

▼ THE LAST WORD

When I was eight, our family went on a two week driving vacation from Indiana to the Black Hills, Yellowstone, and the Colorado Rockies. I'd been taking black and white photographs with my Brownie Hawkeye and making contact prints in a darkened bathroom. For the trip, I wanted to try color film, which cost a lot more. My parents and I worked out a deal: they would supply me with one roll of film for the trip, and pay for the processing upon our return. I agonized over each of the 11 exposures that I made (once the shutter went off by accident), and when the film was developed I was amazed that there were eight prints that I really liked, a big increase over my usual batting average. Viewing each negative as precious made me concentrate on what I was doing, and that improved my photography.

The late Fred Picker wrote at length of the photographic discipline instilled during his time as a portraitist, when economics forced him to use a single sheet of film for each subject. At the other extreme there's the working style of the fashion photographer, who, in the film era, kept an assistant busy just loading and unloading backs.

It is true, at least while the mirror's up, that exposing a picture interferes with seeing. It's worse than that. Tripping the

shutter is a distraction to getting the non-time-dependent parts of the picture right, and the act of releasing the shutter and possibly popping the flash distracts the subject. But it's a trade off; if something wonderful happens and you don't make an exposure because you're busy getting the corners just right, you lose. Then there are the situations where there's just too much going on for the photographer to be able to find the one decisive moment -- group portraits come to mind -- and many exposures is the obvious strategy.

In the field, some people use their cameras like sketchbooks. When you look at their contact sheets, you see them trying out an idea here and another there, then settling in on one and exploring minor variations, picking out one approach and ending up with three or four nearly-identical images; then it's on to the next subject. Were the preliminary exposures and those dedicated to ideas that didn't work out wasted film, or were they necessary to achieving the final result? Could the same result have been achieved without releasing the shutter for the exploratory images?

When it comes to tripping the shutter, between silly extremes of profligacy and parsimony lies a broad range of exposure-making that can yield good results. The number of exposures should be considered as part of an overall technical style, which includes the choice of

camera and lighting, whether or not you use a tripod, etc. It seems obvious that you should pick a style appropriate to your subject matter and your intention. An architectural photographer with a hefty tripod and a view camera will make fewer exposures than a sports photographer with a small SLR, a monopod, and a 500mm f/4 blunderbuss.

However, there's something that trumps matching approach and subject. Nicholas Nixon has made a career of out of capturing available-light, intimate portraits in the field using an 8x10 camera. Sally Mann has a highly successful series of similar images photographed with comparable equipment. Neither one has the option of banging off exposures a mile a minute. I would consider their equipment choice a considerable handicap in making the kind of images they're producing, yet both create incredible work. Jerry Takigawa uses a 35mm camera to make studio still-life photographs, another choice that seems counter-intuitive to me. I don't know if he's taking advantage of the capability of his camera to generate many exposures easily, but Jerry produces great results with an unusual equipment selection. It seems to me that more important than matching the technical style to the subject is matching it to the photographer. The secret seems to be in finding a style that fits your personality and your vision, regardless of whether or not your approach is conventional.

CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC ART NEWSLETTER NUMBER 33 WINTER 2007

FOCUS

▼ Donald R. Anderson *Remembering* January 12-March 2, 2007

As the first exhibition of the year, the Center is honored to present the work of Don Anderson. He has been working on the *Remembering* series for over three decades, incorporating mixed media with photography with the end result being three-dimensional. His use of alternative processes—Cyanotype and Van Dyke prints—combined with string, yarn and other connecting materials to make striking, large-scale visual autobiographies.

Anderson states: "I start with family photographs, snapshots, group pictures, formal portraits, and, in vari-



Like Pulling Hen's Teeth

©2006 Don R. Anderson

ous ways, I incorporate those images into finished pieces. I am exploring family relationships and aging,

honoring family members who have died, and visually remembering the past."—DH

▼ CENTER AWARDS PRESENTATION AND GALA

In the spirit of the *Big Easy*, New Orleans was the grand theme for this year's Center Awards Gala event. Colette, our gala event coordinator, once again created a magical experience for the evening with beads, gilded masks and lots of color covering the grand room at Quail Lodge.

A local Zydeco band raised the temperature in the room and got the guests in the mood for the rest of the night's entertainment.

The highlight of the evening was the eloquent acceptance speech given by Center Awards recipient Heather McClintock. She spoke of her challenges in Uganda as she worked in a small village documenting the effects of the recent war on the women and children. She gave a heartfelt thank you to the Center for its support of her work and told the audience that this twelve thousand dollars in funding will allow her to go back and finish the work needed to finish this important project.

The auction began with a great array of fine photographs. Up front, and attracting lots of interest, was the Karsh portrait of Ernest Hemingway. Artists from all over the world donated extraordinary work to support the Center. By the end of the evening, we'd raised almost \$40,000. —DH

Auctioneer Brook Pfeiffer Ewoldsen



Showing a Ruth Bernhard Photograph



Heather McClintock

Ryan Keck Photos

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CENTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

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The Center for Photo-

graphic Art is a California Non-profit Benefit Corporation, established in 1988 for the purpose of encouraging an increased awareness and understanding of photography as a creative art form.

The Center is supported by memberships, grants, and gifts. With these sources of funding, the organization endeavors to promote a better understanding and awareness of many different approaches to the photographic medium, by maintaining an ongoing program of exhibitions, workshops, and publications.

Newsletter Editor

Jim Kasson

▼ LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



All of us at the Center wish all of you a very happy holiday season.

The Center has had a successful 2006, with 2007 looking even more exciting. The celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Center's site at Sunset Center is at the top of the list for next year. We are going through the archives and selecting a group of artists who have exhibited at the Friends of Photography and the Center in the last 40 years. It will be a dynamic list of the who's who in photography. We will put together a collection of renowned images to create a grand exhibition as a kick off for The Party weekend. We will keep you posted as we get this event firmed up in the next few months. You might want to pencil in the first week in November as a date for it all to happen.

A new bright light for 2007 will be the launching of the CPA International Web Gallery. It has been a long time coming, but Ken Gregg (our web master) has been hard at work to get the bugs out of this incredible site. We will be sending you the information in January on how to join this part of CPA and have your own private web site under the umbrella of the Center's Internet address, photography.org.

Your site in the gallery will be easy to install, reasonable in price, easy to maintain, and stunning to look at. There will be many features that most web galleries do not provide the artist and you will be able to change text and images from your computer at home or office. We are excited about this new vehicle for exposure for artists. We hope many of you will take part of this valuable opportunity.

Happy New Year,

Dennis High
Executive Director/ Curator

P.S. I just received the sad news that our beloved Honorary Trustee, Ruth Bernhard, passed away on Monday, December 18th. Ruth lived a full and productive life for 101 years. She created some of the greatest photographic nudes ever exhibited. Ruth was an inspiration for both the young, upcoming artists, and a friend and mentor to a long list of seasoned professionals. For almost two decades, she was a strong supporter of CPA. One of the last times I saw her was at her 100th birthday party. She still had a sparkle in her eye, great wit, and had the crowd totally transfixed with every story she told that evening. We will miss this great artist and wonderful friend.

Review

▼ Oliver Gagliani by A. D. Coleman

Photography has its own lost generations, and Oliver Gagliani (1915-2002) was a member of one of them.

These are the generations of people born somewhere between 1915 and 1950. Some of them studied photography formally, in schools like Chicago's Institute of Design or the Rochester Institute of Technology. If they did, they were part of the first and second generations of photography students in higher education; their faculty—often founders of departments of photography or photo programs in colleges and universities and art institutes—pioneered the teaching of photography in those contexts.

Others in this cohort learned by doing, serving their photographic apprenticeships in the military, on newspapers and magazines, in hospitals, science labs, police morgues, commercial studios, storefront portrait shops, all the odd venues into which the medium has insinuated itself. (Gagliani started photographing in the Army in 1942, then studied under Minor White and Ansel Adams at the California School of Fine Arts.)

A number of these novices went on to glory and financial success in the various applied branches of the medium—fashion, illustration, photojournalism. But for those who chose to explore what was then considered to be the territory reserved for photography as art, there was little early reward. Outside of a very small circle of image-makers and onlookers, few gained any acclaim or economic security from their work. They survived by finding then-rare teaching jobs, or by offering private workshops, or by taking up some applied form of photography they were good at, or by subsidizing their work with some other profession entirely.

Creative photography itself during the period between 1945 and 1965 received so little attention and respect that no intelligent person could possibly have gone into it hoping for fame and fortune. Edward Weston's prints could still be purchased for \$20. So virtually all of them had to be satisfied with being—or aspiring to the status of—"photographers' photographers." To their credit, most managed to live with that.

That is, until the so-called "photo boom" of the late 1960s through the middle '70s. During that intense explosion of widespread popular interest in and media attention to photography, Ansel Adams was apotheosized. Previously obscure historical figures were resuscitated; many major, older living figures at last received their due, even if belatedly. Photographic prints became collectible artworks. And it seemed as if, at long last, a more reasonable and steady flow of recognition and support might be coming the way of those who had devoted their lives to the medium.

But then the economy began to collapse, which cut the bottom out of what was still a very uncertain market for the work of mid-career artists in photography. Buyers were looking for either the photographic version of gilt-edged stocks or else something much brasher and glitzier, something brand-new and sexy—the dead, the young, or famous artists dabbling in a medium new to them. Enter Carleton Watkins, David Hockney, and the Starn Twins; exit Gagliani and many of his peers.

This has left us with a terribly skewed version of the history of mid-twentieth-century photography. The people I'm speaking of were not naïfs, primitives, or hermits; they were consciously and thoughtfully exploring a field of ideas in their medium that had been identified by its critics, historians and practitioners, as part of an ongoing dialogue. In many cases they were mounting radical challenges to the traditions, or pioneering in other ways. Yet in most cases they have been treated as though they never existed. (For example, this situation, and the disgraceful failure of art critics to do their homework in photography, has enabled Hockney to continue his scandalous plagiarizing of the early Polaroid SX-70 work of Joyce Neimanas, complete with his ridiculous claim of reinventing Cubism.)

So what was someone like Gagliani to do? Till his death he remained an expositor of the idea of the photograph as an "equivalent," the concept that his mentor, Minor White, took from Alfred Stieglitz and expanded so widely. He concerned himself with the poetics of the medium, which he explored in single images, most of them small and monochromatic. He used masterfully the range of interpre-

tive nuance that the silver print offers, crafting a deep, rich, resonant, complex variety of imagined spaces.

Often Gagliani's images seem to represent prosceniums, pregnant with the immanence of theater. At other times they offer entry into a dense, tonally nuanced spirit world of indeterminate geography, illuminated by a glowing inwardness. Small fragments of the real world—stains, scraps of Chinese newspapers—are isolated and contemplated, then interpreted meditatively through both exposure and printing, finally appearing as conundrums and revelations.

Gagliani's pictures are small in scale, requiring close and prolonged attention before they yield up their treasures. His pictures always reward both the eye and the intelligence, and they got consistently better over the years—he had certainly not reached the end of his development. In fact, he was experimenting with color again when he died, an investigation he'd begun in 1959.

Yet events, if not time, seemed to have passed him by, along with many like him. In the era of the rock opera, he persisted in making chamber music. I find myself wondering if there is anyone left who cares to listen—or who knows how to attend to work that demands such stillness. Not having more than a passing acquaintance with this photographer personally, I have no idea if he was bitter about the situation in which he found himself. I hope he was not, though he had every reason to be.

But unless scholars, and curators, and historians, and gallery owners—yes, and critics and audience too—do their jobs with those in Gagliani's age bracket, the current and next generations may well assume that somehow we went from Aaron Siskind and Harry Callahan to their imagistic great-grandchildren in one fell swoop. They'll wonder where the Starn Twins came from, and Adam Fuss, and Susan Derges. Perhaps they'll assume someone found them under cabbage leaves.

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JK: You have been doing variations on a theme for fifteen years now, right? In the studio, black and white, the patterns and the arrangements.

JT: Yes, but not exclusively. There's a series I haven't shown that's been going on for seven plus years. It's in black and white and it's shooting things that are divided right down the middle. There's an attraction for me to do that, and it's not just to break the rules. There's an aesthetic attraction about it. I have some theories about it, but usually it takes awhile for me to understand why I do things. I'm just following my instincts. It's sometimes more enjoyable when you're unconscious. It's pure enjoyment.

JK: You've been a designer all these years. How has that influenced your photography?

JT: I'm sure it has in knowing how to achieve something if I want it to come off a certain way. It's tuned me to a lot of what is possible and what happens in advertising. But fine art for me is separate enough that it doesn't seem to cross over. The design sense that I use is the same aesthetic sense that comes out in my photography because that's just who I am. I know how to light things and how to get things to look the way I want because I spend time with commercial photographers, but when I do my own photography I don't want all that formality to be there. I just want to be with the subject. There's a great amount of control that we have in advertising that I just get tired of. I want some accidents to happen. It takes effort to achieve a timeless feeling versus something that may look cool for awhile but it doesn't have the same resonance with my heart. I don't want my photography to look like it was overdone in any way.

JK: When you lay it out is it, "It's wrong, it's wrong, it's wrong, and then suddenly it's right?"

JT: It's like that. It's basically drawing with objects. I have collections of things—little boxes of leaves and rocks and pine needles that I play with and it's like I need some pattern here, so what can I use? Creating patterns is like taking a paint brush, putting it in the paint and then to the paper.

JK: Except it's easier to undo.

JT: It's a lot easier. It's cleaner. You don't have paint on your hands. But, it is just painting with those objects. I shoot here in the dining room with the blinds open. I don't want to get a light setup. If it's a nice overcast day I'll shoot. It just makes life a lot simpler, and I like that.

JK: The light is broad. You probably don't have any exposure problems. You take the picture. What then?

JT: I get 4x6 proof prints because I use C-41 chromagenic film. If something looks promising I scan it and make a print and live with it. It changes the feeling from being on a piece of glossy paper to being on a piece of Somerset. What's good this week is not always good next month because I do more work and I think, "Well, that was good then, but this is better now, and so I'm not going to show this one."

JK: Is this a huge body of work?

JT: There's a huge body of rejects. There

are usually 20 that I really like at any one time. The more work I do, the more the 20 changes. That's what makes any body of work stronger in the end; the longer I stay with it the more refined the final group of pictures will be. They will be different from what I started with even though I thought the beginning set was really strong.

JK: Over the last 15 years, is there an overall direction to the way your work is changing?

JT: I do something for awhile and I exhaust the possibilities. If I had a box of crayons I'd get tired of those colors. I start to exhaust the possibilities of what I can do with the 30 objects I have. Then I'll think of another set of objects, and then it's a whole different thing.

JK: When did you decide you were a photographer?

JT: I'm not sure. The first time I sold a photograph, I thought, "Maybe I could be a photographer." That's a question of either self-realization or external validation. It wasn't like a lightning bolt, but I always felt I was an artist and it was just another medium.

JK: You're married to an artist. How does that affect your work?

JT: The idea exchange is wonderful. I like being with somebody who has a visual aesthetic sense, and we help each other out enormously. If I had a disinterested partner I'd have to go somewhere else to get the interaction; it's so nice to have somebody right here to talk to. Pam's aesthetic will creep into my work, and probably vice versa. I get very interested in what she's doing because I used to do some of the processes she's working in. It's exciting, but I know that I don't want to go there because I just don't have enough time to do what she's doing. Printmaking is so meticulous. I'm happy working in the medium I'm working in. I've been hanging out with Pam and other artists, and my sense of aesthetics keeps shifting back to the aesthetics I had when I was a painter or printmaker. It seems sometimes that photography is limited only because you're limited to what you can put in front of the camera. Although Photoshop has expanded those options, I haven't had a desire yet to modify my images.

JK: You think there are fewer limits in terms of what's aesthetically pleasing in other art forms?

JT: In other art forms there is a huge variety of all kinds of wild different things. In photography it seems a little narrower. I can pick up a photographic magazine at the newsstand, thumb through it, and most of the time there's nothing different for me to see. Maybe I'm not looking close enough, but there's just nothing that surprises me anymore.

JK: If you picked up a magazine with paintings in it would it be any different?

JT: Painting or printmaking often has shapes and lines and things that are totally abstract. If you took a photograph of something like that it would be hard for people to take it seriously.

JK: Most people want their photographs to be of something even if they read as abstractions.

JT: Maybe that's an older paradigm. I talked about the pictures that are split down the middle. The images have one whole world on one side and another world on the other. Or maybe illustrate parallel universes. These are loose constructs I carry in my head as I make these photos. Lately I've been hanging around print makers, and I started thinking, "Why can't the image just be about composition or a pattern or texture that's interesting to me even if it isn't two different things." I don't know if this direction will pan out or not, but it's exciting for me to think that I don't have to do the same thing all the time within a series. I can just do things because it feels good. I like having more freedom instead of always thinking "What would I say to the critic if he asks me to justify this?" I should get to just play and if it works out great, then I can show it to the world and it's up to them to figure it out.

JK: Worrying about what others will think doesn't seem to slow you down much.

JT: If you're attracted to something out there in the world and you want to make images of it, you should do it. You always end up figuring something out from the process. Even if it is derivative, you're going to do something of your own with it or it will lead you into something you hadn't thought of.

JK: Is there a meaning to your current work that you can put into words?

JT: In my work there is something that I can see because it reflects my life. There is content in the image that I can see and feel, but I'm not sure it communicates to other people. I can look at an image that I made 25 years ago and think, "This still has that energy." Am I the only one who feels this energy? The only thing that I can do is hope that image has some longevity beyond its content. My goal is to create something that has a timeless aesthetic to it. The aesthetic itself can carry the image for a long time, and the longer it does the better the chance for somebody to see below the surface. I've found there's always a deeper personal reason I'm attracted to something. I've learned not to be in a hurry to find out what that reason is.

JK: I think the reason photographers are often not very good at explaining their own work is that if they could explain it succinctly and completely they wouldn't need to do it.

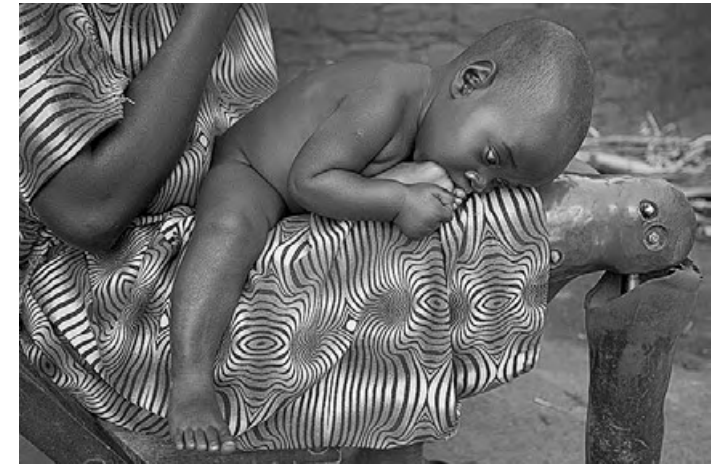
JT: My work always embodied a spiritual approach that had to do with my beliefs about reality and life and what I was studying. Recently I've been studying concepts of time and this series is my doing an exercise in being present and enjoying the exercise and showing it to somebody else. The pictures don't literally mean anything except that it's what I did when I was in the moment. I hope that somebody who lives with one of my pictures will get the sense of a peaceful, in-the-moment calm. That is how I would like to be able to live my life, and surround myself with things that promote that feeling. That feeling is a non-thinking presence, just being. Presence is what is needed to become aware of beauty.

▼ CENTER AWARDS WINNERS

Heather McClintock:

Born in Vermont. Received a BA in Photography from the New England College in New Hampshire.

Her latest creative work has been in the Aler IDP Camp photographing the Acholl people of northern Uganda. "I have no doubt this is a long term project and will evolve into something more than I can articulate at this moment, but my desire is to continue to focus on the strength and pride of a people, ravaged by both mental and physical cruelty, who survive and persevere despite the adversity and despair of a war-torn inner landscape." She has stated this award will allow her to return to Uganda for an extended stay to finish her work on this project.



Alena Rose, Aler IDP Camp, Uganda

©2006 Heather McClintock

Gregori Maiofis:

Born in St. Petersburg, Russia 1970. Studied at the Repin Fine Arts Academy in St. Petersburg. In 1991 moved to the U.S. and began working in photography.

"In 2001 I first began the creation of a body of work focusing on old proverbs. These works consist of staged compositions, constructed in my studio and in several museums in St Petersburg, utilizing objects, animals and people as subjects of these composed visual vignettes. Accompanying the images are proverbs from different origins. Most of them are English, but there are also Yiddish and Russian verses."

Régis Martin:

Originally from France but now resides in Darwin, Australia where he is working on his PhD at Charles Darwin University.

Regis has been working on a series of portraits in bathrooms.



Adversity Makes Strange Bedfellows

©Gregori Maiofis



Untitled

©Régis Martin

▼
Interview:
Jerry Takigawa

Jerry Takigawa received a BA in art with an emphasis in painting from San Francisco State in 1967. He studied photography with Don Worth. In 1969 he started working exclusively with photography. In the early 1970s, he moved to the Monterey Peninsula and began exploring color photography. In 1982 he created the first color portfolio to be recognized with an Imogen Cunningham Award. During the 90s he returned to black and white imagery using digital printing techniques. He is owner and creative director of Takigawa Design, a brand strategy and design firm in Monterey, California. His work can be found at the Weston Gallery, J. Howell Fine Art, the Saret Gallery, or at www.takigawaphoto.com.

Jim Kasson interviewed Jerry at his house in the Carmel Valley.

JK: You backed into photography.

JT: I was a painting major in college. I got interested in doing photo-realist paintings and drawings. I had an opaque projector and projected photos to work from. I decided I wanted to take my own photographs and learn to develop the negatives. Eventually I was able to project my negatives from an enlarger.

JK: How did photographs turn into being your art, rather than just a means to your art?

JT: I graduated from San Francisco State with a degree in painting. I said to myself, "Okay, now what do I do?" They didn't teach anything about business, nothing about galleries, nothing about what happens after school. There was absolutely zero, no information about how to make a living. This was in the late 60s; it was an idealistic time. I joined a Vista program that allowed me to harness resources at the University of California to help the West Oakland community. I did art programs and I published a newsletter for them. I had done design work in high school and college, so I knew how to use print media. I was painting then, but I realized that was going to be a hard way to make a living. Berkeley was a hot bed of politics, and I started taking environmental and political photographs for my newsletter. I was using photography purely to tell a story. Then People's Park happened, and I went to the demonstrations every day and shot photographs. I ran pictures in our newsletter. At the same time I was in a show in Berkeley at the Phoenix Gallery, and I had a few pictures in the *People's Park* book. I wanted to use my skills to make a statement politically about things that I believed in.

JK: Why did you shift your direction away from reportage?

JT: After being in Berkeley for two and a half or three years, I got tired of having my whole focus on political issues. I got tired of looking for things that weren't right and decided to move back to Monterey to make pictures of things that I *did* like or was



Pamela Takigawa Photo

attracted to. I started doing landscape work and I began shooting color at that time.

JK: What did you do for a living?

JT: I had gotten my first design job when I was up in Berkeley. It was for the opening of the university museum. There was a woman who was doing a big bash for the opening, and she wanted me to design an invitation. She was generous about paying me. I carried that experience from Berkeley when I returned to Monterey. I quickly found out that in this area, at that time, people had no idea what graphic design was, and nobody thought they needed graphic design. I did sign painting for two, three years; it was something that people knew they needed. Eventually I got a few graphic design jobs and it started to grow from there. I learned a lot of design just from doing it. I asked a lot of questions of vendors and older colleagues.

JK: You had design courses during college.

JT: Some, but it wasn't like going to an Art Center, where they teach you everything you need to be a graphic designer. I was growing as the area I lived in grew. I was able to provide what was needed and it just grew over time. Coming from a fine art background, my design work had a unique quality to it. I don't recommend it as a way of entering the field, but it worked for me because it also gave me the time to wander around and make photographs.

JK: Tell me about the creative arc of your art photography.

JT: At the beginning there was black and white documentary, politically-oriented or environmentally-oriented work. And then the total opposite: West Coast landscapes only in color. I got into more experimental things in the early '70s—long exposures,

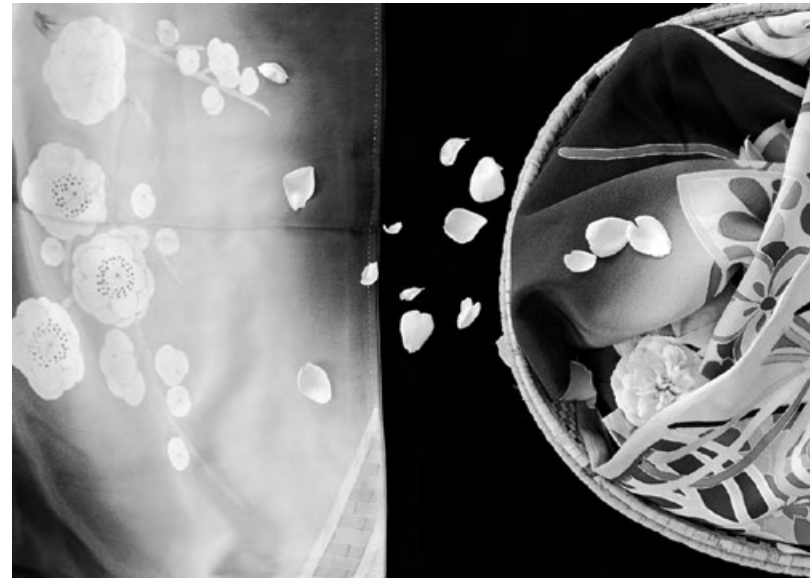
like Wynn Bullock, but in color, mostly of water. I made a conscious effort to meet with Wynn because I was fascinated by his time-space ideas. I did a lot of work with reflections. Steve Crouch gave me my first Monterey Museum show based on that work. I did hand coloring. I did a small body of motion-blurred nudes—grainy black and whites with this soft glowing expansiveness from moving the camera. There's a tie-in to when I was a painting major. I liked Richard Diebenkorn and Elmer Bischoff—people who were painting tightly cropped figurative works. I was doing those things in my photographs, and they looked like drawings to me. I love graphite on paper, that texture you get with the shading. I loved the look of this series; it just had that feel.

JK: Because of the grain.

JT: Yes, anything that looks that way attracts me. Most of the things I do go back to composing things as if I were making a drawing or painting. I created a series of color motion-blurred trees, much like the images you're shooting now. I started out in moving cars. Ron James had taught me this technique of pushing the shutter and rotating the camera so that the subject is sort of sharp at the center and blurred on the periphery.

JK: The photograph that started me on that 15 years ago was a CPA print program photograph by Ron of some trees along Highway 68. I stared at it for hours before I figured out how he did it.

JT: Ron was my neighbor for about four years in Pacific Grove. I began shooting out of moving cars but it was hard because you had to have a driver and your subjects had to be someplace a car could go. I also did stop/blur images with a handheld strobe. I used the same trees as subjects but I would



Untitled 12

©2002 Jerry Takigawa

light the trees with the strobe and then shift the camera a little bit and get a shadow blur because it's now the silhouette that's blurring. I usually shot against a sunset or something that would give me a luminous color backdrop. *American Photographer* ran a portfolio of that work. I called it the "largest color backdrop" in the interview, and they got letters from people trying to figure out what I meant. It was just the sky.

I also did a series about the same time of figures that were in color with a strobe and motion of the camera. Working with a figure, I would put colored cloth down and put hot lights on them so that they would stay lit. Then I'd do a pop with the strobe so that there would be something sharp, and I'd move the camera so the hot-lit stuff would go soft. There'd be blocks of soft, glowing color, going back to that instinct of painting. That series showed me that if I did something in the studio I'd be able to produce a lot more work than I could in the field.

JK: But you didn't stop the field work.

JT: No. In the early 80s I was living with Claudette Dibert, who was also a photographer. We would travel in an RV and camp at the beaches in southern California. I brought some cloth samples on a trip and took a photograph that keyed another direction in my work: shooting pieces of fabric in landscapes. After a while I shifted to Japanese fabrics. Claudette had a little scarf with Japanese painting on it that I shot at Zabriski Point. It was about the size of a necktie, but it looks huge in the landscape. When I saw the Japanese graphics on the scarf I got really excited—maybe it's in my DNA.

I started going to sales and used clothing stores to find kimonos and fabric. I especially liked those that were hand painted. They used an airbrush technique that made soft graduations. I had a dozen kimonos and started doing a series with those and the landscape. That was the series that was recognized by the Imogen Cunningham Award in 1982.

Then Claudette and her pregnant model died in an accident when a light fell into a

hot tub while they were doing some underwater figure photography. It was such an immediate departure. I'd said good-bye that morning and went to work, and then boom. I spent some time with Claudette's kids. She had two teenage sons, and we lived together for awhile. I did that for continuity for them and for me. I didn't have a lot of desire to take pictures then. We had spent so much time doing photography together. All I was interested in was pulling out all the pictures that I had of her. We were surrounded by fine art but the only photos that mattered to me were the pictures of her and what we had done together.

It took maybe two years for me to get back to photography. Her passing had happened in the middle of that series of the kimonos in landscapes. I decided to try shooting them in cityscapes to get my energy going. I shot in San Francisco and L.A. mostly, lying on the sidewalk shooting up at buildings with a friend waving a kimono over my head. I got a lot of strange looks from people walking by, but it made interesting pictures. That rounded out the series; half of it was in nature and half of it was in the city. An exhibit of the Kimono Series in Sacramento gave closure to that project.

Somewhere along the line I must have figured out that the fabric represented spirit. Spirit in harmony in a natural setting, and in contrast to a man-made, hard-edged environment, and beautiful in both. That work had an energy about it that feels timeless to me.

I made myself finish the series, but it took me a long time to get to the next thing. I was taking pictures all the time, but I couldn't connect. I was still grieving. What I was doing was sorting out what was going on inside of me.

In 1986 I got married and then divorced within a year and half. We spent a year in counseling, and I learned a lot about communicating emotions. It was an amazing time for me, learning how to communicate with people, especially to a partner, about things that mattered to me.

JK: How did your current series start?

JT: In 1988, I was in the early stages of my relationship with Pamela. Around 1989 I took a trip with Pam to Hawaii. There was a big floral bedspread print, and Pam was wearing a kimono robe with flowers on it. We also had flower leis that we had bought. The whole thing was flowers, and I could see it in black and white right there. It was a pattern-on-pattern image where you didn't necessarily see the figure immediately. That started me on black and white again. I began using the same Japanese fabrics that I had used before, only now in black and white. They actually were beautiful in color, too, but when they're in color you would just look at it and say it was a kimono. I wanted something more abstract, a slower recognition where the feeling transcends the subject.

I shot and proofed that material as regular silver prints in the early to middle '90s. I had faith that sometime down the road digital printers would get good enough that I could print on rag paper bringing me back to something that felt like a drawing again.

JK: You created a body of work without being able to print it the way you wanted to print it.

JT: Yeah. It looked okay in silver prints, but I had this sense that they would look much better printed on soft rag paper, so in the meantime I kept making them. The first time I saw one of those images come off the Epson printer was like the first time you see a photographer coming up in the tray: "Oh, this is magic." I couldn't believe how good it looked. It just felt right.

JK: You don't want to think about your tools.

JT: I do like to keep my technical life simple and just enjoy the feeling of doing it. When you're putting paint on a canvas, you never know what you're going to do next. When I was a painter, sometimes I did these abstract things. I just put some color here because it felt good, and that's the feeling I want to have making photos. Once something works, I am fine with it. I don't want to mess with it. I don't want to spend too much time thinking about it. That's one of the reasons I've resisted shooting this work with a digital camera. I don't want to break that feeling because the work I'm doing now, which I call *Landscapes of Presence*, has to do with being present in the moment. It's always been instinctive; I'm placing things, and discovering how to put things together that work. When they work I'm perfectly happy to take a picture of it to record it, but it was the process that I enjoy. If I started checking the little screen on the back I might break that feeling of spontaneity. It's like switching from right brain to left.

JK: Nobody's going to make you look at it.

JT: That's true. I know that eventually I'm probably going to use a digital camera, just like I knew I was going to print those images with a digital printer eventually.

JK: But film is working for you now and you're not having problems with the grain.

JT: I love the grain. I'll probably have to create artificial grain when I get into shooting digitally.