



An Exclusive HolgaDirect Interview with Jennifer Shaw



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Name: Jennifer Shaw

Location: New Orleans, LA

Website: [Jennifer Shaw Home](#)

Holga Cameras used: 120S, modified 120S (macro-ized)

Photographers you admire: [Keith Carter](#), [Diane Arbus](#), [Joseph Koudelka](#), [Debbie Fleming Caffery](#), [Lori Nix](#), [Susan Burnstine](#), [Lori Waselchuk](#), [Hiroshi Watanabe](#), [Sally Mann](#), [Francesca Woodman](#), [Ernesto Bazan](#)

1. How would you describe your photographic style?

I think it varies depending on the specific portfolio, but the common threads are a reverence for light and form, and a sense of narrative. Not just in [Hurricane Story](#), which is obviously a narrative project, but in my other work as well - I like to think the images include a narrative subtext; hints of mystery, stories implied.

2. What inspires you in your work?

Everything! Nature, art, literature, music; all of these things provide food for thought and help to



We Got a New Roof before

fuel my work. I'm also driven by a really basic visual curiosity. The process of seeing, and then seeing the way things translate onto film, is still fascinating to me after all these years. Christmas

3. Where is or would be your dream photography location/shoot?

I don't really have an exotic location fantasy. My work tends to be pretty personal, so for me it's more about finding inspiration where you are.

4. How long have you been using a Holga camera?

Since 1999 – I picked one up to shoot Mardi Gras that year and it quickly became my primary camera.

5. What do you like about using a Holga camera?

I love the square format – it's so clean and decisive. And the simplicity of plastic cameras allows me to work from of place of intuition, responding directly to the things that move me. I also feel that the sharp center and fading edges that Holgas provide come closer to the perspective with which we actually see/perceive/experience the world, depicting more of a "mind's eye view", if you will.

6. What films do you prefer using and why?

I'm not a hardcore film loyalty person, and will shoot with whatever I can find. That said I tend to use Ilford HP5 and Tri-X most frequently, and like Kodak's Portra NC for color work.



Send in the Guard

7. What are your thoughts on the way Photography is progressing? (HDR, digital, web)

I'm pretty much missing the digital photography boat, for better or worse. I love the way the web allows us to share and connect in such an unprecedented, international way. Information and inspiration are now so easily accessible, and the ever-growing online photo communities are wonderful.

8. What kind of work/projects do you have lined up for the next 12 months?

[Hurricane Story](#) will be shown in full at the FotoSeptiembre festival in San Antonio this fall, which will be the first time all 46 of the images have been exhibited together. And there's another book in the works through the North Light Press 11+1 Signature Series, featuring images from my Nature/Nurture portfolio.

9. Do you have any tips for aspiring photographers?

Look at everything. Find a subject you are passionate about and pursue it like crazy. Work like nothing else matters. Seek feedback – through classes, forums, portfolio reviews; it may be scary at first but will strengthen your vision in the long run.



10. What have you been working on recently?

The past year has been pretty consumed with the publication of [Hurricane Story](#), which has just hit the shelves.



A Boy was Born

11. Can you tell us about the book and the publication process?

It's my Katrina tale, shared in a graphic novel format, with images and simple one-line sentences. I had self published it a few years ago (through Lulu) and was thrilled to find an independent publisher interested in picking it up – Chin Music Press. The book was redesigned with a few sequence changes, the addition of a foreword, and a lovely clothbound hardcover. It was intense, but also a really fun collaborative process.

12. Do you have any advice for photographers interested in getting published?

I am currently reading [Publish Your Photography Book by Darius Himes & Mary Virginia Swanson](#) and would recommend that to anyone who wants to learn more about the process. It's a comprehensive, inspiring and accessible manual, packed with tons of great advice and resources.

Many thanks to Jennifer for taking time to talk about her work. We wish her all the success for her future projects!

*****AS A SPECIAL PRIZE***** – Jennifer is offering an exclusive signed copy of 'Hurricane Story' (images seen in this article) which will be given away as a Prize for one lucky reader! Once this interview article has been tweeted about 30 times we will choose a random person from those 30. So don't forget to click the Tweet button next to the top of this page.

The HolgaDirect Team

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