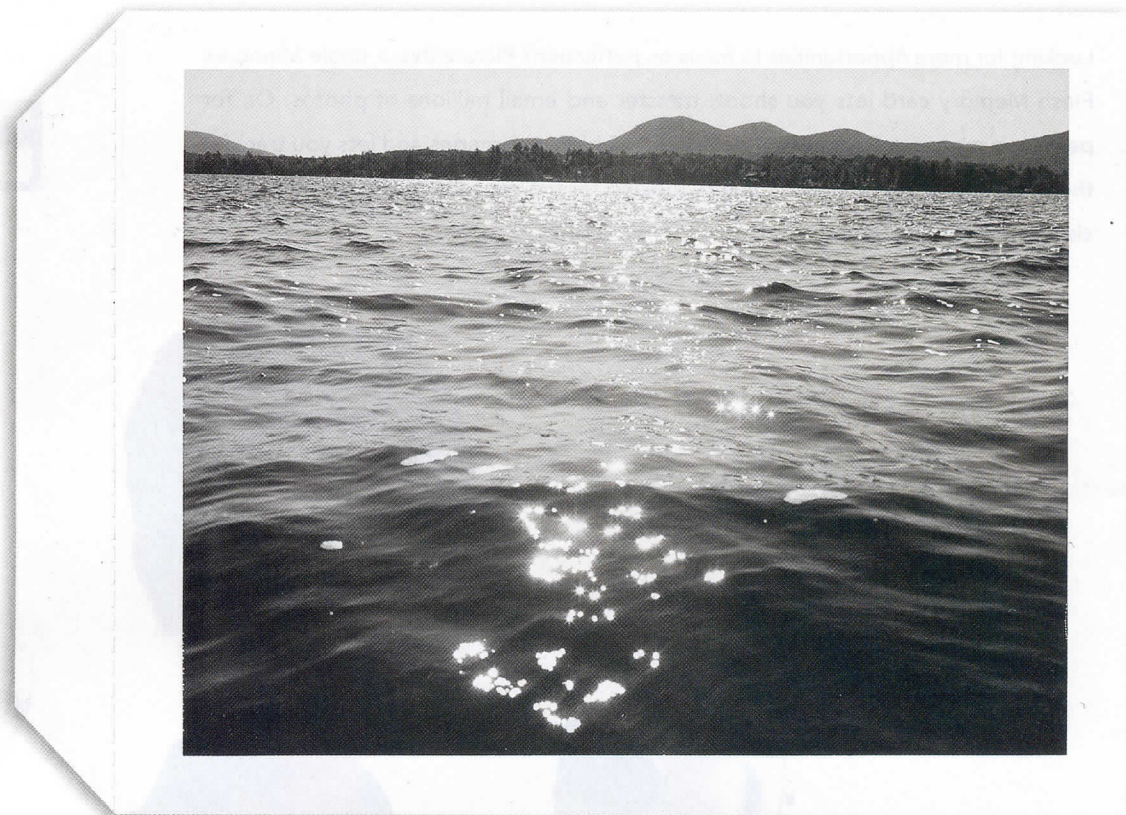


Bruce Weber
shot these
Polaroids for
American Photo
with the Littman
45 Single.

Camp Weber



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The famed fashion photographer takes a handmade camera to his summer retreat. By Russell Hart

When you go out on assignments, most of the time you're sitting around for hours waiting for girls' hair and makeup to be done," says Bruce Weber. "And I don't like just sitting around—I like taking pictures. So one thing I try to do during that down time is shoot with different kinds of specialized cameras. I use them to take pictures of friends, landscapes, the sky."

Most recently, Weber, one of the most influential fashion photographers of our time, has been





shooting with the Littman 45 Single. Hand-built by photographer William Littman on the chassis of an old Polaroid 110 rollfilm camera, the 45 Single is the world's only single-window 4x5 with a coupled rangefinder. (See *Technology & Vision*, page 91, for more about the camera.) Why would Weber want to shoot with such a contraption? Because it allows him to combine the high quality of 4x5, a stodgy format he long avoided, with the ability to handhold the camera. That approach is fundamental to the freewheeling aesthetic of Weber's work. "I like to handhold things," declares the photographer, who says he recently compared notes with Helmut Newton about whether they could still hold a camera steady at 1/15 second. "I'm crazy that way."

So crazy, in fact, that Weber took the Littman 45 Single on a month-long summer vacation to his personal "camp" in New York's Adirondack Mountains, a place so isolated it's accessible only by canoe. To show *American Photo* what the camera can do, Weber (who ordinarily shoots with a Pentax 67) took these 4x5 peel-apart Polaroids of friends and visitors. "I've been going to the camp for 12 years," says Weber, "so I've seen these kids grow up."

Weber feels that while the 45 Single is simpler to use than a regular 4x5, "you do have to be involved with the camera to get something good from it. It's sort of like a human being." But it's harder, he says, to adapt to Adirondack light. "I have to spend two weeks every July getting used to the light up there," he says. "It's mountain light—a bit overhead and into the valleys. The way I get to know it again is to take long walks with our golden retrievers, because they don't ever hold still, and the light's changing every second. Sometimes your meter reading just doesn't mean anything." ■