



New Special Editions from Huntington Witherill!



LENSWORK

Photography and the Creative Process • Articles • Interviews • Portfolios

No. 31 • Sep - Oct 2000

Article

Bill Jay

Interview

Terry Vine

Portfolios

Roger Freeman

Terry Vine

Huntington Witherill



LENSWORK



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 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, insight, personal experience, and opinions it is hoped LENSWORK will inspire photographic artists to create work which truly bears their signature.

The focus of LENSWORK is *ideas* rather than *images*, imagination rather than imitation, and an understanding of photography beyond craft. Images are published only as portfolios of art or to illustrate the 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 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, please find our Submission Guidelines on our website www.lenswork.com or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for submission guidelines.



Huntington Witherill
from *Orchestrating Icons*

LENSWORK

31
SEP — OCT
2000

Photography and the Creative Process
Articles • Interviews • Portfolios

Editors
Brooks Jensen
Maureen Gallagher

In this issue

Article by
Bill Jay

Interview with
Terry Vine

Portfolios by
Roger Freeman
Terry Vine
Huntington Witherill

EndNotes by **Bill Jay**

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Richard Wartell

c/o Judi Block Associates

PO Box 898
Santa Maria, CA 93456-0898
Voice: (805) 614-9571
Fax: (815) 371-0757
E-mail: rwartell@writeme.com

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To counterbalance the oh-so-serious stuff of art-making, this new column allows one of photography's wittiest and most insightful writers to just dish it up – potluck style ...



Orchestrating Icons
by Huntington Witherill

Published by LensWork Publishing, August 2000

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Foreword by Paul Caponigo
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EDITOR'S COMMENTS



The Democratic Art

In writing, certain words tend to become overused as they become fashionable – like the word *paradigm*. It's difficult to read an article these days without finding this troublesome word, and this article is no exception. However, when there appears on the horizon such a substantial thing as a complete paradigm *shift* there is no other way to explain it than to use the word to imply that *the rules of the game have changed* – perhaps completely.

Photography has long been reputed to be *the* democratic art form. Of all the arts, it is the one that is supposed to be the most accessible to everyone in society – both as producers and consumers. It is the only one with supposedly unlimited reproducibility, thanks to the common perception of “mechanical” reproduction. The fly in this theoretical ointment has always been, however, that it is *not* a mechanical reproduction. The creation of a fine photograph takes *years* of study, masterful execution, and an artist's trained eye in combination with skillful craft – often employing days of patience and hours of

handwork. (Brett Weston's Amidol-stained fingernails come to mind!) Fine photographs are a rare commodity and will continue to be so.

For many decades now, books have been the predominant form used in the distribution of fine art photography. I'll bet you are intimately familiar with *Pepper #30*, *Monolith Face of Halfdome*, *Migrant Mother*, or other famous, classic images from the masters of photography. Have you ever *seen* these images? In the flesh, that is – an original, gelatin silver print with the rich subtleties of a master photograph? If you have, I'll bet it was in a gallery or museum where your total visual relationship with the original print lasted, what, perhaps a few minutes? Or, do you know these images mostly from their reproductions (I should say *compromised* reproductions) as ink on paper? Book printing has come a long way in the last 30 years, and we should all be grateful that we live in an age that allows us such high quality and affordable ink-on-paper access to so many great photographs. Nonetheless, ink on

press paper is *not* the same as black silver on photographic white paper.

Photographers have known for a long time that book publishing, in spite of its limitations in reproducing images, is one of the best ways to create an audience for their fine art photography originals. For those of us who are not investment-quality collectors of fine art originals, books have also been a wonderful gateway to collect images affordably. Of course, the images in books are relatively small, by necessity viewed hand-held, and spend 99.99% of their life all but invisible on the bookshelf. Compared to other visual arts – painting and sculpture, for example – photography, locked up in books, spends most of its life *invisible*. What a shame for the art form that is supposed to be the most democratic of all!

With this issue of *LensWork*, we are announcing what may be the most substantial paradigm shift in the history of museum quality photography books. I can best illustrate this with a question: **What if, say, during the last 25 years each photography book you had purchased also offered the images as affordable fine art photography?** Think about the books you have in your private library right now. These books of photography represent your favorite photography, the photography that has inspired you the most, illuminated your life, opened new ways of

understanding and feeling, and connected you with the tradition of photography in ways that gallery exhibitions can not. In these books in your library, I suspect, are several dozen images that are personal favorites you can bring to mind right now. I have my own favorites that I can see in my mind's eye any time I want – a private, if somewhat fuzzy, personal gallery in my head. Surely this is a poor substitute for seeing a fine image on the wall!

So why aren't images from books made available for us to enjoy outside the context of the printed pages in books? Well, they are – as posters, note cards and fine art originals (not to mention day-planners or *screen savers!*). Unfortunately, only a very few images are ever released as posters or note cards (the limited market demand prevents more from appearing) and fine art originals are often price out of reach for most of us. For those of you who have been following the development of the *LensWork Special Editions Collection* over the last year and a half, the solution to this old problem is probably obvious. Why not publish a book and simultaneously make available images using the *LensWork Special Editions Collection* technology? What makes this paradigm shift in publishing so fascinating is that for the first time in history we can make reproductions of those images with incredible photographic fidelity. It is this application of high-fidelity

technology, working in close concert with the photographer and their original master prints, that makes, for the first time in history, such photography *truly* democratic.

This is precisely the paradigm shift that begins today. Working closely with Huntington Witherill, we've just published a new book of his landscape work entitled *Orchestrating Icons*. This book has been printed to the highest standards using 300 line-screen tri-tone with varnish, the finest paper, and exquisite binding. As books go, it is as rich as ink on paper can get. The book is a joy to see and hold, and Hunter's photographs are simply stunning – a spectacular example of a creative mind working in the landscape for over 30 years. Witherill's work, firmly rooted in the tradition of West Coast landscape photography, extends that vision into new palettes, new interpretations, and lyrical compositions that clearly illustrate he is one of the true masters of this genre of photography. (*This*, and he is still just in his fifties!) A preview of Witherill's work is included as a portfolio in this issue.

This brings me back to the paradigm shift in publishing that makes this book the first of its kind. Simultaneous with the publication of *Orchestrating Icons*, we have also worked closely with Hunter to create 25 new *LensWork Special Editions* images

selected from the photographs in this book. Each of these images are gelatin silver, selenium toned, archival processed, 11 x 14 images– our new larger size in the *Collection*. Each of these 25 images are being produced in a limited edition of 500; all are hand-numbered and initialed by Huntington Witherill. These images are being produced in the spirit of all images in the *Collection*, that is, as "*Fine Art Photography at Real People Prices.*"

It's difficult to write about this new book and print marriage without a bit of a "commercial" flair being introduced into my normal Editor's Comments. But, my hope, as a lover of photography, is that this publishing paradigm will catch on with other publishers, photographers, and makers of books. I, for one, look forward to the time when I can surround my life with the fine art photography that inspires me and enriches my everyday existence; to appreciate the work on my walls and display shelves, without being limited to posters and other compromised reproductions.

And, of course, it is a thrill for us at *LensWork* to unlock, open, and step through this door in photographic history, where the marriage of the book and the photographic print will allow this "democratic art form" to be appreciated on a much broader level.

**Welcoming Bill Jay to the *LensWork*
Editorial Staff with *EndNotes*...**

There is a thing called Ultimate Final Truth, and the closest we mortal, finite beings will ever come to it is probably *popular opinion*. Therefore, I'll state with the force of popular opinion behind me, that the best writer on photography — perhaps in photographic history — is Bill Jay. The author of more than a dozen books on the history and criticism of photographic art, Bill Jay emerges as the single most published writer in the seven year history of *LensWork*.

Now retired from his position as Professor of the History and Criticism of Photography at Arizona State University, Jay will

channel his wit, wisdom and keen observations on an open-ended variety of subjects into a new, regular column — called *EndNotes* — that will populate the final text pages of *LensWork*.

We're delighted to add Bill's clarity of thinking, broad historical perspective, and ever-present deflation of pretext and political correctness to *LensWork*.

To welcome Bill, or send along any comments about *EndNotes*, please feel welcome to email him at:
billjay@lenswork.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Jay", with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

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New Special Editions In This Issue!

HUNTINGTON WITHERILL

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14	LWS102	<i>Approaching Storm</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*
15	LWS101	<i>Toroweap Overlook</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*
16	LWS103	<i>Monument Valley</i>	14" x 11.2"	\$99*
17	LWS104	<i>Cliff Face, The White Rim</i>	14" x 10.4"	\$99*
18	LWS107	<i>Reflections, Badwater</i>	14" x 11"	\$99*
19	LWS109	<i>Morning Mists</i>	10.5" x 14"	\$99*
20	LWS106	<i>Waterfall, PA</i>	14" x 10.5"	\$99*
21	LWS118	<i>Ice Form #3</i>	14" x 10.5"	\$99*
22	LWS121	<i>Dune Form, 1977</i>	14" x 5.7"	\$99*
23	LWS122	<i>Dune Form, 1987</i>	14" x 5.5"	\$99*
24	LWS112	<i>Sand Dunes, 1980</i>	14" x 10.3"	\$99*
25	LWS114	<i>Dune Form, 1974</i>	14" x 9.8"	\$99*
26	LWS115	<i>Dune Form #3, 1983</i>	9.4" x 14"	\$99*
27	LWS111	<i>Dune Form, 1982</i>	14" x 10.1"	\$99*
28	LWS105	<i>Juniper and the Grand Canyon</i>	14" x 11.1"	\$99*
29	LWS113	<i>Great Sand Dunes, CO</i>	14" x 10.3"	\$99*

TERRY VINE

Pg	Number	Title	Image Size	Price
67	LWS096	<i>Caballero</i>	12" x 8.6"	\$99*
71	LWS097	<i>The Sword</i>	12" x 8.4"	\$99*
76	LWS098	<i>Braided Hair</i>	12" x 8.6"	\$99*
77	LWS099	<i>Adela's Hands</i>	12" x 8.6"	\$99*
82	LWS100	<i>Three Women</i>	12" x 8.6"	\$99*

* Image only

Add \$18 for matting on gallery white; Or add \$49 for matting and framing



Huntington Witherill was born in Syracuse, New York, in 1949, relocating with his family to California in 1953. Witherill began playing the piano at the age of four. Upon entering college as a music major, he became interested in the study of two-dimensional design. This shift in artistic medium eventually led to a career in fine art photography beginning in 1970.

Witherill's photographs have been exhibited in more than seventy-five individual and group exhibitions in museums and galleries throughout the world. Additionally, his photographs are included in numerous public collections, most notably The United States Dept. of State, Art in the Embassies; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan; and Fundacióe Van Gogh d'Arles, Arles, France. Additionally, since 1975 he has taught photography for a variety of institutions and workshop programs throughout the United States.

Witherill's photographic imagery represents a remarkably varied approach to the medium including landscapes, studies of pop-art, botanical studies, and digital imaging. His most recent work involves a photographic exploration into the visual and cultural diversities of the "strip" in Las Vegas, Nevada.

He lives with his wife in Monterey, California.

This portfolio is from Orchestrating Icons by Huntington Witherill, published August 2000 by LensWork Publishing, ISBN 1-888803-10-X. Twenty-five images from this book (including the 16 presented here) are available as LensWork Special Editions Collection images.

ORCHESTRATING ICONS



by

Huntington Witherill

Huntington Witherill

*Hear an audio interview with Huntington Witherill and see more of his images
in the LensWork MultiMedia Library. Online preview at www.lenswork.com.*





Approaching Storm, The Grand Canyon, AZ, 1983



Toroweap Overlook, The Grand Canyon, AZ, 1982



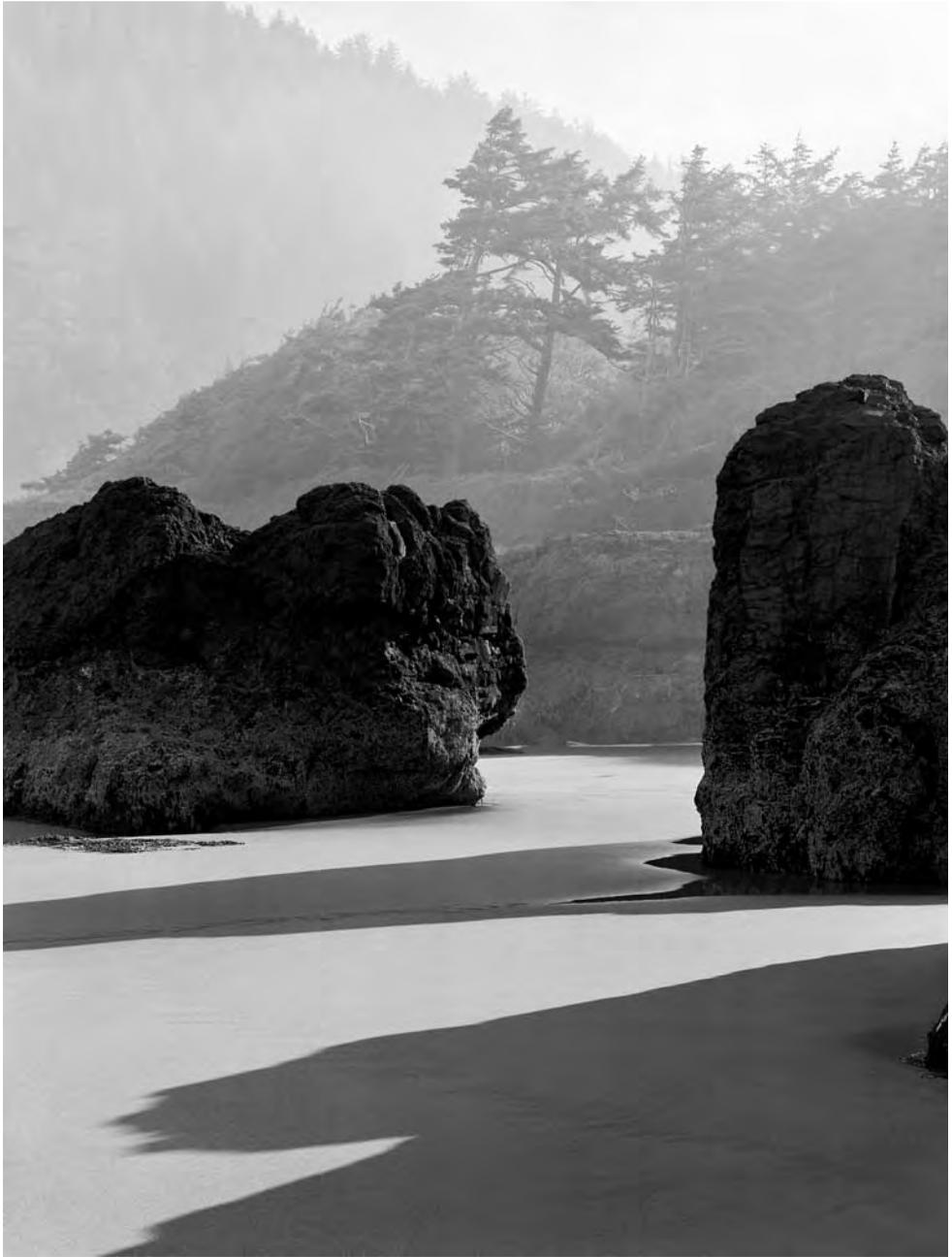
Monument Valley, AZ, 1981



Cliff Face, The White Rim, Canyonlands, UT, 1989



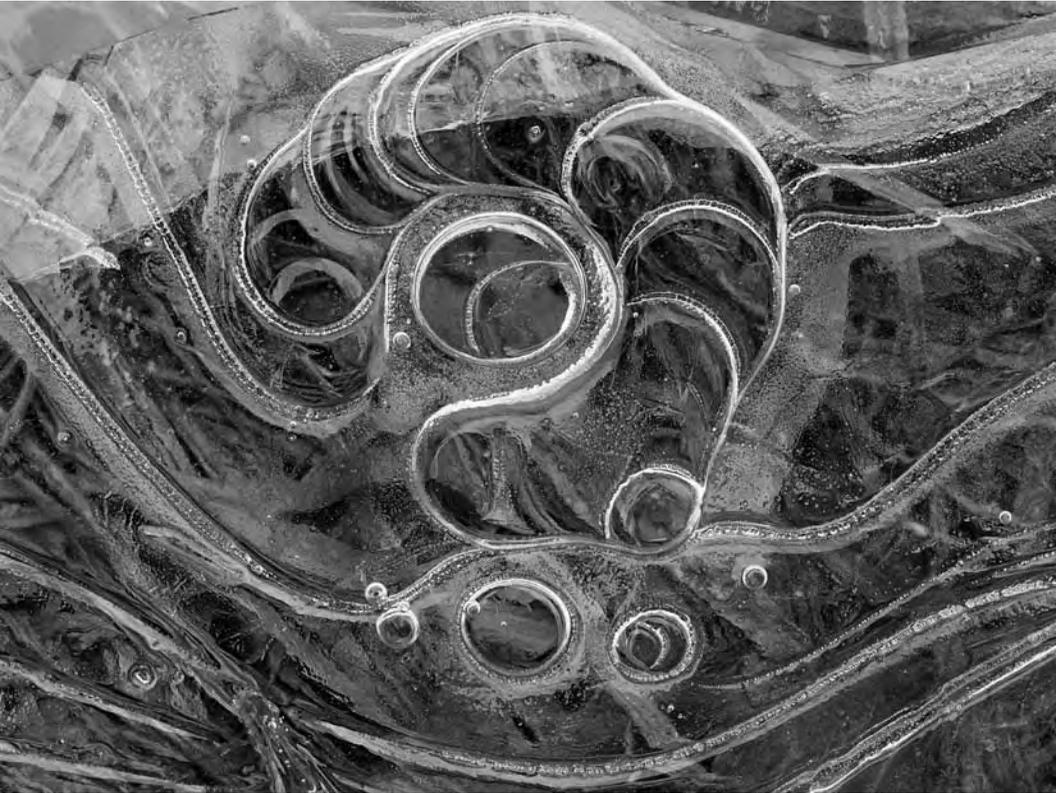
Reflections, Badwater, Death Valley, CA, 1979



Morning Mists, Oregon Coast, 1979



Waterfall, PA, 1978



Ice Form #3, 1983



Dune Form, Death Valley, CA, 1977



Dune Form, Death Valley, CA, 1987



Sand Dunes, Death Valley, CA, 1980



Dune Form, Death Valley, CA, 1974



Dune Form #3, Death Valley, CA, 1983



Dune Form, Death Valley, CA, 1982



Juniper and the Grand Canyon, AZ, 1975



Great Sand Dunes National Monument, CO, 1975



Once and for all we must reject the notion that self-expression is any sort of justification for art. The best art is a by-product of *self-transformation*. Then, in a very much more potent way, it will also be self-expression.

Handwritten signature of Bill Jay.

Bill Jay

MOTIVATIONS, VALUES & TRIVIALITIES

by

Bill Jay

Let me begin with a quote from the book *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences* by Abraham Maslow:

Today a very large proportion of our artists, novelists, dramatists, critics, literary and historical scholars are disheartened or pessimistic or despairing, and a fair proportion are nihilistic or cynical (in the sense of believing that no "good life" is possible and that the so-called higher values are all a fake and a swindle). This volume springs from the belief, first that the ultimate disease of our time is valuelessness; second, that this state is more crucially dangerous than ever before in history; and finally that something can be done about it by man's own rational efforts.¹

My starting point springs from the belief that much of *contemporary photography* is rooted in valuelessness and that this state of the medium has never before been so pronounced as it is today. My personal conviction is that the answer to the problem is inherent within each individual photographer. This prevalent systemized approach to art is merely a reflection of the wider problem of valuelessness that is endemic in society at large.

It is my conviction that the artist has an obligation to *lead* rather than *follow*. If *any* type of person should be in front ranks, breaking trails into the future, it should be the creative individual, who has already found a purpose and

This article was originally published in the book Negative / Positive: A Philosophy of Photography by Bill Jay under the title The Failure of Photography, published by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1979.

meaning to life. This meaning is not directed towards a product – the photograph – but towards the growth of the individual, as a human being who is striving to become *actually* what he is *potentially*. The following ideas are not concerned strictly with photography in any specific way for it is my conviction that photographs are merely by-products of a man's *spiritual* quest towards fulfillment. Attempting to improve photography, while ignoring the individual's life attitude, is as futile as trying to print a blank negative created by the camera's malfunction. What is the 'malfunction' of contemporary photographers? The answer comes to me ever clearer. They have been defeated by the trivia, lethargy and valuelessness of everyday life. They are not aspiring to greatness, because such aspirations seem to be a futile effort. The problem with contemporary photography is it has no heroes. This word does not refer to any particular person rather to the fact the spirit of greatness has been lost.

It is not difficult to understand the reasons for this loss, since valuelessness permeates every facet of our culture. A consumer society which is solidly rooted in the notion that people are conformists who can be manipulated by outside pressures with minimal effort. In fact, the constant process of manipulation by the mass media produces a society that *wants* to be manipulated. Without it, it may feel guilty,

confused or anxious. Individuals who are striving for unique fulfillment do not make good consumers, thus they are considered subversives. In a very real sense, they are. It is ironic, if not tragic, that the prosperity of the Western world, which might provide enough time and money for every creative artist to explore his potentiality, has, in the process of developing such a capacity nearly killed the creative spirit.

In his classic study of the changing American culture, sociologist David Riesman divides society into three basic character types: ²

The tradition-directed person is one who is controlled and 'programmed' in terms of his behavior by the dictates of a specific, small number of individuals with whom he is in daily contact. He is expected to behave in a particular way. If he does not act according to expectation, he feels shamed.

The other-directed person makes up by far the largest group. This person responds to behavior dictated from a much wider circle; he is pushed and pulled by pressures from not only his small peer group but also from anyone with whom he is in contact, whether live or on television. He is the ideal consumer because anxiety sets in when he is not behaving as expected by society.

He will tend to agree with all protagonists in a discussion, changing his opinions and behavior patterns as the circumstances change, and he is capable of rapid and often diametrically opposed attitudes depending on his situation. His 'radar' is constantly sweeping the immediate environment, picking up signals which are converted into behavior patterns. He is the true conformist, without any strong personal convictions. He drifts with life's currents.

The inner-directed person has a built-in gyroscope as opposed to radar. He is self-sustaining, sure and independent. His stability derives from an internal code of ethics that is not shaken off course by outside forces. He is not a good consumer and is relatively insensitive to the feelings and opinions of others. He does not need reinforcement or approval for his behavior. As Riesman remarks: "He is somewhat less concerned than the other-directed person with continuously obtaining from contemporaries (or their stand-ins: the mass media) a flow of guidance, expectation, or approbation."

What is entirely clear from this study – as well as from direct experience – is the inner-directed person is becoming an anomaly; while the other-directed person is being shaped and molded by

contemporary education which abets consumerism and the demise of a strong value-system. While the consumer society has been creating a plethora of materials it has ignored, or subverted, the more important quest for *meaning*. It is spiritual, ethical, value-oriented needs which make life worth living. The greatest confidence trick of consumerism is the promise that material goods can supply all man's wants. An evening watching television commercials proves the point. Yet once possessions have been accumulated the individual is still dissatisfied, if he has come to believe that affluence equals satisfaction. When one lacks nothing, and the struggle for survival is over, what then? Consumerism cannot supply the answer. Education seems unwilling to attempt a remedy. Therefore most people are in limbo, leading frustrated, miserable lives – trying to escape by embracing traditional religion, drugs, overseas travel, etc. Anything seems better than wallowing in a pool of depression. Answers are not to be found in possessions or other-directedness rather in the recognition that man has a higher, transcendental nature which must be nourished if he is to be fulfilled.

The Relevance to Photography

The young photographer may wonder about the relevance of these remarks to photography in general and to his own work in particular. He should understand

that an analysis of contemporary photography reveals much the same symptoms as the consumer society. Photography is 'sold' to young photographers as a product, without the accompanying warning that without added values the result is useless in any important, meaningful sense. The production of photographs is, in and of itself, an unsatisfying goal. Photography becomes yet another subject to learn, another three-credit hours, another class, another possession; the final pieces of paper – the prints – just another contribution to the (visual) pollution problem. Photography has an intrinsic value; the value is inherent in the *photographer*. But the old saw is true! "It is the person behind the camera that counts." Learning photography is not an answer to meaning; learning about the photographer as a potentially great human being is meaningful.

Unfortunately, a study of contemporary photography must lead us to the conclusion that most photographers are other-directed. They do not espouse a life-attitude or value system that transcends the mundane pressures of their peers. A few examples will suffice. With slight effort the reader will be able to find a thousand more. It is evident that photographers are very style-conscious, producing images that look like the latest trend, without a thorough personal commitment

to the work's underlying meaning. How quickly young photographers suddenly become *New Topographics* advocates after a few photographs (with quite dissimilar interests in some cases) were grouped together in an exhibition of that title. Photographs are easy to copy stylistically and the plagiarist can make images which *look like* the photographs produced from an individual life-attitude. Yet the whole spirit or meaning of the original work is ignored. Once *New Topographics* was given a museum's official sanction as a legitimate trend, in rushed all the conformists and other-directed passivists. All they added were little stylistic twists (perhaps, color). For these other-directed photographers the medium must be defined by others; they must wait to see what a gallery director determines is the latest style and then rush to jump on the bandwagon before it becomes last year's trend. By that time, the photographers are dismissed in critiques with the remark: it has been done before. That very remark by the instructor (or whoever), indicates that he subscribes to the stylistic other-directedness of the medium. "Keeping up with the Joneses" is a mark of the other-directed photographer.

Another mark of the sense of valuelessness in photography is the emphasis on trivial subject matter, a glorification of the banal. Ordinary subject matter

does not necessarily imply spiritual poverty but the constant, repetitious, objectification of the trivial things of a photographer's life *does* reflect the sensibility and life-attitude of the photographer. Much contemporary conceptual photography (another stylistic bandwagon) purports to deal with ideas. It does, but the ideas are banal. The same thoughts have been expressed with infinitely more precision and inventiveness by artists in other fields for hundreds of years. Perhaps the most noticeable trend in recent years, emphasizing the spiritual poverty of photographers, is the so-called self-reflexive style. The photograph which is about the art of making a photograph. It deals with the process of the *medium* rather than about the photographer's life-attitudes. No longer is photography pretending to deal with reality, much less the creator. It has abandoned the struggle altogether. Contemporary photography is riddled with the holes of despair, defeatism, boredom and trivia. It glorifies everydayness and ignores the transcendental nature of man. Old style French existentialism, epitomized by Sartre's *Nausea*, might be dead as a philosophical concept but it is very much alive in today's photography. The medium will not regain its lost vigor and vision until more photographers flatly reject old existentialism, nihilism and the self-absorbed preoccupation with the mundane.

Photographers have chosen to be artists. That presumes that they have "moments of intensity" that transcend the banal ordinariness of life. Yet here they sit wallowing in trivia trying to convince people their childish pies are castles. Art is more than that. Photography deserves better. Ozenfant writes in his preface to *Foundations of Modern Art*:

I call art everything that takes us out of real life and tends to *elevate us* – the one aim an artist could confess to should be that of producing great art. But this postulates a nobility of spirit that at no period has been so difficult to attain. ³

Ozenfant asserts that his purpose in writing the book was his desire to provide artists "with arguments in favor of an active optimism." Never has such a message been so needed in photography. Photography is the most potent medium for personal idealism now available, if only for its very pervasiveness. It should be the source of inspiration for the majority. It is ironic that a generation ago, science was seen as the rational, deterministic and spiritually barren field. The layman or artist tended to consider the 'pure' scientist as the cold individual who was only interested in facts for their own sake. He was a rationalist who seemed content to tinker with the trivia of everydayness. The *artist*, however, was

considered the last bastion of spiritual values, the heady idealist who saw visions and struggled to express them. Today the coin has flipped. Now it is the scientist who is the creative, imaginative idealist (as recent researches in quantum physics and parapsychology have revealed) and it is the artist who has admitted defeat, who tinkers with trivia, who has lost a sense of values. Whereas the frontiers of science are pushing back the curtain that covered man's transcendent nature, the artist turns his back on the vision and concerns himself with petty banalities. In comparison to the freshness of scientific awakening the artist is asleep.

Ironically, science is providing the artist with concrete information as to *how* to combat nihilism and defeat-by-trivia. Third force psychologists such as Abraham Maslow, have made studies of values and of the inner-directed person (or self-actualized person, to use Maslow's term) and defined his characteristics. Maslow's paper, *Self-Actualizing People, A Study of Psychological Health*⁴, was revolutionary because psychology ceased to be a study of sickness. Up to that point, psychology was interested in the sub-normal mental state, with the aim of adjusting the sick towards normality. Yet, 'normality' might be *better* than neurosis but is hardly the *best* mental state. Perhaps it was Aldous Huxley who remarked that if psychology is studying

those who live in the basement of the mental house it presumes the house has an attic. The attic is where we want to live. Maslow sought out the healthiest people he could find and studied them with the same rigorous statistical methods previously used on the mentally sick. In a sense this study states that the previous norm was too low; there is a higher, better, healthier mental state that should be the new norm. If it were accepted nearly *everyone* would be sick. The characteristics of the self-actualizer, as studied by Maslow, would take too long to detail here, but a few facts are particularly relevant to our analysis of the failure of photographers. Maslow observed that all self-actualizers are creative (not necessarily in the so-called "fine arts"). This is probably linked with other characteristics such as capacity to enjoy the same experience time after time with a sense of newness. They have a sense of optimism and a perceptiveness which leads to an ability to detect fakes and phonies and a sharper perception of reality, whether in art, music, politics, etc. They dislike having to dwell on negative aspects of life, especially in situations where people are hurt, embarrassed or made to feel inferior. They have a desire to correct bad situations rather than simply to observe them. The self-actualizers are not interested in artificiality, style or straining for effects. They resist the herd mentality. They tend to center on

problems external to themselves. They do not dwell on their own feelings and emotions but are much more likely to be absorbed in impersonal, abstract ideas. I leave it to the reader to determine how far removed much of contemporary photography seems to be from the expressions of self-actualizers.

The point made by Maslow that self-actualizers are not centered on personal emotions is an important one in consideration of modern photography. So much imagery in the medium is concerned with the artist's ego and petty emotional problems. This is inevitable when the photographer is defeated, other-directed, swamped with trivia. That is the composition of his concerns, and therefore the subject of his art. When life fails, the effectiveness of the photographer's art also fails. There is the problem. Once and for all we must reject the notion that self-expression is any sort of justification for art. The best art is a by-product of self-transformation. Then, in a very much more potent way, it will also be self-expression. Great photographs, like most important values, are obtained obliquely, not directly. Viktor E. Frankl, the founder of the concept of *logotherapy*, wrote an intensely moving and intellectually stimulating book called *Man's Search for Meaning* in which he states:

If the meaning that is waiting to be fulfilled by man were really nothing but a mere expression of self, or no more than a projection of his wishful thinking, it would immediately lose its demanding and challenging character; it could no longer call man forth or summon him.⁵

These sentences neatly sum up the reason why self-expression in photography has lost "its demanding and challenging character." But demands and challenges seem alien to many contemporary image makers. Existentialism as an adopted life attitude breeds boredom and inertia. This lack of energy makes a struggle for self-transformation seem futile. Hence it is no wonder that these photographers dislike the 'large questions' about life, purpose, meaning. They tend to regard those of us who ask as naïve. Most great music, painting, and literature *is* implicitly about the large issues of life. Most contemporary photographers make their own art shallow and insubstantial, therefore the medium itself is fast becoming shallow and inconsequential. As shallow and as inconsequential as their own concerns for petty subjectivity. Doris Lessing wrote:

At last I understood that the way over, or through, this dilemma, the unease at writing about "petty personal problems," was to recognize that nothing is personal in the sense that

it is uniquely one's own. Writing about oneself, one is writing about others, since your problems, pains, pleasures, emotions – and your extraordinary and remarkable ideas – can't be yours alone. The way to deal with the problem of "subjectivity," that shocking business of being preoccupied with the tiny individual who is at the same time caught up in such an explosion of terrible and marvelous possibilities, is to see him as a microcosm and in this way to break through the personal, and subjective, making the personal general, as indeed life always does, transforming a private experience – or so you think of it when still a child. *I am falling in love. I am feeling this or that emotion, or thinking or the other thought – into something much larger: growing up is after all only the understanding that one's unique and incredible experience is what everyone shares.* ⁶

That "something larger" than "petty personal problems" that Lessing insists is necessary can only be described in religious terminology since our language of this search for human potentiality derives from mystics, prophets and spiritual leaders. But we are not dealing with church ritual or dogma; we are attempting to explain a visionary's goal in pragmatic terms. In this sense, the search is a spiritual one, or as Bergman puts it, the search is allied to worship:

Regardless of my own beliefs and my own doubts, which are unimportant in this connection, it is my opinion that art lost its basic creative drive the moment it was separated from worship. It severed an umbilical cord and now lives its own sterile life, generating and degenerating itself. In former days the artist remained unknown and his work was to the glory of God. He lived and died without being more or less important than other artisans; "eternal values," "immortality," and "masterpiece" were terms not applicable in his case. The ability to create was a gift. In such a world flourished invulnerable assurance and natural humility. ⁷

To the other-directed photographer such declarations of faith might seem arrogant. Certainly a photographer's credo stating such a conviction, published in a contemporary photographic periodical, would be attacked for its absurd idealism. There is no doubt that the writer of such a statement of faith would be subjected to ridicule, and regarded with suspicion. It would also be considered irrelevant since the existentialist attitude, so common among other-directed photographers, is only concerned with the artist's immediate preoccupations, feelings, reactions. The inner-directed and self-actualizing photographer would understand that the context of a man's work is his life-attitude and value-system. Therefore the 'larger

questions' must be faced. That is why the heroic stance is to challenge any photographer for his overall sense of life. The photographer will respond: look at my work. The critic will retort: I know what you see from the photographs, now I want to understand how broad, how deep, how wide do you see? Your work tells me about your small section of life – now tell me what it means in relationship to the *whole* of life. Do not expect an answer – because the contemporary nihilist does not deal in meanings. But if you ask the question to a thousand different photographers and never receive an answer that still does not invalidate the question. Photographic criticism that deals solely with the work is occasionally valid and useful, although it presumes that art can be measured, weighed and categorized. Since this type of criticism totally dominates the medium today, the young photographer can be forgiven for assuming that it is the *only* valid method of evaluating photographs. I hold the strongest conviction that such academic criticism is a very poor second-best effort at justifying photography that has no other value or meaning. In my opinion, no work of art can or should be separated from the personality of the artist and his life-attitude.

Notes

1. *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*, Abraham Maslow. New York: Penguin Books, 1977, p. 82.
2. *The Lonely Crowd*, David Riesman. New Haven: Doubleday, 1977 (31st Printing).
3. *Foundations of Modern Art*, Ozenfant, translated by John Rodker. New York: Dover, p. xiv.
4. 1950. Later included in his book *Motivation and Personality*, New York: Harper and Row, 1953.
5. *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*, Victor Frankl. New York: Pocket Books, 1977, p. 156.
6. *The Golden Notebook*, Doris Lessing, preface. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1962.
7. Ingmar Bergman, Introduction to the film script of *The Seventh Seal*. London: Latimer Productions, 1968, pp. 8-9.



Bill Jay has authored numerous books on the subject of photography, the most recent being a second collaborative effort with David Hurn/MAGNUM titled *On Looking At Photographs*, which is the companion book to their popular *On Being a Photographer* (LensWork Publishing). A native of England, Jay came to the United States in 1972 to study photography with Beaumont Newhall and Van Deren Coke, earned an MFA in 1976, and then instigated a program in the history of photography at Arizona State University. Recently retired from his professorship, he makes his home in Mesa, Arizona.



A native of Chicago, Roger Freeman earned his Master's Degree in photography from The Institute of Design in Chicago. Since 1977 he has taught photography at the School of Art, Alfred University, located in the rural, rolling hills of western New York State, where he makes his home.

THE CRUISE SERIES



by

Roger Freeman

Roger Freeman

Looking back on the cruise project, it seems to be a distillation of a formal way of seeing that I had worked toward for 15 years. The photographs are like stage sets, influenced by the work of Eugene Atget and Walker Evans. The photographs deal with the architecture of the ships; the emphasis was on the quality of light and its definition of the space. The ships were all at sea, but people were always below deck in the late afternoon when I photographed. I chose to work on cruise ships because of the glowing white spaces everywhere, and the day-for-night quality when contrasted against sky and sea.



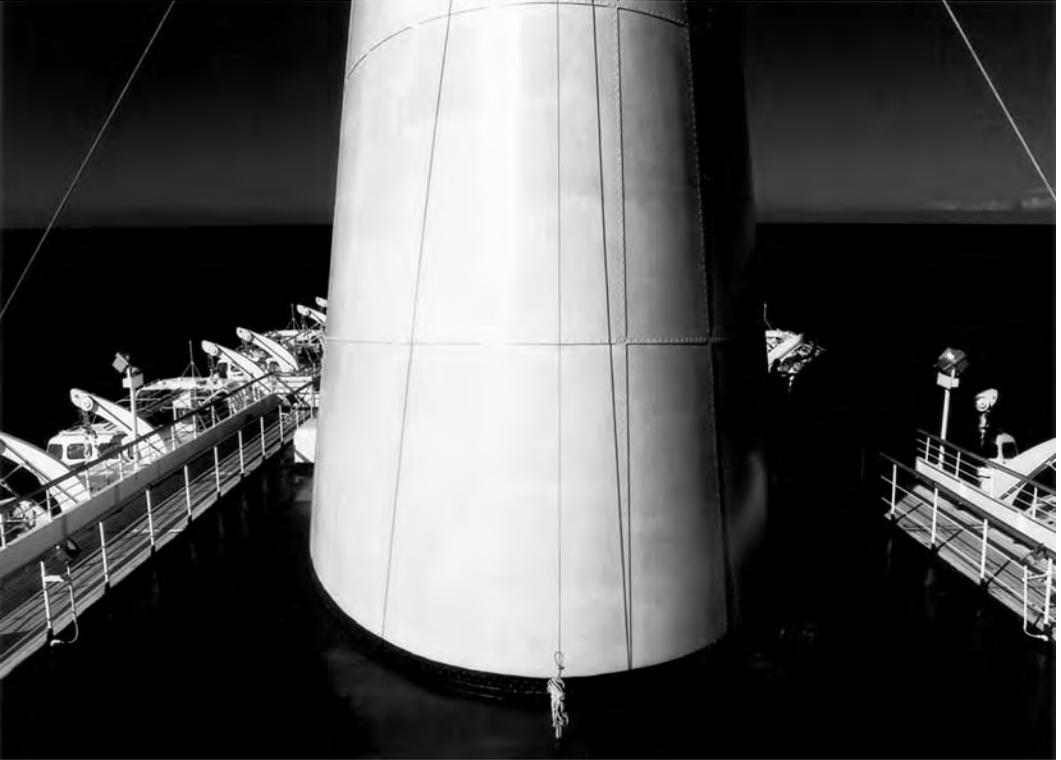


























Born and raised in a small town in Northeast Ohio, Terry currently lives and works in Houston, Texas, where he has been photographing commercially since 1985. While his advertising and corporate work has taken him around the world and won him many prestigious industry awards, his personal work centers on black and white studies of the cities of rural areas of Mexico and Europe.

In addition to many solo and group exhibitions, Vine's work is in numerous private collections, as well as the collections of the Denver Art Museum; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Musee de la Photographie a Charleroi, Belgium; and the Center for Photography at Woodstock / Samuel Doresky Museum of Art in New Paltz, New York.

INTERVIEW WITH TERRY VINE

Brooks Jensen: Let me begin by asking about the challenge of integrating your professional – that is your *commercial* photography – with your *art* life. It seems that a lot of commercial photographers struggle with this. I often hear the same story from photographers who start their career in photography doing artwork, but need an income so they pick up wedding or advertising work to pay the bills. Down the road they find they've lost track of their personal work and wish some day they could find some time to do it. You've been successful avoiding this dilemma. What are the keys that you've discovered that help you keep your personal work alive?

Terry Vine: You're so right. I've know so many photographers and friends who, when they were younger, started out photographing things that they found beautiful or were somehow attracted to. Through the process of school, and making a living, they end up getting geared more towards photographing what *other* people want. Years go by and looking back they think 'Wow, this isn't as *fun* as it used to be.' For me, it is still fun, because I feel incredibly fortunate making a living doing what I love to do. I feel fortunate about that now, but when I first started my commercial business I spent almost no time doing personal work. For quite some time, while I was getting a business started, I was just trying to get any job I could. I started my commercial business in 1985. The next thing I knew I had employees and was traveling — on top of opening a new studio. There was not a lot of down-time.

The business continually grew and I became busier and busier. By necessity, I started taking personal vacations in Europe. I fell in love with Paris and went back every year — sometimes twice a year. I'd wander the streets just looking for images and really focusing on the details of the city. At night the light and the reflections were fascinating. I live in a modern city and grew up in a very small town. A city like Paris was just like a dream. Everywhere I'd turn there was so much to photograph! Because so much of my commercial work involved photographing people, I didn't photograph anything in Paris that included people at first. I loved photographing in bad weather because the streets were empty and I could photograph them without people. Once I didn't get my camera out for a week while it was sunny and I remember telling a friend, 'I wish this weather would change so I could start photographing again.'

BJ: Because you'd been working primarily as a commercial photographer and were not spending a lot of time doing your personal artwork, did you find it difficult to shift gears and pick up a camera while on vacation? Or did you find it a tremendous relief?

TV: It was more like a *release*. I was photographing with no direction in the beginning. I was just traveling — wandering around. I wasn't looking for images for a particular portfolio or even thinking that I was going to do a portfolio on Paris. I was just photographing things that seemed to be attractive.

BJ: So if you had a strategy, the strategy was to have no strategy!

TV: Precisely! Especially the first few trips there. Eventually, I put together a portfolio and realized I had something. I could pull images together from this year's trip and last year's trip and three years ago and everything fit well together.

BJ: Was it important for you to be away from home in order for that process to evolve?

TV: Well, I want to say *yes* and at the same point I say *unfortunately yes*. I can't just walk outside my home in Houston and go create the same type of images. Part of it is the inspiration of being in a new place. In the beginning it was the inspiration of being in a different country that I'd never been to. I also think part of it is being on vacation and just wandering around *relaxed*. I wasn't thinking about deadlines or trying to produce a certain number

of images, so I just wandered and saw with a free eye. Why do I have to travel half-way around the world to create these kind of images?

BJ: But you did, because it was part of the *process*. Now that you've done the breakthrough work in Paris and followed-up with the work from Mexico that we're publishing in this issue of *LensWork*, have you learned a strategy that allows you to break free so you can now photograph around the corner from your house if you need to?

TV: Yes, and even more so. In the beginning this personal work was drastically different than what I was doing commercially. Now, the work I'm doing personally and the work that I'm doing commercially are very similar. That came from taking the personal portfolios and going out and showing them to clients, art directors and designers. They were accustomed to seeing more typical commercial-looking work.

BJ: So did your personal work invade your commercial work, or was it the other way around?

TV: The personal work invaded the commercial.

BJ: Two stories come to mind here, one is from Morley Bear. Morley made

his living as an architectural photographer, but he insisted all of his life that what he did *commercially* in architecture was absolutely *not* different from what he did with his personal work photographing the landscape. When people would try to set up a differentiation between his personal work and his commercial work he would cut them short and say it is all the same thing. I'm also reminded of that great Edward Weston quote, 'Composition is simply the strongest way of seeing.' To a certain degree, if your strongest way of seeing is the way you're expressing yourself through your personal work then that would be the strongest way you see commercially, too. Does that make sense?

TV: Yes it does, and that's what I am finding out. Integrating the personal work isn't appropriate for every commercial job, but the commercial jobs that are more conceptual often involve art directors who want more of an artistic feel to it. That's the kind of commercial work we are doing more and more of.

BJ: Let me ask you a leading question: Is it fair to say that as you've spent more time integrating your personal and commercial work that, in fact, your commercial work in particular and your photography in general

has gotten better because you're more true to your own vision?

TV: Yes. I think that is entirely fair to say. I feel like the work is much stronger now than it was even just a few years ago, and that is a big reason why.

BJ: In one sense it almost sounds like you can also add that great truth, 'to thine own self be true.'

TV: Well, I'm trying to. If anything, I also feel more *excited* about what I'm photographing. Prior to starting this personal work, I was really starting to feel like I wasn't going anywhere or moving forward – whether it be my style or the look of the images. I was feeling quite stagnant. Now I'm excited about the direction the work is going. I like the kind of assignments I'm getting – they are much more exciting. The whole thing is starting to snowball.

BJ: Going back to the original question, a lot of commercial photographers really struggle with this task of integrating their personal artwork with their commercial work. I might also add that at the other end of the spectrum a lot of photographers who strictly focus on doing fine art work tend to look down on commercial work as being not quite *pure*.

I'm fascinated that what you've discovered is that sweet spot in the middle where the continuing assignments and the income that comes from the commercial work allow you to more deeply explore your creative vision! In fact, you've been able to integrate these so that they feed each other. The income from the commercial side means you can afford film, travel, equipment, processing and time; at the same time the more you can explore your creative vision the more you've got a body of work which commercial clients are attracted to. Integration looks like the best of both worlds!

TV: I do feel fortunate and excited about that. I know there is a whole world of fine art photographers who look on advertising and the commercial work as *selling out*. I enjoy commercial work... I like the challenge of it. It's like an ongoing competition; when you send a book out, there might be twenty other photographers' books that are on that art director's table. You may be competing against people from your own city, or from all around the country. I think that pushes you to constantly be working on everything from your presentation to your images, from trying new styles to photographing new places. Yes, it's very expensive

to be a photographer. To start traveling and photographing the way that I like to you have to take time “off work” — during which time you have no income. So at the same time that you’re not earning any income, you’re adding hard expenses of travel and all of the film.

Like I say, I do like the commercial aspect of it, but I think it’s also a love/hate relationship. Sometimes you think there has got to be an easier way to make a living and then there are other days when I think how fortunate I am to be making a living doing something that I love.

BJ: How did this work in Mexico get started? Was it also a commercial assignment that morphed into a personal portfolio? Or possibly the other way around?

TV: Two years ago I met a couple who have a small gallery outside of Austin, Texas. A year later they called and said they would like to have a show of my work, but asked if I had anything other than Paris. I didn’t, but I mentioned that I had been wanting to go down and photograph in Mexico. I’d heard of this little town – San Miguel de Allende – and read about it in various travel magazines. A lot of

people around here have gone there because it’s so close. I asked if they might want to do a show of work from down there. They were interested, but non-committal. That Fall I went on a long weekend to San Miguel with a friend – not to photograph, although I did take my camera — but mostly just to get out and see it. I think we spent three days there.

It was interesting, but I found I was trying to photograph San Miguel almost like I had photographed Paris – looking for the light and the shadows and the details of the city. There was a big festival going in San Miguel – actually I think there is *always* a big festival going on in San Miguel. I got nothing – not a single good image. Then the people from the gallery called again and said they wanted a show from Mexico – in May. I decided to do it and I booked the show before I had even a single good photograph for it!

BJ: Like an assignment!

TV: Yes, it was like an assignment. I thought this could be *great* or it could be a *huge* mistake. They were wanting a title for it and I didn’t even know what I was going to photograph. I went back to San Miguel for the two weeks leading

up to Easter. We went down for two weeks, came back and printed for two weeks and then hung the show. It was insanity here! But, I'm getting ahead of my story ...

In San Miguel, my assistant and I started walking around in the blazing sun — not a cloud in the sky. I didn't know *how* I was going to photograph. I took a whole set-up of 35 mm, two Holgas and a new camera that I had been playing with commercially — a Fuji medium format that allows you to select a focus with tilts and swings. I didn't know what format I was going use to photograph — I was just going to take everything and wander around and see what popped up.

They have a festival day called Friday of Sorrows. This is the day where they set up altars in peoples' homes, in the churches, and in the nooks and crannies of the streets. There were altars *everywhere*, from little tiny tabletop altars to more elaborate altars that spilled out into the street. We started asking questions and met some people, and the next thing you know we were getting tours of these peoples' homes. It was wonderful and we just started photographing. We met people who we would run into the next week and they would introduce us to other people.

Now somewhat familiarized with the town and community, we started making a list of all of the things that we could think of that we wanted to photograph: a bull fight, a cock fight, something that illustrated the children, something that illustrated the death, the cemeteries, and the people. And instead of doing what I thought I was going to do — like the first trip photographing the city of Paris — I really just photographed the people. Within two days we were well on our way to setting the tone for this portfolio.

BJ: You mentioned the willingness of the local people to help you — to introduce you to other people. How was this communicated? Do you or your assistant speak Spanish?

TV: I *don't* speak Spanish, and even though a lot of people there speak some English, it was somewhat difficult to communicate. There were times when I would have people with me who could help. But, you know, it's amazing how you can communicate without actually being able to speak to somebody! The people there were unbelievably wonderful. For example, I said I wanted to photograph a matador, but there wasn't a bull fight going on while I was in town. The next thing you know this woman working at the bed and

breakfast said, “At four o’clock tomorrow you can be at this matador’s house.” So the next thing I knew I was going over to this matador’s *house*. It turns out he is the main matador of town. This gentleman spoke English and welcomed us into his home. He allowed us to choose the costume, and then proceeded to show us the entire process of what it takes to get ready, which took about an hour and a half. Meanwhile, the sun was steadily going down; it was getting dark and I was thinking *what am I going to do here*. By the time he was ready it was almost dark. We stepped out on his small balcony and made several long exposures.

A couple of days later they asked if we wanted to photograph a mariachi band. I was trying to work with as many icons of this society as possible, so we jumped at the opportunity. At one o’clock the next day we were to meet beside a church. I didn’t know what to expect. At one o’clock, a van pulls up and *thirteen* musicians come piling out. They were *great!* They set up and started playing and hanging out on the street. People started gathering around and we made various portraits of the different musicians and people. The one I ended up liking the most was the youngest guy in the group.

BJ: I’d like to have you talk a bit about *Caballero* – the cover photograph for this issue...

TV: That image was done on the *next* trip to San Miguel, which was the Fall of 1999. We’d had enough images the first trip for that show in Austin, but I wanted to add to the series. I had hoped there might be some other opportunities for shows of this work. I went back down for another week of photographing. Outside of San Miguel there was a building with a stable for a little rodeo. We’d passed it while driving into town from the airport. There was a rodeo taking place that week so we purchased some tickets, not really sure at all what to expect. It was just a very small performance and it was hard to get very close to the actual rodeo. I tried photographing a little bit, but it was not as intimate as I wanted. Then we started looking at the people in the *audience*. There was this young boy – probably five years old – with this great outfit on. We went up and motioned that we would like to do his photograph. His mother was all excited, but he was petrified; he wouldn’t leave her side for a second. But then, sitting next to them, was a teenager with a wonderful chocolate brown outfit. I asked if I could do his portrait.

He got all excited and agreed to come outside with us, where the worn texture of the wall was in perfect contrast with his clothing. We set up and I did a Polaroid and showed it to him. He just lit up. I think he realized what we were doing and started doing all of these different poses. He wanted more Polaroids to give to his girlfriend and his mother. I think the most exciting part of photographing him was afterwards — going back into the rodeo with him and seeing him just grinning from ear to ear — Polaroids in hand. His father was performing in the rodeo. He rode his horse up to the crowd and the young man showed his Polaroids to his father. Everyone was chuckling and getting a kick out of the whole thing. I really felt like I had something on film that was going to work. I didn't know *which* image I was going to like, but I was really sure I got something. He was great.

BJ: I wanted to draw attention to something that you said earlier that I thought was fascinating. When you were in San Miguel, you started thinking in terms of what it was that you wanted to photograph — almost as though it were a commercial assignment. You developed a list of things that you wanted to photograph. Then you went around and simply executed the check list.

I am fascinated by that sense of self-assignment, but not just an assignment that you want to “photograph a town.” Your list was specific and preconceived subjects that were important to the project.

TV: That's what we did, but not from the beginning. Those first couple of days I was wandering and looking.

BJ: Yes, but *after* you wandered and looked ...

TV: ... then I started forming the list of people, the mood, the life ...

BJ: It's as though it took a couple of days for the idea to gel.

TV: Yes, and I think part of it was just getting familiar with that town and what is there. The project was very much about their traditions — the traditions of their culture — but at the same time I was looking very much from an outsider's viewpoint. Like I said, I don't speak the language, I don't know all of the history of their culture, so I was looking at it very much from an outsider's perspective. You know, I can't even pretend to say I went in there and really know them as a people, but I just approached it *visually*. At first I started just *mentally* making a checklist and then *literally* making a checklist. With a

few Polaroids, I would come back to my room and lay them out. If I didn't have a Polaroid, I would draw a little sketch. I'd look at these images and see what was happening and what was missing. One thing I noticed was everything that I photographed was vertical, which was kind of strange. I noticed that about halfway into the project. When I realized the majority of everything was vertical, I just made a conscious effort to continue that.

First I photographed the altars, and then a portrait of a woman, and then there was the parade, and it all started coming together. I knew I wanted to avoid coming back with just one subject matter, so I looked for the broad spectrum of subject material. I went outside of town to a cooking school for a day, to a ranch with this woman who I had met. I had an image in mind and was looking for somebody with a long braid of hair — I had written this image down on the checklist. At the ranch I saw a woman working in the field with long black hair. It wasn't braided, but it was long and black. I asked the woman if she would mind if I photographed her. She got all excited and came in and put on a white cotton dress and braided her hair. It was perfect. It was *exactly* what I had envisioned. When we were done with that, she turned

around and was standing there with her hands crossed. I said, 'Don't move!' From that came the photograph, *Adela's Hands*. But that photograph really came from having that braided-hair image in mind ahead of time.

- BJ: That checklist approach is fascinating, particularly with the kind of photography where traveling restricts time while incurring expenses. I think a lot of people tend to just wander around looking for something that looks photogenic.
- TV: Yes, that's right. I do it, too. It's easy to lose time without some sense of guidance.
- BJ: By focusing on specific details and giving yourself specific assignments, you've ended up with a body of work that is much stronger than if you just photographed things that looked photogenic and came your way by chance. When one looks just casually what we tend to see are the images that everybody else has already photographed. That's often why they are in our mind's eye.
- TV: You have seen them, whether it be a painting or an image in a book someplace, especially when you go to a place that has already been well photographed. I picked two places that countless people have

photographed and obviously very well photographed and so on the one hand it gives you the added pressure of not only coming up with interesting shots but interesting shots that are different than how everybody else has photographed this town.

BJ: But you've accomplished that by focusing on the subject material and the details that you wanted other than by focusing on the photography.

TV: And I think *that* is the key.



LA VIDA TRADITIONAL

San Miguel de Allende, Mexico



by

Terry Vine

*Hear an audio interview with Terry Vine and see more of his images
in the LensWork MultiMedia Library. Online preview at www.lenswork.com.*



San Miguel de Allende is a small town in central Mexico that has become a popular tourist destination in recent years. Captivated by the charm and welcoming nature of its residents, many foreigners have chosen to make San Miguel de Allende their home. While this has brought an enormous increase in commercialization, the original residents of San Miguel have retained a strong sense of identity. This is evidenced in the unmitigated fervor of their continuing succession of special events: from religious festivals to the running of the bulls; from cockfights to bullfights; from the celebration of holidays to the celebrations of daily life. It is my hope that this body of work will convey a sense of this people's enduring character and the richness and depth of their traditions. It should stand as a portrait of a people who remain welcoming, yet unchanged.



Caballero



Matador



The Sword



Musicos



Mariachi



Palm Boy



Angel Wings



Braided Hair



Adela's Hands



Procession Girl



Procession at San Juan de Dios



Friday of Sorrows



Crucifixion



Three Women



Parraquia at Night



Cockfight



Rosaura

Bill Jay's
End Notes

A Walk Down Memory Lane with a Giant Banana

A newly married couple in England has been awarded more than \$3,000 in damages from the photographer hired to shoot their wedding pictures. Among the couple's complaints was that in one of the group pictures there was an interloper dressed as a giant banana. How churlish of them. Wedding pictures are so dull I would have thought the addition of a jolly old fruit would have been welcome. If I ever get married again (I am touching wood so as not to tempt fate) I will insist all guests appear as a fruit, and then sue if someone turns up in a tux.



Amidst much wringing of hands and gnashing of teeth by the liberal media, celebrity-stalking paparazzi are constantly in the "news," which tends to be more about moralizing than information. Just once I think such a program should give credit to the photographer who started it all. The name for the history books is Tazio Secchiaroli. Tazio was a famous Italian celebrity-hound who was the inspiration for a character named Paparazzo in Fellini's 1960 film *La Dolce Vita*. Thereafter, this character's name became the term used for all members of his profession. Tazio died in the summer of 1998.



I was in a well-known art gallery, waiting for its oh-so-busy director. "Come in the back," he shouted, "I've got some portfolios to review from photographers who are wanting exhibitions," as he rolled his eyes at such pathetic and forlorn hopes.

Why not, I thought, it would be a pleasant way to spend a few hours.

He had finished in less than 10 minutes, including the opening and closing of the cases.

On our way to lunch, I calculated that he had looked at 150 prints, giving each hard-won image his undivided attention for all of three seconds.

I pondered the significance of this fact.

Back home my attention was drawn to a news item. Scientists (therefore what follows must be true) have discovered that the attention-span of a goldfish is three seconds.

Is this a coincidence? Compare and contrast the appearance, brain capacity and mating habits of gallery directors and pet fish.



Any James Bond wannabees need a job? The highly hush-hush British secret service, MI5, for the very first time is coming out from behind its cloak in an effort to recruit *photographers*. So who said this was not a glamorous profession? "We are looking for

someone who is intelligent and has good powers of observation, as well as being able to handle a camera," said a spokesman. No MFAs need apply. (Only kidding). The web site adds that the applicant "must have no fear of heights or enclosed spaces," just in case, I suppose, he/she would need to shoot while dangling one-handed from a helicopter or from inside a ventilation duct. Presumably the successful applicants will be assigned to A4 Branch, the so-called "Watchers," whose main job used to be keeping an eye on Soviet spies but nowadays it's more likely to be surveillance of terrorists and criminals – but, of course, this might be disinformation, you can never tell in this shadowy world, and the prime targets, with any luck, will be blackmail shots of sexually deviant politicians. The advertisement notes that there are opportunities for photographers to rise to the very highest levels of the service. Move over M.



I recently received an inspiring letter from Arnold Newman, the doyen of photographic portraitists. In a magazine piece I had referred to him as a "marathon man" because he is still enthusiastically active after more than 60 years of image-making.

Arnold wrote in part:

I never thought of myself as a 'marathon man,' but you have to realize a marathon man can get awfully tired

after a while. So what do you do? You just keep going...

Frankly, any good creative person I know (photographer, painter, sculptor, writer, etc) has never retired. This is talked about frequently amongst those kinds of people and all of us agree that complete retirement is inviting death. Besides one is driven to go on. I am reminded of a story Jean Renoir, the painter, told in one of his books about his son the great film director, Pierre, who had a friend that wanted to ask his father a specific question. Renoir agreed despite his constant pain from arthritis, his brushes were tied to his hands because his fingers crippled with arthritis could not hold them - he HAD to go on. The question asked of Renoir by this friend was: "How do I know if I should be a musician?" Renoir's answer, and I can imagine it was filled with irritation, was : "How do you know if you have to take a pee?"

There's still a bunch of us racing that marathon, guys like Penn, George Segal (the sculptor), Arthur Miller, and the list goes on. None of us will ever stop willingly. Besides it's fun!!

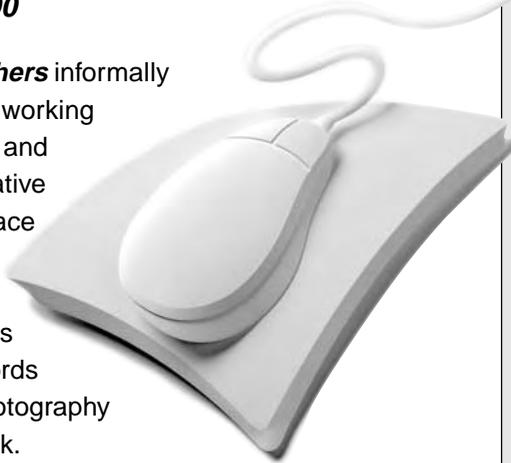
Thanks Arnold, in an age of superficiality and short-lived promotions, we all need to hear the lesson of commitment to the long-haul. (George Segal died this last summer, shortly after the letter was written.)



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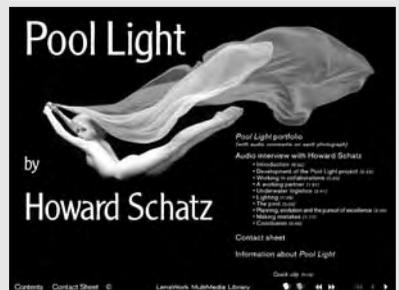
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LensWork Publishing
PO Box 22007
Portland, OR 97269-2007 U.S.A.

USA TOLL FREE 1-800-659-2130

Voice 503-659-2130 FAX 503-659-5945

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