

Evolution of a Creative Vision in a Digital Environment.
Douglas D. Prince, 2005

My creative evolution in photography is driven by my observations, my response to the environment, seeing things, and a need to manifest this vision into a tangible form. Another motivation is my curiosity about image processes and how these processes affect my perceptions.

Of all the fine art media that I studied in college, photography resonated with my creative spirit and has become a life affirming pursuit. I've been working to build a personal vision where craft and content fuse, teaching me to see the world photographically.

Photography is the tool I use to search my environment. For me, the medium is as important as the content in making an image and it is an integral part of the image making process. I have explored traditional and alternative processes with the same passion that I've explored my environment.

Whether I'm working with the camera, in the darkroom, or on the computer, I'm looking for juxtapositions, relationships and transformations that create new perceptions, fostering an insight into the elementary nature of things. I strive to make images where the ordinary is elevated to the extraordinary. I'm looking for things that I haven't seen before.

Since this is a statement to be posted on my web site, I think it appropriate to give attention to the impact of the digital medium on my work. I have chosen to address the processes rather than my intentions or the content of the images. I assume the content is self-evident in the images, if not, my writing about it will not likely make it apparent.

Working in a digital media has impacted my photography in a number of areas. As a pre-digital photographer I was interested in expanding the creative process beyond the camera and straight print, into the darkroom and manipulated images; such as, the early work in the 1960's: multi-negative prints, film collages, and photo-sculptures. That same push to expand the creative potential of image making has lead me to appreciate the possibilities of digital image management. The vastness of images available and the facility with which they can be manipulated and combined makes the digital processes a most responsive and intuitive process for me.

In addition to the digital image processing, I have come to embrace the digital environment both as an image resource. Searching the world of digital images, via the web or scans of objects and books, is at this time for me, much the same process as exploring the "real" environment with a camera. Although the world of pre-existing images is

two dimensional and static, it is greatly expanded in volume, speed and access to options. I find searching this area as exciting as exploring with my camera was in the past. In both realms, I have found the quest for a basic transformative vision to be constant.

Digital imaging has also had a subtle and profound impact on the evolution and growth on my creative process. Digital imaging has offered advances in several developmental areas. Such as the freedom of ideas to evolve, flow, grow with few restraints and limitations of process. I enjoy the responsiveness to ideas, the ability to work in unfinished-draft stages, to revisit, reconsider, and to rework the earlier stages.

An important breakthrough for me has been the freedom to pursue new ideas outside pre-determined constructs. An early, important motivation has been a quest for a unified vision. Like the physicist searching for a unified theory, I was looking for the ability to transform everything I saw into a significant image. Of course, while a source of creative energy, this objective has always eluded me. Digital imaging has lead me to discover that the answer to this quest is more in the form of a diversified theory of seeing.

Digital technology has had a democratizing effect on image production. The inkjet output on paper has reached a level where high quality, archival pictures are easily accessible to photographers at a reasonable cost. At the same time, I have also reached the understanding that images can also exist as originals in the digital form. That is, the digital image is the original and not just a step in the process in order to make a paper print.

This idea of a digital/original doesn't fit within the gallery/museum paradigm of collecting, exhibiting, and preserving unique, physical objects. However, the digital/original images are compelling because they are so widely accessible at little cost, no framing or shipping or admission.

I appreciate the irony that such a digital, scientific medium would prove to so responsive and stimulating to my visual, creative, analogical processes.