



New Silver Series LensWork Special Editions Images by John Wimberley!



LENSWORK

Photography and the Creative Process • Articles • Interviews • Portfolios

No. 32 • Nov - Dec 2000

Introducing the LensWork Photogravures!



Article

Brooks Jensen

Interview

John Wimberley

Portfolios

Tony Makepeace
Ron Prager
John Wimberley

EndNotes

Bill Jay

LENSWORK

32
NOV — DEC
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Photography and the Creative Process
Articles • Interviews • Portfolios

Editors

Brooks Jensen
Maureen Gallagher

In this issue

Article by

Brooks Jensen

Interview with

John Wimberley

Portfolios by

Tony Makepeace

Ron Prager

John Wimberley

New Special Editions Images by

John Wimberley, Maureen Gallagher, Larry Wiese, Russ Dodd

EndNotes by **Bill Jay**

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS



Why This is the Best Time In History to Be a Photographer

I am concerned that too many may believe the ailing patient may be slipping fast. Magazines now regularly predict the death of film. The age of photography as an art form has come and almost gone, replaced by video, computers and other distractions. I disagree – an admittedly partisan attitude – partly because I don't wish to have wasted the past thirty years, and partly because all dinosaurs wish not to become *extinct* dinosaurs.

The problem with such hypothesis is, of course, that one can rarely see large trends when smack in the middle of them. Here, in the beginning years of the new century, it may be impossible for us to see the bigger trends. Nonetheless, there are several important clues that can be seen, the sum of which are pointing to – guess what – *change*.

The four thousand year old trend of humans and graphics exhibits a strangely inverse relationship. Four thousand years ago pictures were rare and potently powerful. Two thousand years ago images were less rare but still powerfully magical.

Five hundred years ago painting was common and, in the Renaissance, broke away from iconography. In nineteen hundred gravures were special, magazines were entering their heyday, offset printing was just being born, and graphic arts became important. In the last hundred years we've seen the introduction of mass communications, Walt Disney, television, web presses, Kodak roll film, film with a lens (i.e. disposable cameras), cameras without film (digital cameras), desktop scanners and the World Wide Web. Pictures that were once special and rare are now everywhere, cheap, fleeting, and often ignored.

Photography is an art form that gained respectability with Alfred Steiglitz and rose in artistic stature through the seventies. It reached a market peak as collectible in the late seventies and early eighties. And then a corner was turned. Some say photography was then decapitated by image gluttony and visual boredom. Today, everything is a cliché, everything has been photographed *ad infinitum*, every interested collector owns all the

photographs they choose to. So, why make more photographs? It is a good question – one each of us should ask seriously, particularly about our own work. How many more photographs do we need of fall leaves, unusual rock formations, pastoral landscapes, body tattoos, the politically incorrect, the politically correct, the undecipherable symbol, every conceivable counter culture in the world, every vaguely indigenous peoples, every waterfall, and my favorite, kittens with yarn? The list of the over-photographed is so exhaustive. When some photographer happens to stumble on a new subject material such a discovery is usually enough to launch an incredibly successful career. It's only a matter of time before we start seeing portfolios of self-inflicted wounds and, with the advent of Photoshop, portfolios of things that never were. Can you doubt it's only a matter of time before we see the photograph of Elvis on a unicorn proudly showing off his pregnant swollen tummy wherein the alien space baby germinates? Forgive me, I am mistaken. This has already been done.

Why, then, am I optimistic about the future of photography? I am optimistic because history teaches us that we *should* be so. In fact, the history of art is nothing more than a series of spent mines – or perhaps I should say spent *minds*. The explosion of Greek art was a reaction to the exhaustion of Egyptian and

Babylonian art. The Renaissance was a response to the exhaustion of art of the middle ages. The Impressionists were bored with the formulaic salon rules. The Post Modernists were tired of realism. And the Surrealists were tired of it all. The last *great* photography master – Ansel Adams – so defined and codified the straight print that he essentially killed it as a creative medium.

The next generation of great photographers – that is to say, the next *movement* in photography – will be the genius of a new generation of creative artists who can radically redefine a new vision. Just as Ansel Adams redefined (in silver and in scale) his predecessors (Timothy O'Sullivan, Frederick Evans, Edward Steichen).

Nature, of course, abhors a vacuum – even a creative one. And, as the cliché goes, the only constant in the universe is change. I am optimistic because there are quite literally hundreds of thousands of photographers right now struggling with the issue of their own creativity – their own vision, each of whom are pushing the limits of what has been. If there is any room for discouragement, it is not that good photography is *not* being created. It *is* being created and will be created as long as our species has eyes. The real challenge is whether or not the rest of us will be able to see, understand, or even recognize the

next genius. There is no question we will fail to do so if we insist on applying the old standards and the old rules without learning from the history of art. This is a great challenge because the obvious pitfall is that it will be far too easy to be seduced by junk.

This is precisely why I believe among the most valuable things today's photographers can do is to accept their inclusion in the broader world of art. Photographers should study art history, with at least as much intensity as we all did the Zone System. Read Gombrich. Read Gowing. Read Malraux. Spend time with the painters and the sculptors and the writers and abandon the narrow perspective that

photography is independent of traditional arts. The alternative is to photograph more weathered barns, more cheesy nudes, more goofy rocks, and more dewy spider webs. If you do not know who Brueghel is you cannot truly understand Joel Peter Witkin. If you don't know Whistler or Ambrose Bierce, Ansel Adams will remain just a photographer.

We are on the brink of a great re-invention. And you and I can participate with vigor and enthusiasm, if we want to.



Publisher's note

You may have noticed that the last issue of *LensWork* #31 (Sept-Oct, 2000) arrived in your mailbox or at your favorite bookstore later than usual. There was a very simple reason: *integrity*. The first printing of Issue #31 was rejected and destroyed in its entirety, and reprinted to the standards that our readers have come to expect. Although this decision resulted in a regrettable delay in delivery, we knew our readers would agree with this decision. We appreciate your patience.

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LWS134
Salt Creek #4, 1988
**Signed by
John Wimberley
Limited to 250**

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New Gelatin Silver Special Editions!

See page 96 for image details and pricing.



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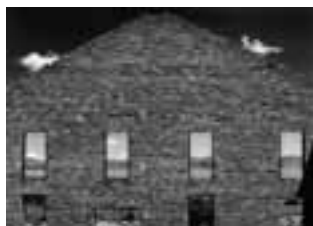
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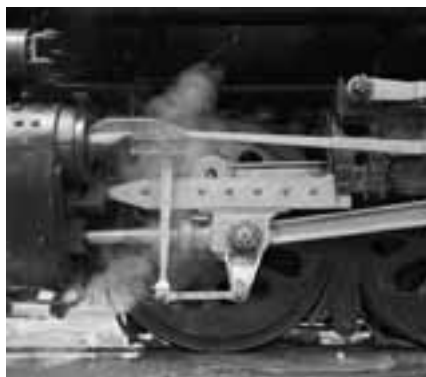
Introducing the
LensWork Special Editions

PHOTOGRAVURES

Limited Editions

Signed and numbered

Framing optional





Descending Angel by John Wimberley

Image size 14½" x 16½"
on 22"x30" deckle-edged etching paper

Signed by the photographer

Limited to 250

Introductory price \$225

Framed to 20"x24" add \$79

No. LPG-001
plus shipping and handling

Each *LensWork Photogravure* is hand-made with craftsmanship and care on a traditional hand-operated etching press. The editions are signed, numbered and limited. Traditional photogravures were small – limited to the size of the camera negatives. Using a variation of the technique we pioneered with our *Silver Series* images, we can make photogravure plates up to 16"x20". At this size, these images are simply breathtaking.

With this issue of *LensWork*, we are introducing three sizes of photogravures – all at introductory prices. The large size is represented by *Descending Angel* by John Wimberley and is a 14½"x16½" image on 22"x30" paper.

John's work is featured in this issue of *LensWork* along with an interview. This image, *Descending Angel*, was the first edition to sell out in our *Silver Series*.



Bixby Creek Bridge, Big Sur, CA 1996 by Larry Wiese

Image size 9" x 16"
on 16"x20" deckle-edged etching paper

Signed by the photographer

Limited to 250

Introductory price \$175

Framed to 20"x24" add \$79

No. LPG-002
plus shipping and handling

Bixby Creek Bridge, Big Sur, CA 1996 by Larry Wiese is a medium size panorama image – 9"x16" on 16"x20" paper. Larry Wiese's imagery exudes light from the surface of the paper. He is best known for his unique gelatin silver printing in deep, rich matte black papers. Now, for the first time, his work is available in a medium that enhances the lush quality of his vision. We first published Larry's work in *LensWork Quarterly* #22. You can also hear him talk about his work in our *LensWork Multimedia* title *Transition*.



Suspended by Maureen Gallagher

Image size 7¾" x 9¾"
on 11"x14" deckle-edged etching paper

Signed by the photographer

Limited to 250

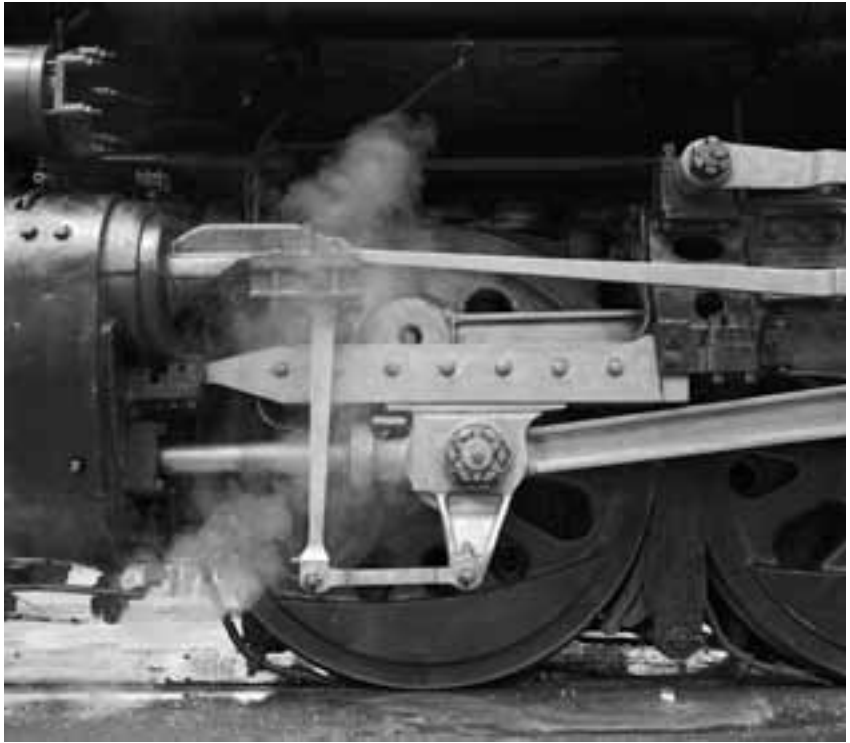
Introductory price \$99

Framed to 16"x20" add \$49

No. LPG-003
plus shipping and handling

Suspended by Maureen Gallagher is an 7¾"x9¾"
image on 11"x14" paper. It is the single most
popular image in our *Silver Series*, soon to sell out.

Now, as a photogravure, the full sensuality of the
image, poised in deep black, is hauntingly beau-
tiful as never before.



Driver, SP&S 700 by Russ Dodd

Image size 7½"x8¾" on 11"x14" deckle-edged etching paper

Signed by the photographer

Limited availability

Sample print \$39

This print includes a coupon for \$25 off
your next purchase of a LensWork Photogravure

Framed to 16"x20" add \$49

No. LPG-SA1

plus shipping and handling, limit one per customer

The art and craftsmanship required with photogravure is practically legendary. This is a medium not for the faint of heart. Because photogravure is so rare, we know many of our readers may not be familiar with it. This sample print is offered as an introduction to collecting and appreciating the magic qualities of this long lost art.



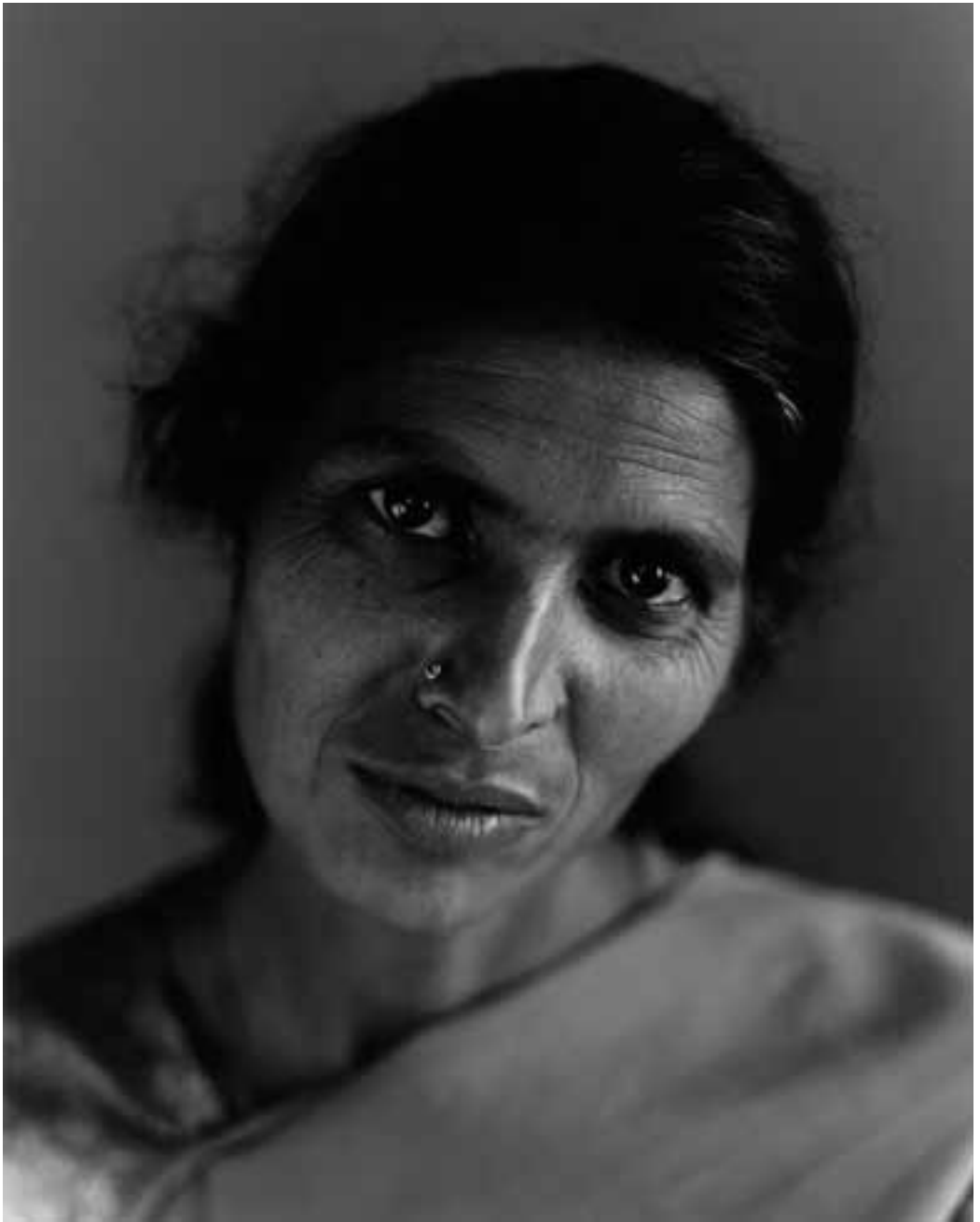
PORTRAITS FROM NEPAL



by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Makepeace', positioned above a horizontal line.

Tony Makepeace



Saraswati, Namsaling, Nepal



WHO IS THE AUDIENCE?

by

Brooks Jensen

I can't resist the temptation to blaspheme, so here goes: The Art World – no, let me be more specific – the Art *Marketing* World has it all wrong. Somehow photography got off on the wrong foot when it came to identifying who the market is for fine art photographs. As a result, all of us who are photographers struggle desperately to sell enough work just to cover our *expenses*. The idea of making a decent living is ridiculous. The idea of getting *rich* is absurd.

I think this is the case because photography is marketed with the wrong paradigm. This may sound simplistic, and perhaps it is, but it's worth thinking about nonetheless. Photography has been created and sold in the *art* paradigm. But what if it had followed the *music* paradigm instead?

I blame Alfred Steiglitz. At least, I think it was Steiglitz. (If it wasn't, please feel free to correct me.) Steiglitz wanted photography to be respected. He wanted it to be important. He wanted it to be *purchased*. Casting about for the best model to follow, he decided that photography was like painting. It was flat, could be framed, hung on the wall and used as decoration and *collectible investment*. That's where photography went wrong. Photography may be all those things, but photography is *not* painting. Photography *is* an art form and could be so



INTERSTICE



by

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Ron Prager". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Ron Prager



From Brooklyn Bridge, 2000



INTERVIEW WITH JOHN WIMBERLEY

Brooks Jensen: Let me start by asking you about the image *Descending Angel*. It's clearly your most well known image, isn't it?

John Wimberley: Yes, it certainly is.

BJ: And it was recently on the cover of a book as I recall ...

JW: Yes. It was on the cover of *Visions of Angels*.

BJ: Well now it's on the cover of *LensWork*, too! Tell us how that image came about.



JW: Well, first, I really love that picture for the simple reason that I made that photograph in a completely different way! Usually my method is based on pre-visualization with very precise technical control. *Descending Angel* is basically a snapshot. That a snapshot is the picture I'm best known by tickles me. It's ironic. I'm normally out there carrying fifty-five pounds of camera gear in the landscape, yet the picture I'm known for is one where I am standing on a diving board, over a pool, pointing a 35mm camera down into the water. There was something about that place and that time that I simply felt I needed to make a picture at that moment. I didn't know what else to do so I pointed the camera and tripped the shutter. I just love the irony of it.



PORTFOLIO



by

John Wimberley

John Wimberley

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





Reese River Valley #142, 1997

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Foreword by Paul Caponigro

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from the foreword by Paul Caponigro

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August 2000

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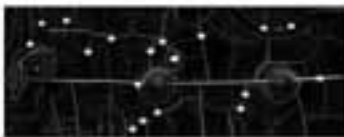
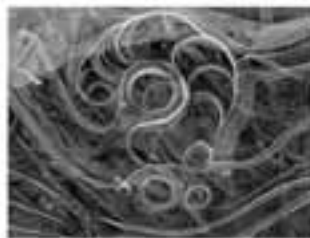
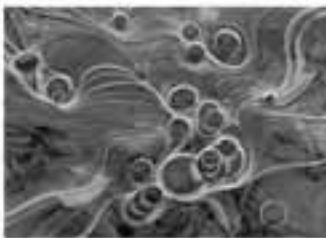
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From the Editor's Comments in LensWork #31

“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, 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!)

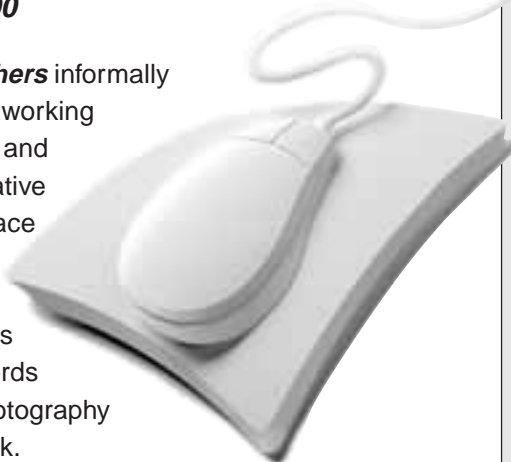
Brooks Jensen



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Being There

Being There profiles
 South American artist David Grant Best



David Grant Best

FIVE HOURS ON THE ROCK



Robert Vizzini

Alan McGee SAND

The Sand Series Profiles



Portrait of the Prairie



William Steinhilber

High Plains Farm



High Plains Farm Profiles

Steven Katzman The Boot Camp Series



The Boot Camp Series

Jean-Jacques Dickel Empty Rooms



Empty Rooms

Human - Nature



Human - Nature

SANTIAGO


Saint of Two Worlds



Juan Myers

Figures

An Alphabet Book by Phil Harris



Figures

Leaving



Leaving by Paul Kerry

enduring spirit



enduring spirit

Lost in America



Lost in America

TRANSITION



TRANSITION

Within These Rooms



Within These Rooms

LensWork Special Editions Images New in This Issue!

PHOTOGRAVURES

JOHN WIMBERLEY

Introductory Prices!

<u>Pg Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Image Size</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Edition Size</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Medium</u>
12 LPG001	<i>Descending Angel</i>	14½" x 16½"	\$275*	250	Signed	Photogravure

LARRY WIESE

<u>Pg Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Image Size</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Edition Size</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Medium</u>
13 LPG002	<i>Bixby Creek Bridge, Big Sur, CA 1996</i>	9" x 16"	\$175*	250	Signed	Photogravure

MAUREEN GALLAGHER

<u>Pg Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Image Size</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Edition Size</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Medium</u>
14 LPG003	<i>Suspended</i>	7¾" x 9¾"	\$99*	250	Signed	Photogravure

SAMPLE IMAGE BY RUSS DODD

<u>Pg Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Image Size</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Edition Size</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Medium</u>
15 LPG00A	<i>Driver, SP&S 700</i>	7½" x 8¾"	\$39*	Limited time	Signed	Photogravure

Sample image includes a \$25 off coupon that can be applied to your next purchase of a photogravure image!

Silver Series

JOHN WIMBERLEY

<u>Pg Number</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Image Size</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Edition Size</u>	<u>Signature</u>	<u>Medium</u>
68 LWS126	<i>Adrian Valley #5, 1995</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
69 LWS127	<i>Reese River Valley #142, 1997</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
70 LWS128	<i>Carmel Valley from Halls Ridge, 1993</i>	14" x 11.2"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
74 LWS129	<i>Campito Mountain #49, 1991</i>	14" x 10.4"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
75 LWS130	<i>Crater Lake, 1977</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
83 LWS131	<i>Windows '96</i>	14" x 9.5"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
72 LWS132	<i>Leamaneh Castle, 1986</i>	14" x 11.2"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
73 LWS133	<i>Leda's Landscape, 1984</i>	14" x 10.4"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph
80 LWS134	<i>Salt Creek #94, 1988</i>	14" x 10.4"	\$99*	250	Signed	Gelatin silver photograph

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