

Traveling Alternative Portfolio - 2008

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The Portraits

It seemed like a good idea to include a picture of ourselves so as to be able to connect faces with names and work. However, I found the assignment challenging. I don't make digital negatives, and my only Photoshop program is Elements 2. However, the only recent picture I had of myself was a digital one taken at a family reunion this summer, so I decided to use it. The other picture is one my father took of me scanned from the original 2¼" negative. They were printed out on tracing paper. Cyanotype wouldn't be my first choice for a portrait, but that was what I was printing, so that is what you get. They're not great as portraits go, but you can get some idea of what I look like.

The Prints

This past spring, I was in a group show entitled "Water: Beneath the Surface." In addition to several skiagraphs (more watery looking than the ones in the last portfolio), I had a series of four cyanotypes. The blue made one think of water and the abstract patterns could be interpreted as whatever one wanted beneath the surface.

The "negatives" are actually enlarged lith positives made in the darkroom from 35mm black-and-white negatives. The images are close-ups of a glass paperweight. It is a clear glass dome with blue and white (and some yellow) swirls and bubbles inside.

When I was working on prints for the exhibit, I made some with gum (green shades) over cyanotype. While I liked the effect, I could see that it might be difficult to match all the prints in the series. I also printed just the cyanotype layer on light green paper. This gave a hint of a second color and made the printing much easier. This was how I made the prints for the exhibit. Three of the images are in the portfolio.

While I was playing around with green paper, I also tried some other colors, none of which I liked for the water exhibit. However, for this portfolio, I thought I would print the same negative on papers of various colors. Several of these are included here. All of these papers came from my father's old print shop. It is all at least 30 years old, and was bought for letter press printing not photography. It is certainly not archival by present day standards. Nevertheless, I have had fun seeing some of the different combinations. (After trimming the prints, I realized that since these are going to be mounted I should have kept some of the uncoated paper for you to see the color of the paper. I'll try to include some when I mount the prints for the portfolio.)