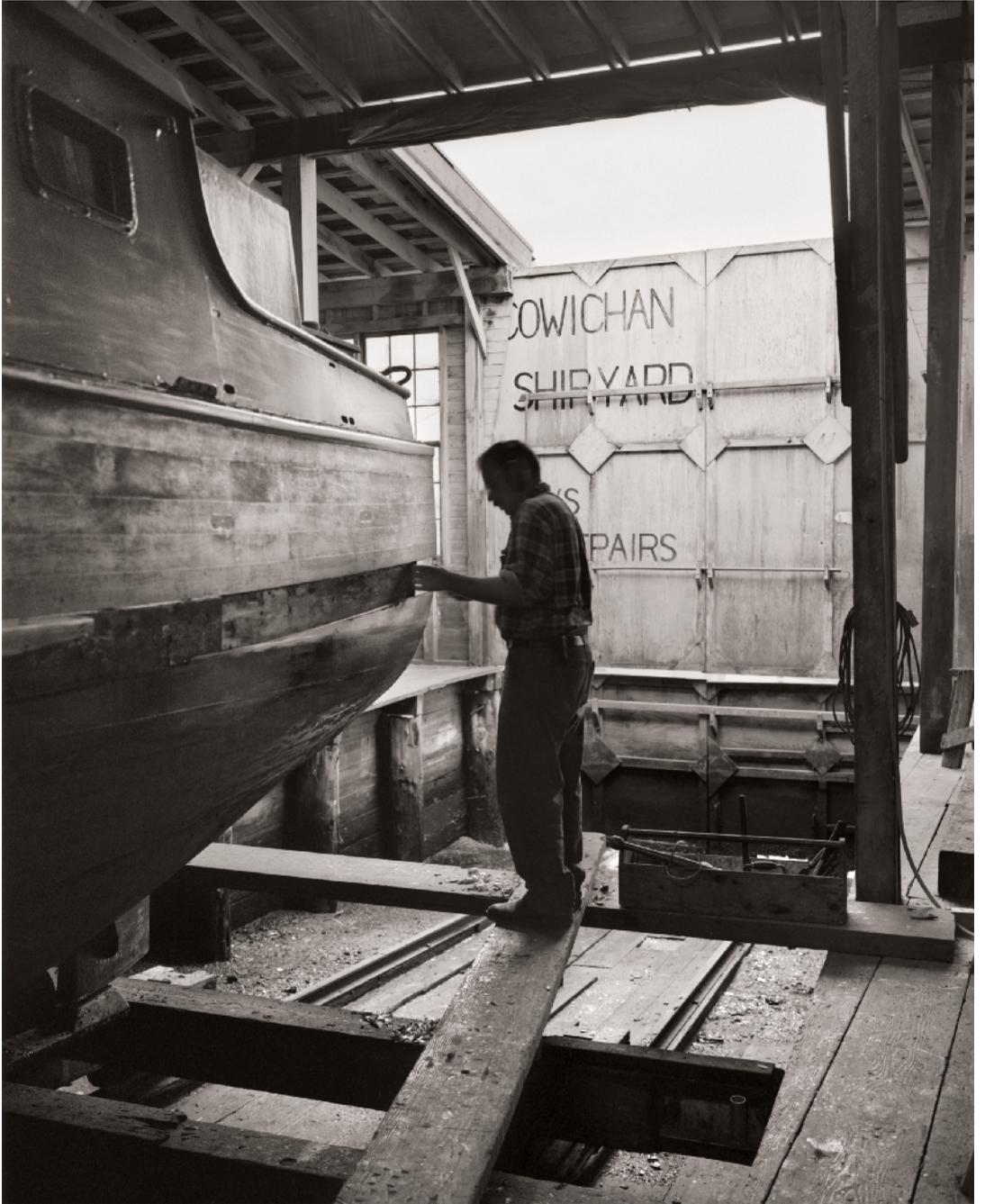




















This portfolio arose out of an intensive two-week trip to China, in which I traveled to seven cities while covering more than 10,000 km (6,200 miles). China is the world's oldest continuous civilization, and the engine-room for the world's manufacturing — a melting pot of photographic possibilities. My photographic focus during this adventure, however, was not to explore modern day urban life — but rather Old China, and the way of life that still exists for most of the people in this, the world's most populous country. Finding Old China involved exploring the fringes of 21st century metropolises, as well as venturing via traditional boat and on foot to the outer regions.

Traveling the ancient paths of traders, emperors, and warriors, it is still possible to sense, see, and photograph the mystery that is pre-revolutionary Old China. I found my material in the faces of elderly Chinese who have survived generations of upheaval, war, and cultural change; along routes and vistas that would still be familiar to Marco Polo from the 13th century; and in the architectural and archaeological fragments of the world's oldest, continuous culture. As one who was originally trained as an architect — and appreciates the rich history and culture here — I was consumed by the visual depth and breadth of my surroundings, as well as the patina of day-to-day life.

The trip down the Li River in Southern China was truly astonishing. Traveling along this ancient route that has been used by adventurers and traders for over a thousand years, we floated downriver on a barge-like boat. Flanked by numerous peaks of classic Chinese karst topography, the Li River seemed to invite us to float gently with her, imagine her history, and absorb her natural beauty. The great Tang Dynasty poet, Han Yu (768-824), was deeply inspired when cruising down the Li River of Guilin, and wrote this famous line: “The river winds like a green silk ribbon, while the hills are like jade hairpins.”

Arriving at the town of Yangshou — nestled in the deep valley of several karst peaks — the boat pivoted against the flow of the river and was skillfully maneuvered towards shore. I could not help but wonder how many times this scene has been repeated over the centuries.

I carried only an Olympus E5 and two lenses. They never left my side. Time was short and precious; I wasn't in China so much as a tourist but rather as a “photographic antiquities collector”: I was in search of Old China. It is still there. The Chinese have a saying: “To see 100 years of history, visit Shanghai; to see 1,000, visit Beijing; to see 2,000 years, visit Xian.” Having visited all three, I can only concur.

Following my travels I sought a finished palette or style that would contribute aesthetically and emotionally to the images. To borrow and update a phrase from Ansel Adams, “I see the RAW file as the score, and the TIFF file as the performance.”



**Gary Pullar** (Born 1956, Geelong, Victoria, Australia): Gary trained as an architect, and maintains a wide-ranging interest in fine arts. Most recently, improvements to be found in digital photography and workflow have rekindled his interest in photography. He draws on a wide variety of photographers who provide inspiration; the list spans much of photographic history: Eugene Atget, Alfred Stieglitz, Paul Strand, Edward Weston, Brett Weston, Edward Steichen, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Ansel Adams, Michael Kenna, and John Sexton. Gary lives on the Lower North Shore of Sydney (“a stone's throw from Sydney Harbour, the Sydney Opera House, and the Sydney Harbour Bridge”) with his wife, Sue, and their three sons: James, Lachlan and Jackson.

# OLD CHINA



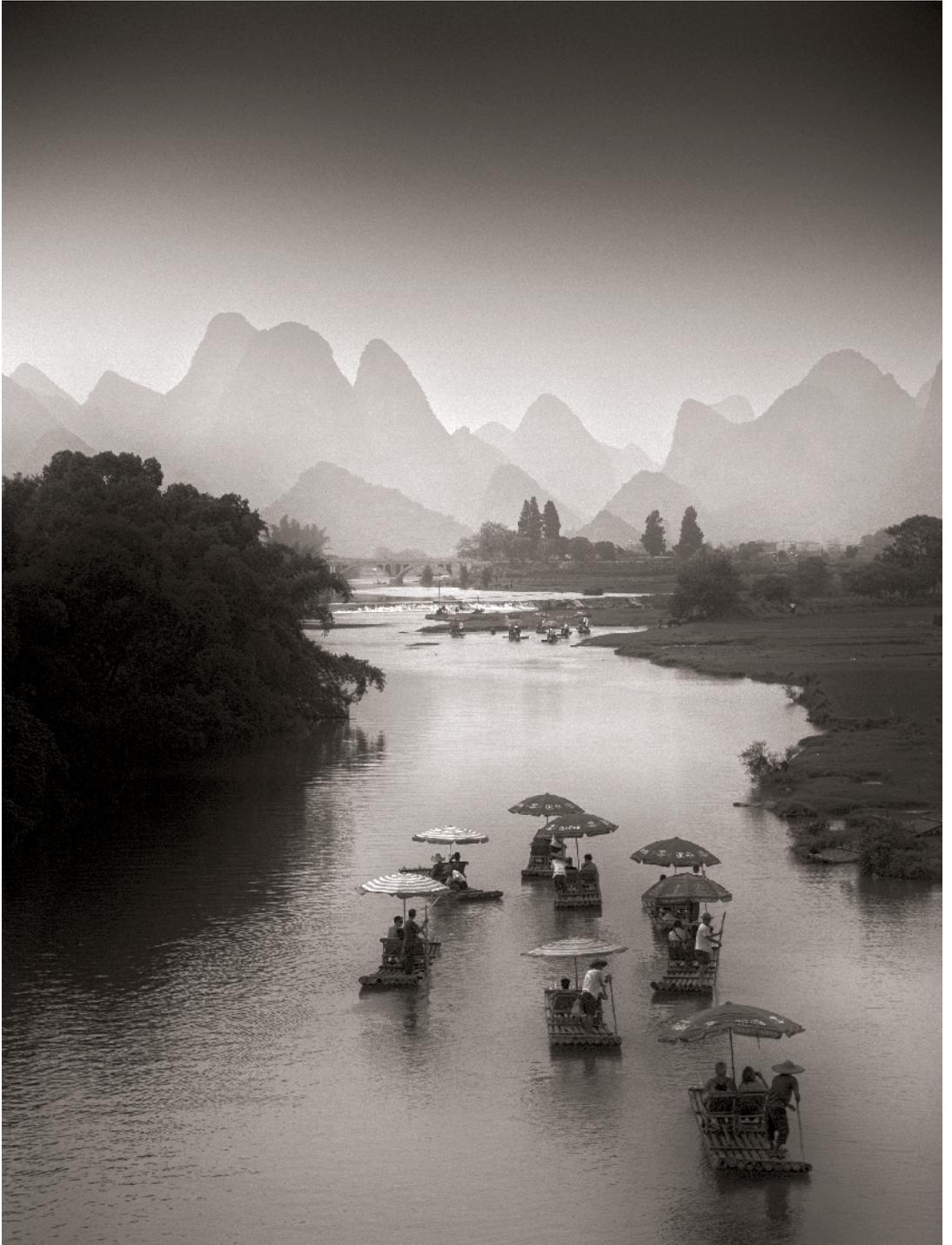
by

G. Pullar.

Gary Pullar

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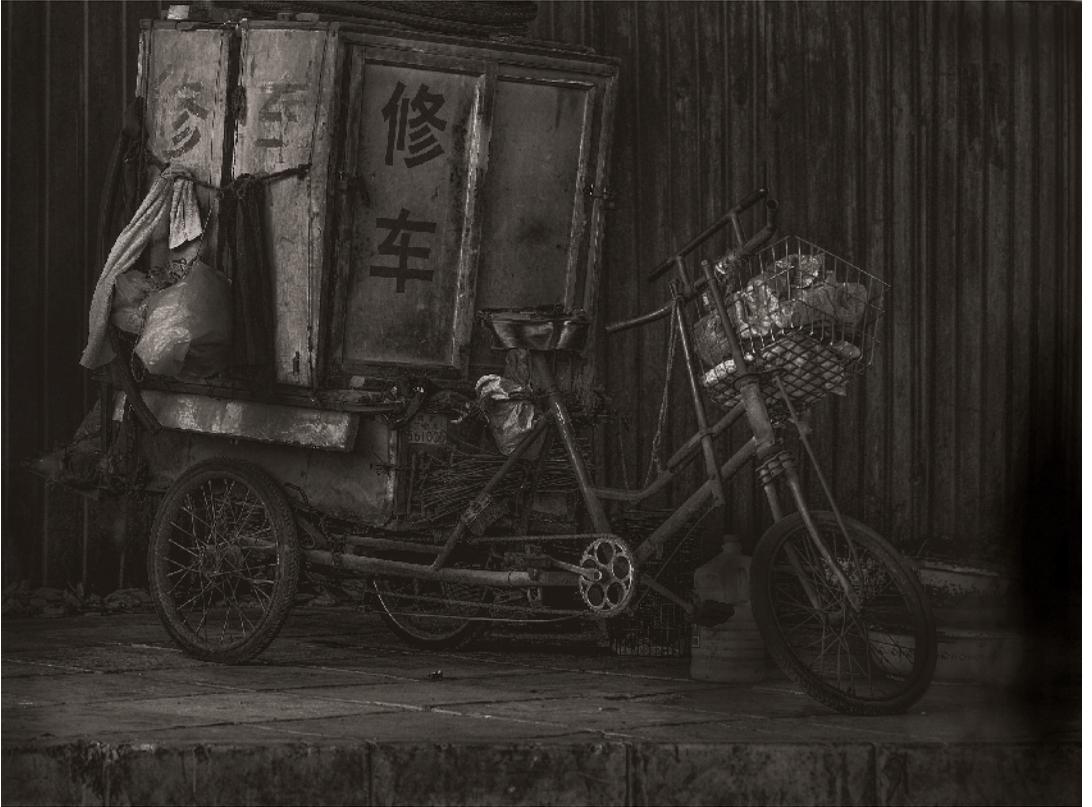




























While my work evolves as my view of the world changes, one constant that remains is my love of architecture, shapes, and tonalities. To me, man-made objects and urban environments are like a playground for light to perform. I'm especially drawn to public spaces and the delicate interfaces of light and space — the continuities and discontinuities, and jarring interruptions.

Of course, our senses are bombarded every waking moment with all manner of attention-getting (or numbing) methods. Often the loudest, brightest, most colorful or blatant obscures the simplicity that contains the meaning. It is like listening for a pin drop at a football game. Perhaps to counter the visual clanging I work slowly and methodically with my Nikon D300 — making nine overlapping/exposure bracketed frames for a total of 27 exposures. I then stitch them together in Photoshop. As one who worked with a view camera for 30 years, I find this approach (and the finished results) very much like the view camera experience — albeit the equipment is significantly lighter.

It's a privilege and thrill to gain access to many of the beautiful places I've been able to photograph. Oftentimes I'm shown around by someone who has intimate knowledge and access. The initial tour typically includes the parts of a building that are meant for the public. While this is always interesting, I like to ask a simple question: "What is *your* favorite part of this place?" The answer has never let me down, and often results in access to the offbeat, or areas that are off-limits.

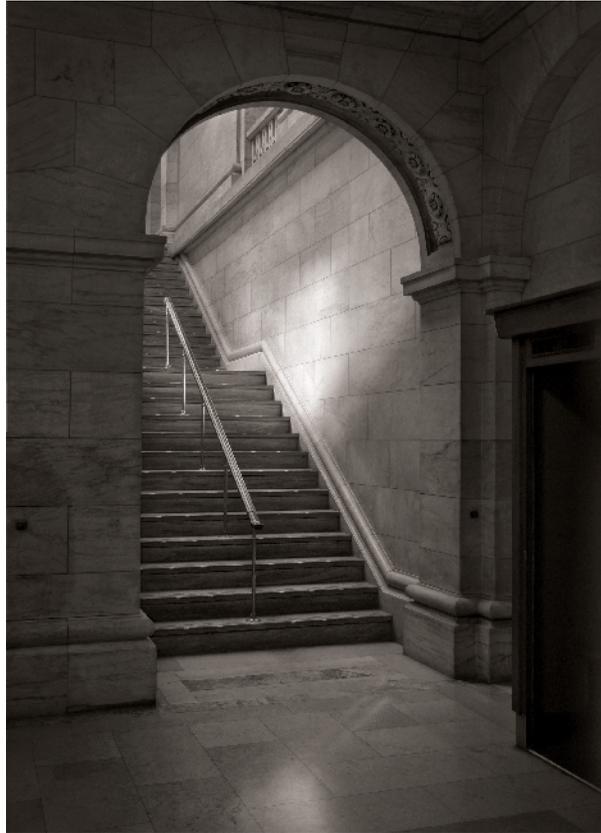
On one occasion my wife accompanied me to a shoot in an historic church. When I asked this question our host paused for a moment and then responded, "That would be the clock tower." He guided us through a couple of very plain, unassuming doors, and into the base of one of the two turrets flanking the main entrance of the 19th century building. Sure enough it was the clock tower. He pointed to a couple of ladders and gave us some instructions about not stepping off the catwalk and then said to let him know if we needed anything — as he shuffled off to his other duties. Before I could even fully appreciate that I was just given unrestricted access to a clock tower, my wife had disappeared five stories up a circular wooden staircase which clung to the interior with no visible support, and through the trap door above into the clock itself.

It's this kind of unexpected experience that allows us, as adults, to reconnect with the simple joy of exploration that we sought as kids. Then, every new discovery was a thing of wonder; each new place was fantastic just because it was new. This is how I still like to photograph. I like to sit in a place and just drink it in. I like to touch objects and smell the air. I like to stand in each corner of a room and inch my way around to see how light and shadow fall and change. It's always new, every time.



**Scott Hendershot** (Born 1960, Taylor, Pennsylvania): Scott grew up in a home where there was an appreciation for art and craftsmanship. He recalls, "There was always something being created and we were surrounded with artwork." He explains, "Photography appeals to me because it is both art and science, and touches on many disciplines." Scott worked in commercial photography for many years, but today makes his living as a software engineer. "I now pursue photography as art. I like to participate in gallery shows, and have enjoyed selling my work through art festivals for the last twenty-some years." Scott lives in Webster, New York, with his wife Sarah, "who is a talented musician." With their three children off to college, he quips, "Our home is now considerably quieter, with only our two dogs creating the occasional drama."

# THE ARCHITECTURE OF SPACE & LIGHT



by

*Scott Hendershot*

Scott Hendershot

*This complete project — with additional images not seen here in the print edition of LensWork, as well as an audio interview with the photographer — can be found in LensWork Extended #106.*

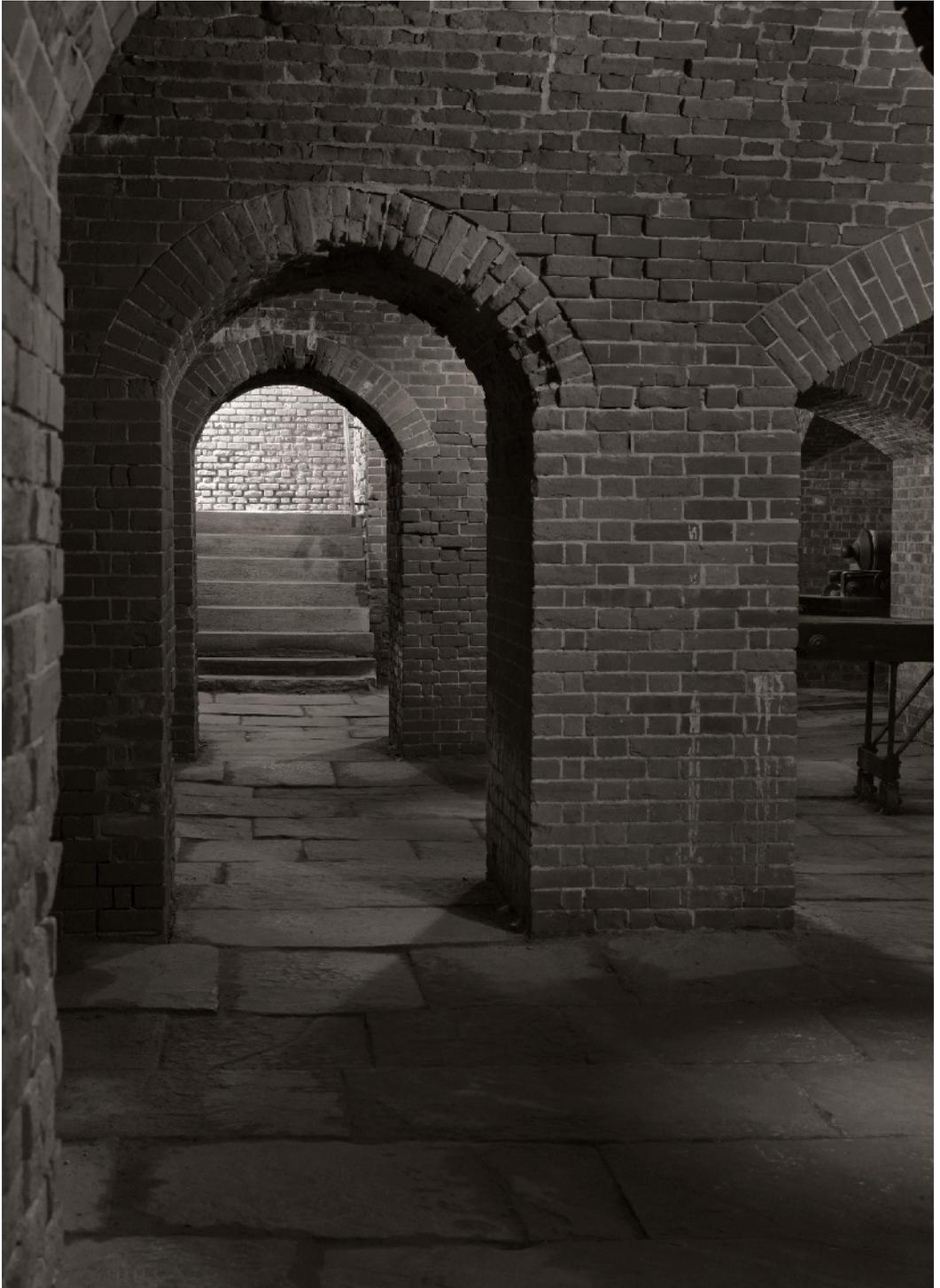




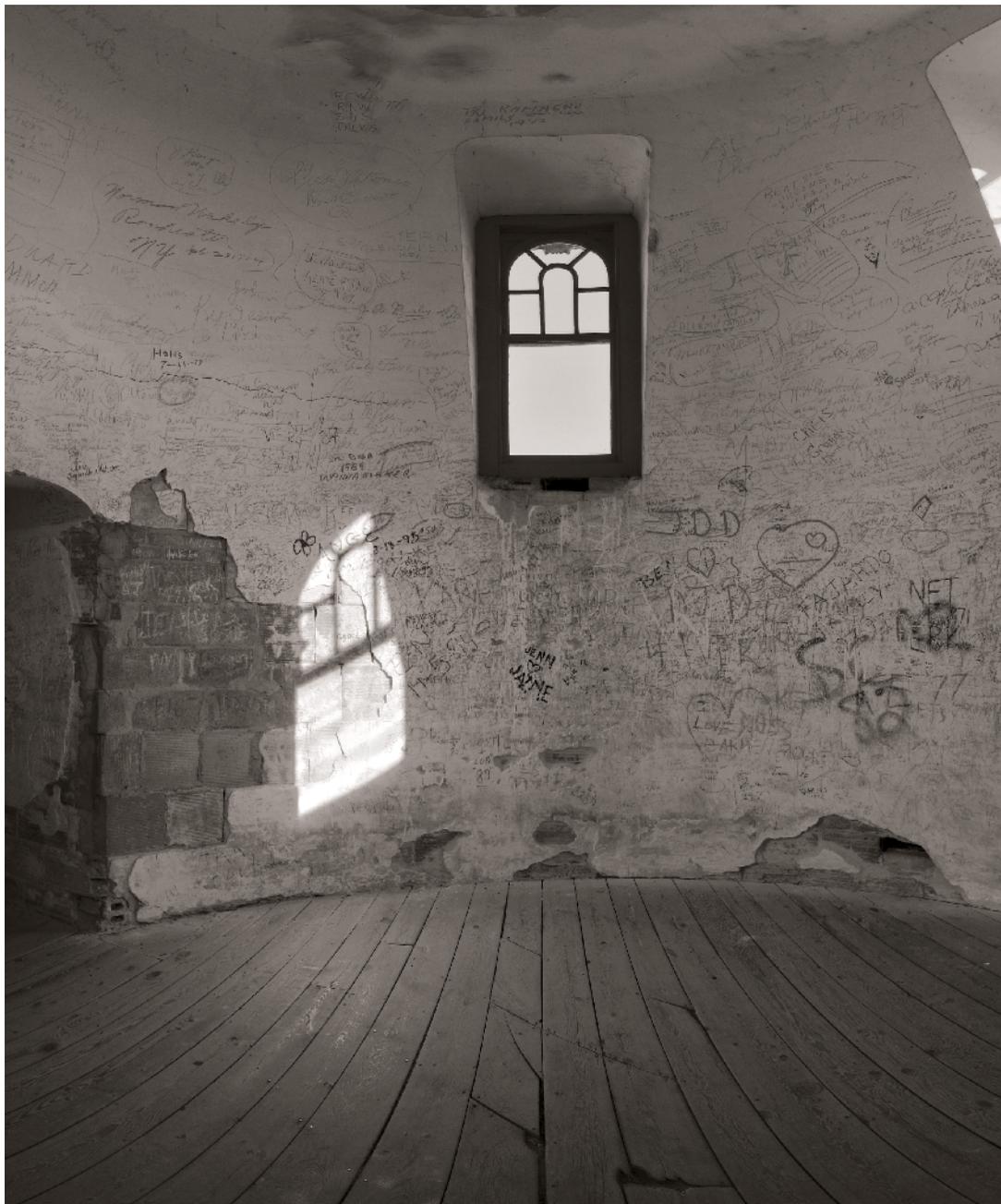






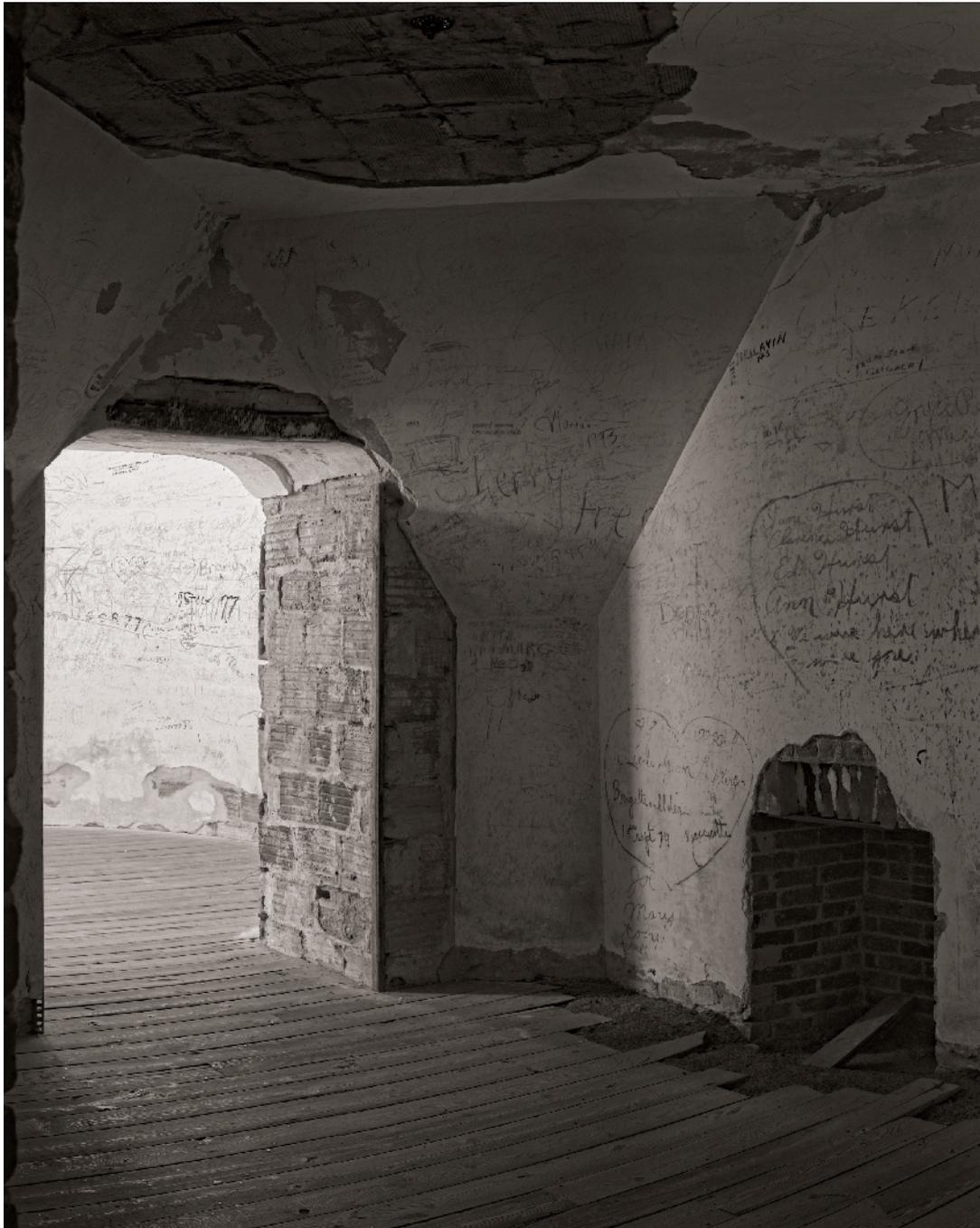






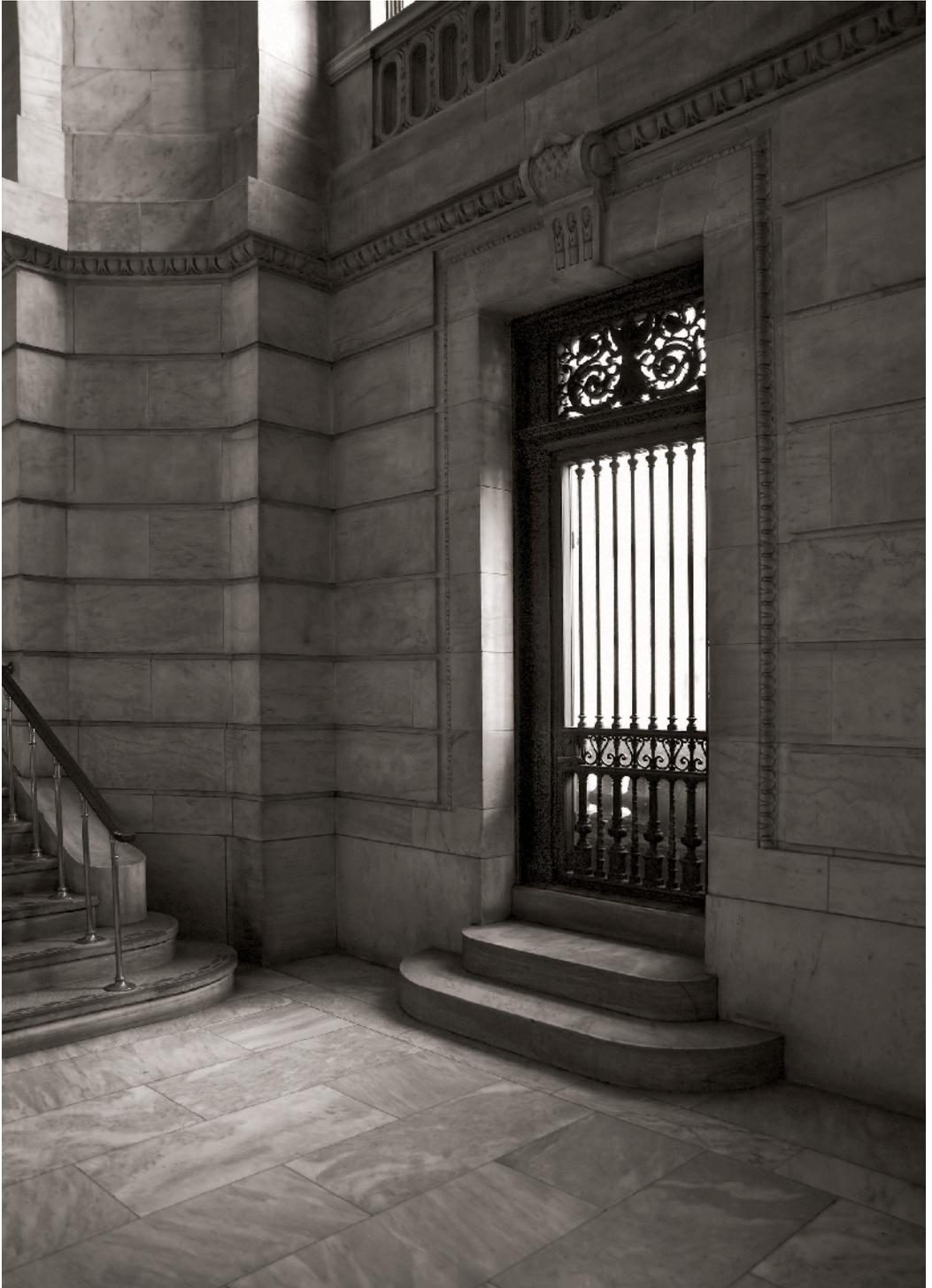












We were at the end of a studio session when Katlyn (a friend, artist, and very talented figure model) and I had both exhausted our ideas. Suddenly, she ran to the dressing room to fetch a six-foot-long tube of tan-colored nylon from her knapsack. She wriggled into what I learned was called a “body cocoon,” and suddenly there was a different creature in front of me. The body of the woman I had been photographing was transformed as the stretchy nylon articulated the sculptural space around her. I was mesmerized.

While I find the nude figure a compelling subject—and one I have photographed continuously for nearly nine years—it is also a subject that is shrouded in our ideas, cultural images, emotions, and fantasies. With so many layers surrounding it, I am always looking for ways to see the human figure with fresh eyes, recalling the challenge I learned from Beaumont Newhall in a class years ago to look to the deepest artistic expression of a photographic image. The body cocoon gave me such a new vision.

I bought several cocoons (which I’ve only been able to find online at a shop in England). Although we can’t figure out their intended use, in the studio they seem to lift us—photographer and model alike—out of the traditional view of the nude and into a lively, playful, and creative space. I’ve worked with different models using a variety of backgrounds and lighting setups. I’ve made dozens of images exploring the web of curves that the cocoon creates around the body. Gradually, I began to see smaller studies: an arm against a breast, the glow of diffused light in a face, a claw-like hand creating expression through the nylon. I stretched the fabric up toward the ceiling, pulled it sideways toward the wall—creating an interactive tension for the model which resulted in new spatial expressions. The pictures aren’t always pretty. Wrapped, contained, the body becomes mysterious, even disturbing, until the smoothed surfaces suggest a sensuous, alluring, and emotional form.

I work in a studio, of course, and at first used a large soft-box to illuminate the entire figure. Later, I experimented with a harsher, more directional light. Using fishing line to stretch the fabric was also interesting—adding angles and mystery to the images that the body alone couldn’t provide. The series was shot digitally with a Nikon D300 and D7000, and printed on an Epson 3800. The cocoon continues to intrigue me, as well as the models who are collaborating with me. Their contributions are undeniable. As trust and friendship develops, we continue to find more ways to create.

This project has also taught me the power of a sustained focus; the cocoon serves to pull the images together in a simple yet elegant way, while encouraging endless experimentation... just when I think I have exhausted the possibilities, something new emerges.



**E.E. McCollum** (Born 1950, Waterloo, Iowa): During undergraduate school in the '70s, McCollum's only formal education in photography was a course with Beaumont Newhall on The History of Photography. In 2004, a friend's terminal diagnosis left him wondering if he had accomplished enough in life. It was then that he came back to photography to satisfy a need for artistic expression. "Since then, workshops, books and mentors have filled in the gaps," and photography has become emotionally nourishing. "When the work goes well life looks better, my wife is happier with me, and the dog gets a longer walk." Although raised in the Midwest, McCollum now lives and works in the Washington, DC, area where he observes, "I love the energy, the incredible arts community, and the cultures and customs of the people who call DC home."

# THE COCOON SERIES



by

E. E. McCollum

*This complete project — with additional images not seen here in the print edition of LensWork, as well as an audio interview with the photographer — can be found in LensWork Extended #106.*





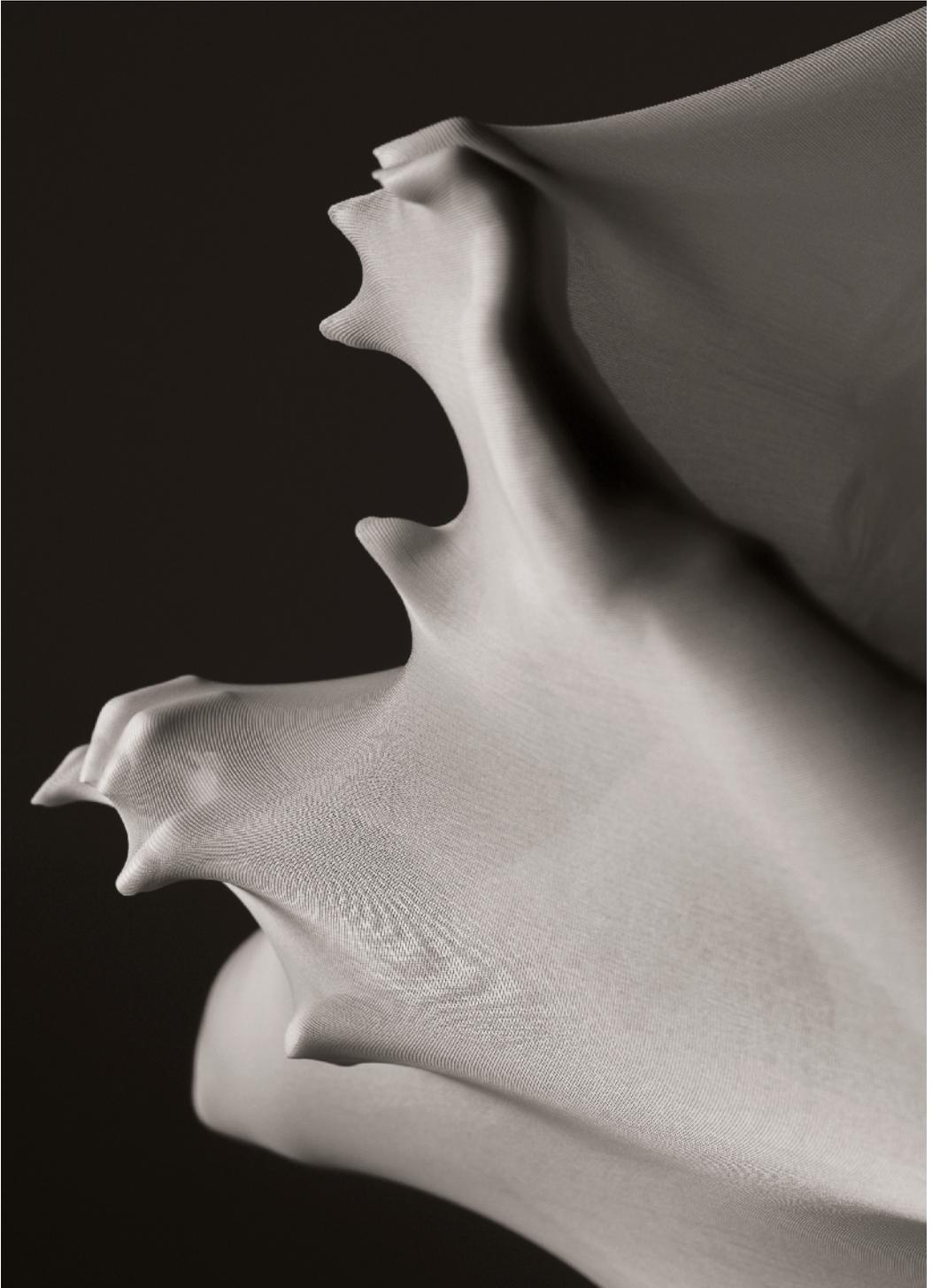




























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# LENSWORK

## *Mission Statement*

The premise of *LensWork* is that photography is more than mere craft. Photography is, or can be, a way of life. Beyond cameras and equipment, beyond film and chemistry, beyond pixels and technology lie the mysteries of the creative life shared by those who strive to communicate and express themselves clearly — fine-art photographers, commercial photographers, amateurs, and professionals.

*LensWork* is an exploration of the path of creative photography. Through an exchange of ideas, insights, personal experience, and opinions, it is hoped that *LensWork* will inspire photographic artists to create work which truly bears their signature.

The focus of *LensWork* is *ideas* and *images* rather than technique, imagination rather than imitation, and an understanding of photography beyond craft. Images are published as portfolios of art or to illustrate the creative concepts expressed in the articles. For those looking for a more technically oriented publication, we refer you to one of the many excellent photographic books or magazines currently available.

We are pleased to offer editorial content from nationally recognized photographers and writers. We're equally delighted to publish articles or portfolios from our readers. If you are interested in submitting an article or portfolio for consideration in a future issue, you'll find full details in our Submission Guidelines at [www.lenswork.com](http://www.lenswork.com).

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