

## Introduction

“It’s all about seeing. *Seeing* is what the old guys always talked about. The question is once you see it, how do you capture it?”

Seeing: What a deceptively simple concept. Because “the old guys” that Timothy Wolcott talks about with a mix of affection and reverence are the masters: Brett Weston, Ansel Adams, and Paul Caponigro among them. And the images that Wolcott sees and hopes to capture—what he calls “these little bits of heaven”—exist first in his mind and then must be found somewhere in the evanescent world of real time and space.

So he goes out. To the ponds and streams of Maine. Into the verdant forests of Northern California. And among the monumental ice floes of Antarctica. The work itself is meditative, an immersion in nature, but physically challenging and intellectually demanding too.

Patience and restlessness, control and surrender coexist in an uneasy balance. He recalls a day in Maine’s Acadia National Park. Wolcott could see his image. Almost. He decided to wait for the moment when a bit more sun would even out the contrast with the clouds. The light changed just as he anticipated but the wind picked up and the water’s stillness was lost.

The memory is still raw yet there’s bemused acceptance. “The gods smile only once in awhile. That day they were grinning ear to ear. And I blew it.”

So he returns. He may not get the photograph the second year. Or the third year either. Then, maybe in the fourth year, it all comes together. As Wolcott says, a photographer should be like nature itself.

Always changing and adapting.

Matthew Jaffe

## Rivers and Streams

Rivers and streams are forever moving and constantly reinvented by all that surrounds them. One moment is actually millions as each wave, ripple, and facet turns and twists to reflect and absorb the colors and light of the surrounding forest and the changing sky.

Wolcott strives to capture that interplay even as photography, by definition, demands that he bring the water's flow to a pause. Yet a stream's beauty is its motion and to grasp that essence, he must show not a single instant but a collection of moments, an episode.

For all the seeming stillness of the woods through which a river travels, its elements are in motion too. A crimson maple leaf or a dogwood blossom may be stirred by no more than a bee's wings.

So it's a bit magic: allowing movement while stopping a world that is perpetually changing. All to capture an ideal instant, which it can be argued, never actually happened. And to somehow show a truth more real than reality itself.

