

THE LIPKA JOURNAL
PHOTOGRAPHS / STORIES / OBSERVATIONS
JOE LIPKA

APRIL FIRST 2022



WELCOME TO THE JOURNAL APRIL FIRST 2022

Verticals and Horizontals

There are vertical places and horizontal places. That just seems to be the way I look at the world. Your view may differ from mine, and I hope it does. It's quite dull when everyone thinks the same way.

This month we have both types of places. Mont St. Michel, off the coast of Normandy is definitely a vertical place. Once you get inside the city, the streets can barely fit three or four people abreast. The place is narrow and keeps going up toward the Abbey.

We found a little creek in Arizona that shares the same narrow vertical outlook, except that little creek is below grade. Not as large or as spectacular as Mont St. Michele, but it has its own place in the world of photography.

For the dedicated Landscape Photographer our world is horizontal. It may even expand beyond the single frame to encompass the panoramic or combination print. No matter if the frame is singular or multiple, the landscape image needs a great looking sky to be complete.



Looking Up

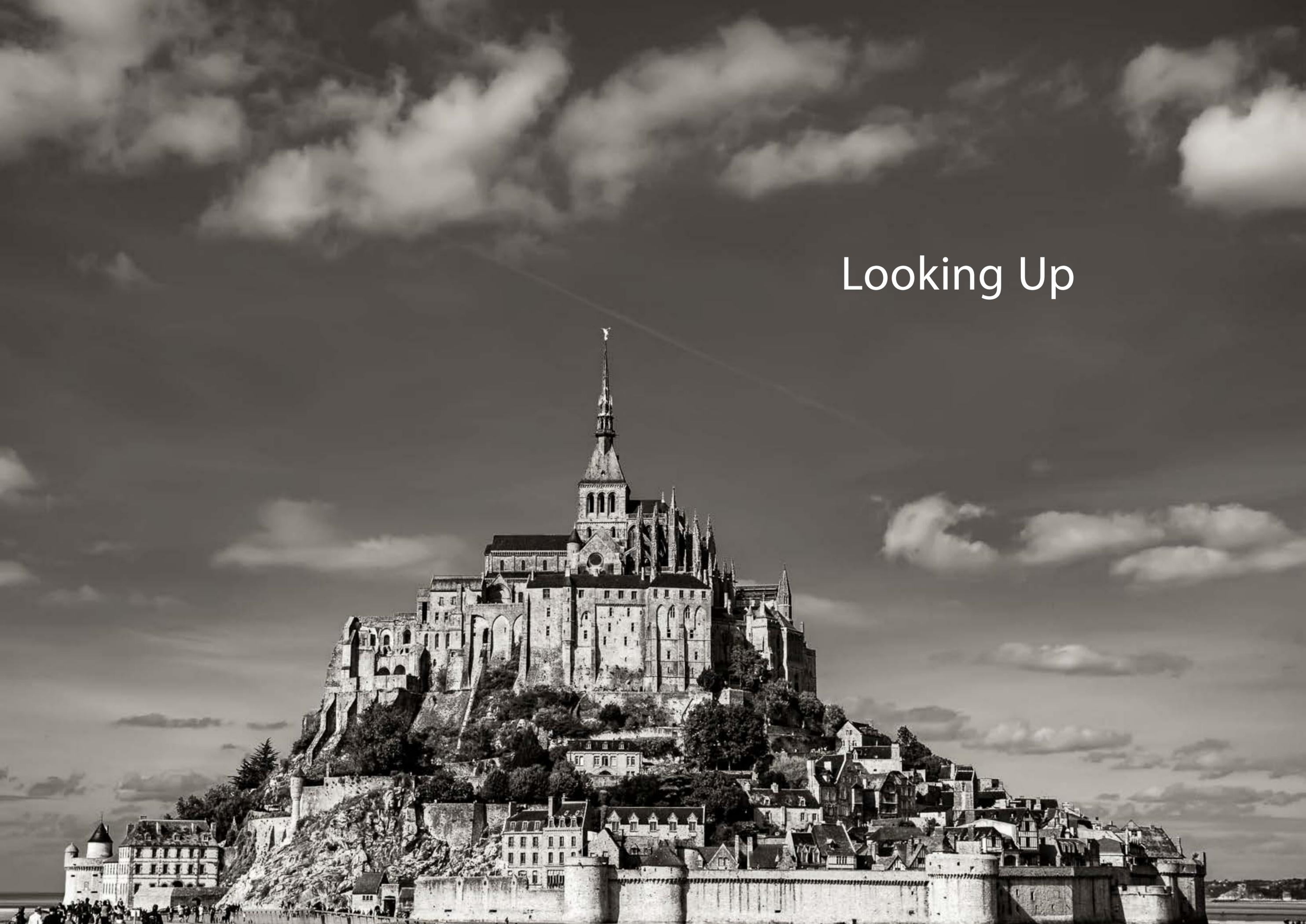


Little Creek



The Sky's the Limit

Looking Up

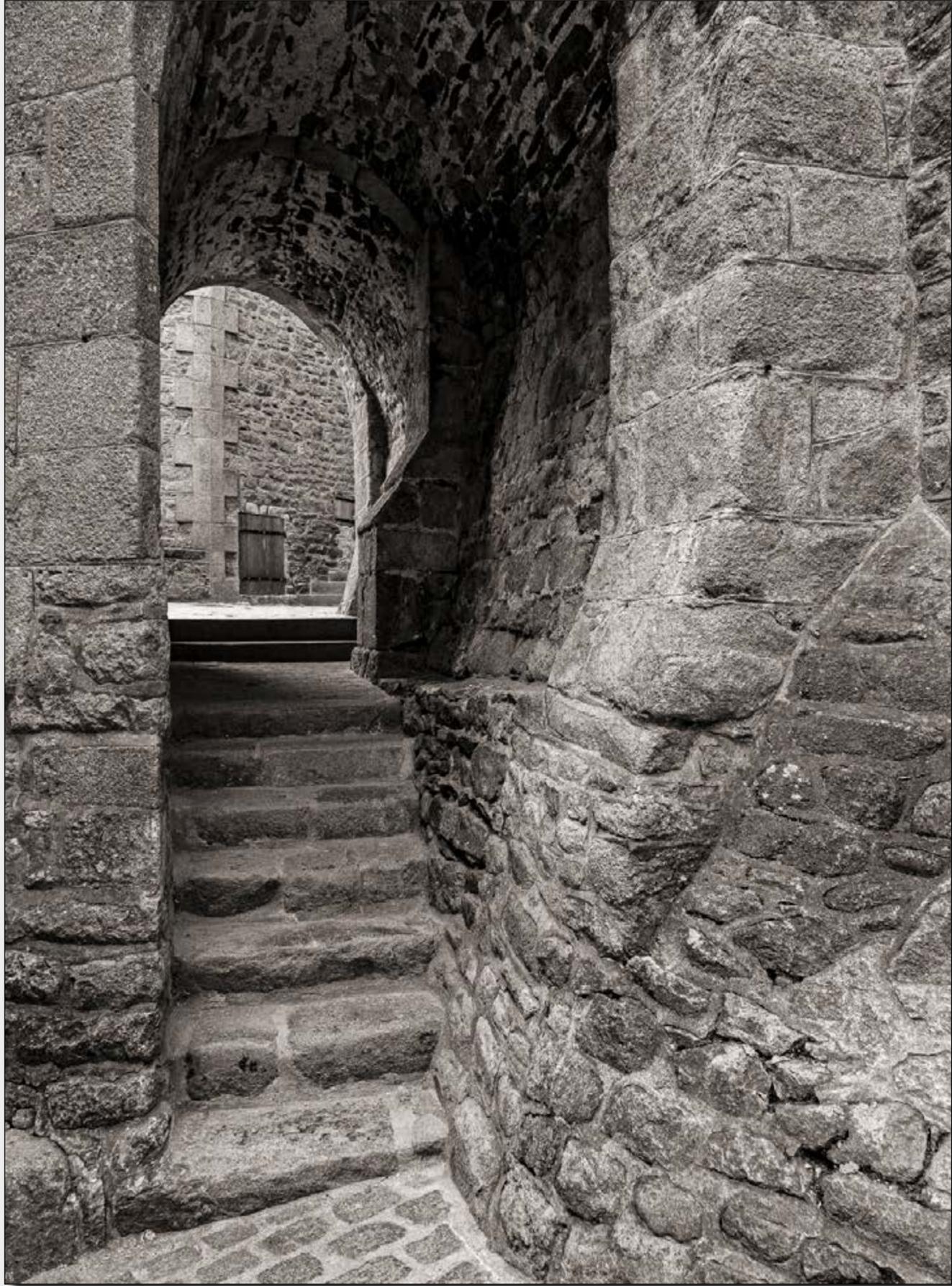


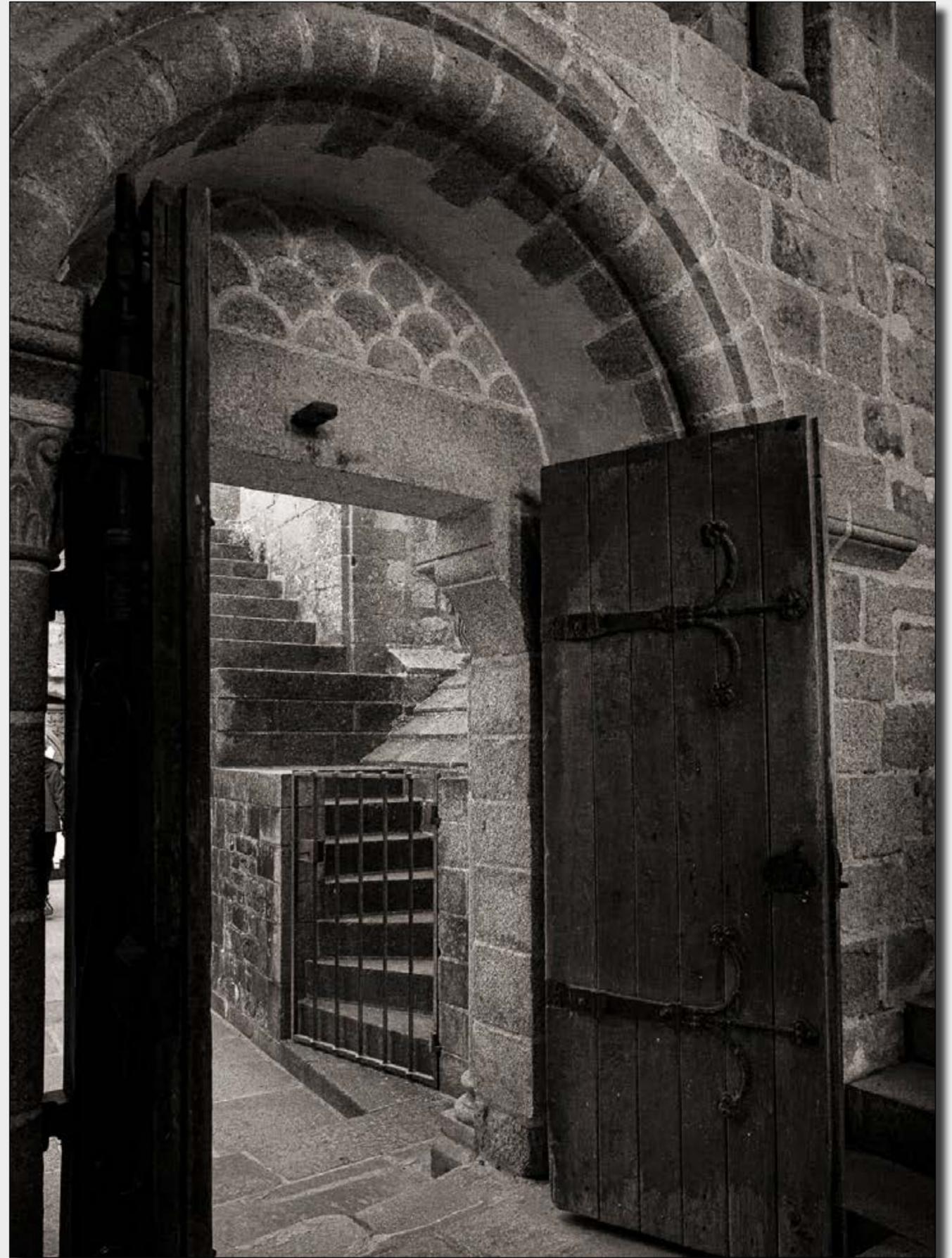
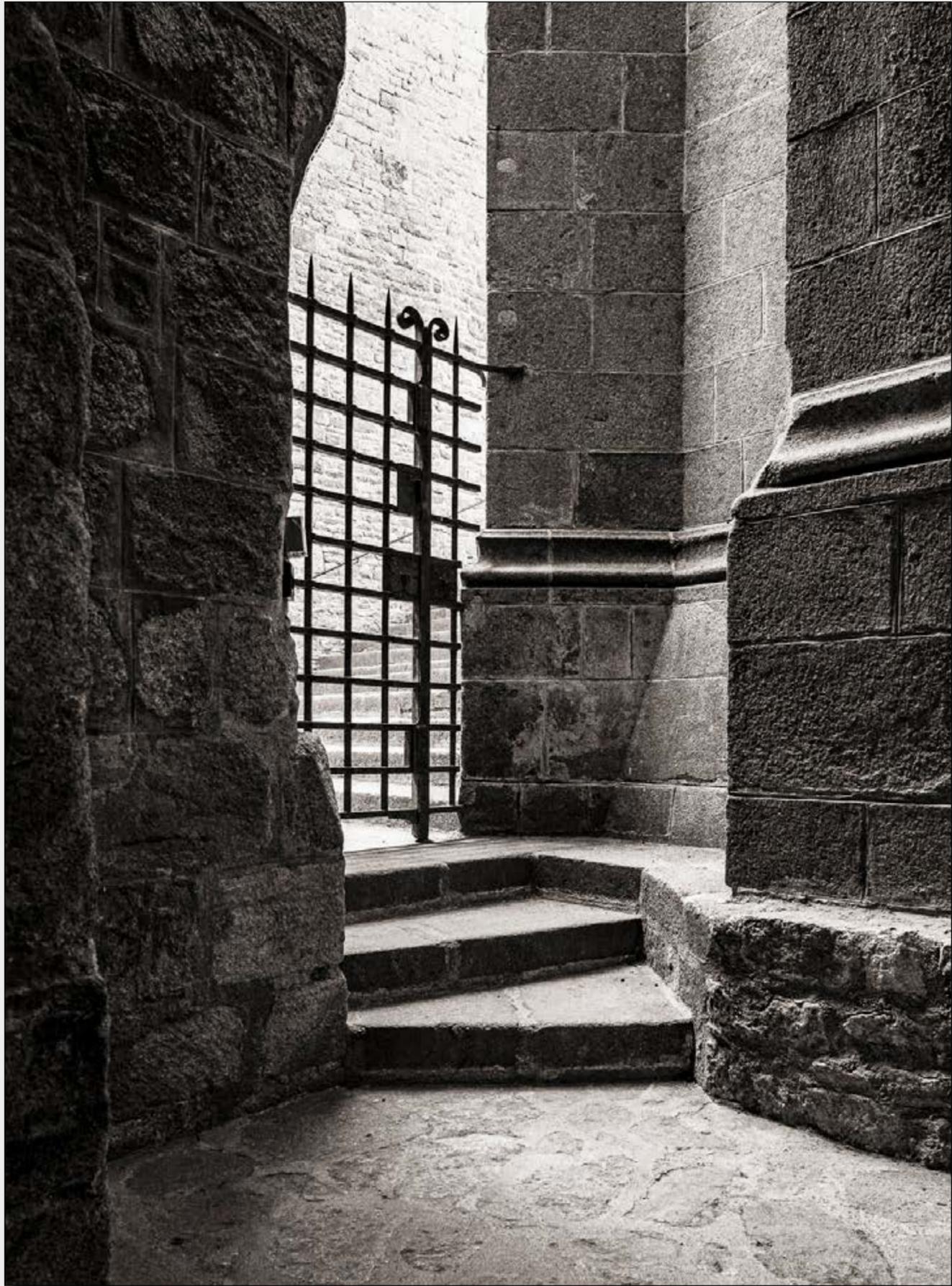
Looking Up

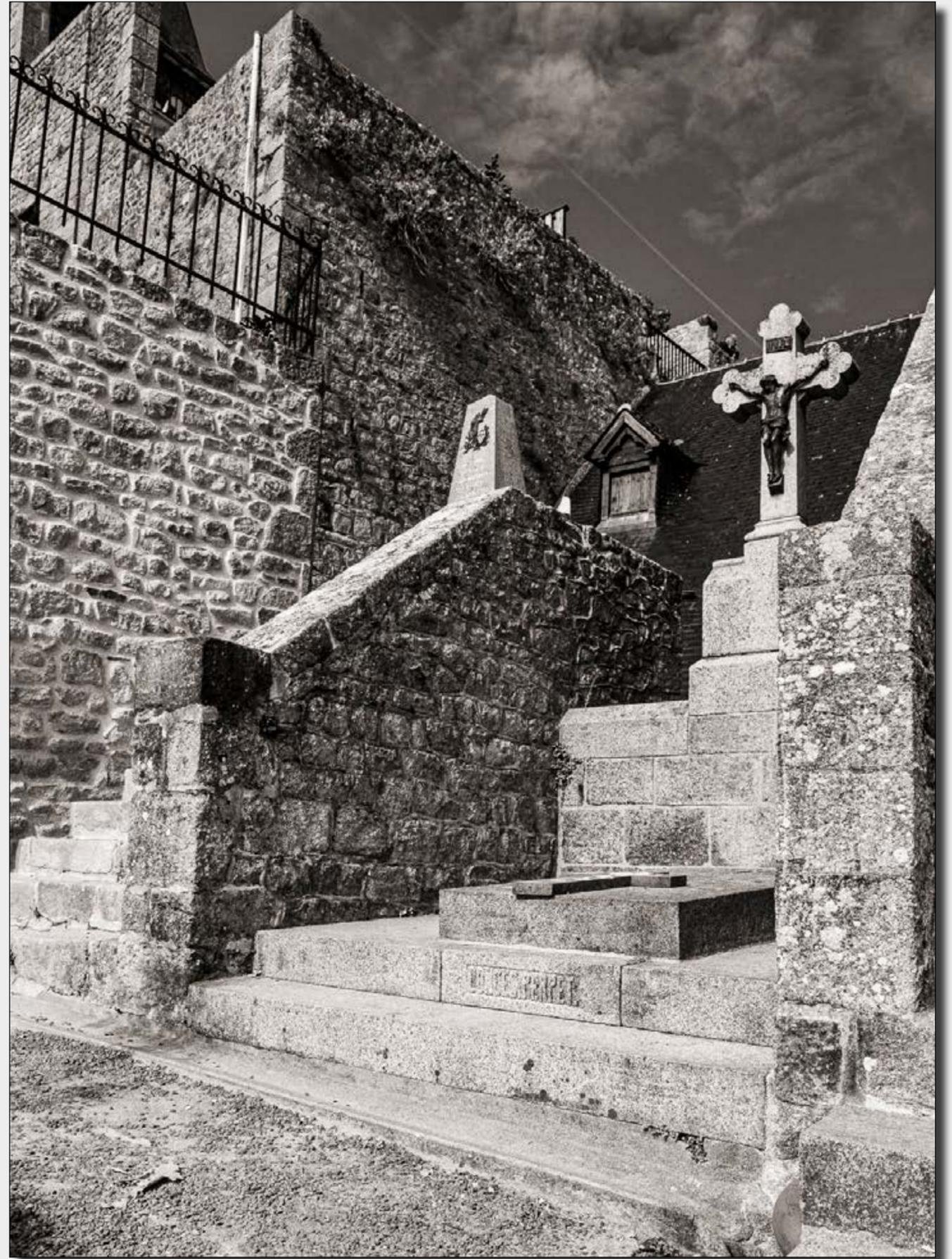
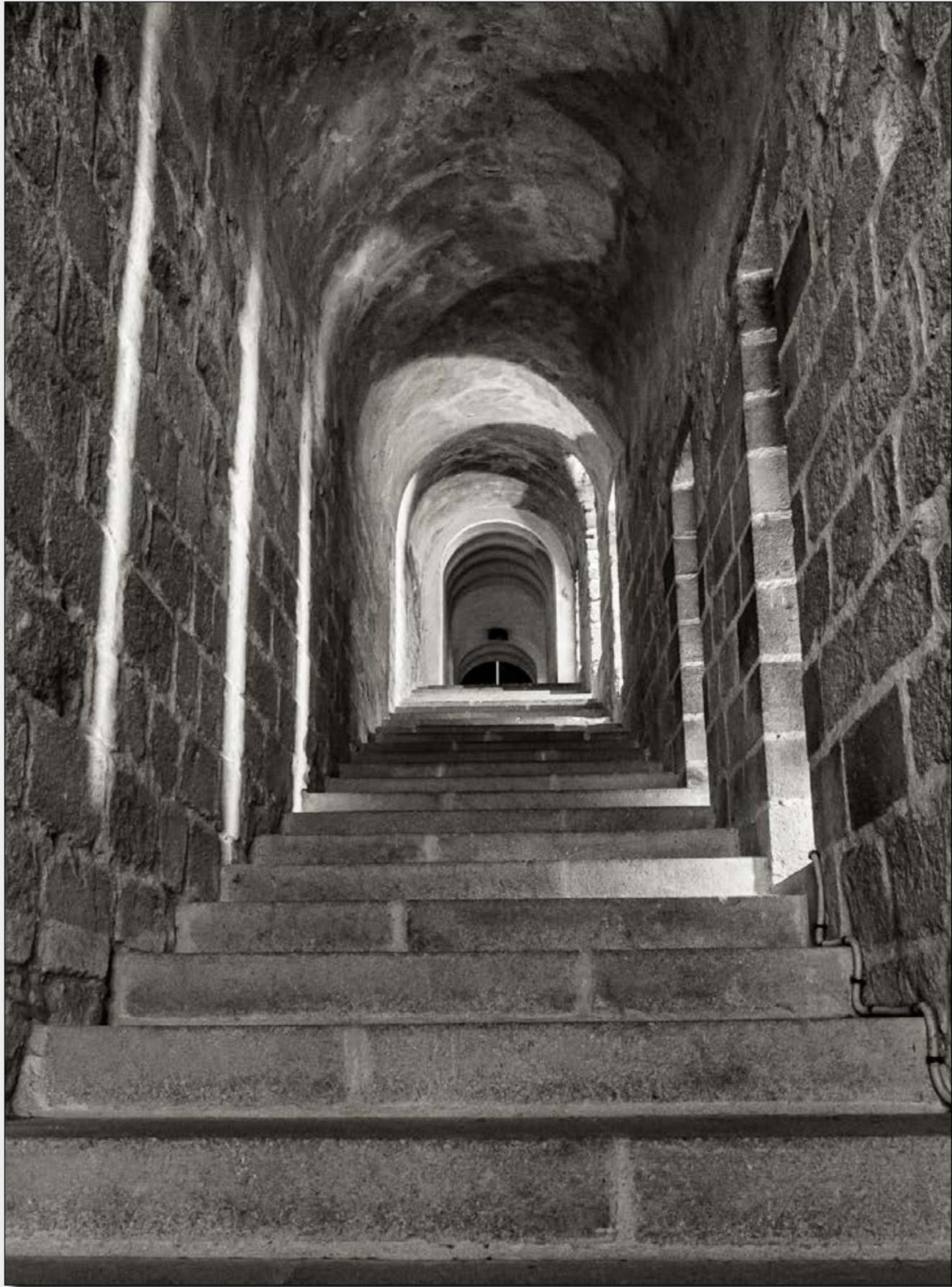
Scripture enjoins pilgrims to keep their eyes on the prize. That is, not to lose focus on where and why they are on their journey. Holy places are set on hills or other raised structures so the faithful will have to look up as they proceed on their pilgrimage. So it is with the final phase of the journey to the Abbey at Mont St. Michel. One starts at sea level and begins climbing. Inclines, ramps, and steps all figure prominently in the pilgrimage to the Abbey.

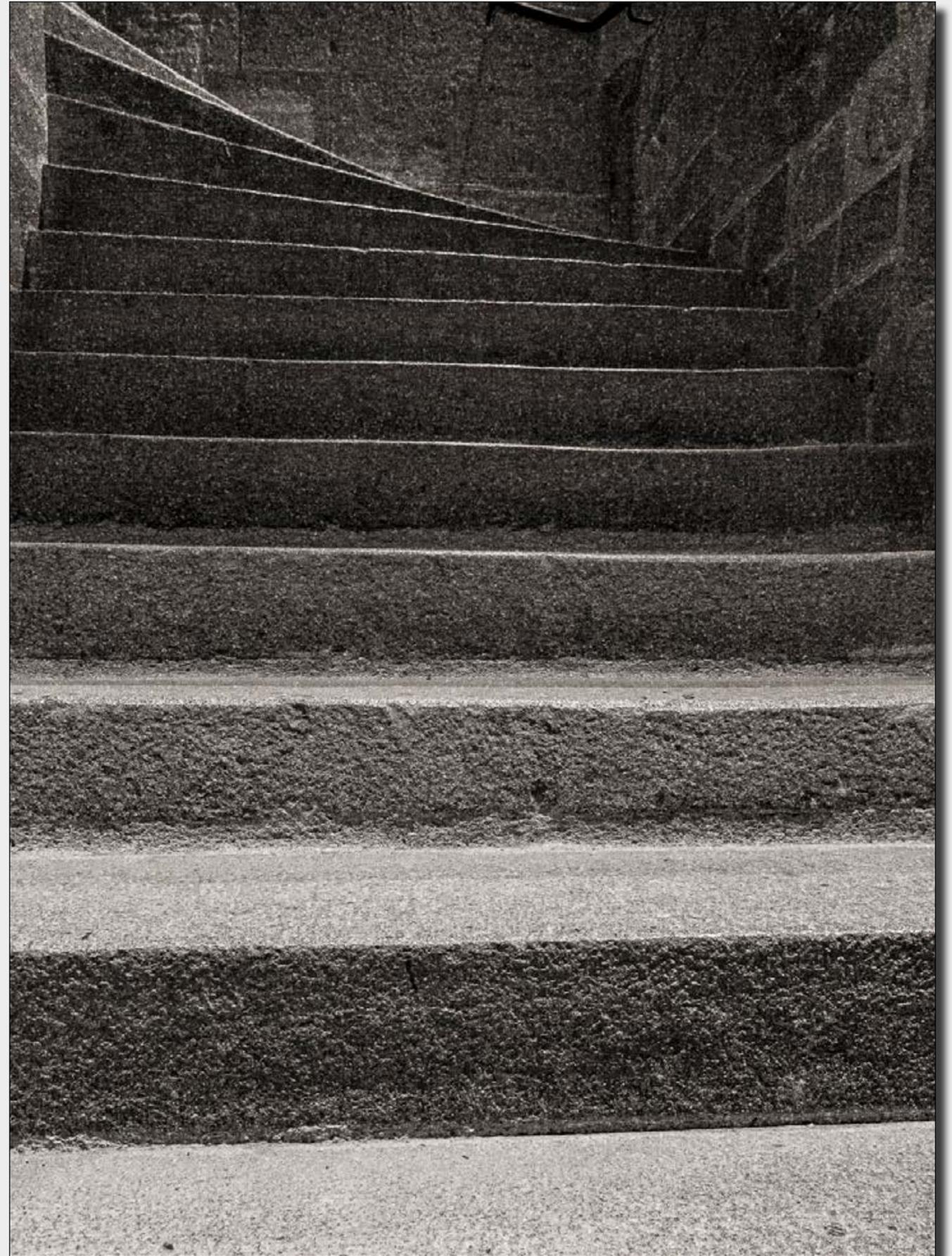
The route is vertical, and we must keep looking up as we hope for a glimpse of our goal.







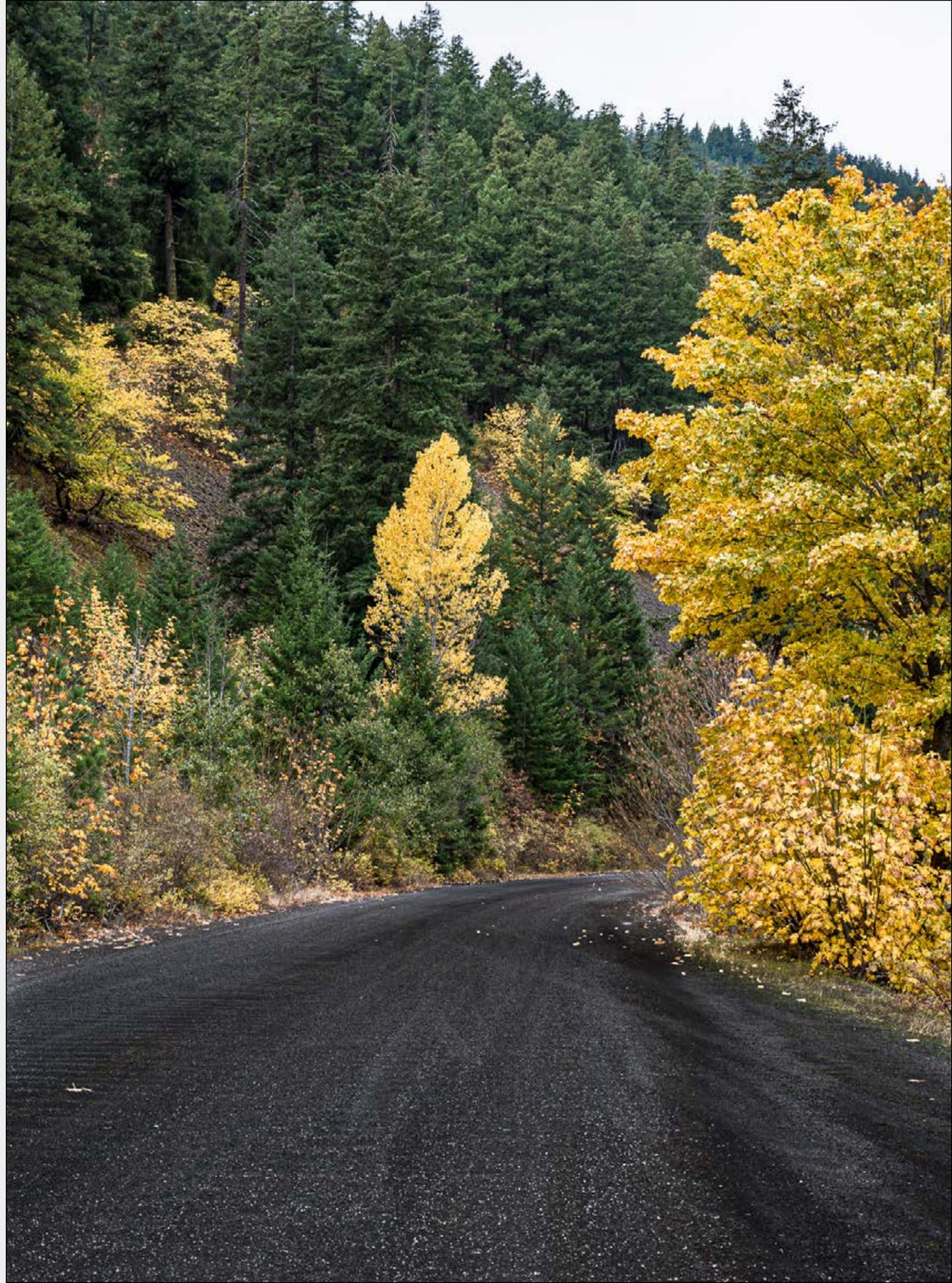






Six Word Project

Out here streets have no names.





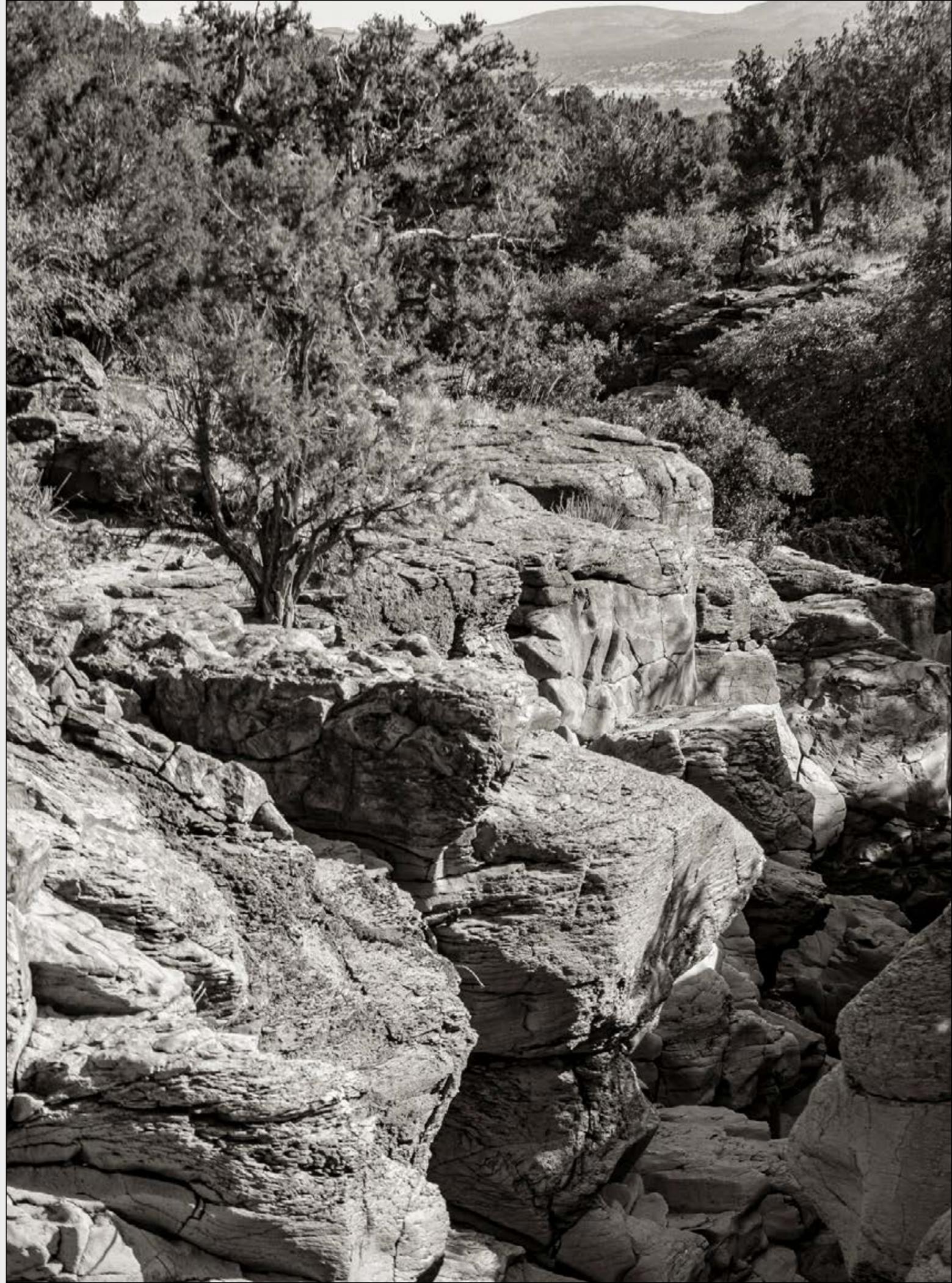
A Little Creek

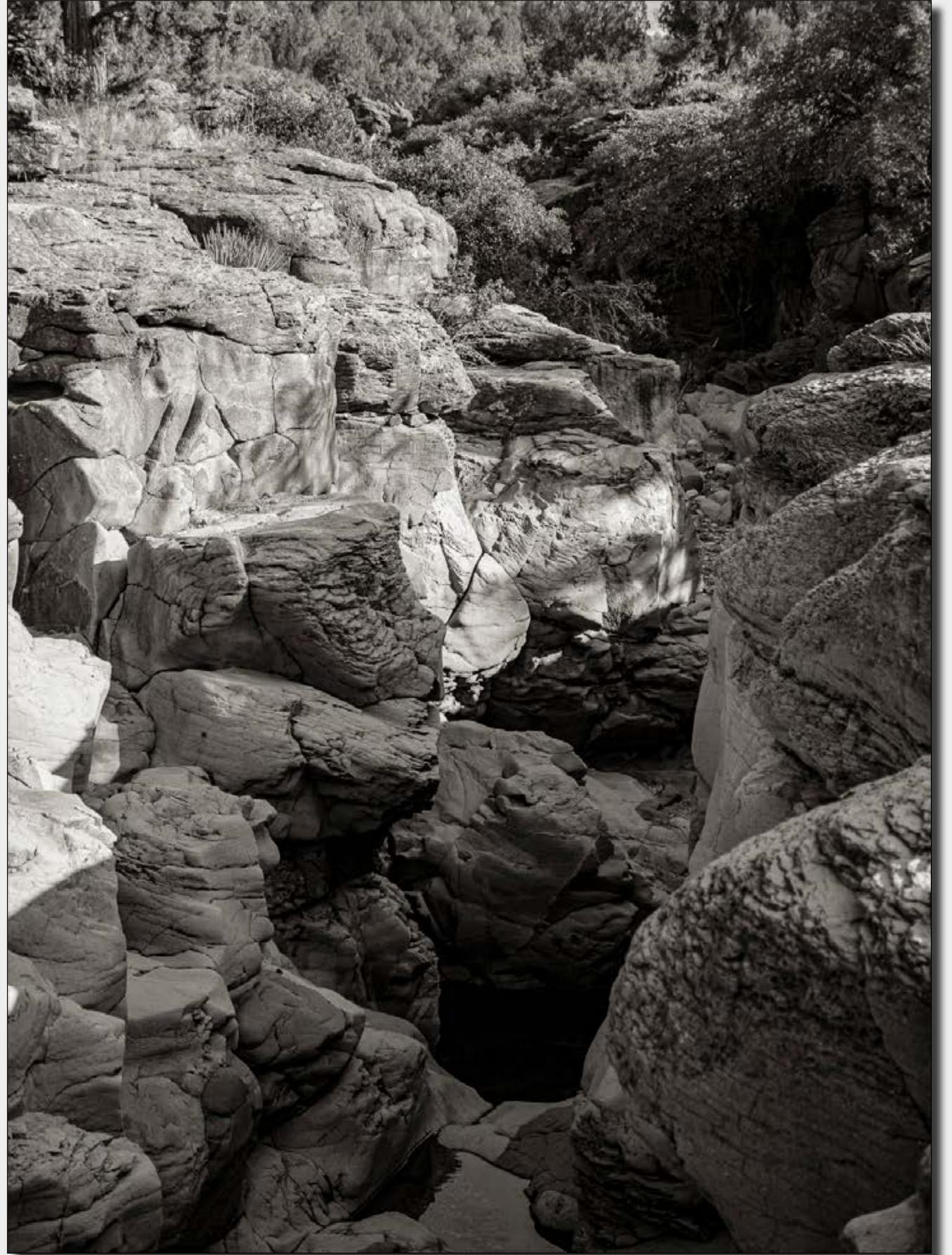
A Little Creek

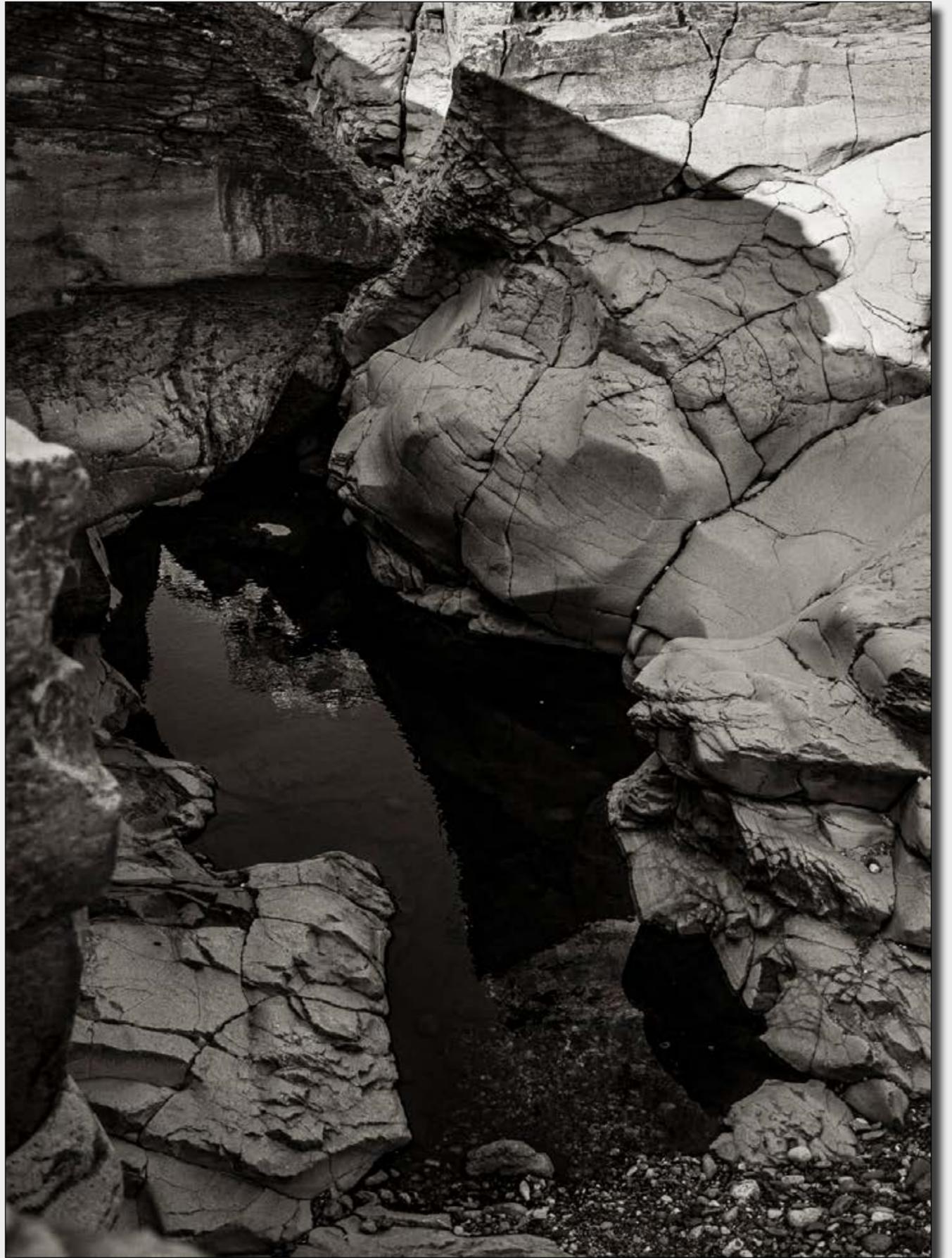
It was a case of extremes. The Grand Canyon was the subject the day before; truly Grand, as Canyons go. Lots of people, lots of impressive beauty and the Grand Canyon was the most amazing geological feature I ever photographed.

The next day we explored back roads, looking for the rest of Arizona. On a Forest Road we rolled over a small bridge. We stopped for a bit. It wasn't very impressive (but then again when compared to the Grand Canyon what is?) but it was intriguing.

The day before photography was big and horizontal. The next day photography was small and vertical. Two days, two different places, two different approaches.







Postcards from the Creative Journey

June 24, 2018



Photography on the Z Axis

I normally avoid technical topics, but today I have to relent and use terms we learned in middle school geometry. Camera position is half the issue with making a photograph and that position is determined by not only where you stand, (that's the X and Y axes), but how far the camera is from the ground (that's the Z axis). We now have options we have never had before in determining the "Z" location of our camera.

I have said before that 99.999% of all photographs made at eye level are dull. One must move away from eye height to create an interesting composition. Getting low helps quite a bit, but we are now facing the ability to move in the opposite direction by raising the camera level far above our eye level using drones.

The extra elevation making the camera airborne is significant, bringing a greater understanding of the topography and context of the scene being photographed. It will make the landscape photographer's ability to exploit the three dimensional aspects of the scene, improving upon the two dimensional exposition that we now have. We can access vantage points that were impossible before unless we rented cranes or helicopters. The drone has changed landscape photography.

Being a droneless photographer, I chose to gain elevation in the traditional manner, climbing a bunch of stairs and a hill to get a vantage point. In this case, the vantage point is from an old castle above the town of Miltenberg, Germany.



The Sky's the Limit

The Sky's the Limit

The sky has always been the limit. We can arrive at our chosen landscape location at the appropriate time and viewpoint. That is the easy part. But then, we worry about the sky. The sky can be completely cloudless or overcast. Both results thwart our artistic enterprise.

This is the eternal curse of the landscape photographer. No matter what we do, we are at the mercy of the sky. What's a photographer to do?

Nineteenth century photographers had blue sensitive emulsions which required they make separate exposures for the sky, and the foreground. Their final prints used both negatives. Sometimes they used the sky negatives in many different scenes.

Twenty first century photographer can follow the footsteps of these pioneer photographers. Technology has made it much easier to make combination prints.

When, whether or *if* we should employ these techniques is another question altogether.

Happy April First.



























One Photo Project

I Love the Smell of Sagebrush In The Morning

It smells like photography.

No town in the American West has a better name than my wife's home town of Roundup, Montana. The best time of our visits there was the first morning. Still stuck on East Coast time, I would wake up a couple of hours before everyone (except the donut maker at Picchioni's IGA) to venture forth with my camera in the early morning light.

The aroma of sagebrush and pine filled the town during the night. The smell was fresh and clean and I knew I was out west. Even though I was in town, the smell of the sage reminded me how close I was to the range land of Eastern Montana. For that hour or so before everyone starting moving through the town I could photograph alone and undisturbed. When the trucks starting coming through town, the still air was disturbed and the smell of sage was lost in the exhaust.

By then it was time to stop photographing and walk down Main Street to Picchioni's for fresh donuts.

Here's the rest of the [Main Street Project](#).





Once you get to the top of Mont St. Michel, the world changes from vertical to very, very horizontal.

A Few Closing Words

Looking Up

Mont St. Michel is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is spectacular on so many levels. I wish I could have stayed there for a week photographing the streets, architecture, the doors and stairs and sweeping landscapes from its summit. Alas, we had but a day with lots of walking up and down stairs. The narrow streets make it a necessity to make vertical compositions. For that day, I don't think my camera was "level" more than a half dozen times.

PS: No pixels were harmed in the Title Image. That's really what the sky looked like the day we were there.

A Little Creek

There are big places and there are little places. We spent a little bit of time in a little place, photographing a small creek near Jerome, Arizona. We sometimes focus so much on the grand part of the world that when we pass something small, we ignore it.

This suite of images is a reminder that the small places are often the little hidden gems that we can add to our portfolio of work.

The Sky's the Limit

The Journal's publication date is April First. That should give you a clue about the seriousness of this image suite. I had fun seeing just how easy it was to misuse, abuse, and generally display ineptness on a grand scale. The sky replacement tool is a very easy way to change the sky for better or for worse. In this case, worse won out. But, seriously, folks...

In the [March Lipka Journal](#), the sky replacement tool made the image suite "Of A Time Past" a solid winner.



Joe Lipka has shared his vision since he began photographing.

In the last thirty-five years, his photographs have appeared in over one hundred juried exhibitions, more than twenty solo exhibitions and his images have been printed in *LensWork*, *Black & White Photography* (UK) and *F-Stop* Magazines.

His website www.joelipkaphoto.com has continuously evolved since it was launched in 2004. His blog *Postcards from the Creative Journey*, published weekly since 2010, feature a photograph and a little bit of writing.

His newest blog, *The Daily Photograph*, is simply that. A new and interesting image posted every morning at 8:00 AM.

COLOPHON

The Lipka Journal, April 2022

Joe Lipka

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Web site: www.joelipkaphoto.com

Blog: <http://blog.joelipkaphoto.com/>

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