

## GALLERY: An avgeek's breathtaking photographic tribute to #AirportsFromAbove

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On a regular GlobalAirportCities.com Twitter hunt for images of "#AirportsFromAbove" content and community manager Niki May Young hit the jackpot, finding Jeffrey Milstein. With an upcoming exhibition 'Flying over airports' that showcases this architect's passion for aviation with splendour, we had to find out more...

**Jeffrey - tell me a bit about your professional background...**

I had never really thought about becoming a photographer when I was young. In high school I was into art, I loved drawing and painting. But I was warned against such nonsense and directed toward a profession - so I chose architecture.

I became an architect and worked on early prefab bolt-together houses and solar designs. I always loved graphic design and in the mid-eighties started a design studio where I published a set of architectural note cards. They were a big hit, and I went on to develop a whole line of photographic note cards.

I started to take more photos, and took a photo class with Jay Maisel. That really sparked my interest. In 2000 I sold the design company, and decided to spend my time doing fine art photography.

***Where does your personal interest in aviation come from?***

As a child I loved to go to the end of the runway in LA, where I grew up, and have the planes fly very low right overhead on landing. I loved the feeling of being so close.

When I started to photograph seriously, I had a vision of making really large photos of the planes from the front as they are ominously coming at you. As I took the photos I realized that they were beautiful objects at the moment that they passed right overhead. The challenge was to get the detail I wanted at the exact moment, stopping the motion in perfect focus. The first ones didn't have as much detail. It is only with the latest high-end digital cameras that I am finally able to get the quality images that I had imagined.

***How many planes have you photographed?***

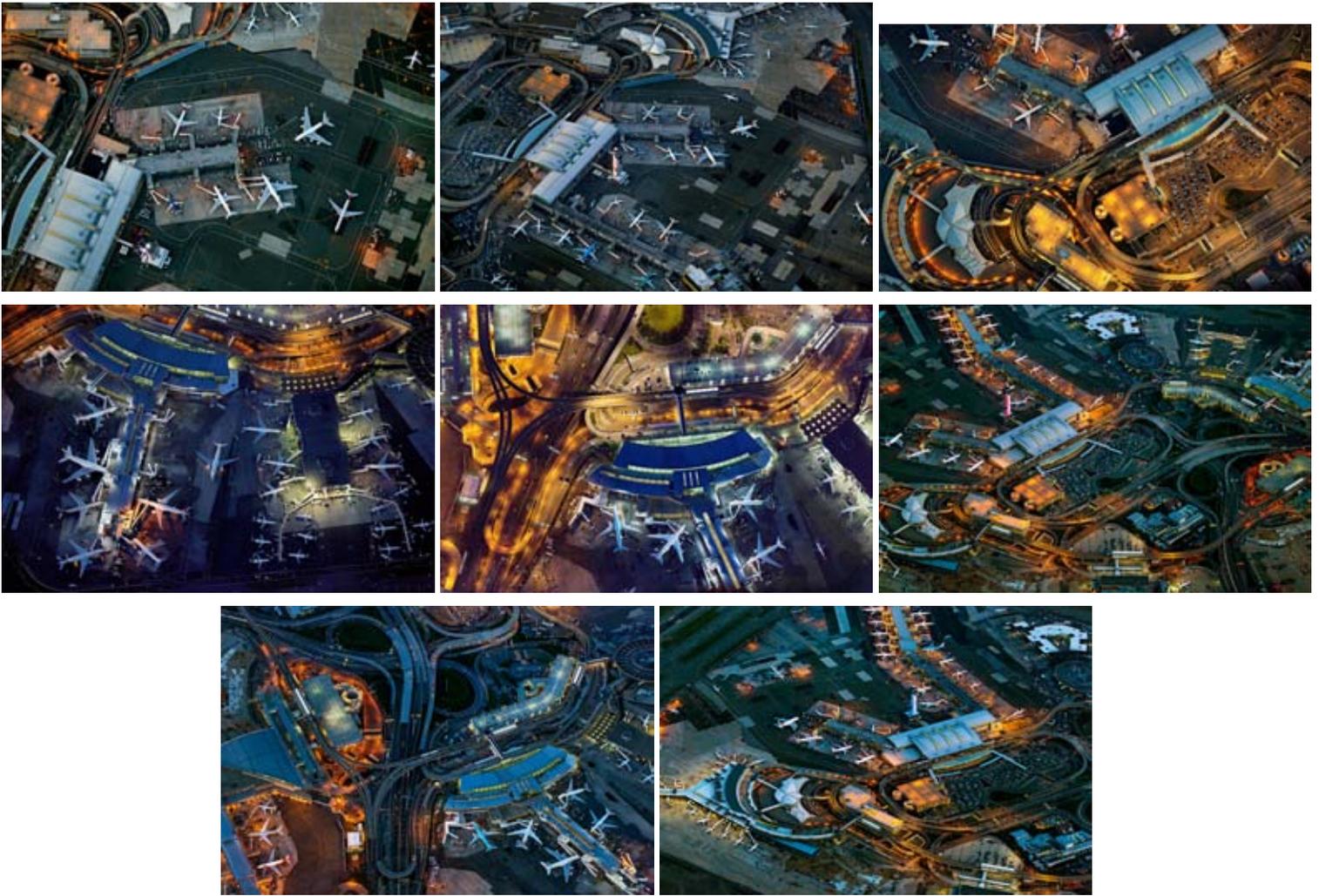
I have photographed countless planes. I usually go out expecting to spend four to six hours at a time during which I will shoot between 50 - 75 images. Out of that I might have a few, or no really good shots: the pilot has to be in exactly on course (any cross wind makes this a problem on landing); the plane's wings have to be exactly level at the moment when I shoot the picture; pilots are constantly making corrections using roll; and I need to have perfect timing, panning and focus. A lot of things have to come together.

***When did you start taking an interest in airports for photography?***

I think that the first camera I had was a Keystone 8mm movie camera when I was about 14. I went out to the airport and made movies of the planes flying overhead as they were landing. When I got my pilots license I used to fly around over LA taking movies from the air. I was always fascinated by how things looked from above. In 2000 I started to seriously work on the aircraft portfolio. Last year I started the airport series.

***Which airport locations have you photographed?***

The airports portfolio is much newer and I have photographed mostly nearby airports, JFK, LGA, SWF, ALB, EWR, TEB, and POU. I have had interest from a book publisher, but they want many more airports. It is expensive to do this kind of photography and without a sponsor to support the project, I don't think I will be able to get enough airports photographed. ("Know of anyone who'd be interested?!" he queries.)



***What do you find particularly interesting/appealing about photographing airplanes and airports?***

I just love airplanes, and the views from flying.

***What was the physical set up involved in enabling you to take the recent aerial photographs?***

I use Canon digital 35mm, and Phase one 80mpxl digital back on Contax 2 1/4, and Alpa cameras, mounted on a gyro and I have shot from Robinson helicopters and small private planes.

***What sort of planning went into arranging the aerial photographs?***

I have to arrange for an aircraft, have good weather, and hope the controllers are not too busy and will let me into the airspace.

***What have you noticed about the design of airports in your time photographing them?***

There are many similarities, but also many differences. People have to get into and out of the planes at the terminals, and so the planes have to pack themselves around the terminals. Some are round like at EWR, or linear like American at JFK. How the parking is handled is a major part of an airport. JFK is the most interesting I have photographed

because there are so many different terminals including the historic Saarinen TWA terminal. And they are still being torn down and rebuilt. It's interesting to see how the different modes of transportation interact. The cars, supply vehicles, the trams, usually elevated, and of course the planes.

**How do you envisage the shape of airports will change in the coming decades?**

I think the architecture will get more exciting. Terminals will be built using creative architects to improve the experience, hopefully the engineers will work with top-notch graphic designers and communication experts to improve the circulation problems for both cars and pedestrians that plague the large old airports like JFK.

**About Jeffrey Milstein**



With artistic ambitions and corralled into a 'serious' career, Jeffrey chose architecture as his creative outlet, graduating from the University of California at Berkeley. After working in the profession predominantly on prefabricated buildings, he set up a design studio publishing a set of architectural notecards. Having furthered his interest in photography, Jeffrey gave up the practice in 2000 to focus full-time on the art. His collections have been shown at Akron Art Museum, Ohio, Musée de l'Elysée, Switzerland, and the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art in New York to name a few.

**Jeffrey will shortly be showcasing the full exhibition at Bau-Xi Gallery, Toronto,**

**Canada. Learn more about Jeffrey's collections, including his current 'AirCraft: the Jet as Art' exhibition at [www.jeffreymilstein.com](http://www.jeffreymilstein.com)**

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