



Featured Artist: Jesse Burke

Jesse Burke doesn't have to venture far from home to find his photographic subjects. They are as near as family, friends, his back yard or a walk in the nearby woods with his young daughter.

"Work has always been personal to me," he says.

His photos are hard to pin down, a mix of disparate types—portraits, landscapes and still life, available light and flash, field and studio styles. His recurring themes are both personal and universal—life, love, nature, what it means to be a father and son.

Burke grew up in Connecticut, but was living in Tucson, Arizona, when he discovered photography in his mid-twenties.

"I took a photography course in community college and fell in love. I knew I found something I would stick with forever," he recalls. "I was a skate boarder and used photography to show people's faces and activities and what was happening in my life at the time. The camera was a perfect tool for me to think about what I was doing and capture the moment."

From community college he transferred to the University of Arizona, where he received his BFA degree, then moved on to the Rhode Island School of Design, where he earned an MFA.

Today he splits his time between teaching at the school, his fine art photography, editorial work for clients from "Men's Health" to "Marie Claire," and some commercial work

He began to develop his first body of work, "Intertidal," when he returned to his native New England, "and applied the same principles I used in Arizona to family in New England."



From "Intertidal"

An extended examination of the "incredibly fragile" idea of masculinity, according to Burke's artist statement about the work, "Intertidal" is, "an autobiographically driven investigation into [the] presence of vulnerability and sensitivity that acts as forces against this mythology of male dominance and strength....I photograph my life and the lives of the men in my social and family circles in an attempt to understand from where our ideas of masculinity originate."

Burke worked on "Intertidal" for about six years, until it was published as a book in 2009. But Burke continues working on it today, calling it, "a life project."

Burke went on to explore similar themes in two other projects. "Blind" explores male identity and, "man's

obsession with and innate calling to simultaneously dominate and embrace the natural world." "Low," examines, "the fragile lives of homeless men."

Until recently, Burke thought of this work as separate from family photos. But that changed when he and his daughter Clover took a road trip to photograph landscapes in Maine.

"On the road, I took pictures of her and realized that I had shaped the foundation for a project without thinking about it. The project is about a new chapter in my life. It became a look at who I am as a parent, but it is also connected to my former work about masculinity," he explains.

Burke has always worked alone, but in an unexpected twist, this project has become a collaboration.

"I'm a controlling person, but a big part of this project is letting go of that control. When you are dealing with a child, it's a different process. It forced me to let go," he says. "When I did, I found that magic happens. The photos that meant the most and looked the best, she had some control over, too."

Although he began shooting 35 mm black-and-white film, like most photographers, he shoots virtually all digital now, with a Canon 5D Mark 2 or Mark 3. "It's a matter of time and money," he says. AutumnColor handles all his printing for his numerous exhibitions and his collectors.

"Mark [Doyle] always makes sure that I am happy with the work, no matter what's involved. He really understands fine art and editions, so my collectors are happy and that means a lot to me," Burke explains.

"I trust him, I trust that he has my interests at heart 100% and I never question his decisions," he adds.

Just as collaboration is new to Burke, so is his enthusiastic embrace of Instagram photography.

"For me, it is the purest version of who I am as an artist. The tool is sharp, it exposes well enough to give me a picture that works, and it allows me to act very quickly and capture the moments, when the burden of a 'real' camera is unrealistic."

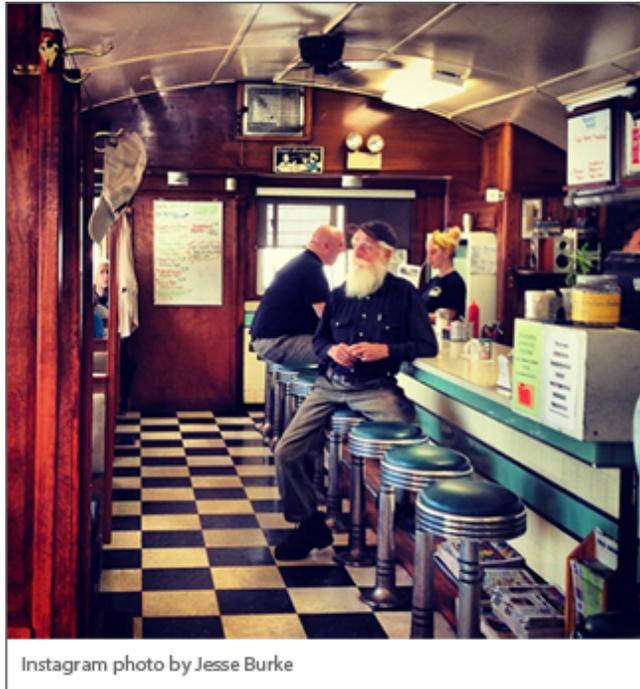
Instagram has enabled him to move away from his customary deliberate approach and be more "freewheeling," he explains. From the start, he decided he would post pictures that he considered good, no matter what the subject. The results have been surprising. Not only does Burke have some 1,300-plus followers, he's also landed jobs from the "New York Times Magazine" and "The New Yorker" magazine, "clients I just dreamed of."

News & Events

- A book by AutumnColor client Sharon Harper, "From Above and Below," has been published by [Radius Books](#). The book features ten years of her conceptual photographs and video stills exploring perception, technology and the night sky.

Sharon Harper's work is in permanent collections at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the New York Library, among others. "From Above and Below" is available in a trade edition as well as a limited edition that includes signed and numbered 11 x 14" color prints.

More of her work can be [viewed here](#), via the AutumnColor website.



- An exhibition of work by Dorina Molnar is showing at [the Vessels Gallery](#), 71 Thayer Street, Boston, through June 2. The exhibition, "Seeds from impermanence," features ceramic sculpture and photography from this AutumnColor client.

Dorina Moldar's work explores changing and evolving forms that are, "in a transition coming from somewhere, going to be somewhere for a while," according to her website. Her work has been featured at Southern New Hampshire University and numerous galleries throughout New England. More of work can be seen [on her website](#).

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