

LENSWORK

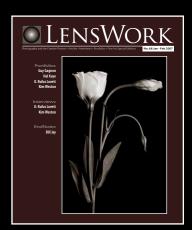
PREVIEW

Overview of LensWork

Overview of LensWork **EXTENDED**

Welcome to the free preview of LensWork 68. This PDF file offers an overview of the look at the content of LensWork in print and LensWork EXTENDED on CD as well as sample pages.

LensWork 68







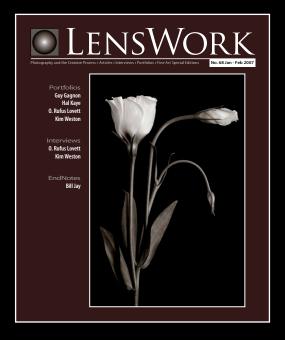
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Articles

Editor's Comments

Printing for a Purpose

If your photographic work looks like it was put together by committee, you may want to consider your purpose before beginning your printing.

EndNotes by Bill Jay

Interview with Kim Weston

Born into the famed Weston photographic family, Kim talks about finding his own style and loving what he does - which is radically different than the Westons before him.

Interview with O. Rufus Lovett

Building relationships and accumulating images, this photographer and teacher spent ten years visiting the tiny Texas community called Weeping Mary – culminating in a recent new book by the same name.

Portfolios



Guy Gagnon A Garden for Marie-Claire



Hal Kaye Cloudscapes at 30,000 Feet



O. Rufus Lovett Weeping Mary



Kim Weston The Ballet Series

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LENSWORK 68 EXTENDED

A LensWork Video Tour

The Weston Darkrooms – Kim and Edward

In this video, we talk with Kim Weston in his darkroom on Wildcat Hill – site of his grandfather's (Edward Weston) famous home. Kim now lives, works, and teaches workshops there with his wife, Gina. In this video we see Kim's studio where he produces so many of his photographs, as well as his gallery/office and, of course, his dark-

room. Using much of the equipment handed down from his famous photographic family, he has explored his own creative path and vision in this famous place, the next generation in this famous photographic family.





LensWork #68	<i>LensWork</i> #68 In Print	LensWork Extended#68
Guy Gagnon	18 images	58 images Plus audio interview
Hal Kaye	12 images	35 images Plus audio interview
O. Rufus Lovett	17 images	37 images Plus audio interview
Kim Weston	11 images	15 images Plus audio interview
Bill Jay's EndNotes	2-pages	3-pages
An Anthony Mournian Video Wet Plate Collodion		√
Audio Interviews with photographers		✓
Kim Weston Studio and Darkroom Tour Video		✓
Edward Weston Darkroom Tour Video		✓
LensWork Podcasts		✓
Bonus Kim Weston Portfolio		√
Book Excerpts		√
Bonus Gallery PDFs		✓



Extended portfolios, more images • Short audio interviews with photographers • Audio comments on individual images • Videos on photography and the creative process • Printable high resolution fine art images • Direct links to web sites, email addresses • Video interviews with photographers • And more all on a single CD using the Acrobat 6 Reader.

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Hal Kaye O. Rufus Lovett Kim Weston

Interviews O. Rufus Lovett Kim Weston

EndNotes Bill Jay

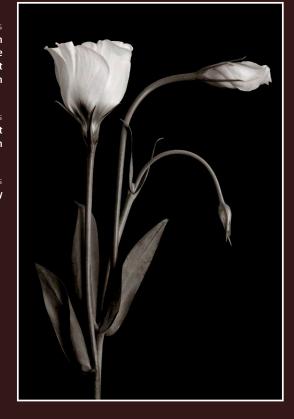


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Gagnon offers a stunning collection of nature's expressions - photographed with window light in the simplicity of his living room.

Portfolio: Hal Kaye Cloudscapes at 30,000 Feet

While on his way to commercial assignments, Kaye discovered the "friendly skies" provided an ever-changing landscape for his in-flight photographic eye.

Interview with Kim Weston

Born into the famed Weston photographic family, Kim talks about finding his own style and loving what he does - which is radically different than the Westons before him.

Portfolio: Kim Weston The Ballet Series

Weston combines theater and photography - with an homage to painter Edgar Degas - in these studio studies made at Wildcat Hill.

Interview with O. Rufus Lovett

Building relationships and accumulating images, this photographer and teacher spent ten years visiting the tiny Texas community called Weeping Mary culminating in a recent new book by the same name.

Portfolio: O. Rufus Lovett Weeping Mary

With excerpts from the book, Weeping Mary, Lovett leads us into everyday life in this rural East Texas community.

EndNotes by Bill Jay

Turn the page for additional content in LensWork EXTENDED #68 on CD!

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS



Printing for a Purpose

My first efforts in photography were, not to put too fine a point on it, somewhat clunky. They were crude and unrefined. Okay, they were ineffectual, sloppy, illseen, badly printed, poorly cropped, badly lit, mostly gray, excessively grainy, and just plain ugly. Their only virtue was that they were insufficiently washed - which thankfully means that most of them have now faded or, even better, completely dissolved.

Looking back, however, their worst attribute was that they were entirely random. By that I mean that they were not merely random subjects, but they were totally random in their production, style, and finish. They were printed on random papers - Agfa Brovira 119, Brovira 111, Kodak Polycontrast F, Kodabromide F, Medalist N, Oriental Seagull, and a few others I've now forgotten; they were toned in one of my 15 favorite toners; matted in a variety of mat boards (which might have been white, ivory, arctic-white, matte black, and even a few in royal blue - I am not joking); using a variety of methods - flush mount, edge mount, single mount, edge trimmed, with a window overmat, signed, unsigned, stamped, signed with pencil, signed with pen, signed on the

front, signed on the back (I'm sure I would have signed on the edge of the paper could I have written so small); and, in every size from 35mm contact prints to 20 x 24 inch prints from large format negatives. All of this experimenting was educational, I'm sure, but I didn't think of it as educational back then. I thought I was producing serious work.

The consequence of such random efforts became clear when I was invited to exhibit my work for the very first time. I excitedly gathered my very best photographs and lined them up to organize the pending exhibition. The forty pieces of work I selected looked, once I had them gathered together as a group, entirely eclectic - as though they had been produced by forty different people. There was no consistency in their finish and presentation and, I was forced to conclude, no possibility of accepting the invitation to show my work. I realized that what I had been doing to that point was printing, but not producing.

This experience taught me one of the most valuable lessons I've learned in photography: Print for a purpose. Until then, my darkroom work was primarily motivated

by curiosity and enthusiasm: I wonder what I can do with this (usually new) negative? By engaging in such random printing I was producing photographs, but I was not producing anything that had a purpose. I don't mean a purpose as in "changing the world" or some such lofty goal; I mean producing work with a purposeful end in mind, a specific end in mind, a specific product in mind. It's good, especially in the beginning of one's career, to experiment with such a variety of production techniques. It's even good to do so later in one's career. But, there is a substantial difference between experimenting with techniques and selecting the best technique to use in a given project.

In short, I learned that the most meaningful work is found in those projects that are produced purposefully, in order to complete a specific artistic vision or statement.

The corollary I also learned is that projects produced in this way are most often produced within a structure that unifies the work. I discussed the idea of structure in an article in LensWork #21 entitled Getting Serious: The 100 Prints Project. In summary, I proposed that defining a project with a precise set of printing parameters focuses one's creative energy more precisely on the *images* rather than on the myriad choices available in production alternatives. In the 100 Prints Project, I decided to make 100 photographs that

were all the same size, on all the same variable-contrast paper, toned with the same toner, matted exactly the same, and signed and finished the same way. The result was a coherent body of work that, even to this day, feels like a thing. It is not 100 unconnected photographs, but rather a single, unified body of work. Structure was the key.

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Nowhere is this easier to demonstrate than in considering the classic photographic portfolio. One of the elements that unifies a portfolio is the consistency of production choices. Each print is produced in a way that is defined by the overall project. Typically all the work in a portfolio is about the same size, matted the same way, and even matted in the same orientation. These are, of course, not hard and fast rules, but it is the typical way a portfolio of work is seen. The result focuses our attention on the images rather than on the supporting materials. Imagine how difficult it would be to read a novel if every letter was a random font - with that sort of "ransom note" visual chaos. Consistency ensures the best environmental background for the images.

This kind of organizational and presentational consistency is not a result of accidents. Obviously, it is the consequence of the photographer having made specific choices - specific decisions - that predefine the project before production has

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begun. So much of photography in the last 50 years has emphasized the concept of previsualization relative to the production of a single image. I'm simply suggesting that this idea of previsualization is equally valid for the production of a body of work. If we are printing for a purpose, that purpose has to be defined before the printing can begin – be it a book, a portfolio, a keepsake, an exhibition, a handmade artist's book, a folio, or any other method of finishing a photograph that is intended to produce a unified body of work.

I almost never print randomly these days. Sure, I'll experiment and test materials, but this work, in my way of thinking, is not printing; it is research and development. I tend now to think of "printing" as the same as "producing a finished project." Printing is simply one step in the project's total task list. A project includes defining the medium, size, finish, enclosure, text, and packaging. More than that, I've come to see defining a project as including a predefined audience, distribution, purpose, and intent. All of these together combine to create what I see as the completing of my "artistic vision."

By the way, more and more I've come to see *printing* as a completely different activity than *photographing*. The two go hand-in-hand, and they certainly influence one another, but they are not dependent on one another. How and what I captured

during exposure defines my available "raw material" for a project, but it does not define my vision of the final project itself. In fact, most often at the time I'm photographing, I have no idea what the finished product – or the finished print – will be. These are tasks that I relegate to the subsequent steps in a project.

One of the things I've been fascinated with of late is an idea that so many photographers are borrowing from other art forms: that a finished project might take form in a variety of media simultaneously. The same music, for example, can be a live performance, a recorded CD, and a movie soundtrack. Similarly, a given photographic project can be an exhibition, a book, a portfolio, a PDF, and a website. In each of these predefined independent finished productions, the photographer needs to "print for purpose." The exhibition might need a certain physical size and a consistent style of matting, for example. Printing for a book needs a consistent tonal scale and resolution/scale defined by the needs of the printer. In each case, the success of the finished product depends on the skill and execution of the photographer to print for the intended purpose. This requires planning, research, visualization, commitment, and even a certain flexibility - after all, a project may evolve during the actual production in ways that are not perfectly predictable.

One of the most interesting aspects of printing for a purpose that I've observed in my process of doing so is how printing for a purpose steers me - cajoles me, forces me - to make artistic commitments. Commitment can be a difficult thing for artists because it implies a discriminating choice that rejects all other alternatives. One might be wrong, or foolish, or trite - a fear which artists dread. (Or, perhaps this confesses something more about me than it does about artists in general.) Printing randomly (like leaving work perpetually unfinished) provides the comfort (read excuse) that the work in its current state is not yet complete and that the "finished" work will be better. "These are just work prints, not for exhibition" is a handy way to dodge criticism. A career of such activity will result in a random pile of prints, but precious little that the artist

Now that I am in the "second half of life" and can no longer reasonably employ the youthful mythology of immortality, I find myself more and more wanting to print for a purpose, for a finished product, for a definitive statement that expresses my artistic vision in unequivocal terms. I find it much more satisfying to look back at a series of defined conclusions rather than a random stack of potentialities. History may very well judge my projects harshly, but it least I will have produced projects – finished artistic statements – that it

can say represents their artistic vision.

can judge. I cannot help but think that this will likely be a better conclusion of my artistic career than a bunch of mismatched prints that appear to be the results from a handful of artists.

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I know that Ralph Waldo Emerson said "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." Consistency can easily become a rut that limits creativity. On the other hand, consistency of structure appears to help the creative process. Shakespeare wrote histories, tragedies, and comedies all for the structure of the Elizabethan stage; he didn't just randomly write. Hokusai and the great Japanese woodblock printers did series exploring a theme; they produced individual pieces that were to be seen as part of a group. As I think about the great photographers, the great painters, composers, and writers, they all have one thing in common: they produce their work within a structure as they explored - often for their entire life - all kinds of variations within the structure, and always with the finished purpose in mind. That is to say, they created specific things within a specific structure for a specific and predefined purpose. If this is a method that has worked so well throughout art history, maybe we could learn from history and use this idea in our photography today.

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Guy Gagnon was born in 1964 in Rouyn-Noranda, which he describes as "a small city lodged in the heart of the Boreal Forest in the province of Quebec, Canada." It is an area with 100,000 lakes – one for each person, it is said – and established an appreciation in him for the beauty of nature.

He remained in Quebec until earning his university degree in data processing from Universite du Quebec en Abitibi-Temiscamingue. In 1993, at the age of 29, he went in search of new challenges and adventure, moving to Paris for a period of eight months. From there he relocated to Brussels, Belgium, where his career as an Oracle database administrator is punctuated by his creative need to make photographs.

Gagnon's photographic education is strictly empirical – he prefers to learn by experimenting and participating in Internet forums. In 1999 he began testing the digital technology, recalling that "The jump into the dslr world was rather brutal and very difficult to grasp. I felt lost in the functions and endless possibilities and wondered if I had made the right choice. I learned quickly that a bad capture, or poor management of light, is not properly avoided while blindly bracketing. Gradually, by persevering, I was able to gain an understanding of this new tool, and am very pleased with the high image quality."

When asked about the work of others, Gagnon says "My main source of inspiration in nature photography originates from the work of Karl Blossfield (1865-1932), a self-taught German photographer who spent more than thirty years of his life photographing and drawing plants. As a botanist, Blossfield was convinced that most of the architectural problems had their solution in nature." He also appreciates the feeling for animals in the work of Nick Brandt, and is "addicted" to Elliott Erwitt's work.

Gagnon will have a debut showing of his work in late January, 2007, at Pixels d'Alencon, in Alencon, France. He hopes to show his work in Canada and the U.S. – "the continent where I was born, and where I will always have my roots." He currently lives in Brussels, Belgium.

Web site: www.guygagnon.com

Works with: Canon 20D and natural light. Regarding prints, he says "I occasionally print through Internet services and local labs. I am hoping to get a

print through Internet services and local labs. I am hoping to get a

real B/W printer, like an Epson 2400."

A GARDEN FOR MARIE-CLAIRE



Huy Lagran

Guy Gagnon

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CLOUDSCAPES

At 30,000 Feet



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Unikang

Hal Kaye

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A native of Miami Beach, Florida, Hal Kaye has been working at photography longer than many of us have been alive. In 1940, at the age of 13, he received his first camera – a Starflash – as a birthday gift. He recalls that "Florida in the early 1940's, with a war going on, did not provide opportunities for photographic education or income." At the age of 15 his father advised him that his hobby was becoming too expensive, and that it would need to sustain itself. Kaye photographed a neighbor's daughter, and was paid 50 cents – thus establishing himself as a fledgling professional A self-taught photographer, he continued shooting small jobs throughout high school.

Returning from service in WWII he opened his first studio in 1947, during the first heyday of the Miami Beach "Scene." Specializing in fashion and advertising photography, he also photographed the many entertainers who played the nightclubs and hotels of Miami Beach. His work appeared in *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Mademoiselle*, *Glamour*; on behalf of accounts for major advertising agencies in New York, Chicago and Miami; as well as tourist and trade publications throughout the U.S., the Caribbean, and Latin America.

His photographic idols in the early years were Richard Avedon, Irving Penn, Henri Cartier-Bresson and Helen Levitt. "And although Florida has no mountains I must include Ansel Adams for the drama in his prints." In music, he appreciates the big-band sounds of Benny Goodman and Glenn Miller, and the New Orleans clarinet of Pete Fountain. Kaye also finds creative inspiration in the writing of Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck, observing that "They both constructed scenes as you would a photograph."

Hal Kaye celebrates his $80^{\rm th}$ birthday in January, 2007. He lives in Surfside, Florida, "with my wonderful wife, Roberta" and continues to work at his art seven days a week.

Web site: www.halkaye.com

Works with: "Over the years I've shot with everything from a 4x5 Speed

Graphic, Rolleiflex, Hasselblad, Nikon and Olympus 35mm, as well as numerous Nikon, Sony and Canon digital cameras. I have

finally settled on a Canon D400 Xti [digital]."

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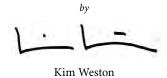
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THE BALLET SERIES







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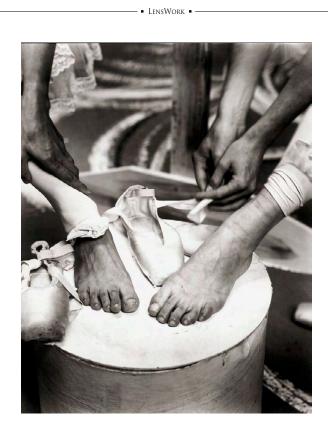
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WEEPING MARY



D. Rufus O. Rufus Lovett

Bible School



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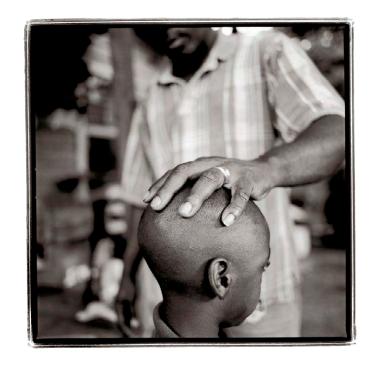
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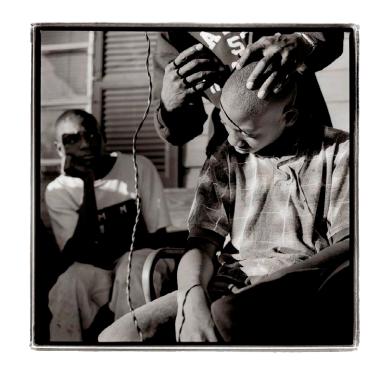
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OLENSWORK EXTENDED 68

Extended **Portfolios**

Hal Kaye O. Rufus Lovett Kim Weston

> Extended Portfolio **Guy Gagnon**

O. Rufus Lovett **Kim Weston**

Darkroom Video Tours **Edward Weston Kim Weston**

> Web links and more!



EXTENDED Portfolios



Guy Gagnon A Garden for Maire-Claire



Hal Kave Cloudscapes 35 images plus audio interview



O. Rufus Lovett Weeping Mary plus audio interview



Kim Weston The Ballet Series 15 images plus audio interview

Bonus Gallery



Surealities Jeff T. Alu



Nighthawks Jim Kasson



Video Tour Edward Weston's Darkroom

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- Wet Plate Collodion Video by Anthony Mournian
- LensWork Podcasts

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- Book excerpts
- Additional Bill Jay EndNotes

Another in our ongoing series of LensWork EXTENDED tours of photographers' darkrooms, digital workspaces, and studios.

In this video, we talk with Kim Weston in his darkroom on Wildcat Hill – site of his grandfather's (Edward Weston) famous home. Kim now lives, works,



and teaches workshops there with his wife, Gina.

Video Tour: Kim Weston's Darkroom and Studio

LensWork Extended is a true multimedia publication that dramatically expands the contents of our 96-page magazine, LensWork — then loads-in lots of audio, video, and "extended extras." In the spirit of the paper publication, the focus continues on the creative process, with each CD offering an engaging mix that only multimedia makes possible.

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D. Rufus

O. Rufus Lovett

Bible School

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Thumbnails







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Duck Neck Easter Egg

Thumbnails













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Christmas Lights

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Christmas Bicycle

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