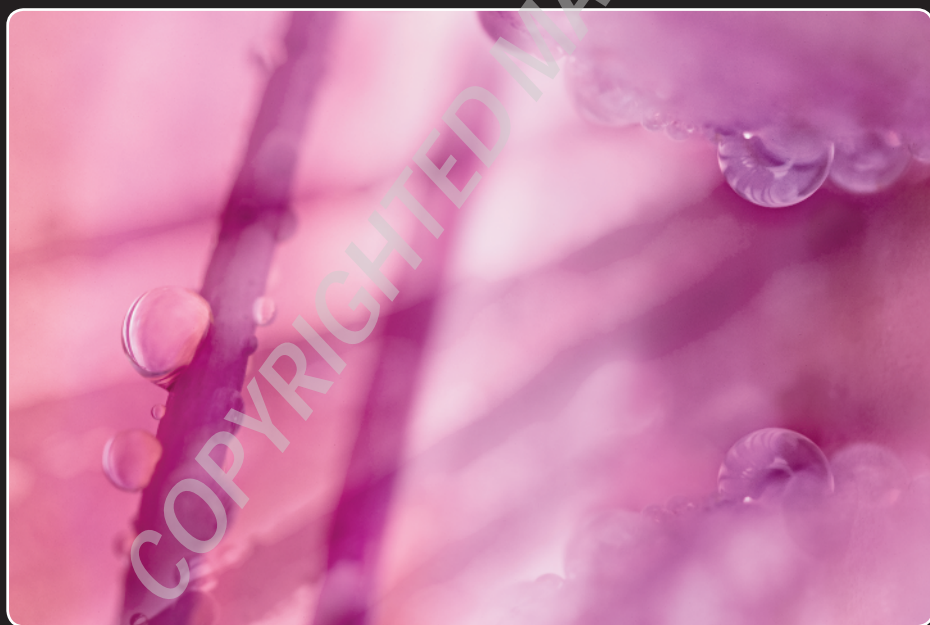# How Do I Get Started with Aperture?

Aperture is like iPhoto on steroids in some ways; but in other ways, it's a completely different beast. Unlike iPhoto, it's designed to be an incredibly flexible image, video, and audio file asset management tool that you can integrate into your existing workflow. However, this flexibility means that Aperture has more jargon, settings, and buttons than iPhoto. This chapter helps demystify Aperture's jargon and shows you key fundamentals you need to know when using Aperture.

Understanding Why Aperture Is a Key Part of Your Workflow

Most photographers agree that the time you spend behind the lens shooting is the best part of being a photographer, and all the other stuff (processing an image, categorizing it, trying to sell it, or using it to promote business) is really just annoying. While digital photography enables you to be more creative as a photographer, from being able to see right away whether you got the shot to being able to experiment as much as you want with the only cost being hard drive space, the "other stuff" arguably gets more frustrating because now you have to manage digital files instead of physical film and learn to use multiple programs to develop and output your images. That's where Aperture comes into play. Aperture is a central point for all of your image management from the moment you download an image from camera to computer until you search for an image and click Print to make a physical copy for a client. Aperture makes it relatively easy and fast to organize and manage your digital files, and that lets you spend more time having fun shooting. However, Aperture isn't the only digital asset management tool out there. Let's look at what Aperture gives you over iPhoto and Lightroom.

Seeing the difference between Aperture and iPhoto

If you've been using iPhoto to manage your images, then you know that our explanation of why Aperture is a key part of our workflow could apply to iPhoto, too. While iPhoto is great for managing images of your family and friends taken with your point and shoot, it's really limited when you put it under a microscope. For example, while you can make basic retouching adjustments in iPhoto like a levels adjustment, Aperture lets you fine-tune those adjustments to develop your image exactly the way you want it to look, perhaps adjusting the levels in just one color channel or using the quarter tone controls (which we cover in Chapter 6) to adjust the levels in a specific part of your image. If you really like the effect your adjustment creates, you can save it as a preset to easily apply to other images, even on import. Aperture 3 has the ability to brush those adjustments selectively onto just part of your image, meaning you can make one levels adjustment in the sky and another on the ground, something iPhoto just can't do. Oh, and if you prefer using curves to levels, Aperture 3 has a curves adjustment, too.

However, more advanced image-adjustment controls aren't the only difference between iPhoto and Aperture. Aperture provides tools to manage a far larger library than iPhoto can manage. For example, Aperture lets you make complicated searches for images, such as the search in Figure 1.1 that finds all your top-rated images taken in 2010 in San Francisco that have the keyword *water*. If you want to know specifics about Aperture's tools to help categorize and search for images, check

out Chapters 5 and 6. Aperture is also a lot more flexible with managing your photos, and unlike in iPhoto, images in Aperture can easily be stored on multiple hard drives. Aperture 3 also adds great new tools to merge and split off collections of images, making it easy to share image collections between two machines.

1.1 An image search that's easy to do in Aperture but just not practical in iPhoto.

Lastly, while there are similar features in iPhoto and Aperture, like Faces, Places, books, and slide shows, they are just more powerful in Aperture. Aperture's Book tool, which is covered in Chapter 7, has advanced layout options that let you completely customize the image and text boxes on your page, or even use a photo to create a two-page background spread. Aperture's slide shows, explored in Chapter 8, let you go beyond iPhoto's click-and-play slide shows, creating custom titles, transitions, and music. You can even include HD video within an Aperture slide show.

Fortunately, starting with Aperture 3.3, iPhoto and Aperture have a unified library and adjustment format. This means you can seamlessly move between the two programs using the same library data. As an example, you could use Aperture to split your library over multiple drives and to adjust your images, and then you could switch to iPhoto, load up that same library displaying your adjusted images, and then order a card or calendar, something you can't do in Aperture.

In summary, while iPhoto is great for the casual consumer, just as you move from a point-and-shoot camera to a dSLR to upgrade your photography, moving to Aperture from iPhoto lets you upgrade your image-management tools.

Choosing Aperture over Lightroom

For many photographers, Adobe Photoshop is the number one program for image work, and we certainly agree that it's a great image-manipulation program (although Aperture's adjustment tools combined with third-party Aperture plug-ins have made it so that we do more than 90

percent of our manipulation work in Aperture instead of Photoshop). You might be asking yourself why you shouldn't just use Adobe products, such as Adobe Lightroom.

While in some ways the Lightroom-versus-Aperture debate is a bit like a religious Mac-versus-PC debate, there are specific reasons that we find Aperture to be a much better choice than Lightroom for our workflows. The main reason is that Lightroom has different modules that you must switch between for different tasks, whereas Aperture does not. Practically speaking, adjustments affect editing decisions, and it's faster to make those decisions in Aperture than in Lightroom. For example, you may frequently look at an image and say, "This is good, but if I straighten it, will it be great?" In Aperture, you can use one keyboard shortcut and then drag the mouse to straighten the image. In Lightroom, you need to switch from the Organize to the Develop module, adjust the image, and then switch back to the main module to continue making editing decisions. Less time having to switch modes to make a decision means more time shooting and having fun!

We prefer Aperture for specific, technical reasons as well. One is that Aperture has a more powerful hierarchy (we dig into the specific parts of its structure shortly) that you can customize, such as moving albums wherever you want them to be, whereas Lightroom has a relatively flat hierarchy with limited customization options. In Aperture 3, like in Lightroom, you are able to brush adjustments onto an image, but Aperture provides far more control over how those adjustments are applied, such as only affecting the highlights or shadows. Furthermore, only a few adjustments in Lightroom can be brushed onto an image, whereas most adjustments in Aperture can be selectively applied. Aperture's curves control is far more powerful than Lightroom's parametric curves, too. Some tools, such as book authoring, have been in Aperture since the first version and have undergone a lot of refinement, whereas in Lightroom they are just appearing and are not as mature. Then there are also features that Lightroom just doesn't have, such as Faces.

We should mention that while we far prefer Aperture to Lightroom, Lightroom is not a bad program, and if you have a PC, it's a very good choice. However, if you have a Mac, we enthusiastically recommend that you use Aperture.

Working with Aperture's File Structure

If you've used a program like Bridge before (one that is essentially an image viewer and metadata editor for the files on your drive), then you're accustomed to the folder hierarchy on your hard drive being exactly what you see in Bridge, and when you move images around within Bridge or make new folders, it also creates new folders and moves files around on your hard drive for you. Programs such as Aperture (and Lightroom) take a different approach. Your images live in a

particular location on your hard drive (more on this in a minute) and appear within a different structure within Aperture. When you move images around within Aperture, between albums for example, they don't move around on your hard drive (although there are special commands to let you move the files around), and when you create a new folder within Aperture, that folder doesn't actually exist on your hard drive. Let's take a minute to explore how Aperture stores files and the different terms for the various collections of images.

Note We frequently use the word *image* to talk about any file in Aperture, including movie and audio files, as Aperture treats them all in essentially the same way, especially as far as the file structure is concerned.

Understanding the Aperture library and where your files live

One of the fundamental concepts in Aperture is a library. A library refers to a collection of images. On your hard drive, a library, like the one in Figure 1.2, stores and tracks information about an image, ranging from the various-sized thumbnails that Aperture uses to display the image to the image's metadata, information about the faces in your images, and information about what adjustments you've made to an image. If you choose, Aperture will also store your image files themselves within a library (more on this in a minute), but your image files can also live outside the library instead. An Aperture library appears as a bundle within the Finder (a bundle is a special type of folder that appears as if it were a single file) and discourages you from digging inside your library. If you dig inside your library, you might accidentally do something, such as move a key file, which causes a problem in Aperture.

Unlike in iPhoto, where most users tend to just have one photo library, you will most likely have multiple libraries with Aperture. For example, you could have a library on an external drive containing every image that you've ever taken and a second library on your laptop's internal hard drive that has a library with images from the previous shoot or two.

By default, Aperture creates a library in your Pictures folder. Chapter 10 explains how to work with multiple libraries.

Genius When Aperture is closed, double-click on a library in the Finder to launch Aperture with the contents of that library.
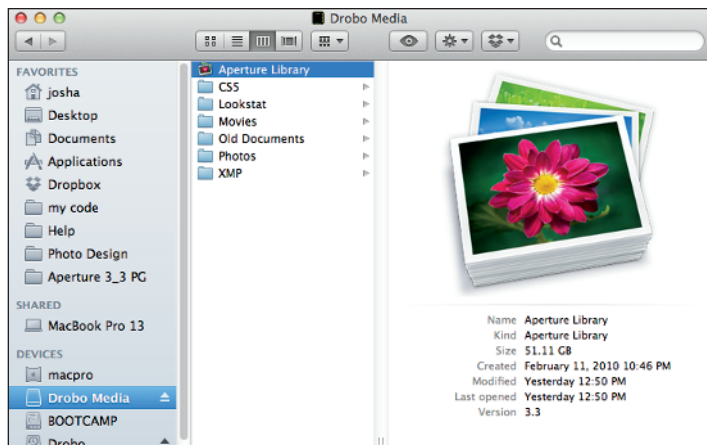
1.2 An Aperture library as seen in the Finder. Notice that it appears as just a single file, even though it contains other files within.

Understanding referenced and managed files

Referenced and managed files refer to where your image files are stored. Put simply, referenced files are stored in whatever folder on your hard drive you select, and Aperture stores a reference to their location within the library. If you move the files around on your hard drive, you have to tell Aperture to update its reference (we cover working with referenced files in depth in Chapter 3). Managed files, on the other hand, are stored within the Aperture library. You don't need to worry about where they are on your hard drive because they'll always just be inside your library, and if you want to access the image files you must do so via Aperture rather than the Finder.

Choosing to use referenced or managed files is largely a personal choice, and within Aperture they are treated exactly the same. The main benefit to managed files is that you don't have to worry about into what folder on your drive you're importing your images because they're all just going into your Aperture library. You might find it preferable to use managed files because they help prevent you from losing track of your images.

However, the main benefit to referenced files is that you can store your images wherever you want, even on a separate hard drive. Aperture stores previews of your images inside the library that you can view in Aperture, even if the full image files can't be found. This means that you can keep your full Aperture library on your MacBook Pro's hard drive so that you can always have your images with you, but you can store all the large image files on a large, external drive.

Referenced files that you see in Aperture but whose image files can't be found are called *offline images.* Aperture indicates an offline image with the badge overlay indicated in Figure 1.3.

A second benefit to referenced files is that if you want to use another program to work with your images, such as Adobe Photoshop, without going through Aperture, you can because your image files are not locked away inside of the library bundle. Just be careful about reorganizing your image files outside of Aperture. If you move the file on your hard drive, you need to tell Aperture where the file's new location is so that it doesn't think the image is offline. Chapter 3 covers working with referenced files in depth.

1.3 When this badge overlay appears over a thumbnail in Aperture, it indicates an offline image.

Last, if you use an online backup service like CrashPlan or Mozy, we recommend using referenced files so that if Apple updates the internal library format and changes where the managed images are stored, these backup services won't have to upload a new copy of every image to the cloud.

Understanding how images are organized within Aperture

Aperture has special terms to explicitly describe which image you're working with: the *original* file on disk or a *version* within Aperture. Furthermore, a key concept to understand about Aperture is that files within Aperture have their own hierarchy that isn't guaranteed to be anything like the file hierarchy on your hard drive. When you move an image around within Aperture, it doesn't also move it between folders on your hard drive. As such, Aperture has a special vocabulary to describe how originals and versions are organized into projects, albums, folders, and stacks.

Original images

An original is the initial file you import into Aperture, whether it's a RAW, JPEG, TIFF, DNG, and so on. Aperture never modifies the original file; you can always return to your original image no matter how many adjustments you make within Aperture.
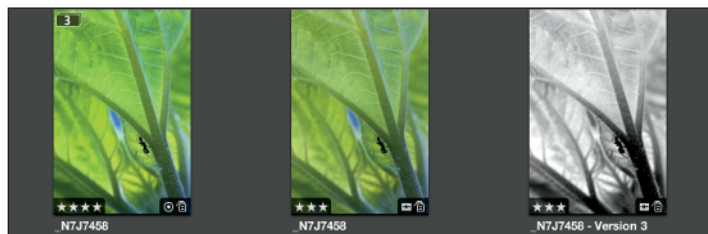
Versions

A version is a representation of an original file that you work with within Aperture. It refers to the original file but is not the original file. No matter how many changes you make to a version, you aren't changing the original. This is called nondestructive editing.

Something special about Aperture is that you can make multiple versions of an image with different adjustments applied to each, as shown in Figure 1.4. And unlike iPhoto, which makes a full copy of the original file each time and uses a lot of hard drive space, Aperture only stores the changes you make to each image, saving hard drive space. (This alone is a great reason to use Aperture for all of your adjustments, even if you use iPhoto for everything else.) Then, when you ask to see a particular version, Aperture loads the original behind the scenes and applies the changes you made to create this version.

1.4 All three versions of this image share the same original file, and each new version only takes a few kilobytes more hard drive space to create.

Working with versions can get a little confusing. Although all of Aperture's built-in adjustments are nondestructive and are stored as information on top of an original file, Aperture also supports third-party adjustment editors such as plug-ins to create High Dynamic Range (HDR) images, as well as external editors like Photoshop. In order for these third-party programs to see the adjustments you make to an image, Aperture makes a TIFF or PSD file from your version for the other tool to work with. This means that if you make a bunch of adjustments to an image within Aperture and want to open it in Photoshop, rather than trying to describe to Photoshop how Aperture converted the RAW file and then also convey to Photoshop the changes you made on top of the converted file, Aperture just collects everything, makes a new TIFF file, and then tells Photoshop to open that TIFF file.

Genius

Even if you're using referenced files, this new file that Aperture makes from your version will be stored within your Aperture library. You can relocate the Aperture-created original wherever you want after it's created, as discussed in Chapter 3.

This new version has an original file on the hard drive, but it's not the original file that you imported from your camera, and this version with its new original consumes far more hard drive space than a normal version because it isn't just a small bit of data describing what changes you made.

If you see the badge overlay indicated in Figure 1.5 within Aperture, it means that this version also has an Aperture-created original aside from the original file you imported.

Projects

Within an Aperture library, you group your original files and versions into projects. A project might represent an entire shoot, multiple shoots of the same subject, a part of a shoot, or just a completely random collection of images. Each time you import an image, you must determine into what project to place it. If you delete a project, you are removing the original files contained within it from your library. There is no limit on how many projects you can create. If you open your Aperture library in iPhoto, a project appears as an event, and vice versa.

1.5 This badge overlay on a thumbnail or image means that this version has an Aperture-created original.

Albums

Albums are a collection of image versions that you create manually. Versions may exist in more than one album (for example, you might put an image in both a *Brooks Wedding Dinner* album and a *Show to Bride* album). Albums can either exist within a project to provide a finer-grained grouping of images or at a library level if they contain images from multiple projects. For example, we typically create a project for a shoot such as *Japan – February 2012* and then create albums within the project to represent specific parts of the shoot such as *Tsurui Day 3 AM.* Later, we create a library-level album, such as *Images to Copyright,* containing images from every project that we need to submit for copyright registration. No matter how many albums within a library you put an image into, Aperture does not create a new copy of the original file on disk. Furthermore, deleting an image from an album does not remove it from your library or hard drive.

There are special types of albums, called Smart Albums, whose contents are created dynamically. For example, Aperture has built-in Smart Albums at the library level (called Library Albums) for 5-star images (the highest rating you can give), videos, images created in the last week, and more. Each time you add or adjust an image and make it meet one of these criteria, such as rating an image with 5 stars, Aperture automatically adds it to the appropriate Smart Album. Smart Albums are covered in depth in Chapter 4.

Folders

A folder is a container for projects, albums, and other folders. As you create more and more projects, you may find it helpful to use folders to group related projects together so that you're not
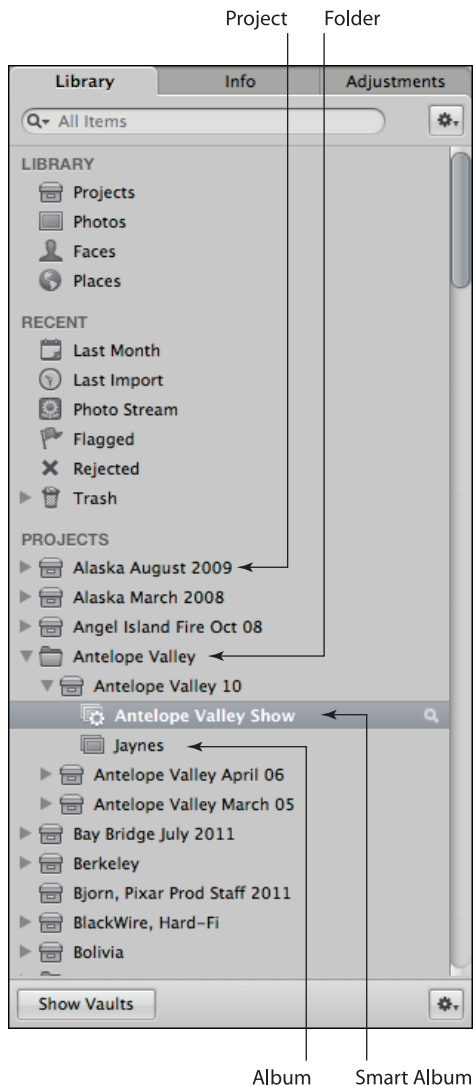
always scrolling through a long list of projects. For example, we have a folder in our library called Antelope Valley (shown in Figure 1.6) that contains projects for each time we've shot at that location.

Stacks

While not strictly part of Aperture's hierarchy, Aperture calls a small collection of images that are related in some way a *stack*. The difference between a stack and a project or album is that a stack of images tends to essentially be one image, but just slightly different versions of that image, whereas a project or album might contain many stacks of images.

For example, Aperture can automatically group bursts of images taken close together into a stack. If you shoot a sporting event and import the images into one album, you would have many stacks representing each burst of action. Additionally, if you want to create multiple versions of a single image with different adjustments, you could group these different versions into a stack for organization. Each time you open your image in an external editor such as Photoshop, Aperture automatically stacks the previous version and this new externally edited version together. Stacks are covered in more detail in Chapter 3.

Project   Folder

Library	Info	Adjustments

Q▾ All Items

LIBRARY
- Projects
- Photos
- Faces
- Places

RECENT
- Last Month
- Last Import
- Photo Stream
- Flagged
- Rejected
- ▶ Trash

PROJECTS
- ▶ Alaska August 2009
- ▶ Alaska March 2008
- ▶ Angel Island Fire Oct 08
- ▼ Antelope Valley
  - ▼ Antelope Valley 10
    - Antelope Valley Show   Q
    - Jaynes
  - ▶ Antelope Valley April 06
  - ▶ Antelope Valley March 05
- ▶ Bay Bridge July 2011
- ▶ Berkeley
- Bjorn, Pixar Prod Staff 2011
- ▶ BlackWire, Hard–Fi
- ▶ Bolivia

Show Vaults

Album   Smart Album

1.6 Here's what part of our Aperture library looks like. Notice how projects, albums, and folders all have different icons, how folders help us organize our library, and how we have albums at both the library and project levels.

# A Brief Tour of Aperture's Interface

Now that you've learned some of Aperture's basic jargon, let's look at Aperture itself. The first time you launch Aperture, you see the Welcome screen in Figure 1.7. Click Continue to close this window to begin using Aperture. The main parts of the interface you see right away are the Inspector, Browser, and Viewer, and this section explores these pieces in depth and explains how to work with the Library Inspector, which you use to manage Aperture's file hierarchy.
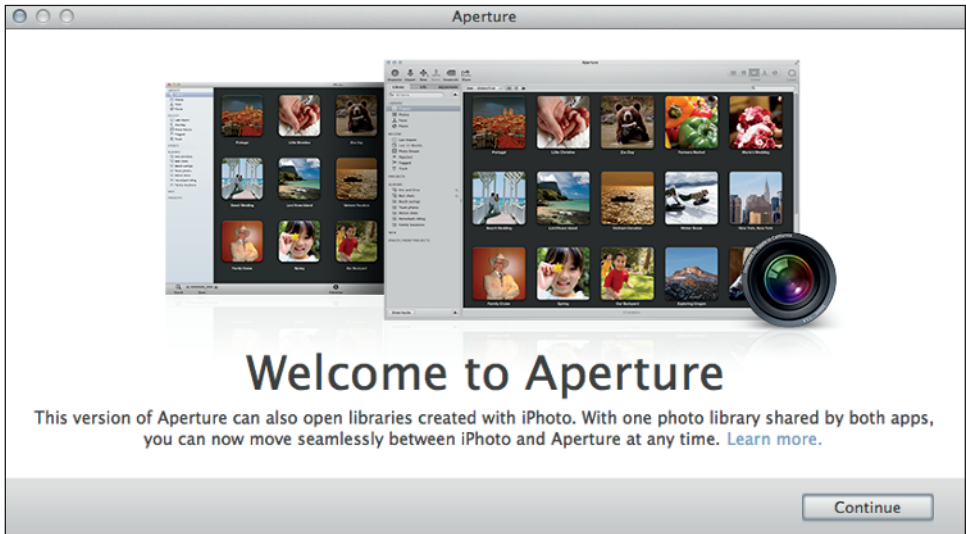
1.7 Aperture's Welcome screen.

Understanding the Inspector, Browser, and Viewer

The three key parts of Aperture's interface are the Inspector, the Browser, and the Viewer. These three areas are shown in Figure 1.8.

Viewer

Inspector

Browser
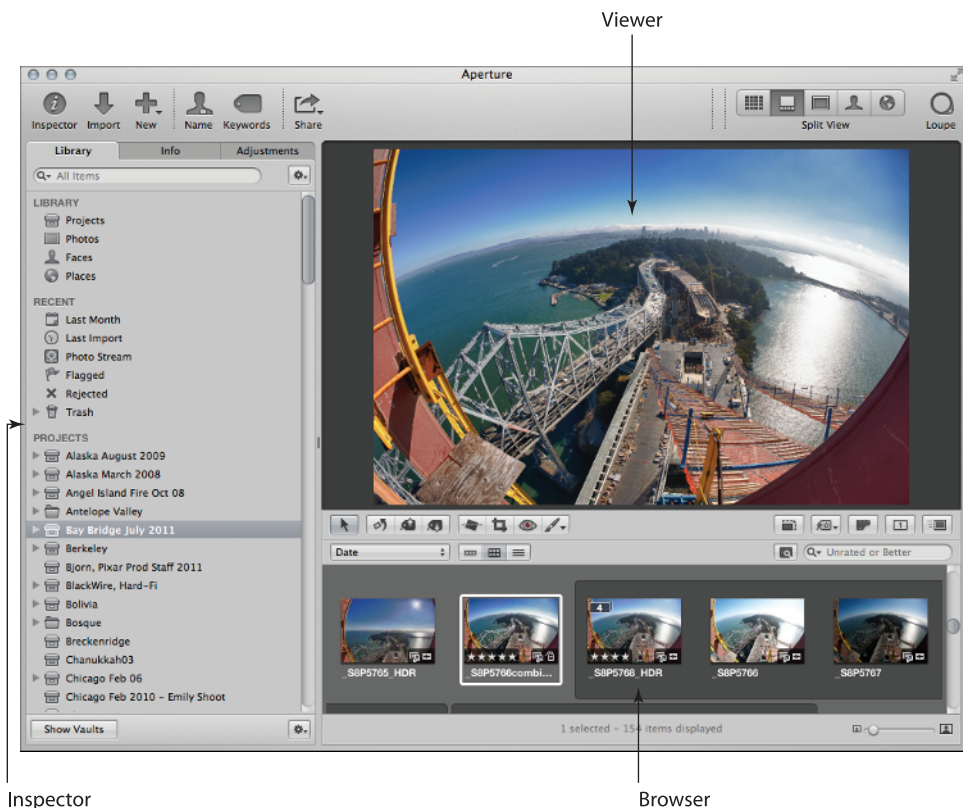
1.8 Three areas of the Aperture interface that will serve you well.

Inspector

The Inspector has three tabs within it to let you inspect different items. The initial tab is the Library tab. The Library Inspector has four groups, as shown in Figure 1.9. At the top is a library-wide group that lets you see all your projects, all your images, every face in your library, and more (we discuss this section shortly). Below that is the Recent group that has images you've worked with recently as well as flagged images and rejected images. This group also has the iCloud Photo Stream collection (covered in Chapter 2) as well as Aperture's Trash. Next is the Projects group. This has all of your projects (or iPhoto events), folders of projects, and items within projects. Last is the Albums group, which contains library-wide albums as well as built-in Library Albums — Smart Albums that search your entire library for certain groups of images.
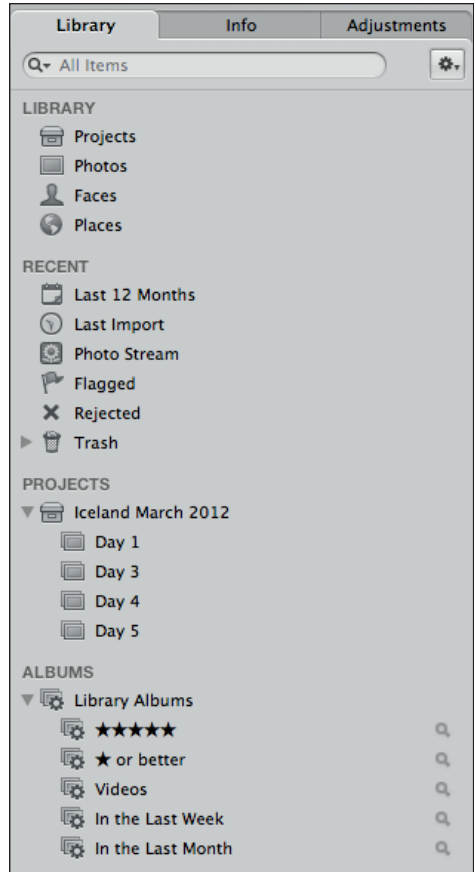
To create an empty project, choose File ➪ New ➪ Project. To create an empty album within a Project, select that project and choose File ➪ New ➪ Album. To create an empty, library-level album, do one of three things:

- Deselect everything in the Library Inspector before running this command.

- Select an item, such as Photo Stream, not within the Projects group and choose File ➪ New ➪ Album.

- Click and drag a project-level album out of the project and into the Albums group.

To create a new folder, choose File ➪ New ➪ Folder.

At the very top of the Library Inspector is a search field that filters the contents of the Library Inspector. This search field does not search inside the metadata of your images. It simply searches your project, album, and folder names for a match. Next to the search field is an Action pop-up menu. This menu contains the following four commands:

1.9 The Library, Recent, Projects, and Albums groups within the Library Inspector.

- **Add to Favorites/Remove from Favorites.** Over time, you will end up with many items in your Library Inspector. To filter the list so that you only see your favorite items, select Favorite Items from the search field's pop-up menu. To mark an item as a favorite, select it in the Library Inspector and choose Add to Favorites from the Action pop-up menu.

- **Keep Albums & Projects Arranged By.** This submenu affects how items at the same level (such as all the top-level items, all the items directly under a project, and all the items directly within the same folder) are sorted within the Library Inspector. Choose

Name from this submenu to sort all the items in the Library Inspector alphabetically. Choose Kind to group the items by kind (for example, all projects will be grouped together, all folders will be grouped together, and so on). Choose Manual so that you can drag and drop items to rearrange them however you want. Even if you choose Name or Kind, you can manually rearrange an item at any point and Aperture will automatically switch to Manual sorting.

- **Export Project/Folder/Album as New Library.** We cover this topic more in Chapter 10, but the quick explanation is that any item in Aperture can be exported as a new library to make it easy to share groups of images.

- **Maintain Previews for Project.** By default, Aperture maintains large previews of your images for use in other applications such as iWork. However, these previews can take a lot of hard drive space, and it's often useful to not maintain them for an entire project. We cover previews and this command more in Chapter 10.

At the very bottom of the Library Inspector is a button marked Show Vaults and another Action pop-up menu with vault-related commands. Vaults are special Aperture-created backups of your library. We cover Vaults and other backup options in Chapter 10.

By clicking the Info tab at the top of the Inspector, you switch from the Library Inspector to the Info Inspector. As you might expect, this inspector allows you to view and edit information about your image, information that's also referred to as *metadata*. This inspector is covered in depth in Chapter 4. The last tab, Adjustments, lets you switch to the Adjustments Inspector, which contains tools to adjust your image. The Adjustments Inspector is covered in Chapter 6.

If you're working on a small screen, it's often useful to hide the Inspector and to only show it when needed. To hide the Inspector, choose Window ➪ Hide Inspector; to reveal it, choose Window ➪ Show Inspector. The keyboard shortcut for hiding and showing the Inspector is I (with no modifiers). There are menu commands for quickly switching to the Library, Info, and Adjustments Inspectors under View ➪ Inspector, but more useful are the keyboard shortcuts to switch to those views: Control+P for the Library Inspector (think P for Project), Control+D for the Info Inspector, and Control+A for the Adjustments Inspector. W (with no modifiers) is also a keyboard shortcut for View ➪ Inspector ➪ Next Tab, which lets you quickly cycle among Inspector tabs.

Note

If you're working with a tablet display like a Wacom Cintiq, you might find it useful to move the Inspector to the right side of the screen. Choose View ➪ Inspector ➪ Swap Position.

Browser

The Library Inspector lets you switch between collections of images within your library, and the Browser lets you see the contents of those collections. The three views within Browser are Filmstrip, Grid, and List, which you can switch by clicking the view buttons marked in Figure 1.10. Filmstrip (the default) and Grid are similar in that they both show primarily thumbnails of your image (we cover customizing what other data you see in Chapter 3), but Filmstrip only has one row of images that scrolls from side-to-side. Grid view arranges your images into a grid that you scroll up and down. List view turns Browser into a table where each column has a different piece of metadata, such as the image's date, aperture, and shutter speed. Another way of switching views is to choose View ⇨ Browser ⇨ Filmstrip (Control+F), Grid (Control+G), or List (Control+L). In Grid and List views, there is a thumbnail size slider that lets you make the displayed thumbnails larger or smaller. In Filmstrip view, use the Split view control, as described shortly, to resize the thumbnails.

Sorting menu   View buttons   Filter button   Thumbnail size slider

Search field
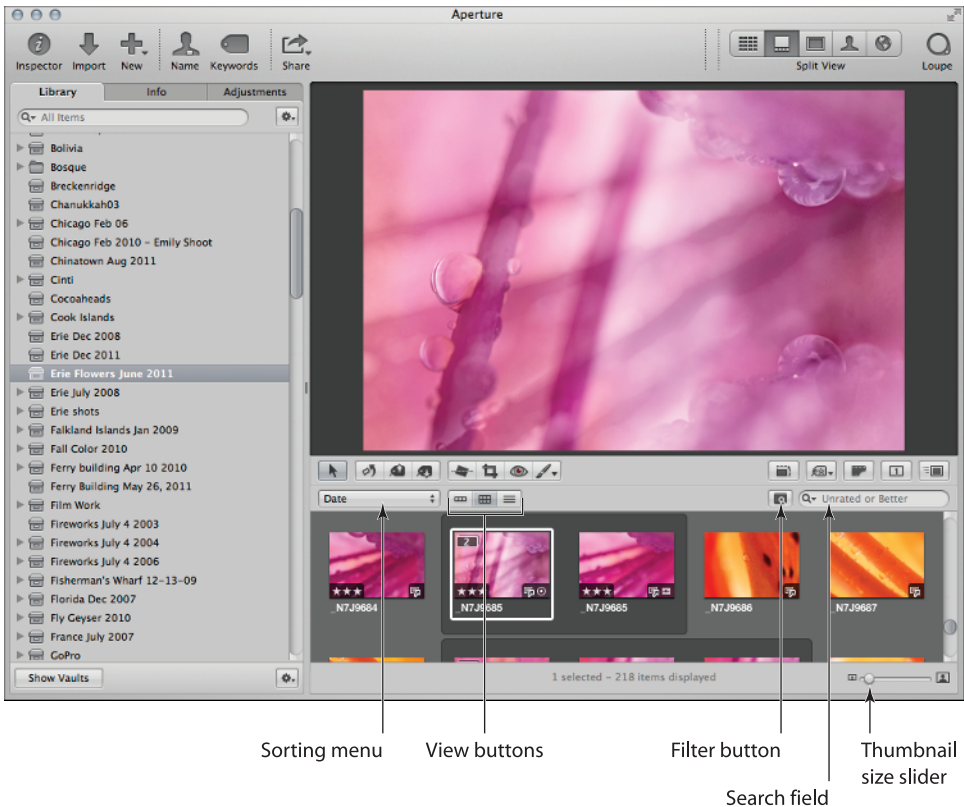
**1.10** Browser with a few key buttons and controls highlighted.

Browser also has a sorting pop-up menu that lets you determine how your images are sorted, be it by date, rating, or more. Switch between Ascending and Descending in the Sorting pop-up menu to change the sort direction. When in List view, you can also click the column header to sort by that criteria, and click the header again to change the sort direction. If you prefer, it's also possible to manually arrange the images by clicking and dragging an image (or group of images) wherever you want it to be. If for some reason the sorting and filtering controls aren't visible, choose View ⇨ Browser ⇨ Show Sort and Filter Controls (⌘+Shift+F). Similarly, if you want to hide those controls, choose View ⇨ Browser ⇨ Hide Sort and Filter Controls.

> **Caution**
>
> If you start to work with your images in the Browser while Aperture is still importing your images, it tends to revert to Manual sorting. We highly recommend making sure you're sorting by Date when editing your photos so that it's easier to see sequences of images.

At the top right of Browser is a search field. As you might expect, if you start typing in it, Browser filters its contents to only show images whose name or other metadata match the text you're typing. If you click on the search field's pop-up menu, you will see commands to quickly filter Browser based on image ratings and labels. By clicking the Filter button to the left of the search field, you open the Filter dialog, as shown in Figure 1.11, which lets you refine your filter even further. This is covered more in Chapter 4, but this control is where you can make advanced queries like "filter Browser so that it only shows images taken last Tuesday containing Eric's face."
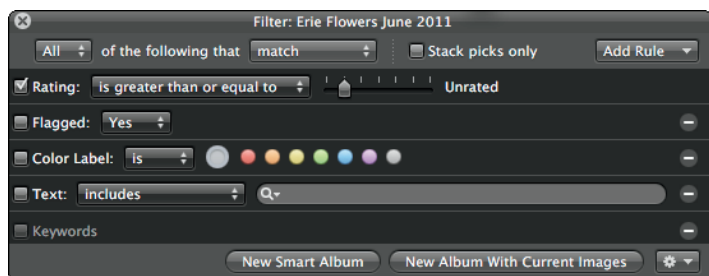
1.11 The Filter dialog and button.

Sometimes, when looking for an image, you'll find it useful to make Browser larger. There are two ways to do so. If you're working in Split view, which has both Browser and Viewer on-screen at the same time, click the dark line between Browser and Viewer and drag it up and down to adjust

Browser's size. Note that if you're using the Filmstrip view, Aperture just makes the thumbnails larger when you adjust the split. Switch to Grid view to see more images in Browser. Unfortunately, Aperture only lets you drag Browser so that it takes up about 60 percent of the screen. To hide Viewer and make Browser take the entire screen, click the Browser button in the toolbar indicated in Figure 1.12 (if for some reason the toolbar is hidden, click the pill-shaped button at the top right to reveal it). To return to the previous view, click the Split view button in the toolbar. Note that when you're in Browser mode, you can only switch between Grid and List views, not Filmstrip. If you're comfortable using keyboard shortcuts, press V to cycle among Viewer and Browser, Viewer only, and Browser only.
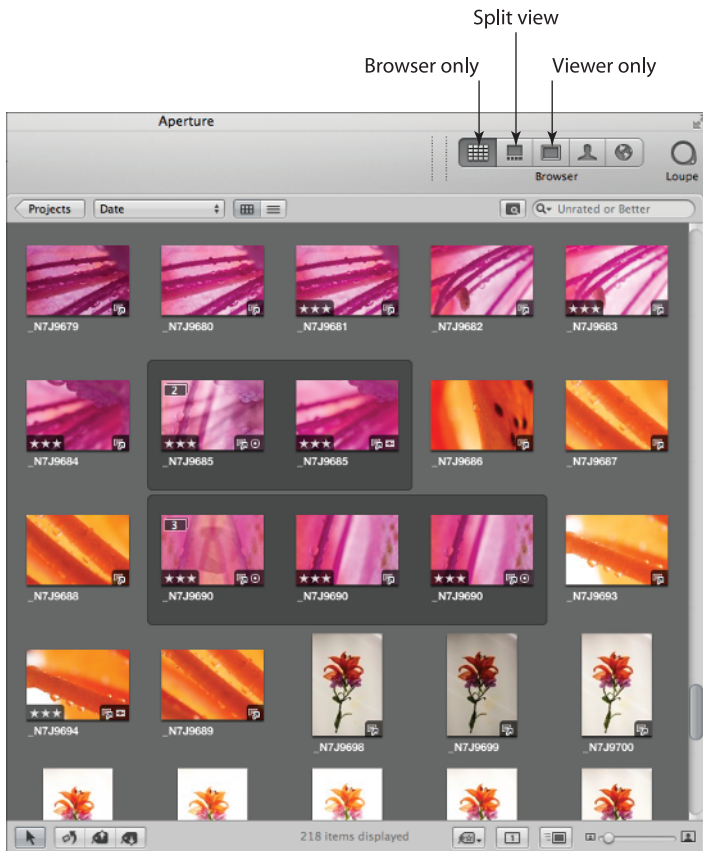

1.12 This is what Aperture looks like with Viewer hidden and Browser maximized. Note the Browser and Split view buttons in the toolbar that let you toggle layouts.

Genius

In Browser, you can use keyboard shortcuts to quickly scroll through your images. Press L to scroll forward, J to scroll backward, and K to stop scrolling. Press L and J multiple times to scroll faster in their respective directions. Make sure to click inside of Browser so that it has focus before using these hotkeys.

If you prefer to see your thumbnails in a vertical Filmstrip rather than a horizontal one, it's possible to rotate Browser by choosing View ⇨ Browser ⇨ Rotate Position (Shift+W). Like Inspector, it's also possible to swap which side of the screen Browser's on (as shown in Figure 1.13) by choosing View ⇨ Browser ⇨ Swap Position (Option+W).
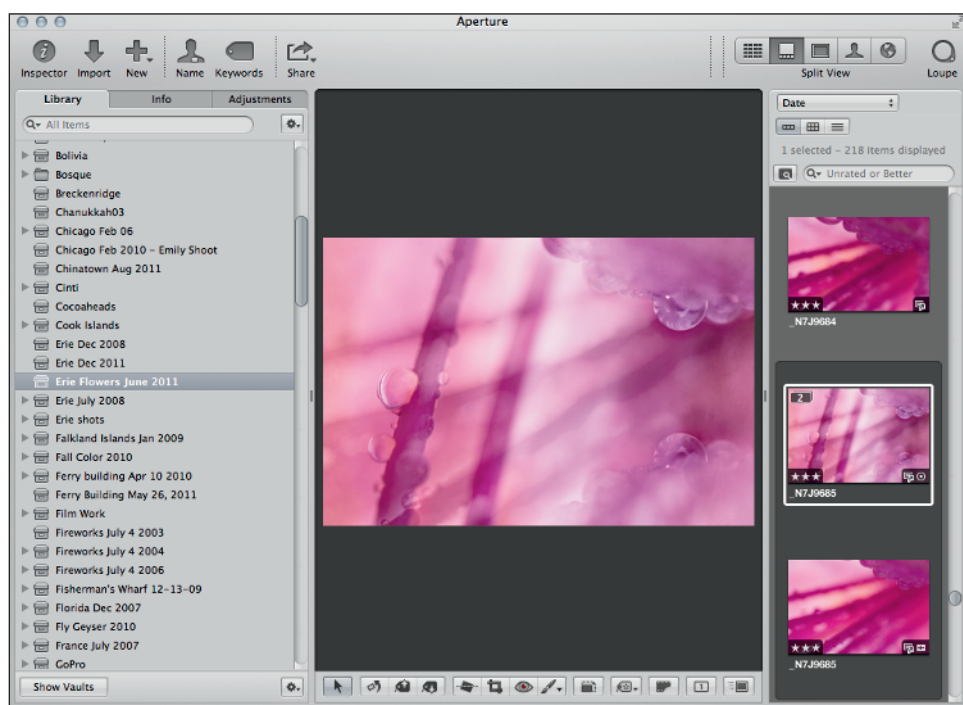
1.13 Aperture with Browser's position rotated and swapped.

Viewer

Viewer, the last key part of Aperture's interface, is where you see the full contents of your image (or selected images). When you select an image in Browser, Aperture loads the full contents of that version, displaying a "Loading" indicator while doing so, and displays it in Viewer. Many tools in Viewer help you examine your image in detail, from zooming in to 1,000 percent to quickly

switching between seeing the original image and the current version with your adjustments. Viewer is covered in depth in Chapter 3.

Aperture also has an excellent full-screen mode for Browser and Viewer that removes any distraction and lets you focus on your images. We explore this mode in depth in Chapter 3.

Managing files with Projects and Albums

As mentioned earlier, Projects are where your images and originals truly live. Making a new project is quite easy. To move a group of images into a new project, do the following:
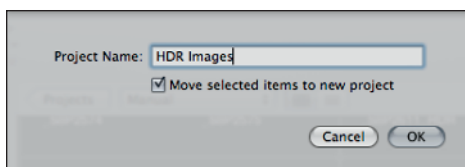
1. **Select the images in Browser that you want to use for the new project.**

2. **Choose File ➪ New ➪ Project (⌘+N).** Aperture displays the New Project dialog, as shown in Figure 1.14.

3. **Type the project name.**

4. **Select the Move selected items to new project check box if you want to move your selected images into the new project.**

5. **Click OK.**

1.14 The New Project dialog.

Another very common task in Aperture is to make a new, empty album at the project or library level and then move images into it. For example, we might make a *Submit to Agency* album and then drag whatever images we want to submit to our stock agent into that album. Another common task is to prepopulate a new album at the project level with the images you've selected in Browser, such as if you select all the images of a certain subject and want to make a new album just for that subject. These tasks are straightforward and similar to making a new project.

1. **Choose one of the following options to begin creating an album:**

   - **To make an empty album, select the project in the Library Inspector where you want the album to live.**

   - **To make a new album from a group of images, select the images in Browser that you want to put into the album.** Aperture creates the new album at the same level as the currently selected item.

   - **To make a library-level album, click on the Projects collection under the Library group instead of selecting a specific project in Library Inspector.**

2. **Choose File ⇨ New ⇨ Album.**
   Aperture displays the New Album
   dialog, as shown in Figure 1.15.

3. **Type the album's name.**
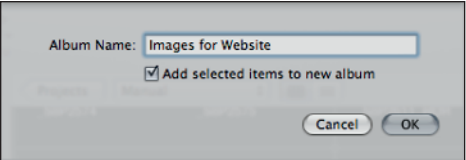
4. **If you are creating a new album from
   a group of images, select the Add
   selected items to new album check box if you want to add the selected items to the
   album.** If you are creating an empty album at the project level in the Library Inspector or
   at the library level in Albums, leave this check box unselected.

5. **Click OK.**

6. **If the album doesn't appear in the right place, drag and drop it to the right location
   in the Library Inspector.** To drag it to the library level, drag it out of the project and to
   the Albums group and then drop it. To drag it into another project, drag the album until
   a black box appears around the right project. Note that this does not move the original
   files into this new project.

1.15 The New Album dialog.

Things get confusing when you start to move images between albums and different projects. To
move images (and videos and other items in your projects and albums) around, select them in
Browser and drag and drop them to the desired destination. Holding down the Option key while
dragging affects what Aperture does with the files in some cases. Table 1.1 explains the situations
you can encounter.

Table 1.1 Effects of Dragging Images between Projects and Albums

Source	Destination	Effect	Effect with Option Key Held
Project	Different Project	Original and all versions are moved to the new project	Original and all versions are copied to the new project
Project	Album in Same Project	Image is copied into the album	Same
Project	Album in Different Project	Image is copied into the new album, but the original lives in the original project	Same
Album	Album in Same Project	Image is copied into the new album	Same
Album	Album in Different Project	Image is copied into the new album, but the original lives in the original project	Same
Album	Different Project	Original and all versions are moved to the new project	Original and all versions are copied to the new project

To quickly reveal which project an image is in from any album, select the image and choose File ⇨ Show in Project.

To remove an image from an album, select it and choose Photos ⇨ Remove from Album (or press Delete). However, removing an image from an album does not move the original to Aperture's Trash. To delete a specific version of an image, whether you're in a project or an album (and by delete we really mean move to Aperture's Trash), select it and choose File ⇨ Delete Version. If the version has an Aperture-created original file, it is deleted, too. If there is only one version of an image, then Aperture deletes the image's original file when you empty Aperture's Trash. However, if there are multiple versions of an image and you want to remove all of them, select the image and choose File ⇨ Delete Original Image and All Versions.

Also note that it's possible to delete an album, project, or folder by selecting it in the Library Inspector and choosing File ⇨ Delete Album, Project, or Folder, respectively. Deleting an album does not delete the contents of an album, but deleting a project (or folder that contains a project) does remove its contents, too.

Using special built-in views

We mentioned earlier that there is a special group at the top of the Library Inspector that lets you access library-wide collections. Specifically, they are Projects, Photos, Faces, Places, Last Month, Last Import, Photo Stream, Flagged, Rejected, and Trash. We discuss these views next with the exception of Photos, Last Month, and Last Import, as these views are straightforward (clicking the Photos item displays every image in your library). Rejected/Flagged items are also not discussed here but are detailed in Chapter 4.
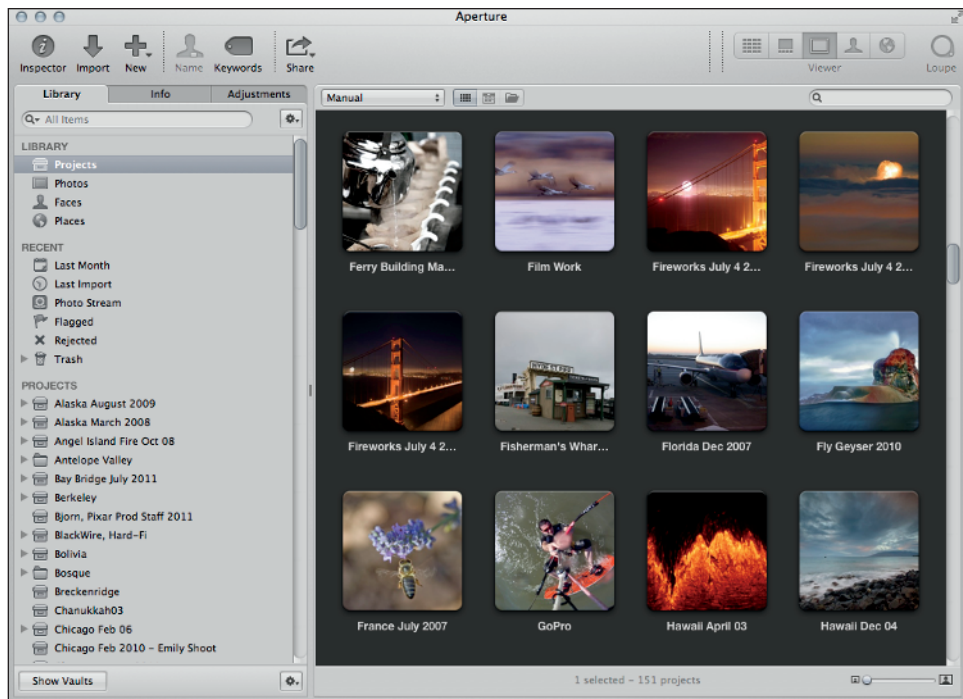
All Projects

Clicking the Projects item opens the All Projects view, as shown in Figure 1.16. This view is similar to the Events view in iPhoto, especially if you click the Group by Year button. Move your mouse over a project's thumbnail to scroll through all the images within a project. If there's a particular image you want to set as the project thumbnail, press the spacebar when the image is displayed.

Genius

A more direct way to set an image as a project's key photo is to Control+click on it in either the Browser or Viewer and choose Set Key Photo.

1.16 The All Projects view.

Genius

To merge two projects together, drag and drop one onto the other in the All Projects view.

Click the Info button (which becomes visible when you move your mouse over a project's thumbnail) to display the Project Info panel, where you can add a project description and assign its general location on a map. Double-click on a project's thumbnail to open the project in Browser view.

Faces and Places

Clicking the Faces item provides quick access to the Faces corkboard, with every face Aperture finds in your library. Clicking the Places item takes you to the Places map, with pins for every location you've assigned to a photo. These features are covered in depth in Chapter 5.

Photo Stream

Photo Stream is an iCloud service that automatically syncs up to 1,000 of your most recent images to iCloud. Those images can include pictures you take with your iPhone, images you import to

your iPad with the Camera Connection Kit, and images you import into Aperture. Chapter 2 covers Photo Stream in more detail.

Aperture Trash

When you delete an item in Aperture, whether it's an entire project or a specific image, it's placed into the Aperture Trash, as shown in Figure 1.17. You can view the contents of Aperture's Trash at any time by clicking the Trash item in the Library Inspector and either retrieve something from it or empty it. Click the disclosure triangle next to the Trash group to see the items in the Trash separated out by original location. To empty Aperture's Trash, choose Aperture ⇨ Empty Aperture Trash. Note that if you're using referenced files, you need to select the Move referenced files to System Trash check box because otherwise, Aperture deletes the images from Aperture but leaves the original files in their current location on your hard drive.
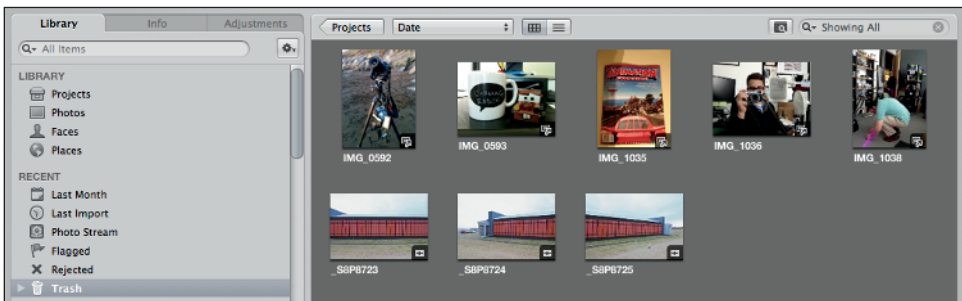
1.17 Note how you view Aperture's Trash just like you would any other album.

> **Caution** Emptying Aperture Trash does not delete the image from your hard drive. To completely remove it, you must also empty the Trash in Finder. If you want to recover the file, open the Trash in Finder, and within the Aperture folder, there will be a folder for the image's project that contains the original file.

To restore an item from the Trash, either drag it back to the desired location or Control+click on it and choose Put Back.

Using gestures

If you're using Aperture on a portable with a Multi-Touch trackpad or on a computer with a Magic trackpad, a number of gestures will speed up your workflow. We mention any gestures at appropriate places throughout this book, but there are a few general gestures to be aware of. Whenever you see thumbnails of images, such as in Browser or on the corkboard in Faces, use a pinch gesture

to scale the thumbnails. Swipe when in Browser to go to the next or previous image, and if you make a rotation gesture in Browser, Aperture rotates the image beneath the cursor. Viewer zooms in and out of the full image when you pinch. In Viewer and in slide shows, swipe to go to the next or previous image. In the Book Layout Editor, swipe to go to the next or previous page.

Basic Customization Options

To open the Preferences panel within Aperture, choose Aperture ⇨ Preferences. Specific preferences are discussed throughout the rest of the book when they apply, but there are a few key options we want to point out for your initial Aperture setup.

Setting library location and other General preferences

The most basic setting under the General pane, shown in Figure 1.18, is which current Aperture library you're working with. In addition to the ways mentioned earlier to switch libraries (using the commands in File ⇨ Switch to Library), you can also switch libraries by clicking Change and browsing for the new library. Clicking Reveal opens a new Finder window with your current Aperture library selected.
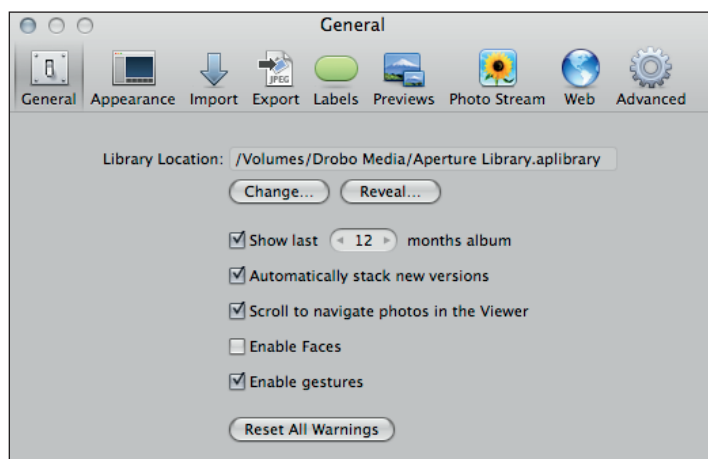
1.18 The General pane of the Preferences panel.

Select or deselect the Show Last *X* months album check box (where *X* is the number of months of images you want to see) to enable or disable the Last Month group under Recent. We find it useful to leave this check box selected so that if we're in a hurry when downloading a card and then forget where we imported an image, we can quickly locate it.

We recommend selecting the Scroll to navigate photos in the Viewer check box so that using your mouse's scroll wheel in Viewer (as long as you're not zoomed in) enables you to go to the previous or next image.

The next option in the General pane is Enable Faces. We highly recommend deselecting this check box, unless you primarily photograph people and use Faces all the time. The reason we recommend disabling Faces is that it slows Aperture down, especially when importing images.

If you have a portable with a Multi-Touch trackpad or a Magic trackpad and want to use gestures within Aperture, make sure to select the Enable gestures check box.

The last key option in the General pane is the Reset All Warnings button. Sometimes, a dialog has an Ask again next time check box or something similar. If you deselect that check box but decide that you really do want to be prompted again, clicking Reset All Warnings makes all the dialogs appear again.

Changing appearance preferences

The second Preferences pane is the Appearance pane, as shown in Figure 1.19. We recommend leaving the brightness levels at their default values, although you might prefer to set your Full Screen Viewer brightness to 18% (which is neutral gray) because the color surrounding an image can influence your perception of an image.

On the bottom half of the pane on the View Slideshows on pop-up menu, we recommend choosing Secondary Display instead of Main Display. That way, if you're presenting a slide show from your laptop while connected to a projector, the show appears on your projector's display.

We highly recommend selecting the Show "Loading…" indicator while full size photos load check box so that you know when the full version of your image is loaded into the viewer. We also recommend selecting the Badge referenced items check box so that you know which of your images are referenced and which are managed. This badge helps avoid accidentally making an image referenced or managed without meaning to and losing the original file. The other options are largely a matter of personal taste.
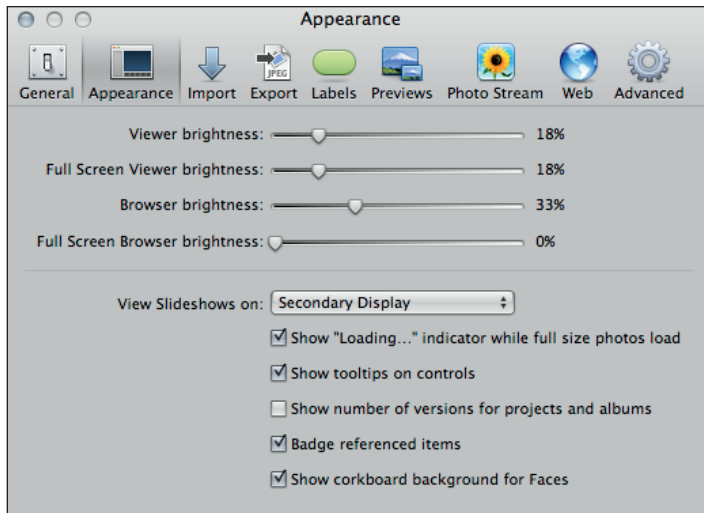
1.19 The Appearance preferences pane.

Changing default import behavior

The Import pane, shown in Figure 1.20, lets you modify the default import behavior. Importing is covered in detail in Chapter 2, but the key option here is what you want to happen when a camera is connected. This pop-up menu allows you to pick between having a specific application open or doing nothing at all. Although you can set this preference within Aperture, it affects your entire system. We typically leave this set to Aperture, but if you sync an iPhone with your computer, we recommend choosing No application so that Aperture doesn't open every time you plug in your iPhone.
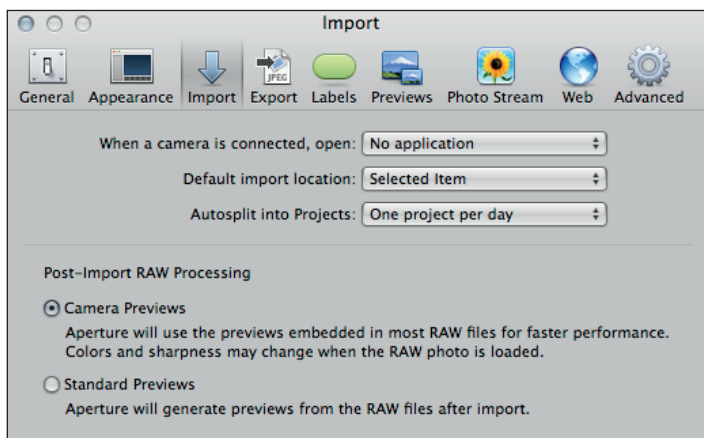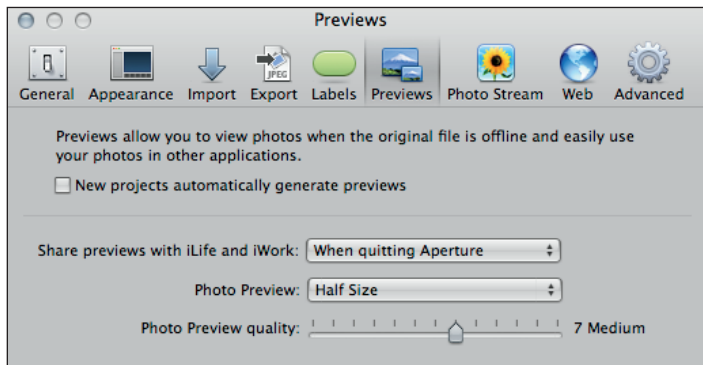

1.20 The Import preferences pane.

Starting with Aperture 3.3, you also have the option to have Aperture generate new previews from the RAW files or use the camera-created previews embedded into your RAW files. Using the camera-created previews is much faster, and especially if you're working on a battery-powered portable, selecting that option saves processor work and hence battery life. But the camera-created preview might look different (how different can vary) from the RAW file when it loads, and if you want the most accurate previews possible, instead select the Standard Previews option so that Aperture generates new previews after importing a RAW file.

Modifying preview preferences

Aperture automatically generates JPEG versions of all your images with all your adjustments applied so that other applications, like iWork or Apple TV, can access your adjusted images. However, these previews can take a *lot* of hard drive space if you're not careful. These are covered in depth in Chapter 10, but for now we recommend that you either disable them entirely by deselecting the New projects automatically generate previews check box or at least limiting the size to your screen resolution and selecting a medium quality, as shown in Figure 1.21.

1.21 The Previews pane.