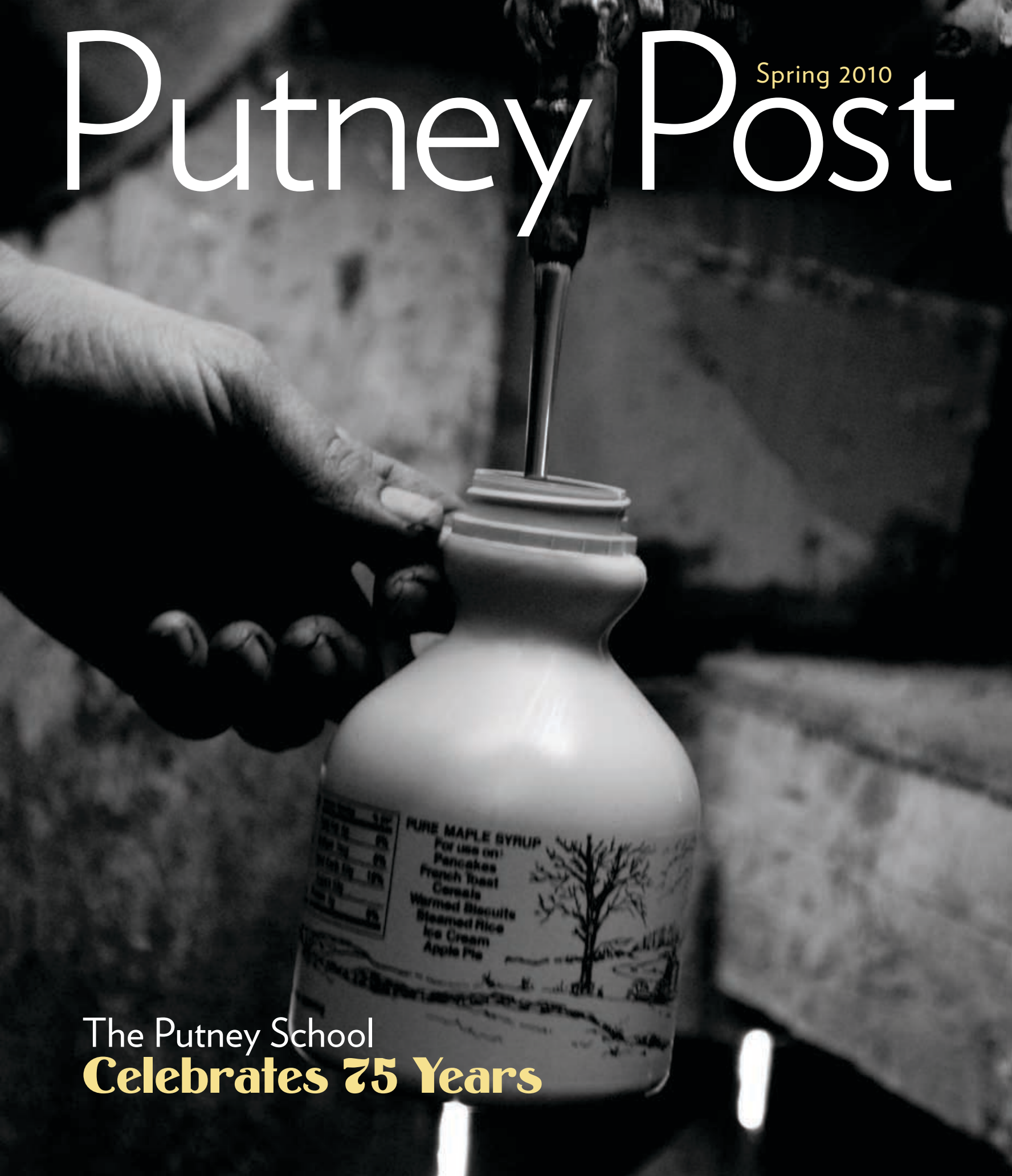


Putney Post

Spring 2010



The Putney School
Celebrates 75 Years



Cover Artist:
**Lydia
Gorham '10**

Ketchum, Idaho's Lydia Gorham '10 has recently returned from a work term with art photographer Sally Mann '69, whose show in the Michael S. Currier Center will most likely have come and gone by the time you read this. Lydia's work caught our eye last winter and we thought the moment she captured, while sugaring last year, apropos for Putney's 75th anniversary celebration issue. Here's what Lydia has to say about her photographic work and working with Sally Mann:

I shot this particular series on sugaring in digital, but I normally work in film.

I feel like there is a quality to film photographs that begins to get lost in the crisp, overly realistic world of digital photographs. Despite how time consuming it is, I love the almost ceremonial process of traditional photography; I feel that it gives you a connection to each print if you devote hours to its creation as opposed to simply connecting your camera to a computer.

I had never really done much art before coming to Putney. I started doing photography as my evening activity my first semester here and have been doing it ever since. I don't seriously pursue any other visual arts, but I try to take advantage of the arts program at Putney as much as possible and have done some printmaking, drawing, sculpture, and jewelry over my three years here.

What I appreciate most about the photography class is the freedom I have to create my own projects.

Your first semester you are supposed to take a Photo I class that focuses on learning the basics of composition, lighting, and darkroom techniques, but after that you are given the ability to pursue pretty much any project you want.

I did sugaring for my land-use credit over last year's March break. After the first day in the sugarhouse, I knew I wanted to take photos in there. The lighting combined with the steam rising from the boiler creates the perfect shooting environment, so I brought my camera the next day to shoot while we worked. I like this picture, but I wish I had brought my film camera instead that day. I feel like it captures dim lighting better, and I'm much more comfortable working in the darkroom adjusting contrast levels and lighting than in Photoshop.

I knew I wanted to do a work term with a fine art photographer and somehow through lots of emailing and waiting and a whole lot of luck I managed to get a work term with Sally Mann.

I went down to her beautiful farm in Lexington, Virginia where I lived and worked for two weeks. Most of the work

I did was scanning photographs and putting together a slide show for when Sally gives speeches. While not necessarily riveting work, I actually learned a lot from just getting a chance to sit down with all of her photographs and really examining them up close.

The PowerPoint starts with her earliest work, a nude photo from her senior year at Putney as a matter of fact (almost got her kicked out) and progresses through her professional photography career: *Still Time, At Twelve, Immediate Family, Deep South,* and *What Remains*. So I got to see how her photography had grown and advanced from the time she was my age to her current work.

Beyond scanning I also got to spend lots of time talking with Sally about what she was doing in the darkroom, see some of her printing methods and various prints she was working on and discuss the crazy business end of being a photographer. She was really great and super nice; I'm still kind of amazed that she let some random 17-year-old come live at her house for two weeks and nose about in her life.