

CAROLYN BROWN A Retrospective

Front cover image: *Preparing for a Wedding, Templo
de San Francisco, Acatepec, Puebla, Mexico*

CAROLYN BROWN
A Retrospective

FOREWORD

I love being an engineer and a college president. But if I was ever challenged to embark on a different career path, I think I might choose to be a photographer. It's a hobby that has developed (no pun intended) into a passion.

So, count me among those who are enthralled by Carolyn Brown's artistry. It is an honor to exhibit her masterful work in the SP/N Gallery at The University of Texas at Dallas. She is a generous benefactor of our growing art presence in the region.

The gallery is but one of the spaces we have dedicated on our campus for creative works by faculty, students and curated exhibits by other artists. I extend a special thanks to Dr. Richard Brettell, founding director of the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, for bringing this exceptional exhibition to UT Dallas.

As so many of us do, I enjoy traveling. It exposes me to different people, different cultures and different architectures. Carolyn Brown's exquisite photographs provide a window on all three of these life-broadening experiences.

To that, I would also add a fourth element—time. Ms. Brown is more than an expert photographer, she is a bold and pioneering student of the human condition. The oldest photograph in this collection is from 1969, and in this collection of photographs, we can also sense the sweep of time through her subjects and their surroundings.

I encourage you to look closely as you take in the exhibit. Admire the composition of the photographs, the magnificence of the architecture captured in the images and the faces that hint of fascinating stories to be told.

Enjoy the exhibit. Most of all, I invite you to make our gallery at UT Dallas a favored destination for the arts.

RICHARD C. BENSON, President, Eugene McDermott Distinguished University Chair of Leadership

CAROLYN BROWN: Architecture and Photography

Architectural Photography: Some Background

Since the public announcement of photography in France in 1839 and the almost instantaneous British announcement in response, the medium of photography has been in a state of constant invention and innovation, therefore it really should be called the mediumS of photography. Even at the beginning the battle between unique photographs exposed on sensitized metal plates, the daguerreotype, vied with the early paper negative technology called the calotype. What the calotype lost in the detailed linearity of the image on the unique silvered metal plate, it gained in the ability to “reproduce” multiple copies and was, thus, possible to sell more cheaply.

Not until the end of the 19th century were exposure times short enough to produce an image representing motion—even slow motion. This meant that trees rustling in the wind, clouds scudding across the sky, water rushing down a river, or people moving and shifting as they posed could not produce stable photographic images in all but the final years of the 19th century. Even painting, the infinitely slower of the visual media, could represent movement in the 19th century better than a camera.



Girault de Prangey, *Mosque of Cairo*, 1843 (Daguerreotype)

This had one enormous advantage for the photography of architecture, simply because, as we all know, architecture stands still! From the earliest daguerreotypes and calotype photographs, the predominant subject was buildings—new or old or even ruins—and the medium was ideal for professional and amateur photographers who wanted to record important works of architecture for collectors in the great age of global colonialism.

When the Frenchman Girault de Prangey started his 3-year journey to the Middle East and North Africa in 1842, he took a custom-built daguerreotype camera and visited Italy, Greece, Turkey, Syria,

Jerusalem, and Egypt, often producing the very first photographic images of ancient ruins and the better known preserved buildings. He applied the very latest in European technology to the rediscovery of ancient lands.

His example was followed by scores of others, most of whom used paper or, later, glass negative technologies to bring scientifically grounded images of global architectural history into European living rooms and the private and public collections of antiquarians and their societies.



Auguste Salzmann, *Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Detail of Capitals*, 1854

The British did better in the Indian subcontinent than the French (one thinks of the superb paper negative prints by Captain Linnaeus Tripe), while the French specialized in the Middle East and North Africa. Even Gustav Flaubert's best friend, amateur photographer Maxime du Camp, went wild with his calotype camera as the two cavorted in Egypt. Indeed, the trip is more objectively recorded by du Camp's camera than by Flaubert's letters. And the Alsatian photographer, Auguste Salzmann, was the first to systematically photograph the holy sites in and around Jerusalem for wide distribution.

By the turn of the 19th/20th centuries, such photographic surveys by travelling European photographers had reached an end, and, with the gradual photographic entrapment of motion and color, the purely documentary function of architectural photography had lost much of its market. Only archeological institutions hired photographers to document these scientific projects, which are now held in the collections of institutions like the University of Pennsylvania Museum, the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, the Peabody Museum at Harvard, and others little visited by historians or amateurs devoted to photography.

Carolyn Brown gives life to a Vestigial Field of Photography

Carolyn Brown, the distinguished Dallas-based architectural photographer, began to make photographs in the 1970s in Egypt. Living in Cairo, she studied Islamic Art and Architecture at the Center of Arabic Studies at Cairo American University when she became interested in photography. Eventually she purchased her first of many Hasselblad cameras that produced 2 1/4" square negatives and



Antoinio Beato, *Kom Ombo Temple, Aswan*, after 1862

transparencies of superb quality. As an American who had grown up without the millennial overlay of civilizations, cultures, and religions, she focused on the architectural record of the various “Egypt” accessible to her from Cairo—from the most ancient Old Kingdom sites through Roman and Christian sites, and various Islamic dynasties toward modern Egypt.

She was as thorough as Antonio Beato or Maxime du Camp, but she had much greater technical resources with her post-war Swiss camera

and was able to produce brilliantly composed architectural photographs with the occasional figure in both color and black-and-white. The fact that she is a tall, dramatically red-haired American created somewhat of a stir as she entered mosques or monasteries, but her charm, easy way of dealing with diverse people, and energetic enthusiasm more often than not won the day, and diverse administrators, priests, and other officials allowed her to set up her tripod and spend the time it takes to arrive at a perfectly composed and calibrated photographic image.

Later in Dallas she purchased a wonderful Bud Oglesby house designed for the great landscape architect, Robert Myrick (1951—the first house Oglesby designed), and made friends here. Virtually everyone who encountered her work understood its particular combination of beauty and documentary value. She was making photographs rooted in the 19th-century practice of recording sites with 20th-century vision and technology. Her prints were brilliant, and sometimes very large due to the quality of her negatives and her sure knowledge of printing technologies and papers.

Soon, the Institute for the Study of Earth and Man at Southern Methodist University realized they could send her on photographic expeditions to sites first in the Middle East and then in Mexico and Guatemala.

Her technique, well-honed in Egypt, was applied to new works of architecture in Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Syria, and Iraq (she was invited to attend Saddam Hussein’s 56th birthday



(L) Félix Bonfils, *Temple of Sobek and Haroeris, Kom Ombo, Egypt*, (R) Carolyn Brown



celebration in Baghdad, allowing her the much desired opportunity to photograph the important spiral minaret of the 9th-century Great Mosque of Samarra).

As the Institute’s priorities shifted to Mexico, Carolyn began to travel with her bilingual friend, Elizabeth Bordt, to both the great cities and the smaller places where Pre-Hispanic Americans as well as early Spaniards and their followers worshipped and created a human environment amidst diverse natural settings. She tackled jungles, mountains, and scrubby landscapes linked by dirt roads to find places of worship across the vast nation to our south, and then tackled Guatemala.

When I first saw these photographs with the Institute’s Director, I knew immediately that they would be material for a kind of photography exhibition which was NOT medium-sized framed works hung on the wall. Instead, we negotiated with The Hall of State in Fair Park to mount an exhibition in the art deco public spaces of that hallowed architectural masterpiece (itself a kind of place of worship of Texas) that would be installed on scaffolding erected in the space with its own sources of power so that the exhibition would never touch the building (it is, after all, a national historic monument).

Carolyn, with her contacts and resourcefulness, secured the support of Fujifilm and The Color Place lab who offered to print pro bono the photographs on such a large scale that many of them were more than 15 feet high and 30 feet long. These were installed directly on the Mexican-made scaffolding with its own lighting designed by Dallas architect Gary Cunningham with Mexico City architect, Fernando Ondarza.

I had the honor to be the instigator/curator of this exhibition entitled *Sacred Space: Man and the Divine* in Mexico, Guatemala and Southwestern United States, which demonstrated that Carolyn’s photographs of architecture, art, and nature, though rooted in the aesthetic in 19th-century documentary photography, completely transcend it. It was held in 2000 during the State Fair of Texas and produced what was surely the largest attendance for a photography exhibition in the history of the metroplex.

Yet, not to be outdone, Carolyn began visiting with Sabiha Al Khemir when the Dallas Museum of Art was negotiating to acquire (on long-term loan) the Keir Collection of Islamic Art. As I joined the talks, Carolyn realized that she had never photographed the great mosques and palaces of Ottoman Istanbul,

and, with the support of the Turkish government, was able to secure permission to photograph the splendid architectural heritage of that great center of Civilization.

As she began to work with her large body of images, she approached us at the newly formed Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, and we were able to procure a Hasselblad digital scanner for her to transform her negatives and transparencies into high-resolution files, also allowing her to weed out repetitive and unsuccessful photographs and properly create a state-of-the art digital archive of her life's work.

This includes not only the foreign work, but an immense body of work in Texas—photographs of our only natural lake, Lake Caddo, of the architecture of S.C.P. Vosper at Texas A&M University, of the Fair Park grounds, of many masterpieces of 19th and 20th-century architecture in Dallas, and of the Swift Meat Packing Company's extraordinary complex of buildings near the Fort Worth Stockyards. More recently, she made beautiful photographs of the extraordinary South Creek Ranch in Ferris and is now working on a book of the historic Fort Worth Stockyards.

As the Founding Director of the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, what is so moving to me is that Carolyn has elected to bequeath her archive and photographs to the Institute. When we receive them (hopefully NOT too soon), we will have the kind of architectural record of western civilization as our older counterparts in the East and Midwest, whose art, art history, and archeology programs are so much older than ours.

Carolyn is a steadfast supporter of our work at UT Dallas, and we dedicate this, the first true survey exhibition of her career, to her.

RICHARD BRETTELL, Founding Director, EODIAH UT Dallas



(L) Félix Bonfils, *Great Hypostyle Hall, Karnak, Egypt*, (R) Carolyn Brown, *The Sweeper, Great Hypostyle Hall, Karnak, Egypt*

TRAVELS WITH MY CAMERA 1969 - 2018

My journey with photography began in 1969 when I lived in Cairo, Egypt for three years to study Islamic Art and Architecture at Cairo American University. It was during the Arab-Israeli conflict and as the Russians were building the Aswan High Dam.

We made weekly group field trips to ancient Fatimid and Mameluke mosques. I purchased a Nikon 35mm camera and discovered the thrill of photographing ancient buildings on these field trips—a beginning of what would become not only a livelihood, but an obsession. It was an enlightenment for a young woman from a small town in the Northeastern Colorado grasslands.

Throughout the next two decades, I traveled often throughout the Middle East, at times as the guest of a government. My photographs from those years include ancient sites and modern cities not only in Egypt, but Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Iraq, Turkey and Yemen.

I first journeyed to Mexico to photograph pre-Hispanic archaeological sites, viceregal churches, and the natural landscape in the fall of 1991. Never did I imagine the many subsequent trips of immense discovery and the thousands of photographic exposures that would follow.

At the end of winding dirt roads, across rich farmland and sometimes fog covered mountains, nestle pristine villages, each with a unique church in the village center or overlooking the world from a hilltop. The snow-capped volcanoes of Popocateptl and Iztaccíhuatl perch outside the churches in Puebla and Tlaxcala, and the clear blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico caress wide beaches of Veracruz and the Yucatan Peninsula, all bear witness to God's majesty. Within ten years I had documented locations in more than twenty Mexican states, and throughout Guatemala.

My experiences in Mexico and Guatemala transformed my life. The photographs—of sweeping landscapes and small places of devotion—portray God's handiwork. They are my attempt to depict, through photography, the holy places belonging to our blessed neighbors to the South.

Throughout these years of foreign travel, as a Dallas resident I was photographing the immediate world surrounding me. And from these experiences come some of my most satisfying photographs. Some were made into books, including *Dallas: Portrait of a City*; *Visions of a Southern Cypress Lake*; *The Painted Tombs of Swift*; *Architecture Speaks: The Legacy of SCP Vosper at Texas A&M University*; and *Dallas Fair Park: Art Deco Forever*.

The beauty of photography is that by looking at a photograph, one can immediately experience long-ago moments, never to be forgotten. The places and people I photograph will always be remembered exactly as they were that day the image was made. These experiences are part of incredible memories and will forever be in my heart—they are an important part of who I am today.

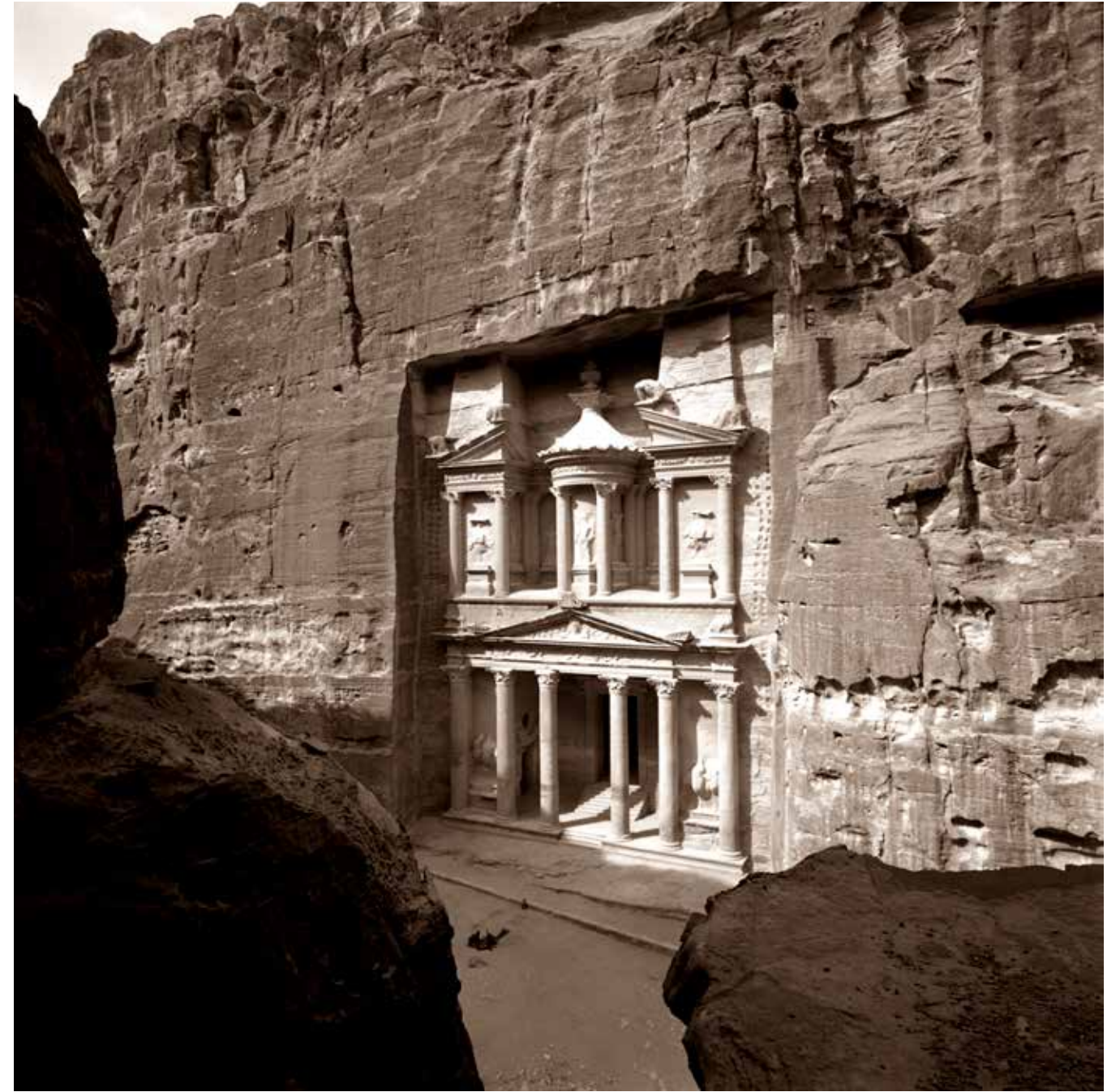
CAROLYN BROWN



The photograph that started it all:
*Three Horsemen at Chephren Pyramid, Gizeh,
Egypt, 1969*



Camel and Boy at Arch, Ancient City of Palmyra, Syria



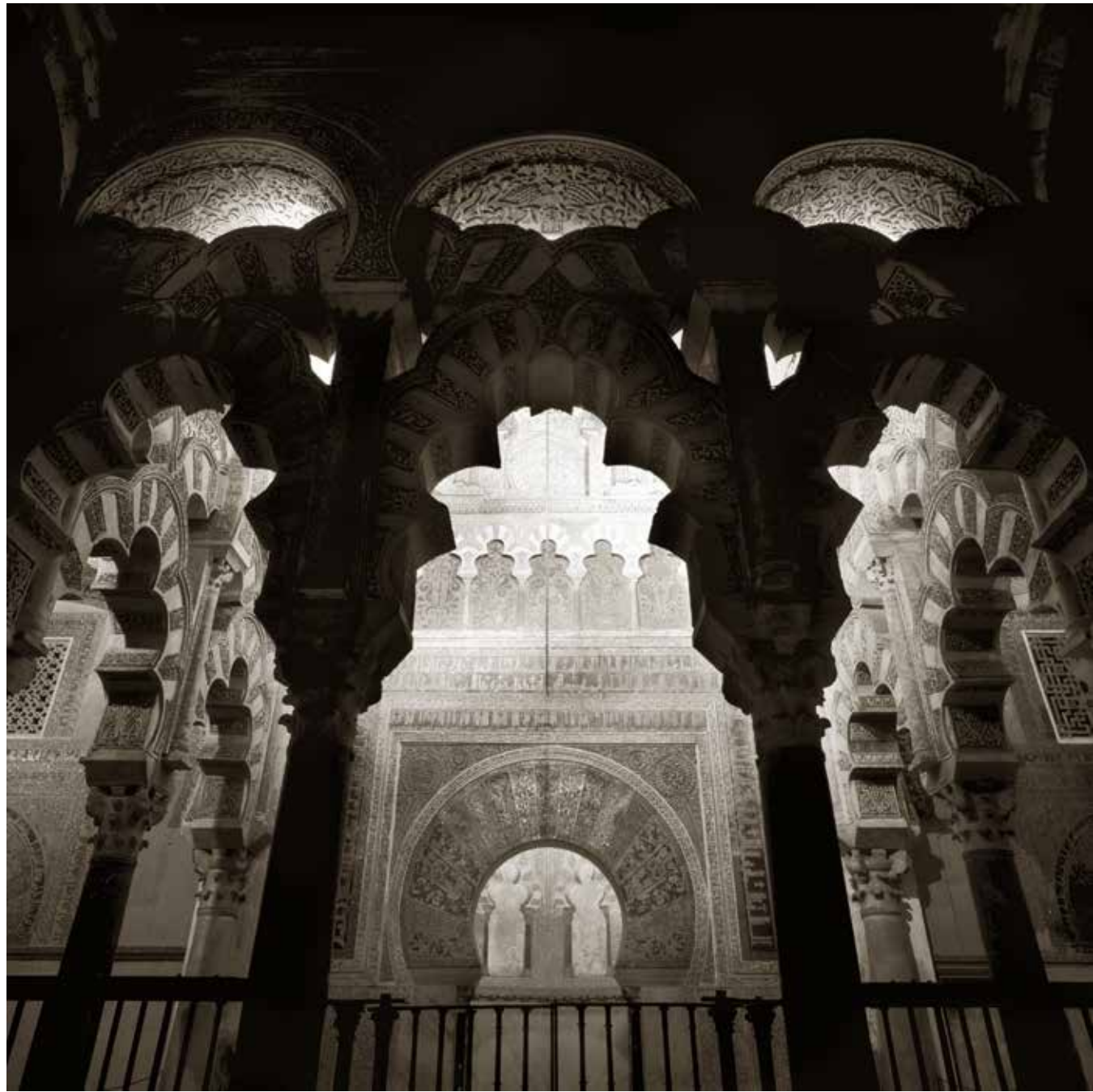
Al Khaznah, Nabataean City of Petra, Jordan



Spiral Minaret at Great Mosque of Samarra, Iraq, 1990



Temple of Bacchus, Baalbeck, Lebanon, 1995



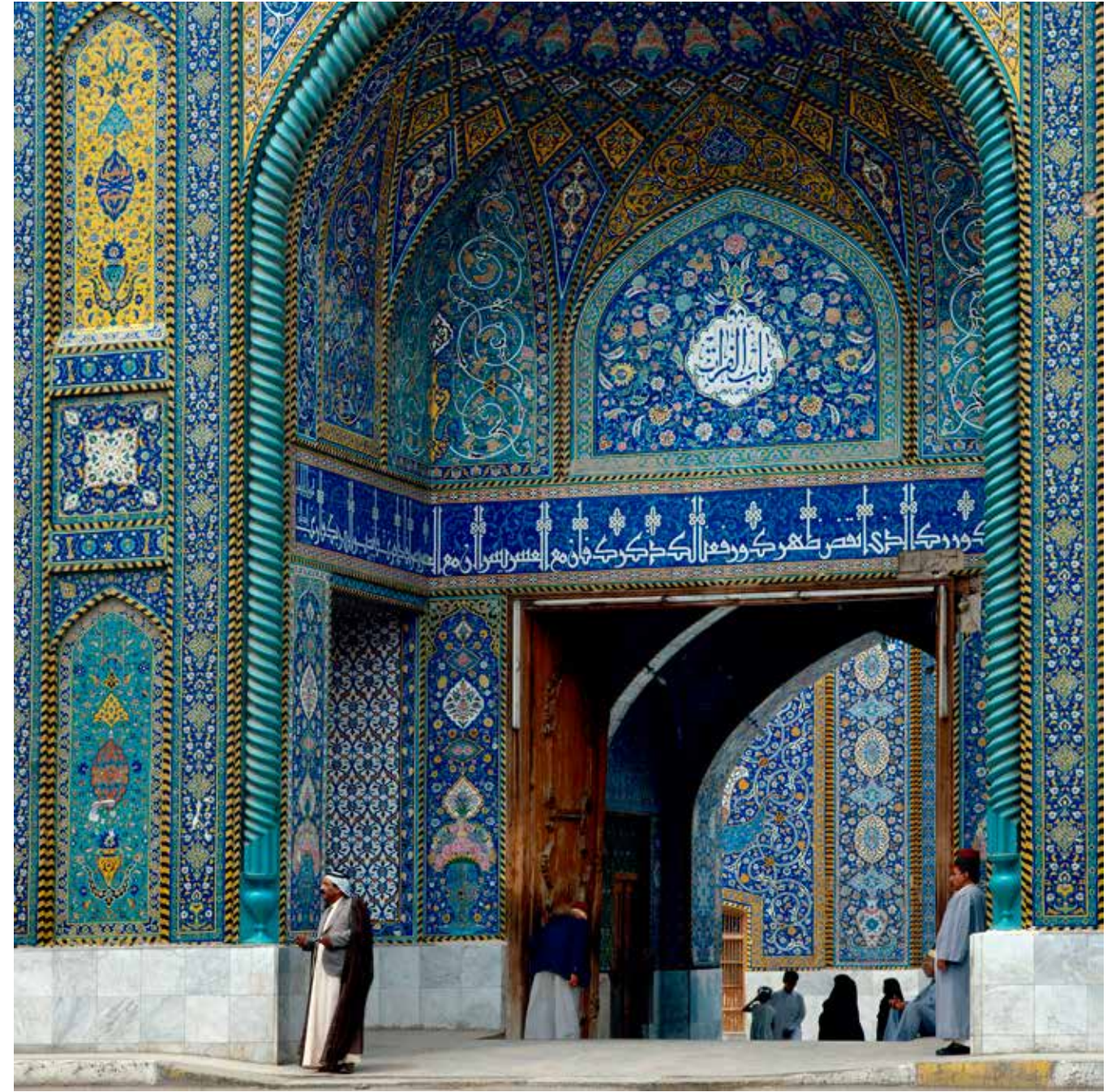
Mihrab at Mosque-Cathedral of Cordoba, Spain



Altar, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Old City of Jerusalem



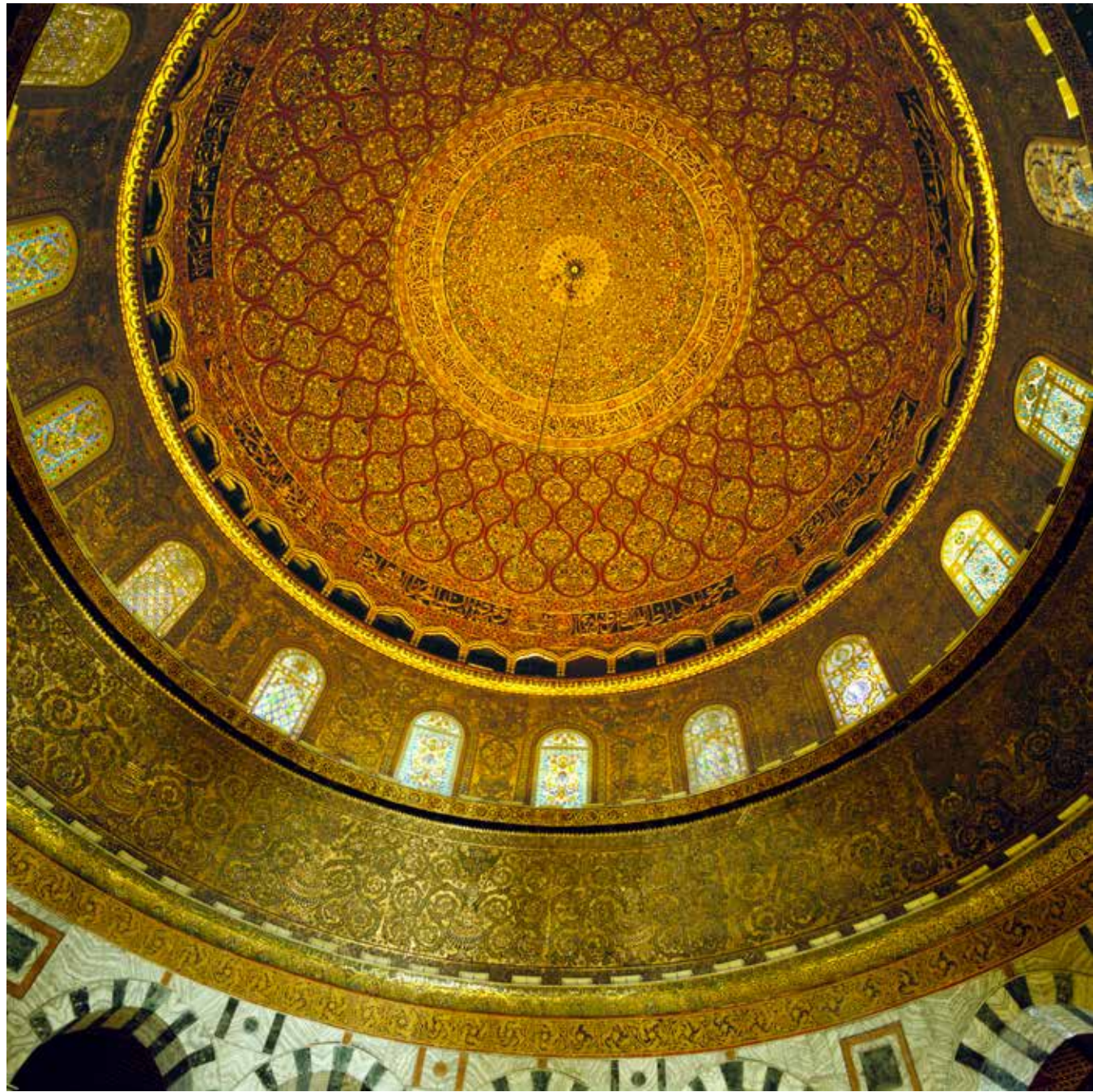
The Sweeper, Great Hypostyle Hall, Karnak, Egypt



Holy men at Karbala Mosque, Iraq



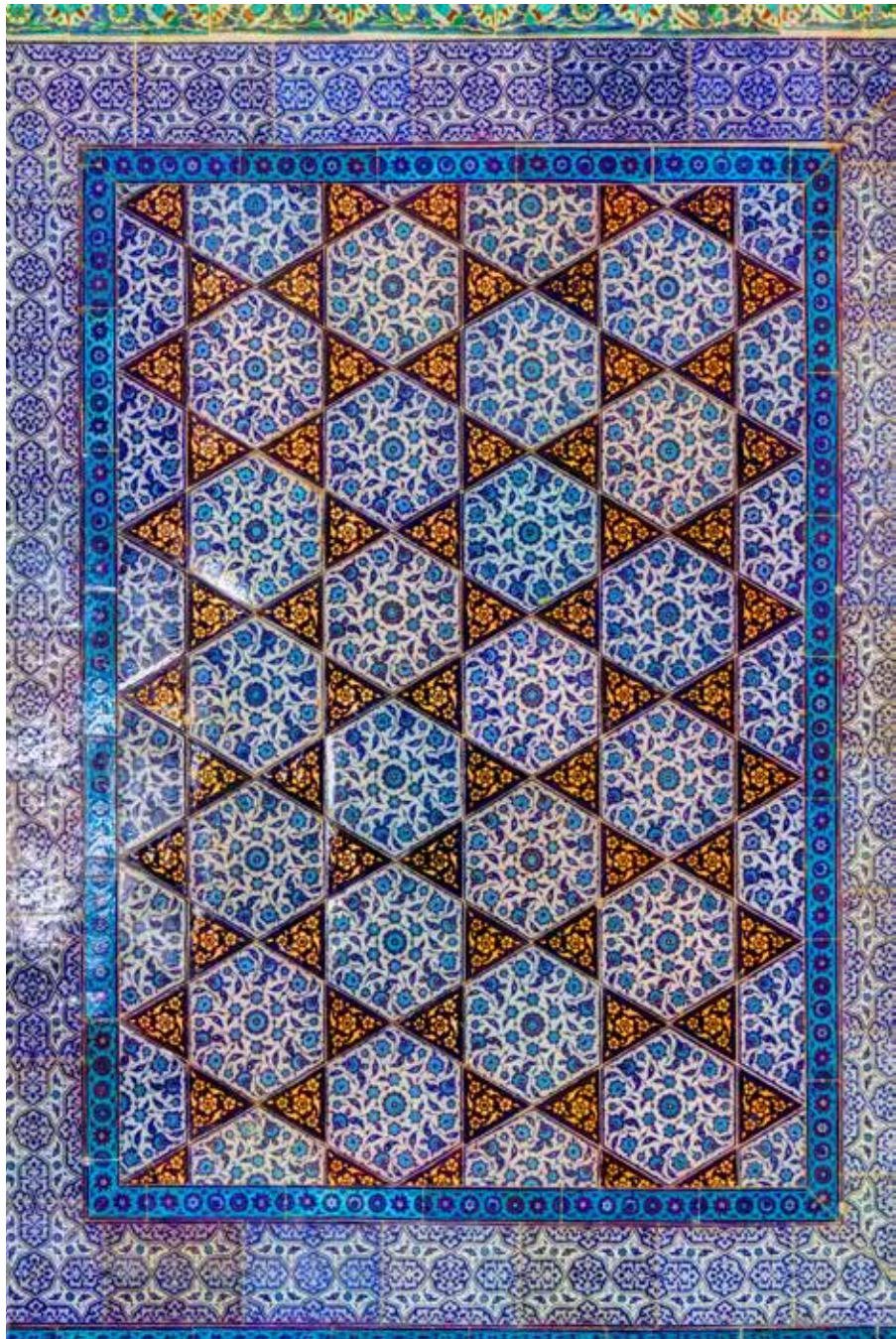
Great Mosque of Samarra, Iraq, 1990



Interior Dome at Haram esh-Sharif, Old City of Jerusalem, 1990



Mihrab at Al Aqsa Mosque, Old City of Jerusalem



Iznik Star Tiles at Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey, 2015



Dome, Baghdad Pavillion, Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey, 2015



Woman with Elaborate Nose Ring, Farafara Desert, Egypt, 1970s



Smiles: Bedouin and his Camel, Petra, Jordan



Girl in Pink Satin Dress, Ancient City of Ma-rib, Yemen, 2003



Three Young Women, Sana'a, Yemen, 2003



West Doorway, San Juan Bautista, Tlayacapan, Morelos, Mexico



Santa Maria Tonantzintla, Puebla, Mexico, 1995



Santuario del Señor de Villaseca, Guanajuato, Mexico, 1997



Church of the Virgin of the Assumption, Mama, Yucatan, Mexico, 1997



Domes atop Capilla Real and Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, Cholula, Puebla, Mexico, 1995



Tarahumara Men at San Francisco Javier de Satevó, Barrancas del Cobre, Chihuahua, Mexico



Tarahumara Ball Players, Barrancas del Cobre, Chihuahua



Flower Mosaic: 350 years of Our Church, Puebla, Mexico



Bride at Our Lady of the Assumption, Zacatecas, Mexico, 2005



Serpent in the Choir Loft, Convento of San Agustín, Acolman, Mexico



Confirmation Ceremony, Church of the Convent of Guadalupe, Zacatecas, Mexico, 2005



Painted Murals of Cacaxtla Archaeological Site, Tlaxcala, Mexico



Altars: Painted Wishes in San Luis Potosi and Sad Christ with Milagros, Oaxaca



Iglesia de San Francisco, Uricho, Michoacán, Mexico, 2008-2009



Three Generations: Michoacán, Mexico, 2008-2009



Vegetable Market at Chichicastenango, Guatemala



Young Woman on Steps Covered with Pine Needles, Santo Tomas Church, Chichicastenango, Guatemala



Temple of Inscriptions, Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico, 1997



San Francisco del Valle de Tilaco, Queretaro, Mexico



Pyramid of the Magician, Uxmal, Yucatan, Mexico, 1997



Façade of the Hall of State, Fair Park, Dallas, Texas, 2000



Six Flag Monuments at the Esplanade: USA, Confederacy, Spain, France, Fair Park, Dallas, Texas



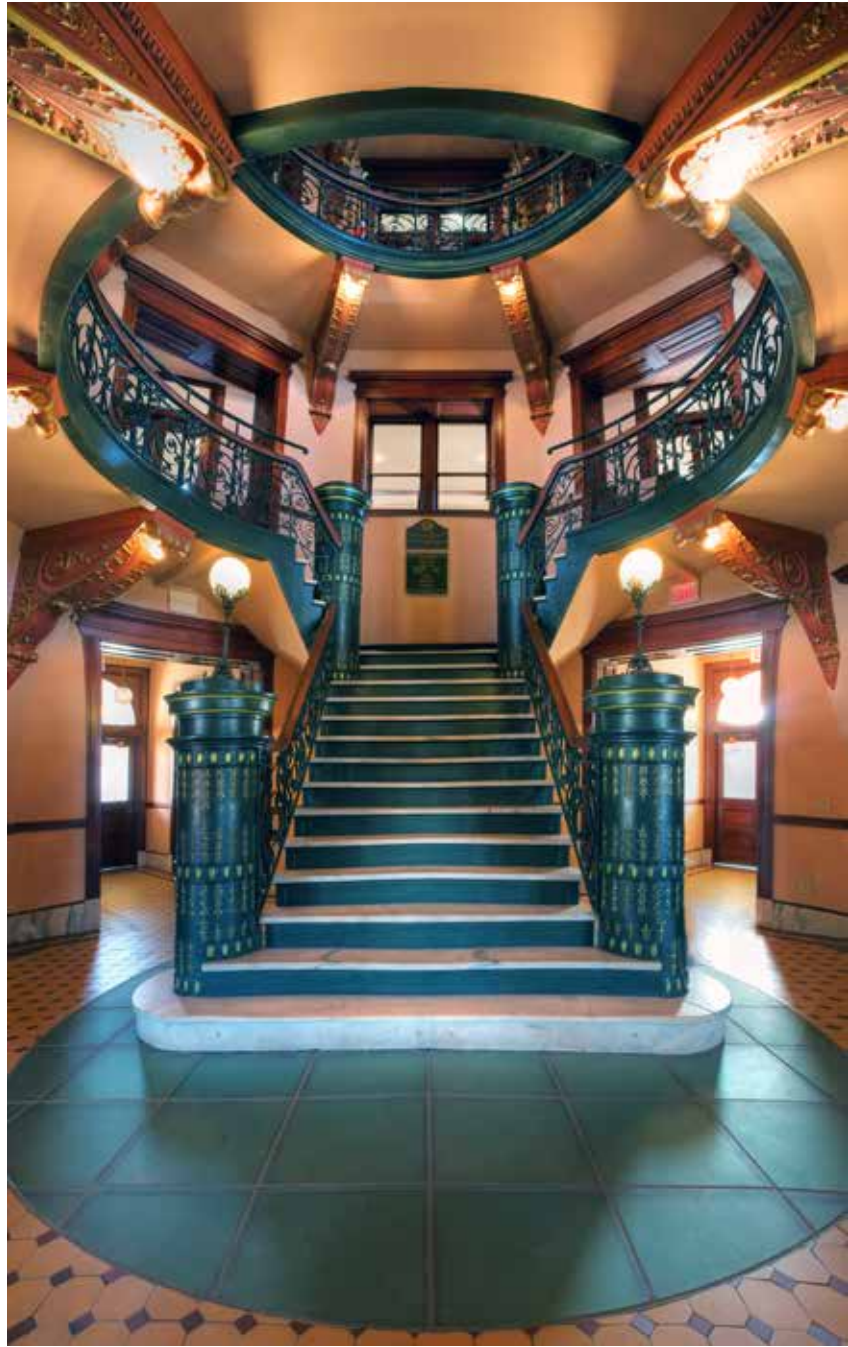
High View toward the city, the Esplanade at Fair Park, Dallas, Texas



The Texas Star Ferris Wheel, State Fair of Texas, Dallas, 1999



The Pegasus Flies High over Dallas, Texas, 2001



Harrison County Courthouse Stairway, Marshall, Texas



Stairways Up and Down at Hill County Courthouse, Hillsboro, Texas



Dome at Johnson County Courthouse, Cleburne, Texas



Big Doorway, Swift Plant, Fort Worth, Texas, 2016



Bird Watching at the Swift Plant, Fort Worth, Texas, 2016



View of the Grotto, Swift Plant, Fort Worth, Texas, 2016



Dick and Charlie's Tearoom, Caddo Lake, Texas, 2014



Henry and His Boss with Karen at Johnson's Ranch, Uncertain, Caddo Lake, Texas, 2014



Flying Ibis at Caddo Lake, Texas, 2014



Caddo State Park in the Fall, Caddo Lake, Texas, 2014



Early Light at Caddo Lake, 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you, Carolyn, for the opportunity to work alongside you and dig into your life's work, which always included delightful conversations over a cup of tea. Both your memories and photographs whisked me away to distant lands and brought glimpses of past lives and places, discoveries of new colors and textures, and a convening of the natural and spiritual worlds.

A heartfelt thank you to my design team, Katrina Saunders and Hannah Hadidi, who without you this catalog would not be possible.

And a final thank you to the EODIAH family who supported this project from its inception. Especially to Rick Brettell, for his insightful words and introduction to Carolyn's work.

LAUREN LAROCCA, EODIAH UT Dallas

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CAROLYN BROWN is a Dallas-based photographer who has traveled the world to photograph famous places and ancient architecture. This catalogue is published in conjunction with her retrospective exhibition *CAROLYN BROWN A Retrospective* with works that span her career, a show produced by the Edith O'Donnell Institute of Art History, the University of Texas at Dallas, at the SP/N Gallery, printed by the University of Texas at Dallas, curated by Lauren LaRocca.

Back cover image: *Photographer Carolyn Brown with her Victorian Bulldogge, Leroy. Photograph by Lyndall Dyer.*



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