

ROBIN McDONALD

A native of London, England, Robin came to Alabama with his parents in 1966. He is a graduate of Emory University with a *BA cum laude*, and Columbia University with an MA, both in art history. Returning to Birmingham, he switched careers to graphic design and photography. In 1979 he became the art director of *Horizon* magazine, a national arts magazine. 1981 he received a Gold and a Bronze Medal from the Art Director's Club of New York for his work on *Horizon*.

Since 1984 Robin has been a freelance graphic artist and photographer with a studio in Leeds. He has been the designer of *Alabama Heritage* magazine since 1991, and has been recognized by the CASE awards for academic publications. He is the author of two books published by the University of Alabama Press: *Heart of a Small Town: Photographs of Alabama Towns* (2003), and, with Valerie Pope Burns, *Visions of the Black Belt: A Cultural Survey of the Heart of Alabama* (2015). He is an active member of PaperWorkers Local, a printmaking cooperative in Birmingham.

Robin's photographs have been included in three exhibitions at the Georgine Clarke Alabama Artists Gallery of the Alabama State Council on the Arts, and in a juried exhibition at the Gadsden Museum of Art. In 2021, he had a one-man show at PaperWorkers Local in Birmingham. This is his second exhibition at the Leeds Art Center.

RHYTHM OF THE WEST

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBIN McDONALD

I made my first trip to the American West more than fifty years ago, as a teenager. Having grown up in England, I fell in love with the vastness of the western landscape. My family and I made two more trips to the West in the next five years, but I had not had a chance to make the same sort of rambling road trips until recently, when my younger son Shaun moved to Denver. In May and June of 2019, we visited some of the places I had not seen since that first trip in 1966. In many ways it was like seeing them for the first time. These images are from the first half of the trip, across Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona, to California. They are studies of the stunning landforms and breathtaking skies of the desert Southwest, some taken at the iconic sites, some just by pulling over to the side of the road.