



INTRODUCTION

GRAHAM NASH

For most of my life I've enjoyed images. It's probably because I don't remember seeing many on the walls of our home in Salford, near Manchester in the north of England. Most of the images I remember were in magazines in the dentist and doctors' offices I went to as a child.

My father was a workingman, and his main joy in life, aside from his family, was to take photos of us and develop them at home. One day he showed me the printing process by having me watch as he set up a simple darkroom. The vision of an image coming into being from absolutely nowhere shocked me. It was just a blank piece of paper in a tray of colorless liquid, or so I thought. Watching the image of a zoo elephant I had taken that very day appear before me on that blank paper exposed me to the magic of photography. I have never lost my sense of absolute wonder at the gift I was given that day. I was eleven years old, the year I took my own first successful image, a portrait of my mother.

I began playing music in the late fifties. By the time I was eighteen I had left the shelter of my home, become independent, and was actually able to make money doing what I loved most, making music. As I got older I began to collect images, images that changed my life and moved my soul. First it was images from the incredibly brilliant mind of M. C. Escher, then German Expressionism and novels in woodcuts by Frans Masereel and Lynd Ward with the tales told only with images...and then at the end of 1969 I bought a Diane Arbus photograph of a child in Central Park with a hand grenade clutched in his hand. I had recently finished my song "Teach Your Children," and this image moved me deeply. I began to collect photography with a passion—fantastic slices of other people's loves and lives—and my life has not been the same since.

In the early 1980s, with the help of my friend R. Mac Holbert, I began scanning some of my own images into a computer with a Thunderscanner, which was a small scanner head that you put into an Apple Dot Matrix printer in place of the ink cartridge. The item to be scanned was fed into the printer—just like loading paper into a typewriter—and special software activated the print head, which scanned the paper or the image line by line. Playing around with this system was intriguing, but when I began to get serious about the images, I discovered that there was no way to get them off the screen successfully. I tried everything—photographing the screen, thermal prints and wax prints. There weren't a lot of choices available in those early days.

We also had some very simple image manipulation software called Digital Darkroom. I really wanted to see several of my images in a large size. The search for a large print led us to an organization at UCLA. It was the Jetgraphix workshop, set up with assistance from the Fuji Corporation. I called and spoke with the manager, John Bilotta, and we printed several of my pictures. The results, though exciting, still left much to be desired. The pixels in the images were about the size of a food tray, but at least they were printed on decent paper. John mentioned that he had heard about a printer from Iris Graphics back east that was used to make quality proofs for the printing industry. Around the same time, my friend Charlie Wehrenberg and his brother Paul, who worked for Apple, put me in touch with Steve Boulter from Iris Graphics. Steve was in charge of developing relationships with people—artists in particular—who wanted to use Iris's

Graham Nash, *The Man Jan Sees*, Sag Harbor, New York, 1969. This portrait of David Crosby was the first image produced by Nash Editions. The negative had been lost, and a 24" x 30" print was made from a scan of the original proof sheet.