

The Shinkansen Series: Tokyo to Osaka / March 2010

reviewed by [Lil Copan](#) in the [November 30, 2010](#) issue



These photos by Tim Lisko bring to mind fields of birch trees, beaches, ocean and skylines—or they may be seen as elements of pure design, strips and strings of light and dark, of shading and repetition. The Indiana-based Lisko took these photos while traveling on a bullet train from Tokyo to Osaka. High train speeds and lengthened exposures create an image so blurred as to produce strong patterns, lines, colors, depths—"something," the photographer notes, that "turned out to be a sense of balance, of simplicity, of stillness." A quote from poet and professor Lionel Basney speaks of the profound reengagement that photographs like these hint toward: "The question is, have you met whatever you take to be nonnegotiable—God, the divine, death, the ultimate ground of being—and held that encounter until the other declared its name?"

—Lil Copan