

# double exposure

## Photos to Inspire: Mark Berndt

By DE Contributor | Photos to Inspire | Oct 1, 2006

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Like many of us, Mark Berndt has been a taking pictures since he was a kid. He's now in his second round of photography as a career with about 20 years off to direct television commercials. But he never stopped shooting. "If it wasn't my business, I was doing fine art work for myself, but I was always making pictures, always had a darkroom, always carried a camera."

His primary interest is people. His environmental portraits celebrate people where they live and work, while his documentary narrative images capture the substance of human interaction. "As a director, I used to cast actors to play 'real people'. Today I love to meet REAL people, learn about who they are and what they do, and then work with them to make a meaningful and significant portrait". His current corporate work concentrates on photographing people working in the arts, education, science and music.



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Embracing digital imaging in 1993—first with post-production in Photoshop and Iris prints of his work (working with Mac Holbert at Nash Editions)—his digital capture evolved with Canon: starting with the EOS D30, then the D60, and finally the 1Ds. "The 1Ds and the Epson 9600 were my turning points for digital photography. I could shoot full-frame digital that was superior to film, and I could make superb, large, archival prints—color and B&W—in my new 'darkroom.' There was no turning back."



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Acknowledging rapid advances in the technology, Berndt is quick to point out that photography has been evolving like this since its inception. "Digital is only the latest 'means' to my real purpose as a photographer—to create compelling images that interpret, communicate, and engage. If I'm not using it for that, it's worthless."

As with his traditional work, Berndt's digital photography is about creating the final image. Pre-visualizing an image still includes the contributions of processing and post-production that imprinted his film work. "Digital hasn't really changed what we DO to our images, but it has profoundly changed the order in which we do them. We spot and retouch before we print; we choose B&W or color after we shoot. I do some of my lighting in post rather than on location, because I have more control, and because it's a more cost-effective

place to do that work."

The contribution made by nuanced post-production is often difficult for potential clients to recognize when they see a final image. That's a good thing, after all, since the success of the finished image should not involve any apparent effects, tricks or gimmicks. It should simply look right—and work. But without understanding its impact, clients often consider it an unnecessary or optional step rather than an integral part of the process. To help inform clients, Berndt offers "before & after" examples of finished images on his website.

**[To See a Gallery of Mark Berndt's Images, Click Here](#)**

"My 'darkroom' today is more of an asset in my creative process than ever before - because it's so much more powerful. And my images are better for it."

A commercial and fine art photographer, Mark Berndt is also on the faculty at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, CA where he teaches advanced digital photography and post-production. He also teaches at the [Julia Dean Photo Workshops](#), and offers workshops and private consultation to professional and amateur photographers in the US and Europe. In addition, Berndt is an accomplished digital printmaker, creating large-format fine art digital prints for a select clientele of photographers and artists.

To learn more about Mark Berndt's work, visit [www.markberndt.com](http://www.markberndt.com)



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#### Inside Mark Berndt's Camera Bag: ( OCTOBER, 2006 )

- **Cameras:** 2 Canon 5d bodies
- **Lenses:** Sigma: 14mm 2.8, 15mm 2.8 | Canon 28mm 1.8, 35mm 1.4L, 50mm 1.4, 85mm 1.2, 200mm 1.8L, 16-35mm 2.8L Zoom, 70-200mm 2.8L IS Zoom, 1.4x & 2x extender
- **Lighting:** Profoto 7b, Profoto ComPact 600+, 7' OctaDome3
- **Digital - on location:** 20" iMac G5, G4 powerbook, Firelite drives
- **Digital - studio:** Apple G5 towers and monitors, Epson 9600 & 4000 printers, Photoshop CS2 & Bridge, Extensis Portfolio, WiebeTech SATAdock

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