

LENSWORK

81

PREVIEW

Overview of
LENSWORK

Overview of
LENSWORK
EXTENDED

Welcome to the free preview of *LensWork* 81.

This PDF file offers an overview and selected sample pages of the content of *LensWork* (in print) and *LensWork EXTENDED* (on computer DVD).

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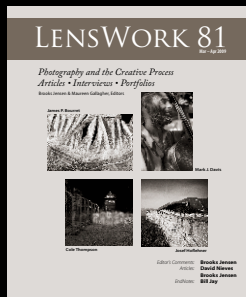


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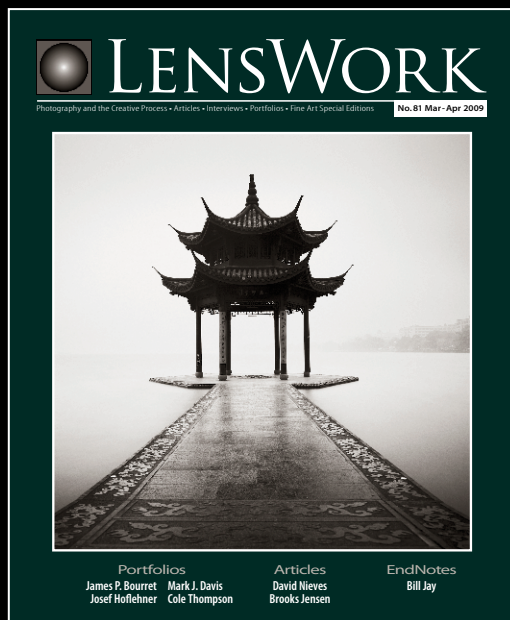
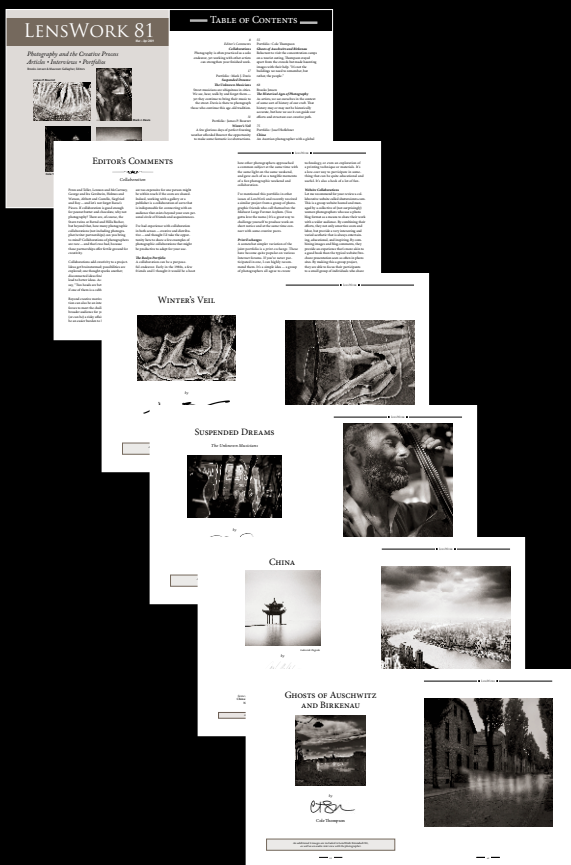
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Editor's Comments
Collaboration

Collaboration on a project can add creativity and create opportunities. Brooks Jensen shares a few examples of photographic collaborations that could prove useful to you.

David Nieves
Stepping Away from the Obvious: The Nat Fein Story of The Babe Bows Out
Nieves offers the inside story of Fein's fateful photographic moment at Babe Ruth's farewell.

Brooks Jensen
Historical Ages of Photography
As artists, we see ourselves in the context of some sort of history of our craft. How we see it can guide our efforts and structure our creative path.

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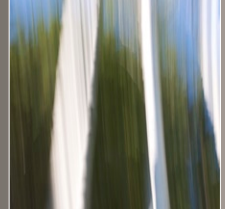
Bonus Gallery



The Last Iceberg
by Camille Seaman



Ceiling Lamps
by Cole Thompson



Motion
by James P. Bourret



Video



LensWork talks with photographer David Grant Best about photography and the mountain landscapes he loves.



Folio Catalog #2

Our Folio Catalog highlights a new folio from David Grant Best, and a special re-issue of a collaborative folio he and Brooks Jensen created a number of years ago.



Mountains of My Desire
David Grant Best



Tangerine Gifts
David Grant Best/Brooks Jensen



LensWork #81	LensWork #81 In Print	LensWork Extended #81 on DVD
James P. Bourret	14 images	45 images Plus audio interview
Mark J. Davis	12 images	19 images Plus audio interview
Josef Hoflehner	18 images	46 images
Cole Thompson	12 images	18 images Plus audio interview
Editor's Comments	4 pages	4 pages
<i>Stepping Away From the Obvious</i> by David Nieves	8 pages	8 pages
Bill Jay's <i>EndNotes</i>	2 pages	3 pages
Video Interview with David Grant Best		✓
Extended Extra <i>Ceiling Lamps</i> by Cole Thompson		✓
Extended Extra <i>The Last Iceberg</i> by Camille Seaman		✓
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Extended portfolios, more images • Audio interviews with photographers • Audio comments on individual images • Videos on photography and the creative process • Direct links to web sites, email addresses • Video interviews with photographers • And more all on a single DVD using the Acrobat 7 Reader.

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Photography and the Creative Process • Articles • Interviews • Portfolios • Fine Art Special Editions

No. 81 Mar-Apr 2009



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<i>Collaborations</i>	<i>Ghosts of Auschwitz and Birkenau</i>
Photography is often practiced as a solo endeavor, yet working with other artists can strengthen your finished work.	Reluctant to visit the concentration camps on a tourist outing, Thompson stayed apart from the crowds but made haunting images with their help. "It's not the buildings we need to remember, but rather, the people."
17	68
Portfolio : Mark J. Davis	Brooks Jensen
<i>Suspended Dreams:</i>	<i>The Historical Ages of Photography</i>
<i>The Unknown Musicians</i>	As artists, we see ourselves in the context of some sort of history of our craft. That history may or may not be historically accurate, but how we see it can guide our efforts and structure our creative path.
Street musicians are ubiquitous in cities. We see, hear, walk by and forget them — yet they continue to bring their music to the street. Davis is there to photograph those who continue this age-old tradition.	
31	75
Portfolio : James P. Bourret	Portfolio : Josef Hoflehner
<i>Winter's Veil</i>	<i>China</i>
A few glorious days of perfect freezing weather afforded Bourret the opportunity to make some fantastic ice abstractions.	An Austrian photographer with a global interest in cultures, Hoflehner shares images of ancient and modern China which will be incorporated in his ninth monograph to be released in 2009.
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David Nieves	<i>EndNotes</i> by Bill Jay
<i>Stepping Away from the Obvious:</i>	
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At times fate intervenes and the rest is history. There's a lesson for us in Fein's Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of Babe Ruth.	

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in LensWork EXTENDED #81 on computer disc!

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Collaboration

Penn and Teller, Lennon and McCartney, George and Ira Gershwin, Holmes and Watson, Abbott and Costello, Siegfried and Roy—and let's not forget Reese's Pieces. If collaboration is good enough for peanut butter and chocolate, why not photography? There are, of course, the Starn twins or Bernd and Hilla Becher, but beyond that, how many photographic collaborations (not including photographer/writer partnerships) can you bring to mind? Collaborations of photographers are rare—and that's too bad, because these partnerships offer fertile ground for creativity.

Collaborations add creativity to a project. Ideas get brainstormed; possibilities are explored; one thought sparks another; disconnected ideas find soulmates that lead to better ideas. As my father used to say, "Two heads are better than one, even if one of them is a cabbage head."

Beyond creative motivations, collaboration can also be an interesting way to join forces to meet the challenge of finding a broader audience for your work. Art is (or can be) a risky affair; a shared risk can be an easier burden to bear. Projects that

are too expensive for one person might be within reach if the costs are shared. Indeed, working with a gallery or a publisher is a collaboration of sorts that is indispensable for connecting with an audience that exists beyond your own personal circle of friends and acquaintances.

I've had experience with collaboration in both senses—creative and distributive—and thought I'd take the opportunity here to share a few examples of photographic collaborations that might be productive to adapt for your use.

The Roslyn Portfolio

A collaboration can be a purposeful endeavor. Early in the 1980s, a few friends and I thought it would be a hoot to spend a weekend together sharing our prints with each other and doing some photography. In the course of our planning, it occurred to us that we could use the weekend as an opportunity to produce a joint portfolio. Each of us produced five photographs from the images made that weekend, which we contributed to each of five portfolios. The resulting portfolio was a great way to share work with each other, see

how other photographers approached a common subject at the same time with the same light on the same weekend, and gave each of us a tangible memento of a fun photographic weekend and collaboration.

I've mentioned this portfolio in other issues of *LensWork* and recently received a similar project from a group of photographic friends who call themselves the Midwest Large Format Asylum. (You gotta love the name.) It's a great way to challenge yourself to produce work on short notice and at the same time connect with some creative peers.

Print Exchanges

A somewhat simpler variation of the joint portfolio is a *print exchange*. These have become quite popular on various Internet forums. If you've never participated in one, I can highly recommend them. It's a simple idea—a group of photographers all agree to create X number of copies of one of their images. Each photographer then sends their stack of prints to the print exchange coordinator, who gathers all of the work. The coordinator then divides the work so that each participant will receive a print from all the other participants, and then ships the collated sets back to the participants. It's a great way to see what other photographers are doing with a thematic subject, a given

technology, or even an exploration of a printing technique or materials. It's a low-cost way to participate in something that can be quite educational and useful. It's also a heck of a lot of fun.

Website Collaborations

Let me recommend for your review a collaborative website called shutteristers.com. This is a group website hosted and managed by a collective of (not surprisingly) women photographers who use a photo blog format as a means to share their work with a wider audience. By combining their efforts, they not only amortize costs and labor, but provide a very interesting and varied aesthetic that is always entertaining, educational, and inspiring. By combining images and blog comments, they provide an experience that's more akin to a good book than the typical website/brochure presentation seen so often in photo sites. By making this a group project, they are able to focus their participants to a small group of individuals who share a common aesthetic and outlook towards their photographic craft—an attribute that is a welcome contrast to the megasites like Flickr.

Tangerine Gifts

In 1990, long before *LensWork* was even a glint in my imagination, David Grant Best and I traveled to Japan on an extended photographic adventure. After three weeks of traveling through

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the remote northern region known as Tohoku, we felt compelled to commemorate our trip with some sort of collaborative project. After several false starts, we eventually produced an artist's book that included one photograph from each of us and a letterpress text story from our travels. To accomplish this, we collaborated not only with each other as photographers, but also with bookbinding master Sandy Tilcock (www.lonegoosepress.com), who designed and constructed an exquisite piece for us.

In this case, unlike the Roslyn portfolio, we didn't set out on our photographic adventures with a collaboration in mind. Our original intent was to simply travel together and photograph independently. The collaboration came as an afterthought, and that in itself demonstrates a possibility for collaboration. It might be worth reviewing your past to see if there are collaborative projects which you can excavate from your personal history. Sometimes the question is not "Did we work together?" but rather, "Can we work together?" in the production of a project that is conceived only in post-production.

The *Tangerine Gifts* collaboration offers yet another lesson I'm compelled to share. In the original production of the *Tangerine Gifts* artist's book, we produced far more letterpress text signatures than we consumed. (I guess that's a polite way of

saying we sold fewer books than we had hoped!) And here is the lesson: don't burn your creative bridges. Thankfully, we just couldn't bear to throw out the beautiful but unused letterpress text signatures. We carefully packaged them and stored them neatly away — and then completely forgot about them. Now, nearly twenty years later, we recently rediscovered them and have repurposed these long-lost text signatures into yet another collaboration — this time as a *Tangerine Gifts* folio. This new folio includes nine images from each of us.

Beyond the Visual

Bruce Barnbaum has participated in a couple of collaborations that are worthy of attention. His two most recent books, *Tone Poems* and *Tone Poems II*, include a collaboration with pianist Judith Cohen. Together they selected pieces for classical piano that they felt harmonized and complemented Bruce's black-and-white photographs. His books are accompanied by a CD of her piano performances.

Whether such a collaboration satisfies his audience for *photography* is almost of secondary consideration. The collaboration was of great importance to his creative process and his thinking about and production of the photographs. In itself, this is a value to the photographer even if the collaborative effort is never made public as a *collaboration*. I suppose another word

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for this might be *inspiration*, but it takes on a more immediate contribution when the collaborator is a real person with whom you engage your creative process "in the flesh," as they say.

Keys to Collaboration

In all of these examples, the key to successful collaboration is to find an area of common ground. Collaborations are a delicate balance between the self-indulgent creative ego and the needs of the group. Pick your partners wisely, and be sure they (and you) all understand and can commit to the common good for the project.

Define the goals and the costs before beginning. Do so on paper — not as a contract, but rather as a means to be sure you are all "working from the same page," literally. This will avoid any conflicts downstream as to what was agreed by the members in the initial stages.

Be realistic about the results you can and can't control. Don't, for example, define income as the measure of success; your group is not in control of whether or not the public will buy your artwork. Instead, define the finished production of the work and the marketing effort as the goal. You may hope for income, but keep the group collaboration in the group's control.

Build in some flexibility. If your project

requires ten people for success and nine people will imply a failure, plan your project with a few substitutes who can jump in should one or two of the original ten people need to withdraw. If you are targeting for a group book publication of 120 pages but find late in the process that the budget grows beyond your comfort levels, have a backup plan that allows you to succeed with a 96- or 112-page book. Plan for the unexpected as best you can. Ask as many "What if..." questions as you need to in order to insulate the project within reason.

Be aware of the "least common denominator" syndrome. Have defined quality standards for the group that motivate the participants to rise to the occasion, not the reverse.

Have an exit strategy. When will the collaboration be complete? Know how you are going to dissolve the group comfortably. If you don't, you may find that entropy will grind things to a crawl and leave people feeling frustrated.

Finally, remember that one of your primary motivations for such collaborations is probably to have fun. So, have fun!



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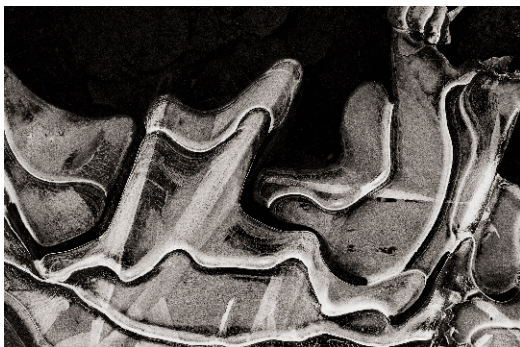
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WINTER'S VEIL



by

James P. Bourret

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as well as an audio interview with the photographer.*

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SUSPENDED DREAMS

The Unknown Musicians



by

Mark J. Davis

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CHINA



Lakeside Pagoda

by

Josef Hoflehner

Some of the images in this portfolio appear in Hoflehner's latest books:
China Li River (ISBN 978-3-9026000-4-7, Most Press, September 2008)
Nine (ISBN 978-3-9026000-3-5, Most Press, September 2008)
China is scheduled for release in September, 2009

An additional 28 images are included in LensWork Extended #81.

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Bamboo Sticks

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GHOSTS OF AUSCHWITZ AND BIRKENAU



by

Cole Thompson

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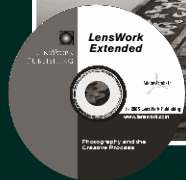
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EXTENDED *Portfolios*



James P. Bourret
Winter's Veil
45 images
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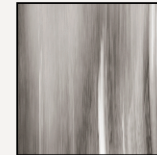
EXTENDED *Extras*



Original in color
Camille Seaman
The Last Iceberg (color portfolio)



Cole Thompson
Ceiling Lamps



Original in color
James P. Bourret
Motion (color portfolio)

Plus...

- Video Interview
- LensWork Podcasts
- Additional Bill Jay *EndNotes*
- and more!

SPECIAL EDITION *Folios*

Special *Folio Catalog* presents the complete content of our two new folio releases!



David Grant Best
Mountains of My Desire



David Grant Best & Brooks Jensen
Tangerine Gifts



System Requirements: This DVD-ROM can be played on your PC or Mac computer using the free **Adobe Acrobat Reader™ Version 7 or newer** available via download from www.adobe.com.

LensWork Extended makes full use of multimedia technologies in this dramatically expanded version of our award-winning 96-page magazine. While continuing to focus on the creative process, the rich content of our DVD version offers expanded portfolios, color work, audio interviews, video content, and other special features.

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Photography • Art Criticism



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EXTENDED PORTFOLIO

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THE LAST ICEBERG

Camille Seaman

by Camille Seaman

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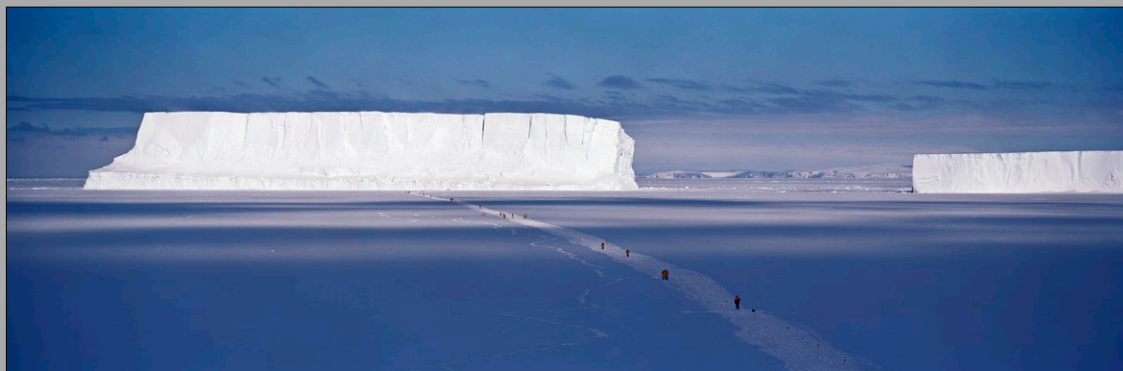
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The *Last Iceberg* is one piece of a larger project entitled *Melting Away* which documents the polar regions of our planet, their environments, life forms, history of human exploration and the communities that work and live there.

Nick Cave once sang, "All things move toward their end." Icebergs give the impression of doing just that, in their individual way much as humans do; they have been created of unique conditions and shaped

by their environments to live a brief life in a manner solely their own. Some go the distance traveling for many years slowly being eroded by time and the elements; others get snagged on the rocks and are whittled away by persistent currents. Still others dramatically collapse in fits of passion and fury.

The *Last Iceberg* chronicles just a handful of the many thousands of icebergs that are currently headed to their end.

I approach the images of icebergs as portraits of individuals, much like family photos of my ancestors. I seek a moment in their life in which they convey their unique personality, some connection to our own experience and a glimpse of their soul which endures.

These images were made in both the Arctic regions of Svalbard, Greenland, Iceland and Antarctica.

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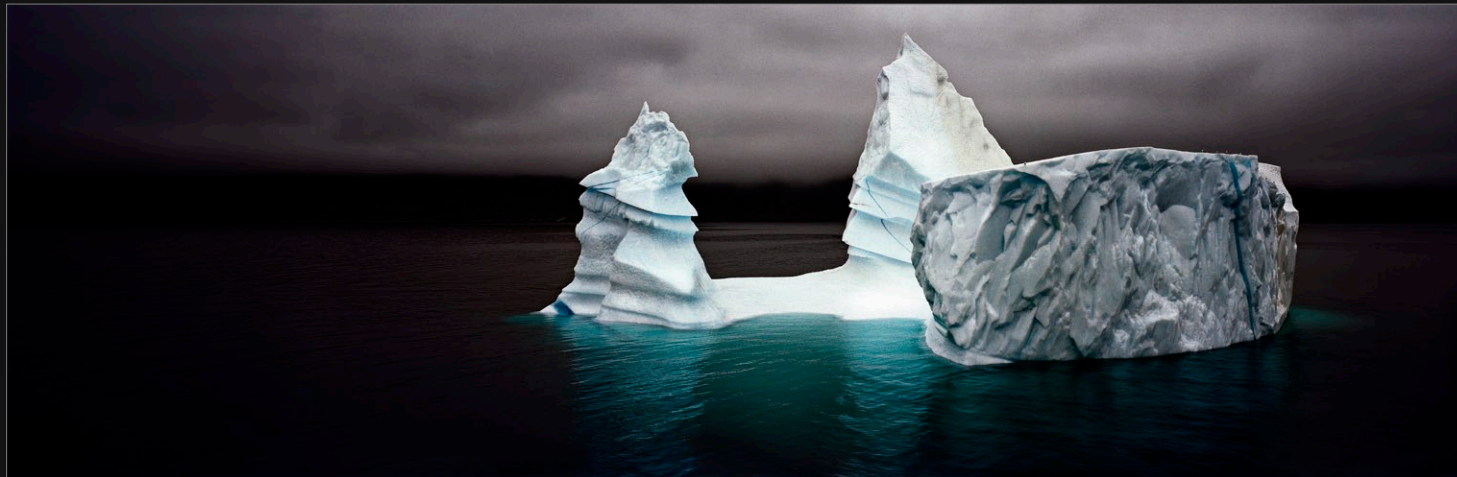
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