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# Alan HENRIKSEN

## Seaweed Abstractions | Seawall, Maine

Online Exhibition: January 9<sup>th</sup> – February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013

One of the strategies employed by photographic artists, especially those trying to extend the camera's ability to describe, is to take a subject matter we all know, and transform it... just enough, if they are truly adept, to make us view it as if for the first time... no mean trick. The result, when it's done with grace and intensity, is that they now *own* what they see, especially the way they see it. If anyone doesn't think Edward Weston owns peppers, let me know.

Here, the topic is seaweed. This particular seaweed lives in the waters along the coast of Maine. Of course if you are not a marine biologist, that fact tells you nothing. Henriksen shows you, in prints that are exemplary, what you need to know.

How seaweed can look like shiny, razor-edged cut sheet metal, or O'Keeffe-like folds of Iris petals, or arras gently billowing in afternoon breezes on a hill overlooking the Aegean... take your pick. And certainly when we think of our own seaweed encounters, we hardly ever think of the kind of luminosity exhibited as native in these images. The light defines their forms, and especially their edges, and even though the depth of the space described in these photographs is no more than a foot, at most, the light also defines their volumes. There is an intricate layering of three dimensional parts that speaks of complexity. And even though the water hardly shows, there is the trace of its action in the sense of movement of the fronds... an adagio choreography which softly lulls you as you watch, and adds, as you look from one image to the next, to your sense of wonder.