# FRAMES

**DIGITAL** | NOVEMBER 2025

**ELIZABETH SANJUAN** | SILENT SNOW – A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY IN SEARCH OF SERENITY

FRAMES Digital
November 2025

**Cover photo**
Elizabeth Sanjuan

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# Silent Snow
# A photographic journey in search of serenity

ELIZABETH SANJUAN

**“As I continued my travels, I find myself continuously searching for that sense of peace that I have found in forests and at the seashore: Solitude, isolation, peace, and nature.**

There are times in our lives when a single event can transform the future.

It was January 19, 1977 — just five days after my 12th birthday — when the entire student body emptied into the school yard. A once in a lifetime phenomenon was occurring and we needed to see it with our own eyes! It was snowing! Snowing in south Florida! Pure bedlam erupted as one thousand students ran, cheered, shouted, hugged, danced, and stared, dumbstruck, as millions of tiny crystals fell from the sky and clung bravely to the ground.

It was a day I will never forget.

As I considered what I wanted to say about this book and my time in Hokkaido, Japan, it was this singular event in my

twelfth year of life that first came to mind. This day, and a few others like it, have had an outsized impact on my life. For example, I remember the very first Earth Day on April 22, 1970. It was my first year in grade school, but I was already excited to change the world at the age of five. I was growing up with images of Chief Iron Eyes Cody and the iconic *Keep America Beautiful* campaign. *Smokey Bear*, created by the U.S. Forest Service and the Ad Council in 1944, had been long imprinted on me. Decades later, I continue to devote my life to championing the environment. Now, I use the power of photography to deliver that message.

I have always loved art and was particularly drawn to photography because of the way it allows us to capture

moments in time, and to memorialize life events from the mundane to the sublime.

As I developed my craft, I slowly transitioned from street photography to landscape photography, even though I still love to photograph everything and anything that catches my eye. As I grow older, I believe that I have more time to realize and enjoy the peace I receive from the natural world — the forest, the seaside, the mountains, rivers, and snow.

Scientists have long documented the health benefits of being immersed in nature, both mentally and physically. *Shinrin-yoku*, a Japanese term for "forest bathing," has now become an accepted form of therapeutic practice in many countries. As a native Floridian, I have always been drawn to the sea. I always feel a sense of calm when I sit by the shore. When I traveled to California and visited the redwoods, I felt that same sense of peace. Seeing the majestic redwoods was life changing and gave me a new perspective on how

small and insignificant we are in relation to Mother Earth. As I continued my travels, I find myself continuously searching for that sense of peace that I have found in forests and at the seashore: Solitude, isolation, peace, and nature.

Hokkaido is an incredibly special and unique place, especially in the wintertime. It is the northernmost island of Japan and has one of the harshest winters on the planet. Siberian winds pick up moisture as they cross the Sea of Japan and dump it as prodigious amounts of snow as they rise above the Hokkaido mountains. Accumulations of ten feet or more are not unusual, as are bone-chilling temperatures in the minus twenties.

But the white, isolated, peaceful land gives rise to a peaceful solitude that keeps calling me back. The distinct spirituality of Hokkaido is palpable in so many ways. Evidence of order and planning can be seen on the rolling hills and fields. The

frozen dormant landscape will give way to crops and livestock by spring, but during the long winter season, the island rests under downy blankets of snow and ice.

There is a peacefulness in the winter that returns to the island. The bustling farms are still, and the throngs of tourists have departed. Winter shows us the resilience of trees, the hardy determination of the wildlife, and the stoic resolve of its people. Through one of the harshest winter seasons on our planet, the island retains its calm demeanor.

My mind returns often to the quiet, serene, majestic stillness of this magical land. The Ainu believed in the presence of kamuy throughout the land — spiritual essences trapped in

the physical forms of nature. From this concept, they built their respect for nature, and for the land, even for its lowliest inhabitants. We have much to learn from Hokkaido about respect and love of our environment.

So, I have returned, four times now, to record the stillness of Hokkaido, to see the silent snow again, to listen to the quiet and revel in the calm. This book, *Silent Snow* is my personal tribute to this northern outpost where Japanese serenity melds with the wildness of the Ainu world on snowy fields — a reminder of that miracle day in 1977 when snow fell in south Florida.

*The accompanying images are from Elizabeth's new book published by Daylight Books fall of 2025, and is available through her website, Daylight Books, and Amazon.*


SANTAFEWORKSHOPS.COM/JAPAN

© Tim Smith | *Children play tag on a pyramid of straw bales on a warm August evening.* | *Spring Valley Hutterite Colony, Alberta* 2010

# **Tim Smith** The Nuance of a Simple Life

**ALASDAIR FOSTER**

© Tim Smith | *Hadassah Maendel takes Kahlua for a swim in the swimming hole on an August evening.* | *Baker Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2016

Tim Smith is a photojournalist by profession, but his personal work takes the form of long-term, immersive documentary. A Manitoban, his personal projects focus on the vast plains of the North American prairie. His photographs bring a lively and empathic eye to the experiences of those who call these grasslands home. And among these projects, the best-known focuses on the lives of the region's Hutterite communities.

Made over the past sixteen years, this work constitutes what may well be the most extensive photographic documentation of Hutterite culture ever produced. His photographs have been published and exhibited all over the world, praised for the clarity and grace with which they depict these distinctive communities. The making of this work has been a painstaking process, as Smith explains: "I am very much someone who learns by making mistakes and, after forty-seven years, I've

© Tim Smith | *Branding, castrating, and vaccinating calves.* | *Forty Mile Hutterite Colony, Montana* 2023

accepted that this is how my brain works. When I began the Hutterite project, I had no clear idea of what I was doing. I didn't have all the right gear. I didn't have a plan. I just knew to keep going back, hoping to figure out a path along the way."

Smith describes himself as quiet and introverted — he likes to work slowly. It is something that can be challenging in the cut and thrust of commercial photojournalism with its tight editorial deadlines. But he has learned that this is an advantage when working with underrepresented communities. "I spend a lot of time listening. I try to be unassuming and non-threatening. And, as a result, I think my introverted qualities allow me into some beautiful, intimate moments." Working more slowly on a long-term project like this has also helped

© Tim Smith | *Young people load straw bales onto a flatbed in a field of recently harvested wheat.* | *Deerboine Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2022

him to understand himself more clearly. “I’ve learned patience and the importance of being present in my own life as well. This should seem obvious, but in journalism we are led to believe that to be successful one must forego other aspects of one’s life. I think that is so stupid now, and I regret that earlier in my life I fell into that trap.”

The project began in May of 2009 when, out on assignment, Smith came across some women from the Deerboine Hutterite Colony planting vegetables in the communal garden. He asked if he could photograph them and they agreed. At that moment he knew he just wanted to keep going back. He approached the minister of the colony, Tom Hofer, to seek permission. Following a series of discussions, Hofer agreed — not so much because


© Tim Smith | *Farm boss Jack Hofer runs through the dust and chaff spit out from a combine harvesting canola.* | *Deerboine Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2018

he was himself interested in the project, but because he considered that the colony had nothing to hide. Nonetheless, the minister must have sensed he could trust him, for, as Smith has since discovered, "Hutterites can be wary of the way they are portrayed by outsiders who all too often misrepresent their communities through reductionist stereotypes." To prepare himself, Smith began researching Hutterite history and culture, reading every book and paper he could lay his hands on.

Founded by Jakob Hutter during the Radical Reformation in sixteenth-century Europe, the Hutterites are one of the many Protestant sects that formed in rejection of the Roman Catholic establishment. It was a turbulent, bloody period and for much of their subsequent history Hutterites were persecuted across Europe. In the late nineteenth century they moved *en masse* to the Dakota territories of the United States. Yet here too, during World War One, they were persecuted, this time for their pacifist

© Tim Smith | *Minister Tom Hofer lectures his two youngest children, Tommy and Deborah, in their home prior to their baptism. The Hutterites believe in adult baptism with each candidate choosing when they are ready. It is seen as the most important step in a Hutterites life.* | *Deerboine Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2011

beliefs. They migrated again, moving north into Canada — though, after the war was over, some moved back to the upper Great Plains of the United States. Today, Canada and the USA are the only two countries where Hutterite colonies are still to be found.

Hutterites are Anabaptists. That is, they practice adult baptism with each individual deciding for themselves if and when they are ready to make the commitment to live within the spiritual and social traditions of the group. They live in small, self-sufficient, and relatively closed communities they call colonies. Here, they maintain strong social bonds with an emphasis on the collective whole rather than the individual. While conservative in their values, they differ from other post-reformation Anabaptist sects such as the Amish and the Mennonites in their emphasis on shared property and their willingness to embrace newer technologies such as cell

© Tim Smith | *Simeon Wurtz tries to corner a duck while helping with the slaughter. Children are taught to pull their weight on the colony at an early age.* | *Deerboine Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2010

phones and the internet when these help the colony to become more productive.

Smith knew from the outset that he wanted to work on a project that would take a sustained period — something very different from the rapid turnaround demand by his commercial photojournalistic practice. He had imagined maybe a year or so. But the more he got to know the Hutterite people and their way of life, the longer the project became. "I understood that to portray their culture accurately meant to document it as broadly as possible." While the project began at Deerboine Colony, he has since gone on to photograph at over three dozen colonies throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Montana.

"My approach was absolutely dictated by the amount of time it took to build relationships and get to know the dynamics of each colony," Smith explained. He had to become comfortable with the word no. "Even at


© Tim Smith | *Tyler Wurtz says evening prayers with his father Michael before bed.* | *Deerboine Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2012

**“My secret ingredient is just showing up, over and over again. I have no other tricks. I just spend time getting to know people and wait for moments to unfold.”**

Deerboine Colony, where I've been photographing for fifteen years, I know who is comfortable with having their lives documented and who is not." And with each new colony he visited, he began again the process of building relationships. One of the ways he does this is by exploring who among the Hutterite communities they might know in common. This helps to build trust, make him less of a stranger. But most importantly, it is about being slow and persistent.

"My secret ingredient is just showing up, over and over again. I have no other tricks. I just spend time getting to know people and wait for moments to unfold." Two years ago, Smith photographed the wake and funeral of the oldest member of the Hutterite communities, Susanna Wollman, who had passed away at the age of one hundred. He knew he would never have been permitted to document such an intimate occasion had he not already spent years building relationships and trust.

© Tim Smith | *Family, friends, and loved ones sing hymns around Susanna Wollmans casket in her home at Decker Colony prior to her funeral. Susanna lived over 100 years, had 52 grandchildren and 154 great grandchildren.* | *Decker Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2023

Working slowly has advantages. It allows him to go back and reshoot if he doesn't capture what he wants first time around — a luxury that photojournalistic assignments, with their fast cycles and fixed deadlines, deny him. He can work at his own pace, waiting for moments to unfold. If there is a disadvantage to working slowly, he believes that "this is primarily in my head. I sometimes worry that I may be missing out by waiting so long to publish. But experience has taught me to overcome that fear and trust that this process works for me."

While Smith was initially drawn to the Hutterite colonies by the things that made them appear different — the old-fashioned clothes and traditional way of life — that soon wore off. As he explained: "Over the years I became more interested in the things we share. I believe in the value of human connection and the importance of nuanced understanding, qualities that are rapidly being eroded in our current society."

Over the years, he has watched children grow up, young adults get married and start their own families, older members of the community become frail and, inevitably, pass away, the cycles of growing livestock and harvesting food, changes in clothing and technology, the rhythms of life, and the adaptation to change. While Hutterites are often romanticized or denigrated as quaint or backward, Smith describes their society as complex, clear-eyed, and

© Tim Smith | *Kids swim in Pine Creek on a hot July evening.* | *Pine Creek Hutterite Colony, Manitoba* 2020

collective. Each colony decides among its members how rigidly they hold onto their traditions and how much they adapt to the outside world.

Through farming and manufacturing, most colonies are in continual contact with clients and businesses in localities near and far. Many colonies are very open with their neighbors; others are more reserved. “I have seen and photographed many ways in which Hutterite colonies help the communities around them,” Smith tells me, “from donating blood to donating food and time to local food banks and soup kitchens. I’ve seen them help sandbag and build dikes during a flood, respond to fires at a neighboring farm, sew quilts for earthquake victims in Haiti, even print 3D face shields during the Covid pandemic. The majority of Hutterites I have interacted with are very generous people.”

“I feel privileged that I get to tell these stories,” he concludes. “Making this work has allowed me to follow my curiosity, the camera freeing me to overcome my inherent reticence. It takes me out of myself. At the end of the day, though, I try not to think too deeply about what I — or any of us — do. We are creatures that go about our lives until we die. Hopefully we have more days making people smile than not.”

© Tim Smith | *Men take a break while cleaning up after a flash flood damaged homes and buildings.| Springhill Hutterite Colony, Alberta* 2020

Dr. Alasdair Foster is a writer, award-winning curator, and publisher of *Talking Pictures*. He has twenty years of experience heading national arts institutions in Europe and Australia and over thirty-five years of working in the public cultural sector.

# Roger Lemoyne: "We Are in This Together"

GINA WILLIAMS

© Roger LeMoyne | Palongkhali, Bangladesh

In October 2017, thousands of Rohingya (estimates of approximately 8,000 as eventually counted by the Bangladeshi border guards), including many children and elderly people, crossed the Naf River from Myanmar and made their way through rice paddies toward the village of Palongkhali. The Bangladesh border guards would not allow the refugees to enter the village and ordered them back into the rice paddy, where they were stranded for three days.

© Roger LeMoyne | Tuzla, Bosnia, October 2006

A group of women known as the "Mothers of Srebrenica" collect, file, and copy photographs of many of the 8,000 men who were murdered after the fall of Srebrenica in 1995. Comprised of women of Srebrenica who lost family members, the group has been one of the most tenacious in pursuing justice and remembrance for the men of Srebrenica. Photography plays a crucial role in their work.

Every photographer I've interviewed over the years makes images that strike a deep chord in me, but there is something about Roger Lemoyne's work that holds my attention much longer than most. I studied my own reaction recently as I selected images for this column, seeking a better understanding of what pulls me in. As usual when reviewing images, I carefully take in the scene, scan the horizons, study the light, experience the jolt/pang/excitement of the visual story at hand, take notes and move on. But with Lemoyne's work, it's literally hard to stop searching for more story, more detail, truths revealed, and stories told in faces and gestures.

As I considered my immediate and visceral reaction to Lemoyne's images and the way in which they pull me in, both in a visual/physical sense and emotionally, I turned to Lemoyne to help me understand, reading his website and sharing my thoughts with him. He offered his own assessment that truly describes my thoughts about his work.

"I look for a kind of cross-current in a photograph. I don't want it to be about just one thing, one idea, one emotion. Rather, it should be a place where multiple, often contradictory, impressions overlap," Lemoyne writes of his approach and results. "This usually leads to some fairly dense, complex images.  One of my former assistants, Jen Osborne, who has become a really wonderful photographer in her own career, verbalized my approach better than I had: that my photography is very much about connections. You need multiple elements for that to happen. It can be graphic connections, say, various repeating shapes, it can be physical connections, people overlapping in the frame like in this image of the Mothers of Srebrenica for example.

I'm looking for these overlapping ideas because the world is such a complex place. We all want simple answers, right versus wrong, but that rarely lines up with the realities of a complex world.

If there is a recurring constant, it might be empathy. Once you have been in someone's position — contact, journalism-style — you can't help but empathize with their situation. This applies in many surprising contexts. I remember being in Kosovo in 1998 where the Serbian police were seen as demonic in their war with the Kosovo Albanians. One day I got access to one of their outposts, spent a bit of time with them and learned how hopeless they felt. They knew they were going to lose and that they were sitting ducks. They were just the pawns of political power, expendable. It was strange feeling empathy for these guys that had been so feared and hated by the Albanian Kosovars that I had been documenting."

Lemoyne says another important constant he strives for is balance.

"Carlos Ferrand, a Peruvian filmmaker based in Montreal, said that my pictures 'balance form and content so closely that they vibrate with that tension.' I look for the discomfort of that push-pull. We are pained by the dead eyes of the blind man in Bossangoa, but touched by the warmth of his son, his guide, leaning against him, and pleased by how beautifully the light shapes their heads together. The bittersweet nature of that moment really moves me."

© Roger LeMoyne | Bossangoa, Central African Republic, February 2023

A sightless man and his son pose for a portrait. The son acts as a guide, leading his father with a stick. Bossangoa has a disproportionally high number of sightless people, though the exact reason for this is not known.

# “We all want simple answers, right versus wrong, but that rarely lines up with the realities of a complex world.” – Roger Lemoyne

© Roger LeMoyne | Kabul, Afghanistan, April 2, 2002

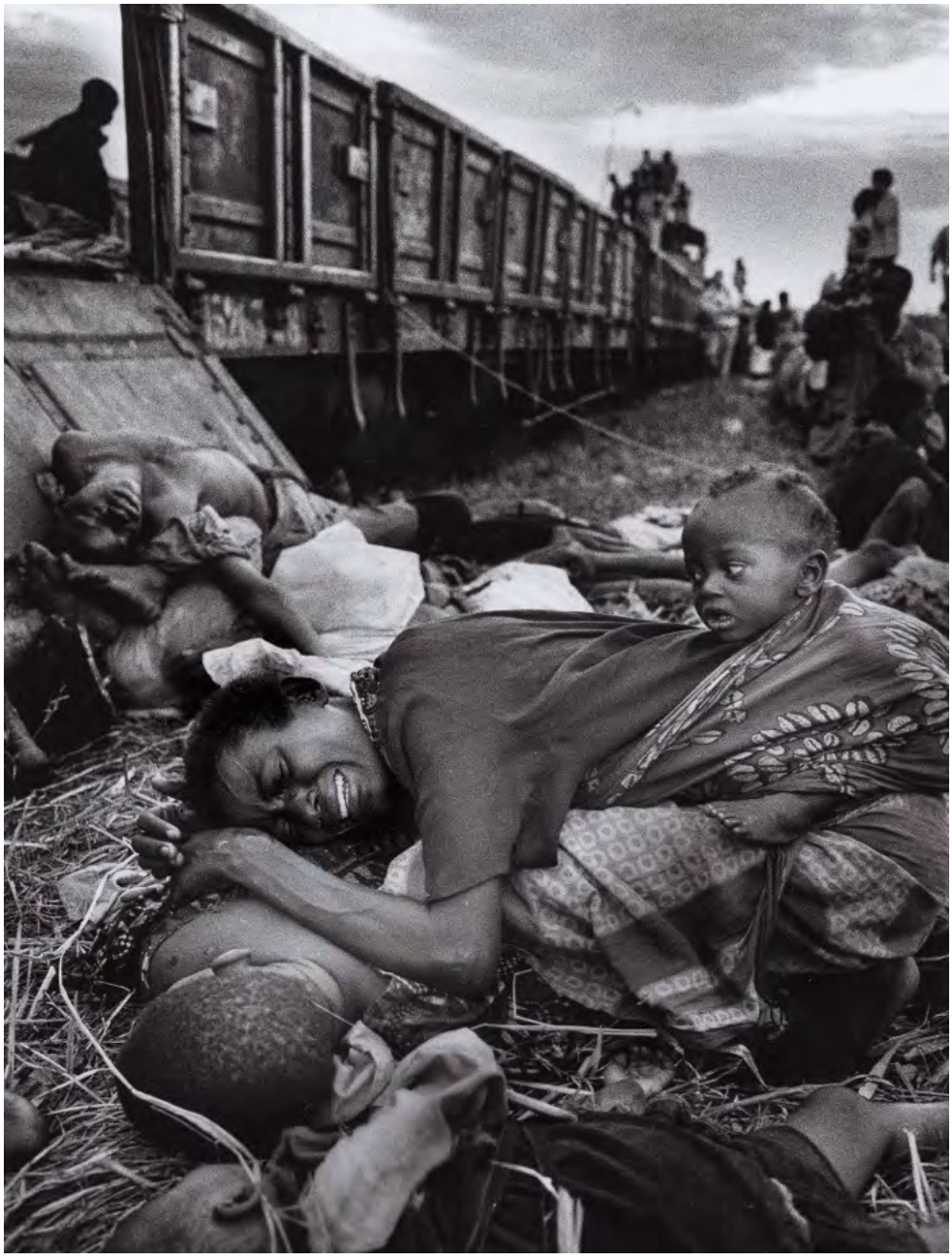
A girl rides a wooden Ferris wheel at a fair held on the outskirts of Kabul. The fair was held for the first time in five years, as it had been banned under the Taliban regime. The Taliban were driven out of Kabul several months before.

© Roger LeMoyne | Port-au-Prince, Haiti, January 2010

The landmark Marché Hyppolite, also known as the Iron Market, burns to the ground two weeks after the initial earthquake on January 12th, 2010. Destabilized by the quake, the fire caused its final collapse. The structure was eventually rebuilt in less than one year. This image is a digital triptych.

Lemoyne's photography career began with film studies and music at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. He graduated in 1979 and then toured Canada as a bass player with the Sainte-Agathe Flyers rock band. During that time, he edited film for small companies around Montreal by day and played in the band by night. He found his true professional calling after switching from film to photography but feels film school helped shape his future work. Since the 1990s, he has dedicated himself to documenting the human condition, conflict, and human rights issues, capturing powerful stories in over sixty countries worldwide. These days, Lemoyne is more focused on Canadian subjects, such as working for the national newspaper and handling portraiture and other commercial work for local clients, but is hoping to finish up his book on the Haitian city of Port-au-Prince in the next year or so, set up a story in Syria and return to the US-Mexico border wall.

"I have more ideas of stories I'd like to shoot than this lifetime can fulfill," he told me recently via email.



© Roger LeMoyne | Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo, April 1997

A woman mourns the death of her mother. Ninety-one Hutu refugees died of asphyxiation between Biaro and Kisangani during an international aid effort to repatriate them. This group of 80,000 Hutu refugees walked more than 700 km into the jungles the Democratic Republic of Congo (then known as Zaire) to escape the advancing forces of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. Thousands died on this journey. The lucky ones were eventually flown back to Rwanda, retracing in a few hours a journey of tragic and almost surreal proportions.

© Roger LeMoyne | Karbala, Iraq, April 2003

Shiite Muslims cut themselves during the ceremony of Ashura, marking the death of Imam Hussein. Banned under the leadership of Saddam Hussein, the ceremony was performed for the first time in many years after his overthrow by the U.S.-led invasion.

**Navigating Identity**

How has photography shaped Lemoyne as a person? "Sometimes I think that I photograph not to preserve the moment but to be in the moment," Lemoyne says. "Attempting to see the world around you as you photograph changes your perception and requires acute awareness of some things but also tuning out of other things. The need to interact with strangers has made me oddly disinhibited. I'll talk to anyone, anywhere. This embarrasses my kids to no end."

Lemoyne says photography, as with many professions or vocations, becomes "the identity with which you navigate the world, your life, your purposes in this life. Photography has definitely been that identity for me. Now, the enormous number of photographs taken every day and shared through new technology has also altered that identity. Globally, there has been a democratization of photography, but also a dilution. One is good, the other less so."

© Roger LeMoyne | Qalqilya, Palestine, December 27, 2003

Palestinian youths try to break surveillance cameras mounted in metal boxes on the newly constructed separation wall surrounding the town of Qalqilya. The Israeli Defense Force sprayed water and colored liquid over the wall to deter them, creating a small rainbow effect.

**Bridging the Divide: We Are In This Together**

I asked Lemoyne for his current opinion on whether photography has the power to undo the effects of longterm cultural and political processes that push us apart, a question he posed in a 2006 interview.

The short answer is yes. The long answer, of course, is complicated.

"I don't think we can unravel what photography can do from what the Internet is doing, what social media is doing, what global telecommunications does to break down cultural barriers and historical prejudices," he says. "All of these technologies and platforms are creating a very different world from the one I grew up in in Quebec in the 1970s. Some things are lost; some things are gained. Change is inevitable. Photography still has the power to move us, but it is being dulled by our constant exposure to images. The image of a child victim of napalm in Vietnam in 1970 seems to have had more impact than the Syrian child washed up on the beach or a child victim in Gaza today."

When he began shooting, Lemoyne says his main reference was National Geographic and GEO magazines. "I thought that's what I wanted to do. I wanted photography to teach me about the world, about humanity. We all still had the

# “Hope is all we’ve got really, isn’t it? We must find hope anywhere we can.” – Roger Lemoyne

notion of the ‘exotic other.’ But of course, there is no exotic, it’s just different cultures doing what a culture does. Now I try to express the idea that everyone views the world through their lens of history, culture, and experience. What should be common ground often looks completely different to different people because of those inherited filters.”

One of his first serious photographic expeditions was to Papua New Guinea in 1984. The experience highlights how important cultural exchange is — and how photography can be a catalyst for common understanding.

“I hitched a ride to the highlands in a truck full of coconuts. I sat in the back on coconuts with a doe-eyed girl and a man so old that he still wore the traditional grass skirt and would have grown up before the outside world had really penetrated to the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. It started to rain. There was a plastic sheet and the three of us huddled under the sheet sitting on coconuts looking at each other. The girl stared, mesmerized, the old man grinned. I believe they were thinking the same thing as I was: ‘I can’t believe I am sharing this intimate moment with someone that appears so different from me but has the same needs and the same basic physical experience. We are in this together.’”

**How Things Connect**

Outside of documenting humanitarian issues, Lemoyne enjoys making portraits. He says he is “endlessly fascinated by how light shapes the human face and influences our perception of the person.” He points to his portrait of a blind man and his son in the Central African Republic that he shaped with a bit of flash. “When I began, I found shooting portraits stressful because no one is ever really satisfied with pictures of themselves. On the other hand, everyone thinks the picture you took of their kid is brilliant. With digital you get the feedback that really helps you work it to where everyone is happy.”

Another aspect of photography Lemoyne appreciates is what he calls “observational photography” which he defines as “a moment of astonishment at how things in the world connect, sometimes through shape or form, or contrasts on some other level.”

He points to a Mayan man who sells souvenirs from his cart at Chichen Itza, a Mayan pyramid, as an example.

“The shape of his cart is that of the pyramid inverted. It is a visual pun that suggests to me the historic inversion of Mayan culture and power,” Lemoyne says. “A man and a monkey with the same coiffure, a souvenir shop with no souvenirs, like a form of memory loss, reflections of people taking pictures when photography itself is just a reflection. You can see all of these in the ‘Observations’ menu on my website. Sometimes I am drawn to photograph something though, I am not sure why. The subtext only reaches my conscious mind later, like the picture of a Roma refugee girl with vitiligo wearing a sweater with a spotted horse on it. When I saw her in this old motel used as a refugee center, I had to take her picture, but at first, I wasn’t sure why. It’s like the horse is her spirit animal. I took that picture over 15 years ago now. Anytime I see it, I wonder where she is and how she is doing. She and her mother seemed so fragile.”

© Roger LeMoyne | Bela Palanka, Serbia, March 2008

12-year-old Jelena lives with her mother and sister in a motel room. She has been there since 1999, when her family fled Kosovo. This motel has been used as an IDP/ refugee center since the Yugoslav civil war. Bela Palanka is a small town in Southern Serbia near Leskovac. According to her doctor, Jelena suffers from vitiligo caused by stress.

© Roger LeMoyne | Kabul, Afghanistan, October 1996

Taliban fighters visit the famed "Blue Mosque" in the center of Kabul. The Taliban, an Islamist militia from southern Afghanistan, took the city in the last days of September to overthrow the Russian-supported secular regime in Afghanistan. Fighting raged on the outskirts of the city for weeks afterwards.

**Where does Hope Reside?**

As someone who spent decades as a photojournalist covering war and conflict that spin through time in seemingly endless cycles, where does Lemoyne find hope?

Hope can be found within our ability to connect, he says, again reflecting on the power of the image to unite.

"Hope is all we've got really, isn't it? We must find hope anywhere we can," Lemoyne muses.

He recalls a young man from Sudan he photographed as a boy in a UNICEF program in 2002, and a woman who fled from Rwanda.

"The boy saved my name on a piece of paper and wrote to me on LinkedIn twenty years later asking if he could see some of his pictures. I shared them, we are in touch. He is now studying in Texas. This gives me hope … A woman wrote to me on Facebook. She had been a refugee from Rwanda in the Congo, part of the most horrific scenes of murder and starvation I had ever witnessed. She survived, married, moved to Sweden. She sent me photos of her family. When we spoke, I asked if she was angry with me for photographing her living nightmare. She said 'no, you did what you were there to do, you did it well. Without it, no one would believe what we went through.' Maybe there is hope in that, or at least a sense of purpose."

**An Emotional Medium**

Whether he is shooting portraits in Montreal or documenting humanitarian issues in Haiti, a long career behind the lens has taught Lemoyne that photography has power. The power to connect, inform and inspire action. Photography is an emotional medium, he says, regardless of technology. Images enter the mind in a very direct and non-intellectual way.

"Photography has the power to convince us that we are more similar to other people than we think."

website

# Future Nostalgia

MARK LAMB

Music has always been the measure that marked the phases of my life, so, when a favorite uncle gave me an old Ensign Ful-Vue camera for my tenth birthday, the gift was forever linked in my mind with the Beatles going to number one with *Rubber Soul*. The Ful-Vue was the false dawn of my photography though, which as a schoolboy was curtailed by a serious lack of funds, so it was much later that Led Zeppelin's *Communication Breakdown* ushered in an era of "serious photography."

This was about the time of my maternal grandmother's passing, an event that left me at a loss, but which also meant I became custodian of the family photograph album. It's an undeniably old and tatty looking document, a heap of furry velvet pages and creased tissues separating the various generations of my forbears; standing at attention, they gaze outward and cast judgement upon their descendants.

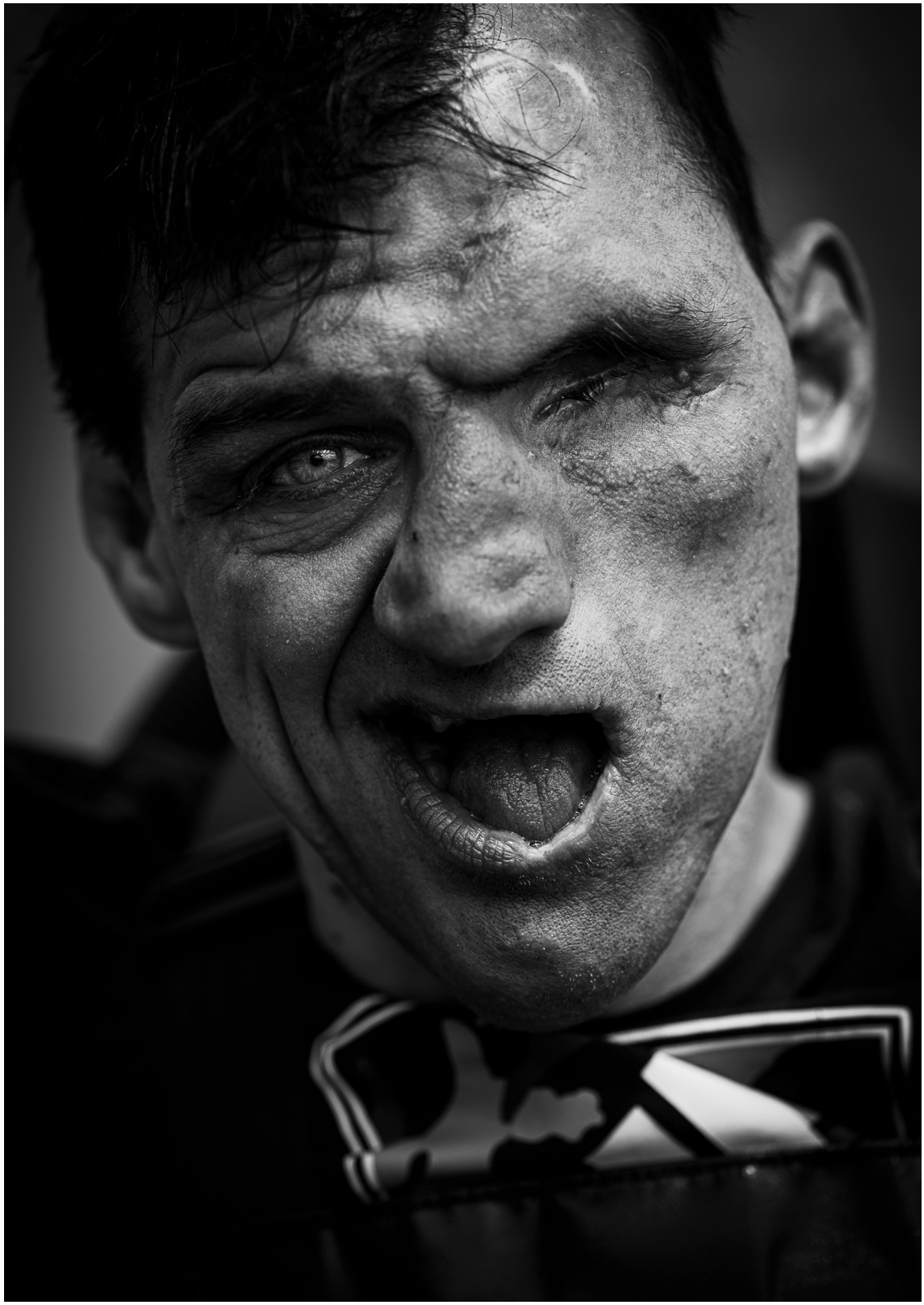
There are tacky and torn locations here, and places where images were formerly stuck down but were removed and are now lost to memory. This dusty repository boasts ghost pictures, created by technical faults, weird double exposures and light leaks; unsettling images occupying a netherworld between past and present. Content, it seems, was all that mattered to my predecessors, never the technique, never the film, never the camera. These people were the unreliable recorders of their own personal era; their wobbling stance, stabbing fingers and imperfect framing entrusted with laying down the historic record.

What a feeling of belonging those far-off faces engendered in me though, out of focus and dog-eared, and how obsessive I became in reliving imaginary moments from those softly glowing sepia lives; these are not photographs, but distant memories, trawled from the depths of time. They seem to me now like future echoes from sixty years ago, a remainder of the past, like the smell of freshly baked bread from my grandmother's kitchen.

And so, to the present. What can I do to continue the tradition that calls me? I find it easy talking to strangers, so upon retirement I started a photo project called *One Thousand Contemporary Portraits*, aiming to take five years to bring the work to completion. But those years began to stretch, and what was originally intended to be a representative selection of serendipitous faces soon resolved itself into a well-ordered collection of subgroups, each with its own highly specific identity.

Potential projects were everywhere. No sooner had I completed a portrait of a theatre from behind the scenes than I found myself viewing the world through the eyes of Bradford's Muslim community. After that came the wonders of a travelling circus, the enchantment of a contemporary dance group and many other excursions into previously unfamiliar worlds.

These various communities have become my touchstone, perfectly described in a widely known fictional presentation:



*In Greek, "nostalgia" means "the pain from an old wound". It's a twinge in your heart, far more powerful than memory alone. This device (the Kodak Carousel slide projector) isn't a spaceship, it's a time machine. It goes backwards and forwards, around and around, it takes us to a place where we ache to go again. — Don Draper, Mad Men*

I am not the viewer though, more the creator of the imagery that feeds the machine. When I meet a likely subject there's a spark of excitement followed by a compulsion to preserve them in that moment by committing their essence to history. Behind every face there's a complex hidden story, an accumulation of event and circumstance, and we borrow that to create a visual fragment of their life, one that we can preserve for future generations. For me these stolen fractions of a second carry an enormous emotional weight; they will give future viewers a rare glimpse into an otherwise inaccessible life.

*One day, this thing I'm holding will be a thousand years old, and I will be dust.*

As my own later life approaches, I'm constantly reminded of human mortality and begin to understand the motives of those philanthropists eager to leave behind a lasting personal memorial. I think I might be living the same kind of dream, not erecting a library or an opera house, but laying down a seam of images for the future, to be discovered, one hopes, many years from now, in a long-forgotten album; perhaps immortalized by some future medium that's more permanent than scraps of paper. These are not portraits, they are more like bookmarks in the pages of my life, and I find myself revisiting them time and time again. Like Draper's fabulous projection machine, these images take me back to a fragment of time, a sacred fraction of a second, in which the subject will endure forever.

My motives have, I admit, changed a number of times since the inception of the project. It began as a loosely framed set of portraits that I felt went well together. Subsequently though, I noticed that a recognizably dark theme was emerging and gravity attracted me to those areas of society where I could reflect that bias. In retrospect I feel somewhat influenced by August Sander in wanting to portray the widest possible selection of people who inhabit our little slice of time, but the selection of pictures so far seemed to me to lack a unifying theme, and that uncertainty made me feel like a fraud. Why was I gathering these images, and for whom? Like many older people I've recently been thinking about death and dying, like Prospero — every third thought shall be of my grave. If anything, that's the ultimate unifying theme, and leads off along dozens of paths, the main one

for me being how do we preserve these lives for the future? And when we say future, exactly how far ahead do we mean? Like the recently reconstructed face of the ten-thousand-year-old woman, we need those images to persist into an uncertain and unknowable future. There is no guarantee that technology or society will prevail, so the method needs to have built-in longevity, engraving the image onto glass perhaps or on durable metal, like the Voyager record we sent to the stars. It's something I'm giving a great deal of thought to: creating an art installation that will preserve photographic works in the very long term.

It may be an arrogance wishing for one's own pictures to be those that survive into the far future, but I have no control over images made by others and no influence over their content, so I can only work with my own meagre output. Amongst myriad stories to be told, my own tale is a grain of sand occupying an infinitesimal volume of space-time. Would that we were granted the time to listen and watch all those other stories.

"Gotika" is a solo exhibition at the Whitby Pannett Art Gallery Oct 11th - Nov 23rd 2025

Mark's entry in the Taylor Wessing Portrait Prize 2025 is *Precious things in the stream of time* and can be seen at the National Portrait Gallery, London from Nov 13th 2025 – Feb 8th 2026 dark_inventions

Mark Lamb is an English documentary and portrait photographer who lives and works in North Yorkshire. He is currently engaged in a five-year project which aims to produce one thousand characterful new portraits of Britons, each representing a unique facet of modern British society.

# Shrink Wrapped Hay Bale
## by Janine Nahapiet

W. SCOTT OLSEN

Let's begin with, and stay with, the image.

And let's also begin with the fact that we have a wonderful and ongoing fascination with detail, with closeness, with, if we're going to be honest, the allure of intimacy.

There is something attractive about getting so close to a subject that we can see the fine details — the pores in the skin, the shape of an eyelash. We believe we are on the other side of some kind of line of allowance or permission. What we see is not so much secret as unusually present; the closeness reveals a truth we might have guessed at but never beheld. And seeing it provokes something fresh in our own history of response.

Sometimes this fascination, this desire for closeness, leads to technology like the electron scanning microscope. It certainly leads to our interest in macro photography. But technology itself is not the reason for our emotional attachment. Instead, the closeness allows us to see something usually invisible to us, and in that closeness there is an act of revelation and discovery. That is the real power here. Not the result of discovery. The act of discovering.

Look at this image, *Shrink Wrapped Hay Bale* by Janine Nahapiet

The subject is simple and commonplace. Even though we cannot see the actual bale in this composition, the sight is well-known. But there is so much going on in this image in terms of shape and form, tonality, texture, and narrative, the composition becomes original and fresh.

The most obvious place to start would be the fact that the image is divided roughly into a left and right half. On the left half, the folds in the wrapping fabric, the lines, are mostly horizontal. There are four sections, filled with ribs or micro-folds or whatever you want to call them, separated by larger folds leading into the center. Those folds, as leading lines, carry the eye from the edge to the center, heading toward an implied convergence. In other words, they become their own story, their own narrative.

On the right-hand section, however, the overlapping wrap is vertical. Again, we have the texture and the lines of the ribs. While not as prominent as those on the left, there is one larger fold that begins at the center and moves upward.

However, on the right we get the addition of lines made by seeing through the partially transparent wrapping. These continue the leading lines and narrative from the left side into a mystery on the right.

The two sides together, with their lines at a roughly ninety degree difference, creates a pleasing and curious tension. Every location of change is a place for the eye to pause and the mind to wonder.

Note how even the shape of the water droplets on those small folds is different on each side. The horizontal lines on the left lead to a wider or broader drop. The vertical lines on the right lead to a narrower, taller drop. These small changes are what make us linger and explore.

The horizontal and the vertical lines are not straight, nor are they level. The vertical lines on the right have a curving sweep to them. The lines on the left all go towards the center. Both of these elements add energy.

Of course, we have the center section, the bit of fabric which begins with loose ends towards the bottom, a wonderful kind of misty confusion of tones and shape, which becomes more defined towards the center of the image, where it disappears underneath the right-hand stretch. This act of disappearing is seductive. It's both loss and promise. It is narrative. It leads us from the bottom of the image up into secrecy and invisibility, almost. There is that hint after the fold of its shape pressing against the wrap.

How often, in other examples, do we see a hand or a face pressed against fabric from the other side, and how often does that press carry story?

We get a hint, an intimation, of a presence beyond what we can see. And just to the right of where it disappears, we get those wonderful upsweeping lines, the shapes of what's underneath.

There is a story in this image, the story of hiding and revelation, a story of wrapping, a story of the knot that holds it all together. And this is amplified by the fact that the shading on the left, the tonality, is darker, more shadow driven than on the right. The light catches the vertical differently than it catches the horizontal.

While my eye keeps returning to the bit of fabric in the middle, and I find myself fascinated by its shapes in the lower half of the image, the brightness, the highlights, its rising act of disappearance, what makes this image particularly intimate is the water. Those droplets, we know from experience, are temporary. They are a result of some recent action, something either intentional like irrigation or something environmental like dew, but they will not last long.

While the center here is a joining place, where we have the simultaneous act of concealment and revelation, the closeness and the details create a fragility to this image, which aids our appreciation of an intimate moment. To place the delicate on top of the secure and wrapped, which is itself a story of future hope, is a braid we treasure.

© Steve McCurry, *Afghan Girl*, 1984, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

# The International Photography Hall of Fame

An interview with Elizabeth Sanjuan, Board Member and Chair of the Induction Committee

**W. SCOTT OLSEN**


© Robert George | IPHF Inductees Sam Abell, Anne Wilkes Tucker and James Balog at the 2024 Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony.

Elizabeth Sanjuan has been photographing for over 30 years, with exhibits in ten states and two countries. She was also a prominent art gallery owner in Florida, championing women's rights and environmental issues. She has served on numerous nonprofit boards, including most recently as a member of the board of the International Photography Hall of Fame. In late 2025, Daylight Books will publish her first full-length monograph, *Silent Snow*, reflecting her five years of travel to the island of Hokkaido, Japan in search of the secrets of peace, beauty, strength, and resilience in of one of the harshest winter environments on the planet.

© Diane Anderson | Hall of Fame Inductee Tony Vaccaro with IPHF Board Member Ken Kranzberg at the reception for the 2019 Hall of Fame Inductee

**Give me a little bit of background. Where did the idea for an International Photography Hall of Fame first come from?**

You know, it's been around as long as I've been alive. That's sixty years. As a matter of fact, October 11th will

© Sally Mann, *Leah and Her Father*, ca. 1983–1985, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

© Ansel Adams, *Moonrise*, Hernandez, New Mexico, 1941. from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

be our sixtieth year. We did skip a few years of induction during COVID, and I think a few years when it transitioned to different locations. But it originally started as part of Professional Photographers of America in 1965, when they were having issues keeping their tax-exempt status with the state of Illinois. In 1977 it became part of the Brooks Institute in California and it was there that IPHF had its first brick and mortar home. And then, fast forward, there was a gentleman out of Oklahoma City, Admiral Kirkpatrick , who was quite wealthy and loved the arts and photography. He wanted the Photography Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City and created a foundation. He left money for us, set aside to run IPHF from there. Unfortunately, he passed away, and the family was not as enamored as he was with photography. They left us a small yearly allotment that goes into some programming in Oklahoma City every three to five years.

Fast forward again to 2013. There was a gentleman, John Nagel, who said, okay, the Admiral has died, Oklahoma City doesn't want us, so let's move to St. Louis. Nagel had taught photography in St. Louis for many years and thought the Grand Center arts district would be a great home, since there were people who really loved photography and thought it would do well. We had a brick and mortar home there, and then COVID hit and we had to close.

Nonetheless, since the inception, we've inducted 139 people related to the photographic arts. That means photographers as well as people in the arts and sciences of photography, curators, scholars. Some of them are surprises at first, like Kenny Rogers. Did you know he was a photographer and had several books published? Elton John was voted in last year, due to his extensive collection, and his advocacy of photography. We tried to induct him this year, but it's difficult to get ahold of him.

© Robert George | IPHF Inductee Photographer Sam Abell at the 2024 Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony.

**How does the whole nominating and voting process work?**

We have a nomination form online. If you feel like there's a curator, or an educator, or a photographer that merits a nomination, you go online, you fill out this brief form, hopefully you have the contact information for this person. They get on the ballot. And if they get enough votes then we call them up and say, hey, we'd like to induct you to the class.

There are over two hundred forty people on the juror pools, and those are gallerists, museum curators, former inductees. But like I said, we would like to have a more diverse and international pool of jurors. If you feel you are qualified and would like to become a juror, please reach out to us.

© Margaret Bourke-White, *Gold Miners*, Johannesburg, South Africa, 1950, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

© Edward Burtynsky, *Iberia Quarries #2*, Marmorose EFA Co., Bencatel, Portugal, 2006, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

**When did you get involved with the Hall of Fame?**
It's been two years now that I've been on the board, and I am also the chair of the induction committee. So I know the challenges of trying to coordinate photographers!

**Do you have a limit to how many people can be nominated?**
No, we ask folks to nominate as many people as they want. But we do go through and see who is really deserving. It's a high bar. Not all nominations make it to the ballot, as they are new to photography, and haven't really made a significant contribution to the craft. Most of the time, these folks have been nominated by a friend or family member. A lot of times, on my days off, I'll be on Instagram, looking at international sites, trying to see what photographers of merit are in out of the way places. I'll do the research, and I'll nominate them. That's how we got Zanele Muholi for the Visionary Award. I nominated them, they were on the list, and they were voted in this year.

**And when you die, you're off the list?**
No. Once you die, you go over to the deceased list. We do induct deceased people too.

**Do they need to show up at a ceremony to be inducted?**
Well, some do show up, and they have a wonderful time meeting the other inductees and fellow photographers and people in the industry. And there are a few that don't show up. Like, this year, Stephen Shore will be inducted. He accepted the invitation to be inducted, but he did not want to appear on camera.

There are people we've inducted who, for whatever reason, health reasons or whatever, haven't been able to travel. A perfect example was Paul Caponigro. We inducted him last year. We did a video with him from his home, which was wonderful, and he accepted it that way. Unfortunately, after the induction ceremony, I was on my way to Maine to buy a print from him, and he passed away a few days before I got there. But I made the trip anyway, to honor him.

**Why is the Hall of Fame important?**
I think it's incredibly important because it is an art form. I sometimes think people feel photography is the stepchild of the arts. Like, nobody takes it seriously, for whatever reason. They all think, oh. It's like when they look at a Jackson Pollock or something, they see a bunch of splatters on a wall, and they say oh, I could do that. And then they go home and try it, and they're like, well, hell, I can't really do it. I think it's the same thing with photography. That is my perception.

I think it's important because just like the written word, it is the storyteller and the timekeeper. Especially if you print it, right? We've gone through DVDs, floppy disks, every kind of hard drive that's changed. I have hard drives that don't even work anymore. Technology is always changing. But once an image is printed, that is the history keeper. That is the timekeeper. That is the storyteller.

Two exhibition views from “Masterworks: Highlights from the IPHF Collection”.

© Julia Margaret Cameron, *Herr Joachim*, England, 1868, Photogravure 1913, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

© Harry Benson, *Beatles Composing Times Three*, Paris, France, 1964, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

It's so important, especially in times like now, where we can go back and look at an image and reflect as to what's going on in history. I mean, it completes the storytelling.

**Do you work with galleries around the country to display the work of people you induct?**

When this conversation goes to print, we will have just concluded a show in Indianapolis, at the Indianapolis Arts Center. There is a big arts community there, and a lot of photography enthusiasts. This is our first year there, and we are bringing part of our exhibition to Indianapolis for their gallery walls. IPHF, with all the inductees, has quite an extensive collection of some pretty remarkable work.

© Virginia Harold | Gallery view from the exhibition *Vivian Maier: Photography's Lost Voice*.

© Eugene Smith, *Weary American Marine*, Saipan, 1944, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.


© Diane Anderson | IPHF Inductee Steve McCurry at the reception for the 2019 Hall of Fame Inductee Exhibition.

© Carrie Mae Weems, *Scenes and Takes, Untitled (In the Carefully Constructed Fusion)*, 2016, from the IPHF Permanent Collection.

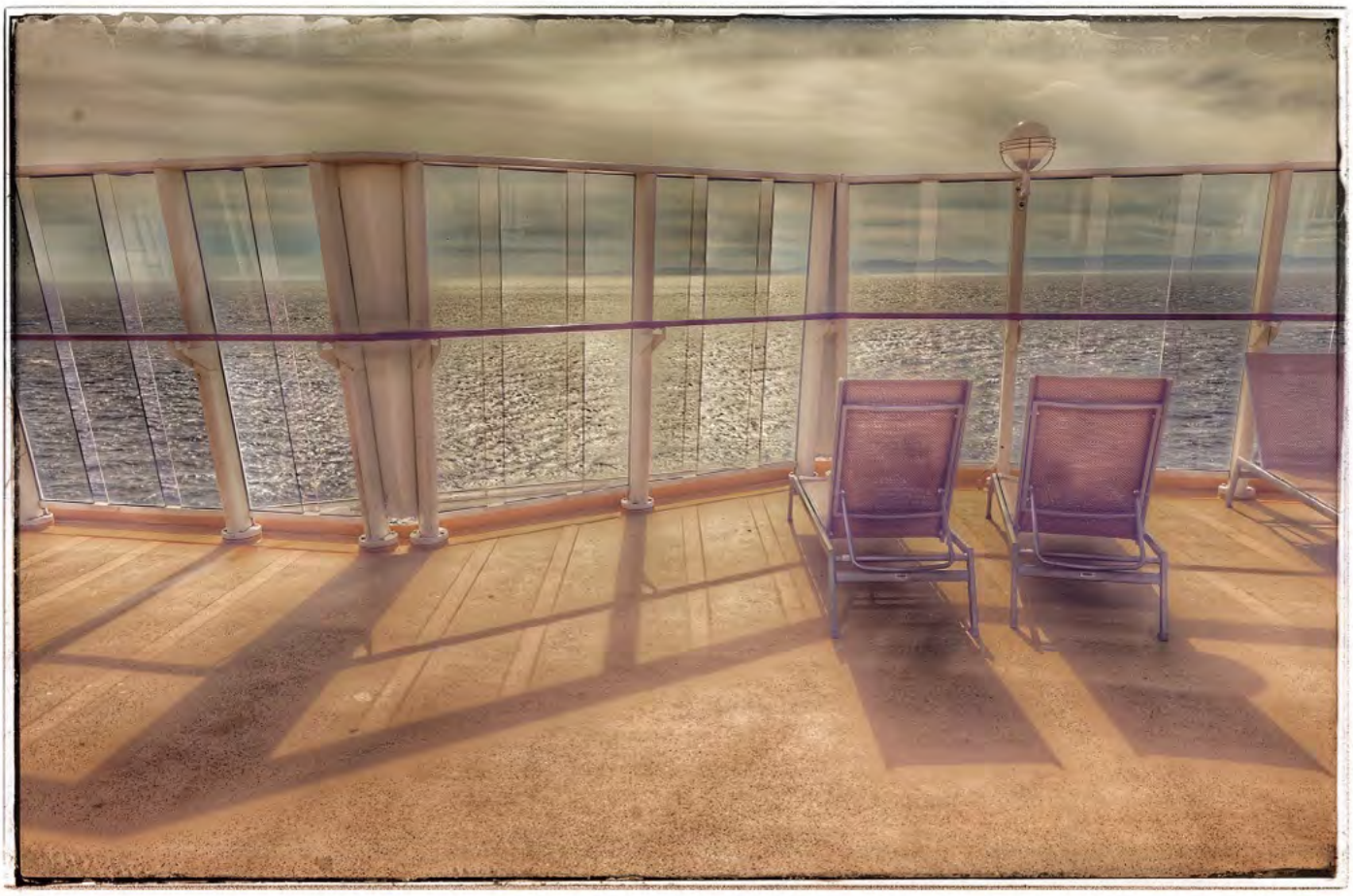
**But you don't have brick and mortar of your own anymore.**

Not anymore. We're in the process of looking. But beyond that, we have an extensive body of work ready to travel. We don't really need an actual home. If we had partnerships with organizations that were interested in exhibiting our work, we would do that while we continue the quest to find the right home for IPHF. We'd ship it to them and work out the details. But I think, most important for us is the programming, locally and nationally and internationally. We're looking for partnerships and ways to expand our educational programming. And we're looking for jurors for our photo competitions. What I would really love is an international pool of nominees, and for people to get excited about nominating people. If people would like to be a juror for our photo competitions, they should send us their c.v..

We need to create community and engagement. The crux of the Hall of Fame is the induction and honoring of these people who have dedicated their life to photography in one way or another. So I think it's really important that, just like the Oscars or Emmys or Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, it's recognizing the people in the industry for their incredible work and dedication. So, if you know of anybody who would like to join the board…

# Ready Spectator

MARTY GERVAIS



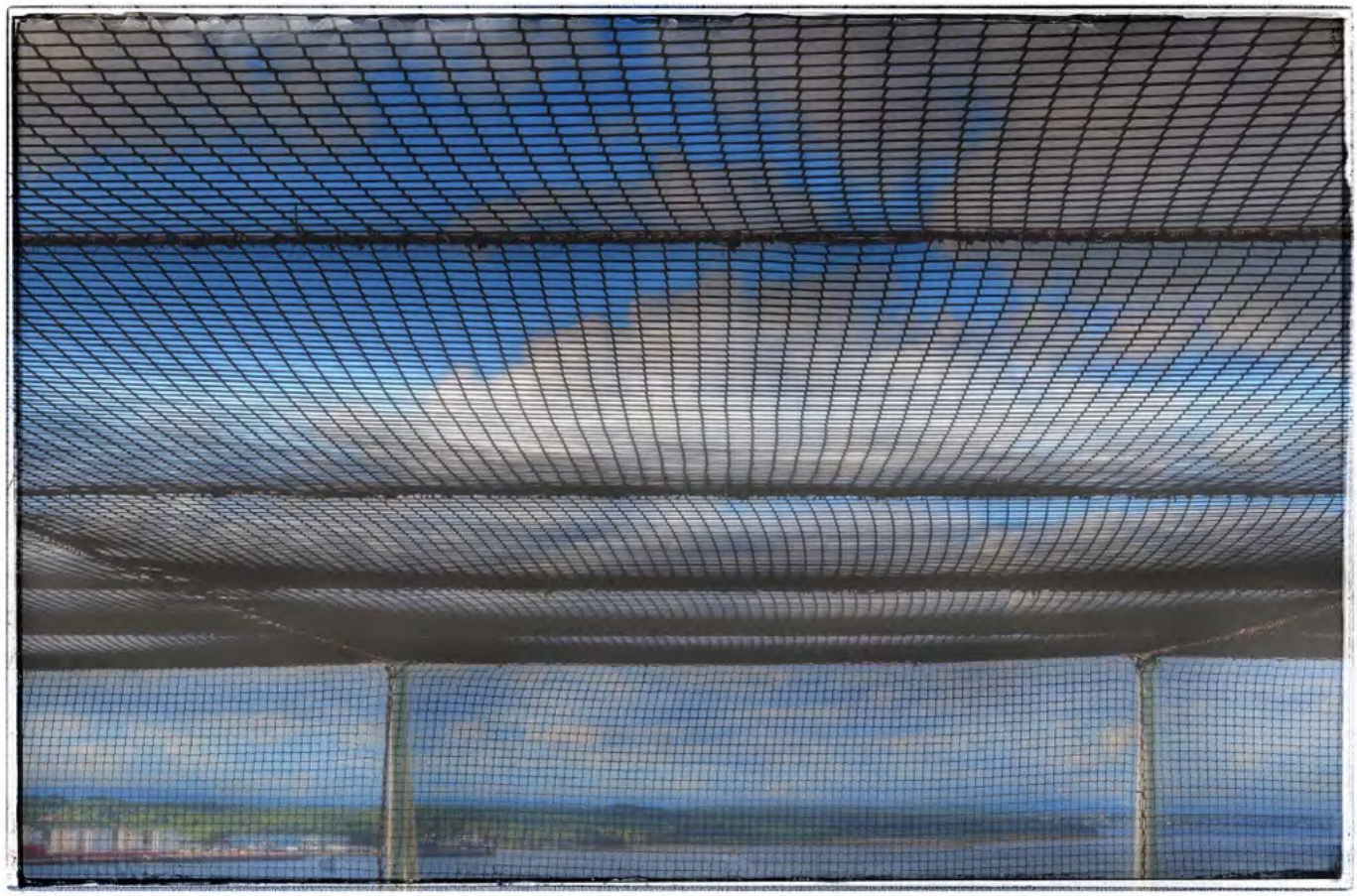
As I stepped out onto a windy, clean, open, and empty sunlit deck on that first morning on the St. Lawrence River, with the nearby shore of Quebec asleep, save for a single blue car that moved like an effortless run-on sentence, I was dazzled by the geometrical.

I took with me a single camera, a single lens, a singular vision, so that no matter where I looked, there was a statement that tugged at me at every turn — horizontals, verticals, circulars, rectangles, squares, angled lines, each of these rigid and true, each unfailing and disciplined in their own roles. And I was there to see. I was there to slip in and around these, remaining a silent and ready spectator.

Morning is that perfect time for patterned shapes and swirls and the sweep of sharp lines and brilliant colors and deep shadows, all resolved and intent upon a distinct embrace of mood and emotion. This, of course, was a contrast to the departure for this journey from Quebec City. Just before sailing in the late afternoon, I surveyed the tiered city — effectively a postcard of color — as we sailed away. I climbed to an upper deck and felt the sun and wind, and when I turned around to the open water, I noticed how in this golden hour, the rim light brushed the ship's dark wooden railings and bleached rows of white columned supports and saw the two deck chairs bathed in this golden luminosity. I was leaving behind the street scenes from the old city, how the sun poured through the doors of the old train station, seeing a man sitting on a stool along the street and reading the paper, another man nearby, all alone, playing a harp.

And now at sea, the next morning I found a court and caught the easy, slow movement of another early riser, a solitary player lazily lofting the basketball high up and into the basket. But something else commanded my attention, and that was the mesh and lines and streaks of light, and the dark, far off roll of mountains.

Much later in the day, I was back to fix my camera on the mesh and the sprawl of cumulous clouds beyond, and I studied the subtle blues and blacks and the distant shoreline transform into an image that now was no longer reflective of the sport. Instead, it was pattern. Now shape. Now a different story. One where the eye connects to the imagination. I say, let it be. Let it be whatever it tells you it is. Like the empty black and white chess board spread out like a tablecloth at an unset table, and how it stretches to the nearby railings, again with passive vulnerability, permitting the sun to use this moment to  orchestrate all color and shape. And there I was, gliding like the grace of a single cloud, changing nothing in its passing. I was there to see, and to move on.



**“And there I was, gliding like the grace of a single cloud, changing nothing in its passing. I was there to see, and to move on.”**

In Charlottetown, you needn't go far to find those bright multi-colored clapboard homes, typical of Maritime dwellings in Canada. The reason for painting them originally was for practical reasons, to enable sailors to spot their homes through fog and rain. Much later in the 1970s the excess and durable paint from fishing boats were used in a revitalization effort to promote bright colors. In Newfoundland, they called it "Jellybean Row."

In Halifax, you don't have to look far to learn about the Maritime folk artist Maud Lewis. Pay a visit to the Gallery of Nova Scotia where her cramped little painted cabin is preserved and now open for visitors. You can peek into its interior, decorated with Maud's signature colorful flower and nature-themed paintings. But curiously, the city itself has given itself over to her memory. You find traces of those themes in the windows of tall office buildings, and rarely, if ever, is there any reference to Lewis herself. A motif of images spotted here and there throughout the city are like a tiny voice singing all alone. It makes you smile. It cheers you on in an otherwise cloudy day.

In Sydney, Nova Scotia, as we pulled into this harbor, I spotted a green clapboard house that is a typical, classic Cape Breton style with crisp white trim, colorful sidings and colorful front doors. I realized how much I was drawn to shape and color. Indeed, a rectangular red door, flanked by two halves of the house, reminded me of twin Lego pieces standing straight and tall.

A few days later, heading down the Atlantic coast and sailing to Eastport, Maine, we navigated a path through an archipelago of islands where the sky and sea become mere watercolor brush strokes in blue, though the surface of the

sea rippled with the passage of occasional boats and barges. There stood a lighthouse in white and red like a lost soul. I know in my heart it was just another postcard — an exquisite stereotype — but I couldn't help myself. So still and solitary. Its placement was so Feng Shui, demonstrating the harmony of things in space, everything aligned with the natural forces of wind and water and land, stationed appropriately at the foot of this narrow island. What's interesting, too, about photographing it was that I did not have to move because the ship angled its way past, affording me a multitude of views until I watched the lighthouse fade into the blinding morning light.

It was interesting, too, as we neared Eastport. I had this glimpse of the shoreline waking to the day, and morning traffic still was nowhere in evidence on those roads that run down to the water except for that bright yellow school bus just then starting its route in those first hours, resonating with comforting presence.

A day later, I saw the approach to Bar Harbor as a gift with its fogy morning. I was up early, as usual, and it was barely light, but the muted darkness was accentuated by the tungsten glow of deck lights, and deck hands were slowly lifting the gathered chairs to put in place in anticipation of warmth and

sunlight. This could have been a street scene in Paris with its wide avenues glistening in the aftermath of rain in an urban landscape of cloistered lamps. It was the delicate, soft-hued colors that drew the eye, especially one lone man with a pastel-colored jacket who stood eyeing a passing vessel in the harbor. Later, walking along the shore, a four-masted tall ship, and the long and sloping platform that runs down to it, were nearly silhouetted in the fog. The picture was nearly monotoned, nearly black and white, but for a flapping red, white, and blue American flag. Walking along that pier, I found a man in a pink shirt, a jacket slung over his shoulder, and maybe he was calling out to someone in a nearby boat that was barely visible in the fog. He reminded me of that man on the ship. A brother in this painterly scene of soft pastels.

Walking along the dock in Bar Harbor, I looked down to three small vessels, two with outboard motors and one with crossed oars. A scene of pails, tarps, ropes, life buoys, gas cans, all tucked away, ready for another day. Farther along I noticed a woman in the sun reading a book, the nearby inlet animated with reflections. I felt like an outsider, seeing everything, saying nothing, moving past and beyond. Chronicling a perspective of shapes and color and movement, and metaphor and allegory and narrative. And there I was — the taciturn spectator gathering these moments into a kind of photographic bouquet.

# Maurizio Rampa

I’m a self-taught Italian photographer who lives a nomadic life around the world. After working for many years in the film industry and as an independent filmmaker, I decided to change my path and live a different life, often on the margins of society. My passion for visual storytelling, strongly influenced by my love of cinema, has been transferred into the images that I started to take with my film camera while travelling. Photography now guides my wanderings, shapes my personal journey, teaches me to live in the present moment without controlling it, and constantly reminds me to always trust the process. I believe that visual storytelling should not provide clear information but rather invite everyone to enter the unknown and embrace his mystery. Photography should ask the viewer to feel rather than to understand.

website

# Dee Kelly

I'm primarily a nature photographer, but also enjoy studio portraiture. My journey to the Ballarat International Foto Biennale (BIFB) was at the insistence of my friend, Ian Kemp, a photographic artist from Ballarat who had seen a couple of my portraits.

In March this year, seeking a potential space for my exhibition LUMINARIA, I approached the management of the sumptuous Grainery Lane, a magnificently appointed restaurant and bar, for permission to exhibit there. The owners agreed that my work was the perfect fit for their venue, but with only three images of the final ten in hand, I had a lot to do before August!

I called for models, met them and assigned them a character, acquired props, made their costumes, and then started shooting. However, I wouldn't have met the deadline without the assistance of my daughter. With a doctorate in literature, a passion for history, and amazing organizational skills, she was invaluable. In addition to modelling, she was hair and makeup artist for my other lovely models, all of whom are local girls who had never sat for portraits prior to meeting me.

I wanted an "old masters" feel to my images and chose to have them printed locally by Aeterna Lab on quality Hahnemuhle cotton canvas and framed in vintage gold frames without matting or glass. The final result has drawn many compliments and the exhibition has been a massive success for me.

As well as being so highly praised, I was thrilled to be able to share with the owners and staff of Grainery Lane that we won the People's Choice Award in the Open Program of the BIFB. I could scarcely believe this news but was delighted to think that so many members of the public voted for LUMINARIA. I now have the confidence to exhibit my work again and to know that beautiful, traditional-style images are still highly desirable, so much so that one has already been purchased.

This was my first exhibition and I hope my story is an incentive to other mature-aged photographers to believe in themselves. The response to this body of work has been amazing and I'm extremely grateful to everyone for their support. It has been an absolute joy to share.

website

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