



A Walk Down Academy Street

Joe Lipka

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Spring is the real beginning of the year. There is the promise of life in the buds of flowers, plants and trees. The temperature warms and the animals come out of their winter habitats. The light changes. Oh, how the light changes. The thin, weak light of winter is gone. The light gains strength and intensity. The shadows become deeper and more compact. Best of all, there is time to enjoy this fresh light before the harsh overhead light of summer arrives.

Sadly, many people are not aware of these changes. We live in climate controlled environments year round. We move rapidly from home to car to office speeding through the world ignoring the changes about us. Having lost contact with nature we don't see the changes in light and shadow. If we can break out of the manufactured atmospheres that dominate our lives, we will see and feel the beauty that exists around us.

Some would have us believe that beauty cannot be found in everyday places, that the only route to beauty road is the less traveled to an exotic location. One does not have to take the road less traveled. One may take the more traveled road, but at a leisurely pace. Instead of driving by quickly, walk slowly and see what is happening in the world. A light post becomes a sentry standing at the church steps. Rocking chairs wait patiently for their occupants. Light and shadow make a porch more than just wood.

Come with me for a walk down Academy Street. Spring is the real beginning of the year. It might also be the beginning of a new way of seeing the world around you.





















A journey starts with a single step. The proverb recognized the difficulty in starting. We all have thought about, planned, discussed and philosophized about how to do a project. That was easy and fun. Getting started and doing the work was tough. It took considerable effort to overcome the inertia of doing nothing. The first step on that journey was deciding what to photograph.

My first step was the discovery of Academy Street. It was one of the few streets in my town that was resistant to the rapid change and homogenous development occurring in the surrounding area. I liked the idea of a neighborhood resisting architectural trends by being anchored in another era. It was an area I wanted to photograph.

Creating a group of photographs about a subject was not my usual approach to photography. Photographing on Academy Street led me to consider multiple photographs as a valid approach to portraying a subject. This new and different approach to photography challenged my previous way of thinking about photography. This approach was the start down a new photographic path for me.

The Walk Down Academy Street was the first step on a journey. It was an exploration of a new place, and also an exploration of a new artistic approach. With any journey, the first steps were slow and cautious. These photographs were the first steps in that new direction.



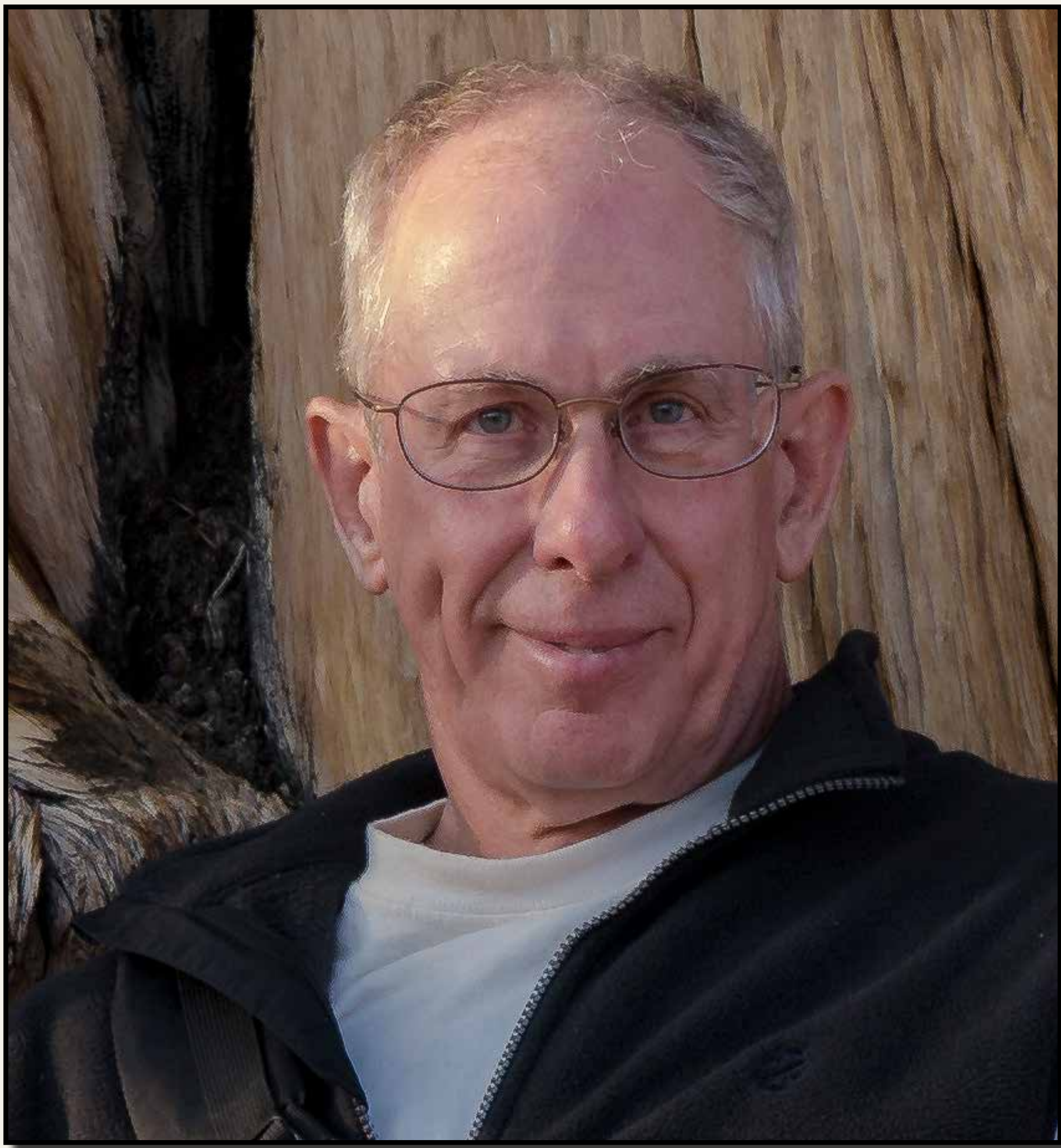
Final Thoughts

For those interested in the technical provenance of these images, most of images were made with a Conley 5x7 Camera. Sears, Roebuck and Company sold Conley Cameras around the turn of the Twentieth Century. The lens was a Dagor in indeterminate age and uncertain pedigree. The rest of the photographs were made with a Wista 4x5 camera with either a 4x5 back or a 5x7 expanding back. The film exposed was Tri X or TMAX 400 developed in D-23 (two bath variation).

The original platinum prints were made on either Palladio paper, or hand coated Crane's Platinotype Paper. The original electronic document was made from scanned silver prints.

This version of the folio was made by photographing the original platinum prints.





Joe Lipka has shared his vision since he began photographing.

In the last thirty years, his photographs have appeared in over one hundred juried exhibitions, more than twenty solo exhibitions and have been printed in both *LensWork* and *Black & White Photography* (UK) 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, is a collection of his photographs and thoughts on the creative process.

COLOPHON

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*The images in this portfolio
were made between 1987 and 2000
in Cary, North Carolina*

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