

This little girl weighed 20 ounces at birth. A stranger's promise helped save her life.

LIFE

The Happiest the Whale in World



The
true—and often
harrowing—
story of what
it took to

FREE WILLY

MARCH 1996/\$3.95

03>



Harold Feinstein

New York City can be surreal—especially when seen through kaleidoscope eyes.

Carrying an inexpensive camera, Harold Feinstein spent hours a day walking the streets of his native Brooklyn. After a couple of years (and an upgrade to a 35mm), he showed his pictures to Edward Steichen, the director of photography at New York's Museum of Modern Art. Impressed, Steichen immediately bought the work and included it in an exhibition. Harold Feinstein was 18 years old. For the next four decades he continued to shoot simple black-and-white photos of New York City. But he longed to see it in a different way. In 1989, inspired by a lifelong fascination with kaleidoscopes, he finally figured out how. Says Feinstein of his first view through the lens he invented: "It was dazzling."



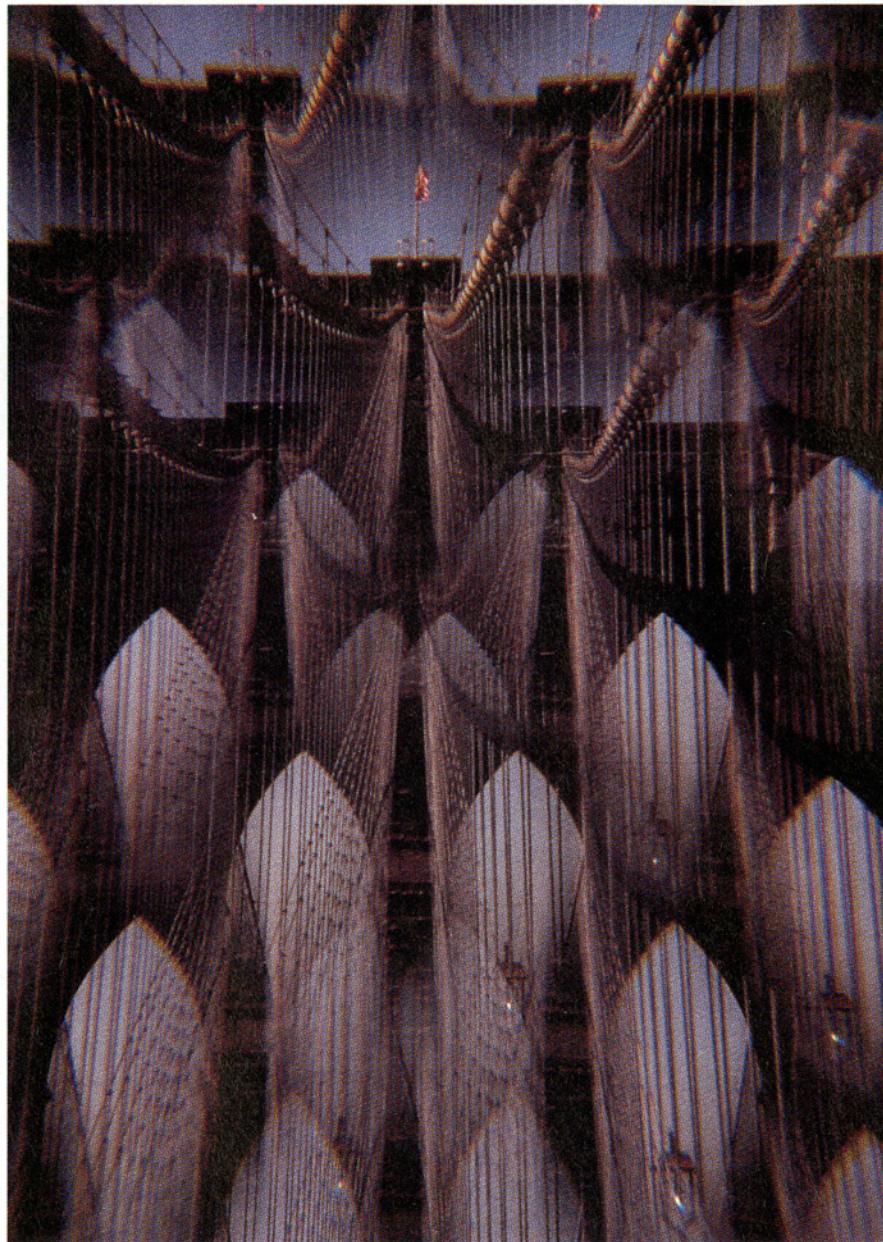
JUDITH THOMPSON

Right: Battery Park City, lower Manhattan, 1993. Feinstein says: "Every time I looked through a kaleidoscope I said, 'I wish I could photograph this.'"

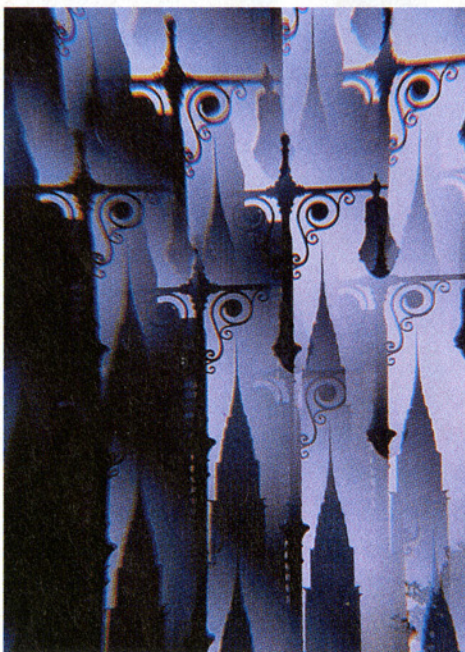
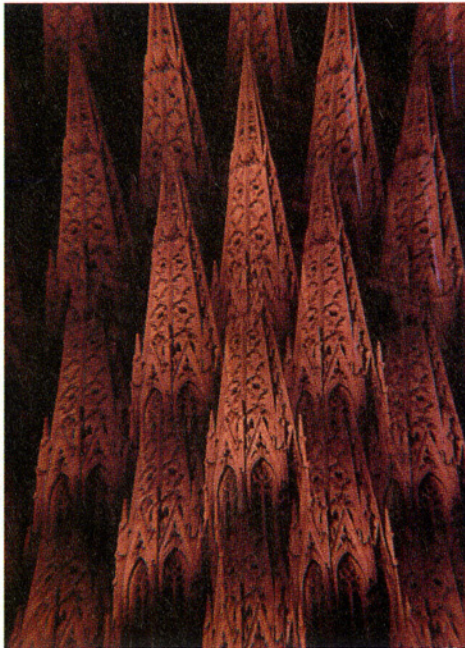




Brooklyn Bridge, 1990



St. Patrick's Cathedral, 1991



East 42nd Street and the Chrysler Building, 1993

"The city has been reduced to a cliché. The challenge is to rediscover it."

All Feinstein will say about his invention is that he built it out of glass and plastic prisms—some curved and faceted, some angular and smooth. He mounts it in front of his lens so that he can manipulate it easily. There is no dark-room or computer trickery in the process; the photographs show what Feinstein sees through the viewfinder. And the images achieve exactly what he had hoped they would. "We've forgotten the vitality and awesome monumentality of this metropolis," says the photographer, whose other work includes images of the Korean War and close-ups of flowers and seashells. "On one hand, you want to see your subject well. On the other, you want to be caught off guard, to retain the spontaneity. If you know it too well, you stop seeing it."

—SASHA NYARY