

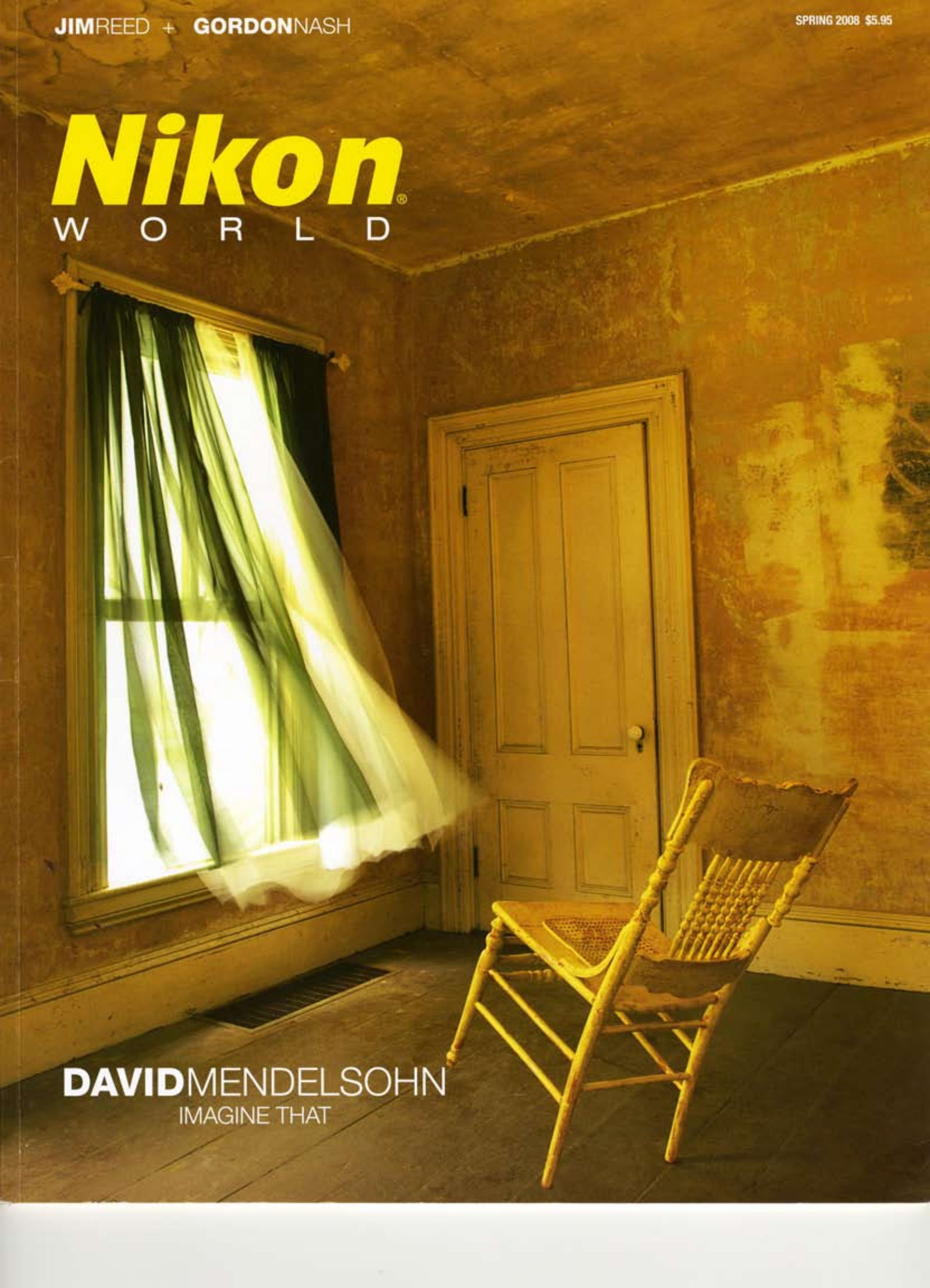
JIM REED + GORDON NASH

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W O R L D

DAVID MENDELSON
IMAGINE THAT





They're not models. They're real couples who've just been married. Somehow Gordon Nash gets them to look relaxed, comfortable, stylish... to look, well, just like models on a commercial shoot.



GORDON NASH
hawaiian eye



"I spend a lot of time with the couple. We're not in a hurry; we're enjoying the moment, and it's fun for them."

I set up situations for the couples so they're not thinking about the camera," Gordon Nash says. "That's the key to getting them to relax. If they feel they have to pose, they're definitely not going to be natural."

Then there's timing. Gordon takes the walk-around photos when the pressure's off—after the ceremony, after the posed group portraits. "I put the couple in a

relaxed setting, away from other people. Then, like a movie director, I'll give them a few cues. I'll say, 'Here's the situation: I'm not here, you guys are by yourselves on the beach; just concentrate on each other and do whatever's natural.' It becomes more of an improvisational situation, rather than them following directions." If all's going well, it's a situation in which they're not thinking about what Gordon

expects from them; it's all about what they want to do, how they want to look and act.

"For some people it's easier than for others," he admits, "but generally speaking most people quickly get beyond the idea of having to pose for pictures. They just enjoy the moment, and that makes all the difference in the picture."

ABOUT THE PHOTOS



Eric Dahl

Gordon's shot with a variety of Nikon D-SLRs, including the D2H, D200, D2X and, currently, the D300. Typically there'll be three camera bodies, with Gordon's assistant holding two while he shoots. "I'll always have an assistant with me—it

frees me up to be more creative and not have to think about carrying equipment." The AF NIKKOR 20mm f/2.8D and the AF NIKKOR 85mm f/1.4D IF comprise a favorite switch-back-and-forth combination. He also uses an AF DX Fisheye-NIKKOR 10.5mm f/2.8G ED, AF-Micro-NIKKOR 60mm f/2.8D and AF NIKKOR 50mm f/1.4D. For a longer reach, he's lately been using the AF-S VR Zoom-NIKKOR 70-200mm f/2.8G IF-ED. He almost

always has a polarizing filter on his lenses when he's shooting outdoors.

"I try to shoot by natural light as much as possible," he says, but when flash is necessary he carries a few SB-800 Speedlights and the SU-800 remote command unit for wireless remote flash photography. "My assistant will help out with that, often holding the remote flash while I shoot from a distance with a long lens. Sometimes I'll use two Speedlights, one on a stand and the other held by my assistant."

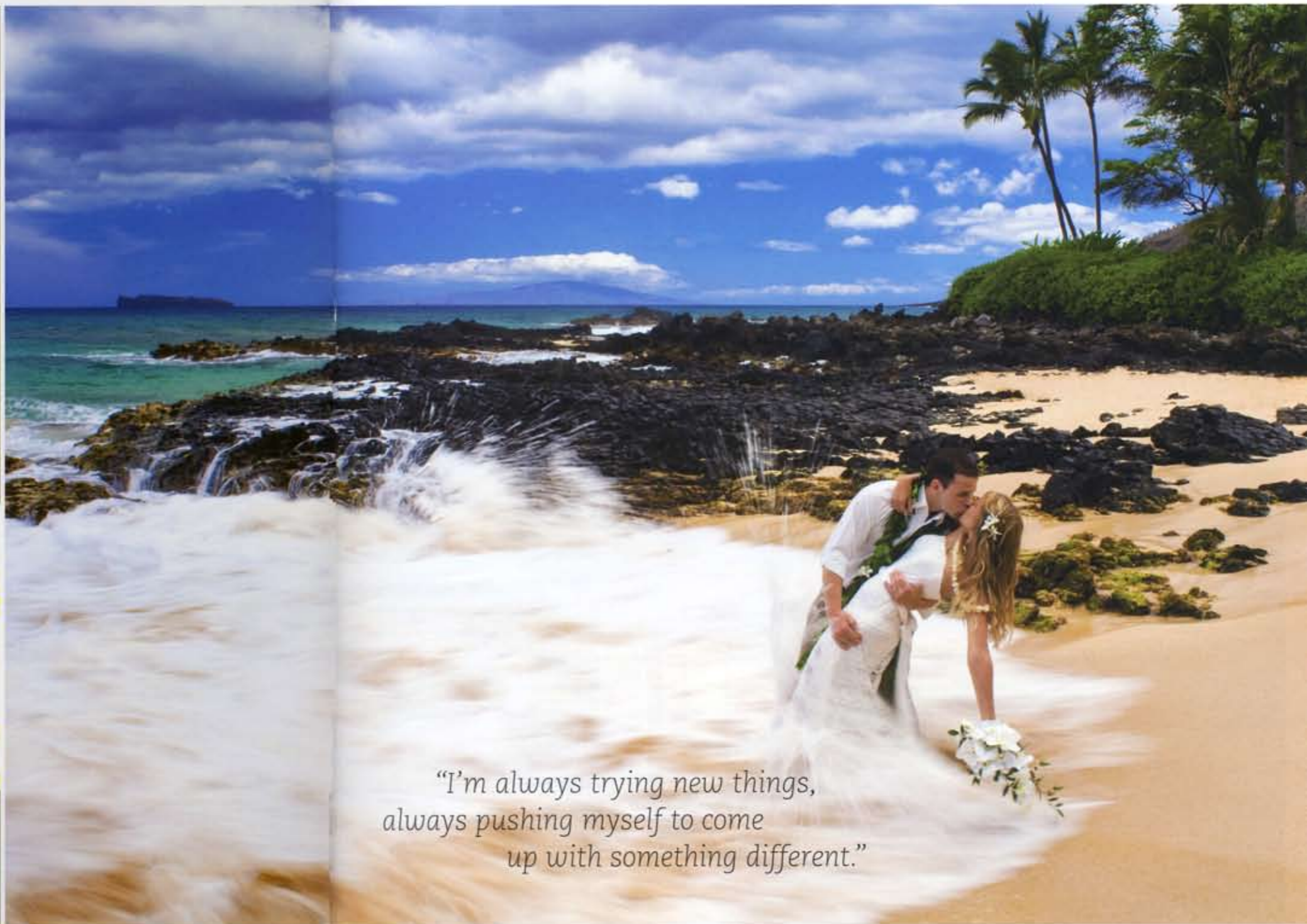
Though he's shot with it for only a short time, he's become a big fan of the D300. "Two huge advantages," he says. "The big LCD and the quality of the shots taken at higher ISOs." Most of the time the camera is set for Matrix metering and aperture priority. "Controlling depth of field is a prime concern for me."



Welcome to paradise, otherwise known as the Hawaiian island of Maui, where Gordon Nash shoots destination weddings. His couples come from the mainland, from China, from Japan, from you-name-it, to be married. They don't arrive with a boatload of friends and relatives, so Gordon's weddings are like small, lively parties at which he gets to spend a lot of time with the couple. "At

a typical wedding the photographer may get 15 minutes with the couple after the ceremony," Gordon says. "I'll often get an hour or more, and so we get to try a lot of different things, a lot of settings and situations. We're not in a hurry; we're enjoying the moment, and it's fun for them."

Gordon's approach to his weddings is actually three approaches. "I shoot the



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ceremony in a photojournalistic way—I'm observing and trying to capture the great moments. After the ceremony, I go into more of a portrait mode to get the structured group shots. Then when I do the walk-around with the couple, when I'm just trying to catch them having a good time, relaxing, I'm more like a fashion photographer, artfully capturing moments between them."

One of Gordon's biggest challenges is to resist the siren song of the scenery. "I know it'll get a little old if I rely on the beautiful backgrounds and the same angles all the time, so I'm always trying new things, always pushing myself to come up with something different. I've gotten into the water with the tripod, trying to work with water splashing up and slow shutter speeds

with the bride and groom kissing. I'm always experimenting with different combinations."

Sometimes the couples are quite specific. "Some say, 'Do whatever you want,' but others have a whole list of shots. I don't mind; whatever makes them happy. I'll shoot to their list, but I always try to put variation shots in as well. And sometimes

clients will come up with ideas that are really innovative, and that helps my photography.

"One couple decided they wanted to go into the water, even with the big waves coming. It was sunset, they went in, a big wave came in and I was able to capture the shot of the sunset and the wave around them and it was perfect, an amazing shot.

But I hope not everyone wants that kind of picture. I've got to be careful about my clients' well being. They're not models."

More images from Gordon's adventures in paradise are displayed at his websites, www.gordonnash.com and www.mauiwedding.net.