



Road Trip—2007 Thoughts & Ruminations

Continued From Volume 1, Issue 1

Yosemite, Arizona and New Mexico

In March of 2007 my wife and I drove from Virginia to California with stops in Flagstaff, Arizona, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Carmel, California. The drive brought to life the places I had only read about over the years. During our cross country trek we occasionally veered off I40 onto Route 66, the old road. We passed by the Cadillac Ranch, drove through the desert and passed thru Winslow, Arizona, made famous by the Eagles song, "Take it Easy". Loving the road as I do, this trip added to my list of memories that I will never forget.

Our final destination was Yosemite. There we stayed above the valley at the Tenaya Lodge. The drive from Carmel to the lodge took about four hours and was enjoyable. The lack of commercialization of Yosemite was noticeable as we drove there. No flashing signs pointed the way to the valley, no lines of shops hawking souvenirs. We passed green fertile farmland, orchard groves, open countryside and open spaces. Many farms along our route offered organically grown foods for sale.

Yosemite simply put, is amazing. In my life I've had the good fortune to travel quite a bit. My travels have taken me to the top of both the Swiss and French Alps. They have taken me from Egypt to North Africa, from Athens to Barcelona to Rome. I've wandered various parts of the world alone observing the people and the landscapes.

Many times I've traveled on a shoestring budget and on several occasions I've ended up in difficult situations due to a lack of currency. The affect this travel had on me was that over time I developed an attitude that nothing the good old USA had to offer in the way of scenery could impress me. I was very wrong.

The first morning we headed into the valley it snowed. Now if you will, imagine the most beautiful, breathtaking winter scene you have ever seen either in person, in photographs or on the screen. For me those scenes could not compare to what I saw heading into Yosemite Valley that morning.

Continued on Page 3.....

Quick Notes - 2008

Just a few facts from the road - 2008

- Won three awards in 2008 including 1st & 3rd places in Virginia & Georgia art shows
- Took a road Trip to Maine to gather new material.
- Introduced "The Third Gate" as part of the planned Nine Gate series.
- Created my First Coffee table book - Available for purchase in 2009
- Participated for my 4th time in Disney's "Festival of the Masters" in Orlando, Fl.

Inside this issue:

Road Trip—2007 Continued	1
Quick Notes—2008	1
2009 Show Schedule	2
Customer Questions	2
Coffee Table Book	2
People Are Strange—Stories Behind the Photographs	3
Road Trip—2008 Back to Maine	4
Price Schedule for 2009	5

Special points of interest:

- You are reading our second newsletter
- The Newsletter is an annual publication
- Many of our segments are continuations
- All segments are based on actual people and actual events.
- We attempt to answer actual customer questions.

2009 Show Schedule

Art in the Square	Williamsburg, VA	April	Confirmed
Arts in the Park	Richmond, Va	May	Confirmed
Artisphere	Greenville, SC	May	Tentative
Artspllosure	Raleigh, NC	May	Tentative
Decatur Arts Festival	Decatur, GA	May	Confirmed
Virginia Beach Board Walk Show	Virginia Beach, VA	June	Confirmed
Roanoke Sidewalk Art Show	Roanoke, VA	June	Tentative
Central Penn Art Festival	State College, PA	July	Tentative
Lazy Daze Arts & Crafts Festival	Cary, NC	August	Tentative
Woodland Art Festival	Lexington, KY	August	Tentative
Marietta	Marietta, GA	August	Tentative
Lynchburg	Lynchburg, VA	September	Tentative
Art Around the Lake	Richmond, Va	September	Tentative
Occasion For the Arts	Williamsburg, VA	October	Tentative
Fall Foliage Festival	Waynesboro, VA	October	Tentative
An Art Affair	Richmond, Va	October	Tentative
Festival of the Masters	Orlando, FL	November	Tentative

Customer Questions: How Long Does it Take?

The short answer to this question is that it takes about three days. The real answer is something closer to two months.

The process goes something like this:

- ◆ To begin, I create the photograph using an enlarger, silver gelatin coated fiber paper for the photograph and a chemical tray development process.
- ◆ Each image is washed in an archival washer for 1.5 hours.
- ◆ The image is placed on a screen to dry overnight.
- ◆ When dry, the image is heat press mounted onto an acid free matboard.
- ◆ Once mounted, the photograph is ready for either framing or is bagged and made available for sale. The entire process, from beginning to end, is typically a 3 to 4 day effort.
- ◆ All said though, this doesn't include

the 3000 miles that I traveled to shoot a lighthouse in say, Nova Scotia.



Scene From the Road - Now Available

My new coffee table book entitled, "Scene From the Road" is now available for pre-order. This book contains approximately 20 of my photographs from various locations including Maine, Nova Scotia, Virginia, North Carolina, and Points West. It is my first book of this type to be offered. In the book I describe each photograph and express the thoughts and emotions I experienced taking the photograph. Technical information sometimes accompanies the images but this is not the focus of the book. The focus of the book centers more around my love affair with the road and the sense of peace and solitude I gain from traveling to remote locations and communing with nature one on one.



Scene From the Road

Road Trip—2007 Thoughts & Ruminations

Continued From Page 1.....

The road into the valley was guarded on either side by tall evergreens and everything was covered in heavy snow. Pure white was all around us with just a hint of green in the trees. There were places in the road that dropped off to the valley below requiring us to drive carefully. The view was so grand that the very sight stole our breath away. This was a defining moment in my appreciation of the America's beauty.

I managed to capture a few photographs from Yosemite. I really needed more time there and hope that in the future I'll be able to return.

I must say that California was worth the time, money, effort it took to get there. It was worth the nearly 6000 miles that we drove just to taste a little of what it had to offer

Now, to finish this article I need to work my way backwards and touch on our stops in New Mexico and Arizona.

While in New Mexico we wandered the streets of old Santa Fe, visited the Ghost Ranch and stopped to look at the Rio Grande.

Santa Fe's charm and it's western history of being an old stage coach stop is seductive. I met characters there including a

simple artisan that resized a ring for me from his cluttered shop. The shop was tucked away in an out of the way spot and looked and smelled like history.

My primary goal in New Mexico was to photograph the Ghost Ranch in Abiquiu.

We drove there from Santa Fe on two occasions to wander the ranch and photograph the surroundings.

Once again the romantic, I was moved by my surroundings at the ranch. I can best describe the feeling generated being there as spiritual. You feel isolated and the terrain feels ancient.

Georgia O'Keefe lived her summers there, other artists have stayed there and old movies were shot there.

My pilgrimage to the ranch was due in part to the other artists that had been drawn there over the years. I had hopes of capturing the landscape on film. I ended



Yosemite - California

up creating two photographs from the ranch entitled "Ghost Ranch #1" and "Ghost Ranch #2." I hope to produce at least one more image from the ranch sometime in January of 2009.

My second goal while in New Mexico was to visit Ranchos de Taos. There, I wanted to find and photograph the "San Francisco de Asis" mission.

Construction of this mission began in 1772 and was completed in 1815. Ansel Adams photographed it in the 30's and my goal was to photograph it in a fashion similar to his. He photographed the mission from the back, focusing on the interesting architectural angles the it presents.

After studying the mission myself, I decided to photograph it from the front. The results of those photographs are very satisfying. In 2009 I will offer two versions of the mission at the art shows I participate in.

Well, I guess its time to finish up with this road trip. I'm out of space so I cannot do justice to my time in Arizona, the Grand Canyon or even my stops along Route 66. I did manage to photograph a stretch of the old road and it is now part of my portfolio. I also ate lunch at an old diner located on R66. It was definitely a holdout from the old days and again it too provided a memory I'll tuck away for my old age.....

People are Strange - Stories behind the Photographs

Taking a photograph might seem like a harmless pursuit to most people. I've found this isn't always the case. This is especially true since I travel alone a lot.

I have learned to expect the unexpected in my travels. For instance, years ago I was sitting outside a café at a table on a crowded dusty street in Morocco. Sipping a glass of mint tea I was speaking freely to a friend of mine. Around us, everyone was dressed in the long gowns and head wraps native to the country. The locals also sported beards and were speaking in their native tongue. As I said, my friend and I were speaking freely when upon hearing something I said of interest one of the locals next to me turned and offered an unsolicited response.

This man was with two friends of his own, one spoke English and the other did not. He and his English speaking friend stuck up a conversation with my friend and I. I never learned the nation-

ality of those two fellows, although I thought in the end they must have been Americans. The first fellow said that he was a retired airline pilot and his friend said he was in the Import/Export business. They told us that they owned a hotel in the hills above the city and that we were welcome to come and share a meal with them there.

Ok, we really felt that we had stumbled upon an adventure worth pursuing so we agreed. So, that evening at 6:00 pm., we hailed a taxi in the old city. We gave the driver the address provided to us and off we went. The driver drove into the hills of Morocco looking for the address and had a heck of a time finding it. In fact, he was about to give up when he spotted a side road which lead deeper into the hills.

We arrived to find an adobe and mud structure consisting of a main building which

looked to contain the lobby. Attached to the main section were two or three wings with rooms on each identified by small wooden doors. This place was remote and dusty. There were no signs of life, no paved areas, no cars, no people.

We entered the "Lobby" and inside it was cool. The floors were marble and a small bar stood against a wall to our right. The usual alcohol products were perched there stadium style After several minutes our host walked into the room. He was gracious and offered us something to drink.

A little later the other English speaking fellow arrived and we sat sipping mint tea as they showed us photographs they had taken of the "Blue People" of the desert. He also showed us photographs of ruins taken near the hotel.

Continued on page 5.....

Road Trip - 2008 Back to Maine

In 2008 I wanted to obtain new material for my portfolio and again thought of Maine. I have traveled there on five occasions to photograph the coastline, lighthouses and quaint coves that the state has to offer. This trip was different though because for the first time my wife, Francine, made the trip with me.

Maine has always held a special place in my heart and I love to return there during the cold winter months or early spring to soak up the atmosphere. Besides, I've had my own great white whale that I've tried to capture there. My whale though was a particular landscape location that I had not been able to photograph to my satisfaction. Really, there were two locations that I was after. One was a house by the ocean and the other was the Nubble Light. On this fifth attempt, I was determined to try again to capture those two landscapes.

Maine is the home of Stephen King and many of his stories take place there. On more than one occasion I've ended my workday by returning to an interesting B&B to sit in a chair by the fire. By the fire, I would read a King novel while occasionally taking the time to watch the ocean just outside. I will attest over and over again to being a romantic when it comes to the road. Finding that perfect place of solitude and peace to hang my hat for a few days holds a great attraction for me. During the winter months, Maine has provided me with just such a refuge.

On this trip I had the pleasure of showing my wife the places I discovered on previous visits. I took her to York, Perkins Cove, Kennebunkport, Cape Elizabeth, Boothbay Harbor, Bar Harbor, Pemaquid Light and more. Together we discovered new places like Camden. We sampled food from colorful little restaurants and taverns by the sea. We watched surfers tackle the waves in the cold waters of York and we climbed the rocky coast of Acadia. Oh yeah, and I took photographs, lots of photographs.

When we arrived in York we were greeted by a fresh snowfall. I absolutely loved this. Francine and I holed up in a cozy room that first evening to watch the snow as it fell outside our window. The next morning we awoke to nature blanketed in white. I wasted no time in packing up my equipment and we headed down to the Nubble Light, my white whale. As before, I worked for several hours trying to obtain an acceptable composition of the lighthouse. By the time I had finished my work, most of the snow had melted under the sun and again this lighthouse escaped me.

I haven't finished working with the negatives that I managed to bring home and may yet decide on one of them for a final composition of that blasted light.

My other whale I'm happy to say was a success. After five attempts, I finally mastered the house by the sea. I have entitled it "Walker's Point #3" and offered it for sale in 2008. I liked the final product enough to make it one of the images that I show quite often during the year.

Our last stop in Maine was Bar Harbor. From there my goal was to shoot the Acadia coastline.

I must say that I've done a couple of less than intelligent things in Acadia. Once, when traveling alone, I held onto trees growing alongside of a cliff and climbed down to the rock covered beach below. In retrospect, I realize I probably shouldn't have done this

while traveling alone.

I made my second dumb and most dangerous move in 2008. To this day when I think about it I still have goose bumps that run from my ankles and all the way up my back to my neck. I truly have to shake off the feeling of fear coupled with stupidity that I feel thinking about it.

I had climbed out on the rocks to a crevice or wide gaping hole in the coastline. Looking down I could watch the water rushing in and then back out again. When the water rushed out, large round stones sitting in pools of water and surrounded by smaller stones were visible. I really wanted this shot so I attached my camera to the tripod. I then adjusted the tripod with the front leg lower than the back two so that the camera was aimed downward into the crevice.

Standing on my tiptoes, I proceeded to focus the camera by adjusting the bellows while looking at the inverted image on the camera's ground glass. Using my jewelers loop I stared into the glass which was focused on the rocks below. I had planted my toes just on the edge of this abyss and basically scared Francine to death.

She begged and pleaded with me to come back to safety and to forget the shot. A photograph simply isn't worth your life she said. I laughed at the drama she painted, determined to complete my work. She actually asked me to at least give her my wallet before I fell.

I continued my reckless ways back in Bar Harbor later that evening. I had climbed down onto a rock shelf by the water to get a better angle on a boat out in the bay when I slipped and fell, tripod, backpack and all.

I heard a loud and distinct pop as my legs twisted under me in the fall. I just knew I had broken my leg and hesitated to try and stand. My Blackberry had ripped from its holster and was lying in deep water. Gingerly I stood to find that I had only popped my tendon in my ankle. With some pain, I found I could walk, I was still mobile. I would like to think the hours I've spent on the treadmill paid off here.

So, all of you aspiring photographers out there, I have a little advice for you. One, don't take chances you may never recover from just to get a photograph. Two, if you're married, listen to your wife.



People are Strange - Stories behind the Photographs - Continued

After a while the second fellow asked if we would like to take a little hike to see the ruins. My friend quickly jumped at the opportunity. We were told rocky coastline and steep climbing came into play.

I decided to stay back at the hotel. After all I was young at the time and my friend and I was a bit more suspicious of this whole episode. Needless to say, everything worked out my friends hike.

Later that evening, we found ourselves in a small room sitting on pillows on the floor. In front of us was a table at about knee high where dinner was presented. I remember our new friends served the meal. I also remember that everything seemed impromptu. It was as if we were never really expected to show up there.

After dinner our hosts called us a taxi which took us back to town. In our conversations during dinner, we never discovered what these two English speaking gentlemen were doing running a deserted hotel in the hills of Morocco.

All I know is one said he was a pilot and the other said he was an Importer/Exporter. Both were dressed in local attire, fluent in the local language and both wore facial hair and looked just like the locals.

I've always wondered, were they drug smugglers? Were they CIA? Why were they involved with the desert people?

Suffice it to say that over the years I've run into a lot of characters. I've run into them in the hills and deep woods of West Virginia. I've run into them on the streets of Cairo and on the streets of Amsterdam and Paris. I've run into them on the cold deserted coastlines and beaches of Nova Sco-

tia and Maine.

In my mind these characters are attached to the photographs I've taken at that moment in time.

Ok, by now I have digressed to the point of no return. So, lets briefly discuss one of my more current photographs.

Normally I take my photographic expeditions during the winter months when it is cold and tourists are few.

This wasn't the case though when I shot the "Pier" on Sunset Beach, NC. The "Pier" is part of my Cape Fear portfolio and I shot it on a breezy dark night in the fall. The summer was just coming to a close and the beaches were deserted around Cape fear.

Just before dark I sat up my camera and tripod and took the necessary light readings. Once ready, I sat in the sand by the sea and waited for complete darkness to arrive.

As it grew darker I made ready for the photograph. I took my cable release in hand and set my watch for eight minutes. Just as I pressed the trigger, out of the darkness, a man walked up to me and started a conversation.

Being befriended on a deserted beach at night by a stranger didn't feel like a good omen to me. I've been approached, followed and watched by strangers many times. It has happened in all kinds of weather and it has always caused me to take pause.

This stranger proceeded to tell me about how he had just arrived from Connecticut in pursuit of a woman that he had fallen for. After looking into his eyes, I thought my best approach to this situation would be to

listen politely.

He told me that the lady in question wasn't interested in him, yet he had sold everything he had to follow her to North Carolina. He knew, he said, that she was the woman for him.

He displayed and read the poetry he had written for her. He told me about how he had consulted a minister about his love for this lady. He told me that upon hearing his story, the minister advised him against selling his belongings to pursue her. It was all a bit over the top.

I was captive to all of this as I held my cable release for the required eight minutes. I just stood there in the dark as he talked as if we were old friends.

The hair on the back of my neck told me that caution was warranted. As he continued, I mentally calculated how to quickly pack and get out of there. After a long eight minutes, I did manage to get the photograph.

Just as he was telling me they were to meet that night to discuss their "relationship", I spotted a couple of people heading towards us. I took this opportunity to basically pack and run. You see, the whole situation just didn't feel right. Expect the unexpected.



Price Schedule for 2009

Here is my price schedule for 2009. Please remember, all images are hand made in the traditional darkroom and no two images are identical. Sure, they are close, sometimes very close, in tonal range and texture, but that is how they are meant to be. I produce four photographs of a given size at a time. Because of the dodging and burning techniques I employ, I may interpret a given image differently when I re-create it. I maintain records which enable me to at least re-create the photograph as close to the first one as possible. **Patrons receive a 15% Discount on any purchase.**

	Unframed	Framed	Shipping
8x10	\$85	\$150	\$20
11x14	\$115	\$225	\$20
16x20	\$185	\$290	\$25
20x24	\$300	\$450	\$45
24x30	\$650	\$850	\$125

Art in Black & White

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An Artist's Journey - Continued

Continued from Vol 1, Issue 1.....

I began using my first field camera about eight years ago. It was a Tachihara 4x5 and was made from 500 year old Japanese cherry trees. I also purchased a 30 year old Bronica Medium Format camera at that time. I took several of my signature photographs with that old Bronica. I've since upgraded to a new Hasselblad.

I purchased the Hasselblad from "Mr. Tony" in Hong Kong. This involved a risky wire transfer and a lot of trust on my part. In the end the transaction worked and I saved a good deal of money.

My Tachihara is a beautiful camera with brass fittings but it is very hard to use. Four years ago I purchased a Toyo 4x5 and this has become my camera of choice. It is a pleasure to operate.

Upon purchasing the Tachihara, I began to photograph the American landscape. Less than a dozen of the photographs offered in my current portfolio were taken with the Tachihara. Once I purchased the Toyo, that was all she wrote. The Toyo was also purchased thru a middle man on a journey to the Orient. Again the transaction worked and I saved quite a bit on the purchase.

The thing about photography is that it gives me the opportunity to go on the road. Something I have always loved to do.

In Europe, home was in Italy in an apartment overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Even there, I liked nothing better than to pack a bag and hop aboard a train to some distant location. If it was an overnight trip, all the better.

Many nights I have sat looking out of a train window into the darkness. The landscape rushing by me bathed in moonlight and barely visible, if at all.

I still love traveling at night on dark lonely

roads although I now avoid this when possible. Thirty years ago it didn't seem so dangerous. I was young then.

My first photographic journeys were to the Virginia mountains along the Blue Ridge Parkway. I followed trails to places like Crabtree Falls. I photographed covered bridges, aged abandoned houses, and old mills. Many of these structures sat in the woods slowly being reclaimed by nature.

I began my forays to locations in Cape Fear, North Carolina and Maine. I fell in love with the Maine coastline and I've traveled there five times seeking new material.

As I photographed these landscapes I became aware of a problem. What was I going to do with the work? I mean, I was beginning to gather a collection of photographs but I felt I needed to do something with them.

One day I was showing my work to the manager of a small camera shop. He told me that my photographs didn't look like the usual snapshots he was accustomed to seeing., they were more like art, he said. So, he had a suggestion.

To Be Continued.....



After Repast—Amsterdam