

Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

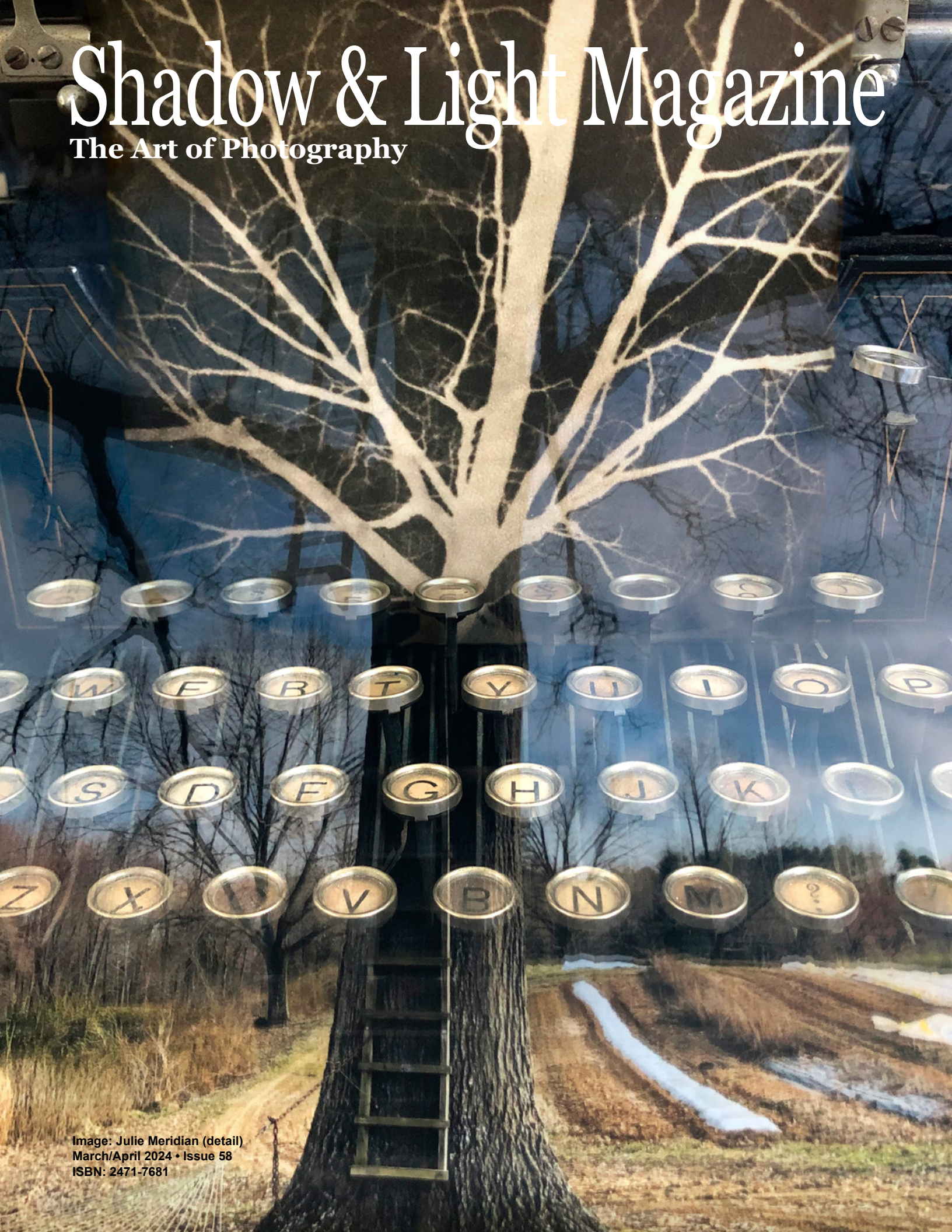


Image: Julie Meridian (detail)
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Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

Notes...

I know I have written about the process of placing the work of photographers within the covers of each *Shadow & Light Magazine*. None-the-less, I continue to be very impressed by the quality and subject range in each portfolio.

In this issue we begin with our Cover Artist, Julie Meridian, a photographer who has graced these pages previously. When deciding on which of her impressive portfolios from her site to publish, I was immediately drawn to her typewriter series.

Being a writer/poet myself, of course I chose her series, “Keyboard,” which features her poems. In describing the series, Meridian writes, “... the machine seemed to become animated with its own mysterious activity.” She was surprised when I chose that series because it was her lesser well-known work. I liked that! Why go where everyone else is going?

Rounding out this issue, following our Cover Artist, is a book review of Tony Bonanno’s new release, “The Horse of the Sea.” Inside this wonderful book are many powerful images of the legendary white, half-feral horses, herded by the Gardians, whose main existence is to care for the Carmargue Horse.

Because so many books have appeared at our office, lately, we have another review. This time it is Jacque Rupp’s, “The Red Purse,” an intimate reflection on the challenging time she spent after the untimely death of her husband. I met her at a recent Review Santa Fe, where she had 20 minutes for the pitch and she had me after five! It’s a sad, but also an uplifting story about death, recovery, and hope, with poignant writing and captivating images by the author.

With an interview with photographer Elinor

Carucci and additional text by Jason Langer and Ann Jastrab, the story is compelling, about one woman’s journey from grief to acceptance to the opening of new doors and the realization of self.

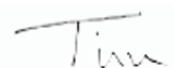
Additional portfolios include works from Eduardo Fujii, Sam Elkind, Jonathan Bourla, Michael Allan and Fritz Liedtke. Fujii and Liedtke take on surreal imagery using different methodology; Fujii with digital and Liedtke getting his hands wet and mixing up media. Elkind takes a unique look at presentation and Bourla, who came to us through the Submission process, presents images from a historical and reverential perspective.

Michael Allan, who recently became a subscriber, offers a brief look at an extension of his wonderful black-and-white photography, in our periodic section “Backstage,” with a hands-on result, that may enable you to do something more with your own work.

Regular columnists, E.E. McCollum and Steve Immel join in with their take on a chilly topic, winter, from separate viewpoints.

In his regular column, Mindful Matters, McCollum writes about winter and its effect on his mindset, “I find those days of winter are a lovely time to immerse myself in meditation practice. Over the course of the week-long retreats, attention seeks the spiritual interior.”

Immel writes of a recent realization that *Sketches of Winter* may just be his most distinctive series. He has wandered in and around random fields of snow for many years and is constantly amazed by how, “fresh unmarked snow was the essential ingredient,” to his quest.



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Shadow & Light Magazine

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Shadow & Light Magazine • The Art of Photography



Shadow & Light Magazine's primary objective is to introduce new voices in photography by featuring them in a nationally-distributed fine art photography magazine.

In publishing a wide range of fine art photography, Shadow & Light Magazine will seek to publish those photographic artists who strive to formulate creative ideas and translate them into work that captures and ignites human imagination. Experience, education, and age are not determinates in recognizing quality art.

Shadow & Light Magazine will also feature established artists who reflect the magazine's goal of eliciting an emotional response from the viewer and who provide inspirational examples of imaginative and innovative work.

Not only does Shadow & Light Magazine seek to engage the reader visually but intellectually as well with informative articles, critical insight, and compelling interviews.

Shadow & Light Magazine is a bi-monthly, subscription-based PDF/print publication designed for photographers across all levels of photography offering valuable information about a range of photographic subjects including portfolios, and individual images, along with interviews and in-depth essays.

It is also designed for the photographer who desires to present their work to a large audience, including curators, collectors, gallerists, and photography peers and professionals.

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Showcase Featured Portfolio

Julie Meridian: *The Poetry Machine*

The Poetry Machine traces the path of my creative process, one that often swings between words and images. Beginning with a vintage typewriter, I placed a series of small objects from my collection on the keys and then wondered what kind of poems or images such a machine might invent.

The poetry machine
types poems while I sleep.

I made it myself,
with only a bit of tinkering,
out of butterfly wings
and pocket watch parts,
old typewriter keys
and a dash of blue.

I hear it click-clacking at night
and when I wake,
there is the sky
washed clean as a page,
with only one word:

make.

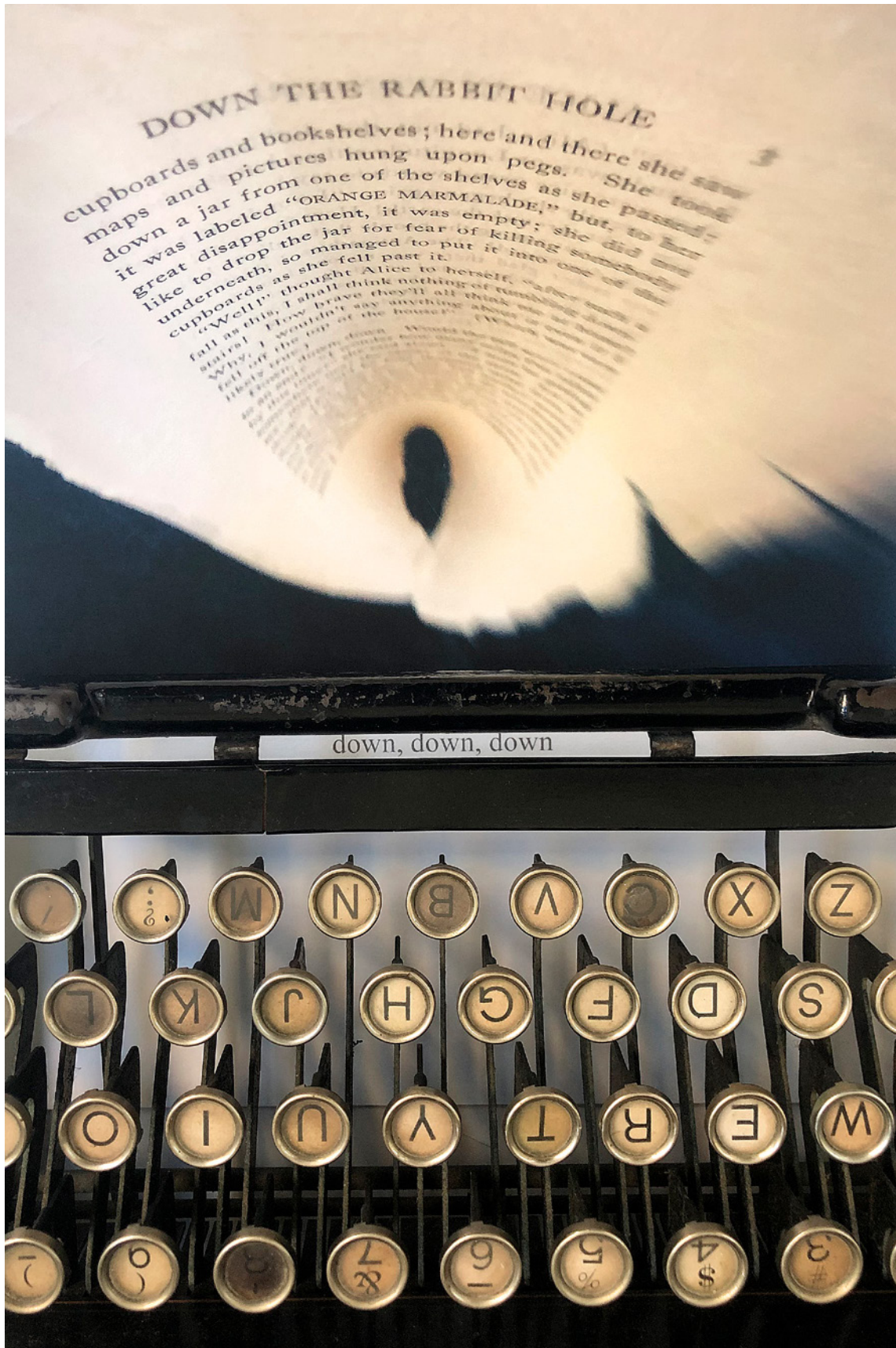


In a series of playful experiments, I trusted my intuition and imagination, as the machine seemed to become animated with its own mysterious activity. After printing the final image, I was surprised to discover that without my deliberate intention, the machine had actually written a poem. On a closer look at the small words on some of the keys and reading them from left to right, the machine has written:

Memory
into life
becomes image.
This is only
you.
Conjure time,
come
and

The simple word *and* seems deceptively potent to me – perhaps it is the most elemental key to the creative process – open-ended, recurring, additive, and then, and then, and then, and....

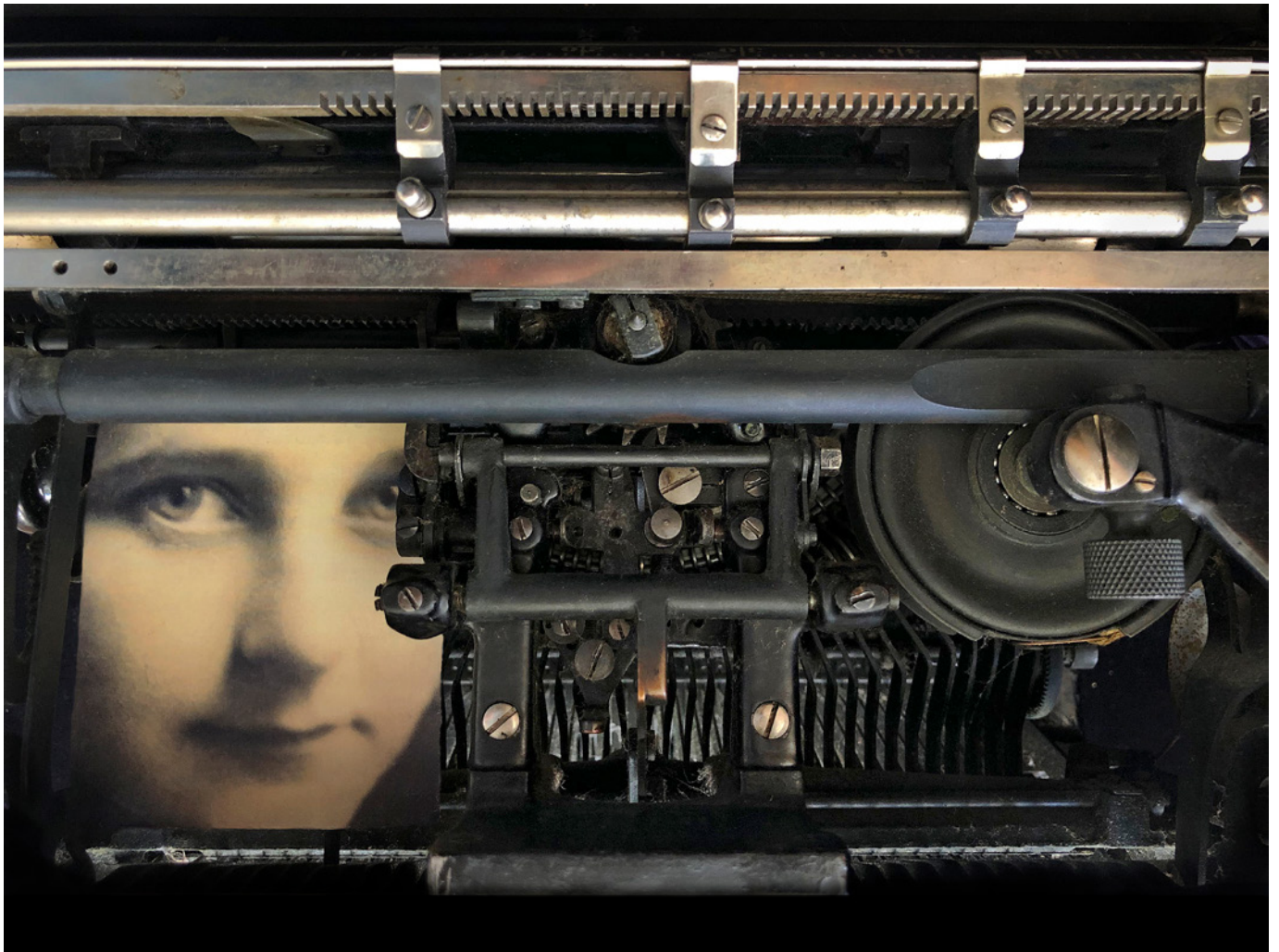
Julie Meridian



Fall.



At Night.



Muse.



Then.



Translate.



Conjure.



Possible.



Between. (cover image)



Gather.



Almost.



Make.

Mindful Matters

Essays on Photography

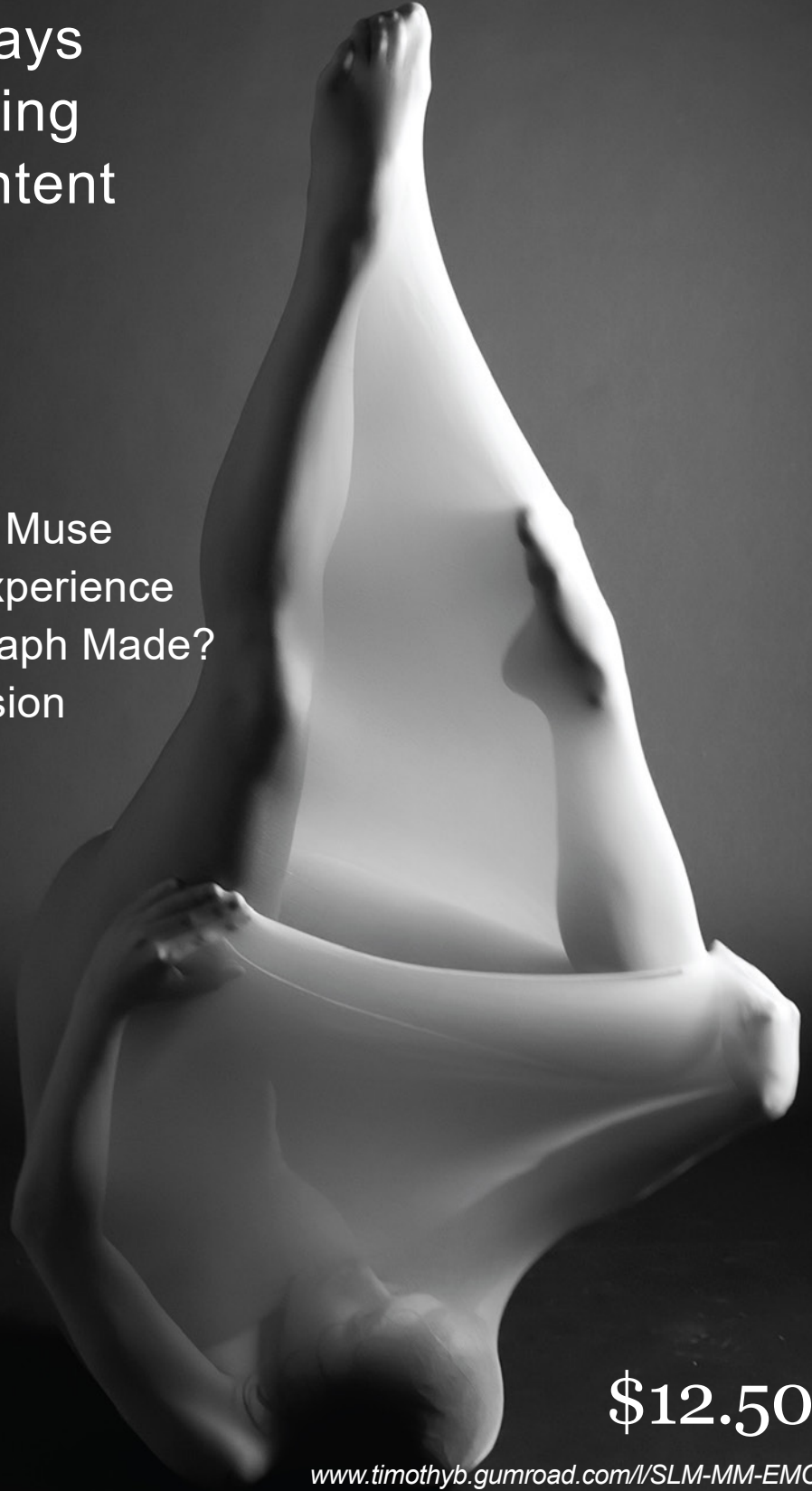
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by
E. E. McCollum

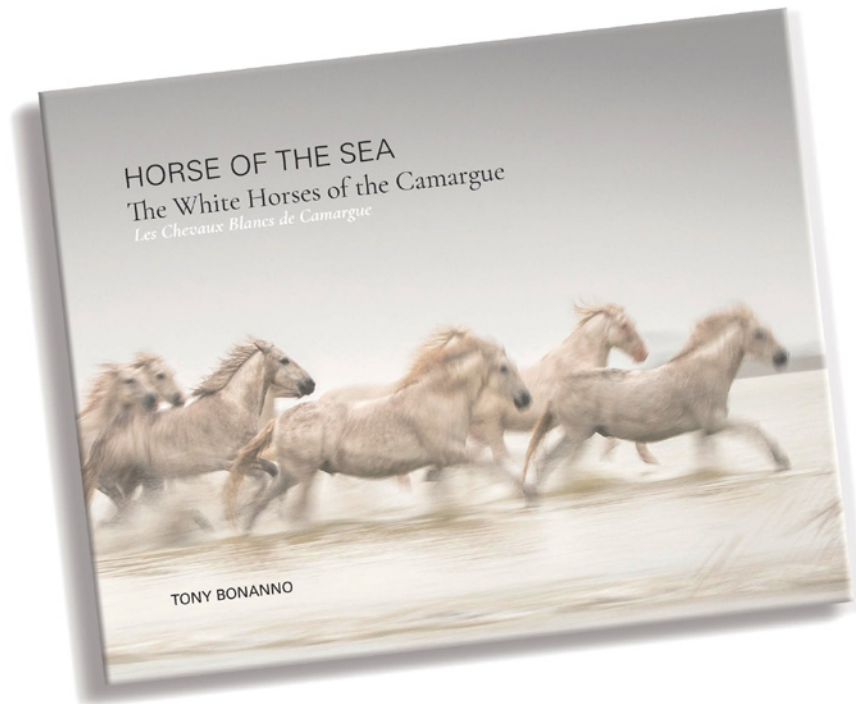
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Turning Pages

Tony Bonanno: *Horse of the Sea*

by Tim Anderson



“This is a book about horses, of course. Those magnificent white horses indigenous to the Camargue area of Southern France. Living wild in the tough milieu of the Camargue wetlands and marshes, these animals have, over centuries, developed the endurance, toughness and quickness for which they are known today.” From the Foreword by Baron Wolman 2019 (1937-2020)

What better way to begin a book about horses than to provide a backdrop to their existence. *The Horse of the Sea*, by Tony Bonanno, is a fitting tribute to those stunning survivors. I am fortunate enough to have viewed them up close, a few years back. The images in this book are as powerful as if you were viewing them in person: muscles straining and taught, running free and unbridled.

I have known Tony for many years and consider him a friend of passion, dedication and pursuit. No matter his topic, it is followed by those three guidelines. A much sought-after photographer for commercial work, he is well suited for the fine art arena because no matter the subject he looks at it as if it were a piece of art. And, of course, his art is hanging on many walls of homes around the world, as well as in numerous museums.

Not simply a visiting tourist who wants to bring an image of a horse back home, Tony has immersed himself in the centuries-old culture all that keeps the legend of the Camargue Horse alive: the Gardians, the Bulls and Cattle, and even the Camargue Cross.

The Horse: “The Camargue Horse is an ancient breed and probably existed in the region since prehistoric times. Some experts suggest the breed is very similar in appearance to the horses depicted in prehistoric cave paintings in France.”

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The Guardians: “The Guardians are the “keepers” of the Camargue Horse. It is a culture that goes back hundreds of years in this region of France. The Gardian and their herders are responsible for managing the semi-feral herds and ensuring the purity of the breed and the protection of the herds. The breed is protected by French law.”

The Bulls & Cattle: “The Gardian and their “herders” are a traditional culture that raise the black Camargue cattle and Camargue bulls that are used in the bull rings of Southern France. The Camargue Horse is the traditional mount of the Gardian and the herders. Most of the Guardians’ herds are part of free roaming manades (ranch herds).”

The Camargue Cross: “The upper end of the Camargue Cross is a three prong fork with trident tips (the tool used by the Guardians), the lower end an anchor (with fish tail tips), and the anchor is topped by a heart. It stands for three cardinal virtues: Faith, Hope and Charity.”

Having a chat with the author, recently, he spoke of the horses with almost a spiritual reverence, one that permeates his whole being.

In his Preface, he writes about the increasing proliferation and growth of tourism in the area that foretells a dimming future for this ancient lifestyle that will affect not only the horses but also the Gardian culture and all that it encapsulates, including saddles and hats and vests, along with trident-tipped staffs and caged stirrups. All still in use just as they were in the 16th century.

If you are a lover of culture, animals, tradition, passion, connections and more, *The Horse of the Sea* belongs in a revered space in your bookcase. Don’t hide it, however, it is meant to be viewed again and again, as I have done. ○









Showcase Portfolio

Eduardo Fujii: *Fractured Souls*



The “Fractured Souls” body of work delves into the metaphysical examination of the human soul. The perennial inquiry into the nature of the soul has confounded philosophers, theologians, and intellectuals across the annals of history. Traditionally construed as the quintessence of an individual’s existence, the soul is regarded as the repository of consciousness, emotions, and the ineffable qualities that make each person unique. The question arises: Can human beings have multiple souls?

In the realm of psychology, the notion of fragmented identities introduces the prospect of two or more discrete personas or personality states coexisting within an individual. Regrettably, as per current knowledge, direct observation or visualization of the human soul remains beyond the realm of possibility. It is within this intellectual backdrop that the “Fractured Souls” series was born.

In the course of immersing myself in the domain of long exposures while capturing images of dancers in rehearsal, I inadvertently engaged with what could be interpreted as a metaphysical visualization of the soul. Despite the soul’s elusive and intangible nature, the blurred and spectral figures my camera created



due to long shutter speeds symbolize a visual representation of the soul's conceivable endeavor to liberate itself from its corporeal confines.

However, images from the camera never make it to the final work undisturbed. With an almost self-portraiture approach, I often impart inner unresolved feelings to the work as a form of personal therapy. By applying poetic and often metaphorical language, I create intense personal moments by means of rules and omissions, acceptance, and refusal. With a painterly approach, I investigate the dynamics of light and movement, including the manipulation of their effects including applying texture layers and cinematic effects to create the final grand spectacle.

The “Fractured Souls” series, thus, extends an invitation to its audience to perceive the imperceptible, offering a visual conduit into the metaphysical dimensions of the human soul. Through the use of long exposures, this collection facilitates an artistic exploration that transcends the visible, providing a nuanced insight into the potential existential fractures within the human soul, as inferred from the interplay of movement, time, and light.

Eduardo Fujii















Amann.



Day.

Mindful Matters

E.E. McCollum: *Winter*



There is a kind of quiet in the meditation hall that I've never experienced anywhere else. At the beginning of each period of sitting meditation, fellow meditators come in quietly, without speaking, without making eye contact, and take their places on their meditation cushions or chairs. By the third or fourth day of the retreat, coming back to my place in the hall feels like coming home; a spot made familiar by my presence and the presence of those who sit close to me. We rustle a bit as we arrange ourselves, adjusting blankets or shawls if the room is cool, slipping out of sweatshirts or sweaters if it has grown warmer during the day. Then the meditation bell rings. And fades to silence.

I have sat a number of week-long silent meditation retreats over my time as a meditator. Many of them have been in the days between Christmas and New Year's. With the days just beginning to grow longer after the winter solstice, we arrive at the meditation hall in the dark and leave for dinner in the dark, coming back for the teacher's evening talk, chanting, and a final meditation period. What daylight there is allows for a walking meditation outdoors and some reminder that the world has not gone away completely.

I find those days of winter are a lovely time to immerse myself in meditation practice. Over the course of the week-long retreats, attention seeks the spiritual interior. Concerns about life outside the retreat venue fall away. Sustained attention to the interior world reveals experiences that the distractions of everyday life keep us from noticing. While the mind calms, it also struggles. Restlessness, distraction, physical discomfort, all conspire to pull attention away from the present moment, away from an inner focus. But if the process goes well, equanimity arises, an awareness and acceptance of whatever arises in the mind and body. I think of meditation as coming home, being held in the arms of this practice, especially in the deep days of winter.

Many kinds of winter come into a life; some exterior, some interior. The season itself finds us yearly as the autumn sun sinks daily toward the south. There is the winter of grief. The winter of solitude, and sometimes loneliness. And the snowbound days when we give up all we have planned to play cards by the fire. Right now, I find myself in a different kind of winter — the winter when creativity and the motivation to do work have faded.



It doesn't help that it is actually winter here in the high desert of New Mexico where I live. Clouds have blocked the usually deep blue sky for more days than usual this year. The temperatures have been colder. I should go out to make photographs, I know.

“But the light is terrible,” I say, surveying the dull gray cloud cover. “It’s too cold, and the wind. What if the tripod blows over? I can’t do anything good in this weather.”

I remind myself that some of my favorite photographs have been made in light exactly like this, and that my tripod has never blown over. Yet inertia remains.

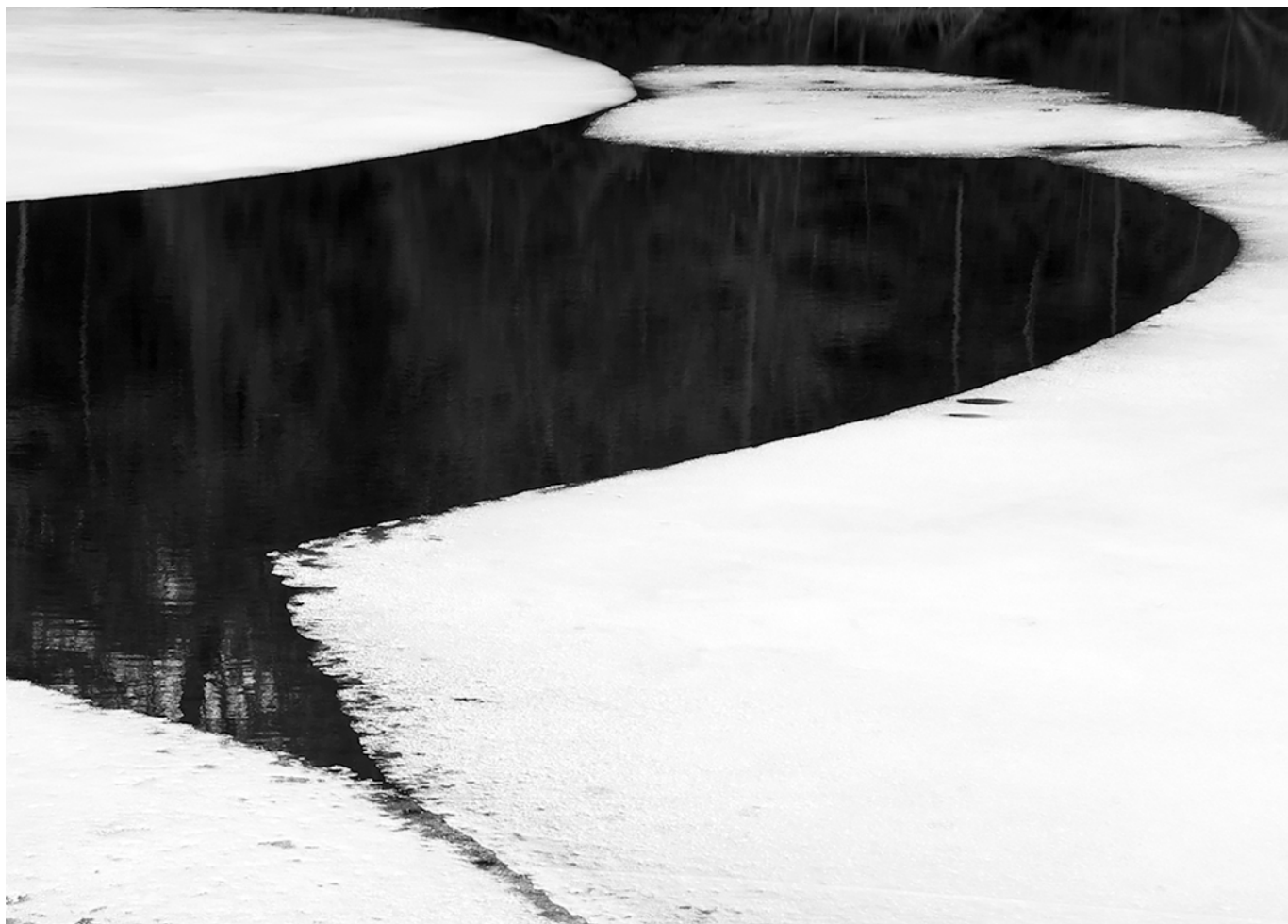
I don’t have a cure for a period of creative winter. I know we all experience it — except, of course, the friend who proudly proclaims that he is never at a loss to make photographs. But are they good photographs, I wonder silently, the tug of envy souring my mood. I see so many articles on the general theme of “Seven ways to get out of a creative slump.” Ever hopeful, I try them. Some even make sense. Don’t wait for inspiration. Do the work. It isn’t bad advice, but even when I force myself to venture into the world with my camera, what I come home with usually doesn’t please. I set my camera aside for a day, a week, sometimes a month, or more.



When I lived in Kansas years ago, it seemed odd to see farmers in their fields in the late fall, planting a crop of wheat soon after the harvest. Winter wheat, they call it. Planted in the fall, winter wheat grows through the winter and is harvested in early summer or turned back into the soil in spring to enrich the earth for the next crop. The growth of winter wheat depends on a period of cold weather and, hopefully,

the protection of snow on the ground. The seeds germinate soon after being planted, then suspend growth during the coldest weeks, only to resume growth as the weather warms. When harvested, winter wheat is high in gluten and is ground into flour used to make yeast breads. The cold and snow and dormant weeks are all part of its cycle. Without them, the plants don't produce seeds, and may not survive.

Talking about beginning a new project, the photographer Baldwin Lee said, "I started in the late afternoon and made a bunch of pictures that I knew were no good. I had learned that making bad pictures is just part of the process. It's nothing to be discouraged about." Can a creative winter be the same? Can it be just part of the process? As winter nourishes the wheat, or a meditation retreat in the depths of winter nourishes the heart, or bad pictures set the stage for good, can a period of creative quiescence nourish the work to come?



It's easy to become impatient with winter. I asked my wife once what her favorite season is here in New Mexico. "The next one," she said. It was a warm-hearted statement, expressing her love for everything this land has to offer. But it also hints at our desire for movement, for what's next, for how restless the present can become. As the gray days and cold temperatures drag on, I begin to long for change, too. A warm breeze in the morning smells like spring, and then two days later, snow covers the ground. "I'm ready to be done with this," I think.

Productivity is so ingrained in our culture, so much a part of how we judge a life that I often miss the benefits that fallow periods bestow. With a focus on productivity, I fight against what feels like inertia,

laziness, creative failure, a lapse of spirit in the days of a creative winter. Yet the more I berate myself, the more discouraged and immobilized I become. Whenever I meet artistic friends for coffee, or a quick lunch, one of the first questions we ask each other is, “What are you working on?” When I feel I haven’t been working on anything, at least nothing tangible, I often resort to vague answers, a bit embarrassed.

“Got some things going.” Or, “Still working on that project I’ve had going for a while.” leaving the details unsaid.

But there could be a different conversation. What if the response was this?

“I’m not making new work right now. I’ve been reading a lot, looking back over some of my older work, and resting, really. I’m not sure what’s next.”

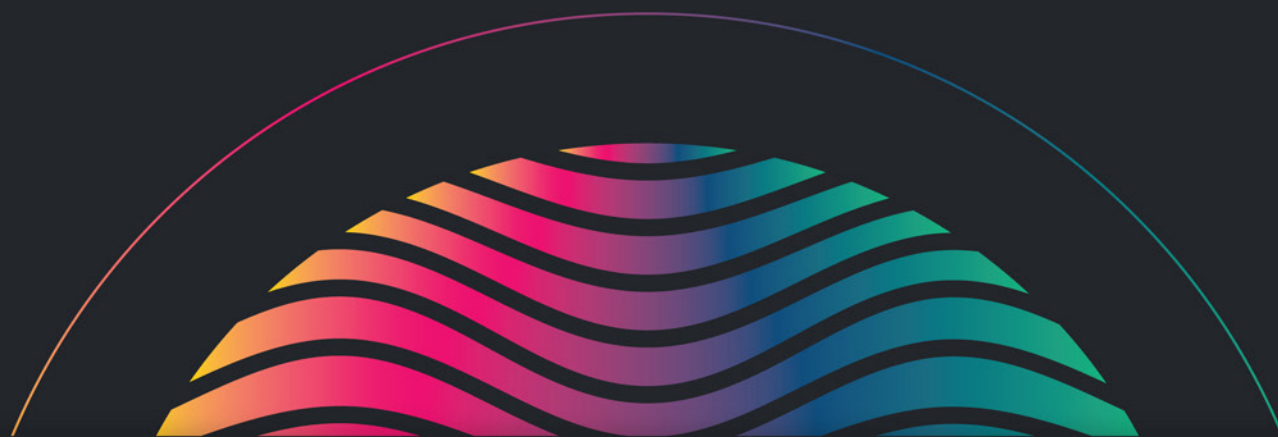
Being an artist is more than an activity, it is a way of being in the world. I’ve heard this many times, and it always sounded glib, but I think there is something to it. If we expand the notion of a life of art past production, we make room for the creative winters that are the inevitable part of that life and that, if we embrace them, can re-energize us for our work. We need faith that our creative urges have strength and will re-emerge. Sometimes that faith is hard to come by. But if we find it, like winter wheat, we can grow during the creative winters that may come our way. Fill those periods with the things that nourish us. For me, that includes reading, art, travel — even short trips — without a camera and the accompanying pressure to create. And naps! Always naps!

The busy-ness of daily life begins to intrude on the last day of a meditation retreat. I steal a moment here and there to pack my clothes, to straighten my room at the retreat center, to carry a few things out to the car to save doing it all later. At the end of the last sitting meditation period, we slowly begin to speak to each other, breaking a week of silence. Our teachers entertain questions. I get to know my fellow meditators who have sat near me for the week. But life back home calls and I don’t linger long. The peace and equanimity developed during the week of meditation slowly fall away as traffic, the excitement of homecoming, and the pressure to put aside solitude intrude. By the next morning, the days of silence seem years away. I have come to find that while it seems that nothing comes home from a retreat with me, bits of that experience return over the next weeks, often when I find myself struggling. A realization gained while meditating. The wise words of a teacher.

Our creative winters hold the same potential to nourish us if we give up the struggle to produce and use them as a time for reflection and renewal. Like a meditation retreat, we can step away from our work in order to come back to it, renewed.

I wonder if winter wheat remembers the silent days of cold and snow, as the earth warms in spring. ○





“Of course, there will always be those who look only at technique, who ask ‘how’, while others of a more curious nature will ask ‘why’. Personally, I have always preferred inspiration to information.”

Man Ray



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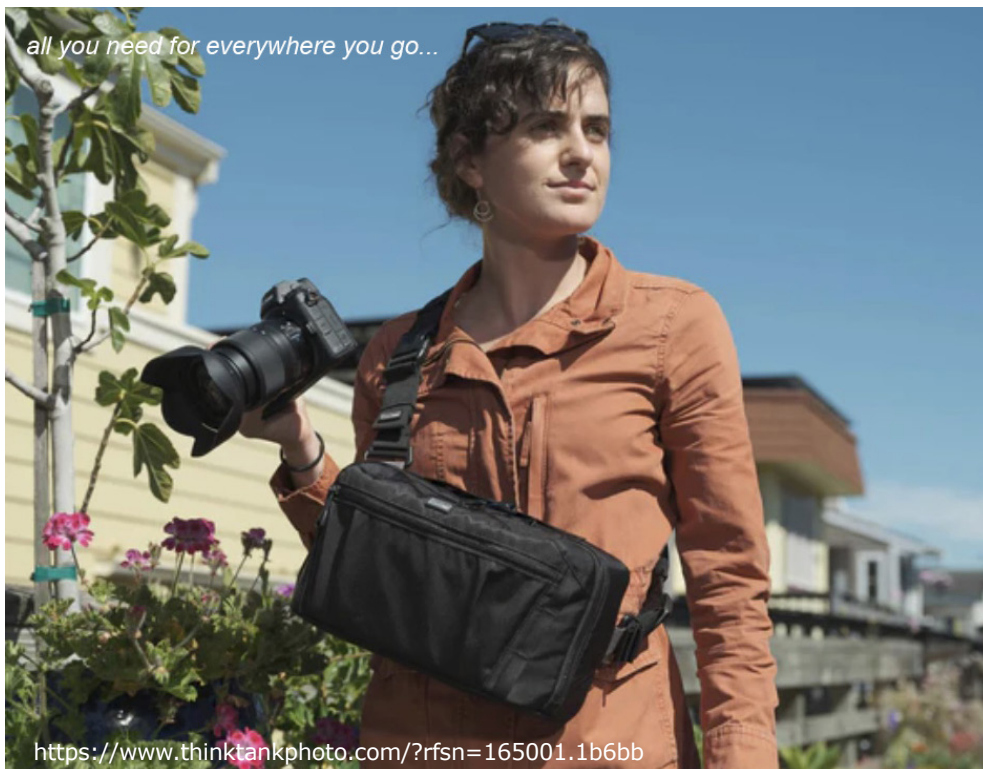
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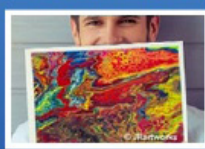
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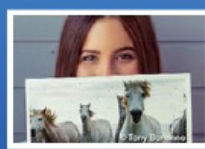
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Showcase Portfolio

Sam Elkind: *Assembling the View*



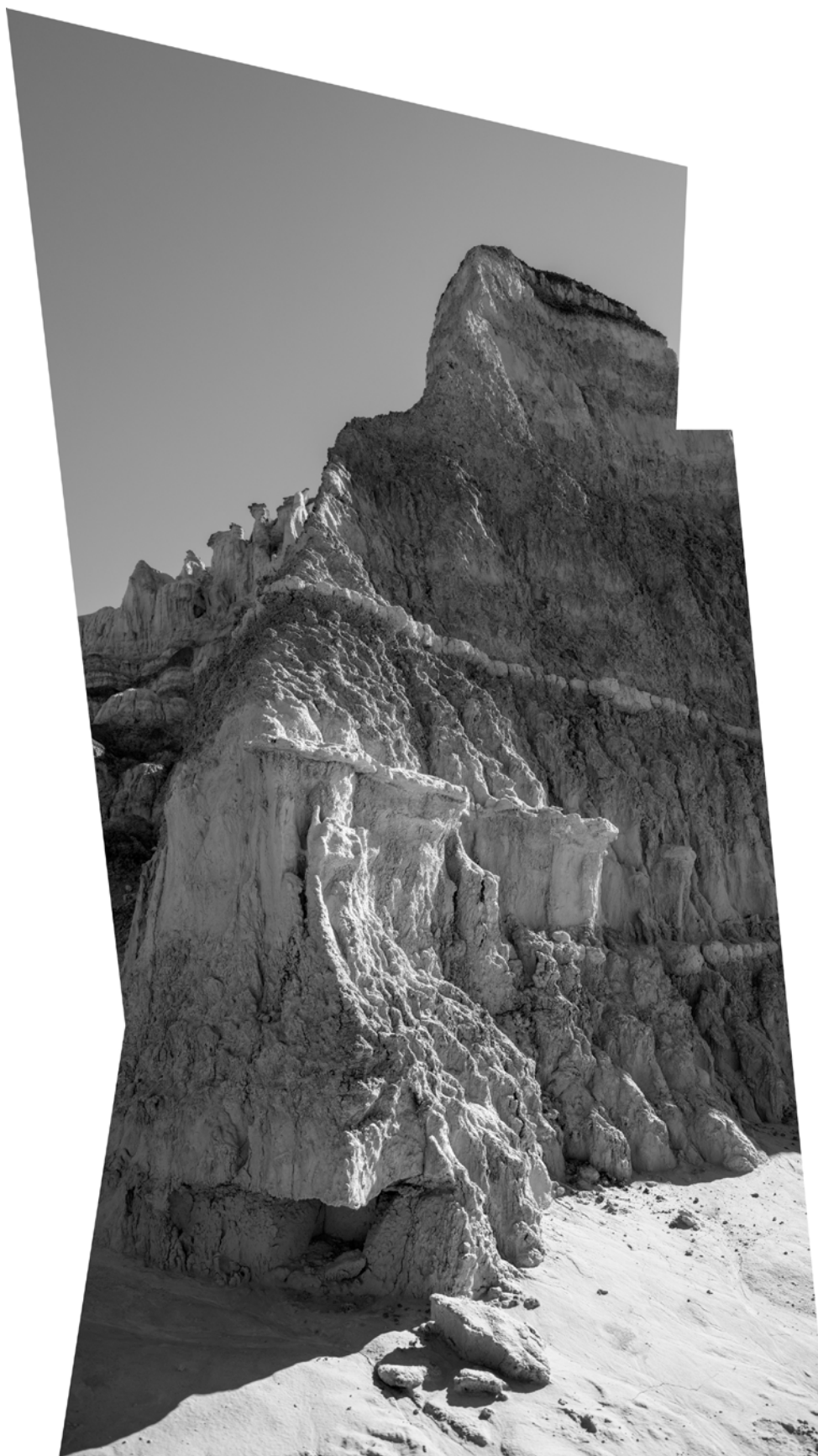
Why confine photography to rectangles? We don't see in rectangles, and our world is not rectangular. When we survey landscapes that interest us, certain features – landforms, clouds, manufactured components, textures, contrasts – excite us, and these same features activate landscape images. Why not stress these elements and diminish or omit less active components of a landscape?

This body of work seeks to exploit the visual habit of landing on certain points of particular interest in a landscape, as it abandons the rectangle (or the square) container for the image. It blends changes in perspective as different parts of a scene come into view, assembling a survey from smaller segments.

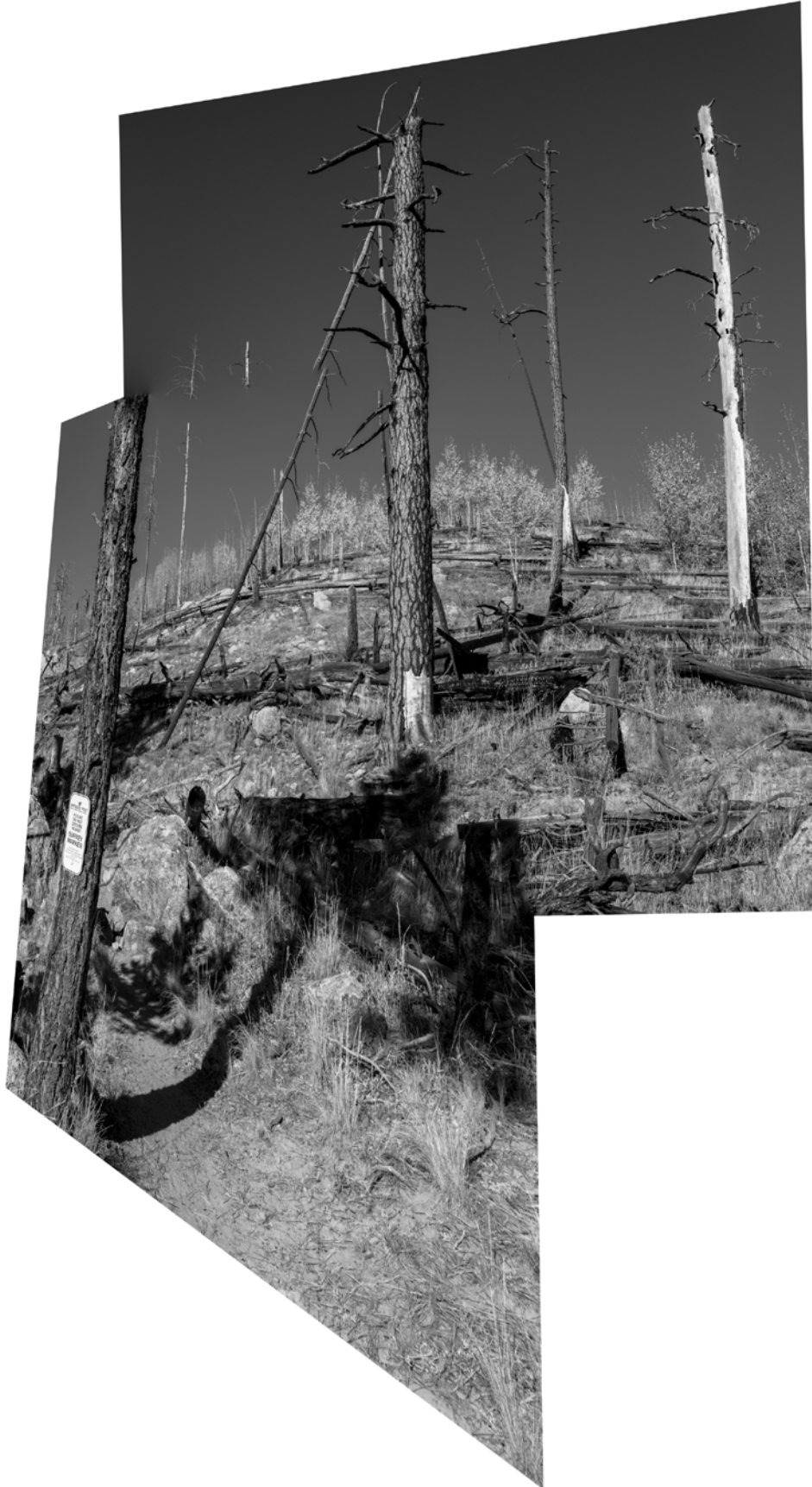
The resulting images challenge our assumptions about photographs, while building a sense of space out of the irregular boundaries. These images echo our own habits of vision, becoming as much psychological representations as visual depictions.

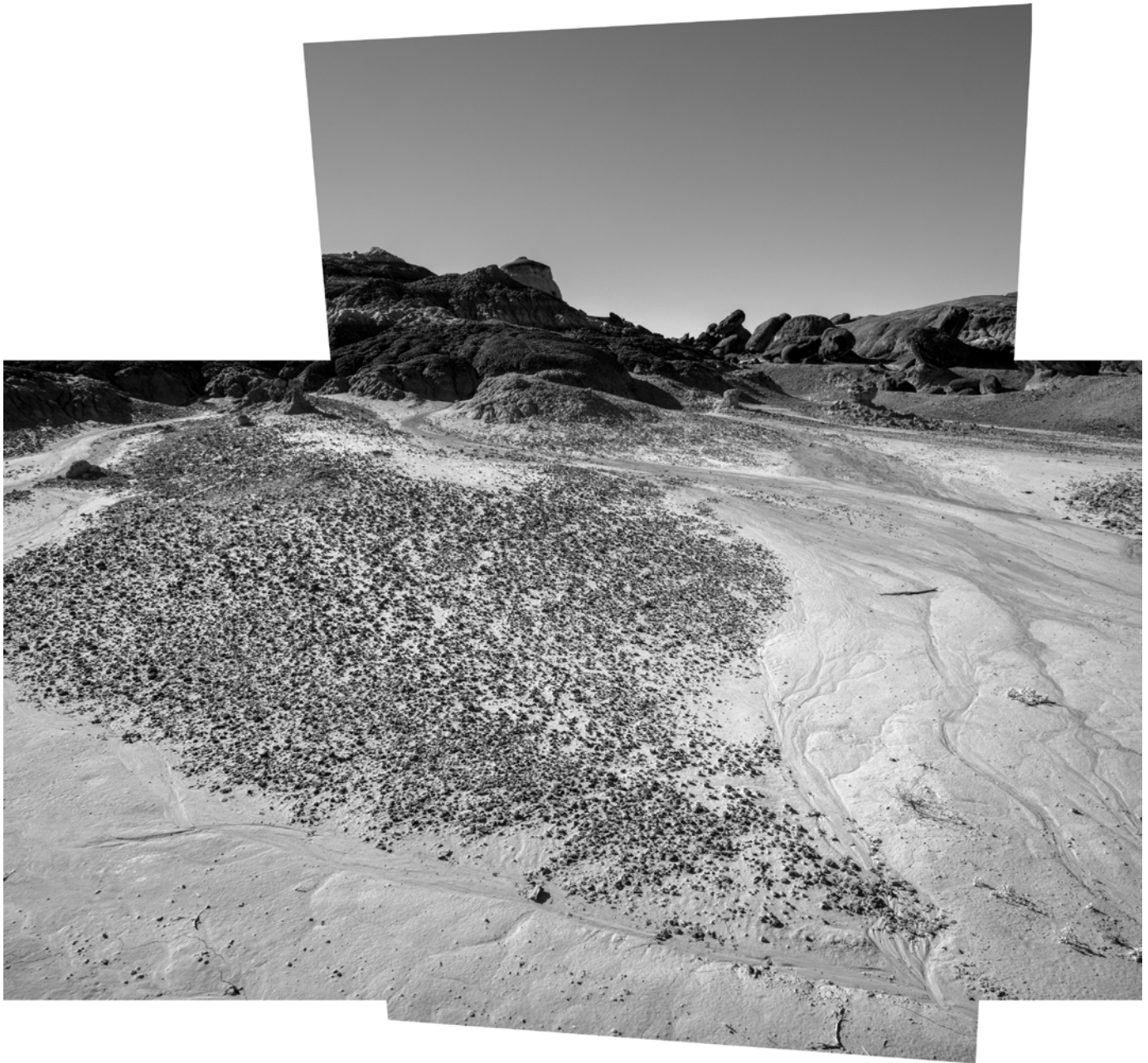
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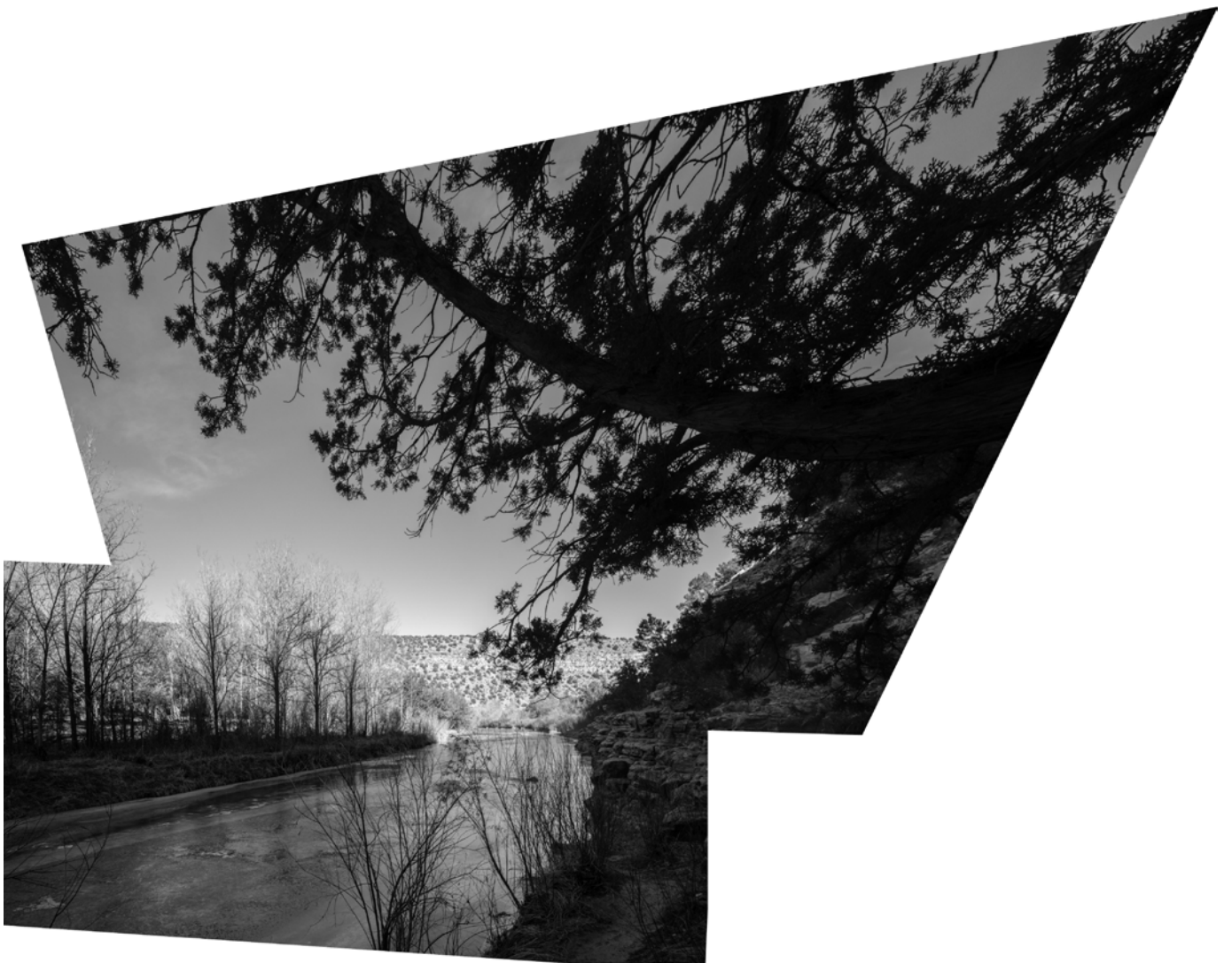












Turning Pages

Jacque Rupp: *The Red Purse*

by Tim Anderson



“Shortly after my husband died, I bought a red purse, which sat on my dresser for years. I knew I had to have it, but I did not know why. I never used it. I see now it was a reminder of what I needed in my life as a woman; something feminine, frivolous, and out of character. It gave me permission to reimagine who I could become. —Jacque Rupp.

Like many photographers, Jacque Rupp photographs objects that capture her attention or, perhaps, a memory escaping. In the case of her new book, *The Red Purse*, she works with that escaped memory and creates a memorable portfolio of something gained and never used. How many of us have done just that?

“Shortly after my husband died, I bought a red purse. I knew I needed it, but I didn’t know why. For years, the purse sat untouched on my dresser, waiting for me to take up its call,” Rupp writes in the introduction to the book.

I met her at a recent Review Santa Fe and was impressed by her forthrightness and belief in the new project she had just completed. I can only imagine how tiring it must have been for her to have already sat in front of several other reviewers that same day and go through the same pitch back and forth.

When she sat in front of me, I knew she was not to be denied. She wasn’t! After about 5 minutes, I was

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in—and I told her I wanted to publish a review of the book in *Shadow & Light Magazine*. I am always thrilled at the reaction of artists when they sit across from me and find out about a soon-to-be-published portfolio of their work. It keeps me going.

She was also very prepared for the task as she knew she had to “knock it out of the park” each and every presentation. Bright and colorful post cards, and other marketing material lay strewn across my table.

“The Red Purse is Rupp’s striking visual exploration of the reclaiming of her identity after the passing of her husband. She confronts head on widowhood, death, and ageism in an authentic and at times humorous manner. Using herself as the subject, the color photographs in the book have a film noir narrative element in their composition. This approach stretches the autobiographical to fictional through storytelling devices of symbols, metaphors, and moods. The recurring color red, rose imagery, and the purse, to name a few, contribute to this sensibility.” (Publisher’s comment)

The images in the book (some in these pages), ask viewers to take a moment and think about times when they were saddened by the loss of a loved one. How did they feel? How deep was their grief? How long did they grieve? How long is too long?

In an interview with the author in the book, photographer Elinor Carucci writes, “The honesty in the sexuality, femininity, identity, and those types of feelings, surprised me, challenged me. Even being a



feminist, liberal and open-minded, I was surprised by the conversations we had and are still having about women's issues: widowhood, ageism, sexuality, identity, and feminism. You challenged what it means to be a widow, to be sexual at an older age. I felt connected, inspired."

No punches are pulled. The sheets are drawn back, revealing long-hidden secrets, some good; some not so good. They are all (mostly) revealed within the covers of a book that was a long time coming. Or, perhaps, it arrived at just the right time, when there is so much struggle with women's rights. Rupp compares her feelings with her mother's, whose husband died young, forcing her into a different kind of grieving, one in which she had to retreat into her own grief and keep her desires hidden.

As an emblem, totem, if you will, the red purse served to keep Rupp going, allowing her to proceed to the future instead of receding into the past.

"From early on in the grieving process," she writes in the Introduction, "one thing was certain: I did not want to raise my boys under a shroud of loss. I did not want people to pity us. I would, however difficult, press forward, using the confusion, the liminality, as an opportunity to grow."

That growth was evident as she sat across from me, with dozens of people all around us buzzing about their lives, caught up in their own dramas (some positive—some not). I listened and was not saddened. I was enlivened by her positivity and resolve. I hope you are, too, when you order your copy. ○









Shadow & Light Magazine

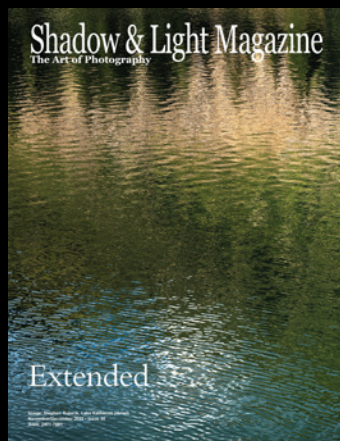
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Showcase Portfolio

Jonathan Bourla: *Highwic House*



My photographic process in the last 30 years has in some ways really changed, particularly in the last year or two, but in other, perhaps more important ways it hasn't changed one bit. My photographic companion for most of this time period was a large format film camera, and every time I removed it from my backpack I would marvel at its beauty and count myself very lucky. With it everything I did was very slow and methodical. Preparation was key, as was a high level of patience. But recently I started using two small digital cameras, with which I have found great freedom and spontaneity, whilst retaining my old philosophy of making every shot count. I am drawn to

textures and details and feel almost euphoric when I encounter a subject which captures my attention.

Years ago I had visited the historic Highwic House, here in New Zealand where I live, with high hopes but with my big camera mindset the practicalities put me off and I left without a single exposure. But last year, with one of my small handholdable cameras, I found I was overwhelmed at Highwic, seeing potential photographic subjects almost everywhere, all around, and it was an amazing experience.

A while ago I attended a workshop in America run by Howard Bond. He was truly inspirational, from his fantastic photography to his wonderfully kind and generous nature. I was in awe when he demonstrated dodging and burning techniques in his darkroom. In the first half of my career, I similarly printed in my own darkroom before discovering an even greater joy in doing what I call my Interpretative Stage in my digital darkroom of Photoshop.

While I really enjoy capturing the camera exposure, it is this process on the computer that I just love, very slowly building up the tonal relationships I want. I'm also particularly grateful to my lovely wife Julie, who has not only been so supportive and understanding through my long term struggles with major depression, but has continued to give me great encouragement and words of wisdom throughout my fine art photographic journey.

Jonathan Bourla



















Backstage

Michael Allan: *From Inspiration to Completion*



Cover image of "Golden Gate" chapbook.

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My grandfather was a bow hunter and fly fisherman. I spent every summer in the woods with him, hunting and fishing, listening to stories of his childhood; humorous, but typically with an underlying thought about the meaning of life. I was mentored while I thought I was only being entertained. A story about his nickname “Barney,” which was the name of his inseparable horse, demonstrated his values. Painting turpentine on his teacher’s horse’s ass just as she sat on the buckboard, hilarious, but the consequences were instructive.

As my photography progressed, I wanted to tell my stories, like my grandfather. I began with folios of hand held large border prints, creating a tactile and visual experience, where one can walk around with them and view them under different light and feel the thick paper. I took them to parties and let people play with them around a table with wine and cheese. It was like watching group art as they showed them to each other and talked about them.

At the same time, I was journaling with images and experimenting with poetic forms and lyric essays, not even knowing what a “lyric” was. I ran into a Rob Knight class about writing for images, and thought: why not combine words and images? This would add some richness and give me a little more control of the story, with the same visual and physical experience, but more personal.

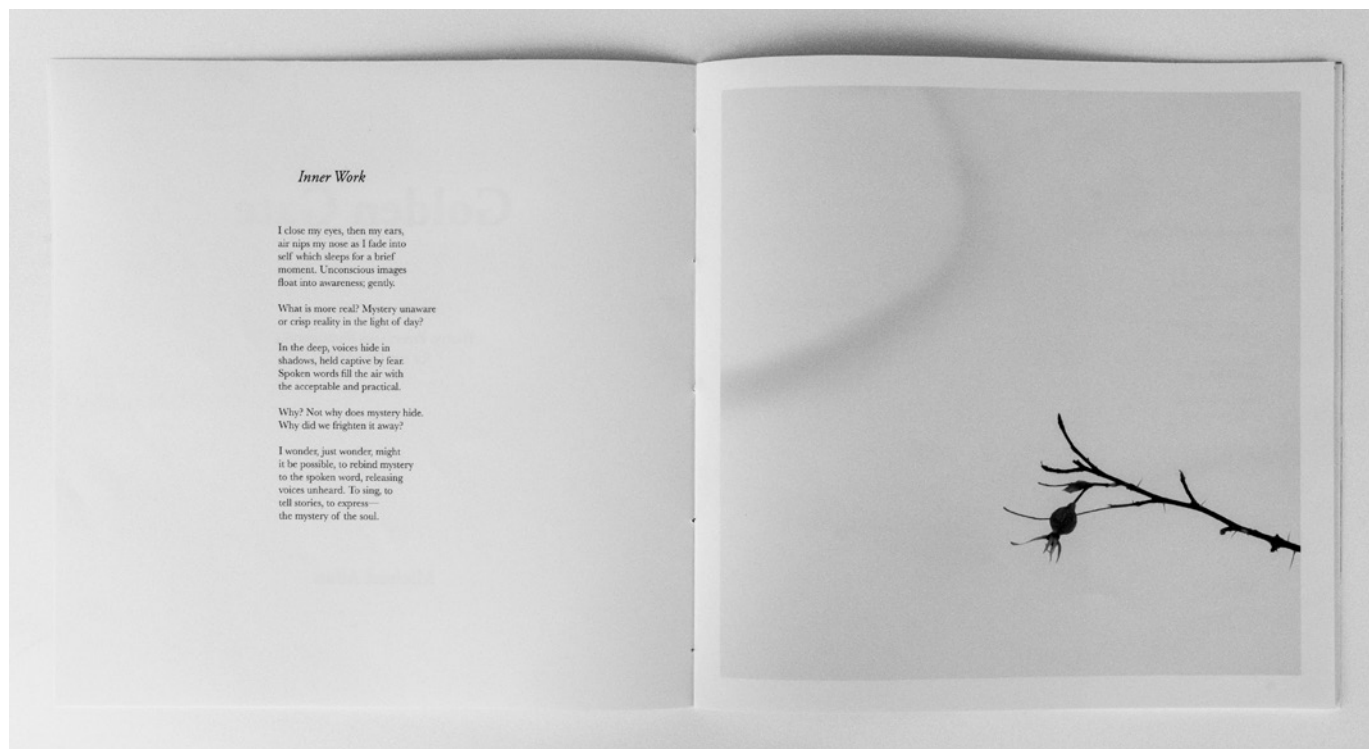
My final project for the class was in the form of a zine, but being inspired by Brooks Jensen (LensWork magazine), I called them chapbooks, which is a more traditional art. I’m not a dyed-in-the-wool traditionalist, but I enjoy making traditional images, then adding a twist. Words are one way to twist an image, much like my grandfather sneaking a moral into his humor.

Four chapbooks later, I have found a new platform for expression. I get to hike with a camera, write with a fountain pen, play with software tools, print content, sew paper, and tell stories.

Michael Allan



Interior stitching.



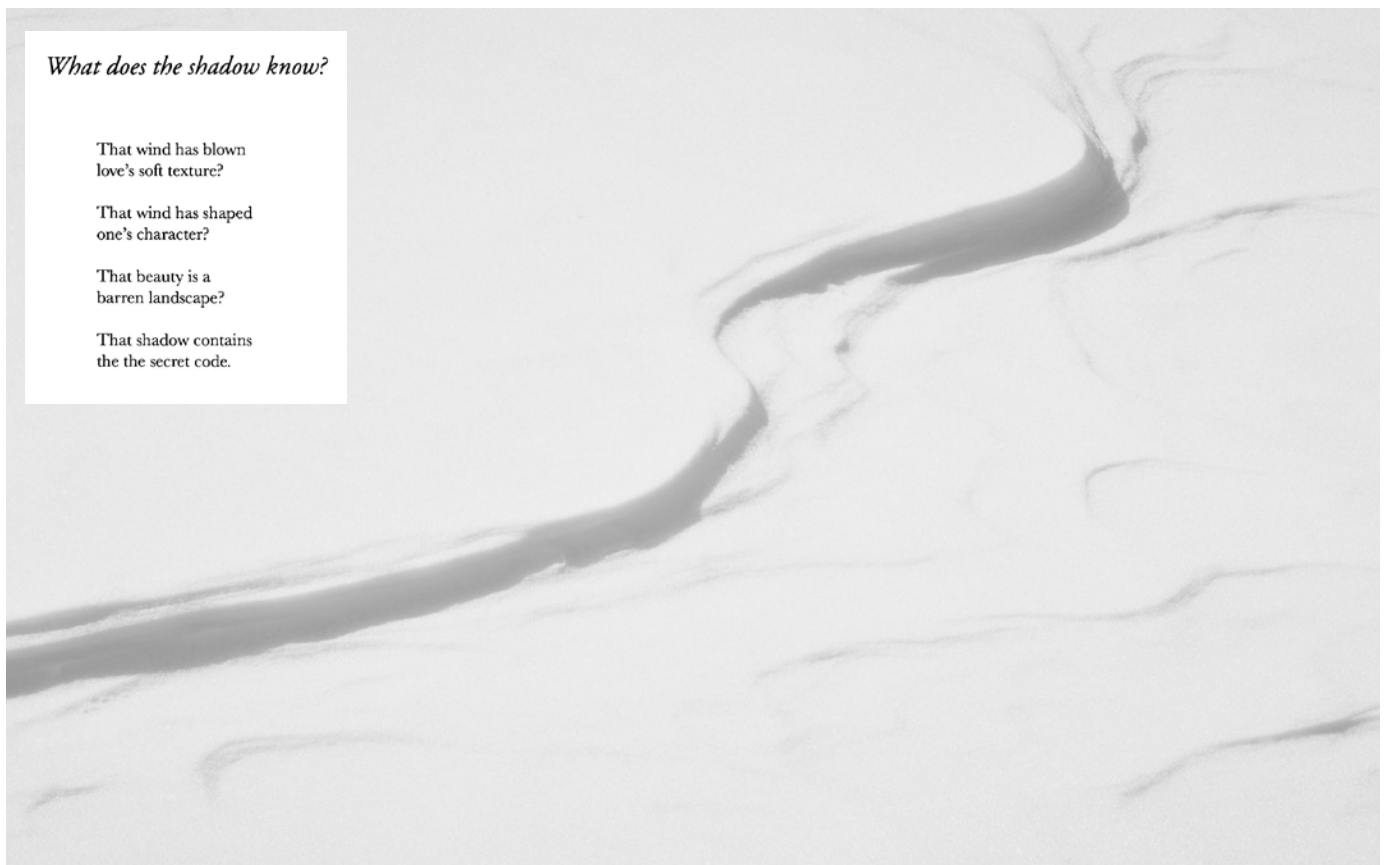
Page and poem from "Golden Gate" chapbook.



Interior stitching of chapbook.



Front cover (R) and Back Cover (L) of "Golden Gate" chapbook.



Page and poem from "Golden Gate" chapbook.



Folded Back

I look and see me
looking at "me,"
looking at ""me..."""

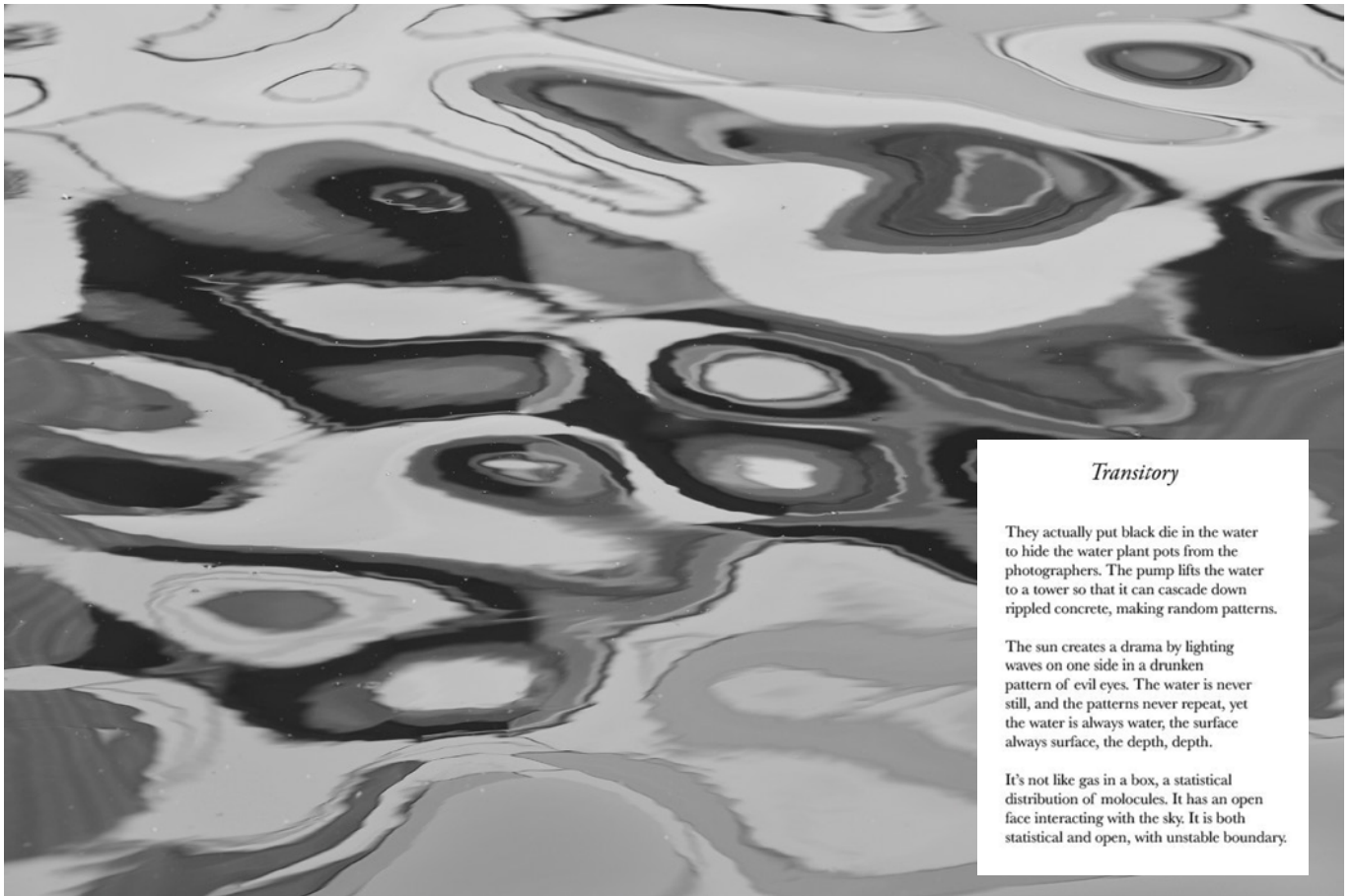
Turtles all the way
down in a hellscape
recursion of self.

No place to rest,
I cannot see I;
me cannot see I.

I may not be I;
me may not be me;
self may not exist.

Who is writing?
Whooooo.

Page and poem from "Shadow Puppets" chapbook.



Transitory

They actually put black die in the water to hide the water plant pots from the photographers. The pump lifts the water to a tower so that it can cascade down rippled concrete, making random patterns.

The sun creates a drama by lighting waves on one side in a drunken pattern of evil eyes. The water is never still, and the patterns never repeat, yet the water is always water, the surface always surface, the depth, depth.

It's not like gas in a box, a statistical distribution of molecules. It has an open face interacting with the sky. It is both statistical and open, with unstable boundary.

Page and poem from "Shadow Puppets" chapbook.



Image from "Garden of the Gods" chapbook.



Image from "Place Space Time" chapbook.

Showcase Portfolio

Fritz Liedtke: *Unfurling*



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Ferns and lichen, moss, wood, and leaves: fragile materials, vulnerable to the seasons and the elements. But also flexible and strong, resilient.

During long walks in the woods, I observed the hanging mosses, clinging lichens, and sprouting ferns as forms I wanted to incorporate into my work. They whispered to me of hair fluttering on the wind, veins splayed across branches, spines sprouting from the ground: body parts strewn about the forest. Over time this palette expanded to include wasp-nest paper, leaves, bark, metal leaf, and paint, all held together by wax and resin on wood panels.

This work springs from my personal experience with seasonal depression, which is closely tied to the landscape and weather patterns of the Pacific Northwest. It is also informed by my experience with physical disability, and three decades of dealing with the vicissitudes of my own body. While crafting this work, I was meditating on this, and the stories hidden away inside all of us—that inner wilderness in which we cache our questions and wounds, the parts of us that are fragile and vulnerable, the ways we grapple with the dark. And the ways we hope for light, for sight, to be seen.

I was also contemplating renewal and redemption: how we rise from the damp darkness, emerging like a fern unfurling from the forest floor, transforming decay into new life, creating something beautiful out of this beautiful mess.

Each of these unique 3-dimensional mixed-media pieces is crafted by hand. Materials include wax, resin, paint, paper, botanical elements, metal leaf, and photography, on a wood panel.



Fritz Liedtke



















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Telling Stories

Steve Immel: *Sketches of Winter*



Feathery Shadows.

***Sketches of Winter* may be my most distinctive series.** Some folks say so. When I began building the portfolio in 2008, I'd never seen anything like it. Then several years later I saw similar work in *LensWork* magazine. Of course, I wished I'd submitted my portfolio since there can only be one first. During the years 2008 through 2010 I enjoyed three one-person shows with the series, first at the Cache Gallery in Fort Collins, Colorado, a second at Open Shutter Gallery of Photography and a third at Wilder Nightingale Fine Art in Taos. A short two-paragraph three image article about *Sketches of Winter* was my third one in *Shadow Light* as a matter of fact. A show, *Sketches of Winter Revisited*, at Wilder Nightingale ended on March 3, 2024. So, the portfolio has been at the front of my mind lately.

I remember the genesis of the series very clearly. It was in December of 2007. I was photographing La Morada de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Taos. The Morada, a Penitente lay chapel, and its grounds were and still are my favorite Spanish Colonial site in Northern New Mexico. At the time the Morada was owned by the Taos Historic Museums and the public were welcomed to the grounds of the enchanted place. Unhappily, that is no longer the case. When ownership of the sacred site was transferred to the Diocese of Santa Fe the Taos parish priest closed The Morada to the public and even the Catholic faithful in favor of the small and insular band of Penitente Brothers. Que lastima.

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Brush Strokes.

The way the morada grounds juts into Taos Pueblo lands is breathtaking to me. On that brilliant December morning I was photographing the Morada buildings, the Stations of the Cross, and the Pueblo beyond when I looked down to see hardy weeds seeking the sun through the fresh snow. I took a couple of shots and thought nothing of it. But when I was processing the image, I discovered something more like a pen and ink drawing than the mid-century black and white photography I'd pursued since the early Sixties. The image was more about shapes and design than representational photography. That first Sketch of Winter showed promise but had to be coaxed to its potential. It took a dozen or more layers in Photoshop to achieve Brush Strokes. It's not the paradigm of the concept but certainly led the way. The simple forms on the nearly white background needed more contrast, fewer gray tones and the featureless snow had to be almost as white as the paper it would be printed on. That took a boatload of manipulation, but it proved to be worth it once I'd mastered the process.

The image sold at a benefit for the Taos Men's Shelter in January 2008 at Wilder Nightingale, just a month after I made it. Owner Rob Nightingale and I both remember the occasion fondly. The buyer was a long-time instructor at Taos Ski Valley who thought it was a pen and ink drawing or a pencil sketch. I took that as high praise. I began to see the potential of a portfolio built on simplified snow scenes. From that image, Brush Strokes, and that first sale the Sketches of Winter portfolio was born.

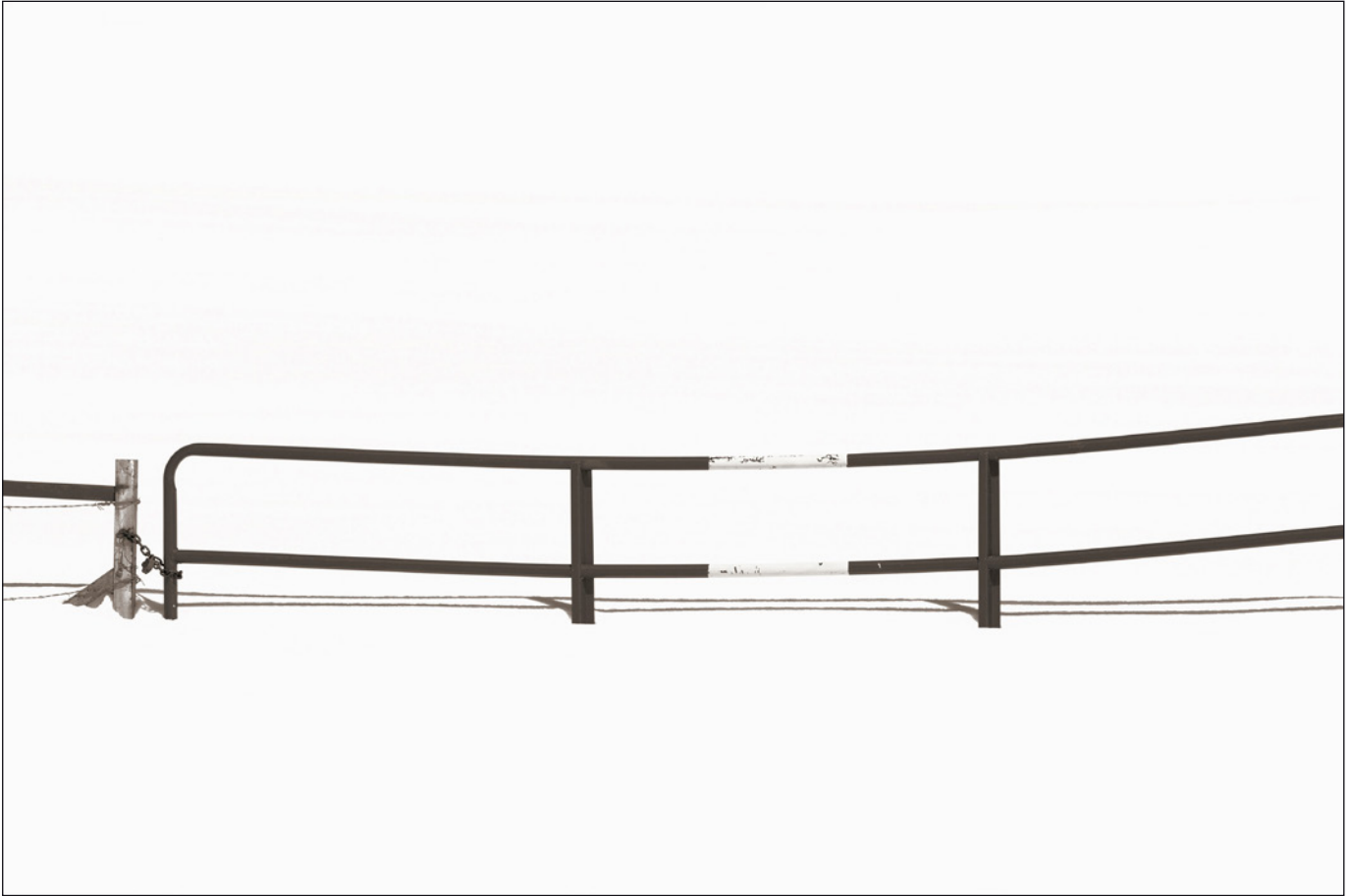
Fresh unmarked snow was the essential ingredient. I photographed the morning after every meaningful snowfall for two years. I sought the best powder stashes in northern New Mexico and southern Colorado. The best of those snow magnets were at the height of land and that's where the snow lasted the longest, as well. I explored on foot, snowshoes, and cross-country skis throughout 2008 and 2009.



Inky Shadows.

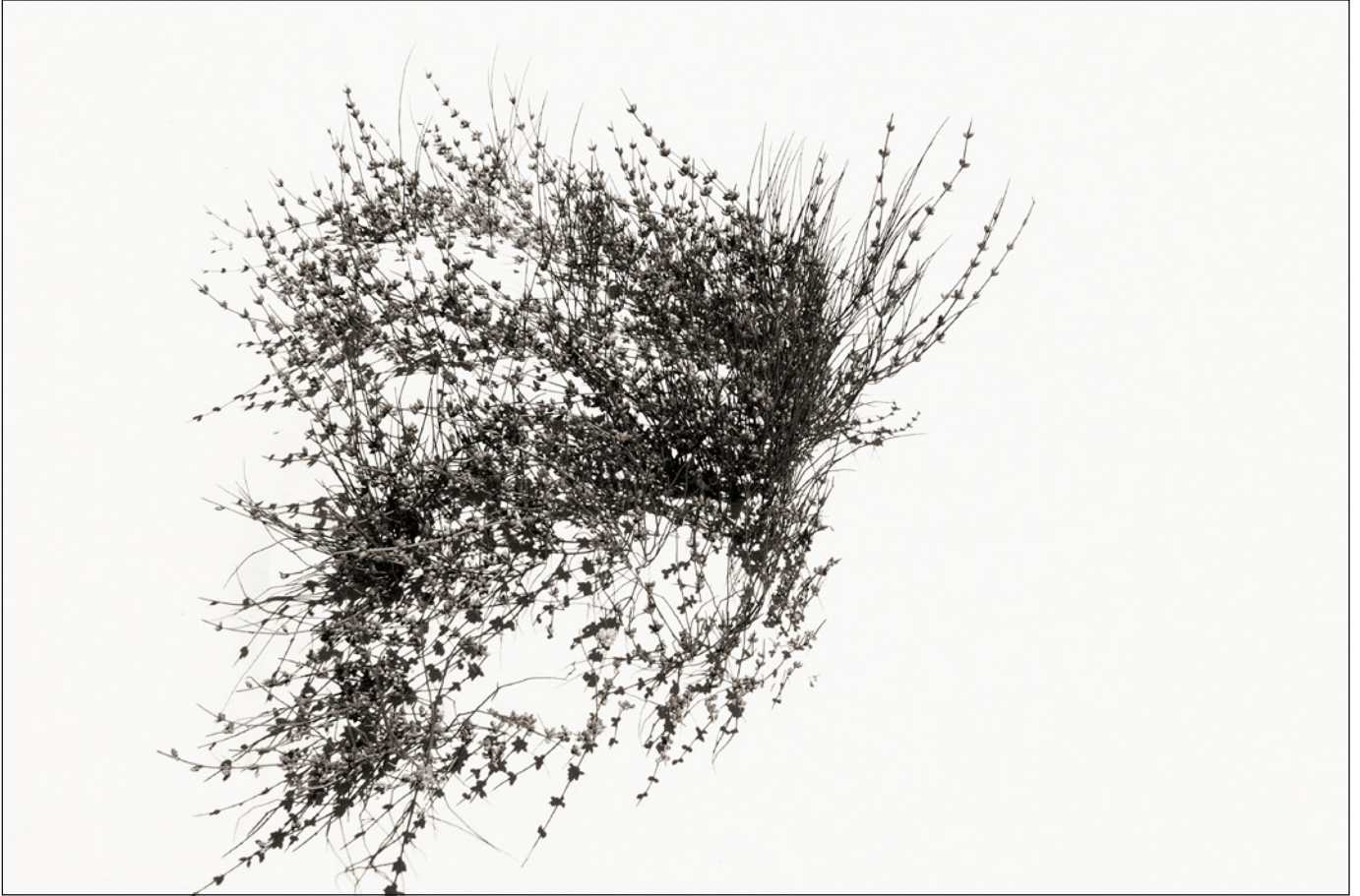


Porcupine.



Pipe Gate #1.

One of the best was on the stretch of US 64 between Tres Piedras and Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico. In those 48 miles I traversed cattle country in the flats at 7,500 feet and ascended to aspen groves and pine forests at 10,528 feet on Brazos Summit. Everywhere I looked was a photograph asking to be taken. I post-holed across endless meadows and wove through aspen stands where I found myself in an ocean of silent white.

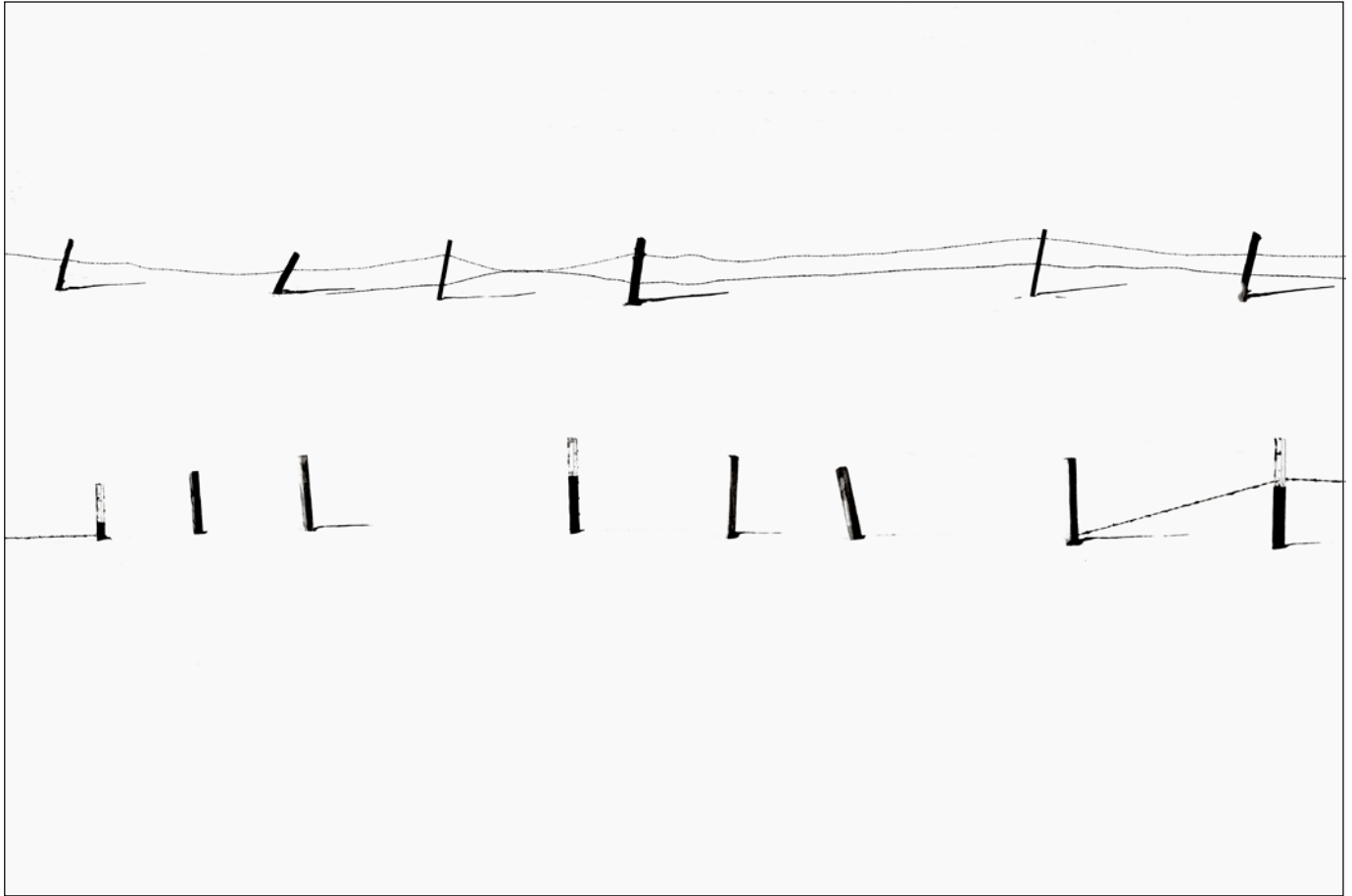


Harbinger.



Trio.

Valles Caldera high above Los Alamos was even higher at 11,523 feet. So, snow conditions there were much like Brazos Summit. But for reasons I can't explain my best tight shots, perhaps they're still lifes, happened along NM Highway 4 across from Valles Caldera National Monument.



Lines of Defense.

Another deep snow attraction was the Taos Plateau north of Tres Piedras and beyond to the vast San Luis Valley, the largest alpine valley in the world at 165 miles long and 65 miles wide. The Taos Plateau and the San Luis Valley are the same land mass. They carry different name simply because map makers in 1847 drew the line between the Colorado and New Mexico territories as far south as possible to demark as much USA as possible. Had the natural geography been recognized, New Mexico then a Mexican colony would have extended north to Saguache in what is now Colorado. The plateau and valley are open range and farming and ranching operations at 7,500 feet that's pancake flat with the occasional mesa and two rock monoliths, Ute Mountain, and San Antonio Mountain. Fences are ubiquitous icons of the valley where millions of sheep once grazed.



Snow Fence.



From the Wind.

My visits to Brazos Summit, Valles Caldera and the Taos Plateau were targeted photo safaris aimed at building the Sketches of Winter Portfolio. While the photographs along the road from Gunnison, Colorado from Saguache were serendipity. We were driving to Crested Butte to ski. That took us through a winding canyon leading to US 50. On a soft shouldered hill to my left was a rustic snow fence curved across the slope like a backward 'C'. Then as I ascended further up Highway 114 over Cochetopa Pass on my right was a fence with shafts of grass bent away from the persistent wind.

Wherever I ventured on big snow days, Brazos Summit, Valles Caldera, the Taos Plateau and elsewhere, I immersed myself in a crystalline otherworld. My breaths grew deeper in the profound silence. The unmarked snow was a vast canvas to frame the simple shapes around me. ○

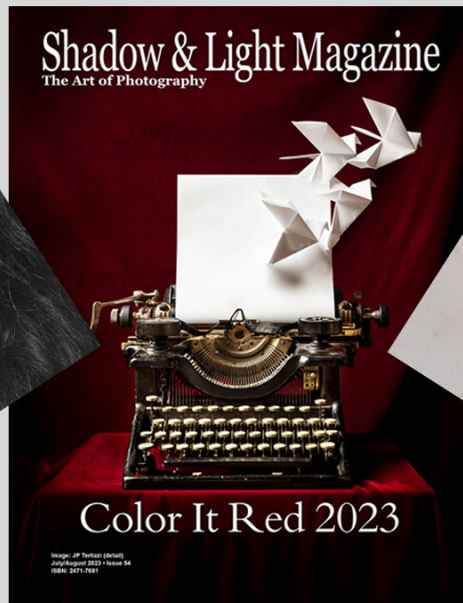
Endpaper...



Laugh (from *Mindful Musings* series). ©Tim Anderson (*prints available for purchase-email me*)
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