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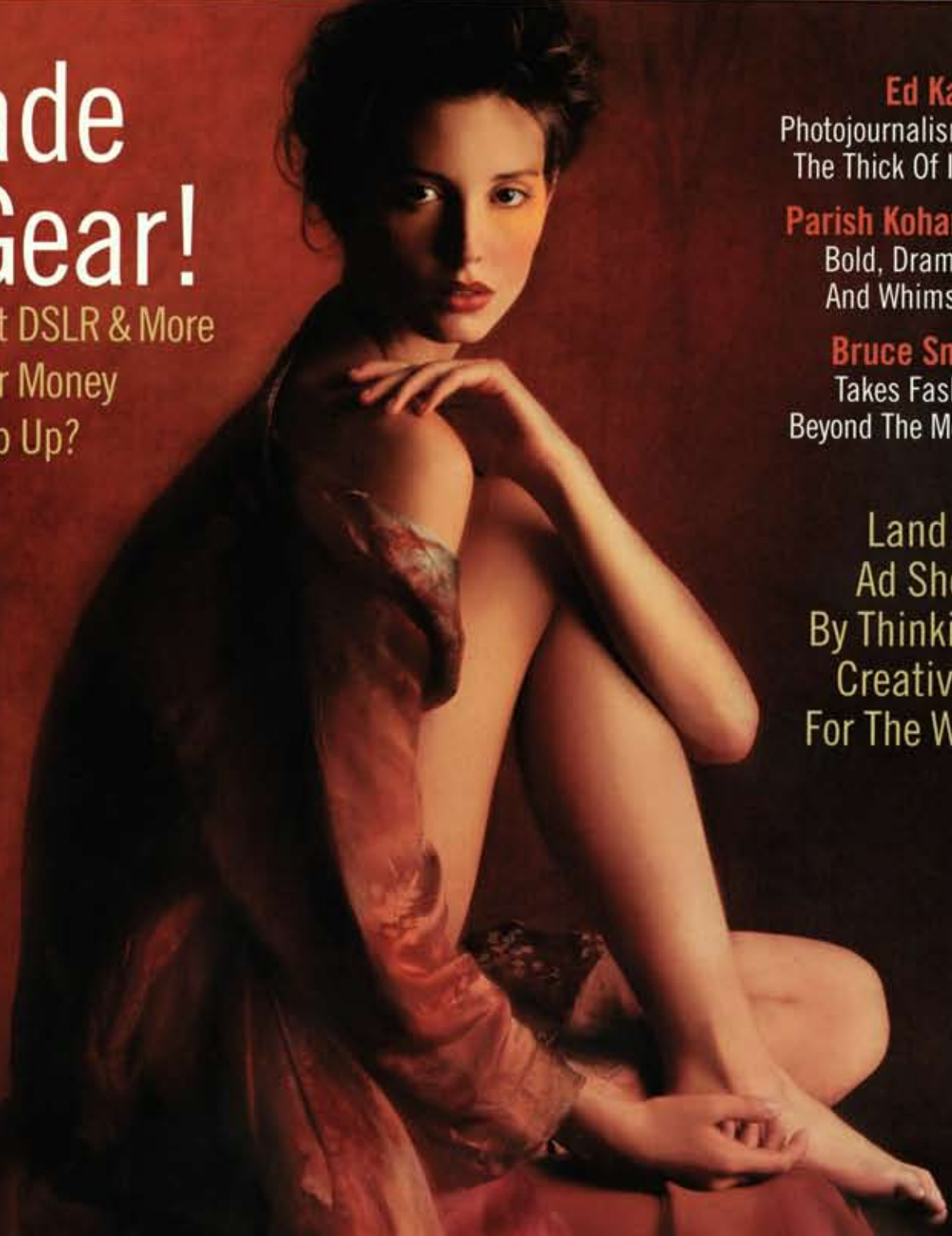
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Vision To Visuals

Light, Ritual,
Journey And Passage

Jo Yarrington's work is characterized by a perpetual shifting of image and light that alters the relationship between the building and the viewer

By Baldev Duggal



Jo Yarrington is a photographer, but to use the word "photographer" isn't fair. I'd like to think of her as a visual artist. And as a visual artist, Yarrington has always been interested in the liminal places, that is, areas of the mind or reality that blur definition, that exist somewhere in between the threshold of the physiological and the psychological.

Yarrington has been working on a series of sited projects in which her photographs are housed in the windows and glass facades of galleries, museums and sanctuaries. Her pieces are transparent and usually quite large in scale, which allow the images to take on mythological proportions. This is all the more impressive because she considers herself a low-tech girl, shooting only 35mm film and scanning the negatives here at Duggal for large-scale output.

Her works include installations at the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Wash.;



Jo Yarrington

the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park in Lincoln, Mass.; the Bezirk Christuskirche in Koln, Germany; and The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Conn.

Yarrington is one of five artists who was invited to submit proposals for the restoration of the H. H. Ellis Technical High School in Danielson, Conn. If accepted, her project will incorporate her imagery into the school's architecture and grounds beginning in 2008.

During our conversations, Yarrington explained to me that "this project specifically parallels the emphasis and visual direction of my primary studio practice, as well as my own general focus and beliefs. My interest in light, ritual, journey and passage, the linking of interior sites with exterior space, a poetic interweaving of nature and culture, and a lifelong passion for teaching and learning clearly align with the actual and metaphoric resonances of H. H. Ellis Technical High School."

The type of imagery Yarrington will create is beyond poetic in its elegance and simplicity. "Capturing the energy

and movement of students' hand gestures as they discuss ideas, shape objects and interact with each other will be the basis for the images photographed and filmed in extreme close-up."

Regarding her proposed installation, she said that the work presented as imagery on the windows "is a perfect mediation between interior and exterior on many levels—architecturally, culture to nature, interiority of thoughts and responses to exterior reality. The work mediates the viewers perception of what's outside of the space, a flickering visually between image and landscape or even the melding of the two."

In describing her work further, Yarrington explained that "altered, layered and ignited by sunlight, the work often seems to push outward, releasing its physicality and suggesting something just beyond its glass skin. At other times, projections of the images caused by the sunlight's movement around the architecture slowly change by the way they color and shape the interior space. The passing observer is caught in this inward spill of altered



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light, becoming a participant in an active ritual. This perpetual shifting of image and light alters the relationship between the building and the viewer. A transformation on many levels seems possible as the interior and exterior fold into one another, and the boundary between the two begins to dissolve."

I've previously discussed how artists need to remove their work out of the museum and put it into the public sphere. In thinking through the concept for this sited installation, Yarrington understands from her previous projects that museum windows are never scheduled to be used in an installation, and this work, for the school, takes advantage of that.

Our biggest design problem, therefore, was to create a way in which Yarrington's photographic images could be scaled from a 35mm negative to the demands of an architecturally grand design. We needed to create a product that would be more durable than a DuraClear, use material that wouldn't fade with prolonged exposure to sunlight and one that we could fabricate for the exacting tolerances as required by the architect. After a lot of experimentation, we created a new product called DG Glass. Each of the photographic glass panels will be made of DuraClear, a UV-coated, photo-archival transparent film, and encapsulated in DG Glass, a product currently in use for permanent photo-based exterior windows.

In order to translate Yarrington's concept from the spiritual to the physical, my associate Jose Vargas, whom Yarrington has worked with for many years, repeatedly travels to the site to measure the existing structure of the building. We then scan Yarrington's artwork at the highest possible resolution, creating test prints of the artwork to full scale on one whole window. We'll even print a lightbox version of the scan and present it to her, asking for her feedback. If it's not right, we'll return to the drawing board, changing the color, contrast and density, and do it

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again. We understand that the process takes time, acknowledging that it's not something that can be created in a day.

It's our clients, especially our fine-art clients, who push us to the nth degree to solve complicated design challenges. When we take on these projects, only two things can happen: We'll either succeed, or we'll learn from the project and apply what we've learned to the next project.

It's exciting to come up with new ideas to make our clients' projects transition from concept to physical reality. Most artists and lab technicians find it intimidating to fill a large wall window with an image, but we can. By working together with manufacturers of scanners, printers and film technologies, and most importantly, our fine-art clients, we always strive to push the technology that they've created to new levels. We do all of this to help artists like Yarrington effectively communicate their vision.

I always want to talk to the artist in order to get inside his or her mind and understand what makes him or her tick. I understand that artists are perpetually driven by a need to create and express an idea larger than life. Their concepts and ideas often present challenging visual communication problems, often beyond what current scanning and printing technologies are capable of producing. It's then when the excitement and pleasure in solving the problem begins anew. DPP

Baldev Duggal, president and founder of Duggal, has been innovating visual solutions for image-makers for more than 40 years. Credited with building and designing the industry's first dip-and-dunk processing machine, Duggal has maintained his status as a leader in the imaging business and is heralded for outstanding service by consumer and trade magazines alike. With digital capabilities reaching worldwide, his headquarters covers a block on West 23rd Street in New York City.