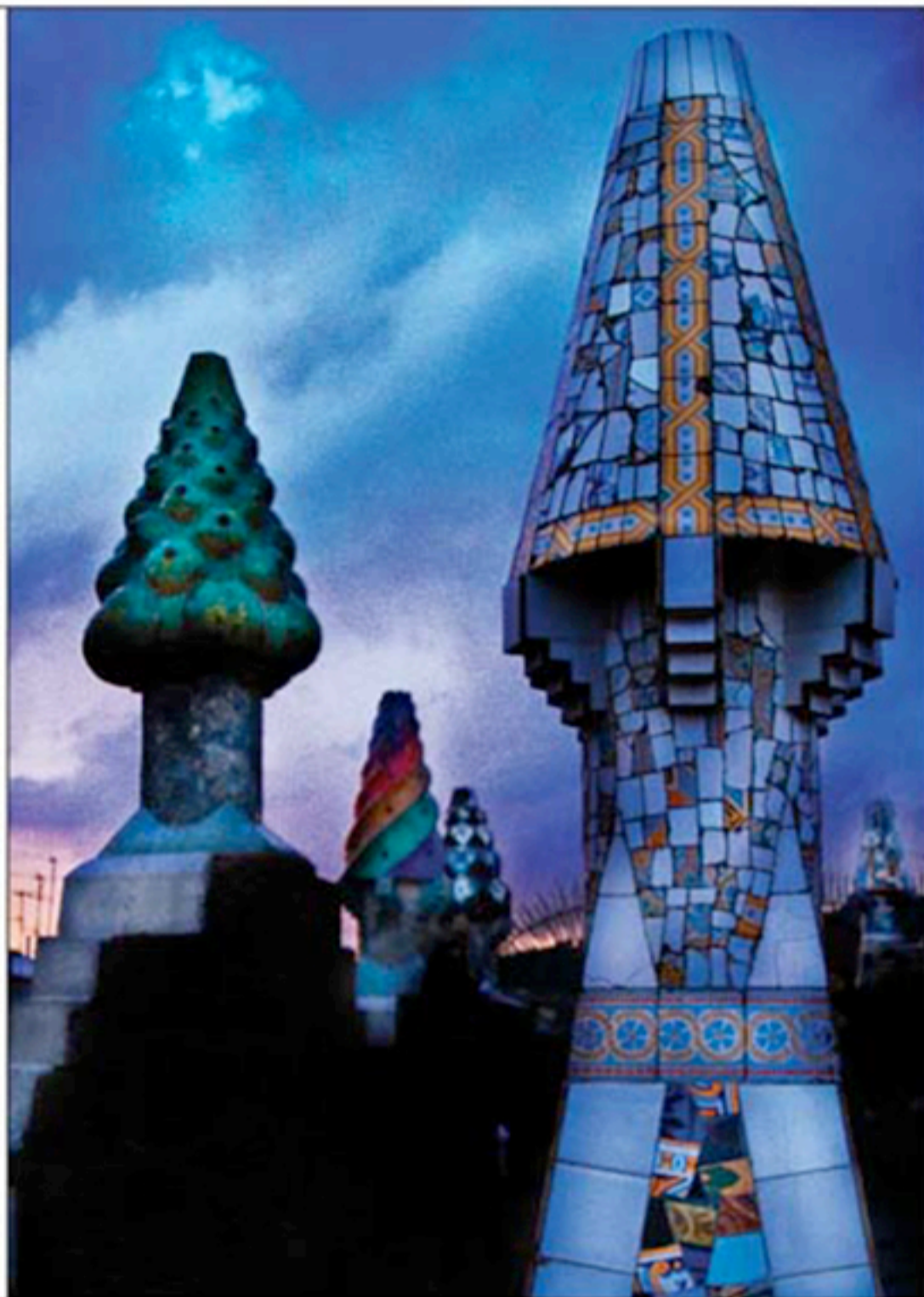


[Architectural art] For Jeff Condit, a photograph is just the entry point to a fantasy world of colors and shapes

Editing the world



BY ANGELA ALLEN

In 2000, as Jeff Condit took photos of Antoni Gaudi's elaborate unfinished Sagrada Familia cathedral facade in Barcelona, Spain, his vision of what his work could become opened wider than a large-aperture lens.

Condit's work — which he doesn't call photography — uses the photograph as just the starting place. "I use the image to lay the foundation," says the 57-year-old Portlander. "Then I go off into a fantasy world and create a new piece."

Condit's photographs, often drawn or painted on, evolve into "more of a sketch that I can change at any time," he says, contradicting purists' beliefs that a photo shouldn't be tampered with.

He uses computer technology and archival pro-

cesses and materials, such as paper with a tooth, or surface texture, rather than traditional photography sheets. His methods are more familiar to fine artists than to photographers. Using these techniques, he turns a shot of the Broadway Bridge under construction into a heady piece of vivid blurred colors and half shapes by multiplying the image into a diptych, or double image. In his "Urban Studies" series, he morphs Portland parking garages, the Brewery Blocks and Albers Mill into dream-

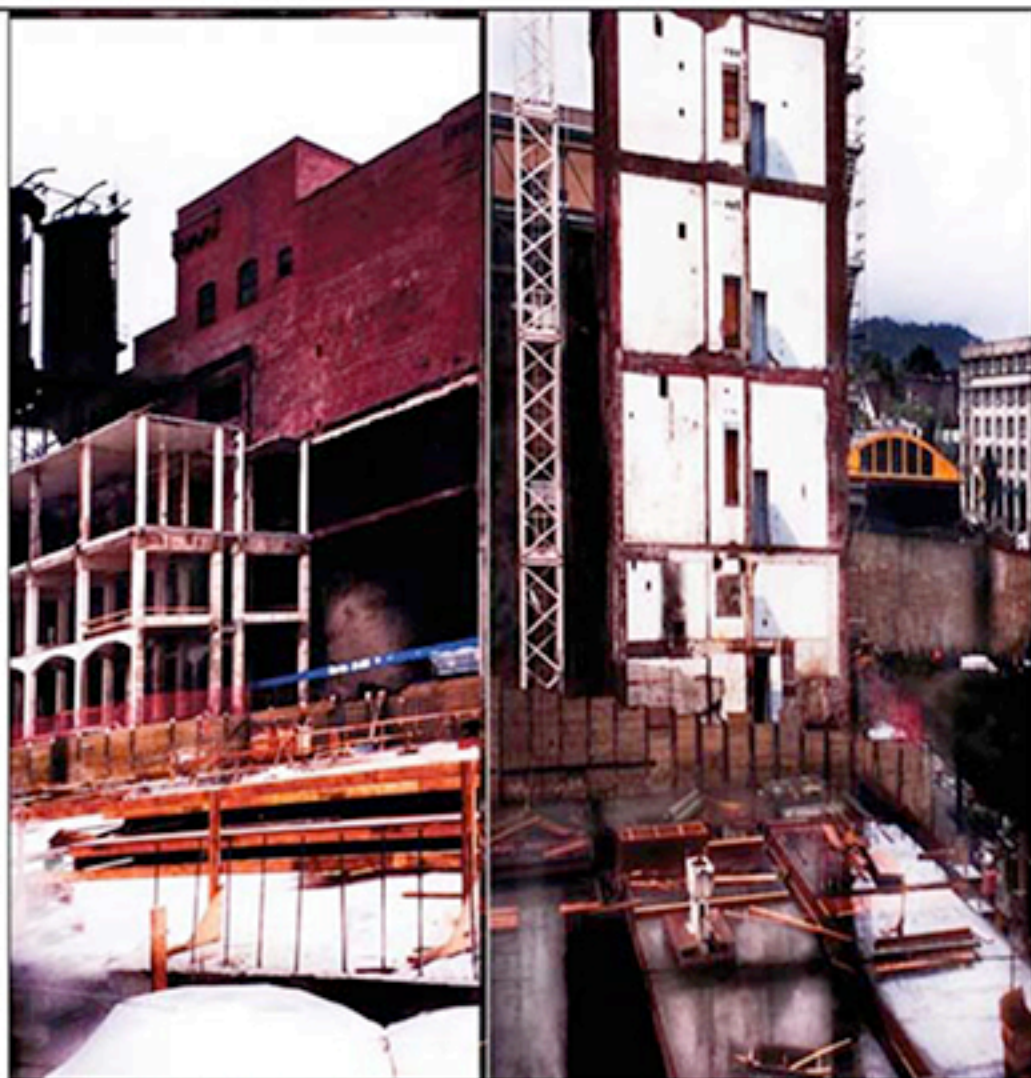
like art.

Still, Condit zeroes in on structure. "I've always been into composition and design and use of space. Architects are sensitive about space, too."

Architects like his work. Oh planning + design, a downtown Portland architectural firm, displayed Condit's pieces for several events and settled on buying one.

Condit had a long career as a commercial photographer before he exchanged continued on page 32

Jeff Condit's work (clockwise from top left): "Seattle Combine," "Palau Guell," "Inside Out Sagrada Familia." // PHOTOS COURTESY OF JEFF CONDIT (WWW.JEFFCONDIT.COM/DETAIL/)



his Hasselblad for a point-and-shoot and began experimenting seven years ago. "My stuff has been gradually fragmenting into changing imagery. I'm stretching and pulling the image, but I do it with static, structural forms. The lines began to blur more and more" between reality and imagination, photography and mixed media.

The lifelong Portlander graduated from Lincoln High School and studied at Portland Community College, Portland State University and the Portland Art Museum's school. Most of his visual education,

he says, has been hands-on. Condit never dreamed of leaving town to shoot elsewhere. He grew up in the family business alongside his father, Don, at Condit Studio in Southeast Portland.

His work is often displayed on First Thursdays in the Pearl or downtown. At his newly renovated Studio 1636 at 1636 S.E.10th Ave., the former Condit Studio that he shares with photographers Ed Gowans and Bob Bahner, he hosts First Friday art shows and continues to experiment with the limits of photography. "I capture the world loosely and edit it to fit."