

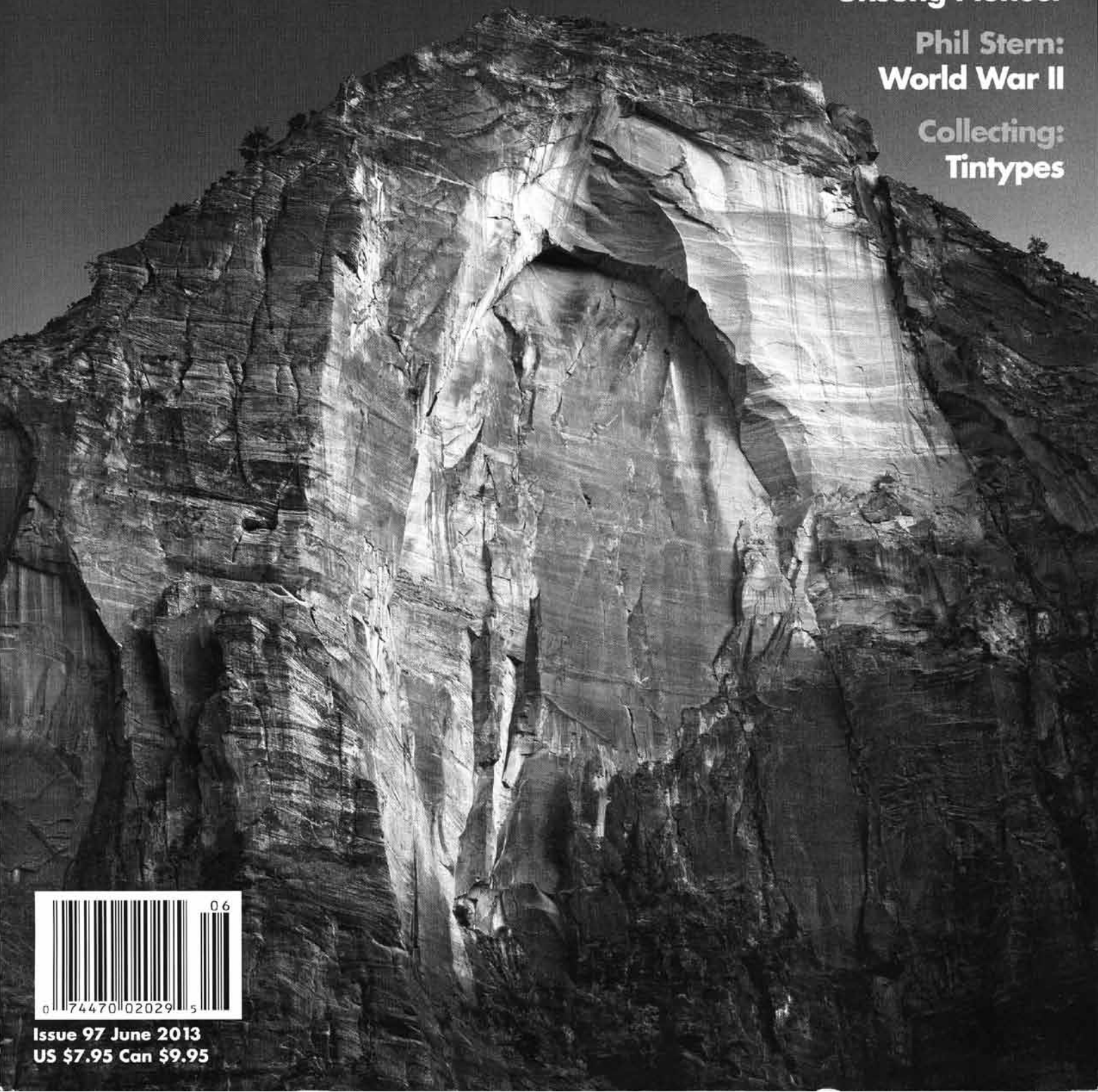
FOR COLLECTORS OF FINE PHOTOGRAPHY

# Black & White

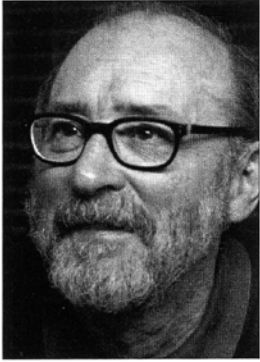
**Tsuneko Sasamoto:  
Unsung Pioneer**

**Phil Stern:  
World War II**

**Collecting:  
Tintypes**



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**"I love photography because there is no code, and people can read a photograph based on their familiarity with the medium."**

## Fact File

David Jeffery  
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Prints are available at 9.4 x 13 inches for \$100 (photo paper) or \$130 (watercolor inkjet paper), and 20 x 20 inches for \$120 (photo paper) or \$155 (watercolor inkjet paper).

**"I don't know** why I take the photographs I do, or why I take photographs at all," says David Jeffery. "To say it is some kind of obsessional therapy for the artistically inclined would, in my case, be a fair description. But if it is therapy; I'm still on the couch."

Born and raised in a working class neighborhood in postwar London, Jeffery traces the arc of his life in this laconic note: "Experienced the Sixties in and around London. Didn't really get it. Art School. Basically a waste of time. But fun sometimes. Professional photographer. Boring. Photographer for museums and archaeology. Fun but poor. Worked as photography technician and assistant at an art school in London. Wonderful, liberating and a privilege. Moved to Sweden with total collapse of momentum for too many years. Documentation production for camera company. Stable."

Throughout this checkered career, Jeffery's personal photography has evolved into a quirky look at abstract shapes and designs, amongst other things. He loves wandering about in the forests of his adopted Sweden, searching for images that capture a bit of the magic and mystery of the outdoor world. With an occasional nod to Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, he seeks contemporary images that reflect the idiosyncratic visions, memories and ideas that have shaped his life.

"Years ago, I used to go out 'looking for pictures,'" he says. "But now I wait for pictures to come to me. This is the result of the metaphors, symbolism, stimuli and visual pleasures accumulated in my head—like jigsaw pieces waiting to fall into place. I feel distanced from my work, as I often don't feel in control of the process. The trick, if there is one, is to let the picture come to you, from outside your focused attention. I can almost feel them sneaking up from behind me."

Jeffery loves the accompanying pictures of ice, taken in Sweden, because they were unsought, serendipitous and fleeting. They were taken by the side of the road, a few minutes' drive from where he lives. Few people would notice these formations in their hurry to get to their next destination, but Jeffery found them staggering expressions of a simplistic,

transient scene. He thought to himself, "Why did I come here now? I've been here so many times; there cannot be anything new. And then, suddenly—amazing!"

**Jeffery likes to** see combinations of symbolism and metaphors in his pictures. A photo of a tree, for example, is rarely an objective representation of a tree. Everything is subjective, and has underlying messages for him. He likens his images to poetry, with the viewer "reading" into them his or her personal interpretations. He rarely photographs people, and when he does sees them as representational objects rather than individuals. He feels more comfortable turning his cameras on his environment, urban or natural.

"I would love to have been brave enough to be a painter or sculptor," Jeffery admits. "But I'm a bit of a wimp. Paintings and sculptures are always abstracted from what we can immediately relate to, and are therefore distanced from the viewer. You need to know 'the code' to understand them. I love photography because there is no code, and people can read a photograph based on their familiarity with the medium. In that way you can sneak something in between the lines for those who want to see it."

It's difficult for Jeffery to explain why he takes the photographs he does. He regards statements like, "seeks to explore the narrative of nostalgia, memory and loss," as unhelpful and pretentious. He does consider his photography as art, however, just as playing the guitar is art, and baking a cake is art. He sympathizes with those who think what he does is obscure, pointless and simplistic.

Let's give him the last word:

"Basically, I'm a directionless, dreamy, focus-free old goat who likes taking pictures for himself and no one else, for reasons I don't fully understand. This has gotten me nowhere in this glossy, high-tech, self-centered, superficial, sharp-elbowed world."

— David Best



*Ice in Ditch #3, Sweden, 2012*

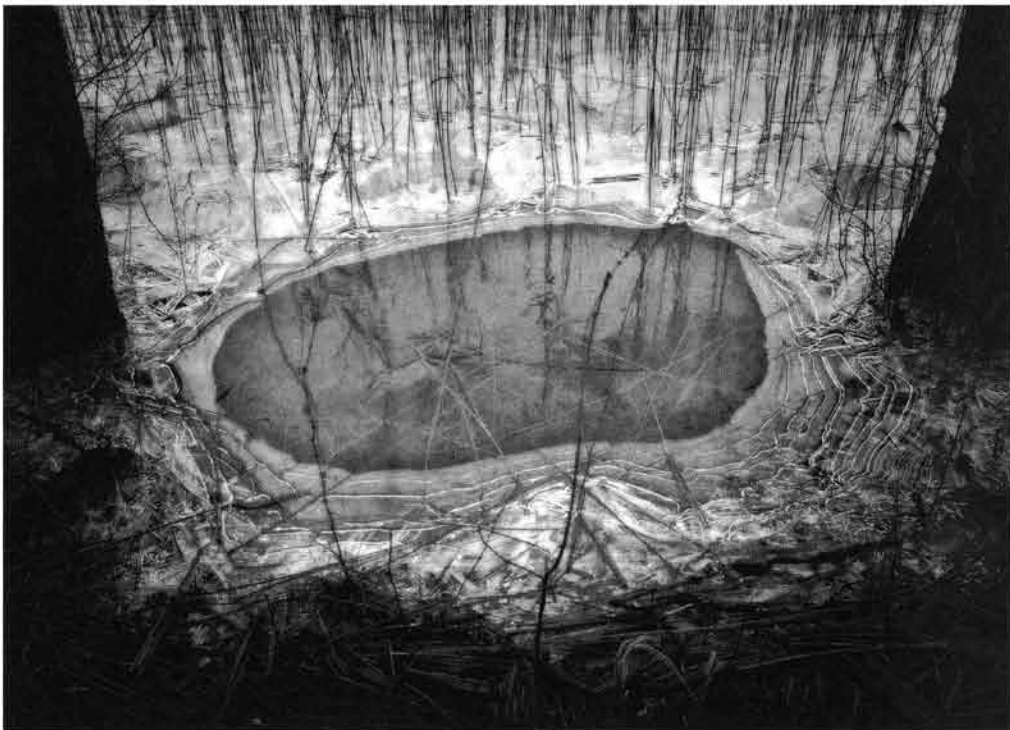


*Ice in Ditch #2, Sweden, 2012*

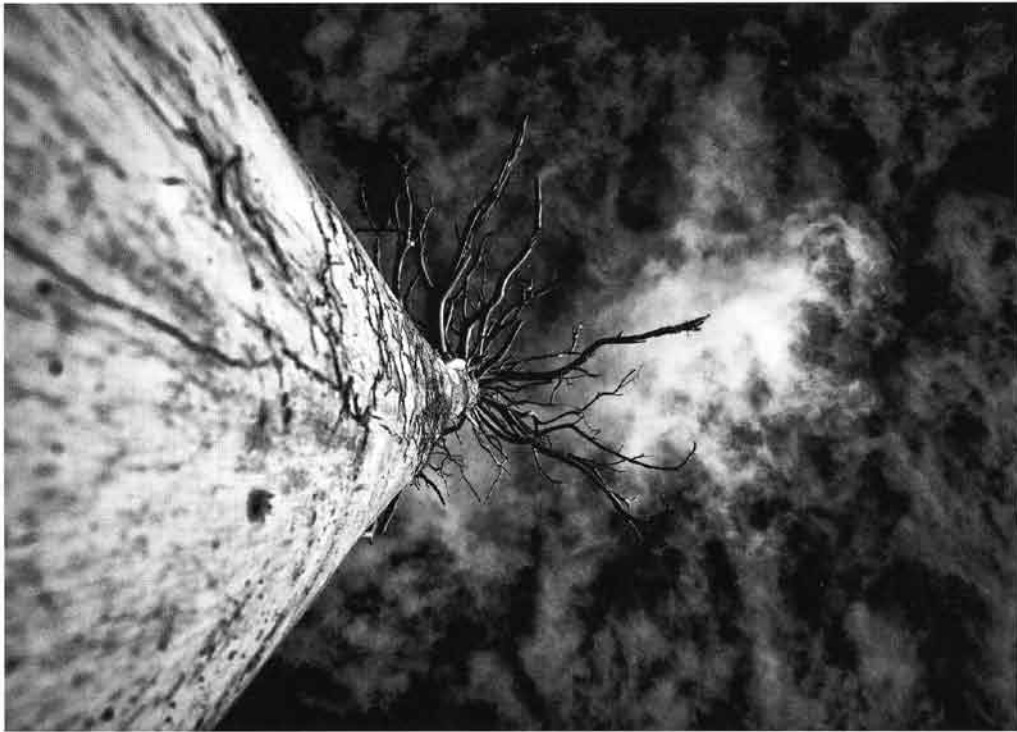




*Ice in Ditch #1, Sweden, 2012*



*West Coast Lake, Sweden, 2012*



*West Coast Tree, Sweden, 2011*



*Mountain Rushes, Sweden, 2009*