

# Scott Hendershot

## Architectural grace

*“Somewhere between the ordinary places and times in our lives there lie moments of extraordinary beauty,” said Scott.*

“I’ve never met anyone who could truly hear the Flower Duet from Lakme without closing their eyes. Why is it that we close our eyes when we hear the most beautiful music or when we are confronted with the richest, most evocative smells? Why is it that all else falls away when we experience a profound connection with another human being? We skirt the edge of something beautiful and we try to hone in on it by blocking out the distractions. Every waking moment, our senses are bombarded from all directions, with everything competing for our attention. Often the loudest, brightest, most colourful, most blatant obscures the simplicity that contains the meaning. We miss these slivers of extreme beauty and truth that swirl around even our most mundane moments, lost in the maelstrom of daily modern living – the routine business of survival. Each scene we witness evokes feelings and moods. When we quiet the noise, remove the extraneous, we are left with structures and the light that defines them. I want to hone in on these elemental qualities.

In my youth, I spent so much time thinking about photography and visualizing every scene that I found myself seeing in black and white. No matter what I looked at, I found myself removing the color and reducing the scene to its constituent tonal values and shapes. We have become so desensitized to simplicity that this distilling of an image almost begins to shift it toward the abstract. Visual simplicity excites me because its authenticity brings me closer to a state of truth.

Every image I make is deeply personal and is the result of an intimate relationship with these buildings and places. Finding the right subject matter takes hours of simply being in a place and trying to understand the feeling it evokes. Only then

can I begin to see it in the way in which I can photograph it. For me the visual and the emotional are one and the same. I can’t separate them. As I work with a scene I try to remove the elements that are not part of the emotion. This distilling of an image begins to shift it toward the abstract. The perfect image lies in-between simply recording the likeness of a place and the truly abstract.

I think that photography is often viewed as more of a process and less of an art than other forms of expression like painting or sculpting. We, as photographers, borrow from nature and the physical world around us more literally. But the very objects and environments that give us our subject matter present obstacles that can make it very difficult to produce the images that we visualize. We are challenged to create a rich visual that is free from distractions and yet fully expresses our intent. All this must be achieved within the limitations of our medium.

Throughout my work you will find architecture to be a dominant theme. Architecture provides subject matter where form is clearly divided into large, pleasing shapes, and tonality is carefully regulated by materials and lighting. It is the shapes and tones that I like to work with. I ask viewers to disregard the content itself and instead try to perceive the image as a whole. Think about the lights and darks. Think about how different shapes in the scene are balanced. Think about the softness and depth of the shadows and the subtle rendering of tones. It is this visual perception and interaction that I enjoy. Each of these images is a tiny slice out of time and experience which lies in between the ordinary parts of our lives. These are the moments when our thoughts are free from details and obligations. The moments when we are open to seeing more than just what are around us; these are moments which I find hold extraordinary beauty.” This is how Scott explained his approach to his image making.

Photography has several distinct phases for Scott; observing, seeing, capture/acquisition, processing and presentation. The real bulk of the creative process is in the observing and seeing. The acquisition, processing and presentation are somewhat academic and have more clearly defined steps whose intention is producing the image he initially visualized. As a large format photographer for 30 years he had a difficult time making the transition to shooting digital. Large format film captures a great deal of spatial and tonal information. Most digital SLRs do not. In addition film has a characteristic response to light that digital sensors don’t match and he realized that a large part of the disparity was in the quantity of information. Digital SLRs don’t have the ability to capture the same quantity of spatial or tonal information. To reconcile the differences he found a way to use his digital SLR to provide the same photographic experience as his 4x5. His general process is to photograph 9 overlapping/exposure bracketed frames for a total of 27 exposures and then stitch them together and blend in Photoshop. The result is images with exceptional detail and tonal range. The most important and unexpected benefit was to find that shooting this way is very much like the view camera experience. Like using a view camera the process becomes more deliberate, you have to slow way down and plan images. Much of the image is composed in his head rather than the viewfinder and he finds himself focusing on the details instead of shooting from the hip and relying on the camera to get it right.

Glenwood Front Stairs

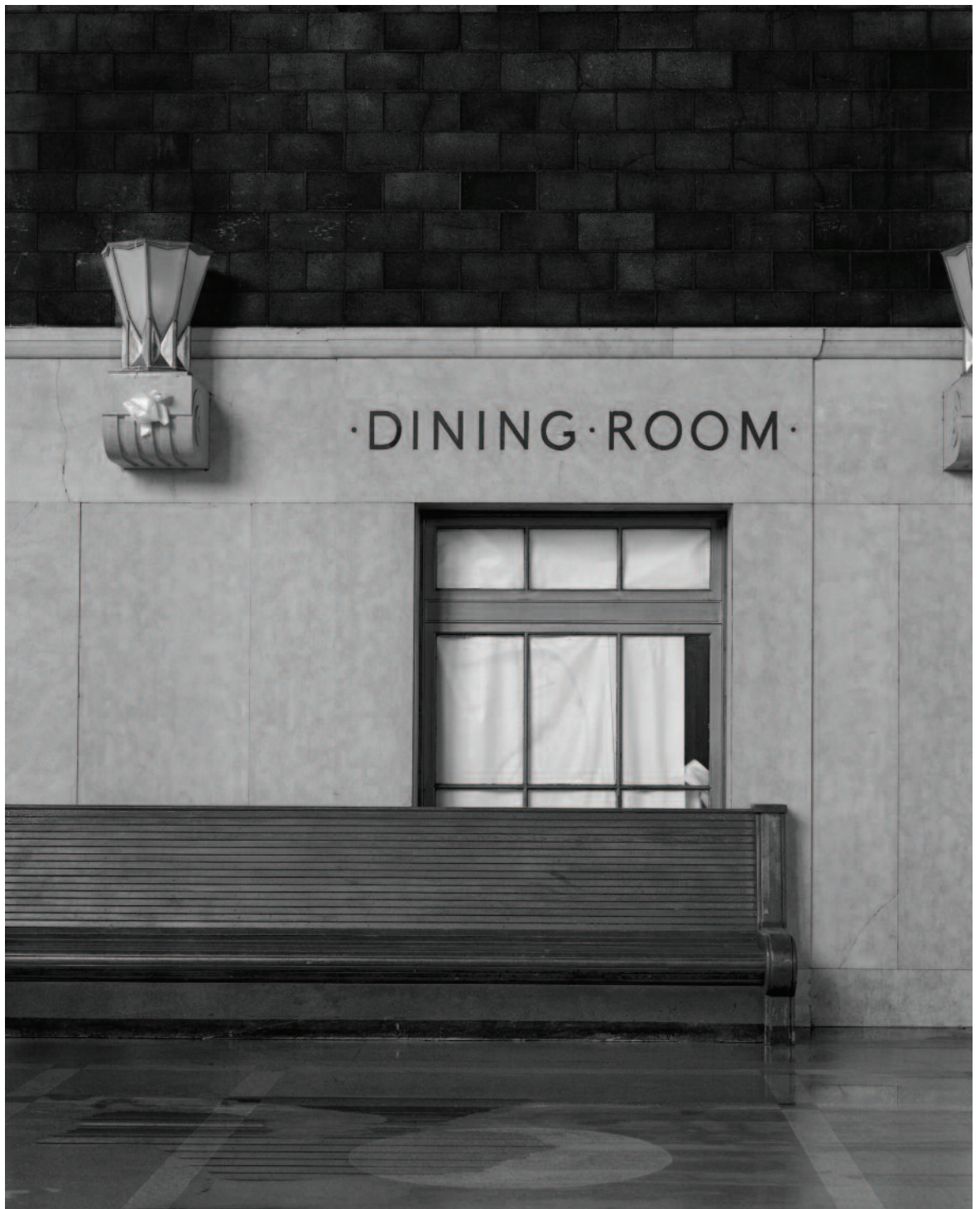


Top left: Attic into Turret  
Bottom left: MH Door  
Top right: Green door  
Bottom right: Sheas06V2









Scott had a substitute teacher in shop class in 8th grade who offered to teach any interested students how to develop film. It was his description of photography as "magic" that caught Scott's attention, so he borrowed his father's camera and learned how to process film; he was smitten and immersed himself in the photographic world. College beckoned so he studied Geology at the University of Buffalo with the intent to become an invertebrate paleontologist. Bad times for the oil industry nudged him into Electrical Engineering where he subsequently

worked for ten years at Xerox. His photographic career has included a stint as a Medical Photographer at Rochester General Hospital, a custom B&W Printer at Mel Simon Labs and Campos Photography Center whilst practicing as a Commercial Photographer. He is currently concentrating on his fine art images and working for a software company. In 2011 two of his images were included in the annual 'Kolor Panobook 2011'. More of his images can be viewed at [www.scotthendershot.com](http://www.scotthendershot.com)

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