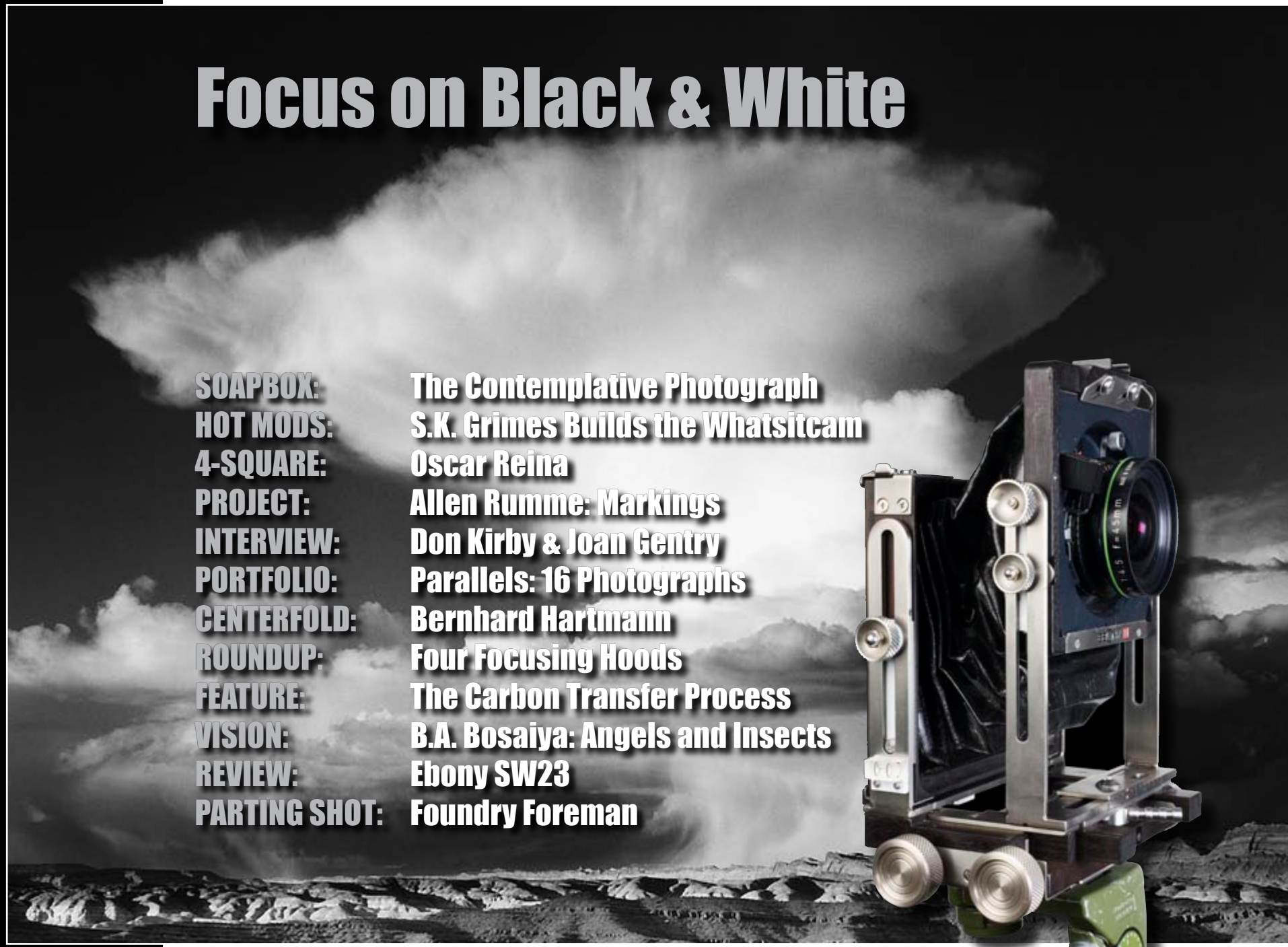
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3, BUILD 2

MAGNAchrōm

The Alternative Journal of Medium and Large Format Photography

Focus on Black & White



Storm Cloud Over Comb Ridge © 2007 Don Kirby

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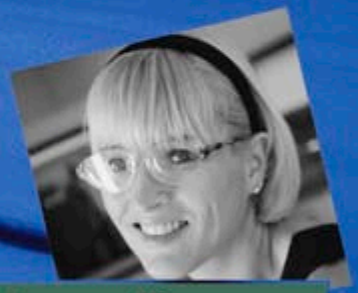

NancyScans

[THE SOAPBOX] The Contemplative Photograph

What separates the merely good photograph from the great? And what does that have to do with shooting with a BIG camera?

I'd argue that the key to great photography is simply this: becoming one with your subject.

Whether it is a lonely vigil walking the empty grasslands and wheatfields of the American West or staying up late to capture the rotating stars or zooming in to the microscopic worlds of the unseen, the dedication involved in lugging and setting up your big equipment pretty much guarantees that you are already half-way there to becoming one with your subject. The universe will reward you for your arduous quest.

I'd also suggest that the ease with which one can pocket a small camera puts you at an immediate disadvantage since there is no "skin in the game" (i.e. there was no effort involved in "getting there") — in the end photographs taken with small cameras are mostly about skill (and a bit of luck).

But the kind of photography I'm talking about embodies a "wholeness" which only comes by way of dedication to the quest and acceptance of all the hardships it entails.

The other half of oneness involves empathy with your subject. Empathy involves curiosity, gained knowledge, and active investigation. In short, true empathy demands an investment in time getting to learn and understand the true nature of your subject.

A quickie snapshot is always distant from its subject — no matter how close the camera is to the subject. There is no investment other than being in the right place at the right time. One could reasonably compare a snapshot to a one night stand — perhaps full of passion but in the end devoid of any deep meaning since there is none.

Great photographs, on the other hand, stand the test of time, much like a deep relationship. In fact, the photograph itself can be considered an expression of the commitment of photographer to subject. In general, the greater the photograph, the greater the investment and commitment (unfortunately for most of us, the opposite is not true at all!)

Last but not least, it is important to realize that simple equipment makes for better photographs than complicated equipment. Having the latest and greatest and newest and badest equipment won't help you one bit in getting pictures that count. In fact, it probably will prevent you from getting there since you'll inevitably be more concerned about scratches and wear and tear on your expensive new toys than investing yourself in your subject. In a very real way, less is more.

So travel light, go where your heart takes you, learn to respect and love your subject, and make art for yourself and don't worry if there is a market for your photos or not. The reward is the quest itself.

J Michael Sullivan

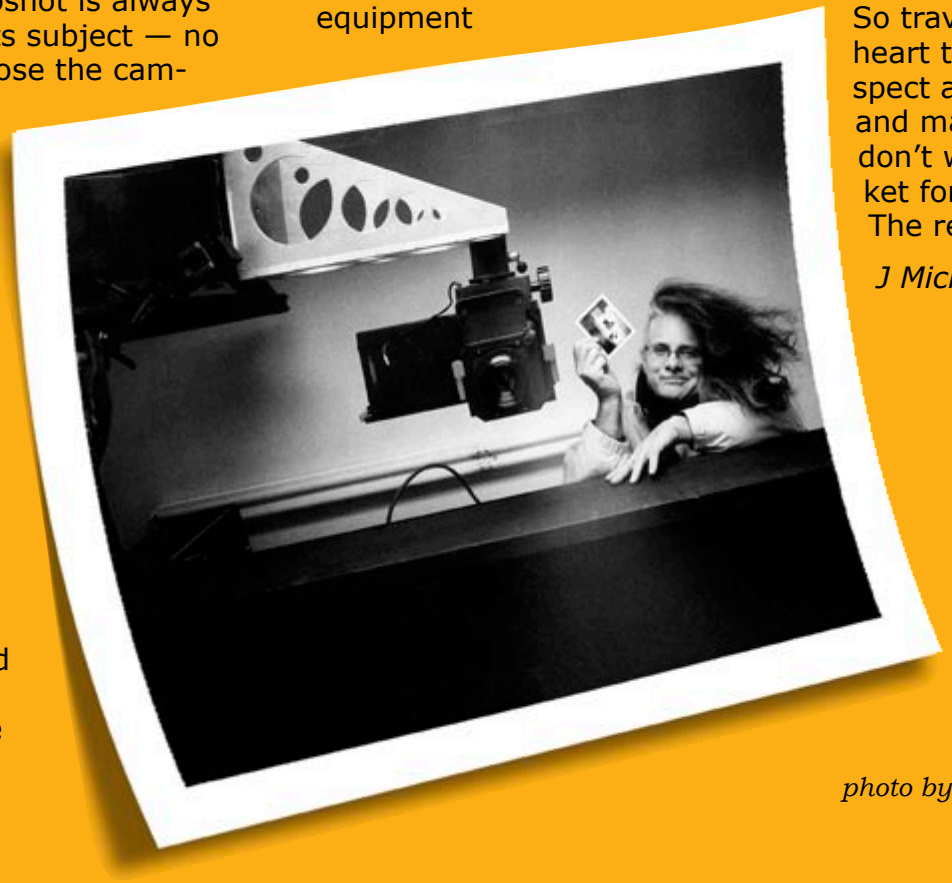

photo by Megan Sullivan

CONTRIBUTORS v 1.3

J Michael Sullivan

Boston-based J Michael Sullivan has been writing about scanning, design, and digital photography for nearly 18 years. His first digital scans were made in 1989 using Photoshop v1.0. He is the author of one of the first layperson's book on flatbed scanning *How to Make Your Scanner a Great Design & Production Tool* which was published by North Light Books in 1994 and reprinted as a second edition two years later in 1996.

Formerly a Contributing Editor at HOW Magazine, he also has extensive experience lecturing at MacWorld and The Seybold Seminars throughout the 1990s.

As editor and publisher of MAGNAchrom he feels nothing rocks more than a BIG camera. Mr. Sullivan has been shooting professionally with medium and large format equipment since the late 1970s and owns a bunch of big cameras.

Lance Keimig

Lance Keimig is a Pembroke, Masssachusetts based photographer who is best known for his night time photographs of the built environment. Keimig has been photographing primarily at night since 1984, when he first picked up a 35mm camera.

Lance Keimig has been teaching photography since 1997, at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and the New England School of Photography in Boston, as well as leading workshops in California, Massachusetts, Ireland and Scotland. In 2003 Keimig founded the Mono Lake Photo Workshops in California, to promote interest in the fragile ecosystem of the Eastern Sierra through photography. After successful programs in 2003 and 2004, Keimig and Nocturnes founder Tim Baskerville co-produced the 2006 Night Photography Conference at Mono Lake.

Eric Biggerstaff

Eric Biggerstaff has been engaging his interest in photography since he was eleven years old. He first used his camera to record the many backpacking and rockclimbing trips he made as a young man and later, after college, began working with medium format and large format cameras to explore the world in a more artistic way. Since 1995, Eric has used a 4x5 camera almost exclusively and is a dedicated traditional darkroom worker and a frequent contributor to View Camera magazine.

Sandy King

Sandy King is a photographer and photo historian. He has published several scholarly books on Spanish Pictorialism, including *El impresionismo fotográfico en España: Una historia de la estética y la técnia de la fotografía pictorilaista* and *Schmidt de las Heras: Fotografías 1944-1960*.

Sandy is also a landscape photographer who works primarily with large format and ultra large format cameras and prints with alternative processes, including carbon, kallitype and Platinum/Palladium.

He is the author of a book on carbon printing, *The Book of Carbon and Carbro*, and has conducted numerous workshops in the US and abroad on carbon printing.

B.A. Bosaiya

B.A. Bosaiya is a self-taught, award-winning, internationally recognized fine art photographer who specializes in large format photographs of unusual subjects. "I enjoy finding the beauty in the overlooked and discarded, exploring the extraordinary world that is all around us every day. The world is still mysterious and full of surprises; I hope to help people rekindle that sense of wonder." Bosaiya's first book of photography *Here There Be Dragons*, available from Amazon.com and others, includes a foreword by photographic luminary and master printer Dr. Tim Rudman.

Don Kirby & Joan Gentry

In retrospect, striking parallels emerge in the photographic lives of Joan Gentry and Don Kirby. Growing up in New Mexico, Joan completed BA and MA degrees in photography at the University of New Mexico in the mid-1970's. For the next 20 years she photographed in New Mexico and northern California.

In the mid-1970's Don built his first darkroom and self-studied photography with workshop support. For the next twenty years he photographed throughout the west.

Don and Joan met in 1992, joined lives and photographic ventures, and lately moved to Santa Fe where they continue to pursue their photographic interests.

Oscar Reina

Mr. Reina's relationship with photography dates from his school years. After a long hiatus during college, he picked up photography with deeper interest in 2004, working in the street and documentary field using 35mm rangefinders. In part due to his interest in classic cameras, his first step into medium format came in the shape of a USSR made Lubitel, He currently splits his time between his job as a computing engineer and his photographic projects, which have turned towards scenics and nature, with a special interest in portraying the vanishing traces of past human activity in rural areas.

1.3

hatever we come upon that is great, beautiful, significant, cannot be recollected. It must from the first be evolved from within us, be made and become part of us, developed into a new and better self, and so, continuously created in us, live and operate as part of us. — *Goethe*

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At the end of the first year, the entire Volume 1 (all six issues) will be printed in a limited edition, high-resolution, bound volume and available for sale.

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Full Page (A4 horizontal)
210mm height by 297mm wide
49p7.28 height by 70p1.89 wide
8.267" height by 11.693" wide
2480 pixels height by 3508 pixels wide

3/4 Page
210mm height by 217.986mm wide
49p7.28 height by 52p2.917 wide
8.267" height by 8.592" wide
2406 pixels height by 2575 pixels wide

1/2 Page
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While you can certainly just hit the "print" button, the result will not be a magazine, but rather a bunch of individual pages. We suggest the following simple procedure to improve the overall visual experience of each issue.

1. First, be sure to use an opaque paper as you will be printing back to back. There is nothing worse than seeing the type from the following page show through a nice photo.
2. Now you are ready to print. In your print dialog box, select *Reverse Order* and *Sequence: Odd Pages Only*. Then print. Only the odd pages (starting with page 1, the front cover, will print)
3. When your odd pages have finished printing, take your entire output, flip it over, and re-insert it into your printer with the back of the cover on the top of the paper stack.
4. In your print dialog, select *Reverse Order* and *Sequence: Even Pages Only*. Then select print. This will print the even pages onto the back of the previously printed odd pages, starting with the inside front cover.
5. When you are done bind the output using whatever method you have available (we suggest wire-o binding along the left-hand edge)
6. ENJOY!

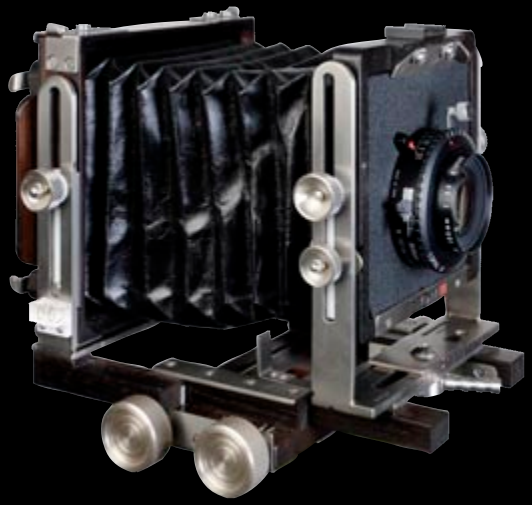
MAGNAchrōm

Storm Cloud Over Comb Ridge © 2007 Don Kirby

MAGNAchrōm

Volume 1, Issue 3

Contents of this issue:



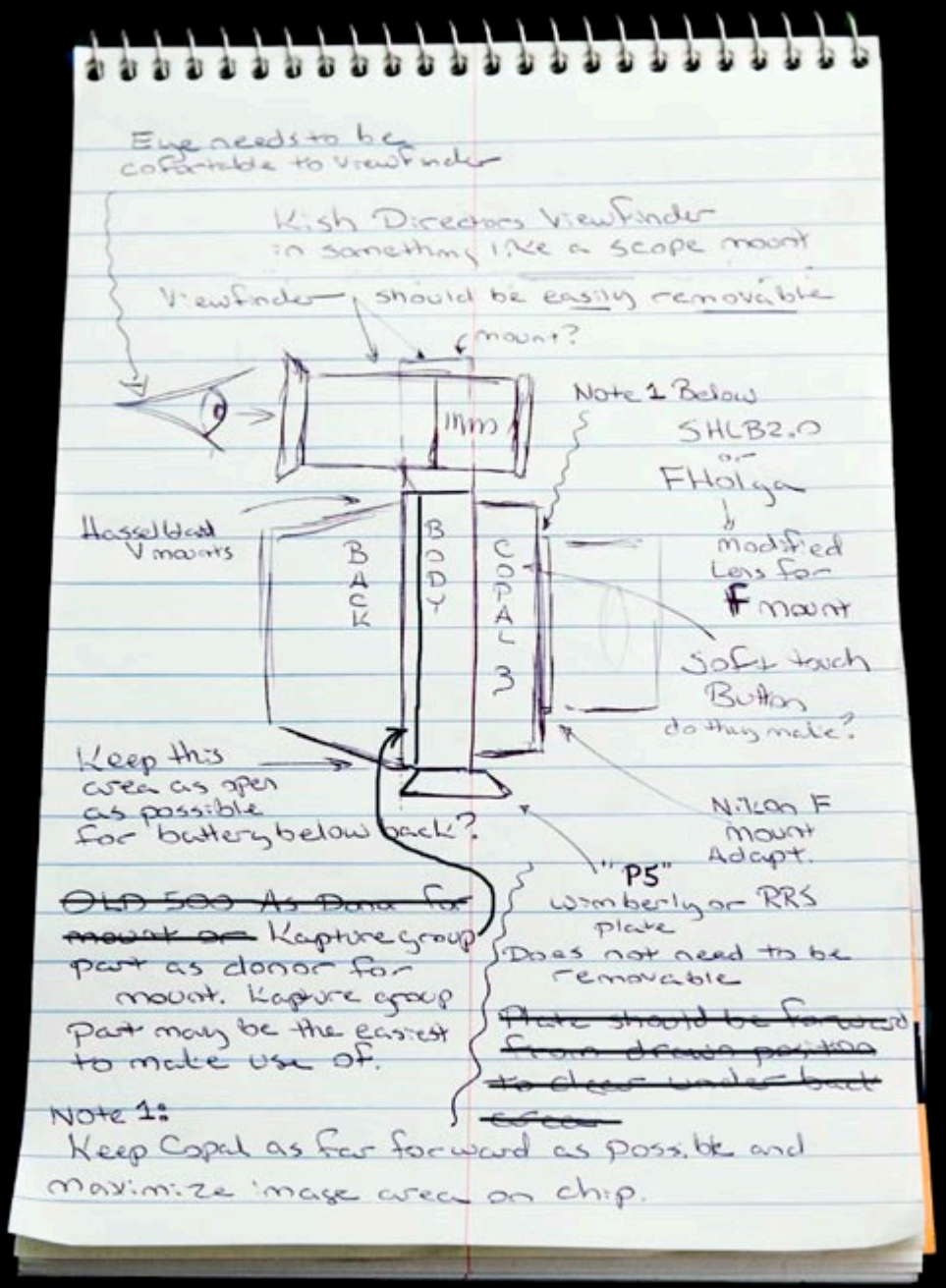
[HOT MODS] The Whatsitcam?

Alex R. Jones is a commercial photographer and digital tech in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Alex has been working in the field for twenty-one years. His work primarily depends on keeping things such as focus and depth of field, firmly in hand. However, he is always open to new approaches to traditional situations. One of the greatest things about what Alex does for a living is the singularity of each day. There is always room for creative solutions to problems, because if a commercial photographer or digital tech didn't work on their feet everyday, they would be roadkill.

Alex has always liked the look of Holga images, but confesses their commercial viability is fairly limited. He wanted to produce images with the Holga look, but with a medium format back, but didn't find anything out there to fulfill his goals. Alex was intrigued when he read an entry on Flexframe, an Imacon/Hasselblad users Yahoo Group, from Ted Dillard of E.P. Levine. Ted wrote about an idea to rubber band and gaffe tape an Imacon digital back to a cut apart and milled out Holga "toy camera".

The idea tumbled around in Alex's mind until it had to be tried. He created a crude but working device that was enough to make machinists like Adam Dau and his brother Joel shudder. Alex had worked with the team at S.K. Grimes before. He had found their responsiveness to innovation and their

The Whatsitcam (cont.)



Alex's original notes to S.K Grimes

"can-do" attitude refreshing. The words epoxy and Velcro made the Dau's cringe, but Alex's prototype worked. Alex submitted a concept sketch to Adam who was receptive to the project.

The Hasselblad 903SWC and TrueWide were the inspiration for the shutter configuration and body style, while the Holga "toy camera" lens was the motivation for the project. Adam, Joel and their assistant Lauren Paul created what Alex dubbed the Whatsitcam to Alex's specifications and great pleasure.

Alex uses a Hasselblad/Imacon 132C digital back with the Whatsitcam. At present, he uses the modified Holga lens, but he is interested in experimenting with some other things. The present configuration does not use full lens coverage so some minimal post-production is necessary to finish off the Holga look. Alex's motivation has never been the pursuit of a purist ideal of how things were "meant-to-be". Rather, Alex wants to create beautiful images in the context of where he lives. The Whatsitcam is lightweight and beautifully simple to shoot. It has the wonky viewfinder idiosyncrasies and aberrations he loved to see on Holga images, with the beauty of a digital result to be viewed on set or site so you know if the desired product has been obtained for a paying client. Blurry pictures with aberrations aren't that appealing if you don't get the shot a client is after.

Other Cameras that Alex Owns:

MEDIUM FORMAT DIGITAL

- Hasselblad 555 ELD with Hasselblad/Imacon 132c
- 22MP capture (50MB 16bit RAW FFF, 64MB 8 bit RGB,)
- 30mm FishEye (older style)
- 40mm f4 CFE
- 50mm f4 CF
- 80mm f2.8 CF
- 120mm f4 Macro CF
- 150mm f4 CF
- 250mm f5.6 CF
- 10 & 21mm Extension Rings
- 2000 FCM (Focal Plane Shutter Body) max sync with digital back is 1/90th sec.
- 501CM
- Four A12 Film Backs and Polaroid Back

OTHER CAMERAS FOR MEDIUM FORMAT DIGITAL USE

- Arca Swiss 6x9 Classic View Camera with Kapture Group sliding/stitching back
- Hasselblad 903SWC 38mm Biogon
- Horseman Digiflex II
- Kapture Group TrueWide
- 16mm Fisheye Nikkor
- 14mm Nikkor
- 24mm Olympus shift (Nikon F mod.)
- 35mm Nikkor shift
- 35mm Ukrainian tilt/shift f2.8 "Boris 35"

The Whatsitcam (cont.)

Alex feels lucky to have found someone as responsive and enthusiastic in helping him pursue some of his creative endeavors as S.K. Grimes. Solving problems, albeit self-invented ones, is part of what makes it all worthwhile for him. He believes you must continue to do some things, just to do them. Commercial viability is great and is always a welcome benefit, but if it turns out to be his only photographic goal, Alex thinks it's probably a good indication that it's time to roll up the shades and strike the set.

Janice R. Jones

examples of some portraits taken with the Whatsitcam.

Lower right:
The S.K. Grimes gang.

4-Square*: Oscar Reina

Four, square, medium-format photographs by Oscar Reina of Spain, one of our registered users.
You can see more of Oscar's work at www.singlecoated.com

** 4-Square is a new, regular feature of MAGNAchrom and is only available to registered medium-format users. See page 15 for details*

Gavà beach, Barcelona

Camera: Lubitel 166U
Lens: Industar 75/4.5
Film: Fuji Superia 100: 1/250 @ f16-22

Portfolio: Off Season

The beach gets into a very different rythm once the last tourist leaves and the beach season comes to its end.

This project tries to capture some of the quiet happenings from that moment and up to when the first summer visitors return once again to the beach.

In particular, I sought to document how much life there is around the world of surf fishermen.

In keeping with the unusual point of view, I shot all these photographs using relatively old, square-format, TLR (Twin Lens Reflex) cameras.

Specifically: a Yashica D, a Lubitel 166U, and a Minolta Autocord.

Oscar Reina
Sant Boi, Spain
www.singlecoated.com

4-Square: Oscar Reina

Algo cambia en la esencia de una playa cuando la temporada llega a su fin y el último bañista del verano se marcha.

Este proyecto intenta reflejar parte de la quietud y los pequeños detalles que, casi de manera inadvertida, toman posesión de nuestras playas desde ese final del verano y hasta que los próximos turistas acuden de nuevo, llamados por el calor de la nueva temporada.

En especial, y dado que fue lo que en primer lugar llamó mi atención, el proyecto gira en torno a la imagen, tan contrapuesta a la que nos ofrecen los turistas, de los pescadores de playa.

A la par con el inusual punto de vista, estas fotografías han sido realizadas con cámaras binoculares de formato 6x6 relativamente antiguas, concretamente una Yashica D, una Lubitel 166U y una Minolta Autocord.

Oscar Reina
Sant Boi, España
www.singlecoated.com

Gavà beach, Barcelona

Camera: Yashica D
Lens: Yashinon 75/3.5
Film: Fuji Acros 100: 1/250 @ f16-22

4-Square: Oscar Reina

Gavà beach, Barcelona

Camera: Yashica D
Lens: Yashinon 75/3.5
Film: Fuji Acros 100: 1/250 @ f16-22

Oscar's three TLR cameras.

Submit your work to 4-Square!

4-square is a new, regular article in MAGNAchrom that will feature four medium format, square photographs of one of our registered users. The images must be shot with a medium-format camera and rollfilm and must be square. Large format film cropped square will be disqualified.

To be considered, send email to foursquare@magnachrom.com with the following information:

About you:

Your Name _____
Your MC email _____
Your Website _____

For each of four square images:

Title _____
Camera _____
Rollfilm _____
Exposure _____
Lens _____
Year taken _____
Location _____
Link to photo _____

If chosen, you will need to supply four photographs sized to 2030 x 2030 pixels in RGB JPG (high quality) format. Images should not have any borders. FTP information will be supplied to those that win. If you are not chosen, please submit again for the next issue — there is no limit to the number of times you can submit. Winners however must wait one year before submitting again.

4-Square: Oscar Reina

Gavà beach, Barcelona

Camera: Minolta Autocord L
Lens: Rokkor 75/3.5
Film: Fuji Acros 100: 1/250 @ f16-22

Allen Rumme: Markings

All over the world, examples of ancient man's desire to communicate the events of their time by creating markings can be found. From Europe to Africa to Australia, Asia, South America and North America rock paintings and carvings have been found depicting early man trying to survive in a world not always open to his presence. In the United States, the best known examples of this communication form can be found in the desert southwest where the ancient Anasazi people recorded the events of their communities on the cliffs and boulders that surrounded their desert homes. More recently, the American settlers carved their names and the names of loved ones in the rocks and buttes that dotted the landscape as they made their way to new homes and new lives in the west.

By Eric Biggerstaff

Like ancient man, modern man continues the tradition of marking the landscape with pictures and words in an attempt to communicate the events they feel are important in their lives. Today of course, we consider much of this to be graffiti and seek to clean it from our environment, but in many ways the present day markings are a direct link back to the ancient times, and the ancient tradition of rock art. What is different about today's work is the message contained in the markings. Where ancient people used them to highlight events in the community, today the messages are more personal; they are about fear, anger, love, hate and searching for a greater meaning in the world.

Fine art photographer Allen Rumme has found inspiration in the signs and symbols of modern man and for over twenty years has turned the lens of his large format camera towards those things that mark the walls and ruins of our society. "I have long considered myself a landscape photographer and I've always been drawn to wide open spaces", notes Allen, "however, as the signs of human interaction with land have increased, so too has my interest in these signs and symbols that I refer to as "Markings". I now incorporate evidence of human impact as an element in my images, or just as often, as the primary subject".

Allen first became interested in markings while out looking for landscape images. One day he set up his camera on what he thought would be an interesting landscape and began waiting for the light to change (something most landscape photographers can relate to). While waiting, Allen glanced over to a nearby structure and saw a drawing of a disembodied head on a wall; "There was something haunting about it and needless to say I made no landscape images at that site. After that, I started paying attention to the signs that folks left on the environment. I was immediately taken with the huge amount of raw emotion contained in many of them, and the fact that I reacted so strongly to much of it".

Choosing which marking he will photograph is a decision based on the emotion he feels when looking at them. His attention is drawn towards the most emotional and raw markings as he feels it is important to confront this work and attempt to understand why, with all the modern forms of communication at our disposal, the maker felt the need to leave the message they did, why they needed to pour their emotions out in public the way they have. By photographing these markings Allen is able to confront his own reactions to them and discover more about himself, they act as a springboard to personal discovery. Allen states, "These are not easily approached images as they present some of the more difficult and disturbing aspects of the human condition; they are about life, death, love, hate, anger, frustration and terror. The markings are about aspects of the human condition most people would rather not confront and can make people uncomfortable as many contain elements that are threatening or offensive, but I feel this is important to understand and communicate."

At first glance, the photographs seem to be simple recordings of words or pictures painted on walls of abandoned or run down structures. But if the viewer takes a few moments to see more clearly, the markings are often layered one on top of the other, one message partially hidden by another. It is this layering effect that gives many of the photographs their visual and emotional power. In addition, Allen has been careful to choose compositional elements that serve to strengthen the message contained in a particular marking and amplify the impact. Lastly, by adjusting the tonality of his black and white imagery, Allen can help direct the viewer's attention to those elements in the marking he feels should be engaged.

Allen Rumme is having an ongoing conversation with the markings he finds in the world around him and it is a project with no clear conclusion.

Capturing these images can be a challenge as much of the material is located in dark, cramped areas and long exposures are common. When Allen locates a marking he finds interesting, he sets up his Canham 4X5 Wood Field camera, usually with a Schneider 210 mm / f5.6 Symmar S, composes and meters the scene with a Zone VI modified digital spot meter. Often the subject brightness range is only 1 ½ to 2 stops so Allen knows that, in Zone System language, he will need to expand the tonal range by providing "plus" development, often to N+2, N+3 and beyond; "My tools of choice for this environment are Kodak Tmax 100 film and Kodak D-76 developer. I prefer Tmax 100 as it permits achieving significant tonal expansions with very minimal increases in Film Base + Fog and reciprocity failure is much less of a problem than with other films. I develop the film using straight D-76 in a Jobo processor and Jobo Expert Drums. Achieving large expansions often requires that the film be processed for 40 to 60 minutes and the Jobo equipment allows me to consistently produce the results that I desire."

Allen Rumme is having an ongoing conversation with the markings he finds in the world around him and it is a project with no clear conclusion. By choosing to approach the often difficult subjects of these markings, Allen is discovering more about the people who make up our communities, the emotions they feel about the world around them and about himself; "All I hope is the viewer will engage each image and give themselves an opportunity to respond to what is presented. I don't intend to tell them what they should see; instead I hope each viewer will walk away with their own thoughts and impressions. I think that is all any visual artist can ask". For thousands of years man has left his mark on the land in an attempt to communicate the events of their time, to create a visual record of the world for others. Like ancient man, modern man continues this tradition and as long as markings are left, Allen Rumme will use his camera to explore their deeper meaning.

To view more of Allen's work, please visit www.allenrumme.com.

Marking #1

1988
Corpus Christ, Texas
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #90

1998
Bryson, Texas
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #75

1994
Grafton, Massachusetts
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #59

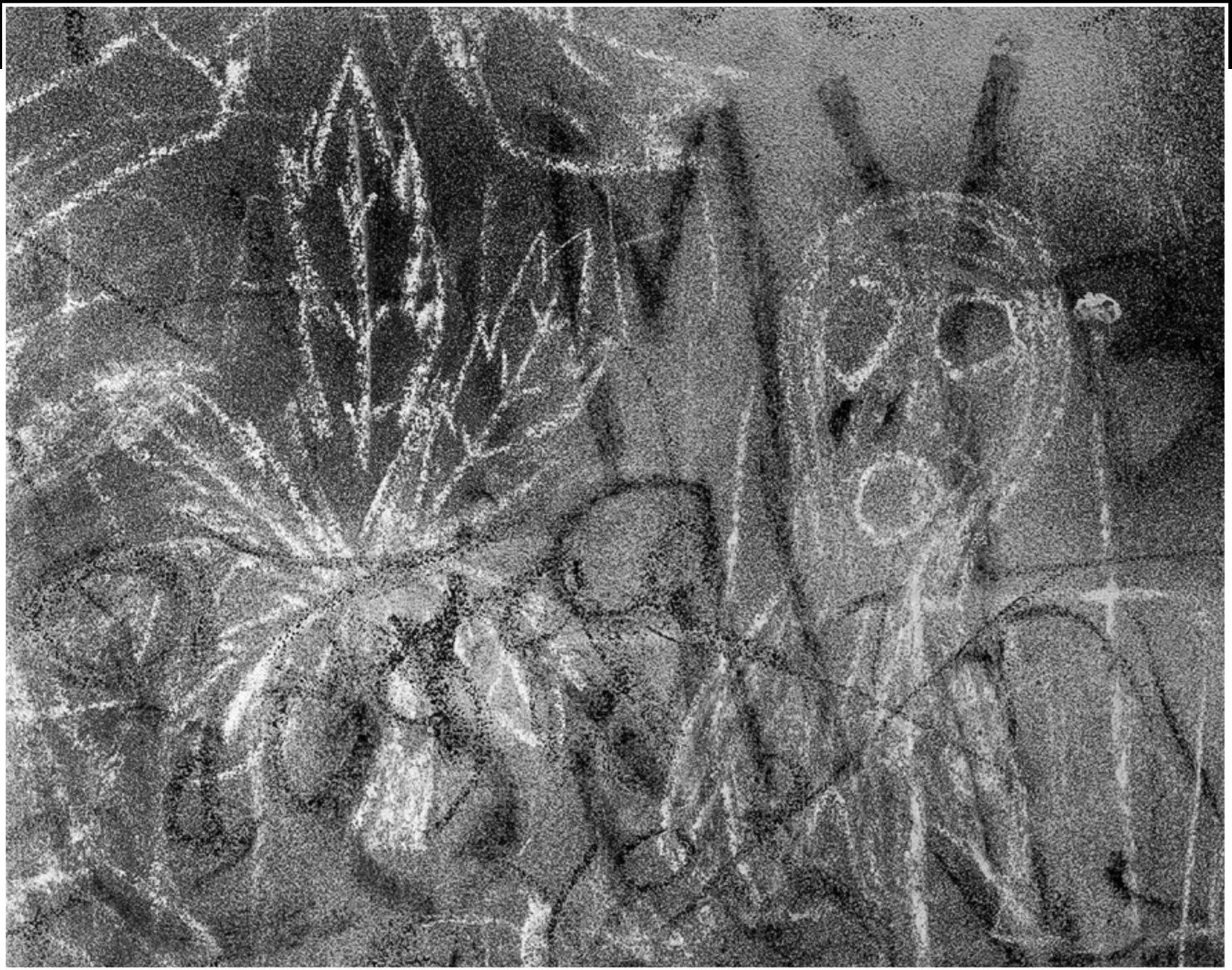
1993
Lincoln County,
New Mexico
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #134

1992
Lincoln County,
New Mexico
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

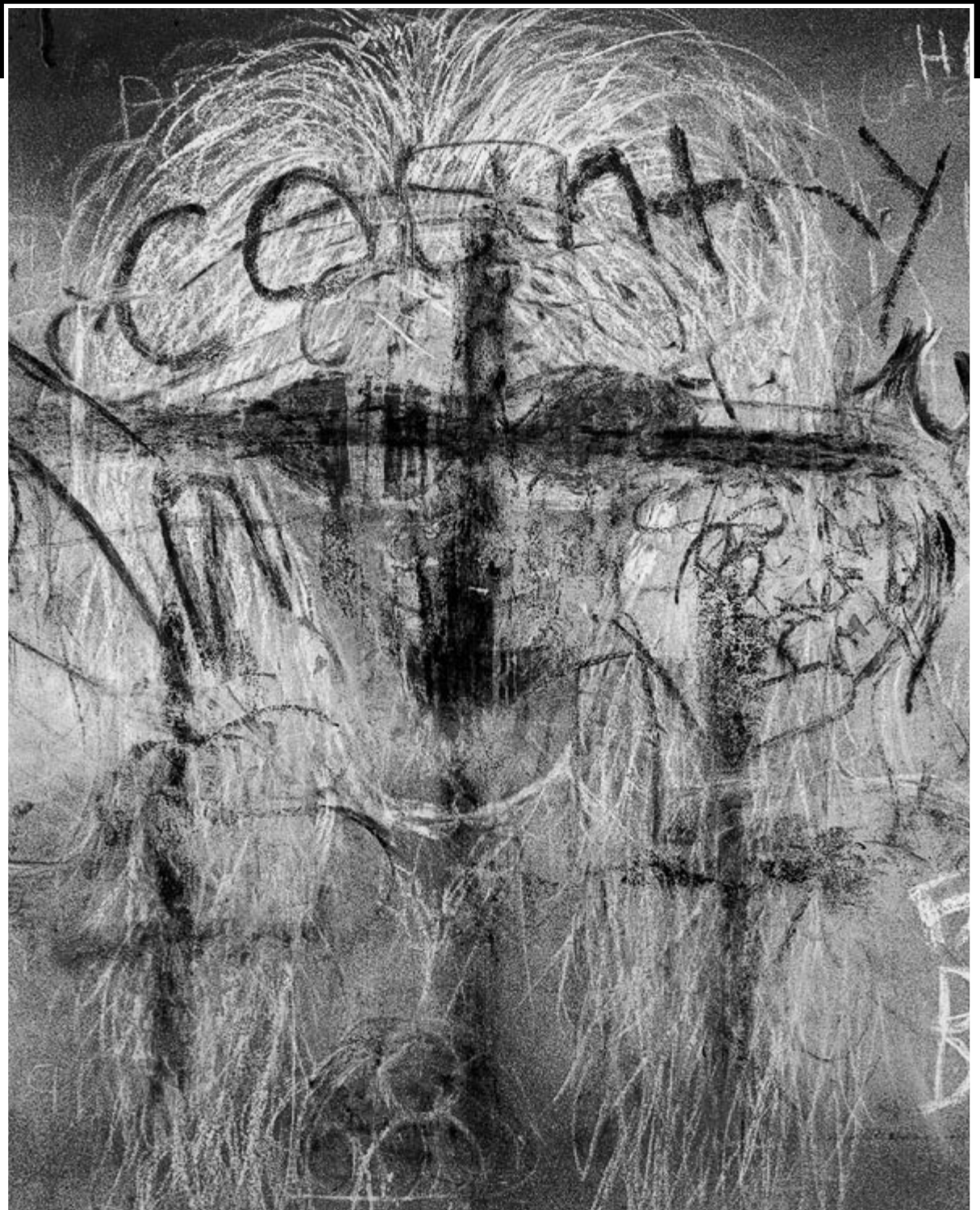
Marking #99

1991
Polk County, Iowa
6x4.5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's



Marking #135

1992
Lincoln County,
New Mexico
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's



Marking #27

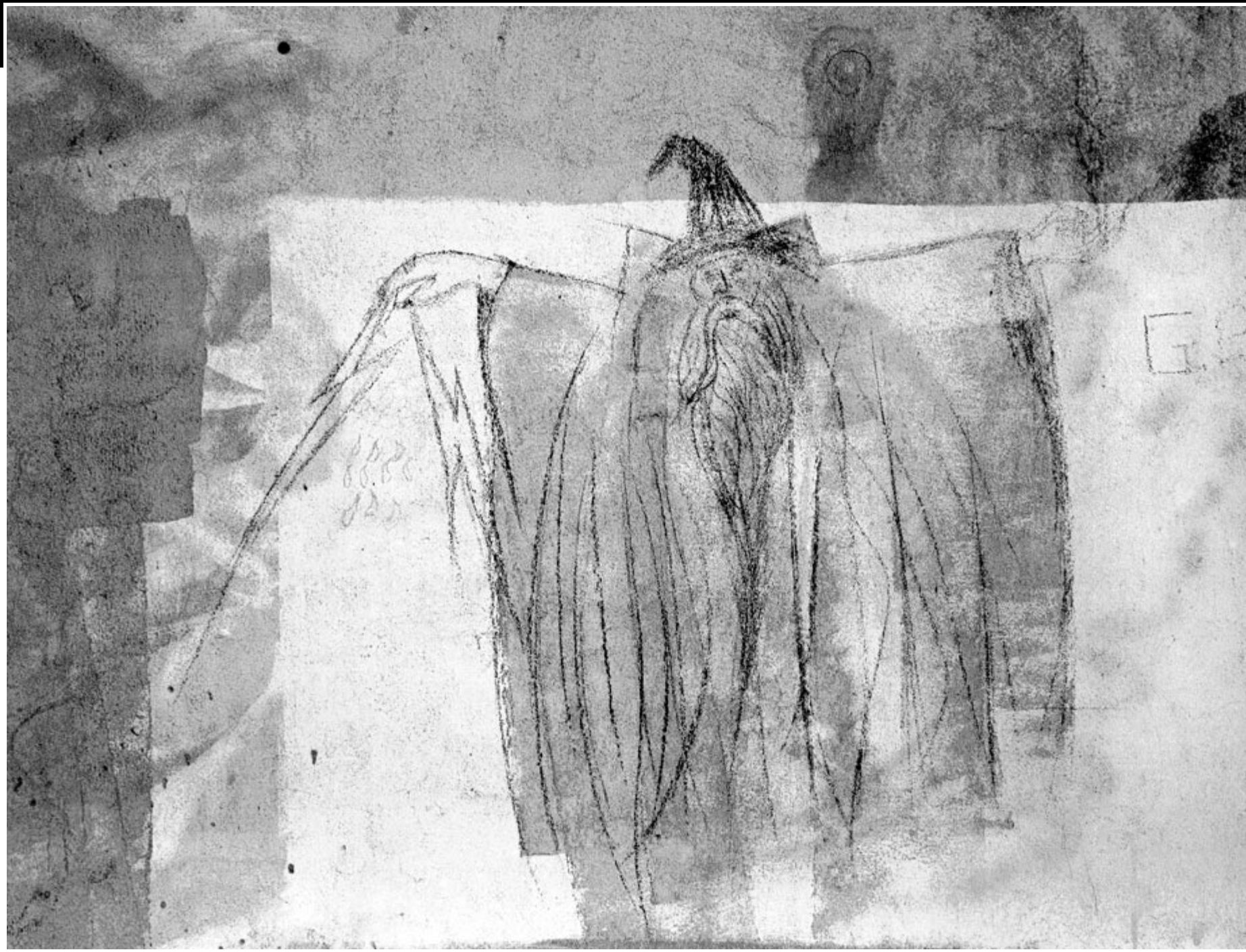
1992
Lincoln County, New Mexico
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #81

1995
Nueces County, Texas
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #28

1992
Tularosa, New Mexico
4x5
TMax 100 + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's



Marking #100

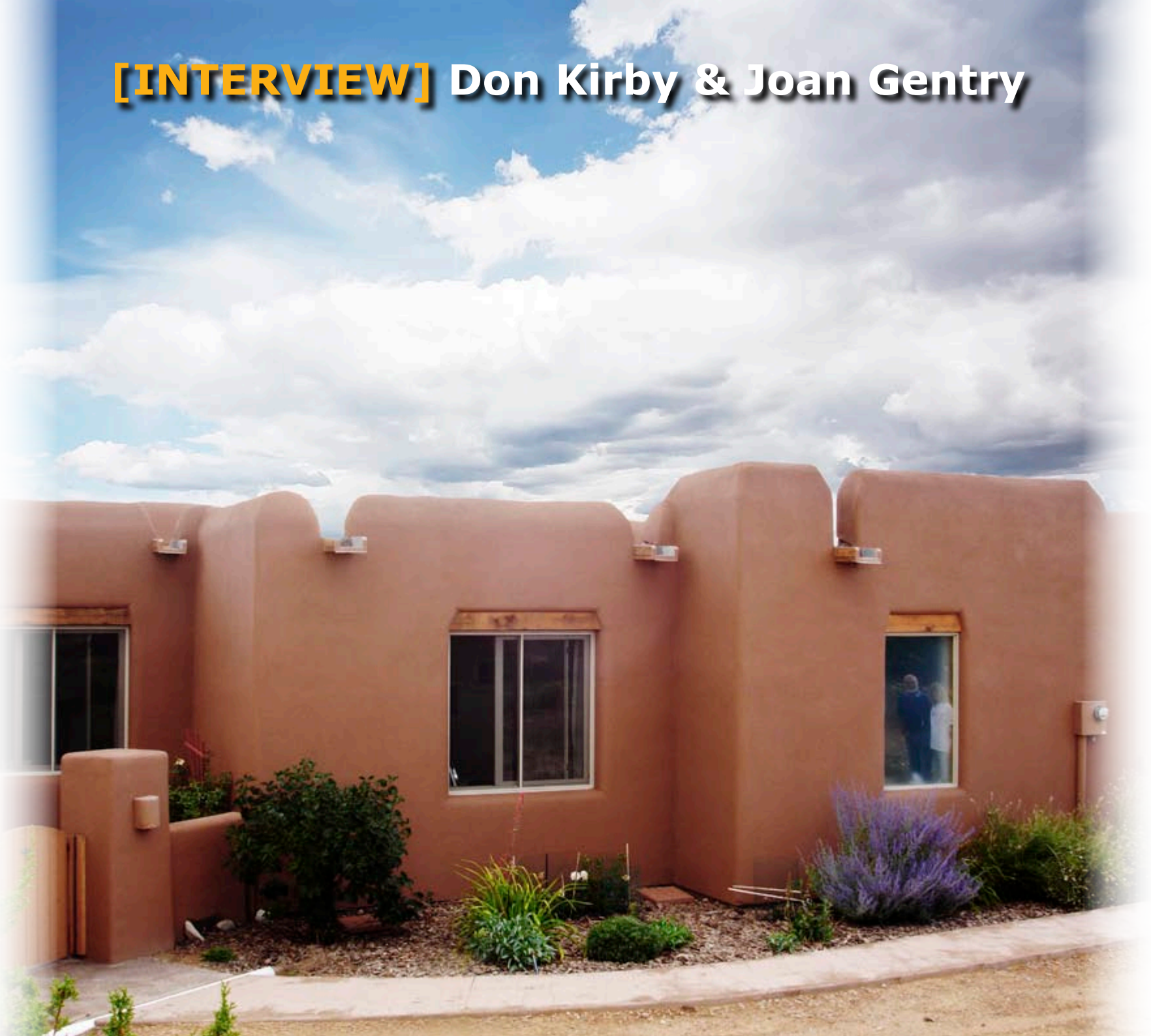
2002
Gonzales County, Texas
6x7
Pan F + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

Marking #90

2001
Central Texas
6x7
Pan F + D-76
Oriental + Dr. Pratt's

MC

[INTERVIEW] Don Kirby & Joan Gentry



MAGNAchrom: We are here in beautiful, northern New Mexico. My first question for the two of you is a simple one: How did you first meet?

Joan Gentry: Well I guess I should start. The two of us almost didn't meet. I was working in Silicon Valley. There happened to be a photo opening at a gallery so a girlfriend and I decided to go but we didn't much care for what we saw. I was in the back of the gallery and I saw a Bruce Barnbaum workshop brochure. It was an old one and I asked if I could have it, and the gallery owner said sure no problem. The handout mentioned a workshop in Utah and I thought this could be really cool. While I wouldn't go camping by myself, I would be willing to go on a workshop. So I signed up. Took some vacation time off, drove up there, promptly got lost and saw some men standing on the porch of a motel having a beer. And I thought well, that may be it. So I walked over and said something stupid like "is photography spoken here?". And all of a sudden these hands came down to shake mine and then there's this blue shirt and an arm, I follow the arm up, I saw this beautiful white beard, big smile, his blue eyes, I thought wow. Later I found out he was the instructor so I thought forget it, I'm not a groupie!

MAGNAchrom: Don, what was your take on your first meeting?

Don Kirby: Well I thought things were definitely looking up for that workshop because we had twelve students, eleven guys and one gal — and I'd never met the gal. She shows up in a four wheel drive, red and white Bronco. She steps out, she looked she was about seven feet tall, skinny, long blonde hair and I thought mmmm, this is most promising.

MC: Just goes to show that photography really can be beneficial to your well-being.

DK: Absolutely.

MC: What did you do on that first outing? What kind of photography were you doing, since it sounds like it might have been one of your first experiences being out in the wilderness?

JG: Through the years I had camped out plenty in New Mexico, but never in Utah. We did the canyons around the Escalante area. Hiked down, checked out the colors and incredible shapes. It's a very beautiful place.

MC: But I'm specifically interested in what kind of photography were you doing there?

JG: I was trying to make a landscape. Up 'till then I was doing a whole lot of neat stuff with cityscapes — "hard edges" as I call them. I didn't know much about landscape work.

MC: So the instructor was pretty good, huh?

JG: Well he didn't like my light meter, but other than that he helped me a lot. He helped me to see, you know, get the exposures right.

MC: That's an odd statement: "didn't like your light meter". Was it an incident or a spot meter?

DK: No, she had one of those light meters that's a computer with limited optics. And there was no way to make a correct exposure. Very simple light meters are much preferred — which she finally has. But she still uses the old one because it's paid for.

MC: So Don, in spite of all these beautiful colors in the world you prefer to shoot in black and white. Aren't you ever tempted to shoot color?

DK: I do shoot some color, but I don't think I see to compose in color very well. I'm not very enthusiastic about the color work that I've done in the past frankly. My first photography was color slides, documenting where I was and my friends, but when I started doing more expressive work, it's been black and white primarily for me ever since. And that's thirty two years ago now.

MC: Joan, what about yourself? When did you first do any black and white — get your hands wet?

JG: Well, I started college as a thirty five year old freshman at

the University of New Mexico, with the idea of learning all I could possibly learn about photography.

MC: Day one they put you in the darkroom I'm sure.

JG: Well, before then we had a little minuscule home darkroom that didn't allow much printing, other than small prints. But at least I was somewhat familiar with the chemicals and what happens.

MC: Did the University of New Mexico program encourage you to experiment and get "outside of the box"? Is that where some of your abstract works comes from or is that just from within you?

JG: It's pretty much within me. But outside of the box I did some cyanotype and gum bichromate prints and actually did street shooting.

MC: Urbanscapes?

JG: Well, you know, the University is on Central Ave. and I would take my morning bus ride all the way downtown, and catch people as the old night owls are going in and the new ones are coming out, and people waiting on buses and various things. I really had a ball, in spite of the fact that I'm rather shy. But when I put up that camera, everybody's asking me "take my picture".

And all of a sudden these hands came down to shake mine and then there's this blue shirt and an arm, I follow the arm up, I saw this beautiful white beard, big smile, his blue eyes, I thought wow! - JG

MC: Oh. So these were more portraits rather than "decisive moment" kind of photographs?

JG: Possibly, and then one summer I took a 35-mm and I did hip shooting only with a wide angle lens. I never looked at the viewfinder. And that revealed some very disturbing subjects.

MC: Well you're looking up, there's distortion, they're not aware you're taking pictures.

JG: That's right.

MC: It's interesting that you've gone after a kind of hidden world with both your abstract work as well as this shoot from the hip project. Don, you keep going out to these fields, going out to these canyons, basically have to hike to see something that most normal people wouldn't ever see. Is that a thematic thing with you, you're trying to find and uncover something that hasn't been seen before?

DK: Well it's not an intellectual thing or necessarily an artist thing either. It's simply that the camera went with me doing things that I like doing. And I liked mountaineering, climbing, backpacking, outdoors stuff which kind of kept me sane while I was living and working in the city. So the camera went along and then ideas flowed from what I saw there.

MC: Were you recording your adventures then?

DK: Well no. That's what I did back when I was shooting slides. Ever since I moved to black and white, my photography has been about seeking a composition of something that has an idea behind it, expressive form behind it, something to say. I don't think a photograph necessarily "speaks", because it doesn't have a language. But I do think it has something it expresses.

MC: There must have been a transformation with you because like many people you started off with slides and you documented your adventures and ostensibly it sounds like the reason to leave the city was for your soul, for your brain, to clear your mind. Thus the camera came along as a companion.

DK: That continued. As for subject matter however, with the very first exposure I made on 35 mm black and white in the camera, the subject matter quickly changed.

MC: And at that moment you were no longer going out to get away from the city, but rather you were going out explore

who you were as an artist?

DK: Both.

MC: Joan, is photography something that cleanses your soul or is it something that just because you studied it professionally is a natural fit? Meaning there's not necessarily any intellectual reason for doing it?

JG: Well, I've kind of been selective, but I see something and I know I want a photograph of it. I don't ask why, I just know I must photograph it.

MC: And that was true when you lived in Southern California?

JG: Oh yeah.

MC: What was the beginning of your photographic journey?

JG: I was working at Sandia Labs in the sixties and then I saw all these people with college degrees making all this money and I was doing their work and I thought there's gotta be something better. So I started saving up money and saved enough for four years of college. I began with the idea that I'm going to learn all I can about photography.

MC: Now that's a very curious thing. You were working with PhD's and what not, and then the next thing you go for photography. What drew you to that?

JG: I've always loved photography. My mother was a painter but also did photos of the family in black and white. I've always enjoyed it and I enjoyed taking slides. And with a Brownie Hawkeye during junior high years, terrorizing all my friends, running around taking their pictures.

MC: You mentioned your mother — does art run in your family?

JG: I think she was gifted, but she never had the opportunity to get her work out or even devote the time she should have mostly because of family circumstances, illnesses, 2nd World Wars, you name it.

MC: What about brothers and sisters?

JG: I have a younger sister who is an incredible craftsman. She can make anything with her hands. However, visually she doesn't make art like that.

MC: Now Don, your family, same thing or…

DK: No, I'm the black sheep there. There's no history of any form of art once or ever.

MC: So you made your own way then?

DK: Yes, I was self taught and then I realized that I was progressing kind of slowly after about five years. I made about one year of progress in five years and then I started taking workshops with other good photographers and my progress accelerated remarkably. At the time I was living in southern California.

MC: Did you do the trek to Yosemite and all that or did you tend to avoid that?

DK: I've been to Yosemite. I've never really photographed there. I like to go to places that are off the beaten track.

MC: How do you feel about being in a location when you know the tripod has been set before and then you're either compelled to take a picture or to not take the picture. Have you had that experience?

DK: Oh sure, it can be somewhat intimidating I suppose, But I don't worry about it too much. I know for instance about a subject I photographed, and I knew it had been photographed by a real good friend of mine, Ray McSavaney — in fact I owned some of his photographs. I took great care not to rip him off. So it doesn't concern me much.

MC: Well, isn't it true that if I were to stumble on that same scene we're looking at here in your living room that I wouldn't be able to reproduce it anyway?

DK: I think that's true. I let students use my camera if they don't have the equipment to do what they want to do. Even on a scene that I might have done, I assure them their prints won't look like mine because their interpretation is going to be different.

MC: Now you two travel a lot and photograph a lot, so it seems as that you must have a lot of experience where you're at in

the same location with the same lighting at the same time and perhaps only separated by 10 or 20 feet and yet the pieces come out similar yet quite different and the eye I see between the two of you is remarkably different and yet I can sense some sort of companionship. Do you ever copy each other or do you avoid that at all cost? Or do you ever say "let's take a picture and see who can do better"?

DK: No, we don't. We rarely ever copy each other. Sometimes I can remember shooting, well, like this one, I mean the sun coming through the trees — she did her exposures, I did mine. And while they are very similar they're also very different.

MC: I agree — the look, the lighting, even the way you approach the subject. Clearly each is unique. Would you say that if 20 people were there with you they would end up with 20 different pieces?

DK: I should certainly hope so.

MC: Your treks: Solo? Or together?

DK: I used to do them solo. I would just pick an area: typically in southern Utah, but sometimes Arizona, or the California desert. Just pick an area on the map where I'd never been. Camp out and hike into canyons or the back country wherever it is and photograph all day. We still do that. We sometimes lead groups because we run a workshop program and we teach together. We take groups on week long backpacks in Grand Gulch Utah. So that's a regular journey for us. We travel a lot together to go places and try to see what we can find.

MC: What compelled you to approach the grasslands?

DK: Well, there's a bit of history. This is the first intellectually pre-defined project that I've ever done. Both the Anasazi work and the wheat country work resulted from seeing the land, the wheat country, just passing through and making a photograph and liking the result and resolving to get back there to continue next year. So it became a project. The same thing happened with the Anasazi when I started seeing ruins and canyons in southern Utah. Then I started looking for them. I'd go out to the canyons purposely and find them. So those projects grew out of positive experience in getting photographs I thought were interesting to me. But the grasslands I found out about as I was looking for a state park campground, got on the wrong website, realized that there are 20 National Grasslands in the United States that I didn't even know. I thought wow, I wonder if they might be as interesting as the wheat country. I expected a different challenge because the wheat country has nice graphics, pretty easy subject matter to work with. So I resolved to visit some of these grasslands when I got a chance. We're exploring New Mexico anyway, so I made plans on one of our trips to include a short trip through one of the grasslands, the Comanche National Grassland. I saw some possibilities and I made a couple exposures, made a print and I liked the result and I thought, hey this is going to be challenging, it's flat and featureless land in many cases, but, I know real useful work can done there. So I think, why not give this a go? And it's turning out to be very interesting.

As for subject matter however, with the very first exposure I made with 35 mm black and white in the camera, the subject matter quickly changed. - DK

MC: I would imagine the subject itself changes you as much as how you change the negative. It's not just that you're in the darkroom and you're looking for it to communicate, rather, what I'm seeing in your work is that the way you have printed the grassland pieces is actually quite different than the way you printed the wheatcountry pieces.

DK: Oh, there's no doubt about it. In fact that's part of the challenge. You have to plan on how to change what can be featureless land. You have to do something that's interesting to see in a photograph, so I've expanded the techniques for negative development beyond what is taught by anybody as far as I know. To try to get the print from the material that

was out there.

MC: Are you approaching your negatives differently too?

DK: Absolutely, just the negative. You get the most benefit out of controlling the negative.

MC: So you use the Zone System or…

DK: I use the Zone system, but primarily I have invented and used techniques to greatly extend contrast. It's all relative to the negative.

MC: Joan, you seem to see things that other people don't see, for example, you see the possibility of some pattern on a scrapped piece of photographic paper in a stainless steel sink and you seem to have no qualms about experimenting and seeing what's there. Where does that come from?

JG: I don't let anything stop me if I get an idea or if I see something happening, stay with it and see what else is happening. So experimenting is one of the things that drives me. I think it's a down right good time.

MC: Were you that way as a child?

JG: No, I was always in trouble as a child.

MC: I see. Pushing the envelope?

JG: Only my parents thought so.

MC: So Don sees the possibility in some flat grasslands. You see the possibility in these hidden patterns. To me I see some parallels, but still quite different. Do you approach your negative and your print in a similar vane, or are you more "shoot from the hip" and more experimental?

JG: Well, I learned a lot from Don about getting a good negative, because if you don't get the negative, you don't get the print, it's very simple. So he has slowed me down a little bit, get out that light meter and really consider what's going on in the scene. So that's a change, that's a really good change in my mind, 'cause I'm getting better results. Other than I was a little more happenstance and sometimes happenstance happens, so something usually turned up but there were a lot of failures.

MC: Now, the Zone system is naturally more difficult to do with medium format. Do you tend to shoot 220 or 120? What I'm getting at is the longer the roll, the higher the chance that you're not going to be able to be "in the zone" for all the negatives. Do you deliberately try to use those lessons from Don and apply his techniques or are you a little bit looser with it and let the roll speak for itself?

JG: Well, I think about it. I use 120 film the most. I look at the scene, the lights and darks and sometimes I'll pull out a light meter, sometimes I use the one on the camera, depending on what's happening. By then I have a real feel about how to make the photograph, and go with it.

MC: So each roll is in the same zone and as you move to a new subject, you'll take some notes and use a brand new roll?

JG: Yes.

MC: Obviously you'll come to a flat scene and then you'll encounter a contrasty scene.

JG: Well, because it depends on how I see it, yes that's true.

MC: You don't manipulate the negatives as nearly as Don does?

JG: I'm impatient. I want that negative right now. If it's not perfect, I'll deal with the rest of the negatives and duke it out in the darkroom.

MC: Interesting, so is it that his skies are dark and that's who he is as an artist and that doesn't necessarily appeal to you?

JG: It's hard to pin down the ever-changing landscape and what in it grabs me to make a photograph. And I have to think it through about how I feel about the light, and then make the exposures.

MC: Would one of your goals be to obtain a straight print, rather than a manipulated print?

JG: That would be nice, but most of my prints are manipulated.

DK: Mine too.

MC: Tell me, where do you see analog going? Ever thought about it before?

DK: We made a final decision about a year ago, maybe two years ago now, because we were getting closer and closer to going digital, what was happening with the paper companies going out of business, that sort of thing. Getting closer and closer and I realized it would take me probably three years to get up to snuff so I could produce the kind of prints I wanted to produce and I'm not that young any more, so I says, I've got so much that I want to do with the techniques that are available. So as long as there is paper, various films, I'm going to continue with analog. Not that I have anything against digital. If I could get there fast enough to get the quality I want and if I were much younger, I would be much more willing to make the switch. Joan has no interest in going digital, so the decision was actually easy.

MC: It is interesting that you say that, because it suggests to me that you recognize that any technique really does take years to master. Is that based on your own experience then?

DK: No, I was familiar with Huntington Witherill's transition to digital. He made a 6 month commitment to getting into the digital process, then two plus years later he started showing prints. So it took a while and he's one of the smartest men I've ever known.

MC: There is no doubt that some people believe digital will give them that push-button easiness. In my opinion that's crazy because if you're going to do it right, you better study and take lessons and master these tools and unfortunately there's a lot to master.

DK: Well, I run Photoshop and I do scans, so I'm a little bit into digital as it is. However, there is nothing more precious than a day in the darkroom. It's just a marvelous experience that can not be replicated in a computer.

MC: Joan, you showed us you love the darkroom, you love being there. Is it an equally Zen experience for you as well or do you have a different take on it?

I made about one year of progress then I started taking workshops with other good photographers and my progress accelerated remarkably - DK

JG: I think I walk in there expecting more. Now if something good happens I'm really happy. I just go in there, expecting to work on some negatives that probably were not previously printed. In fact I'm going through my archives now and keep finding promising negatives not ever printed.. I can't wait to see what happens. If I can end my day with 2 or 3 new prints I like, it has been a good day!

MC: Have you ever been absolutely frustrated in the darkroom and given up or are you determined to solve something, even though a negative may not be doing what you want?

JG: I'm delighted when I can get a good print, because I was delighted with the scene when I took the picture. In a perfect world every negative would be perfect, but they're sometimes not. Being frustrated is counterproductive — I just put the offending negative away for another day and do something else.

MC: Is it getting easier and easier as you go on, more natural or are you just sticking your neck out more and more and making it equally as difficult each time you go out?

JG: I like to think it is getting easier because every time I get one of those horrible snags, I cross a hurdle, and I learn from the experience.

DK: The two of us work completely differently in that respect because she'll try 2 or 3 prints or even 10, she'll go on to something else and she'll set that aside. Nothing can come out of the darkroom for what seems like weeks. Then I'll be off on a 3 day trip, maybe photographing, and when I get home, there'd be 5 or 10 new prints waiting on the table. Me, on the other hand, if the print doesn't work, it probably will never be printed. I go onto another one. I wrap it up on the day I'm printing. It's almost invariable, it's either I succeed or it's sayonara negative.

MC: You're together as a couple, you're often together when you photograph, but then the darkroom is very private then and you each do your own thing.

JG: Afterwards, we do look at each other's work and I'll ask him, "what's going on with this or that"? Or I'll just kind of horn in on him see what he's done lately. So we do have an interaction after the prints are done.

MC: Do you see the final print in your minds eye before you push the shutter?

JG: No, but I have a sense of what the light was like and how I exposed the film

MC: How about you Don?

DK: Absolutely. I think I know what the print will look like.

MC: It takes an investment in "seeing the print" before one clicks the shutter. Not everyone can do this. You have to feel it, sense it. With the instant feedback that digital affords you no longer are required to do that. One can go click, click, click. Then inspect. Then click again.

DK: Some people use Polaroid's in the film world for that purpose and I always cautioned my students. If it looks good on Polaroid, it sure as heck won't look good as a final print. So you're really hurting yourself.

MC: On these excursions, do people bring Polaroid's?

DK: Some do, sure. We encourage people to do that in classes because it is useful. You can see what a filter does and you can see what their composition is a little better. But I think it's totally impracticable in the field.

MC: It certainly slows you down, not only do you have to set it up and pull it out but you have to wait 60 seconds. Then you have this pola-garbage that you have to stash in your bags. We surely don't want that in our environment.

DK: I know.

MC: Joan, It's obvious you gain joy through the whole process. In your photography, what gives you the most satisfaction: is it the taking, the making, or what?

JG: It's being there, the seeing and the taking. And then if the making turns out, then that's the real joy.

MC: Maybe in your case the making is the icing on the cake and the cake is the taking and there's a pre-visualization or willingness to experiment, to see what may happen here when I do this thing that's never been done before.

JG: I would say that's typical of me.

MC: Which picture, if you had to choose one would you be most proud of or that represented the most joy?

JG: I would have to say the one at the end of the hall, Gateway One. I shot it in Los Angeles in the underground station. I saw this gorgeous, unbelievable ceiling and I had a good camera with me equipped with a 75mm, which was the widest angle I had. I squeezed myself into a corner on the floor, and focused the camera using the back. Anyone seeing me probably thought I must have been an aberration! I only had time to take two exposures as the security guards were waiting for us the leave!

MC: No tripod?

JG: Yes, I used a tripod. We were all sitting around on the floor. And it came out exactly the way I saw it.

MC: You are definitely drawn to the graphic. That beautiful wall that's there, the nine pieces together most done with graphic shadows etc… Is that a theme in your work, a graphic look at the world?

JG: And those are strange shadows. I see that kind of light in those graphics just, I almost lose it, I'm so thrilled.

MC: Don, has her joy in graphics affected you, because your high-contrast, beautifully toned landscapes have that kind of graphic nature to them as well?

DK: I'm not really aware that it has affected my work.

MC: In this piece here, most people would see that as a pure landscape yet I see nothing but shapes really but it turns out to be both. Joan's work is clearly graphic but I don't see a direct connection between the two. However I certainly

sense there's some sort of synergy. Joan, what about you? Do you use a computer? or not at all?

JG: I'm an unfriendly user of a computer.

MC: So, when you show your work in a magazine, do you let Don do the scan?

JG: No, I'll scan. I'd rather do the dull work, that's enough. But to go play with something and try to manipulate it, no. It's enough get the right dimensions and put it on a CD.

MC: Are you happy when you scan new prints that they look reasonably close to what you had attempted on a computer screen or are you unhappy with that?

JG: I don't think I really notice. If something comes up, I'm pleased. For the most part it just a picture and I scan it.

MC: Don, who are your muses as a photographer, as an artist? It doesn't have to be a photographer, just a person who has inspired you through your life and continues to inspire you.

However, there is nothing more precious than a day in the darkroom. It's just a marvelous experience that can not be replicated in a computer. - DK

DK: Well, I have some truth tellers that have helped me a lot. I get them to tell me the truth about my prints. That helps me get better.

MC: Can you name one of them?

DK: Oh, of course. Jay Dusard probably understands my work better than anybody else. Ray McSavaney was most helpful starting out. Bruce Barnbaum has been a big help to me over the years. Huntington Witherill out in California. Stu Levy, who I teach with have been instrumental.

MC: It sounds almost like a cabal.

DK: It is, yeah. Other photographers whose work I admire. Michael Kenna is certainly one of my favorites, Brett Weston, Frederick Sommer whose work and life is astounding. Sebastiao Selgado and Mario Giacomelli's work has recently made me rethink my approach to landscape.

JG: At the university there were three instructors I really appreciated for their patience and encouragement. One was Tom Barrow another was Betty Hahn and yet another was Beaumont Newhall. Now my main supporter is Mr. Kirby.

MC: What about the Internet? Has the camaraderie of photographers expanded because of the Internet? What do you think of all those photography-related websites?

DK: I hardly ever go to photography websites on the Internet. What technology has done has made the process of being a teacher very rewarding, because I get daily communication from my students and people who have been my students. Some of them have become real fine photographers and so the communication aspect, the email aspect is irreplaceable as far as I'm concerned.

MC: So rather than teach someone and you never see them again for the rest of your life. Instead, now many of these people have connections for years.

DK: Oh, for years, yes. Many of my students keep in touch. This has been going on over 20 years.

MC: How do you react then, when a student has perhaps learned all too well and started copying you? That must have happened in 25 years — find somebody almost mimicking your look, your style whatever. Or has that never happened?

DK: I can't recall any instance that ever happened.

MC: I think that's unusual. Perhaps because I've seen it happen with my wife who teaches pastel.

DK: Oh, I'm sure they could if they wanted to. When I teach I don't teach people to do photography like I do. I try to find out what it is they want to do and learn how to do that better.

MC: Find their own voice?

DK: Absolutely, I like to start with their work. I like to see what

they're doing and make it better. I mean there's lots of different ways, all perfectly valid and central to photography and habits and techniques that would work for me that wouldn't work for Joan and don't and she doesn't use them and wouldn't work for any other photographer. So the key thing is take a student from where they are and take them to where they're going.

MC: Now these workshops that you've been leading. Have they changed over time or has the methods more or less stayed the same?

DK: The basic approach has remained constant. The technology changes, films, papers, so one must stay current, which is a big advantage of teaching. Digital technology is causing changes.

MC: Because you can review things instantaneously?

DK: Oh, we don't do that. I think that's really a false way to teach. To think you can go to a workshop for two days or a week and to think you're going to get a good photograph during that period of time. It's a wildly optimistic assumption. What we do and have always done is a thorough critique of existing work the student brings to the workshop…

MC: At the beginning?

DK: Beginning, as early as possible in the workshop. We try hard to find out what they're doing, how they're doing it, take a look at their work and critique it in the sense of making positive suggestions for improvement.

MC: Are your workshops solely black and white or are colors allowed or what?

DK: Oh, anything. Color, black and white, digital, alternative processes. I do workshops that involve hands-on printing. I do one-on-one workshops here in Santa Fe. Often, somebody wants to work in color or they just want to work on compositions that sort of thing. This is fine with me, so anything.

MC: Joan, you've led workshops too, right?

JG: Yes, I work with him and others.

MC: You work together… You teach together… of course. What's your take on drawing the student's inner art out? Is that something that you have such a really good skill with because you are sensitive having been there yourself at one point through school etc… or is there something that's different or being in contrast with something you just said?

JG: Well, you already know what the student does and this is mostly in the classroom situation. When we're out in the field, walking around, everybody has an opportunity to interact with us. We talk about what they're doing and I look at the scene through the camera view finder, and say well, did you know you have a little extra leaf hanging or something and is it what you want, and that kind of stuff. I want to talk with everybody in the class one-on-one as often as possible.

MC: And that's a good team work.

DK: Well, the key thing is to… You can't teach anybody by starting with bad works on their part. So the key thing is catching somebody doing something right and making that known to them.

MC: Do they sometimes not know they're doing it right?

JG: Well, I think they're so hung up from the workshop and hearing all this stuff about their prints that their minds are just going every which way. I can relate to that. Things eventually settle down and then we talk about it.

MC: Why then, do you not request a portfolio submission prior to allowing someone to your workshop.

DK: Oh, I think that's ridiculous. It suggests that I only want to teach somebody that's already skilled. And the fact is that people that learn the most are those who are just starting out. You can mix skill levels in a workshop very easily and the beginners learn from more advanced students so they have several teachers there. Sometimes they get misled but then the workshop tutorials can correct that. So I see no reason to put limits on the skill level of the student on preorder. So all I ask is that they work diligently in the workshop and have some enthusiasm and energy to add to the thing.

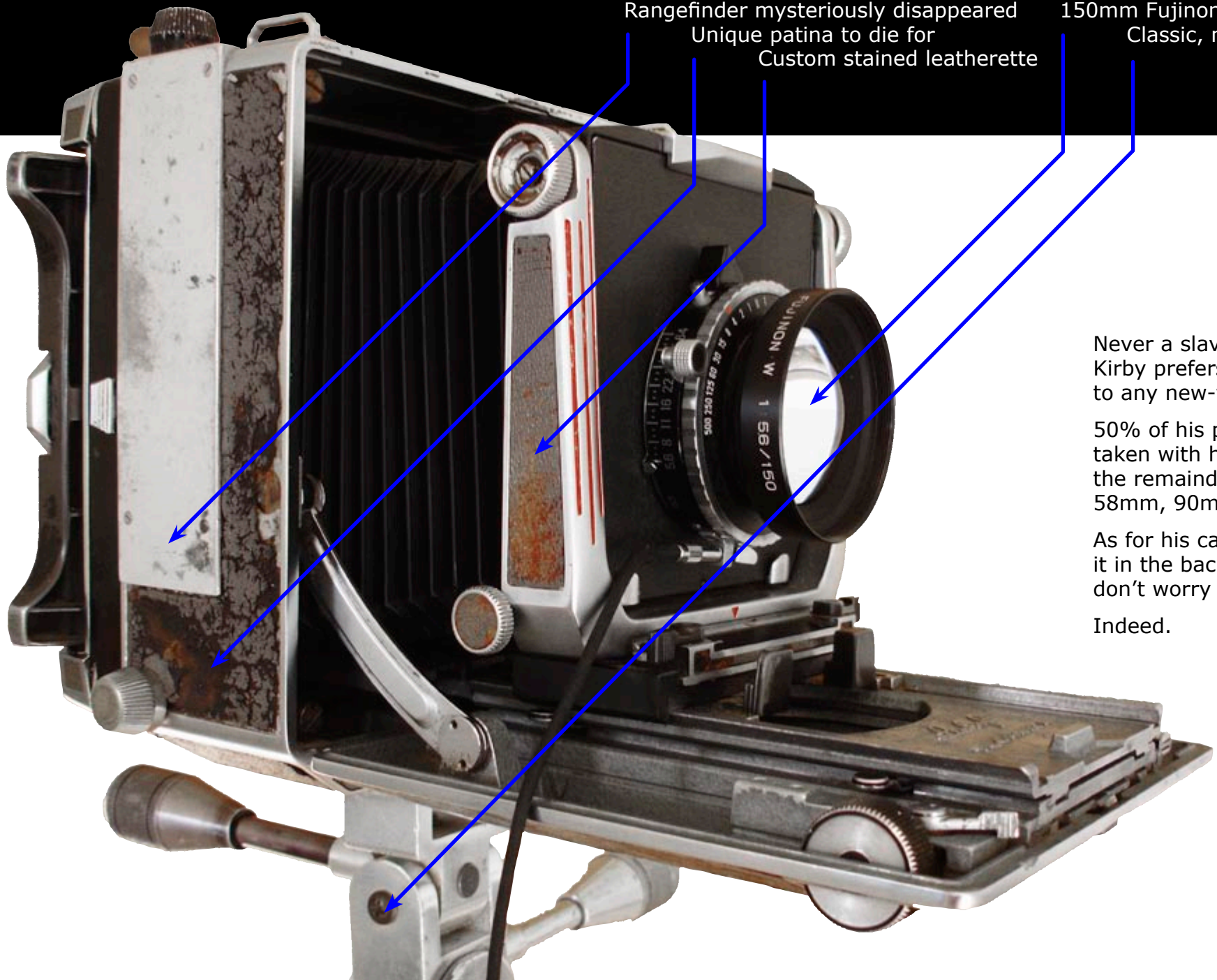
MC: Thank you both for your time and hospitality.

[TOOLKIT] Don Kirby & Joan Gentry's Darkroom

Don's darkroom is his shrine. Well-appointed and perfectly arranged for maximum efficiency, he has no problem at all spending an entire day working on his prints which he can produce up to 30"x40"

Darkroom photograph taken with a Gaoersi 4x5 w/ 47mm Schneider XL, Horseman 6x12 back, and Portra 400NC film. f8 @ 1/2 sec

[TOOLKIT] Don Kirby's Linhof Technika IV Outfit



Never a slave to fashion, Don Kirby prefers his "old reliables" to any new-fangled technology.

50% of his photographs are taken with his 150mm with the remainder divided between 58mm, 90mm, 300mm lenses.

As for his camera: "I just throw it in the back of my car and don't worry about it too much".

Indeed.

PARALLELS: Don Kirby & Joan Gentry

GLF

Don Kirby: Bandon Beach Spire

Don Kirby: Bluegrass II Harvard Rd WA

Don Kirby: Bluegrass Valley Chapel Rd WA

Don Kirby: Popo Agie River Basin WY

Don Kirby: Storm Cloud Over Black Mesa

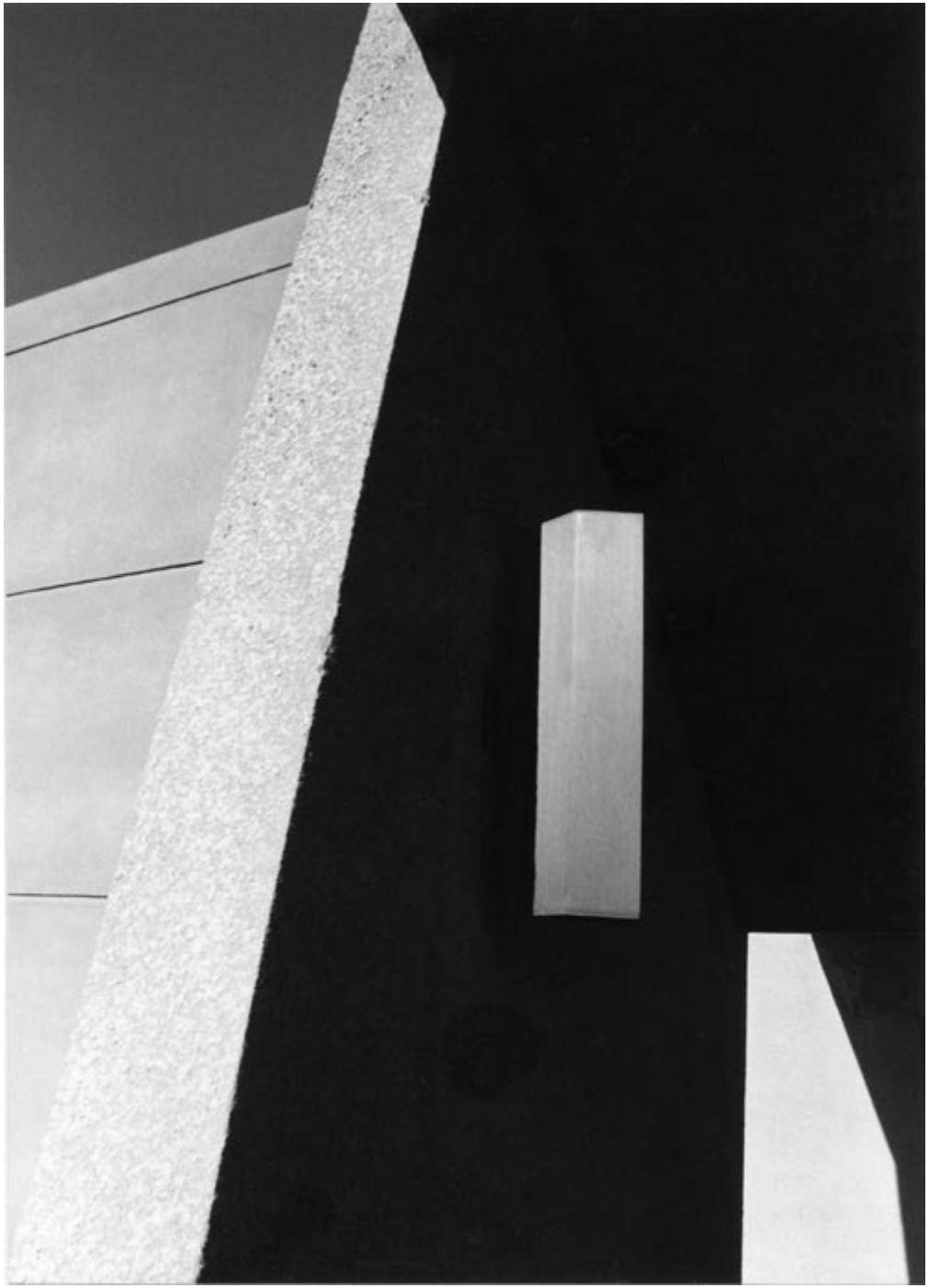
Don Kirby: Wheatfield Gashaus Road

Don Kirby: Bluegrass Jackson Road

Don Kirby: Wheatfields Steptoe Butte

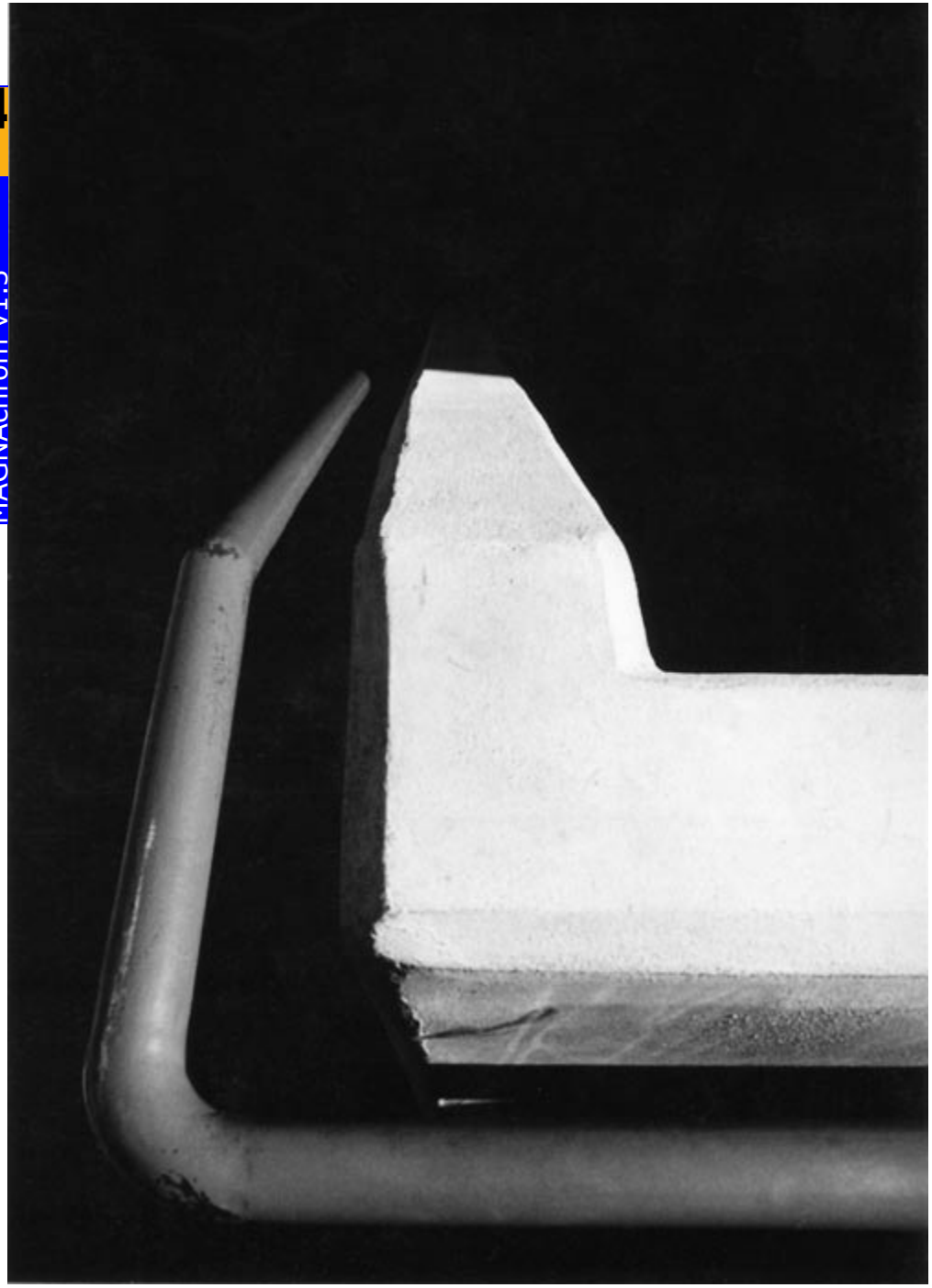
Don Kirby: Wheatfield Ping Gulch Road WA

Don Kirby: SunFogTrees Cape Arago OR



Joan Gentry: UNM A Closer Look #8

Joan Gentry: UNM A Closer Look #1



Joan Gentry: UNM A Closer Look #2

Joan Gentry: UNM A New Look #2

Joan Gentry: UNM A New Look #3

Joan Gentry: UNM Another Look #14

Don Kirby
Bandon Beach Spire
Year: 2005
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Oregon, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 150mm
Exposure: 1/8 @ f32

Don Kirby
Bluegrass II Harvard Rd WA
Year: 2000
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 58mm
Exposure: 1/2 @ f32

Don Kirby
Bluegrass Valley Chapel Rd WA
Year: 2001
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 150mm
Exposure: 1/2 @ f32

Don Kirby
Popo Agie River Basin WY
Year: 2005
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Wyoming, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 58mm
Exposure: 1 sec @ f32

Don Kirby
Storm Cloud Over Black Mesa
Year: 2004
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: New Mexico, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 150mm
Exposure: 1/4 @ f32

Don Kirby
Wheatfield Gashaus Road
Year: 1999
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 58mm
Exposure: 1/4 @ f32

Don Kirby
Wheatfield Ping Gulch Road WA
Year: 2000
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 150mm
Exposure: 1/8 @ f32

Don Kirby
Wheatfields Steptoe Butte
Year: 2001
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: Technical Pan
Lens: 300mm
Exposure: 1/8 @ f32

Don Kirby
Bluegrass Jackson Road
Year: 1997
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Washington, USA
Film: Technical Pan
Lens: 58mm
Exposure: 1/2 @ f32

Don Kirby
Sun/Fog/Trees
Year: 2005
Camera: Linhof Technica IV
Location: Oregon, USA
Film: TMAX-100
Lens: 58mm
Exposure: 1/8 @ f32

Joan Gentry
UNM A Closer Look #8
Year: 1973
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/125 @ f5.6

Joan Gentry
UNM A Closer Look #1
Year: 1974
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/125 @ f5.6

Joan Gentry
UNM A Closer Look #2
Year 1973
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/125 @ f5.6

Joan Gentry
UNM A New Look #2
Year: 1996
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/125 @ f8

Joan Gentry
UNM A New Look #3
Year: 1996
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/125 @ f5.6

Joan Gentry
UNM Another Look #14
Year: 1973
Camera: Nikon F
Location: Albuquerque, NM, USA
Film: Plus X
Lens: 24mm
Exposure: 1/60 @ f8

[STATS] Who Are MAGNAchrom Readers?

Well, after only two issues we are begining to get a good sense of who our audience is. The really great thing is that as of late, we are seeing readership increase on a daily basis, so whatever you are doing to promote MAGNAchrom to your friends and co-workers must be working! (keep up the good work)

As you might suspect, MAGNAchrom readers are largely male and English-speaking. But what is interesting is that in spite of no advertising, nearly 40% of our readership hails from non-English speaking countries. This worldwide interest in medium and large format photography is just as we predicted and we are pleased to see so much international interest in our publication (note that the 4th issue of MAGNAchrom due in April 2007 will be dedicated to international photography).

What is also interesting is how much detail people willingly gave us regarding their equipment usage. As might be suspected, there were a handful who didn't provide anything. But from the information we have obtained to date, it is clear we have a bunch of true camera lovers as readers. In fact, 81% of all registered users willingly gave us information about what equipment they use. We are also pleased that the mix of medium to large format users is 94% MF vs. 78% LF, with 60% of readers who indicated equipment choices owning BOTH medium and large format equipment — exactly the kind of reader we were hoping for.

Where would we like to be one year hence? Well, obviously we'd like to see more women involved with medium and large format photography — we know you are out there! To that end, we will continue to actively seek out women to feature within these pages. We also want to expand the readership in both North America as well as the rest of the world. Ideally we'd like to see something closer to a 33/67 percent mix of readership with two thirds of our readership outside of North America. We believe this is where the real growth in medium and large format is likely to remain.

Only time will tell...

Gender:	
Male	96%
Female	4%

English speaking countries:	
en countries	60%
non-en countries	40%

Regions:	
North America	48%
Rest of the World	52%

Top ten LF brands:	
Linhof	17%
Sinar	16%
Toyo	11%
Speed Graphic	10%
Cambo	9%
Shen-Hao	7%
Arca Swiss	7%
Ebony	6%
Tachihara	5%
Other LF Brands	66%

Top ten MF brands:	
Mamiya	38%
Hasselblad	26%
Rollei	20%
Bronica	11%
Pentax	9%
Fuji	9%
Yashica	9%
Kiev	5%

Submit your work to Centerfold!

Centerfold is a new, regular feature of MAGNAchrom that will showcase one panoramic photograph printed large, in a double-wide spread. You must be a registered user of MAGNA-chrom as well as a member of www.panorama-gallery.com.

To be considered, send an email to centerfold@magnachrom.com with the following information:

About you:

Your Name _____
Your MC email _____
Your Website _____

Describe your panorama:

Title _____
Camera _____
Film or back _____
Exposure _____
Lens _____
Year taken _____
Location _____
Link to photo _____

... and a paragraph (or two) describing the photograph, technique, and/or your artistic vision.

If chosen, you will need to supply a single image sized fit inside the following pixel box: 7000 wide x 2500 tall pixels in RGB JPG (high quality) format. Images should not have any borders. FTP information will be supplied to those that win. If you are not chosen, please submit again for the next issue — there is no limit to the number of times you can submit. Winners however must wait one year before submitting again.

CENTERFOLD

Bernhard M. Hartmann was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1955. His love of photography was growing from childhood till nowadays and he believes that the photographic art of expression is the essence that keeps him alive.

Bernhard's educational background is shaped by his studies of law and his accompanying work as a photographer for some major German magazines like Color Foto and Foto Creativ.

A couple of years ago he moved with his beloved wife Birgit and his daughter Leonie to Upper Bavaria and is living near Lake Starnberg, where King Ludwig II (he was the one who build the romantic castles) was drowned. But he claims himself a good swimmer and therefore he has confidence that his pictures will continue to be shown in serious European black and white Fine Art Magazines as well as in leading German Galleries. Bernhard's work is widely exhibited and you can also find his pictures in collector portfolios in Europe and in the United States.

His work can be seen at www.bernhardhartmann.de

Piscina Al Mare II, © 2007, Bernhard Harman

> *"I deeply admire the romantic paintings of Caspar David Friedrich, William Turner and Eugene Delacroix. I can not draw, nor can I paint, but I can express my feelings and emotions, my whole creativity, with another wonderful medium: the Art of photography. I don't know any other way to do so.*
>
> *Therefore my pictures can be seen in the photographic tradition of the 19th century Pictorialists. By viewing these pictures you should feel a connection between the physical and spiritual world, your fantasy and your imagination should be activated."*

CENTERFOLD

Piscina Al Mare II, © 2007, Bernhard Harman

[FEATURE] The Carbon Transfer Process

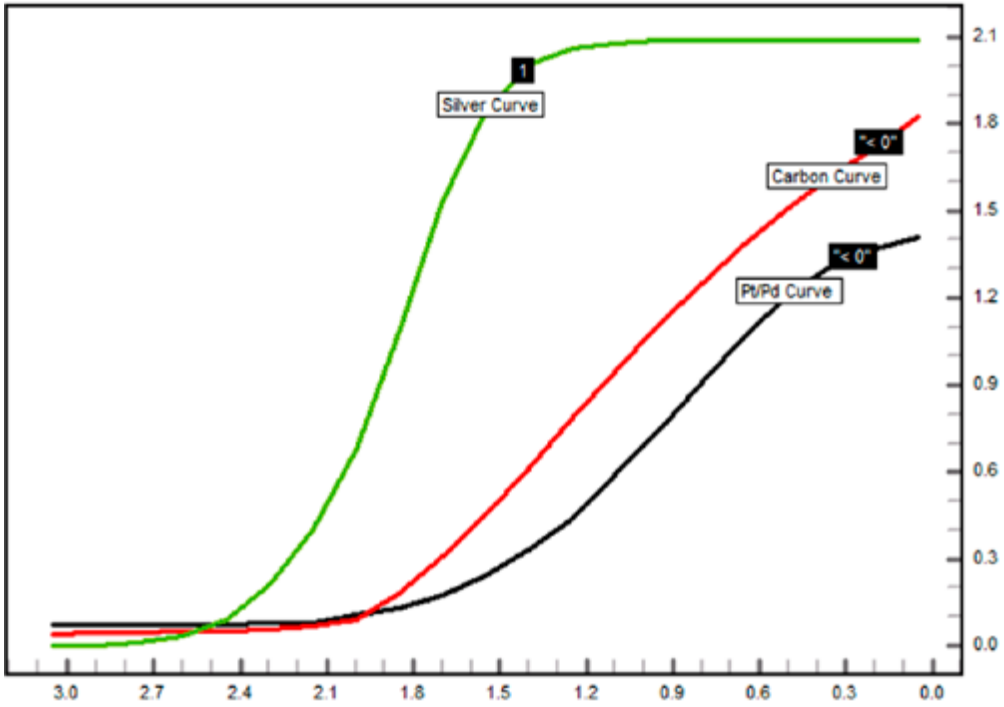
by Sandy King

HISTORY OF THE CARBON PROCESS

The carbon transfer process is considered by most persons who know it to be one of the most beautiful of all photographic processes. Carbon prints are capable of a wide range of image characteristics, they can be virtually any color or tone, and the final image can be placed on a wide variety of surfaces, including glass, metal, paper, as well as various kinds of synthetic surfaces. When the final support has a smooth surface carbon prints have a highly unique quality, a discernible relief which gives them a real dimensional quality, especially prominent when the photograph is held sideways to the light. Carbon is without question the most distinctive and stable of all photographic processes, with the capability of presenting images with a wide range of image characteristics, of virtually any color or tone, on a wide variety of surfaces. Finally, carbon transfer prints, which are made up of inert pigment(s) suspended in a hardened gelatin colloid, are the most stable of all photographic prints.

Tonal reproduction is also one of the strong points of carbon printing. Carbon has a long tonal scale and excellent straight-line characteristics, qualities which allows the use of fully detailed negatives with long density ranges, resulting in an even and completely linear distribution of tones from the highest lights to the deepest shadows. Compare in the following family of curves a typical carbon curve with typical silver and Pt./Pd. curves.

Figure 1. Family of Curves. Carbon, Pt./Pd. and Silver



The carbon curve has a very linear straight line curve, with little toe and shoulder, and Dmax of over 1.80, the Pt./Pd. curve has a curve with very long toe and shoulder and Dmax of just less than 1.50, and the silver curve has a short but very pronounced toe and shoulder with Dmax of over 2.0.

The carbon process as practiced today has a long history of use, having been introduced in 1864 by the Englishman Joseph W. Swan. Swan used a paper support, coated on one side with a pigmented-gelatin solution, known as carbon tissue. After sensitization and exposure this tissue was transferred to a temporary support for development. When dry the resulting pigment image was transferred to its final paper support. Swan began marketing carbon materials in 1866, offering his ready-made tissue in three colors, black, sepia and purple-brown.

Carbon was widely practiced in Europe and in the USA throughout the 19th century and well into the 20th. It was considered by many the aristocrat of all printing processes, and commercial carbon prints typically cost much more than those produced by any of the other processes, including palladium and platinum. The market for carbon materials all but disappeared in the 1950s, although Hanfstaengl of Germany continued to produce small quantities of carbon tissue and transfer papers for monochrome and three-color work until around 1990. Ultrastable, a modern carbon color printing process based on the use of digital negatives and pin registration of the color reliefs, was introduced in the 1990s and enjoyed some popularity as a high-end color printing process, but as of several years ago materials for the process are no longer available.

As of early 2007 the only monochrome carbon tissue available in the US is that manufactured by Bostick and Sullivan in Santa Fe, New Mexico. B&S produces the tissue in several colors, including Forest Green, Nut Brown and Renaissance Black. The tissue is supplied in sheets of 36”X60” at an approximate cost of just under $4.00 per square foot. The tissue is of good quality, with a smooth and uniform coating, and is completely free of the bubbles and other surface imperfections.

I strongly encourage anyone interested in experimenting with carbon printing to work first with the B&S carbon tissue before attempting to make your own. However, this article will focus on the home manufacture of carbon tissue and instructions for its use. If you use the B&S tissue be sure to follow the working directions provided by the manufacturer since they are in some ways different from the directions given here for use with home manufactured tissue.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Carbon is a contact printing process that gives a final image that comprises a pigment suspended in gelatin placed on a final support, usually paper. To make this image a negative is placed in contact with a sensitized sheet of carbon tissue and exposed with an ultraviolet light source. This causes the gelatin to harden directly in proportion to negative densities, i.e. the tissue is hardened more in the shadows than in the highlights. After exposure the tissue is soaked briefly in cool water, then squeegeed into contact with a paper or plastic support. After about 30 minutes the tissue on its support is transferred to a tray of water at about 105° F for development. Once the pigmented gelatin has begun to melt the tissue is peeled from the support and discarded. The unhardened gelatin slowly washes away from the support leaving a relief image.

There are two major variations of the monochrome carbon transfer process: single transfer and double transfer. In single transfer the sensitized and exposed tissue is developed directly on its final support. In double transfer the sensitized and exposed tissue is first developed on a temporary support (usually a plastic of the polyester or polyvinyl family), and after drying the image is transferred to a final paper support. The final support is usually paper but may also be glass, metal, or various kinds of synthetic paper supports.

Depending on the final support one should expect some slight increase in density of a carbon print on dry-down, though it is nothing like what we expect with processes like kallitype, pt./pd. or vandyke. And, unlike a pt./pd. print, which loses much of its wet beauty when dry, carbon prints usually have a richer, more brilliant look when dry than when wet.

The major steps in making a carbon print are the following.

1. Make the tissue.
2. Sensitize and dry the tissue.
3. Mate a suitable negative with the emulsion side of the tissue and expose with a light source rich in UV.
4. After exposure, separate the negative from the tissue and soak the latter in water at about 65°F for 45-50 seconds, and then squeegee the tissue into contact with the final support (single transfer) or with a temporary plastic support (double transfer). Cover the sandwich with a sheet of blotting paper, place a sheet of plate glass over the paper, and leave it undisturbed for about 20-30 minutes.
5. Transfer the sandwich of tissue/support to a tray of warm water and develop the relief by washing away the insoluble gelatin. This is the final step for single transfer.
6. For double transfer, allow the image on the temporary plastic support to dry and then transfer it to a final support

We will now describe each of these steps in detail. Carbon printing is a very flexible process and in every step there are multiple methods that work. However, in this article we must limit discussions to only one or two of the major variations. Consult the sources in the recommended bibliography for more detailed information on the process.

Carbon is without question the most distinctive and stable of all photographic processes

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS: THINGS YOU WILL NEED

In order to make carbon prints you will need the following chemicals, materials and equipment. Most of the basic ingredients are readily available locally, and inexpensive, a fact that will be much appreciated by those used to the high cost of processes that use precious metals such as gold, palladium and platinum.

- Chemicals and Things
- Alcohol and/or Acetone
- Ammonium or potassium dichromate — Sensitizer
- Sodium bisulfite or sodium metabisulfite — Clearing Agents
- Sugar — Plasticizer
- Glycerine (optional) — Plasticizer for arid climates.
- Thymol (optional) — Preservative
- Pigment — India or Sumi Ink, tub watercolors and numerous other pure pigments in aqueous dispersion.

Figure 2 – Some of the essential materials needed.

Equipment

- A few pieces of plate glass, 1/4” thick and two inches larger on all sides that the largest print you intend to make.
- UV light source
- Contact Printing Frame or Vacuum Frame
- Rubber squeegee
- Plastic trays about two inches larger all around than the largest print you intend to make
- Drying screens
- Access to Running Hot and Cold Water
- Scale for measuring chemicals and gelatin

Materials

- Carbon Tissue
- Final Support Paper
- Thin Mylar sheets

STAGE ONE: MAKING CARBON TISSUE

It is recommended that you prepare the pigmented gelatin solution, which I will call henceforth in this article the "glop," in one liter quantities. One liter gives a convenient reference point for many existing formulas and provides an adequate amount of solution to make about 10-15 tissues 8X10" in size, or the equivalent. It is not necessary to use all of the glop in one session since it can be frozen and used at a later date, weeks or even months in the future.

STEP 1 — Pour 900 ml of distilled water at 65-70°F into a clean wide-mouth container, either glass or plastic. While stirring, add 80 g of gelatin (Bloom 175-250), to the water and allow the solution to sit for about thirty minutes. Plain Knox gelatin from the grocery store works fine.

STEP 2 — Fill a small ice chest, or some other type of insulated container, with warm water at around 115-125°F. Place the gelatin solution (in its container) in the warm water and allow it to completely liquefy.

STEP 3 — When the gelatin solution has completely liquefied, stir in 50g of plain white sugar. The purpose of the sugar is to give pliancy to the dry tissue and prevent it from becoming too brittle. In arid climates the addition of 5-10 ml of glycerine per liter of glop can be added in addition to the sugar to prevent the tissue from drying out too much..

STEP 4 — Add the pigment to the gelatin solution, and stir well. Many different kinds of pigment can be used. With some exceptions almost any pigment that disperses well in water can be used. For this formula I am going to recommend either Sumi or India Ink, or a tube watercolor such as Ivory Black or Lampblack. Both Sumi and Ivory give a warm black color, while India Ink and Lampblack give a very neutral tone black. The exact amount needed depends both on the specific pigment itself and on both how much contrast you want in the tissue (the more pigment you add, the higher the contrast). For your first try, use about 15-20 g of pigment per liter of glop.

STEP 5 — Add water to top off the solution to 925 ml and then stir gently for a minute or so. Then add 50 ml of Isopropyl Alcohol to serve as a surfactant, and 1 ml of a 30% Thymol in Isopropyl Alcohol as a preservative. Finally, top off the solution with distilled water to one liter.

STEP 6 — Leave the container of glop in water at about 115-125°F for at least an before coating. This should get rid of most of the bubbles stirred up during mixing. .

STEP 7 — Coat a suitable base with the glop. Although paper can be used for the tissue base I recommend a plastic such as Denril Multi-Media Vellum or Yupo, a synthetic polypropylene paper. You can coat either by pouring the warm glop directly onto an oversize base and spreading it with your fingers, or by the use of a frame of flexible magnetic used over a sheet of galvanized steel plate. Either way, make sure that the room temperature is at about 68-72°F for the duration of the coating.

Simplified Coating Procedure

1. Level a piece of plate glass, larger by several inches than the largest tissue you plan to coat.
2. Draw on the tissue base a rectangle with a permanent marker the size of the area you want to coat. The base itself should be at least one to two inches larger on all sides than the coating area. Wet the tissue base, squeegee it to the surface of the plate glass, and blot off with a clean towel.
3. For coating an area about 8X10" in size, pour about 50 ml of the warm glop into a small beaker. Gently but rapidly, pour all of the glop onto the center of the base. Then, working very quickly, spread the glop with your fingers over the 8X10" coating area.
4. The coating will set in 5-10 minutes. When it sets, pick up the tissue and place it on a drying screen, and set it aside to dry. Drying time will range from 3-24 hours, depending on the thickness of the coating, the temperature and humidity of the drying room, and whether or not a fan is used to accelerate drying.

Coating with Magnetic Frames

An alternative to the free hand method of coating described above is the use is of magnetic sign material over a sheet of galvanized steel. With this method you first level a sheet of galvanized steel, squeegee the tissue support to the metal, and place a frame of flexible magnetic sheeting material over the support. The warm glop is poured over the paper, and then evened out either by hand or with a rod. The magnetic sheeting material serves as a damn and keeps the coating solution confined to the area of the frame.

Magnetic sign material is available in a wide range of sizes up to approximately .060". I use the .040" thick material for most my own work. Assuming you fill up the frame completely with glop the .040" material will give a wet coating thickness of approximately 1.0mm. Prepare the sheeting material by cutting out a frame in the material slightly larger the tissue size you wish to make. You can also use strips of magnetic tape, cutting them to form a frame of the desired size and taping the sides together with duct tape.

To coat, first place the galvanized steel plate on a flat surface and level it. Next, place the tissue base briefly in water and then squeegee it to the galvanized steel sheet. Place the magnetic mask over the paper. The magnetic material will stick to the steel through the thickness of the paper with enough force to keep the gelatin from flowing, keeping it entirely confined within the frame. Wipe off excess water with a clean towel.

Pour the pigmented gelatin on the support and rapidly spread it with your hands as evenly as possible over the area of the frame. This can be done very quickly as there is no risk of the glop running out of the coating area as sometimes happens with the free hand method of coating.

Figure 3 – Pouring the glop within the frame of flexible magnetic sheeting. (Image courtesy of Mike Robinson)

Done correctly the surface of the tissue will be as smooth as glass after coating with this method

Figure 4 – Spreading the glop in the frame.
(Image courtesy of Mike Robinson)

It is also possible to even out the coating by rolling a steel tube or threaded rod, preheated to about 125°F, over the glop. First, pour the glop at one end of the frame and quickly spread it over about 2/3 of the surface to be coated. Then, roll the rod or tube, supported by the thickness of the magnetic sheeting material on each side, over the glop from one end of the frame to the other. This action will even out the coating over the base. The rod needs to be long enough too completely cover the cutout of the frame, and it must be rigid enough so that it does not sag in the middle. With practice one should be able to distribute the pigmented gelatin solution evenly with just one passage of the rod. The heat of the rod melts the gelatin as it passes over the glop and dissipates on contact any bubbles that may be on the surface of the pigmented gelatin solution. Done correctly the surface of the tissue will be as smooth as glass after coating with this method. When the gelatin sets, run a sharp point such as a toothpick or sharp lead pencil around the edges of the mask, life the tissue and transfer it to a drying screen.

Figure 5 – Spreading the glop with a heated tube.

To determine how much volume of glop is needed in to completely fill the frame and allow some excess, which is necessary with the rod, first convert all of your dimensions to centimeters, then multiply width * length * depth (thickness of the sheeting material). For example, for a tissue 11X14” in size you will need about 100ml of pigmented gelatin solution to achieve a wet coating height of .032”. This assumes, of course, that the flexible magnetic sheeting being used for the frame has a thickness of .032”. For sheeting of other thickness just make the above calculations to determine how much coating solution should be used for a given area. Remember, to use the rod requires that the amount of glop you pour into the frame be slightly in excess of the calculated amount.

PREPARING FINAL SUPPORT PAPERS

Single Transfer Procedure — The final support for single transfer can be either a fixed-out photographic paper or a drawing or watercolor paper that has been sized with a hardened layer of gelatin. Any good quality paper may be used, depending on the final surface desired. I recommend that beginners use fixed out photographic paper for the final support during the learning phase as the sizing of art and drawing papers is a fairly complicated procedure and can lead to much frustration in use if the sizing is not done properly.

Photographic papers are prepared by soaking in a hardening fixer for 5-10 minutes, then washed thoroughly in running water for 15-20 minutes.

Drawing and watercolor papers must be sized with a coating of hardened gelatin. Follow the directions below.

1. Make up 1000ml of a 3%-5% gelatin solution, following the directions for making carbon tissue.
2. Soak the drawing or watercolor paper to be sized for 5-10 minutes in warm water, then squeegee it onto a level, flat surface.
3. Pour about 80-100ml of the 3%-5% gelatin solution into a beaker, add a few drops of a 40% solution of formalin to the solution, pour the solution over the paper and spread evenly using a clean foam brush.

When the gelatin sets, hang the paper to dry.

For good results, two or more coatings, with drying between each, is usually required.

Double Transfer Procedure — Papers used for the double transfer procedure should be coated with a relatively soft layer of gelatin that will expand considerably when wetted out. This is necessary for complete transfer of the image from the temporary plastic support. If the gelatin of the paper support is too hard it will not expand sufficiently and certain parts of the image on the plastic, i.e. the highlights, will not come in contact with the gelatin of the final support, resulting in an incomplete transfer. Fixed out photographic papers are not recommended for double transfer since the gelatin of these papers will not normally swell enough to make contact with the image on the temporary plastic support, and this may lead to an incomplete transfer.

Drawing and watercolor papers for double transfer may be prepared as for single transfer with one important difference: in place of formalin or glyoxal use potassium alum as the hardener. Mix two grams of potassium alum dissolved in 100ml of warm water, then add about 5ml of this solution to every 75-100 ml of coating solution. The gelatin of papers hardened with potassium alum will swell much more than that of papers hardened with formalin or glyoxal, thus allowing complete contact with the carbon image on the temporary plastic support.

SENSITIZING CARBON TISSUE

Either ammonium or potassium dichromate can be used to sensitize the tissue. I use potassium dichromate for tray sensitizing and ammonium dichromate for spirit sensitizing.

The contrast of a carbon image is controlled by matching the dichromate concentration of the sensitizer to the DR (density range) of the negatives: solutions high in dichromate are used for high contrast negatives, solutions low in dichromate for low contrast negatives. Depending on the native contrast of the tissue, and the DR of the negative, the useful strength may range from as low as 1/4% to as high as 4%-6%. The strength of the sensitizer is expressed as a percent solution, an expression of weight per volume (w/v), indicating how many grams of a chemical are to be dissolved in water to make a final volume of 100ml of solution. For example, to prepare a 3% potassium dichromate sensitizer dissolve 3 grams of potassium dichromate in 90 ml of water (or 30 grams in 900 ml of water, etc.), then top off to 100 ml or 1000 ml of total solution.

Figure 6 – Tissue spirit sensitized in a 2% ammonium dichromate solution, diluted 1:2 with acetone.

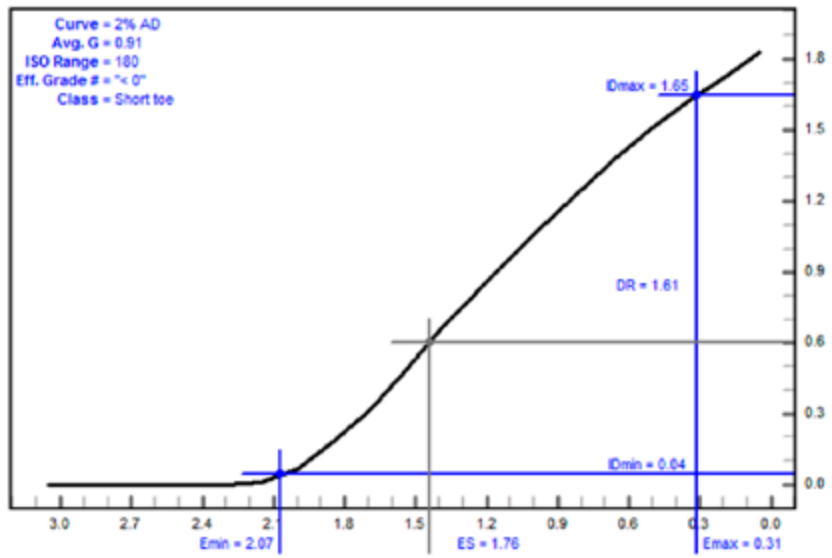


Figure 7 – Tissue spirit sensitized with a 4% ammonium dichromate solution, diluted 1:2 with acetone.

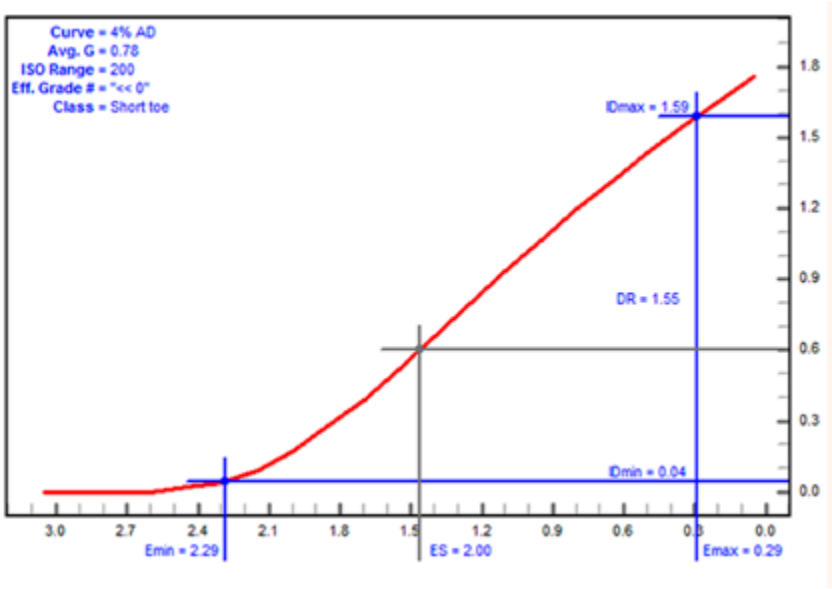
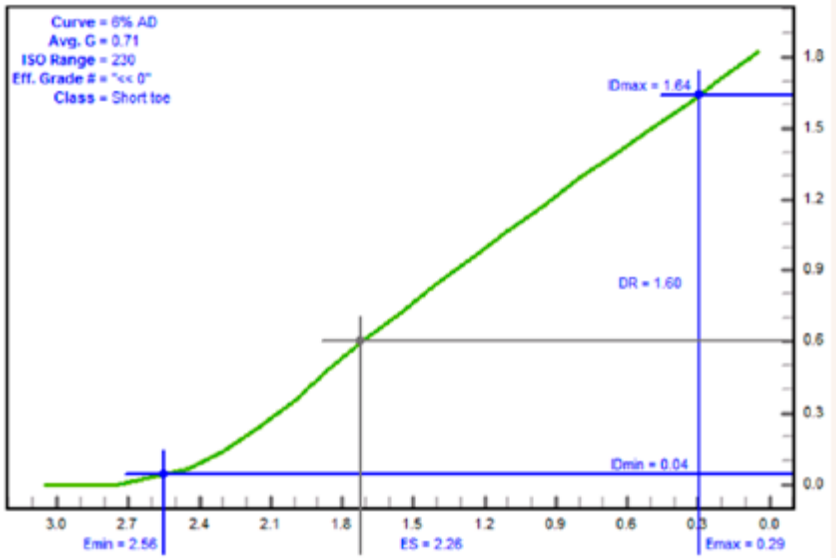


Figure 8 – Tissue sensitized with a 6% ammonium dichromate solution, diluted 1:2 with acetone.



Carbon tissue can very greatly in contrast so the exposure scales obtained above with the 2%, 4% and 6% sensitizers would apply only to the specific tissue used for the tests.

In actual practice carbon tissue is sensitized in one of two ways: 1) by soaking the tissue in a tray containing the sensitizer, or; 2) by brushing a solution containing dichromate and a fast drying spirit such as alcohol or acetone directly on the tissue. Tray sensitized tissue takes up to 1-2 hours to dry, while spirit sensitized tissue will dry and be ready for printing within 15-30 minutes. Both methods are capable of giving excellent and repeatable results in monochrome work when used properly. I personally prefer spirit sensitizing because the sensitized tissue dries faster than with tray sensitizing and because it is very efficient in use of materials.

As soon as the tissue is dry a phenomenon known as “dark effect” kicks into gear. Dark effect is caused by a slow insolubilization of the gelatin of sensitized, unexposed tissue. The practical consequence of the dark effect is a gradual gain in speed, accompanied by a loss of contrast. The effect is least in a cold, dry

environment, and at a maximum in warm, humid condition. For maximum consistency maintain the working room at a constant humidity of around 50% RH and always time the exposure of the tissue to within 5-10 minutes of the end of the sensitizing stage.

Tray Sensitizing of Carbon Tissue

Carbon tissue should be sensitized under low-level tungsten illumination or with a bug light. The sensitizing bath should be used at about 55-50° F. and the tissue should be left in the sensitizer for about three minutes. For consistent and repeatable work it is necessary to standardize this operation in terms of solution temperature and time of sensitizing so that the tissue always absorbs the same amount of sensitizer.

If the tissue has dried out excessively it may be necessary to first place it in a tray of cool water for a minute or so and allow it to flatten out before sensitizing. Squeegee to eliminate excess water before transferring the tissue to the sensitizing bath. If the tissue has been stored flat this step can be eliminated.

Place the tissue in the sensitizer and agitate gently for the duration of the three minute sensitizing period.

After three minutes remove the tissue from the sensitizer, allow it to drain for a few seconds, then place it emulsion side down on a clean sheet of acrylic plastic. Squeegee out the sensitizer, remove the tissue from the plastic and hand to dry (or dry on a drying screen. Dry the tissue in the dark, or in a room illuminated by a yellow bug light.

The potassium dichromate sensitizer can be reused, but it's printing properties change with time and it must either be periodically renewed or replenished.

Figure 9 – Pouring the dichromate sensitizer over the tissue in tray sensitizing. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

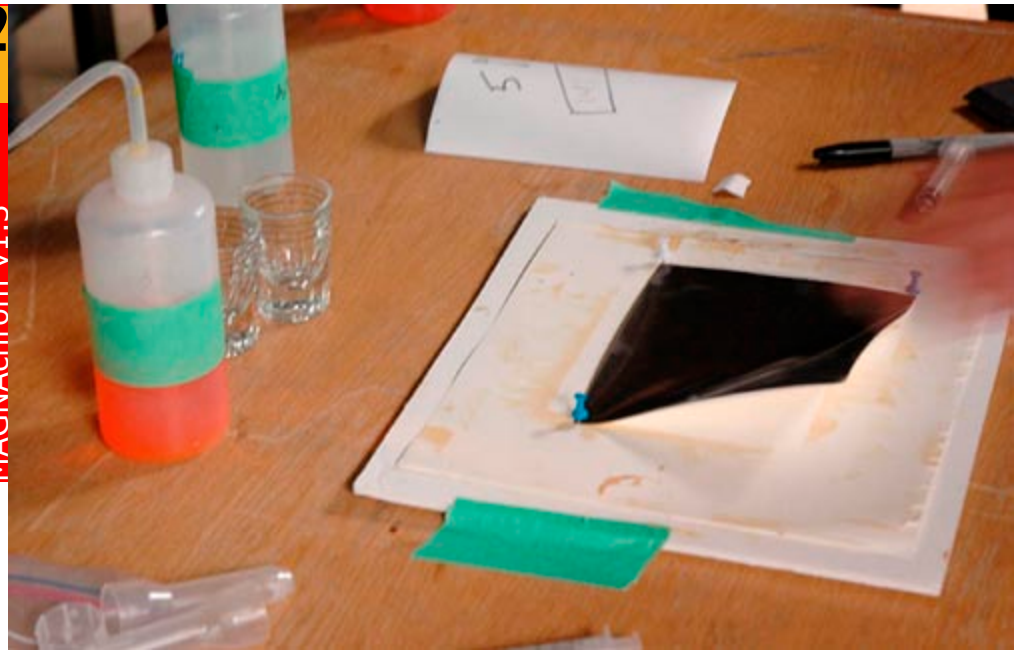
Spirit Sensitizing

Spirit sensitized tissue dries much faster than tray sensitized tissue and is also more environmentally friendly since only a very small amount of dichromate solution is needed. Ammonium dichromate is recommended for spirit sensitizing because it can be diluted with either alcohol or acetone and the stock solutions can be mixed at stronger dilutions. Potassium dichromate can also be used, but should only be diluted with acetone. To spirit sensitize a sheet of carbon tissue do the following.

Prepare a dichromate stock solution of 3X the strength necessary. For example, if you need a final strength of 2% prepare a dichromate stock solution of 6%. Then, dilute 1 part of the stock solution of dichromate with 2 parts of the spirit, either acetone or alcohol).

First, place several sheets of newspaper on a cork or foam board. Then, pin the tissue to the board to keep it from moving when brushing.

Figure 10 – Pinning down the tissue in preparation for spirit sensitizing. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)



Brush the sensitizer on the tissue using a foam brush. Use a one-inch wide brush for 4X5” and 5X7” tissues, a two-inch wide brush for 8X10” tissue, and a three-inch wide brush for tissue 11X14 and larger.

To coat, first wet the brush in clean water and shake out the excess. Then, pour the required amount of sensitizer directly on the tissue and brush it on: first, brush with parallel strokes on the long dimension; then repeat the process on the short dimension; and finally brush over on the diagonal.

Figure 11 – The author brushing on the spirit sensitizer in subdued light at a workshop in Toronto. (Image courtesy of Mike Robinson)

Allow the tissue to surface dry and then brush on a second coating. To coat twice you will need approximately 8ml of total solution for an 8X10 tissue, using 4 ml for each coating. Adjust accordingly for other sizes.

After the second coating place the tissue on a drying rack or hang to dry. Drying can be accelerated by directing the air from a fan on the tissue.

Whether the tissue is sensitized in a tray or with a spirit sensitizer it must be completely dry before it is placed in contact with a negative, otherwise the two could stick together, causing serious damage to the negative.

NEGATIVES FOR CARBON PRINTING

Carbon printing is quite flexible and changing the strength of the dichromate sensitizer allows for use negatives with widely varying density ranges, from as low as log 0.9 to as high as log 2.7 and even higher. In my experience, however, the best negatives for carbon are those with a high density range which maximize the very long scale and straight-line characteristics of the carbon process. This type of negative also maximizes the relief potential of the media when combined with the right type of tissue. The optimum negative will have a DR of about 1.8 (with a range from about .30 to 2.10) and exposure should be sufficient to get as much shadow detail as possible off the toe and into the straight line of the film's characteristic curve. As a general rule negatives for carbon printing exposed under normal lighting conditions should be developed about 1.5 times as long as would be required for silver negatives exposed under similar lighting conditions. Since increased development times also increases shadow density the EFS (effective film speed) of the film should also be increased slightly, generally about one-fourth to one-half over the manufacturer's ISO rating of the film.

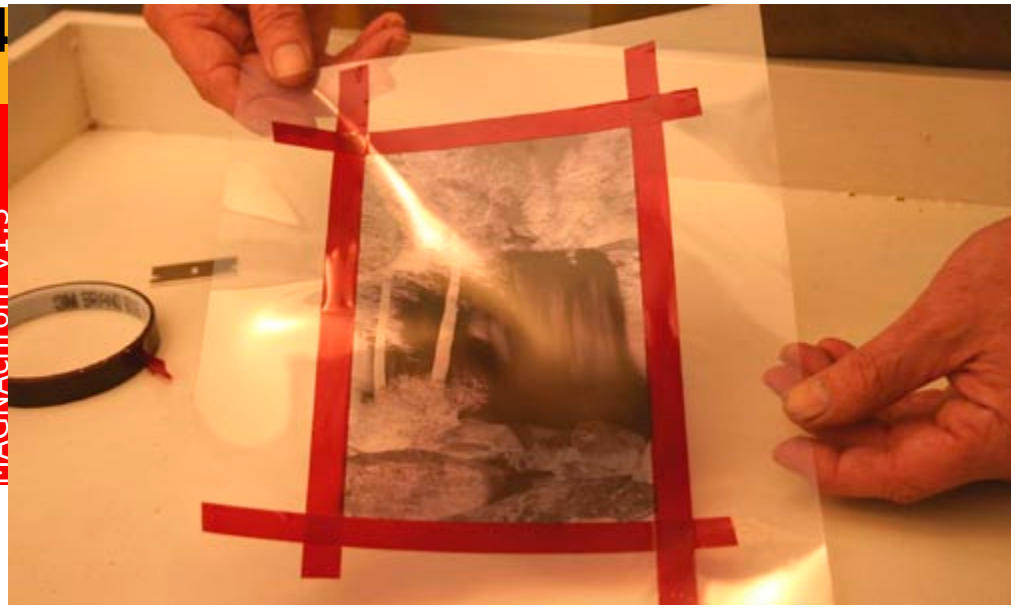
Much of my present work is with digital negatives. The use of digital negatives allows one to standardize procedures and can greatly increase productivity. In making digital negatives I use Mark Nelson's Precision Digital Negative system and print on Pictorico OHP with an Epson 2200 printer. The quality of my work with digital negatives closely approximates the quality I get from in-camera negatives.

EXPOSING THE SENSITIZED TISSUE

Carbon tissue sensitized with dichromate has its maximum sensitivity in the UV and violet at about 350-420 nm. Its sensitivity extends through the blue but falls off very rapidly in the green to about 515nm. It has virtually no sensitivity to orange and red light. In practice carbon tissue is exposed with a source rich in UV light, such as the sun, mercury vapor and metal halide lamps, banks of BL (black-light) fluorescent tubes, and to the carbon arc, metal halide, pulsed xenon and continuous wave xenon plate burners made for the graphic arts. Each system has its advantages and disadvantages, but when used properly all are capable of good results. For the handy there are a number of relatively inexpensive artificial light sources that can be put together or assembled from materials available at your local garden and home supply store. Consult the references for more information.

Sensitized carbon tissue should be exposed with a contact printing frame capable of exerting very firm pressure, or better, with a vacuum easel. The dry tissue can be very stiff and requires a lot of pressure to maintain good contact with the negative. Mask around the edges of the negative with lithographic tape to create a safe edge of about 1/4". Failure to mask the negative may result in frilling during warm-water development.

Figure 12 – Masking the negative with a saf-edge. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)



If the final image is to be made with the single transfer process the negative should be reversed for correct orientation of the final image. To reverse the negative, just sandwich it with its base side in contact with the emulsion. In double transfer the final orientation of the print will be correct if the emulsion of the negative is placed in contact with the emulsion of the tissue. If it is necessary to reverse the negative some loss of sharpness should be anticipated, greater with a diffuse light source such as a bank of UV tubes, least with semi-collimated and point-light sources.

Exposure times in carbon printing will vary significantly according to tissue type and light source. I expose carbon with two different light sources, a UV bank of twelve 48” BL fluorescent tubes spaced at about 4” from the printing frame, and an AmerGraph ULF-28 Continuous Wave Xenon. Under these conditions typical printing times for well-exposed and developed negatives range from about three to fifteen minutes, with the major variable the tissue itself. The AmerGraph ULF-28 prints on average slightly more than twice as fast than the bank of BL tubes.

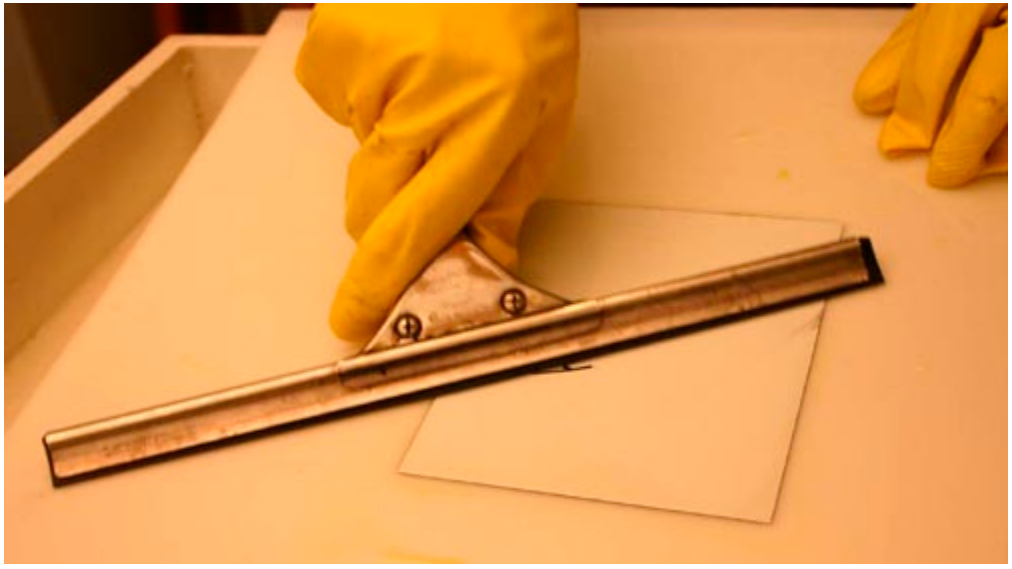
Figure 13 – Exposing carbon tissue with the AmerGraph ULF-28 Continuous Wave Xenon light.

TRANSFER TO FINAL OR TEMPORARY SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT

After exposure the carbon tissue must be transferred to a final or temporary support for development in warm water. The support on which the carbon image is developed must be somewhat larger than the tissue. Paper supports should be soaked for a minute or so in a tray of water at about 60-65°F before mating with the sensitized and exposed tissue. After exposure, place the carbon tissue in the tray of cool water, along with the final or temporary support, and allow it to soak for about a minute. The tissue should be brought into contact under water with the final or temporary support, then the sandwich is removed from the water and allowed to drain for a few seconds. Place the sandwich on a sheet of plate glass, tissue uppermost, and squeegee out the excess water, applying gradually increasing pressure with the squeegee. Blot off the water from around the edges, place the sandwich on a sheet of clean blotting paper, cover with a sheet of place glass and let stand under pressure for about 20-30 minutes.

Figure 14 – Under water mate the tissue with its final support, emulsion to emulsion. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

Figure 15 – Squeegeeing the exposed and wetted tissue to its final support. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)



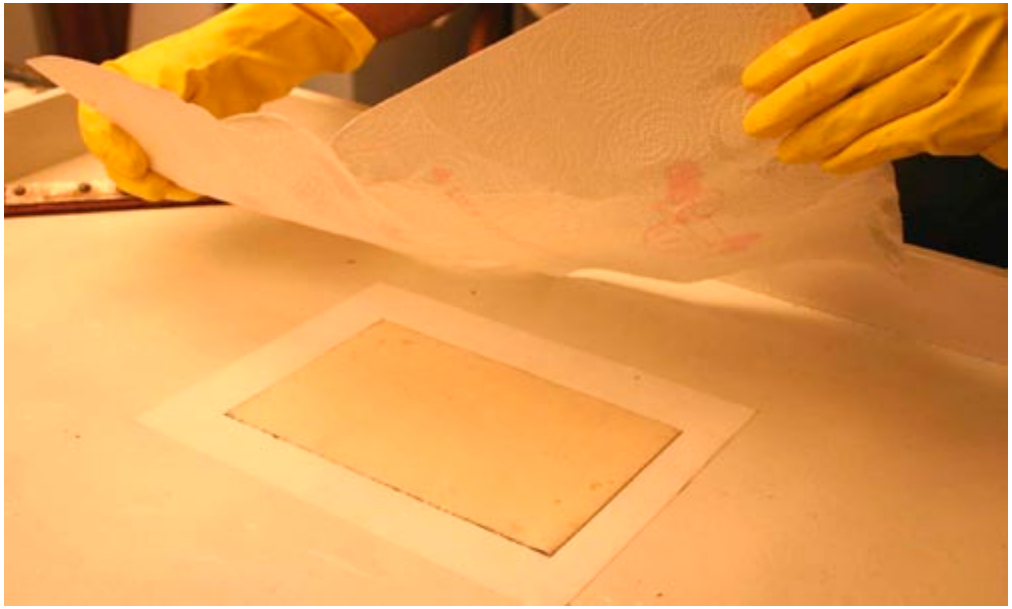


Figure 16 – Place sheet of blotting paper over the tissue/final support sandwich. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

Figure 17 – Placing plate glass and weight over the tissue/support sandwich. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

WARM WATER DEVELOPMENT OF THE CARBON IMAGE

The next step is development in warm water. Transfer the tissue/support sandwich to a tray of warm water at about 110-20° F. In a minute or so the soluble gelatin will begin to melt and start to ooze out at the edges of the tissue. You should now strip the tissue from the support: starting at one corner, lift the tissue and gently pull it off the support with an upward motion. Discard the tissue.

Figure 18 – Transfer of the carbon tissue on final support to warm water for development. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

Figure 19 – Strip tissue from support in warm water development. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

At this point you will not see an image but a mass of melting, oozing pigment. To clear the image agitate it in the warm water with a gentle rocking and shaking motion, occasionally lifting it from the water to drain for a few seconds. After about 4 minutes most of the insoluble gelatin will have washed away and you will have a good view of the image.

Figure 20 – Most of the insoluble gelatin has washed away about 4-6 minutes. (Image courtesy of Sam Wang)

Continue to agitate as before, lifting the print from time to time to drain. The print should be fully developed in 6-10 minutes, at which point the drain water should be clear.

There is no precise ending point to development with carbon printing so if the print is too dark after 6-10 minutes continue development in the warm water until it looks right to the eye. With extended development of 30-60 minutes it is possible to further reduce the density of the print by as much as 1/2 to one full stop.

Carbon prints have some dry down, though relatively speaking not nearly as much as Pt./Pd. Therefore, continue development until the highlights are just a bit lighter than they should appear on the final print.

After development is judged complete transfer the print to a tray of cool water (50-60°F.) and continue agitation for a minute or so, lifting it out of the water several times to drain. Leave the print in the cool water for 2-4 minutes to allow the gelatin to set, then hang it up to dry.

Veiled margins and other pigmented gelatin residue left around the borders of the print may be removed from the print by carefully rubbing these areas with a clean sponge.

CLEARING THE PRINT

Prints developed on a final paper support will have an overall yellow stain from the dichromate sensitizer. To remove this stain, soak the print in a 3% solution of sodium bisulfite or potassium metabisulfite for 5-10 minutes, or until the dichromate stain clears. Always allow the print to dry before clearing because the relief image, which is extremely delicate following development, is further softened by the clearing agents, and blistering or reticulation of the image is possible. After clearing, rinse the print in running water at 60-70° F. for 5-10 minutes. The print is now chemically stable and ready to be mounted for presentation, unless some retouching is required.

Carbon reliefs developed on plastic with the double transfer do not require clearing as the dichromate has no way of leeching into the plastic support.

TRANSFER OF THE IMAGE FROM TEMPORARY TO FINAL SUPPORT

When printing with the double transfer procedure we must transfer the relief on its temporary plastic support to a final support. The most reliable support for the double transfer procedures is a paper support sized with a layer of relatively soft gelatin, as previously described. To make the transfer, first soak the final paper in water at about 65-70° F for 5-10 minutes. When the gelatin has swollen, which will be recognized by a soft, slimy feel to the paper, it is time to make the transfer. Now, soak the image on its plastic temporary carrier for 30-45 seconds in the same tray of water, then bring the two into contact under water. Transfer the sandwich to a flat surface, paper support uppermost and gently squeegee the back of the paper support to remove all water. Place blotting paper or a clean

towel over the paper and cover it with a sheet of plate glass. After about 10-15 minutes remove the sandwich and place it on a drying rack, or hang it to dry. Depending will take several hours, or with heavy final support papers, even overnight. When dry the paper, which now carries the image, should peel easily from the plastic. In fact, it may do this on its own as it dries. If all has gone well there should have been a complete transfer of the image from the temporary plastic support to the final paper support. You should re-soak the image in cool water for 5-10 minutes to remove the gloss, then hang to dry.

FINAL FINISHING

The thick gelatin layer of carbon photographs can cause heavy curling and wrinkling of the print. A dry mount press can be used to flatten out the print. To flatten, warm up the dry mount press to about 180-200° F and place the print in the press between two sheets of clean board and leave for 1-2 minutes. Remove the print from the press and place it under pressure for 20-30 minutes to cool and then store it flat under light pressure. Another solution is to just place the print between two flat surfaces for a week or so, with light pressure applied with some type of weight.

Retouching prints

If any retouching is needed I recommend the use of tube watercolors. Tube watercolors are available in a wide range of colors and unless you are using a very unusual color it should not be difficult to match the color of the tissue.

SOME COMMON FAULTS AND THEIR REMEDIES

Most problems in carbon printing can be traced and corrected without great difficulty. Good record keeping is a great asset in figuring out what went wrong. Below are the most common causes and solutions.

1. Tissue is so stiff and curled that it is impossible to maintain good contact with the negative

Cause: This results from prolonged drying of the tissue in conditions of low humidity.

Solution: Once the tissue has dried store it flat under pressure until it is time to expose.

2. Negative will not separate from the tissue after exposure

Cause: The tissue was not sufficiently dry or a bit of water splashed on either the tissue or the negative before they were placed together in the printing frame. This is a very serious situation that may result in damage to the negative. To eliminate this danger I recommend the use of a thin sheet of Mylar between the tissue and negative during exposure.

Solution: Do not use the tissue until it is completely dry, and avoid splashing water around the tissue and negative. Further, I recommend the use of a thin sheet of protective Mylar between the tissue and negative during exposure.

3. The image floats off or frills during warm water development

Cause: The most likely cause is that the paper support or the tissue (or both) absorbed too much water before being squeegeed together

Solution: Reduce soaking time of the tissue and the paper support to about a minute and keep the soak water at 60-68°F or lower.

4. It is impossible to separate the tissue from the transfer support during warm water development

Cause: The most common cause is gross overexposure of the tissue, which results in hardening the gelatin all the way to the base of the support.

Solution: Expose the tissue for the correct amount of time.

5. Most or all of the pigmented/ gelatin relief washes off the support during warm water development

Cause: The tissue was underexposed, or perhaps received no exposure at all

Solution: Expose the tissue for the proper amount of time.

6. The image frills around the edges during development

Cause: There are several possible causes. The most likely cause is that the negative was not masked to provide an adequate safe edge. Frilling can also be caused by inadequate blotting of the tissue/support sandwich around the edges. It can also result from the tissue and support being left in contact for an inadequate amount of time and the gelatin does not dry out enough to establish good adhesive contact with the support.

Solution: Mask the negative to provide a safe edge, blot up all excess moisture from around the edges of the tissue and leave the tissue/support sandwich under pressure for more time.

7. Small irregular blisters on the final image

Cause: Air under pressure in the water is trapped between the tissue and the support. During warm water development the air bells expand, causing small bubbles to develop.

Solution: Prepare the transfer water well in advance to allow for the dissipation of air under pressure.

8. The final image contains streaks

Cause: In the home manufacture of tissue one will find that certain pigments, most notably some varieties of lampblack, can cause slight streaking on the face of the tissue. This apparently results from a small residue of oil in the pigment. If this problem occurs, eliminate the guilty pigment. The problem can also result from inadequate dispersion of the pigments within the gelatin solution.

Solution: Disperse the pigment thoroughly in the gelatin solution and eliminate the pigment(s) causing the problem. Always strain the pigmented/gelatin solution before coating.

9. Shiny specks on the print

Cause: Shiny specks are caused by slight irregularities in the gelatin sizing of the final support.

Solution: Apply a thinner gelatin coating, or decrease the gelatin percentage in the solution, or add a small amount of starch to the sizing solution to cut the gloss.

10. The final image has a yellow stain

Cause: The yellow stain is most likely residual dichromate from the sensitizer.

Solution: Carbon prints made by the single transfer process should be cleared by soaking in a clearing bath such as sodium bisulfite or potassium metabisulfite, followed by a wash of several minutes in running water.

11. The image is too dark

Cause: The image was overexposed or the sensitizer was diluted too much.

Solution: Reduce exposure.

12. The image is too light

Cause: The image was underexposed.

Solution: Expose longer.

13. The image is too contrasty

Cause: The sensitizer was too weak.

Solution: Use a stronger sensitizer.

14. The image is too flat

Cause: The sensitizer was too strong.

Solution: Use a more diluted sensitizer.

PHOTOGRAPHIC CREDITS

The photographs used in this article, other than those of the author, were provided by Mike Robison and Sam Wang.

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Consult the following sources for more information about carbon printing.

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WORKSHOPS ON CARBON PRINTING

Carbon printing workshops are sponsored by Photographers' Formulary in Condon, Montana, as part of Workshops in Montana, a series of workshops on the alternative processes.

In 2007 Sandy King is scheduled to teach a carbon work June 10-15. See www.photoformulary.com/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabindex=3&tabid=10 for more details about the Formulary Workshops in Montana.

The author of this article also conducts one-on-one workshops. For details contact Sandy King at sanking@clemson.edu.

SELECT LIST OF SUPPLIERS

The following suppliers offer chemicals, papers and pigments used in carbon printing

Art Craft Chemicals
P. O. Box 583
Schenectady, NY 12301
Phone: 800.682.1730

www.artcraftchemicals.com

(chemicals and gelatin)

Daniel Smith
4150 First Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98124-5568
Phone: 800.426.6740

www.danielsmith.com

(support papers, Sumi ink)

Bostick & Sullivan
P. O. Box 16639
Santa FE, NM 87506
Phone: 505.474.0890

www.bostick-sullivan.com

(chemicals, gelatin, support papers and carbon tissue)

Photographers' Formulary
P. O. Box 950
Condon, MT 59826
Phone: 800.922.5255

www.photoformulary.com

(chemicals, gelatin and support papers)

Professional Color Carbon Printing Services

Although there is no source for color carbon tissue at this time there are still a few enterprising and talented individuals who continue to print in this extraordinary beautiful and stable media. At the risk of leaving out some important names my current information includes the following persons who have great mastery of color carbon printing.

Gerard Anière — Gerard is a Frenchman who has made his home in Cornwall for many years. He is an expert printmaker in many alternative processes, including cyanotype, salt, albumin, dye transfer and gum. An exhibition of his color carbro prints in New York in 2003 attracted much attention. He makes all of his materials by hand.

John Bentley — John is a Canadian who lives in Toronto. He is an expert color carbon printer whose work may be found at the John Stephens Gallery in New York. His color carbon prints are characterized by superb control of color and great dimensional qualities. His color carbon prints have great relief, in some cases rivaling the relief seen in well-made color carbro prints.

Tod Gangler — Tod operates Art & Soul in Seattle, Washington. Art & Soul specializes in the pigment transfer or color carbon print, and also offers scanning, image editing and other printing services. One of Tod's most interesting projects at this time is a limited editions in color carbon of original carbro prints of Frida Kahlo made by Nickolas Muray. Tod has been working in color carbon since the early 1980s, and although he used for a time the Ultrastable color printing materials he now coats all of his own tissue. For information about the history of color carbon printing and to see some of Tod's work go to www.colorcarbonprint.com.

Hans and Chia — Hans and Chia is a husband-wife team (Hans Nohlberg & Chia N-Löfqvist Hedåsgatan) who operate a fine arts printing service in Göteborg, Sweden. In addition to monochrome and color carbon they also offer printing services in palladium and platinum, gum bichromate, and color and B&W inkjet. For information about their work see www.pictoform.nu/pages/frameset.html

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sandy King has printed with the carbon process since the early 1980s, first in tri-color carbon and carbro, and more recently, exclusively in monochrome. He is widely recognized as one of the current masters of carbon printing and has taught numerous group and one-on-one-one workshops on carbon printing both in the US and abroad.

Sandy focuses on alternative printing processes and has numerous publications on the subject, including articles on carbon in Coming into Focus, Photo Vision and View Camera magazine, and on kallitype, pyro staining developers and UV light sources in on-line photography journals such as www.unblinkingeye.com and www.alternativephotography.com. He has a monograph on carbon printing, The Book of Carbon and Carbro: Contemporary Procedures for Pigment Printmaking. Greenville, SC: Permanent Light Systems, 1999, 2nd edition 2002. Sandy has also experiments with developer formulation and his technical article on pyro staining developers, "An Introduction to Pyro Staining Developers", originally published in English at www.unblinkingeye.com, has been translated and published in on-line journals in the French and Russian languages.

Sandy is a landscape photographer who works primarily with large format and ultra large format equipment and prints almost exclusively with alternative printing processes, primarily carbon but also with kallitype and pt./pd.

In 2006 his work was shown at the APUG conference in Toronto (May), at the IFSAK Biennale in Istanbul Turkey, (October), and at Elevator Digital in Toronto (December).

He has been invited to join the Contact Printer's Guild and beginning in March 2007 will offer work for sale through this group.

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS

We have come to see the world as devoid of mystery, and with these images I hope to restore some sense of wonder about the world around us. There was once a greater sense of mystery in the world — sailors of long ago would tell tales of mysterious beasts in uncharted areas of the flat Earth. Hand-drawn maps had vast areas marked as “Unknown” and the darkest corners were marked with the wondrous phrase, “Here there be Dragons.”

Those days are gone now and the deep, dark secret places exist for us only inside our minds and in our imaginations. These photographs ask viewers to examine their interior lives, the secrets within themselves. My photos can act as a mirror into the viewer’s unconscious mind. One thing that can be said for certain is that my photographs provide an instantaneous visceral reaction in almost every viewer. I want the images to do this, to encourage people to look into their interior lives, and to become aware of the mystery and beauty of the world around them.

B.A. Bosaiya

Ascending to heaven on the wings of a demon

Why must we always destroy that which we love most

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS

I do not have to understand in order to forgive

The mermaid's tail

The bride's new gown

Gather 'round, children, the time has come at last

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS

If I Could Relive Just One Single Night

Your prayers are as silent snowflakes in the night

Memories of happiness fade in the blowing dust

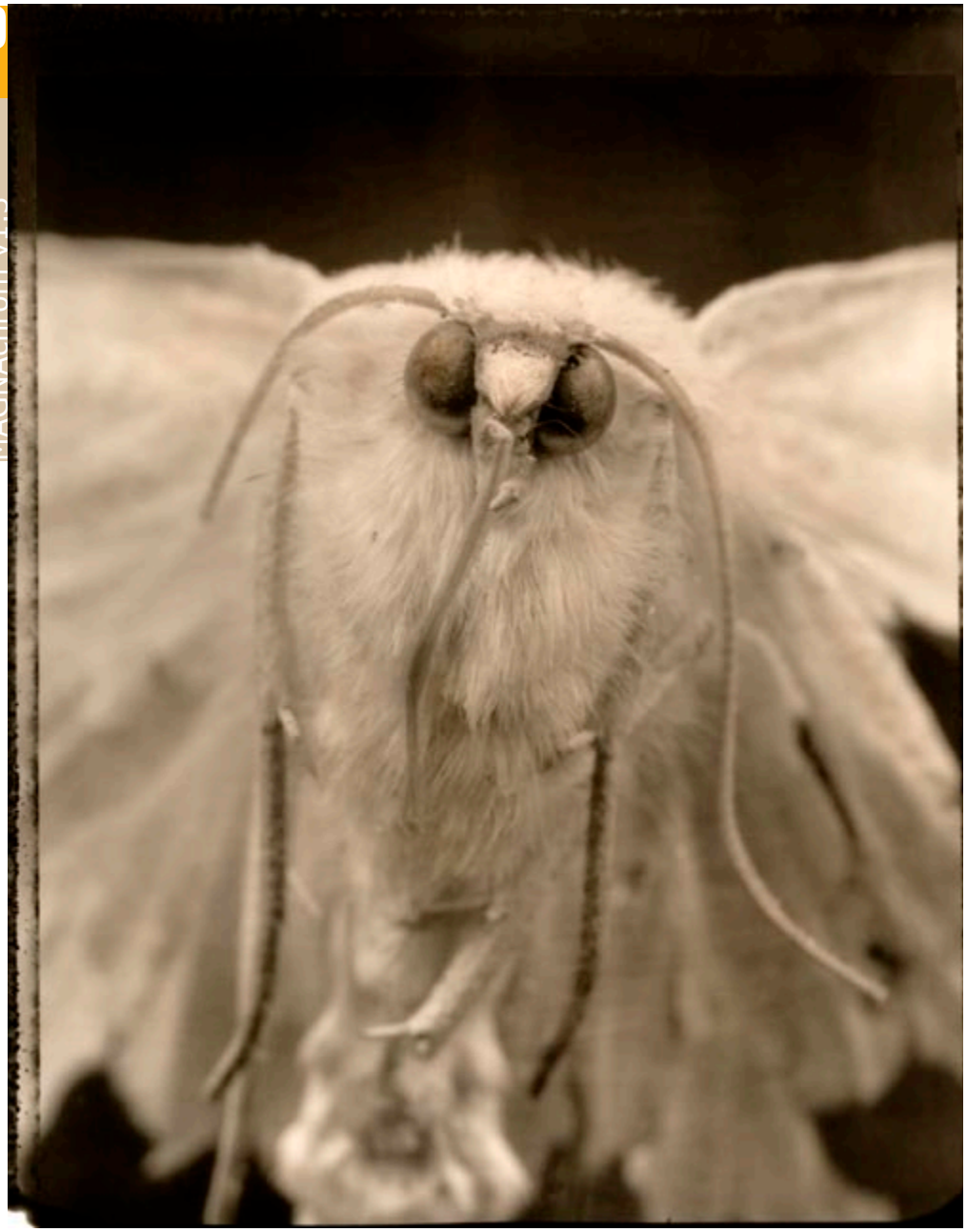
You Will Keep Your Promise In The End

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS

The Lights Burn Through The Curtain Like Falling Stars

Once Our Ship Has Sailed Into The Sunset, My Love

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS



Under The Softest Fur Lies The Sharpest Of Bones

And A Certain Foul Darkness Crept Up Upon The Land

B.A. BOSAIYA ANGELS AND INSECTS

Red Sails In The Sunset

I Am Born Aloft On Wings Of Love And Despair

About the Angels and Insects collection

My photography is deeply rooted in my love of cinema: Watching Sinbad do battle with saber-tooth tigers in Sinbad and the Seven Seas, the giant Harryhausen monsters which inhabited Mysterious Island, Mario Bava's psychedelic Hercules in the Underworld and the endless onslaught of anthropomorphized denizens of Monster Island sent by Toho to wreak havoc on a curiously unsuspecting Tokyo kept my youthful Sunday afternoons occupied with imaginative flights of fancy. At the same time my father encouraged me to watch movies that were beyond my comprehension at the time and I was steeped in Northern European existentialism, French avant-garde and American noir. Then again he also took me to see Jaws while vacationing in Montauk one summer.

It may seem odd to make the jump from films steeped in the human condition to photos of magnified insects, but for me the connection is real. I approach my subjects with the intent of conveying all of the emotion and expression that I can conjure from them. For me they are creatures of great feeling and contemplation, at least on the surface. The subjects, insects instead of human beings, provide me a way of exploring the ideas and emotions that can be difficult when doing portraiture with a human face — people tend to get caught up in the specifics of the person.

Working in black and white allows me to explore these ideas in an even more dissociated way. With the absence of color comes the appreciation of tone, line and form. The same subjects are rendered differently. In my photographic subjects I use a similar approach — abstracting aspects of humanity through the looking glass of other-worldly creatures, hopefully achieving something more human than human, as it were.

Of course on an empathic level no one is going to confuse one of my photos with a still of Klaus Kinski from Aguirre, but my goal — what I strive for — is to capture with my view camera the depth and intensity of the human spirit that Werner Herzog seems to so effortlessly capture with his cinema lens. I'm hoping that the pathos I intend comes through on some level.

For me there is the idea, the drive, to take things that are almost universally considered unattractive and to turn them into something that can be seen as beautiful. This collection gives me an opportunity to share that view. There is the old optical illusion of a woman which from one angle looks like an old crone but when flipped around mentally looks like a beautiful young woman. My job is take the old crone and show people how to see the beautiful young woman. She's there, you just have to know how to look right. From a certain angle and in a certain light all things are beautiful.

When I made that realization, I felt as if I had finally lost touch with the innocence and wonder of childhood. I had raced so far and fast to become grown-up that I had lost all sense of wonder.

Equally important to me is what I allude to in my artist statement about the disappearance of mystery from the world. From a young age I took a keen interest in the sciences and could name a line of plastic dinosaurs two rooms long before I could say a proper sentence and I could identify constellations and solar systems before I could cross the street on my own. I studied the sciences all my life and enjoyed the act of classifying and categorizing things in the natural world. As time went on I had a growing feeling inside me that every time I learned something's name, learned about the species and where it was from, where it fit in with the rest of the animal or plant kingdom, all of the details that you can find in so many books, documentaries and even trading cards, that some small part of my world disappeared forever.

I saw the world around me and felt like the mystery that used to

exist when both the world and I were young was slipping away like grains of sand through my fingers. There were no unicorns in enchanted glades like in the books I read as a child. There were no gnomes living in toadstools, no sprites in the deep forest nor dragons deep in the sea. Everything in the world had been organized, categorized and put in scientifically proper hierarchical order. When I made that realization I felt as if I had finally lost touch with the innocence and wonder of childhood. I had raced so far and fast to become grown-up that I had lost all sense of wonder.

The first time my children stood and leaned against a tree, feeling the bark under their hands and gazing up and realizing just how BIG those things really were... that was a profound thing for me to witness. To a child the head of a dandelion is not an indication that more weeding needs to be done, rather it is a magical glimpse into the world of the unknown. I felt like I desperately wanted to recapture that feeling. Once I realized what I was missing I was able to touch part of it, it wasn't gone forever, just buried under a ever thickening layer of jaded dust in need of a good cleaning. These photos help to bring back that sense of wonder for me.

When you look at the creatures in the photos, and they are actual photos of real things — not paintings like on the covers of the dime-store sci-fi and fantasy books I used to lose myself in, and you can see them staring right back into your eyes, those creatures of myth and legend are real. They are inhabiting the world with us. We are not the lone masters of the world, we share it with many other wondrous beings. These photos provide an immediate and accessible window into that world that used to exist for me as a child.

In retrospect exploring the themes of human emotion — particularly sadness and isolation, through the black and white photography of insects doesn't seem like such a stretch.

Most of my subjects are victims of my front porch light, its bright glow a siren song to the sailors of the night air. Others are found on the dusty, ill-lit, spider-patrolled windowsills of my back steps. Their lifeless bodies are gathered periodically and I begin each photo session by picking through to find the subjects that stand out most to me — sometimes the specimens are perfectly preserved, other times there is more missing than present. I do almost no pre-planning of my photos; rather I find a subject, examine it to find its personality, then place, light and photograph it. The entire process is self-evident and almost automatic, as if the subjects are telling me what to do; I merely facilitate their spectral will. It is very rare for me to use a subject again in more than one photo, although a few of them have shown up repeatedly.

All of my photos are shot on a custom-modified Sinar large format camera using Polaroid sheet film. The ability to see the subject magnified on the ground glass is truly amazing and infinitely helpful. The large format movements allow me to control all aspects of focus and I make considerable use of those movements. The Sinar cameras in particular have the excellent ability to easily make the fine adjustments that are so necessary to macro-photography. The instant proofing of the Polaroid positive gives immediate feedback and allows me to easily catalog my collections. The slow Polaroid negative is nothing short of beautiful to work with. I have tried using other film in the past but refuse to use anything else until there is no alternative. The world of fine art photography will suffer a great loss should that film be discontinued.

I hope you have enjoyed looking at these photos as much as I have enjoyed making them.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOPS 2007

Workshop listings are free to individual artists and mentors. To be included in this or any future issue of MAGNAchrom, send email to editor@magnachrom.com and we'll be sure to place your announcement in the very next issue.

Note: announcements of workshops for full-time schools and other professional institutions are not free but can be inserted for a fee.

Given that MAGNAchrom is a journal that is dedicated to medium and large format photography, we will give preference to those workshops that actively encourage students to use medium and/or large format equipment. To the extent that you can mention that in your listing will assist us and our readers greatly.

USA

Complete Photographic Process *for Black and White: from the camera to the fine print. May 13-18 2007 qnd Sep 30 - Oct 5, 2007. Contact Bruce Barnbaum: www.barnbaum.com*

Jackson Hole Wyoming, *expressive B/W photography from the field to the finished photograph, integrating photographic intuition, expressive forms, spectacular field sites, and hands-on printing to enhance all the skills and techniques required to produce fine B/W photographs. August 23-27, 2007. Contact Jackson Hole Art Association: www.artassociation.org*

Shore Acres, *the "Point Lobos of Oregon" and the Oregon Coast provide the field locations for this workshop by Don Kirby and Stu Levy. Sep 7-11, 2007. $550US. Contact Don at don@donkirbyphotography.com*

The Photographic Portrait
With Martha Casanave

June 22-24 2007 Tuition $225US plus $20US lab fee Open to 10 students

Who would dispute the statement that having your picture taken is an unnatural act? This workshop works with, through and around this reality rather than trying to deny it. The goals of this practical, nuts and bolts workshop are to assist participants in:

- *Dealing with the sitter's discomfort*
- *Helping sitters to pose naturally*
- *Dealing with one's own nervousness*
- *Learning to read and use non-verbal communication to enhance the portrait process*
- *Developing and honing a sense of timing with the shutter*
- *Learning to assess and use natural lighting*
- *Methodically building a pleasing composition*
- *Making the sitting into a collaboration*
- *Choosing the sitter's appropriate clothing*
- *Posing groups*

This workshop will include readings, lively discussion, camera work and an on-location demonstration of an environmental portrait using Polaroid materials, during which Casanave and participants will methodically design a portrait from scratch.

Visit Mart's website at www.marthacasanave.com

EUROPE

Ireland: Mayo and Donegal
September 22 to October2, 2007
Contact Lance Keimig:
lance@thenightskye.com

This year, my Ireland photo tour will include 3 days and nights in County Donegal, as well as a week in County Mayo. This trip will provide opportunities for both day and night photography (the full moon occurs on September 26). September is one of the best times to travel to Ireland, the summer crowds are gone, and the weather is usually some of the best of the year. Please join me on this exciting adventure to the North and West of Ireland. $2795US

A Photographic and Cultural Adventure to Skye and Orkney
June 23 to July 5, 2007
Contact Lance Keimig:
lance@thenightskye.com

Highlights: Photograph and explore the diverse landscape of the Isle of Skye. Endless summer evenings on Orkney, with it's perpetual twilight and megalithic sites. Accommodations on Skye in a mountain lodge and a Victorian manor house on Orkney. Excellent Scottish meals and local seafood. Maximum of 12 participants. $2595US

REVIEW: EBONY SW23

Just about everything in life is a compromise, and choosing a camera is no exception. For me, the Ebony SW23 is as close to having my photographic cake and eating it too as I am ever likely to get...

Text and Photos by Lance Keimig

EBONY SW23

Text and Photos by Lance Keimig

The evolutionary process that has taken place in my camera bag over the last twenty years is as follows: 35mm (a logical beginning), Yashicamat (it was a gift), Pentax 67 (a logical progression), 4x5 (bigger is better, right?), Fuji 645s (3 different fixed lens rangefinders, smaller is easier to carry!), Mamiya 6 (I've always seen in squares), Hasselblad (met almost all of my needs), the search for a Hasselblad Arc system (obsolete, limited, and scarce) and finally, the Ebony.

Camera shown here at 100% scale

EBONY SW23

I eventually settled on the Ebony SW23 because it is really the only camera that offers a relatively full range of view camera movements, sets up quickly and easily, takes up about the same amount of space as my previous Hasselblad outfit, and costs less than a gazillion dollars. The other cameras I considered were the Linhof and Horseman technical cameras which were less flexible, and in the case of the Linhof, much more expensive, and the Arca Swiss F Classic Compact, a monorail camera which is heavier and considerably more expensive.
The Ebony SW23 is a very compact 6x9 cm non-folding view camera that is designed primarily for wide angle lenses, making it particularly well suited to architectural and landscape photography- which is the type of photography that I mainly do. I also tend to photograph at night, and in low light situations, and I travel frequently, so I needed a camera that was easy to set up and lightweight. I needed a camera that had the movements of a view camera, utilized roll film, had a bright viewfinder, and was lighter and more compact than a 4x5 camera with a roll film back.

Elegantly designed by Mr. Hiromi Sakanashi (who founded the company in 1981) and built by hand in Japan, the camera is as beautiful as it is functional and durable. Like most Ebony cameras, the SW23 is made entirely of quarter sawn Indonesian Macassar Ebony heartwood and titanium for strength and durability. Every piece of the camera is machined in the Ebony workshop to a tolerance of .1 millimeter, even the screws that hold the camera together are specifically manufactured for Ebony cameras. Ebony also has a long tradition of customizing and also custom building cameras to meet customers specific needs.

Camera shown here at 100% scale

EBONY SW23

The camera accepts lenses from 45 to 150 millimeters in focal length without accessories. Longer lenses can be accommodated with extension boards, and 35 or 38mm lenses can be used with a recessed board. (In practice, I have found that it is easier to use my 45 mm Grandagon with a recessed board.) The camera uses Linhof type 4x5 lensboards, which are plentiful and relatively inexpensive. Ebony makes a wide variety of accessories for the SW23, including an extension back that adds rear tilt to the camera's capabilities in addition to the ability to utilize longer lenses, extension lensboards, an instant film back for pack film, and a wonderfully designed lens shade clip.

Medium format view cameras are a highly specialized breed to begin with, and Ebony's non-folding field camera version is truly unique. In my experience, getting most field cameras open and set up is an exercise not unlike solving a Rubik's cube. The SW23 is ready to go straight out of the camera bag. Once mounted on the tripod, the camera only needs to be leveled and focused before it's ready for action.

The lens and film planes collapse to 2 1/4 inches on a base that is only 3 inches deep. This allows for a most lenses to remain on the camera when stowed, and not protrude beyond the base. The camera weighs just under 3 pounds which is remarkably light considering its rigidity. For comparison, the carbon fiber Toyo CF weighs 3 pounds 10 ounces, and is much less stable. The SW23's closest competitor, The Arca Swiss F Classic compact weighs almost 5 pounds, and will cost you an extra $1000, not including essential accessories.

For more information on this and other Ebony cameras and accessories check out Ebony's website at www.ebonycamera.com

EBONY SW23

The SW23 accepts all Graphic Standard or Graflok style backs. (Horseman, Mamiya RB, and others) It is possible to buy and adapter that will enable you to use a digital back with any of the Ebony 6x9 view cameras, but not surprisingly, they are quite expensive. The interchangeable back is easily changed from horizontal to vertical positions, and the cleverly hinged focusing screen sings out of the way to accommodate a film back without being removed. This feature has both advantages and disadvantages. The fixed back reduces the risk of breakage due to dropping the focusing screen when exchanging it for a film back, and it is also faster and easier to work with than a removable back. The main disadvantage is that during windy conditions or long exposures, the focusing screen swings freely when used it he horizontal position. This is less of an issue when taking vertical photographs, because the focusing screen opens downward, and usually rests on a tripod handle. The focusing screen comes with a fairly bright fresnel lens, and there is an optional wide angle fresnel that in my opinion should be standard on this camera. I have installed a Maxwell fresnel in my camera that is so much brighter than the standard fresnel that Mr. Sakanishi commented on it when my camera was in his shop for repair. Again, the supplied fresnel is perfectly adequate, but since I photograph primarily in low light situations, I needed the brightest screen available.

The fixed bellows is extremely supple, and easily accommodates the generous camera movements without obstructing the lens. (It smells great too.) The camera features double draw rack and pinion focusing, which allows for both front and rear standard focusing. All of the camera's adjustments are easy to operate, smooth, precise, and secure. The SW23 has a full range of camera movements on the front standard, and rise only on the rear. I have found that the range of movements is more than adequate, and the lack of swing, tilt, and shift on the rear is rarely missed, as these movements are mainly used in the studio. The rise and tilt movements are secured with different knurled titanium knobs, and shift and swing are secured with a locking lever. The rise and shift are not geared, but slide easily,

Camera shown here at 100% scale

EBONY SW23

and have zero position alignment points on the camera body. The swing and tilt have firm zero detents. There are two well positioned spirit levels attached to the body that make easy work of leveling the camera, although they are not the ingenious two way mirrored level mounted on top of some of the other Ebony models. There is an accessory shoe mount on top of the lens standard that is designed to hold Ebony's lens shade clip, but will also accept a flash if for some reason you ever wanted to use on camera flash.

So, where are the compromises? For starters, the use of ebony wood is a compromise. It is the hardest, most expensive, and probably most difficult wood to work with. It splits easily, and must be drilled to extremely precise tolerances. Macassar ebony is also a threatened species, like most tropical hardwoods. On the other hand, it is the most durable and warp resistant wood available. Secondarily, it is a very beautiful wood, and one of the few woods that sink in water. Titanium is also expensive and difficult to work with. Aluminum would be much lighter and easier to machine, but much less rigid.

Bellows extension and base tilts have been compromised in favor of the non-folding design that is simpler and more compact than folding designs. The limited bellows extension is not really a major factor since it is possible to either add an extension back or extended lens board when lenses longer than 150 mm are required. People who use telephoto lenses more often than wide lenses should choose a different camera (The Ebony 23S, SV23 or SV23U2 come to mind). While base tilts are a useful feature as they maintain focus during adjustments, they also provide an opportunity for alignment errors that cause the focus problems typical with folding cameras. The available center tilt on the SW23 is more than I will ever use, and the minimal effort required to refocus is simply part of the image making process.

For me, the biggest compromise is not shooting sheet film when I often make very large prints. If I decided to shoot 4x5 instead, I would buy my camera's big brother, the Ebony SW45!

MC

Minuses:

- wide angle fresnel not standard
- no handle (and no room for one!)
- lack of ground glass protector
- expensive ($2000)

Pluses:

- rock solid stability
- extremely well designed and constructed
- very attractive camera
- accommodates very wide lenses without a recessed lens board or bag bellows
- very compact and lightweight, smallest and lightest 6x9 view camera
- focusing screen does not need to be removed to install film backs
- quick to set up and easy to use.
- fills a unique niche, purpose designed
- does everything it was designed to flawlessly
- very responsive and personal customer service
- Less expensive than competition
- A joy to use

Examples of two night photographs by Lance Keimig using the EBONY SW23.
You can see more of his work at www.thenightskye.com

Roundup: 4 Focusing Hoods

I don't know about you, but I've never owned the perfect focusing cloth. For the past 10 years I've lived with a hand-made cloth that my wife made for me. It has served me well. Constructed of lightweight black fabric with velcro attachments, it has been my one and only groundglass focusing aid over the years. But while it does the job, it also flaps helplessly in the breeze. In windy conditions, I've never been satisfied with it.

Fortunately several manufacturers have risen to the occasion and today offer custom-fitting focusing hoods that address many of the shortcomings of mere focus cloths. As such, I was really looking forward to this review so I could once and for all find the "perfect" focusing accessory.

One thing I should make clear up-front: all four of the reviewed focusing hoods are very good — there is no one perfect design. Much depends upon your camera back and your style of shooting. In the case of my Linhof Technikardan, only one of the four fit its tight rear standard without allowing any light in. Your mileage may vary.

For those of you with technical-style cameras, you are in luck as all four focusing hoods work ideally with such square backs. So for you, it is simply a matter of size, weight, cost and features that should influence your decision to purchase.

I tested all four hoods on a cold winter day and as such, I cannot comment on how they perform in hot weather (rumor has it that focusing hoods are very hot in the summer sun). Be that as it may some conclusions can be made.

The number one feature of these hoods is a promise of a tight seal eliminating most extraneous light

which provides a photographer an enhanced focusing experience using his/her groundglass. I tested all four hoods on my Gaoersi point and shoot 4x5, Linhof Technikardan, and a friend's Linhof Technika. There is no doubt that the designers succeeded in making a technical camera a perfect fit — all four provided an excellent seal with such a design. However on both the Technikardan as well as the Gaoersi, only the diminutive Ted Burford hood was able to provide a completely light-free seal. In general, any view camera with a rail will always be problematic as the space between the rail and the groundglass back will allow a small amount of light in. In the case of BlackJacket, they now include a dual-purpose storage bag fitted with velcro that can be used as a "skirt" to block out such light.

For many people, their shooting style would favor them towards the **BlackJacket**, arguably the most unique of the four. With two "arms" that allow one to bring a hand or two into the dark enclosed space without allowing additional light more than makes up for its large size. Fortunately it is not particularly heavy and packs up fairly small. While I was impressed with the features, I'm not sure I personally need access to the camera back as much as others do.

I rather liked the lightweight **BTZS** hood in spite of the fact that the fabric was the least supple of the four. It just felt to be well-designed overall — you won't go wrong with this one.

GnassGear's focusing cloth was the tank of the four. Nearly bullet-proof in construction, it also weighed significantly more than the others. Without the benefit of elastic, the seal around the camera was the least effective. But with plenty of snaps and velcro, it also proved to be quite adaptable. This cloth was meant to last years and work with just about anything. Pretty sure this would also work with a 5x7 as is.

The surprise for me was **Ted Burford's** "teeny tiny" hood. Not much to look at, it is the smallest and lightest by far. Further as it uses a thin material and an elastic opening, it was the only one of the four to tightly fit all three of my test cameras.

Perhaps the best feature of all is that none of the four focusing hoods requires you to add velcro to your camera body. For me, this is a key feature and a major reason anyone who is serious about using a view camera should consider adding a focusing hood to their list of must-have accessories.

BlackJacket 4x5 Hybrid

For many people, their shooting style will favor them towards the BlackJacket, arguably the most unique of the four focusing hoods reviewed here. With two "arms" that allow one to bring a hand or two into the darkened enclosed space without allowing in additional light, more than makes up for its large size — the largest of the bunch. Fortunately it is not particularly heavy and packs up fairly compactly.

While I was impressed with the features, I'm not sure I personally need access to the camera back as much as others do, as my shooting style generally does not involve a loupe. Thus, I am somewhat ambivalent about the arms. Certainly looks cool though! Might also be useful if a sudden rain shower were to appear. The construction is top-grade and very durable.

The fabric was absolutely opaque. In spite of the poor fit with my Technikardan, I had no problem viewing the groundglass. Had I used the accessory "skirt" (doing double duty as the travel pocket) to block the openings, viewing inside would have been better. When used with a technical camera, it delivered a nearly light-tight seal.

Likes: opaque, supple, waterproof fabric. Arms are very useful when using a loupe or making rear adjustments. Quality construction and details. Packs up to a small package. Includes travel pocket.

Dislikes: does not create a completely light-tight environment with a rail camera. 4x5 model too small for a Technikardan. 4x5 model overkill for Gaoersi hand-held. Large.

Model	4x5 Hybrid Focus Cloth
Dimensions	1372mm x 965mm (54 in x 38 in)
Weight	(12? oz)
Color	Black inside, White/Silver outside
Material	2 outer materials: breathable white nylon taffeta & waterproof silver in the shape of a "jacket". Elastic opening with draw cord.
Price	$75.00 US
Contact	www.quietworks.com contact-us@quietworks.com 202.342.1915

BTZS 4x5 Focus Hood

There is absolutely nothing to dislike about the BTZS focus hood — it is nearly perfect. Clearly this was designed by people who make extensive use of large format cameras. Everything just "feels right" — not too small, not too big. I think most people will be very happy with this product. Additionally, the construction is top-grade and very durable. It was definitely one of my favorites.

The fabric was absolutely opaque, even in bright sunlight. In spite of the poor fit with my Technikardan, I had no problem viewing the groundglass. When used with a technical camera, it delivered a nearly light-tight seal. The elastic used in the opening will provide a viable rear seal on most view cameras.

Likes: opaque, waterproof fabric. Quality construction and details. Folds up to a small package. Comes in a variety of sizes for different format cameras.

Dislikes: does not create a completely light-tight environment with a rail camera. Fabric is not as supple as the other brands.

Model	4x5 Focus Hood
Dimensions	762mm x 508mm (30 in x 20 in)
Weight	(8? oz)
Color	Black inside, White outside
Material	plasticized, waterproof white fabric with elastic opening and velcro bottom
Price	$55.00 US
Contact	www.viewcamerastore.com 408.767.7105

GnassGear 4x5 Focusing Cloth

A much simpler design than some of the others, this product is half-way between a traditional focusing cloth and a focusing hood. However, with plenty of snaps and velcro it ends up being an amazingly adaptable product. And if you like things that are built like a tank, you will be thrilled with the GnassGear line of products.

One thing Gnass Gear did was use top-quality fabric, robust construction, and a no-fuss design. Anyone who is looking for a step up from their dark cloth need look no further than the GnassGear. The construction is top-grade and very durable. This product is especially suitable to larger cameras.

The fabric was absolutely opaque. Since there is no elastic, a completely light-tight seal is elusive. However, when used with a technical camera, it delivered an acceptbile seal.

Likes: opaque, supple fabric. Quality construction and details. Charcoal outer color does not blind you like silver or white fabric can. Extremely durable, likely to last a lifetime.

Dislikes: does not create a completely light-tight environment with a rail camera. 4x5 model simply way too big for Gaoersi hand-held — I cannot recommend it for use with small view cameras. Large. Heavy.

Model	4x5 Focusing Cloth
Dimensions	1067mm x 458mm (42 in x 18 in)
Weight	(12? oz)
Color	Black inside, Charcoal outside
Material	heavy, breathable polyester cloth with various snaps and velcro opening and bottom
Price	$40.00 US
Contact	www.gnassgear.com justin.gnass@gnassgear.com 530.894.5819

TedsPhotoGear 4x5 Focus Tube

This was the surprise of the four. Such as small, diminutive product doesn't stand a chance against the more-established, fancier-featured, "big brother" focusing hoods — or does it?

Well for starters, this is the only focus hood that can literally fold up and fit in your pant pocket. Due to its thin fabric and flexible elastic, it is able to fit around the rear groundglass frame of my Linhof Technikardan, avoiding the problem of having to deal with the space created by a focusing rail. The result of which is a light-tight fit on pretty much any 4x5 camera out there. I liked this design so much that I have a good mind to add a machined "lip" to the rear of my groundglass so that this focus tube could be permanently attached while allowing access to the film opening, eliminating the need to take your hood off when inserting film. I'll be sure to let you know if I do that.

Ted only sells his focus hoods (available in a variety of sizes) via his eBay website, and the transaction is simple and worry free.

Likes: supple, waterproof fabric. Smallest and lightest product of the four. Only product to provide a completely light-tight seal on all three test cameras. Comes in a variety of sizes for different format cameras.

Dislikes: Thin fabric is not 100% opaque to bright sunlight, but is more than adequate to provide a very dark environment.

Model	4x5 Focus Tube
Dimensions	457mm x 381mm (18 in x 15 in)
Weight	(6 oz)
Color	Black inside, Silver outside
Material	waterproof silver with elastic opening and velcro bottom
Price	$47.00 US
Contact	www.tedsphotogear.com tedburford@yahoo.com

4 Focusing Hoods (Comparison)

Do you realize that two years from now, people new to medium and large format photography who had never heard of MAGNAchrom will register and download this very issue? And they will be reading this very page? (like you are)

If your ad were here, you could be assured that future readers of MAGNAchrom will see your product or service. It is NEVER too late to add your advertisement to a previous version of MAGNAchrom — we will constantly create new versions of previous issues and we can easily make room for you.

Including this space in this issue.

Email us at advertise@magnachrom.com to find out more

[Parting Shot] Foundry Foreman

A close friend of ours is co-owner of the only art foundry left in Eastern Massachusetts. So he invited my wife and me to come to "a pour" of some bronze sculptures. The head foreman of the foundry, James Montgomery, wears a fireproof gown to protect him from the 1800° F heat of the furnace. Standing in a doorway, I couldn't resist taking this photograph of him attrired in his silver garb.

J Michael Sullivan

Location: Boston, Massachusetts
Camera: Mamiya 7II
Lens: 50mm
Film: Kodak Portra 400NC
Size: 18"x27"

Insight from our Readers

I just finished the first edition; Congrats on a fantastic magazine. I've looked at many on the web and in print and I think yours is superior. I have a digital camera and am going back to film via a Kiev 88 as I don't care for digital. All the other photo magazines I see make you feel that there is no more film, only digital. Also there are times I feel that they run a equipment catalog as most of them is just equipment reviews. Pop Photo is the first to come to mind. I've quit reading most of them. Your publication is actually balanced!! You have photos and descriptions of your work as well as the equipment you used to get them. You also show that film and digital can be used side-by-side.

There are two things on which I wish to comment:

1. Your interview in the 1st edition with Shelly Lake was very well done. The only problem is that I sat here wondering "Who is Shelly? Why are they interviewing her?" I feel that a short precis of her life, endeavors, especially photographically, would be helpful. Think of how you would introduce Adams or Weston.

2. I would like to see some alternative photo processes used in conjunction with M/L formats. Especially with 8X10 as that is perfect for contact prints as is 5X7 & 4X5 for smaller prints. Many of the people who do this have web sites but I feel that by using your soon-to-be larger coverage you could disseminate more info on this. As you've probably guessed, I'm very interested in it and am trying to find a 4X5 on eBay I can afford. I'm setting up a darkroom after many years out of photography altogether and am anxious to begin.

Thank you and all who help on this endeavor, for a delightful publication.

— Michael Blum

Editor responds: Hopefully, this version of MAGNAchrom will begin to address the issues you bring up. Thank you for your kind words and good luck with your own quest!

MAGNAchrōm

1.3

Build 2 Release Notes:

- Correction in Ebony article
- Minor typo fixed
- Correction on Parting Shot