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Praise for Diffusion, Volume I

“Avant-garde, breakthrough and innovative are just three adjectives that describe editor Blue Mitchell’s first foray into the world of fine art photography magazines. Diffusion magazine, tagged as unconventional photography delivers on just that. Volume 1 features the work of Jeffrey Baker, Pamela Petro, Tina Maas and Sika Stanton. With each artist giving you a glimpse into how photography forms an integral part of each of their creative journey. The first issue’s content is rounded out by Zeb Andrews’ and Dr. Mike Ware. Zeb Andrews’ peak through his pin-hole world is complimented by an array of his creations along with the 900 second exposure “Fun Center” as the show piece. And Dr. Mike unscrambles the history of iron-based photographic processes and the importance of the printmaker in the development of a fine art image.

At a time when we are seeing a mass migration to on-line publishing and on-line magazine hosting, the editorial team at Diffusion proves you can still deliver an outstanding hard-copy fine art photography magazine. I consumed my copy immediately with delight; now when is the next issue coming out?”

- Michael Van der Tol

“Regardless of the retrospective approach to the medium of photography, which could be perceived by many as a conservative drive towards nostalgia and sentimentality. I find the fundamental ethos in Diffusion, is one of vibrant personal exploration. The enthusiasm of the proponents highlights, not a yearning to go back in time to experience the pioneering days of photography, but more a visceral engagement with the medium which does not reference the ephemeral nature of modern digital systems.

This approach brings both the photographer and the viewer into direct contact with unique and resonant styles of photography which are perhaps more important today than they ever were. I feel it is a kind of reaction to the general evolution of photography which is mostly governed by technology, by people who prefer to chose for themselves what type of image they want to create by drawing from the complete range of possibilities that traditional methods offer them.”

- Jason W

“I am an art history student doing my MA thesis on the use of alt. photo processes in contemporary NZ art. Diffusion is really interesting—it’s existence indicates just how developed the revival of alt processes is internationally and how important the establishment of a sense of artistic community is for those active on the fringes of general practice. It’s really great to get a feel for what’s happening overseas as it provides me with a broader context in which to place the photographers working in NZ. Thanks, and I look forward to next year’s volume!”

- Chanelle

“I really appreciate the effort you have made to make a quality product and especially your effort to include substantive articles. Too many photography magazines today rely on a gloss-over approach to their articles, or amount to little more than a list of technical specifications. I can’t remember the last time I took more than 10 minutes to read a photography magazine start to finish. And I definitely have never wanted to reread it! But I spent a delightful full evening with your magazine, reading and rereading everything, and enjoying it immensely.”

- Karen O
Alternativephotography.com is a free information center for historical photographic methods in use today - the art, the processes and the techniques of alternative photography. Techniques and processes, photographers’ gallery, articles and forums and specialist literature.
Features

I am often asked... by Zeb Andrews

Zeb Andrews reveals the “what’s” and “why’s” of his zero image pinhole camera, examines the illusion of motion, and divulges his photographic purpose.

Profile: Jeffrey Baker
“spiritual ramifications”

Jeffrey Baker uses photography as a tool for large scale mixed media pieces. He shares his views about technology, spirituality, and the process of craft.

Profile: Pamela Petro
“nature recycles everything, even us”

Pamela Petro explores installations of rocks and cairns embedded with human identity—amplified by the cycle of thought, nature, and life.

Profile: Tina Maas
“drawn to the beauty in decay”

Tina Maas dives deep into a transitory photo process, details the meaning of her Ophelia series and her desire to create something unique.

Profile: Sika Stanton
“The human impulse to see”

Sika Stanton creates moody modern tintype portraits. She scrawls to us about cheap instant photography contrasted with alternative photographic processes.

Formerly & Hereafter

Plates to Pixels Gallery

- 2nd International Juried Exhibition
- Juried by Christina Z. Anderson
- “photography is very much alive”

I Hate You by Courtney McManus

I had made up my mind about it well before you had even opened your mouth to make the suggestion. As you closed the door, I wanted to tell myself, “I hate you for this.”
From the Editor

It seems every week I learn of a newspaper or magazine that is going under, most likely due to increased reliance on the internet, coupled with current economic problems. Unfortunately, I am probably part of the problem. Outside of public radio in the morning, I turn to the internet for my daily news and art updates. The internet hosts a plethora of art related resources, making art appreciation more accessible. I do however find myself annoyed with the limitations of this online art world. To me photography is visceral. It cannot be bound by a monitor and mouse clicks — it is best showcased in a tangible form. Don’t get me wrong, I have immensely enjoyed curating for the virtual gallery platestopixels.com. This magazine would probably not be possible without my experiences and the outstanding response to the Plates to Pixels gallery. The main problem I have come across in this virtual world is that I long for the experience of grasping my fingers around hard-copies of magazines, books and images.

Diffusion is born out of a longing to create something palpable as well as enticing, educational, and hopefully entertaining. I have a keen interest as an artist — and art consumer — in photographers that push the boundaries and limitations of traditional photographic processes. Although I surround myself with artwork from photographers that push these boundaries, I have discovered, outside of physical exhibitions and online, that this type of photographic work is underrepresented in the modern photography magazine.

Diffusion is a compilation of articles, interviews, and images from artists and image-makers that coincide with this purpose. The magazine will be published annually, however, we will be producing special editions periodically that will focus more on specific themes and will not be limited to the photographic arts.

Feel free to shoot me an e-mail and let me know what you think of the magazine and what you’d like to see in Diffusion’s next issue. Also, notice the “Next Issue - Call for Work” for more information on our purpose and the 2010 Group Showcase.

Thanks for reading and viewing, plus a big thank you to all the Diffusion contributors, this could not have happened without all your patience, incredible image-making, and exceptional writing abilities.

Cheers,
Blue Mitchell
blue@diffusionmag.com

Next Issue - Call for Work
2010 Annual Group Showcase
Theme: Elements

Diffusion focuses on unconventional photographic processes and photo related artwork. We encourage artists working in alternative processes, experimental darkroom derived work, low-fi/analog, as well as unique digital processes to submit work for review. We believe the print market is saturated with traditional photography and conventional digital photographic practices, therefore Diffusion showcase’s artists working with unusual photographic methods. Surprise us!

For group showcase consideration, send up to five images in tiff or jpg formats, at least 2200 pixels on the longest side on disk to: Diffusion c/o One Twelve Publishing, 3016 SE 65th Ave, Portland, Oregon, 97206. Please include image titles, detailed photographic process description, date and dimensions. Submissions will not be returned unless SASE enclosed. Happy image making!
I am often asked the question
by Zeb Andrews

I still remember the first day I took my new pinhole camera out to use it. I was in a park in downtown Portland and I had just set up the camera on the tripod and was ready to begin an exposure, when a gentleman approached me, introduced himself and asked me politely what type of camera I was using. That simple question was the beginning of a ten minute conversation, as well as a pattern that would repeat itself in the future almost every time I took my pinhole camera out to photograph. I expected a lot of new things when I bought the camera, but I did not anticipate the amount of attention that this camera consistently draws. It is a rare day when no one stops to ask me a question or three about the scratched up wooden box with which I am tinkering. Over the years I have noticed that these questions tend to fall within two broad categories: the “whats” and the “whys”, as in “what is that camera?” and “why do you want to use it?” In the process of responding to these questions, I have realized that the answers enlighten our way of thinking not just of pinhole photography, but of photography as a whole.

The world of photography right now is revolving around images that are super sharp and super saturated, with high dynamic ranges balancing highlights and shadows to an even greater degree than our own eyes can achieve. Much of this photography is done with cameras that practically require college degrees to fully understand, cameras that do almost everything for us except cook breakfast and wash the dishes. This is in the pursuit of precision at best, and perfection at worst. Don’t take me the wrong way: I love making technically precise images myself, wringing every bit of detail out of a scene that a piece of glass and frame of film are capable of capturing. Some scenes resonate more strongly with me when they are photographed in this manner and I don’t believe there is anything wrong with that approach. Sometimes though, I feel that the idea of technically precise images becomes a carrot in front of the donkey: this ideal leading us, as opposed to us leading it. This concept gets to the heart of my love for my pinhole camera. In contrast, pinhole photography is not precise, and it is certainly not perfect. It gives me balance to my sharper “lensed” cameras and a needed change of pace. It is like a sunny day amidst two weeks of rain, those bright hours so rejuvenating, or conversely, a nice, cool rainy day after two weeks of bright, harsh sunny ones.

As I alluded to above, pinholes are not as sharp as their lensed brethren; there is no confusion on this point. Then again, they are not meant to be. Pinhole photography is about capturing things just a bit soft. The emphasis is not on capturing large amounts of incredibly fine detail, but rather communicating the sense and mood of a place or time. Consider this analogy: my eyesight is not poor, but I still need glasses to see things sharply. There are times, sitting in a field or standing in front of a waterfall, or watching it rain, that I take my glasses off and enjoy the view of the world with everything just slightly fuzzy. You probably will not be surprised if I tell you that things look different in this manner. But what if I were to tell you that you actually notice more? Instead of concentrating on the details of this world, you start to notice its patterns. You begin to see how things relate to one another, particularly in the form of motion.

“There are times, sitting in a field or standing in front of a waterfall, or watching it rain, that I take my glasses off and enjoy the view of the world with everything just slightly fuzzy.”
Colors, shapes and light all take on increased importance when detail and texture recede. Simply because I take my glasses off does not mean I see the world in a diminished fashion, but rather in a different one, and the same applies to the soft nature of pinhole photography.

The aspect of motion also plays a major role in the “why” of my pinhole photography. Considering the pinhole camera I own uses an effective aperture of f250, exposures by necessity are quite long. On a bright sunny day with fast film I can achieve blindingly fast exposures of around one or two seconds. Most days, though, I operate in a realm between 15 seconds to 30 minutes. If I am shooting at night, an exposure can easily take several hours. A single frame of film exposed in such a manner captures the world in a fashion we are not able to see with our own eyes, for humans see motion one moment at a time. Our perception of the world is like a flip book where motion, or the illusion of motion, is created by rapidly flipping through the pages. Despite a perception of motion, we are only ever seeing a single page at any given moment. The pinhole camera, then, is like seeing the same flip book, but with the pages transparent so that they can all be viewed at once. At a single moment one is able to see not just where something began, but also where it ended, and the relationship of that range of motion with the world around it.

The necessity of longer exposures also makes me feel more a part of the scene I am photographing. I am forced to remain in one particular place while I wait on an exposure that may be several minutes in length. Regarding one such four minute exposure, I had a friend comment that I must have the patience of a saint to stand still for such a long time. My response was, “Really? Is it that Herculean of a task to stand still for four minutes?” After all, it is during these times that I get to enjoy being in that spot, to study it and note its details, to wonder what it may look like in a year’s time, or ten. The long pinhole exposures encourage me to pause, to be less of a transient observer who snaps a few photos before rushing on.

Now, at this point I am sure some of you are mentally raising your hands with the intent to ask why I feel the need to do this with a pinhole camera. After all, with the rise of neutral density filters, it is quite easy to achieve super long exposures with many other cameras. This is very true. I could easily do long exposures with the aid of extremely slow film or extremely strong neutral density filters. I could even choose to shoot everything just slightly out of focus to incorporate...
a soft effect similar to that of a pinhole. If these particular effects were all I desired, I probably would not shoot pinhole cameras nearly as much as I do, but I do have one last ace up my sleeve: the pinhole camera’s sheer simplicity.

The whimsical and unpredictable nature of how a pinhole renders an image is one of its qualities that I enjoy the most. As a result, when I take a picture with my pinhole camera, I spend a lot more time thinking about what I want to photograph as opposed to how I want to photograph it. I concentrate more on what is in front of my camera than on the camera itself, which is exactly where a photographer should be focusing his or her energy.

And so, if you have stuck with me this far, you have a fairly good understanding of “why” I do what I do. My pinhole camera gives me balance in a world of technical precision. It grants me a perspective of the world I am not able to see without it, and in the process it encourages me to slow down and actually enjoy the places I am photographing. Now, if you would like to hang around just a bit longer we can discuss the “what”, which has an answer that is much more direct but no less important. After all, while the quality of the tools used to make art may not be the greatest factor in determining the results of one’s endeavors, this quality still plays a significant role.

The camera I use is handmade by the Zero Image Company in Hong Kong (www.zeroimage.com) and creates a negative that measures six by nine centimeters. At these dimensions, when I am shooting 120 film, I can produce eight images per roll. Zero Image’s pinhole cameras are remarkable for their sublime and simple design. They are incredibly effective cameras that readily double as objects of art, in no small part because Zero Image builds their cameras from high quality teak wood which is then coated for a gorgeous finish. The metal parts are all coated brass, which Zero Image’s web site claims helps prevent oxidizing. I can verify this from personal experience.

My Zero Image pinhole has been in the ocean twice. And I do mean in the ocean. I was setting up a shot one time waist-deep in the surf and a larger-than-normal wave snuck up behind me. The wave knocked over my tripod, pinhole and all, completely submerging it. I had to stumble around for a minute or so, waiting for the surf to recede before I found a leg of my tripod sticking out of the sand. I hauled it out, pinhole still attached, to survey the damage. Other than being full of salt water and sand, the camera was fine. I took it up to a bathroom, washed the camera under freshwater, dried it off with paper towels and had it reloaded within 15 minutes. I cannot say the same would have been possible with any other camera I own.

In fact, though these anecdotes may seem like an odd way to promote a camera, allow me to share a few of my other misadventures with my Zero Image. There was the time I was on top of Eagle Falls at Lake Tahoe and my pinhole camera unattached itself from the head of my tripod, bounced...
off one rock, somersaulted off another and plunked into the stream. I stared after it, a bit dumbstruck for about two seconds, which conveniently was how long it took the flow of the stream to carry my pinhole over the edge of the falls. Luckily, the camera snagged in a crevice of rock about ten feet below and I was able to scurry down to retrieve it, once again having to dry it off with paper towels before reloading it. Another time as I was getting out of a car in downtown Portland, my camera threw itself off my lap and onto the sidewalk, where it shattered into about four pieces too many. Even that disastrous little adventure was remedied with liberal amounts of wood glue and electrical tape, and two years later the camera records images as well as ever.

I have now owned my Zero Image 6x9 for almost three years, and while it certainly looks nowhere near its original mint condition - scarred, scraped, taped and glued as it is - the camera still functions flawlessly. The images it produces still cause people to pause, to wonder or marvel, to be moved and entertained. And this is how it should be, after all. Even worn and scarred, my pinhole still draws a lot of attention and many questions, which I never mind answering. The answers to the “whats” and “whys” have resulted in not only a lot of perfect strangers learning more about photography, pinhole and otherwise, but myself as well.

Zeb Andrews is a Portland, Oregon photographer, more of his work can be found at www.flickr.com/photos/zebandrews. Zero Image pinhole cameras can be purchased, among other places, at Blue Moon Camera in Portland, Oregon. More info at: www.bluemooncamera.com.
**A Little History**

In the dawn of photography, it was far from obvious which light-sensitive substance might lead to success in developing the new art-science. Sir John Herschel, one of its pioneers, wrote in 1839:

‘...I was on the point of abandoning the use of silver in the enquiry altogether and having recourse to Gold or Platina...’

Silver salts had shown great promise for recording photographic images at the hands of Herschel’s colleague, Henry Talbot, the inventor of photography on paper; whilst in France, unknown to them, a different process for making exquisite silver images on metal plates had been invented by Nicéphore Niépce and Louis Daguerre. Both the Photogenic Drawing and the Daguerreotype, as these processes were named, had their limitations. Aware of this, Herschel investigated many light-sensitive materials as alternatives to silver salts, including compounds of other noble metals, dyestuffs extracted from flowers and, most significantly, the iron salts of certain organic acids which occur naturally in the plant kingdom.

In 1842, Herschel discovered that light transformed ferric ammonium citrate into the ferrous state, which could then be used to make permanent images by reduction of a noble metal salt to the inert metal. Thus, he made contact-prints in gold, silver, mercury, and the pigment Prussian blue, which he dubbed, respectively: chrysotype, argentotype, amphitype, and cyanotype. A later innovator, William Willis, found a similar way to print in platinum and palladium, giving us the platinoype and palladiotype.

None of these iron-based monochrome processes, however, proved sensitive enough for the camera. It turned out that Talbot had been on the right track; his invention of calotype set photography on the road to today’s negative-positive process, in which the chemical development of a latent image in a silver halide emulsion achieves a photographic speed sufficient to capture the camera negative ‘instantaneously’.

The printing of a positive photograph from a camera negative is more leisurely than negative-making, because lengthy exposures are no limitation, and light sources can be intense. So for this purpose the slow contact-printing processes devised by Herschel are brought back into play, and some were accepted into 19th Century photographic practice, when popular negative formats were much larger than today. But, early in the 20th Century, the evolution of miniature camera formats made image enlargement a necessity, calling for the more sensitive gelatin-silver halide development papers. Thus, a major manufacturing industry was founded, which soon dominated the commercial photographic market, forcing the iron-based processes into obsolescence. Ironically (!), the practice died out completely in its birthplace, Britain. But, in a counter-flow to the commercial stream, and driven by dissatisfaction with the increasingly limited range of surfaces and tones offered by the manufactured printing papers, a few dedicated artists in the USA re-discovered the iron-based processes and kept them alive in the intervening years by hand-coating their own papers.

**Digital versus Analogue**

Now, at the dawn of the 21st century, the ‘silver-gelatin monoculture’ of the photographic industry is, in its turn, succumbing to the commercial challenge presented by the new technology of electronic imaging. Photographers - both amateur and professional - are turning away from the 150-year-old traditions of wet and smelly chemistry in the darkroom, in favour of dry and odourless electronics on the desktop. There can be no denying that electronic
imaging, digitally manipulated, brings great benefits in the ease and convenience of acquiring and transmitting pictures: it is clearly advantageous and economical for purposes where the image is essentially ephemeral. The problems of electronic imaging are long-term, arising from issues of storage, conservation and accessibility of the digitally-encoded files. How long will the re-formatting of entire digital archives be sustainable to keep pace with the frequently-changing high-technology of the computer industry? In contrast, the traditional photographic negative can be stored, handled, and re-printed anywhere, at any time, with only the most basic technology.

As commerce withdraws its interest from photo-chemical image-making and re-invests in electronic media, the traditional practices of analogue photography will revert into the hands of those with whom it began - or rather, their spiritual heirs: the dedicated photographic artists, experimenters, and craftspeople. It is very hard to replicate the multi-layered, silver-gelatin printing papers manufactured by the industry, which may soon vanish altogether in the 21st century. Rather, to make permanent photographic images in the future, we may prefer to turn to the simple and beautiful alternative processes.

The chief difference between making an iron-based print and using the silver-gelatin product lies in the hand-crafted aspect. Alternative printers are rewarded for their labour (which is considerable!) by the satisfaction of being true to their materials. Hand-made plain-paper prints distinguish themselves from silver-gelatin by the absence of any binder layer. The image resides within the surface fibres of the sheet, and its matte surface acquires a tactile quality akin to an engraving or a watercolour. Connoisseurship can tell if a print is a good work of art, but can rarely say whether the print is also a good work of science. I believe that artists deserve the best science. To perfect these beautiful processes calls for a degree of scientific professionalism no less than that which has been devoted to the commercial photographic medium.

**Platinotype**

In 1873, William Willis, searching for a solution to the problems of impermanence of silver images, devised a means of printing in platinum. Willis devoted a further 20 years to improving his platinotype process, founding a company to manufacture the coated paper in 1879. By the late 1880s he began to enjoy a commercial success, which reached its zenith around 1900, when more platinotypes could be seen on gallery walls than any other process. The ‘platinum age’ enjoyed a lamentably short life; its end came with the First World War, when the use of platinum as a catalyst for manufacturing explosives debased the metal to a ‘strategic material’. Its use for jewellery and photography was consequently banned in 1916, and the commercial manufacture of paper ceased. Willis valiantly responded with an analogous process using the related metal palladium, which is hardly less permanent than platinum.

Subtle quality, total permanence, and ease of working place the platinotype at the summit of alternative photographic printing. Platinum and palladium can yield colours ranging from blue-black, through neutral greys, to rich sepia browns. The tonal separation in the middle values is excellent, and great delicacy can be achieved in the highlights, imparting a beguiling luminosity to the print. This medium has in recent years enjoyed a renaissance, especially in the USA, because it evidently meets an aesthetic need in some people’s expressive work. In collaboration with Professor Pradip Malde in the mid-1980s, I developed a modern printing-out method of platino-palladiotype that is economic and reliable, enabling a consistency of working that had been difficult to achieve with the traditional process.
**Chrysotype**

Sir John Herschel’s embryonic chrysotype process never reached fruition, owing to problems of fogging and excessive contrast. Sporadic attempts to tame this elusive process proved unsuccessful, and all the leading authorities of the 19th century discounted the feasibility of gold printing. However, gold did find use as a toner for silver prints when the issue of permanence was paramount. Compared with the analogous platinum or palladium compounds, gold salts are harder to use in an iron-based sensitizer because their oxidising nature needs to be tamed by some modern chemistry. My new chrysotype process is possibly the first chemically novel method of precious metal printing to be invented since 1900. Chrysotypes can yield a wide range of colours, including pink, magenta, brown, purple, violet, blue or green, which offer the possibility of matching the colour of a monochrome print to the expressive intent of the artist. The various colours are due to differences in size and shape of the colloidal gold particles, which absorb and scatter different wavelengths of light. The particle size is, in turn, controlled by the chemistry of the sensitizer and the conditions of processing. Chrysotypes are extremely light-fast and resistant to chemical attack; they therefore enjoy an archival permanence equalling or exceeding that of the platinotype, and share with this process the same characteristics of a perfectly matte surface and a subtle tonal gradation.

**Argyrotype**

Since 1842, Herschel’s iron-silver process, the argentotype, has fathered many offspring, variously named van Dyke, kallitype, sepiaprint, and brownprint, which differ only in detail rather than principle. These brown silver images consist of metal particles much smaller than the black silver images of modern development papers. Tiny particles are inevitably more vulnerable because they present a larger surface area for attack by substances that oxidise silver. The inherent problem of the iron-based silver processes lies in the danger of leaving residual ferric iron in the print - to its ultimate undoing, because ferric iron will oxidise silver with consequent degradation of the image. In the past, some of these recipes were said to be deficient in gradation and most have acquired a poor reputation for image permanence. I have added yet another version to the set, called argyrotype, which has been designed to overcome these objections in a ‘user-friendly’ way.
Cyanotype

Herschel’s invention of cyanotype, or printing in Prussian blue, was at first taken up only by amateur botanists for plant illustration. Most notable among these was Anna Atkins who, from 1843 to 1853, hand-printed in cyanotype her comprehensive albums of botanical photograms of algae and ferns, which have become highly-treasured items in the early photographic canon. Following Herschel’s death in 1871, cyanotype was usurped by entrepreneurs to exploit its potential as a reprographic medium. Their re-styled ‘ferroprussiate’ process found some use among photographers as a cheap and easy option for proofing negatives, but its major commercial market was for copying the plans in every drawing office, and it became the leading process for photocopying until the mid-1950s. Even in obsolescence it has endowed our language with an indelible new word: the blueprint.

The British photographic establishment has been reluctant to acknowledge cyanotype as a valid pictorial medium, thanks to the intolerant response of 19th century British critics to its powerful and uncompromising colour. Fortunately this prejudice did not prevail universally. In the USA, Canada, and France, there are substantial museum holdings of artistic cyanotypes. Herschel’s original cyanotype formula has survived essentially unchanged for 160 years, due to its pleasing simplicity and economy; but I found it possible in 1994 to make some small improvements in the chemistry which confer greater speed, stability, convenience and quality on the process.

Conclusion

Lens-based picture-making with commercial materials, whether digital imaging or analogue photography, necessarily employs media that are designed to satisfy large markets. Inevitably, these media tend towards a homogeneity of appearance that dulls the edge of our appreciation of the photograph as an art-object. My purpose in helping to revitalize the iron-based alternative processes has been to enhance the richness and variety of the photographic medium. In the end, the aim is to place the choice and control of the print’s appearance where it properly belongs - into the hands of the printmaker. ♦

Dr. Mike Ware is a UK photographer and chemist. More of his work can be viewed at www.mikeware.co.uk.
I'm a product of the Inland Empire in Southern California. Most of my childhood took place in Riverside, CA with a few formative years occurring in a housing development against the San Bernardino foothills. The San Bernardino house was consumed by a wildfire a few years ago, as was much of the scrubby desert foothills were my father used to hike with my sister and I. I remember the Santa Ana winds being relentless there; they would whip under the eaves of the house and make this incessant high-pitched whine for months at a time. It comes as no surprise that those same winds contributed to the inferno that ate that particular housing development: it always felt like a place that wasn’t meant to exist.

The years spent in Riverside seemed rosier. We knew our neighbors and, quite unlike most suburban children these days, we were allowed a bit of latitude to roam about on our bikes. Both my parents worked full time and were fairly liberal in terms of education and perception. Dinner conversations were always conducted at their level and my sister and I were simply expected to rise to their complexity of discourse. Consequently, we were in a persistent state of striving to articulate our ideas with clarity and wit. I doubt we succeeded all that often, but the compulsion to try was probably more important than anything we might have said or felt at the time.

I grew up with two parents in a time when many of my friends were dealing with divorces. Many people jokingly referred to us as “The Cleavers.” It wasn’t uncommon though that such a joke was made with a bit of longing in the voice and I always felt saddened at what I naively perceived to be the lack of commitment in the adult world. Even then I perceived a sort of shiftless, faithless, tendency being engendered by the modern world. This might be one of the most important assumptions I’ve made in terms of my preoccupations and decisions as an artist.

**Profile**

Jeffrey Baker

When did you start taking photographs?

I began taking photographs when I moved away from Southern California. I moved back in with my parents (who had relocated to Oregon) and met Paul Gentry, a fantastic jack-of-all-artistic-trades, who offered to teach me the basics of constructing pinhole cameras. My first photographs were taken with converted VHS boxes and developed on top of a washer and dryer in a closet-sized laundry room. I’ll never forget watching those first prints flash to life under the red light and hastily trying to throw them in the stop bath before they went completely black. “Don’t burn the toast,” became my photographic mantra for some time as I worked out the technical side of pinhole exposures. Paul and I would spend countless hours wandering the Willamette Valley taking pictures and, in that year prior to art school, I probably netted more successful images than in all of the years that have passed since. In art school I took many photography classes, but in some ways they tainted my ability to be completely open to unpredictability. That little bit of knowledge about ideal negatives and prints robbed me of the capacity to appreciate a more random sort of beauty. I’ve been trying to find my way back to those exhilarating moments of naiveté ever since.

In your work you often do mixed media, lots of drawing and photography, how did you arrive at this process?

There’s a short, and rather jaded, answer to that question or a longer, more earnest, response. I’ll offer both.

In college I was awarded a commission to produce a drawing or painting for the annual fund-raising auction on behalf of the Drawing Department. I understood that the intent of the fund-raiser was to make money for the school and, therefore, that...
anything too avant-garde would be less likely to sell. Out of a sense of obligation I sat down one night and really attempted to analyze how I might go about creating the most shamelessly beautiful image that I could muster while still retaining a bit of my own personal proclivities. I settled on developing a drawing derived from a pinhole image I'd taken that would utilize an “antiqued” color palette as well as the symmetrical harmony of a grid. As the drawing developed over the course of the weeks I found myself completely enthralled with the idea of manufacturing a commodity. When it sold for a respectable price on auction night I felt like I’d cracked some sort of code, and that a foolproof recipe for beauty wasn’t just some sort of cerebral exercise relegated to the ivory tower of the conceptual artist.

That’s the short answer.

The longer answer is that after I graduated from art school I had to return to Southern California and I found myself blocked. My entire thesis experience had been very heady — I’d been looking at the spiritual ramifications of the digital age and had been working in a variety of media. But once away from the cloistered experience of art school I fell prey to the demands of a real life and became... artless, I suppose. I couldn’t settle on any one direction and ended up growing so frustrated with my mounting collection of incomplete projects that I just stopped creating.

Eventually I began to look back through all the work I’d produced; reflecting on their relative value. And I don’t mean monetary value, I mean that I wanted to uncover when my joy for creating had been most earnest and pure, which may seem like a very wistful undertaking, but it brought me back to those first experiences with pinhole photography. I missed the wandering about and the egoless approach to capturing images.

With this realization I then looked at what I felt was the most limiting aspect of pinhole: it was never scaled quite right to fully accentuate its most sublime qualities. Matchbook-sized contact prints or increasingly thin enlargements just seemed incapable of expressing the magnitude of an intangible quantity of light writing a bit of
time onto a physical surface. In order to really convey that quality I felt that the human hand would have to act as intermediary...so I picked up charcoal and gesso again.

**You used an interesting phrase “spiritual ramifications of the digital age”, care to expand on that? How do you think spirituality influences your work?**

I’m not a Luddite, but I do look upon the digital revolution as a potential gateway to disconnected experience. I cannot embrace you or look into your eyes over the Internet. A blog post doesn’t offer me a way to run my hand over the raised ink of a printed page and think about the process that brought a particular book into my bed that night: how a writer’s idea was valued enough to take down trees and turn the drums of noisy machines half a world away before it shipped into my hands and thoughts. Technology offers me no real intimacy, no spiritual closeness, and no haptic reward.

I don’t value the anonymity of bits and bytes: I believe that people should take ownership of their experiences, words, and creations — I believe those things should be offered up to the world with integrity and care. To hide behind an avatar is morally irresponsible.

Were we further along in our evolution as a species I might see value in the speed with which we can now transmit our thoughts, but at this point that speed primarily promotes the dissemination of vacuous and trivial information. If I can post anything I want on my blog why should I take the time to actually craft my thoughts? The entire digital revolution is so biased towards the immediate moment that it ignores the future and spurns the past. As an artist—as a photographer— I value a longer temporal picture, and I remain wary of the impermanence of the digital age.

After having been raised in a household that values faith and the ethical standards that are intrinsically a part of religious faith I found the self-
Timber, Oil, Gum, and Resin by Jeffrey Baker (top)

We were jostled by the light. by Jeffrey Baker (bottom)
centered, uncritical, and consumerist expansion of cyberspace to be profoundly alarming. At the same time, I could see beyond the baser surface of the web’s development and realize that the technology itself held many profound promises for sharing experiences and inspiring creative inquiry. This duality became the crux of my thesis in college. After college I found my preoccupations changed. Instead of considering the spiritual potential within technological advancement I started to look backwards and consider my moral responsibility to respond to the complexity of creation; to the beauty of natural order and the world we live in.

Why do you feel the human hand in artwork is important? Or, outside of your own work, do you feel that it is important?

The presence of the human hand has a validating quality. Minutes, hours, and days of hand labor indicate a deep personal commitment to an image or object. Even non-artists understand that devoting time to something is, essentially, paying for its existence with your life.

The sudden swelling of the DIY (Do It Yourself) movement points to just how hungry we are for legitimizing our time with handwork. For many people now there seems to be this painful realization that television, bestsellers, and internet chat groups are tantamount to “trading your time for little colored beads,” as David Mamet so wonderfully put it at a Portland lecture a few years ago, and the natural reaction is to will your hands to bring something into the world. I don’t remember who said that America was really a culture beholden to Death; that our products and our entertainment were so empty as to be just distracting corpses of imitated reality, but clearly there must be some truth to this or we wouldn’t see so many people striving to create now. Using your hands is an assertion of a life-giving energy that works counter to the embalmed consumerist goods we are being shouted at to buy day-in and day-out.

Who or what are some of your artistic inspirations?

How do you answer this question? Where do you start? I always wonder if people prepare a few pat answers to this so that they can’t be taken off guard.

I’m inspired by music, visual artists, writers, folktales, rituals, antiques, and world history. I have been lucky to develop relationships with some tremendously talented and inspiring individuals. In my day job I’m called upon to know a great many things about a variety of subjects so I tend to be perpetually involved in research projects that often lead me along interesting tangents.

I won’t go so far as to say that I studiously avoid looking at the work of other visual artists, but as the years go by I grow increasingly paranoid about falling so in love with an image or conceptual idea that I will become ensnared by it. I understand my own inclinations towards mimicry and I employ avoidance as a means to fight against them. Nevertheless, there have been figures who’ve made a lasting impression on me. Among them are Leonard Baskin, Ann Hamilton, Anselm Kiefer, Sally Mann, Caravaggio, Robert ParkeHarrison, Frank Miller, Andres Serrano, Michelangelo, Michael Kenna, Allan McCollum, Jim Dine, Andrew Wyeth, Uta Barth, David Wilson, Richard Misrach, and Cy Twombly.

In terms of visual inspiration I think I’m most taken with the early photographic experiments of the mid-1800’s and the flea market snapshot collections of family photographs from the first half of the twentieth century. I keep a collection of found photographs that I’ve dubbed the “Lost and Found” which serves as the basis for at least a third of the drawings I create. The idea of these anonymous images being mistaken for photographs I shot provides countless hours of happy contemplation about the veracity of memory and the historical record.

If you were mentoring a young photographer what would the first lesson be?


“USING YOUR HANDS IS AN ASSERTION OF A LIFE-GIVING ENERGY”

Jeffrey T. Baker lives and works in Portland, Oregon. His work can be viewed at www.jeffreytbaker.com and his personality is documented at www.jeffreytbaker.blogspot.com.
I was born in Hamburg, North Germany. I grew up in a picturesque suburb next to the wide river Elbe. Being the eldest of five siblings, our house was always full of children and full of life. We did not have a television (out of choice) so we played a lot of games. My mum would do many art and crafts projects with us; I loved drawing and knew from a young age that I wanted to become an artist. My dad is a radiologist and gave me my first camera when I was 15. It only occurred to me much later that he actually spent all his day working with images and in those days it was all film and chemistry. Maybe my mum nurtured my creativity and my dad’s scientific mind pushed me to explore the boundaries of photography.

When did you start making artwork?

I have always loved drawing and painting and knew I wanted to study something creative. A family friend convinced me though to go for something “sensible, where you can actually get a job afterwards” so I chose graphic design. I came to London in 1996 to do a foundation course and went on to study graphic design at Camberwell College of Arts in South London. I never really liked working on the computer or the disciplined art of typography. I always saw myself as an image maker and did a lot of experimenting and rule-breaking. I finally fell in love with photography on a school exchange program to New York’s Parsons School of Art in 1999 where I took a class about alternative processes with Jill Enfield. She showed me how unique photography could be and I was instantly attracted to processes that were handmade, experimental and were often prone to mistakes and failures; I have been hooked ever since. For my final degree show back in London, I used Liquid Light on found objects. After traveling for a year and living in Israel with my boyfriend I came back to London to do my masters in photography. For two years I immersed myself in the study of alternative processes out of which the Ophelia series emerged.

Can you please describe in detail the process you used to create the Ophelia series and how you came to it?

I created the Ophelia Series during my two-year masters degree course at Central Saint Martins School of Art in London. We were encouraged to work on a personal project from early on in the course. After watching a film on the installation art of Christian Boltanski I had a dream of women’s faces floating in water lit with a mysterious orange light from below. So I decided to experiment with putting liquid light emulsion onto wax plates so I could subsequently float the pieces in water. I have always admired the Pre-Raphaelite art movement in England, and especially Millais’ famous “Ophelia” painting that I saw at the Tate Britain a few years previously; I instantly saw a connection and decided to name this body of work after it. The sad looking, beautiful and mysterious, eternally young women in Pre-Raphaelite paintings epitomize for me feminine beauty, symbolized by their long flowing hair. Boltanski deals a lot with death in his installations and I tried to integrate this aspect into my work through the evocative reminiscence of waxen death masks, whilst playing on the ambiguity of the former—the possibility of it simply being innocent sleep. I was drawn to the beauty in decay and death.

I took a lot of photographs of my female friends from all around the world, lying on the floor with their long hair spread out. From the digital files I printed large internegatives onto acetate which I contact-printed onto the wax plates. To make the plates, I bought wax pellets, heated them up and poured the liquid wax onto a table coated with cooking oil (to lift the plates off afterwards without breaking) in several layers to create 5-7mm thick plates of wax. To help the emulsion stick to the wax I sprayed them with artist varnish before coating them with liquid light emulsion and exposing them under an enlarger. It is hard to get

1 Liquid Light is a silver-based sensitizer for applying on any surface, exposing by an enlarger, and processing in conventional chemistry.

2 Internegative is a negative created directly from a color-reversal (positive) or black-white positive film. It is the negative copy of the camera original.
“I had a dream of women’s faces floating in water lit with a mysterious orange light from below”
the emulsion to stick, especially as the wax is temperature sensitive, which causes it to expand and contract unpredictably. Some days I would come back after leaving coated plates overnight to dry in the dark, only to find that the entire emulsion had separated and curled up. Sometimes the image would appear fine in the developer but by the time the plate was in the wash the entire emulsion had separated from the plate and had literally washed off. Even if I got perfect images after the wash, the emulsion would sometimes crack under the pressure of the wax expanding a few days later. But all this unpredictability is part of what I love about the process and what makes each plate so unique. It took me about ten plates to get one image I was happy with. After I had created the final wax pieces, I floated them in a tank of water and illuminated them with underwater lights to re-photograph them. Most of the original wax pieces continued to deteriorate and eventually disintegrated.

You mentioned Christian Boltanski and the Pre-Raphaelites, who or what else inspires you?

For inspiration I always love going to one of the many museums or art exhibitions here in London. The list of photographers whose work I admire and that inspire me is long and includes, amongst others, Melanie Manchot’s early emulsion works on canvas, Abelardo Morell’s camera obscura work, the Starn Twins collage work, Connie Imboden’s underwater illusions, Jill Enfield’s alternative processes, Anne Arden MacDonald’s self portraits, Mona Hatoum’s installations, Sarah Moon’s polaroids and Sally Mann’s large format collodions. I also love discovering like-minded photographers on internet sites such as alternativephotography.com and I can spend hours browsing in good photography bookstores. Seeing other photographers’ work in lectures and talks can be very inspiring for me also.

What aspects of photography come easier for you? How about more difficult?

When I switch into “photography mode” I become totally immersed in the moment and enjoy exploring a subject from many different angles; so shooting usually comes easy for me. I sometimes have difficulty getting started on a big project that I have been thinking about for ages. I am fearful that I will not be able to live up to my own expectations. Also, editing my work is hard and tiresome. But once I start in the darkroom I am very enthusiastic and even several misfortunes cannot
dissuade me (it sort of makes the eventual success even sweeter). One aspect that is extremely difficult for me is self promotion. Advertising my work, networking with the right people and contacting galleries, magazines, publishers is not my cup of tea at all. I really hate bothering people and still like to think that if people liked my work they would contact me - a very naive attitude I am told.

What is one of the first lessons you teach your photography students?

First of all I tell my students to stop using their cameras on auto mode. I believe that being in full control of the camera is essential, and that experimenting and making mistakes are the best ways to learn. I usually start my courses with a revision of depth of field as I see it as a key tool for directing the viewers gaze, thereby giving my students more control in expressing their vision. Ultimately I like my students to develop personal projects, which I try to foster by encouraging them to look at other photographers work, participate in critical discussions, and also by going to see exhibitions, looking at relevant internet sites, films, etc, which all contribute to stimulating their creative awareness.

What is one of the best lessons you’ve learned?

This may sound cheesy but an essential lesson I have learned is never to give up—to keep believing in yourself and your abilities. If you do become disheartened, speak to other creative people in your field, from my experience they act as a wonderful support group and get you working again.

Any future or current projects of interest?

Too many to tell you about... actually, I am working on a new personal project that involves my wooden view camera (4x5) and the dry tintype process but it will be a while before the work is ready to show. At the moment I am simply enjoying the shooting.

Tina Maas is an alternative process artist, photographer and educator that lives in London, England. More of her work can be viewed at www.tinamaas.com.
I grew up in northern New Jersey (though in my imagination I was living in Cornwall, England the whole time). I was a happy kid with a great family: 2 brothers and my parents, dogs, turtles, fish, one raccoon, and a ferret for pets. My family loved to go for long car rides—I think that sense of excitement and expectation, even in the suburbs, is what made me into a travel writer. (My dad declared every outing, from a major trip to going to the dump, “An adventure!”). All this said, I also lived a lot in my imagination, populating my world with monsters, ghosts, and all manner of magical creatures when young, and often feeling like an alien in my teen years. (Why North Jersey, for heaven’s sake, when I was clearly meant to be in Cornwall?)

When did you start making artwork?

I’ve always been a word & image person. Artist’s books make sense to me. My independent concentration at Brown was in word and image studies; my master’s degree from the University of Wales was in the Word and the Visual Imagination. For a long time after grad school, however, the word took over. I’m a better writer than draftsman—or maybe writing comes more easily to me—so I spent my 20’s and 30’s writing. But until I began working with petrographs I felt as if I were cheating myself—not communicating in images meant not tending to the other half of me. (Are you surprised I’m a Gemini?).

You use such a unique process called Petrographs, can you explain the process and how you arrived at it?

From 2000-2004 I worked on a travel book called The Slow Breath of Stone: A Romanesque Love Story (Fourth Estate, London, 2005), which was set in Southwest France. I had a set of photos of thousand-year-old sculptures taken by a woman named Lucy Porter in the summer of 1920 (to accompany her husband Kingsley’s magnum opus, Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads). Lucy’s photos are still gorgeous, and I used them—and her travel journal—as a guide to Southwest France. I spent a lot of time thinking about the relationship between stone carving (the art of standing still) and photography (the art of travel), and how the snapshot moment contrasts the near-eternity of stone. After I finished writing I wondered if it were possible to unite the two—photography and stone—and kept imagining how strong the metaphorical implications would be. It took me awhile to figure out how to do it, but I finally found Liquid Light, made by Rockland Colloid, and got my first good petrograph image in Fall, 2005. (The coincidence with my name—Petro—is just that: a happy coincidence.)

Petro is a silver-based sensitizer for applying on any surface, exposing by an enlarger, and processing in conventional chemistry.
The process is fairly straightforward. For the simplest installations, I choose a spot where I feel comfortable working, usually involving water, but not always, and gather up the available rocks. Then I take them to the darkroom, coat them in Liquid Light, and expose them. I then return the imaged rocks—the petrographs—back to their natural environment and wait to see what happens. The results—the erosion of human presence through time, tide, and exposure—are endlessly evocative to me.

I’ve also printed on sidewalks—the Fleeting Fossils series—documented on my website (www.petrographs.blogspot.com) and in the Fall 2008 printed on forest detritus (leaves, twigs, moss, bark, etc.), but stones are my favorite canvas.

Your Petrographs flirt with the notion of life cycles both human and geological. It seems then your work is temporary like that of Andy Goldworthy. Can you expand on what draws you to this type of working method?

I was first attracted to the idea of uniting the caught moment—the photographic image—with the sedentary, near-eternal presence of stone because I was drawn to the juxtaposition of their time scales. The first time I saw an image appear on a rock in the darkroom was one of the most magical moments of my life: it was like a fossil was being summoned up out of the stone to its surface. Amazing. I was thrilled, but after awhile I realized the result was inert. An image on a rock: so what? Only then did it occur to me that the implication of time scales—and by consequence, the evocation of mortality and the notion that nature recycles everything, even us—could only be summoned by the erasure of the image I’d just printed.

That’s when I decided that the “art” in this endeavor lay not in the petrograph itself, but in the installation that followed: in the process of the image interacting with nature, or rather, the elements acting upon it. So I took my first petrographs back to the Mill River, here in Western Mass, where I’d found the rocks to begin with, and put them back in the water. That’s when the real excitement came: the river racing over them, changing them, moving them, and ultimately decomposing their images, leaving them as they’d been before I found them—it was a necessary process with a beginning and an end. The images vanished, but then the images weren’t the point—the process was. It’s a little bit heartbreaking (especially considering all the work involved), but then life is too, right?

Who or what else inspires your artwork?

There are so many ways to answer this question! I’d say, above all, a growing interest in science and the natural world. Growing up I’d been taught that life is “either/or”—you’re an art person or a science person. Can’t be both. Only now, in mid-life, am I realizing how utterly artificial and limiting that is, and how much I want to know about the world around me, particularly in terms of natural science. My dad was (still is, although recently debilitated by a stroke) an ardent amateur mineralogist, and his love of rocks and the processes that created them is finally seeping

“The first time I saw an image appear on a rock in the darkroom was one of the most magical moments of my life...”

Marguerite, State One by Pamela Petro

Marguerite, State Two by Pamela Petro
into me (after fighting it for 30 years!). Books like John McPhee’s Annals of the Former World—a kind of geology for poets, written by a master of creative nonfiction—speak directly to what I’m doing.

In terms of images I’m an eclectic admirer. I’m a big fan of David Nash, who does environmental installations in Wales; of Judith Larsen, an artist I just discovered, who beams projected images onto dancers and again photographs the ephemeral; of Rosangela Renno, a Brazilian artist who works with found photographs and creates word-and-image installations; and Jim Magee, who’s creating what can only be called a megalithic monument in the desert near El Paso. (Have a look at it—I wrote a story on him for Granta: www.granta.com/Online-Only/Jim-Magees-Hill). The coolest thing I’ve seen in ages is Walter De Maria’s Lightning Field in New Mexico.

Any future projects on the horizon?

I’m currently working on something called Faces in Nature, which links the human-centric downtown of Northampton with the greenspace around it. I’m taking portraits of people on the street downtown, and then collecting bits of “natural stuff”—twigs, pine cones, leaves, you name it—on which to print their images. So far, so good...

There is one larger scale project on the horizon, subject to funding. It is called The Hermes Project. Hermes—to whom rock cairns were dedicated in classical Greece—was the god of record-keeping and remembrance. For this project I’m hoping to work with The Women’s Commission for Refugee Women and Children, in New York (my best friend was the Commission’s director, until she died of cancer almost 5 years ago). Working with the Commission, I’ll photograph women refugees and asylum seekers, and then create petrographic cairns of their images back in their home countries. Their photos can go back, although they can’t.

Both of these projects are only in planning stages, however, and as I said, subject to grants.♦

Pamela Petro is a photographer and writer living in Northampton, Massachusetts. More of her work and prose can be viewed at www.petrographs.blogspot.com.
“The human impulse to see what we look like, to document our image and to share those images with others is still the same.”
I grew up in a small town with my mom — Readfield, Maine (a rural town outside of Augusta). So I did a lot of typical small town things and spent a lot of time outdoors.

When did you start making artwork?

I started drawing, painting and building things when I was little. I started taking photos as art almost seven years ago.

You use tintypes as one of your methods of printing, what drew you to that process and why do you like it.

I was drawn to the process for the odd colors and because they were unlike any photographs I had ever experienced before. I like the material presence of tintypes. They are somewhere between a flat image or a “window” and a three dimensional object. They can be messy, scratched up and uneven around the edges, they are tactile, and best viewed when you get to hold them and turn them in your hand. So I guess there’s a renewed sense of intimacy and the human hand both as an image maker and as a viewer that attracts me to tintypes. From there, portraits seemed like the most appropriate subject matter to approach with the process. I also just like the added excuse to shoot in large format. People approach the big camera with a less familiar attitude and there’s so much more visual information. All the detail and texture makes a picture of a face also seem like a landscape.

Who or what else inspires you and your artwork? Do you have a favorite photographer?

For the work I’m doing now — I like interesting faces. I don’t have a favorite photographer but recently I’ve been interested in Edward S. Curtis’s portraits, Platon’s portraits of political players, and a variety of content from a handful of photo/video blogs.

Photography is considered the baby of the art world. Currently, how influential do you think photography is on the art scene?

There seems to be a lot of photography shows happening in Portland, Oregon lately (there were three or four shows featuring old processes in 2008 alone) and there are quite a few galleries dedicated to photography. Photos are fetching higher and higher prices all over the place. So, photography is “growing up” I suppose.

Do you make artwork for yourself or for others? Please explain.

It’s hard to say. Sometimes I enjoy the work I’m doing and sometimes I don’t. I suppose if I made artwork just for myself I wouldn’t bother showing it to anyone nor would I try to sell it.

What are you currently working on, art or otherwise?

I’m working on a new series of portraits of people dressed up as their imaginary animal counterpart. Although it involves costumes and some creative interpretation on my part I consider it a documentary project because I’m working with peoples’ ideas about themselves. I was also thinking about doing a series of pet portraits.
The tintype process was invented in the mid 1800s. The process produces an instant positive image—an optical illusion, created by backing an underexposed negative with a thin blackened piece of metal. Entrepreneurial photographers who considered them a relatively quick, inexpensive and sturdy product compared to the daguerreotype or the glass plate made tintypes popular in America. Tintypes were the documents in family photo albums, the portraits of loved ones stored in lockets, the snap shot of proud working men, and the mementos sent home by soldiers during the Civil War.

When I considered that the tintype—a relatively slow and laborious process—was one of the earliest versions of cheap instant photography I had to admire how far technology has come and how sophisticated and commonplace our use of photography is today. From camera cell phones, to digital point and shoot cameras—we can instantaneously send and reproduce images translated into immaterial bits of information with a few clicks of a keyboard. While the technology constantly changes it seems like people haven’t changed that much. The human impulse to see what we look like, to document our image and to share those images with others is still the same. So, I honor that curious, sometimes vain but always deeply human impulse by making portraits.

Sika Stanton is a photographer living in Portland, Oregon. More of her work can be viewed at sikaphotography.com.
Juror’s Statement by Christina Z. Anderson

What a fun and creative venture, judging this second annual Plates to Pixels online show. The theme this year of “Formerly and Hereafter” was artfully expressed in numerous ways in the 570 entries. The use of blur, implied movement, multiple frames, retro elements, aging of person and place, expressions of longing, and 19th century processes all contributed to a portrayal of time’s acting and passing.

I viewed these 570 images through this theme to cull 65 works that I felt were strong. I was impressed with the caliber of work submitted, and it was not always easy to limit my choices. However, each of the 65 fulfilled these qualifications for me: does the photograph in its particular genre grab me in a way that makes me want to linger and read it a little longer? Does it stay with me after the initial viewing is done? Can I visually recall it in my mind’s eye? Does the image show me something in a way I have not necessarily seen before? And, especially, do I connect emotionally with the work?

Daughn’s Portal, a bromoil print of a curtained window, is fairly standard as far as subject matter goes, but the way the image is rendered in the bromoil process, the tonal range of the image, creates an atmosphere of graphic beauty that brings it out of the realm of ordinary into a much more evocative place. In Hoving’s “Transfiguration”, the graceful gesture of a hand beckons the viewer into the dark waters. Smithson’s “Didn’t Want to Leave” reminds us of languishing summer days now past. Each of these three images have captured, as Roland Barthes says, “that which was” in a memorable way. And yet Dettlinger’s “Hanging” and Crain’s “Cypremort Point 1971” are images that I connect with, too, in their confrontational matter-of-fact situations. I can’t seem to forget those feet dangling in front of the noncommittal female, nor the craggy once-stylish faces of the lawn chair occupants. And finally, you can snow this juror anytime with retro—Meek’s wallpaper/portrait combinations are thoughtfully integrated, minimal, and playful.

I thank Blue Mitchell for allowing me the pleasure of jurying this exhibit and praise all photographers who submitted work to this show. It was a pleasure to view your creative work and see that the whole history of photography is very much alive and well in such contemporary expressions.

Christina lives and teaches in Bozeman, MT, visit her website at www.christinazanderson.com to treat your eyes to her unique photography portfolio.
Box Problems by Janet Matthews

Surfacing by Paul Karabinis

Cypremont Point - 1971 by Charles Hugh Crain

Forgotten by Fred Everett

Transfiguration 1 by Kirsten Hoving
Untitled #3 by Trace Meek
Transformation by Donna Moore
Woman no. 1 by Jenny Sampson

Last Picture Show by Bob Gates
Entwined by Deanna Foran

Spool Bed by John Bergholm
Didn’t Want to Leave by Aline Smithson
Barbie 1958 by Barbara Dombach

The Dress by Emma Powell

Silent Tree by Peter Wicklund

Seared Impressions #3 by Jane Nodine

Sophie by Angela Land
Featuring one image from each selected artist in the 2008 The International Juried Exhibition “Formerly & Hereafter” hosted by Plates to Pixels online gallery. Plates to Pixels was formed in 2007, by artists for artists, to promote the creation and exhibition of photography based fine art. The name Plates to Pixels suggests evolution of photography from the archaic process of Wet-Plate photography to the new digital format of Pixels. The gallery has shown a range of artists from all over the world including Dorothy Shoes, Michal Karcz, Polly Chandler, Jason DeMarte, Michael Sherwin, Balaz Borocz and many more talented artists.

Visit platestopixels.com to see all the images from the 2008 juried show as well as the other talented photo artists.
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Diffusion magazine
Next Issue - Call for Work
2010 Annual Group Showcase
Theme: Elements
details on page 5

An ocean, a camera, a handful of moments, 45 seconds by Zeb Andrews