

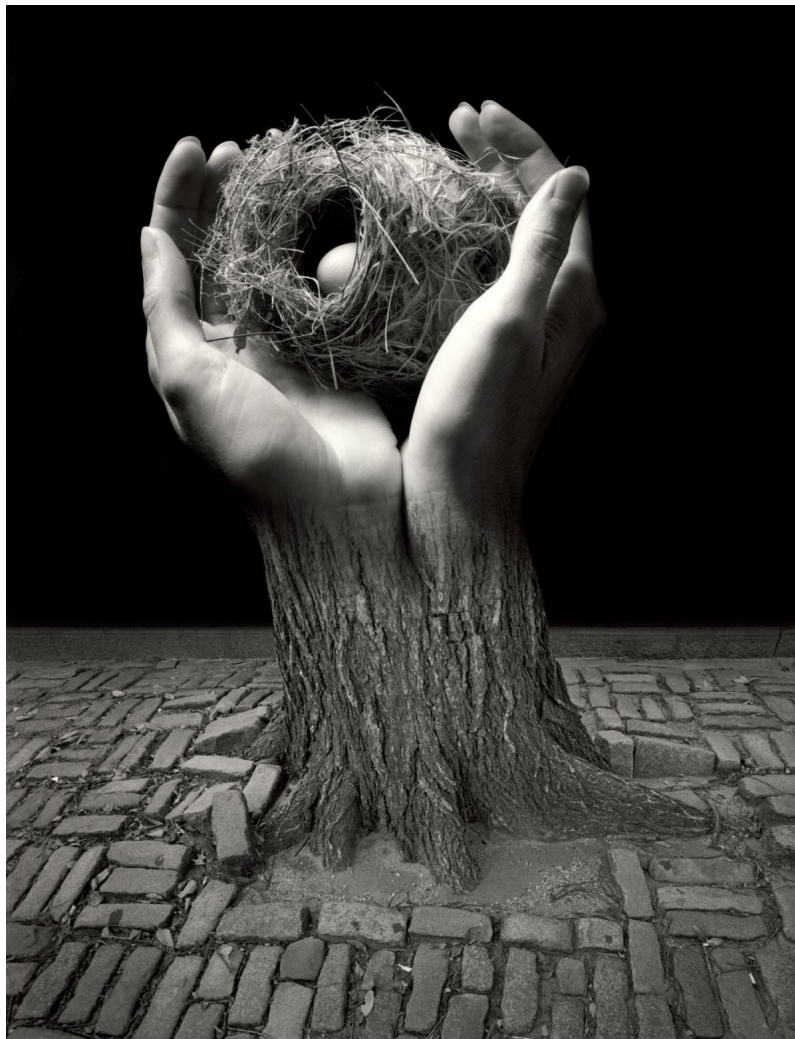
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Select Contemporary and Vintage Photography

Jerry Uelsmann **Process and Perception**

"It is my conviction that the darkroom is capable of being, in the truest sense, a visual research lab; a place for discovery, observation and meditation."

Jerry Uelsmann



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Journey Into Night, 2006

The response to last week's missive was rewarding. Thanks to those of you who wrote to us. As Janet wrote in her responses, I was reluctant to write about my father, thinking it might be *too personal*. Instead, so many of you responded with your own stories and memories. They were very moving and we thank you for sharing.

Please know that your notes mean so much to us and have motivated us to continue with these talks. We hope that these texts will lead to a deeper look into the artists, processes, issues, and philosophies presented. These are not meant to be lectures but informative emails. As there is no real substitute for seeing prints in person at museums and galleries, we look forward to the days when that, too, will be available.



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Untitled, 1981

Today we will focus on one of the great artists of the 20th/21st century. Proud to consider him a long time friend and colleague, Jerry Uelsmann, through his artistic work and his teaching, created and furthered an area within the photographic oeuvre that is solely his own. Going back to 19th century ideas and mastering various darkroom and exposure techniques, Uelsmann has been able to bring the ideas that drove the Surrealist movement into photography. He does this not by photographing per se, but by creating finished photographic compositions that are made first in his mind, created from his psyche. Jerry calls his process “Post Visualization” making his finished photographs from several negatives already taken - by studying his proof sheets and negatives and merging them to portray his thoughts and inspirations.

In our current times the word “Original” has been claimed by many, but few, especially in the arts, have attained that title in the truest meaning of the word. Jerry Uelsmann is such an artist.

Before we look at his work and hear from him (through the magic of technology), let's take a few minutes to familiarize ourselves with the predecessors of his technique, who were both solving 19th century technical problems and translating them into new image-making.



Gustave Le Gray (1820 - 1884)
The Great Wave, Sète, 1857
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The silver iodide emulsions of the late 19th century were overly sensitive to the blue rays of the spectrum. Since blue is predominant in the sky, the skies were often overexposed and cloudless. You see this result in many 19th century landscapes – a well-exposed foreground landscape with a white sky. A solution to solve this exposure problem was to produce two negatives, one exposed for the earth (often the foreground) and one for the sky. Thus the two negatives were masked and both printed on a single piece of paper. This technique came to be called “Combination Printing”, and is exemplified by the work of Gustav Le Gray in his dramatic seascapes of the period.



Oscar Gustav Rejlander (1813–1875)
Two Ways of Life, 1857
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

The Swedish photographer, Oscar Rejlander, while working in England, perfected this idea of combining negatives to an extreme and produced this monumental combination print, *The Two Ways of Life*. This was created by combining 30 separate negatives. The final print took him six weeks to produce and measured 31x16 inches. The print

was exhibited in the Art Treasures Exhibition in Manchester, England, 1857.



Henry Peach Robinson (1830 - 1901)

Fading Away, 1858

The Royal Photographic Society at the National Media Museum, Bradford, United Kingdom

Henry Peach Robinson, primarily a painter and etcher, took up photography in England in 1852. As Beaumont Newhall wrote in his history, “*he made this print showing a dying girl attended by grief-stricken parents*”. The print was made from five different negatives. Robinson stated that the principal model “*was a fine healthy girl*”. His intent was “*to see how near death she could be made to look*”.

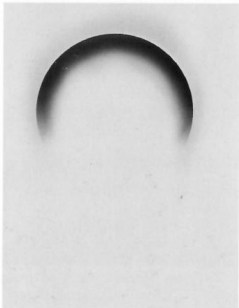
The public was outraged. They felt tricked and manipulated. No such criticism was ever directed at a painter. This alerts us that photography was already considered “a truthful” medium. This period in time was a crucial one; the camera in the hands of artists was beginning to express thoughts and ideas, not necessarily a representation of reality.

These artists, ideas, and Uelsmann’s study of art history began to percolate in his mind and shaped his artistic expression. With the encouragement of a select group of teachers and curators, Jerry has enhanced and enchanted us with his work for over 50 years.



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Untitled, 1987

There are numerous monographs of Jerry Uelsmann's work that have been produced the world over in many languages. One standout is his 1985 publication, *Process and Perception*, the University Presses of Florida. In this volume, he takes us into his darkroom and deconstructs many of his well-known images. The book, like his work, is inspirational and gives us a rare insight into his image-making process.



This print involved two negatives plus a metal template with a die-cut hole in it, used as a third negative in the enlarger. In one enlarger I placed the boat negative and blocked below the enlarger lens with a piece of cardboard so that it faded off into white. In a second enlarger, the sky negative was blocked below the lens so it also faded off with a soft edge into light.

In a third enlarger the metal template with the hole was placed in the negative carrier; below the enlarger lens I blocked with a piece of cardboard in a curved shape that created a soft edge in the interior of the sphere. When it was printed on top of the sky area it introduced the sphere-like shape in the sky.

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Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Untitled, 1982

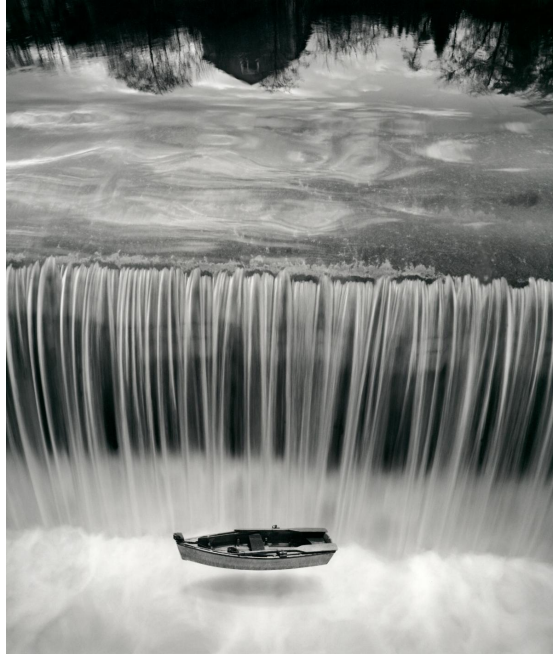
Today's videos include a lecture that Jerry delivered at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2012, as well as a brief visit to his darkroom where he demonstrates his printing technique.



In the video, Jerry spends much time discussing one of his mentors, Minor White. To discuss Minor White peripherally is a disservice to him as an artist and to his many notable contributions to our medium. I intend to devote a future mailing to Minor and two other of his students/protégés, Walter Chappell and Paul Caponigro.



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Meditation Mystery, 2001



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Untitled, 1997



Jerry Uelsmann (b. 1934)
Untitled, 1982

NEWS FLASH

Thanks to Andra, at long last, I now have a personal website devoted to my work!

www.davidscheinbaum.com

Over the last many years people have asked for my website. Up until now I replied, “I don’t have one”. Please check it out, and if you have any comments, I would be pleased if you would share them with me. Over time, I will include more new work

and articles. I hope you will enjoy it. Stay tuned, Janet's website is next! THANK YOU ANDRA xo.

We look forward to seeing you soon. Please stay safe and healthy.
With all best regards, Janet, David and Andra

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