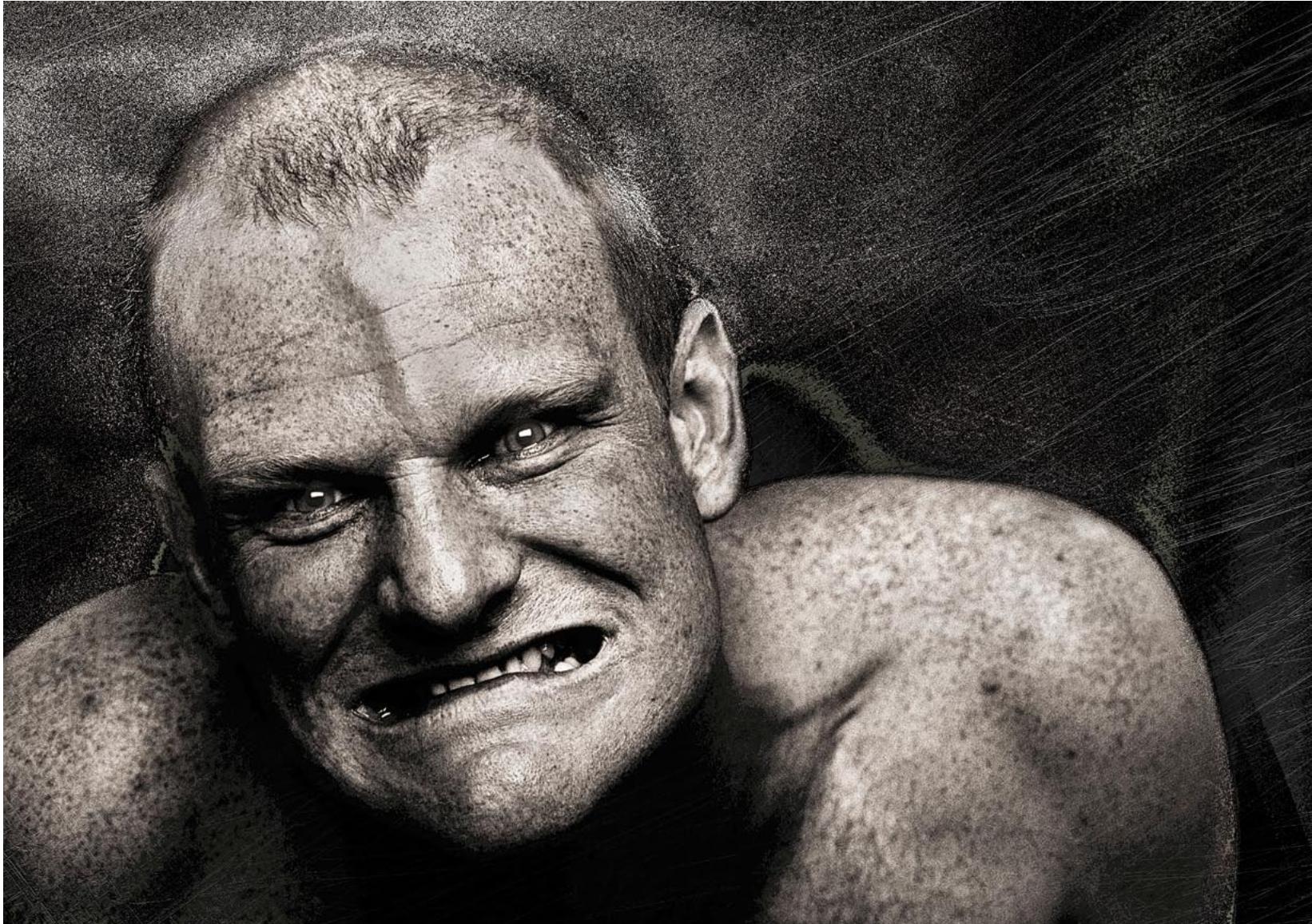


web**photo**mag

Simon Larbalestier, Robert Maybach,
Michael Kern, Piotr Kowalik

Issue 2
January 2006



Creatives' Night

2 february 2005 @ Queen

<http://www.queen.fr>



To begin february, the prestigious nightclub *Queen* organises a night around Fashion and Creation, it will feature a fashion show, a live painting performance and a design & photos exhibition.

Webphotomag is proud to have partnered with this event and will exhibit large prints from photographers seen in our pages. A party where festive and creative spirits meet is bound to be unique, don't miss it!

Queen Club
102, avenue des Champs Elysées
75008 PARIS

Admission fee: free between 11 pm and 12.30 am on presentation of this voucher.
10€ otherwise (paid admission includes a drink)



Jeudi 02 Février 2006

à partir de 23h

Nom, Prénom

Invitation Nominative

Validable de 23h à 00h30



102 avenue des Champs Elysées 75008 Paris Métro George V www.queen.fr

Contact : lea@queen.fr / lorenzo@queen.fr

First of all, a Happy New Year to everyone! May it be very creative and give us many books, exhibitions and events to enjoy! 2005 finished on a lot of positive notes for me, webphotomag was launched and feedback has been extremely positive. It generated an opportunity for Andrew Brooks to have one of his photographs featured as the cover of a sampler CD from *Naïve*, a french record company. It also led to Martin Waugh and Denis Olivier being selected to exhibit their work during the event advertised in the preceding page. But the absolute best positive note of the end of the year is definitely the birth of our son, Lou, who has made this start of the year such a beautiful thing (and this issue a bit late). May 2006 be, for everybody, a continuation of such a string of good things!

This month, I wanted to see more faces in webphotomag, to be more about people and I have come across photographers who have very strong sets to present.

I'm very proud to welcome Simon Larbalestier in our pages, very grateful for his being so supportive ever since the early stages of the mag. For those of you who are fans of the Pixies, the name should ring a bell as he was the photographer behind

their covers, some fifteen years ago. He now lives in Thailand and presents here photographs about his vision of Cambodia, very strong images that I find are both disturbing and sincere, can be both beautiful and horrible, and are quite simply... moving.

We then go north-west, to Tibet with Robert Maybach. I came across his work by chance and was stunned by his portraits. He processed them in a way that blurs time, making us ignore the question of "when" and leaving us face to face with his subjects in a very intimate way.

While in this oriental mood, we'll move north again and Michael Kern will describe his vision of China around the concept of Wu Wei. A disorienting concept illustrated in a way that can be disorientating too... Let his images sink in and they may well, like in my case, make you come back to them.

To finish, we'll enjoy the work of Piotr Kowalik, who creates something very expressive in the studio, a mix of lighting, body expressions and actor's gazes that results in images that seem familiar while somehow something feels shifted.

I hope you will all enjoy this issue, and once you've

read it, why not come and discuss it on our forum? As always, feedback is important and whether you send it to me direct, get in touch with the photographers or start a discussion up on our forum, it can only make the magazine better.

I hope to see some of you at the "Paris, Capitale de la Création" night at the Queen club in Paris, on the 2nd of February!

Jérôme Muffat-Méridol LRPS

editor

jmuffat@webphotomag.com

30 trying to save the world

Paul Fawley

<http://www.photolink.co.uk>

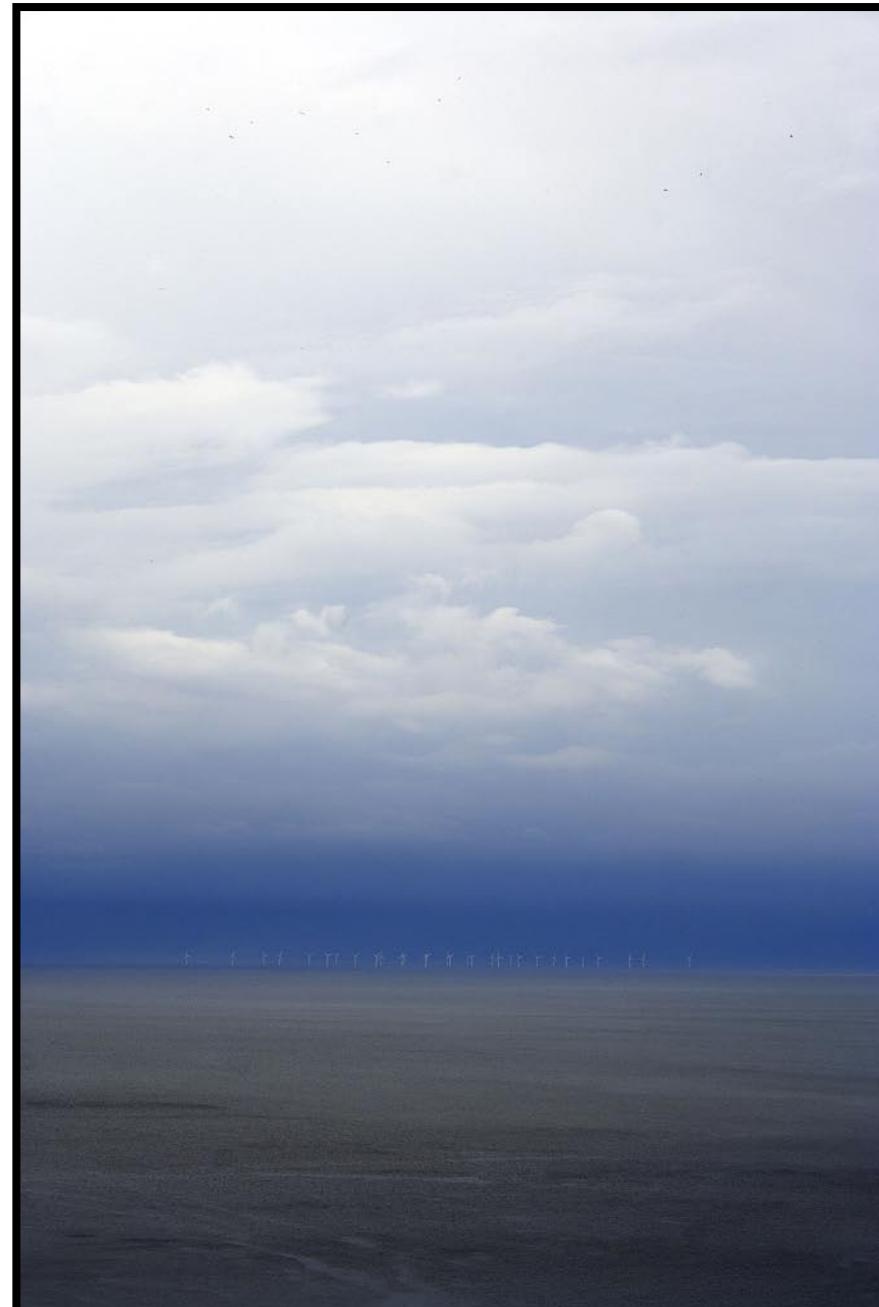
We regularly drive along the A55 in North Wales, and the children often asked what the elegant windmills are for, out at sea.

We tell them that they are one of the only man made machines to provide free power for their creators, purely by the strength of the wind.

They are now happy to see them as a landmark on our journey, and they also see them as things of beauty... Not as a blight on the landscape as some claim.

The image was captured in April 2005, with the sea covered in a thin veil of mist. This takes the windmills to an uncertain location, with a storm hanging over them, they, like the birds circling in the top of the image, look ready to take on the elements.

This photograph has been selected by the Association of Photographer's Gallery in London for its "Capture" exhibition (www.the-aop.org). Unfortunately, by the time you read these lines, the exhibition will be over...



Cambodia: Tabula Rasa

(works in progress)

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Tabula rasa: (Latin: «scraped tablet», though often translated «blank slate») is the notion that individual human beings are born «blank» (with no built-in mental content), and that their identity is defined entirely by events after birth.

[...]

In recent times, however, tabula rasa has come to be understood fundamentally differently. While the idea that the individual can be changed remains, the power to effect that change is now ascribed to society, not the self - and that power extends to the whole of human nature. Under this view, one can almost without restriction shape the individual by changing the individual's environment, and thus sensory experiences.

«*Tabula rasa.*» Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. 5 Jan 2006, 04:30 UTC. 6 Jan 2006, 09:24 <http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Tabula_rasa&oldid=33933318>

My thinking is along the lines of those being born disabled effectively having their entire future life really in someone else's hands as it were. The blank slate concept I like, in that I do believe a person is shaped by their surrounding and life experiences and that to start from a disadvantaged position forces certain social changes. In the same way as 1/6th of the population was wiped out during the Pol Pot regime most of those in the poorest Khmer provinces have effectively had their social and economic slate wiped clean.

Discarded day chair

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Discarded day-chair belonging to Srey Srous (13), Cerebral Palsy.

Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia 2005

Tat Kuang Si Waterfall

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Luang Prabang, Laos, 2001

From the series «Between Two Worlds 2001-2004»

Nap Vannet

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



©Simon Larbalestier/Network

age 5, Cerebral Palsy, Kampong Chhnang Province,
Cambodia 2005

Boy holding plastic bag

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



©Simon Larbalestier/Network

Boy holding plastic bag of antibiotics, distributed by LICADHO (Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defence of Human Rights) during a visit to the Kumpong Pluck Commune when a fire destroyed 187 houses making 1382 people homeless. In less than a month the monsoon rains will fill the Tonle Sap Lake flooding this particular commune. Normally the houses are built on stilts to accommodate this. LICADHO will visit for two days only to offer medical aid and food supplies.

Han Him

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



age 38, Amputee

Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia 2005

Karen Hill Tribe #1

Simon Larbalestier
<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Thai-Burmese Border, 2003

From the series «Between Two Worlds 2001-2004»

Los Ply

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



©Simon Larbalestier/Network

age 7, Club Foot

Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia 2005

Heng Not

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Angkor Wat, Cambodia 2002

From the series «Between Two Worlds 2001-2004»

Discarded wheelchairs

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Discarded wheelchairs belonging to Bo Nara, Bo Narong and Bo Narey. All suffer from Muscular Dystrophy and their condition has deteriorated so much that the wheelchairs are no longer in use.

Kampong Chhnang Province, Cambodia 2005

Boys in the Rain

Simon Larbalestier

<http://www.simon-larbalestier.co.uk>



Angkor Wat, Cambodia 2001

From the series «Between Two Worlds 2001-2004»

webphotomag: What is Photography to Simon Larbalestier?

Simon Larbalestier: The shortest answer to this, for me, is that photography is a powerful visual vehicle to communicate my way of seeing the world.

Over the last 20 years it has shifted in various directions but the underlying themes of texture and decay have always been present. What has changed is I've gone a full circle really in that I started by photographing people and then, in 2004, I found myself returning to people based images. Now in 2005 the people are essential to my images. Having moved from album artwork, through advertising to a more documentary approach my recent work (based in Cambodia) is now moving in a new direction for me. Still I'm rooted in traditionalist methods of picture making using B&W film and rangefinder cameras and although I am now using digital methods to output my work for clients, the origination is always from film. Given the time and space I'd prefer to still print my own images but that is becoming increasingly more difficult as supplies become more scarce and, working over here in SE Asia, it's not really practical. I save all my dark-

room printing for when I'm back in the UK, making work for international exhibitions

WPM: How would you say the transition happened from representing spaces, empty spaces, to work like you present here, where man is always very present, in or off-frame ?

SL: Looking back on my Cambodia trips since 2001 (and I must have made about 22 by now), the attraction was initially the decaying temples in a jungle setting, a natural move from earlier work; but the more I photographed the temples the more I became fascinated with the Khmer culture and its place in the 21st century. *Culture = Society = the Khmers themselves* and from there I moved towards a small part of their society - the disabled, both mentally and physically.

When explained like this I can see that, although it feels like it, it has nothing to do with coming about full circle!

WPM: Tell us more about your relationship with the Cambodia Trust.

SL: My current work involves detailing and docu-

menting Disability in Cambodia through the help of The Cambodia Trust, a UK based Charity that operates in the poorest provinces of Cambodia. For me it's a doorway into a harrowing and often shocking Third World approach to things we might take for granted in the West; medicine, caring of patients and general awareness of disabilities. It's a long term project and not an easy one to access but I feel compelled to record and draw public attention to this particular aspect of life. So many people go to visit Cambodia as «the next hot destination». I think few are aware of Cambodia's underlying social problems and the great divide in rich-poor Khmer society, as the tourists are well shielded from this fact.

I would like to think that eventually my work would help them see a different side to Cambodia.

Faces of Tibet

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



Old monk

Drepung monastery

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>

I met this monk in Drepung monastery on the outskirts of Lhasa. He was sitting in the grass somewhere in the huge monastery area and was enjoying the sun. I was amazed by his calm and warm-hearted charisma.





Prostrator kid

Potala kora, Lhasa

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>

Prostration is a common way for Tibetans to show their devotion to their beliefs. It always follows the same sequence: They place their hands in a prayer-like position, touch their forehead, throat and heart, get down on their knees and then lie down on the ground with the hands stretched out. Some Tibetans are prostrators by profession, they live from donations and do their prostrations day in day out. So are these two young boys on this and the next page. I met them early in the morning in front of the Potala palace in Lhasa.

Prostrator kid, portrait

Potala Kora, Lhasa

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>





Teenage girl

Gyantse

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>

This girl was very honoured being photographed. At first she was a little sceptic, but after watching me taking pictures of her friends she allowed me to photograph her. She was very proud when she saw the result.

Boys in the street

Gyantse

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



These two boys had big fun pulling all kinds of funny faces. After every picture I got down on my knees, they came over, wrapped their arms around my neck and starred at the camera display. When the photo appeared they screamed and laughed ... and posed again, even more enthusiastic.

Boy presenting his friends

Shegar

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



The boy in the middle saw me photographing other people. He came and meant me to take his photograph. I nodded, he grabbed his two friends and they posed. After they had seen the photo on the display he thanked me and they walked away happily.

Boys with slingshots

Gyantse

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



After I took a few shots of these boys with their slingshots hanging from their pockets, one of them briefly aimed at me and grinned. I laughed and encouraged them to aim again and took the picture. Enthusiastic they showed me what else they got in their pockets. The boy in the back even had a living bird with a rubber band around its feet.

Monks after the prayer

Drepung monastery

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



When I came to the entry of the big assembly hall of Drepung, I realized that I had just missed dozens of monks chanting together. I watched the monks streaming out of the hall, and when I turned around I saw these monks examining the prayer flags, which they just received from the woman on the left. I admitted to myself that getting a shot like this was a fair compensation for missing the chants.

Boy presenting his friend and a CD-ROM

Gyantse

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>

This boy shyly approached and pointed me that he wanted a photo taken of him. I smiled and nodded, he quickly grabbed his friend, and meant me to wait. He opened his jacket and proudly pulled out a CD-ROM. Then he was ready for the picture.



Workers returning from the field

near Shigatse

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



When driving on the road between Gyantse and Shigatse I told the driver to stop for the beautiful scenery. All of a sudden these workers came onto the road, and even the pony posed quite professionally.

Nomadic women

near Lhatse

Robert Maybach

<http://www.robertmaybach.com>



I had the pleasure to meet a nomadic family and watch them at work. While the men were washing their sheep in the river, these two women were sitting at the fire place preparing tsampa, a traditional Tibetan dish made from barley flour.



Young nomad

near Lhatse

Robert Maybach
<http://www.robertmaybach.com>

I was fascinated by this boy's expression. Although he was a young boy he had the charisma of an old wise man.

webphotomag: How do you define photography?

Robert Maybach: Well, I could answer it's a projection of time and space, it's a form of art, it's a medium of information transport, in fact one could write a whole book on that question. I restrict myself to what photography, and especially portrait photography, means to me. I see it as a way of connecting souls. The picture is the link between the viewer, the portrayed and the photographer. All three parties are joined through one picture. What I try to do in my photography, is to connect souls and spread something positive. I think we all have seen too many awful things in the news, in movies and on photos. I want to show and express the good things in the world.

WPM: How did the trip to Tibet go?

RM: I went to Tibet for two weeks. The trip started in Lhasa, I stayed there for a few days and visited a lot of famous and not so famous places in and around Lhasa. The rest of the time I spent going back to Kathmandu by Jeep, staying single days at places like Gyantse, Shigatse, Lhatse and Everest

Base Camp. It was both visually and emotionally a very pleasing trip thanks to the wonderful landscape and the warmth of the people.

One reason for going to Tibet was that I wanted to produce this «Faces of Tibet» series. Another one was to see, hear, feel, smell and taste a place and culture I have always been fascinated by. When I came to Tibet I expected a friendly and polite people, but after a few days I was overwhelmed by the happiness, warmth and devoutness of a people that had to suffer so much from destruction, persecution and repression in the last decades.

WPM: These portraits seem very personal, do you find easy to connect with people ?

RM: Well, as you might guess, I'm not the most introverted person in the world, but especially in Tibet it was rather easy because I had to communicate without words. That means I did a lot of smiling, something I am rather good at. In return I got a lot of positivity from the people, exactly what I was looking for.

WPM: Tibet is also well known for landscapes, it

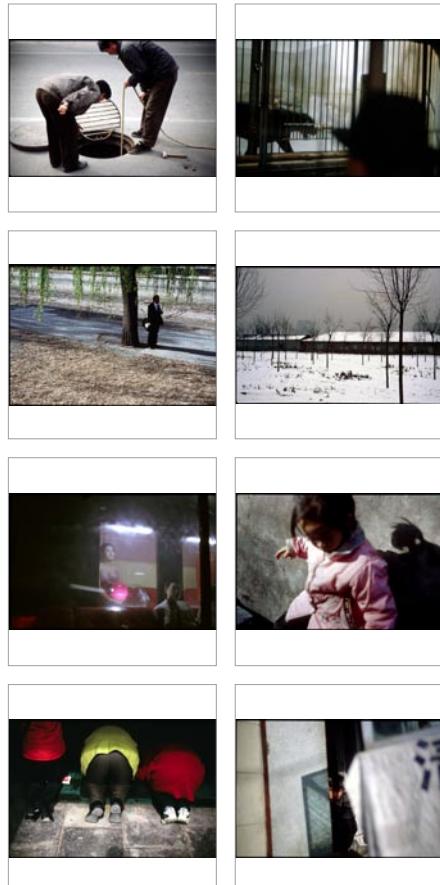
almost seems like the people overshadowed the country in your eye, is this right?

RM: You're not exactly right, the scenery there is absolutely marvellous, I really soaked it up into my heart. But I restrict my photography mainly to people. I am not a specialist in landscape photography and I would have needed much more time for that. For portraying people I got out of the hotel early in the morning and walked around all day long, meeting a lot of people. So two weeks were enough for my project. For landscapes it is best to check out the places and return when the light is pretty. That usually takes much more time.

WPM: Any photographic project ?

RM: There are a lot of new projects I am planning right now. The next projects I am going to do are two reportages on a catholic convent and on a school for the hearing impaired.

WPM: Good luck !



WUWEI: Not to act. Rather than absence of action, it represents the Taoist ideal which refers to the natural command of the Dao. To act without discrimination and ulterior motive. This kind of spontaneity only causes action to answer a given situation. One can think that it is the action which initiates from void. The Taoist interpretations, subsequent to the classic period, expressd this concept by "quietude" and "spontaneity", which are some manifestations of Wu Wei and which go though the void of conscience, the absence of emotional excesses called "purity".

WuWei #1

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #2

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #3

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #4

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #5

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #6

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #7

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



WuWei #8

Michael Kern

<http://www.michael-kern.com>



webphotomag: China seems to be a subject forever fascinating, how do you see it?

Michael Kern: At a time when we keep this superficial image of one of the greatest economic powers in the world, China stands with the marks of a recent past loaded with serious social and cultural events.

Open to foreign investment, the country erects glass towers synonym of wealth, demolishing quarters that were historically popular, in a kind of "leap forward" towards the 2008 Olympics. Living witness, on each rebirth, the people see - with or without regrets - the train of popular fraternity be gone forever, and live modestly, working or not, proud to belong to this country, some for what it has been and others for what it becomes. Together, they watch the rich become rich while thinking about the future of their unique child and, out of necessity, keep the state of mind of who lives the present moment, here and now.

This spiritual evocation of the daily life find its definition in the Taoist concept of "wuwei", the Not Doing, emptiness of the conscience and absence of emotive excesses called "purity".

This is indeed the spiritual foundation of what constitutes the true character of China, not in renunciation or passivity in front of historic changes, but a way of being that is a pillar of millenniums of existence.

WPM: A spirit difficult to express with words, how do you go about expressing it with pictures?

MK: This feeling is a basis of reflection that lets me state and balance the search of our unspeakable difference with this deeply mystic country. The photographs constituting my research can be considered as nodes of significance, calling forth daily life in the construction of simple images, having a relationship of equivalence with the subject, not in the mechanic of an aesthetic message, in the assertion of a style ; but the cancellation of the relationship of authority between life and image, subjectivity and reality.

The quest for a correct distance being part in the continuity of a reflection about contemplation of our surroundings, as a mirror reflecting the poetry in a particular moment spent among mankind and creating a living memory of our times' loneliness'es.

I explore this working space, where at a given time it is not question of art at all and, at another time, it is question of only that.

WPM: I find that these last words apply well to photography in general! How do you see photography?

MK: In my case, it is to let myself be swallowed by the movement of life, not to try to grab it, just pass by, maybe: "a fresh vision, combined with an intelligent intuition" (W. Evans). It's not about inventing anything, simply about belonging to one's times.

WPM: It's exactly the impression that this panther gives me: as a viewer, I get the impression of being passing by and to see something fleetingly. But then you could also say it's only a blurry shot. What would you say to someone who would want to understand these pictures without managing to?

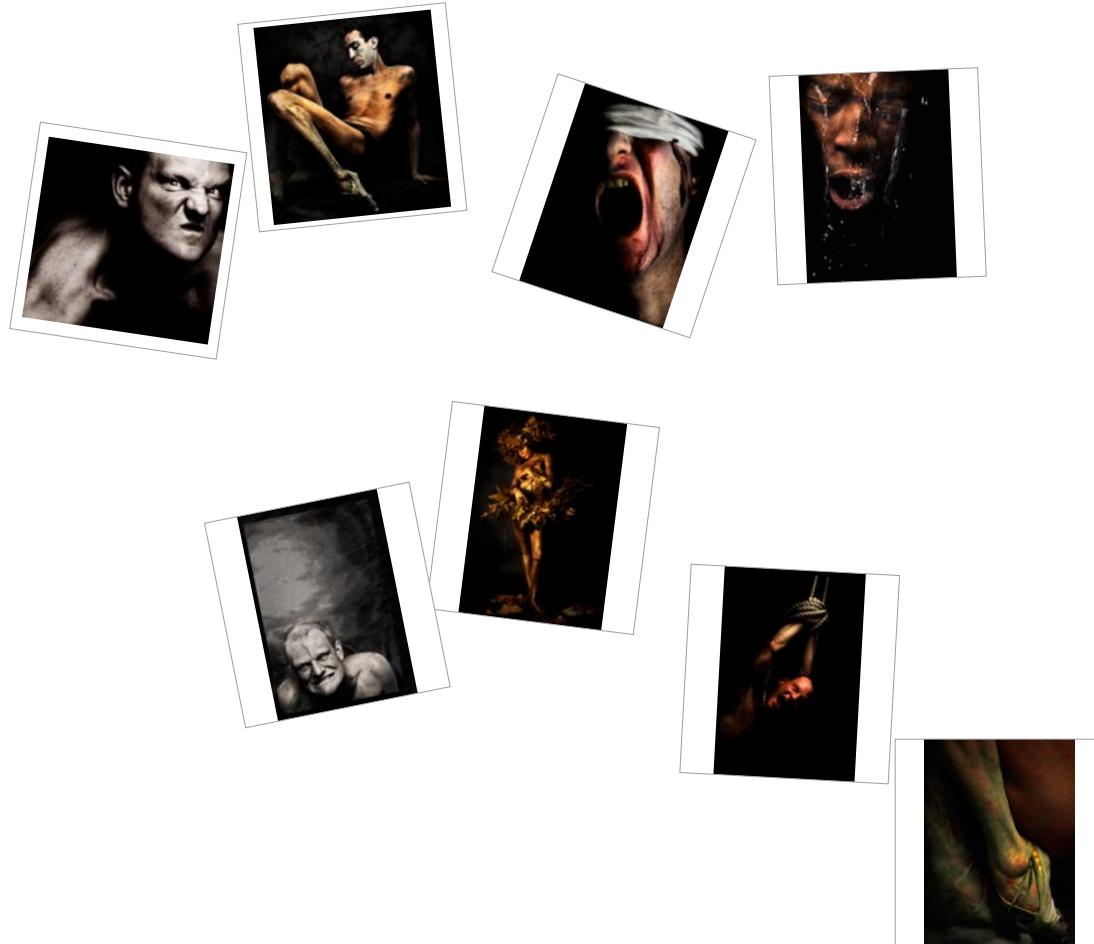
MK: Wu Wei might be translated as *corner of the eye...* What creates an echo in me will be different for someone else, but it all belongs to a collective sphere, a common sense, maybe do we have to accept to close our eyes to see clearly...

Love and Death

and other work

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>



"I often think that the night is more alive and more richly colored than the day."

Vincent van Gogh

Man Story of You - 1

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkowalik.co.uk>





Inside

Piotr Kowalik

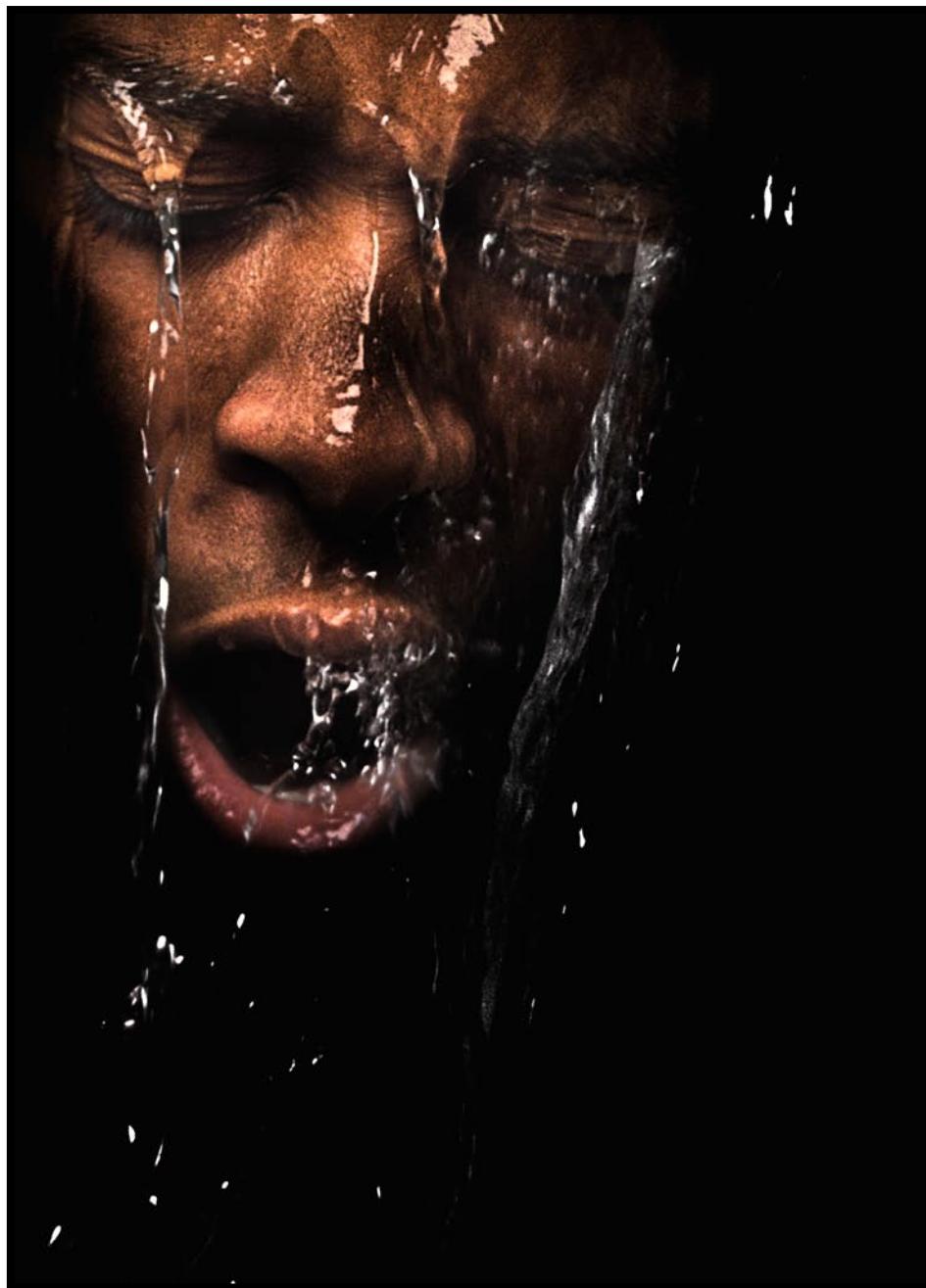
<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>

Faces of War

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkowalik.co.uk>





Tomas

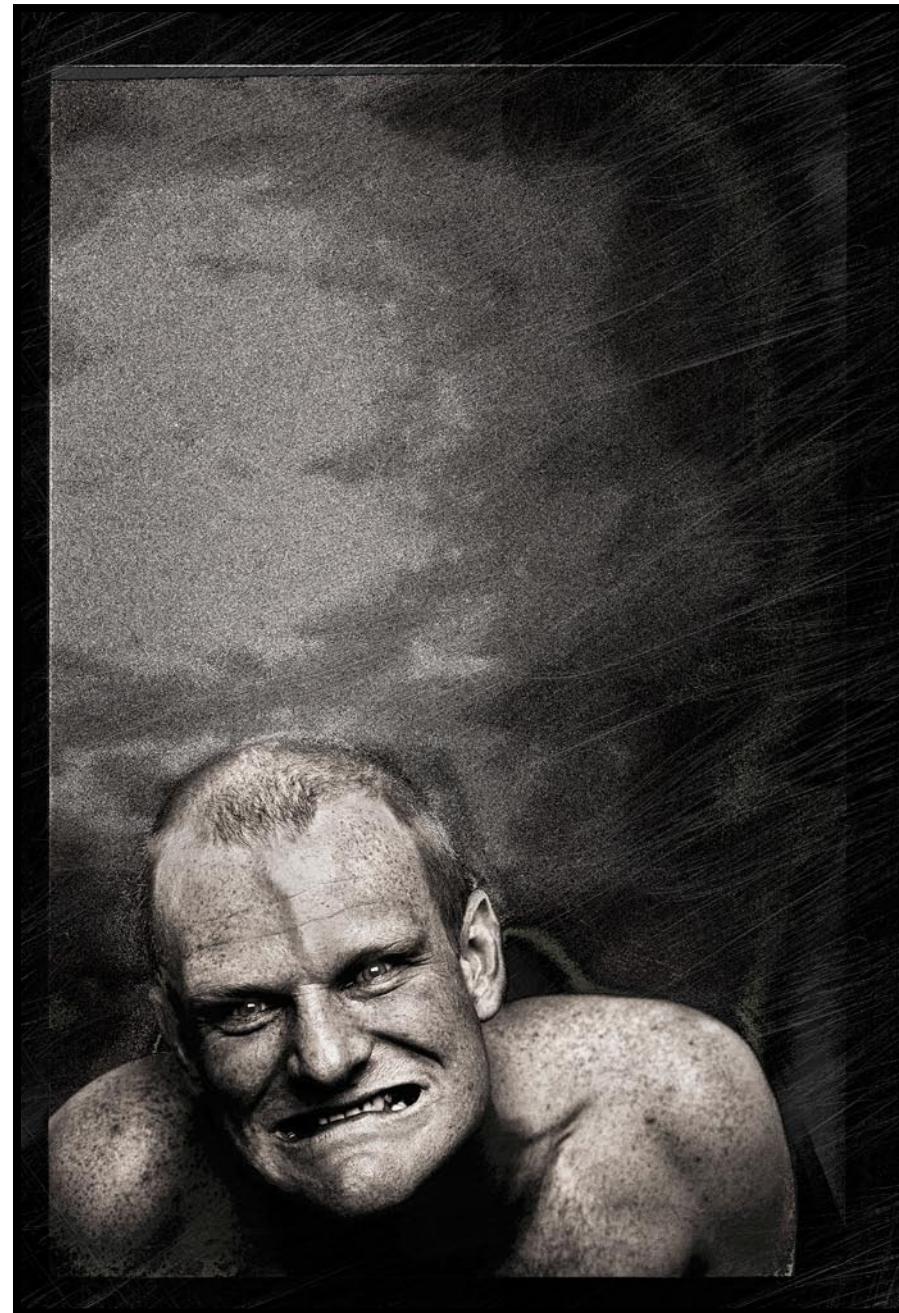
Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>

Man Story of You - 2

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkowalik.co.uk>





Autumn Lady

Piotr Kowalik

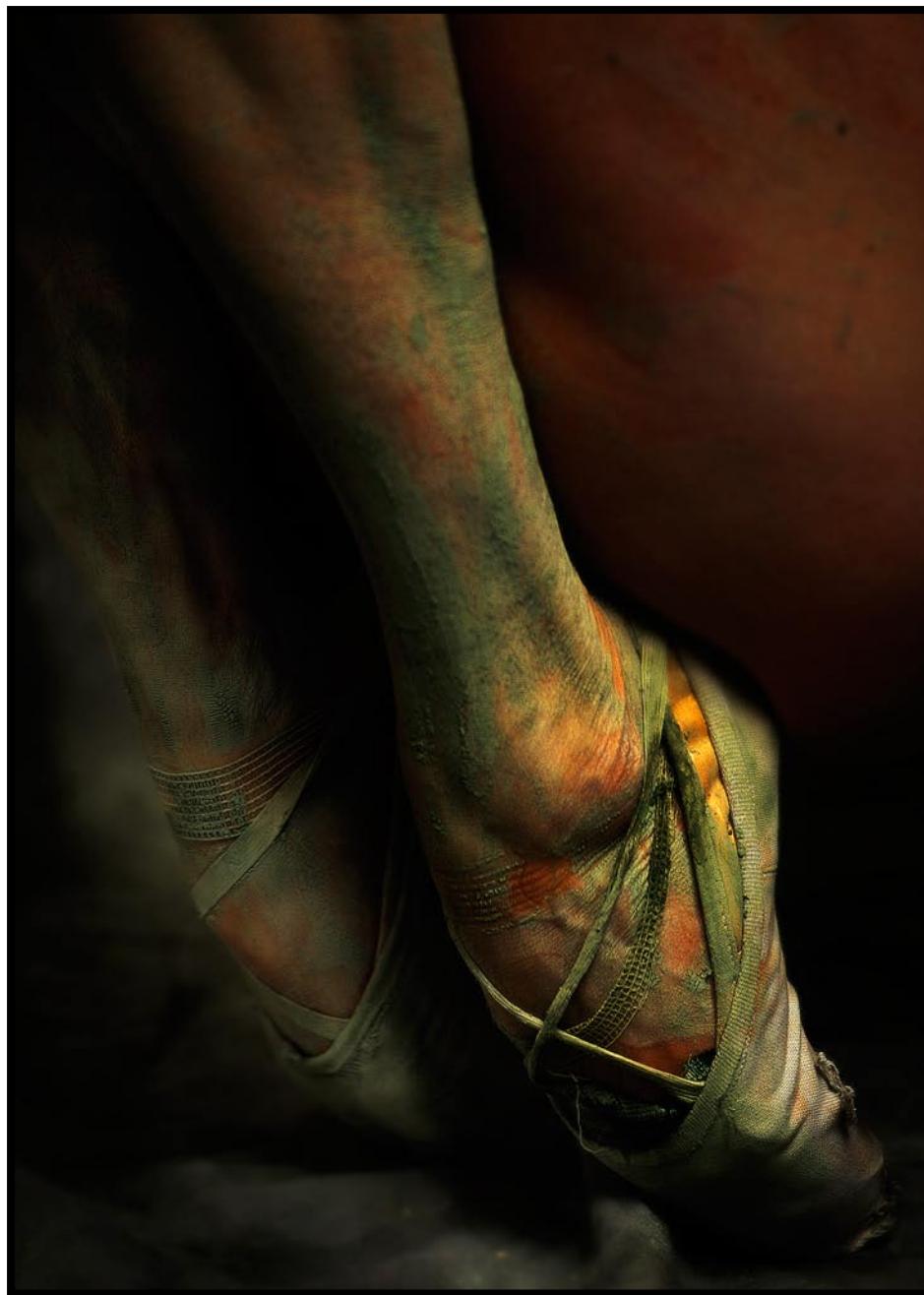
<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>

The Keeper

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>





Dancing shoes

Piotr Kowalik

<http://www.piotrkwalik.co.uk>

webphotomag: What's photography for you?

Piotr Kowalik: In my case, there is a simple answer which fully covers my approach : PASSION

WPM: Looking at your work makes me think of theatre and more precisely of *La Comedia del Arte*: the pain and cruelty displayed here are masks, aren't they?

PK: I guess you are right... I think I use expressions, emotions and behaviours as alter ego, often searching for other dimension in oneself. The true self often is different form the reality and hides deeply. There actually is a more direct use of masks in one of my series IDENTITY:

http://www.photo.net/photodb/photo?photo_id=2361567
http://www.photo.net/photodb/photo?photo_id=2361272

http://www.photo.net/photodb/photo?photo_id=2373622

The first image represents elements of choice and hope. The character wants to leave all his past behind him. He is about to make a decision of Who he wants to become today. Use of warm colours is like an introduction to the second image which appears COLD. The choice has been made. White represents good, dark is about evil in him .

The character sits facing right, which indicates the time direction, white masks looks into the future, all that was bad has been left in the past. Still, no matter what we try to pretend we carry our real identity with us. The black mask is with him all the time.

The Last image, the element of confusion. The essential thing is the title : a man and three rooms.

WPM: Your latest work («the awakening») seems to go more towards humour, while still questioning life, where are you headed?

PK: It is interesting that you have noticed the series. The images are something new. Both in my own photography and to what I have seen from other photographers .

The series comes with an essay. The idea behind it was to create triptych which would be working as stand alone as well as a story :

When does a nightmare become reality? What is actual and what is imagined? Is our Destiny under our dictate or are we subject to predestination?

This scene is multi-layered. It shows the figure, alone, making important decisions in his life. His move brings «Check Mate». He feels he's winning but the reflection opposite in the mirror proves that he's not! The next layer reveals chess play fantasy - something is odd regarding the pieces on the board some pieces are missing! On the closer inspection they appear to all be the same colour - or are they?

Look more deeply - is it not revolution that is occurring on the board? Self destruction is reflected and events take on a twist of fate.

There is great diversity in dreams, channelling the dreamer though a labyrinth of fear and phobias with anxiety perching on the sleeping, waking moment.

We are in the restaurant in the very short night-

shirt feeling totally insecure. The cheese board has become enlarged and upon it, human beings.

The figure has passed from one scene to this, perhaps a gateway for the character to escape - or is it a time loop? Perhaps his alter ego is urging him to wake up! In the background does the chef sense the impending tragedy or is he afraid of what he has cooked?

Time is being served: a prisoner or time running out like the grim reaper the maitre d' presides the question - Who are the chess pieces? What really is the state of play - surely people managing people which begs the question - Are we in sole charge of our destiny?

Another avenue of destiny showing and linking certain symbols from the other shots. Perhaps self action gone too far - a frightening factor being faced with the image - to thine own self be true! The biblical allegory of John Baptist or Goliath.

When seeing the mirror it perhaps reflects the figure's life at its begging but the final move of the chess piece shows that his time has run out - his dream has become a nightmare reality. We start alone and finish alone and our greatest fear is facing - who we really are!

WPM: Thanks Piotr, it's odd that we've spent the whole of this page talking about pictures we don't show here and that it still feels like we've learned a lot about the ones presented in the preceding pages.

In the next issue...

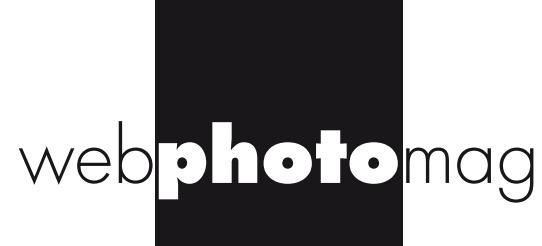
More photographers... If you're a photographer and want to be featured in these pages, send us a little e-mail!

More features... If you run a gallery or an exhibition and think we can mention your current events, you're right! Send us a little e-mail!

More pages... More photographs to enjoy and universes to discover. If you know about some work you would like to see featured in these pages, send us a little e-mail!

jmuffat@webphotomag.com

More readers... Let us know what you like, don't like, would like. Tell us what you expect from a magazine like webphotomag !



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