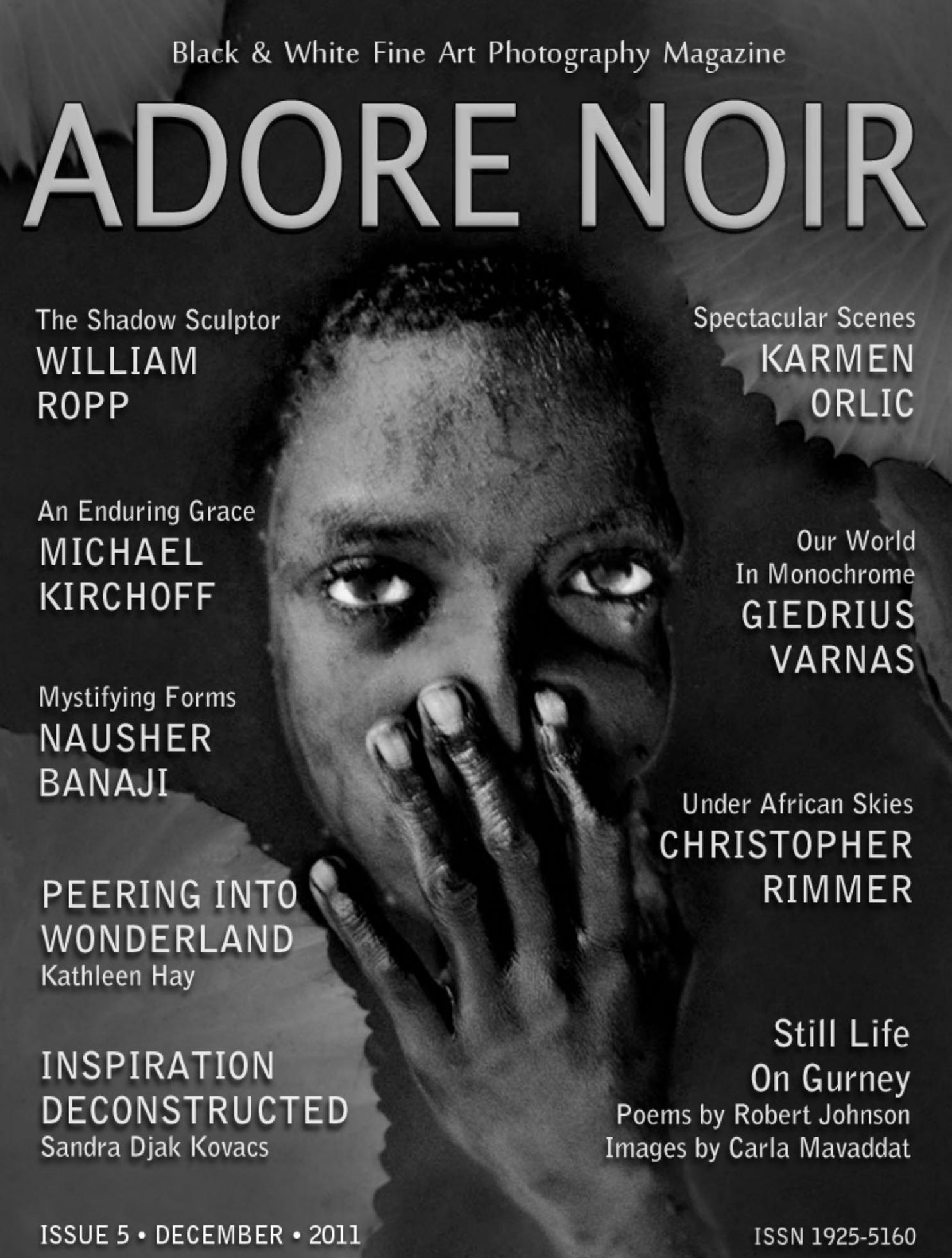


Black & White Fine Art Photography Magazine

ADORE NOIR



The Shadow Sculptor

**WILLIAM
ROPP**

Spectacular Scenes

**KARMEN
ORLIC**

An Enduring Grace

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ON THE COVER



WILLIAM ROPP

FEATURED

WILLIAM ROPP



"I trust in people and let them go where they want to in terms of defining my photos."

AN: Where do you live?

WR: Nancy, France.

AN: When and how did you get into photography?

WR: I was involved in the theater in 1999 and began to photograph actors. At twenty-five—with no real experience, I began to make my living from photography. I started to work with an agency. I was well paid and worked a few days a month leaving the rest of the month free.

AN: How would you describe your art?

WR: My photos speak for themselves. I do not want to use words or titles to describe them

as I do not want to guide people to define them in a particular way. Art critics define my work one way and certain people will define it differently. People are smart enough to get their own inspiration; I trust in people and let them go where they want to in terms of defining my photos.

AN: What inspires you?

WR: People inspire me. I can't imagine a picture without a human being. I was once asked to bring back a landscape photo only and found it impossible; I brought back a landscape with a human being in it! I am fascinated by the portrait. I try to really understand human beings. I find that the eyes are the entry to the soul and I dig as deep as I can.



AN: Your images have a very unique look to them. How do you achieve this?

WR: The shot has to speak to my soul. If you don't have a good shot none of the technology will assist you in creating it. I use the current technology such as Photoshop in the same way as I used the darkroom. Photoshop is used differently by photographers; you must be a photographer to achieve a beautiful print.

AN: What are your influences?

WR: Human beings. I really try to mentor young photographers. I started giving workshops about three or four years ago as I want to pass on the knowledge that I have, I want to see what they do. I say to my students that I will give them everything but they can never get the exact same results as me.

I want to give my students the tools to work and transform the knowledge I give into something personal for them. I tell them not to try and emulate me. In the beginning when I first started, I was painting murals and someone told me that I should check out other muralist's work as they have done it before me. I said that I don't want to check it out as I don't want to be influenced by it; my work was original. I try to find my own way and showcase my own personality and not have too many influences. I want the critics to find their own interpretations.

AN: What fascinates you most about photographing people?

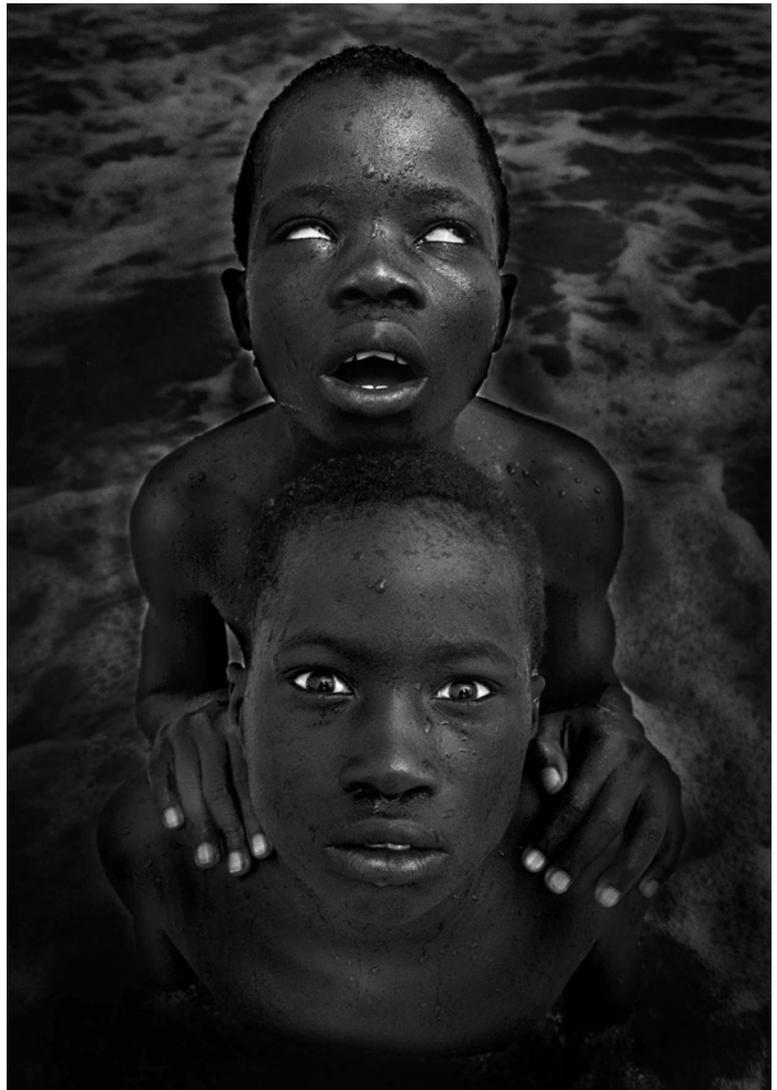
WR: If you want to get something from the soul you must get it

through the eyes. I tell my subjects to close their eyes and to get inside their most beautiful dreams, I use my camera as a machine to capture their dreams.

AN: Do you plan your shoots in advance or do you let things unfold as they may?

WR: I prefer to not plan, I would rather be surprised. I want to be moved. If you open your eyes and open your ears, you open your mind.

AN: Please tell me about a memorable experience you had while on a shoot.



WR: I was shooting in an orphanage in Russia and one of the orphans, a young girl of about ten, became enamored with one of the translators, a young woman. The young orphan held the translator's hand all day and when it was time to part the emotions were high; it was a hard and beautiful moving day.

AN: Do you have any current projects on the go?

WR: I am currently working on two books. Two

editors are working with the same set of pictures. There will be about eighty pictures in each book, one will be a small book in terms of scale, the pictures will be about 25 cm and the other will be large at about 70 cm. I love this idea.

I have two books that are already out which are in black and white. This time around they will be in colour.

My biggest show in France is coming up at the



Maison Européenne de la Photographie and it has been in the planning for five years.

AN: What is your final say?

WR: Be yourself as a creator, many photographers are afraid to be themselves. Don't let anyone influence you!

Joel-Peter Witkin is a famed photographer whose prints are quite expensive and he has now become my friend and we are doing a show together. He went from being my icon to my friend, this is amazing. ♥

See more at: williamropp.com

