

feature

# Digital Maneuvers

*Leaving Behind the Dark Room*

By Renée Targos



*Cosimo on the Seawall* (15" x 10")  
by Gay Ribisi.



*Space Cleaner*  
(20" x 30") by  
Gay Ribisi.

## WATER

Having shellacked a pizza for an underwater photo shoot, California photographer Gay Ribisi gives her subjects a "floating in space" look. Using an underwater film camera for initial images, Ribisi selects shots to work up in Photoshop. For her WET show, in most of the images she removed bubbles, achieving the anti-gravity illusion.

Presently, Ribisi, is taking totally digital portraits of children and placing them in spacious environments. Receiving two honorable mentions from the Women In Photography International's 2006 annual portrait competition, Ribisi who studied art at Berkeley University in the 1960s, says about using Photoshop, "It's very much like painting. I can use different colors, smooth out skin, it feels like painting."

While Ribisi believes that a digital image can be "flatter looking than film," she says the trade off is that digital is immediate. "I used to be in the dark room until 5 a.m., getting a print just right," says Ribisi. "I can spend less time on the computer and not use up paper or chemicals."

Digital also allows Ribisi greater flexibility in its multiple image storage. Creating a flip-book of images documenting the work of actor/photographer Jason Lee in creating his book, *Instant America*, Ribisi says she "uses around 45,000 images. It's like a movie. I could never do that with film."