

FOCUS

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY NEWS

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December 2004

Number 3

December print meeting will be a special critique program

Ray C. Henrikson

The December 1, 2004 meeting of the Print Group will depart from the previously announced program for this regularly scheduled meeting. The new program, which was approved by the Board on August 1st and announced in the September-October issue of *FOCUS*, will feature a detailed critique of all submitted prints instead of a speaker.

- A maximum of two prints may be entered. Please attach labels in the usual manner but fill in only your name and print title. Anonymously submitted work is acceptable, also. Usual rules concerning print size and mounting apply.
- There is no assigned topic for this meeting. Submitted work may be any combination of color and monochrome prints.

- Prints submitted may be either new work, i.e., not previously entered in an SPS competition, or previously entered work that did not receive recognition, i.e., not 1st, 2nd, or HM.
- Prints will be displayed in the usual manner and the pre-meeting viewing period will be extended to 7:45 PM.
- Each print will receive criticism by the judge and, possibly, from the audience. Prints will not be ranked.
- Prints entered in the Critique Night may be reentered in subsequent competitions and may be modified based on criticism received.

The assigned topic for December – Low Key Portraits – will carry over to the January 5th meeting when we will have two assigned topics.

Clifford Oliver Mealy: Different Worlds Drawn Together Through Photography

Amy Howansky

Much like the Hollywood-inspired game “Seven Degrees of Kevin Bacon”, and the stream-of-consciousness writing style of William Faulkner, Clifford Oliver Mealy links together many different worlds through his involvement with photography. The Kevin Bacon game tries to associate Mr. Bacon with any other actor by linking the two performers through a series of movies shared with colleagues. William Faulkner was known for his rambling prose that jumped from thought to thought. The



Please see Mealy page 3

Photo by Cliff Oliver Mealy

The Evolution of the Slide Show

Jim Craner

Affordable computer software has greatly simplified and enhanced the photographer's ability to create slide shows. In just a few years software such as *SmoothShowT* and *ProShowT* have advanced to the point where the potential of slide shows created digitally eclipses those created with older technology. Combined with modern digital projection equipment, digital slide shows can confidently be shown to large audiences in convention hall sized rooms.

Conventional multi-projector slide shows - the standard of the industry for decades - are fraught with quirky pitfalls. Projectors have to be carefully aligned, can easily lose focus, and generate a fair amount of background noise. The analog tape containing the audio track and control signals is fragile and the audio track of limited quality compared to its digitized counterpart. Additionally, conventional slide show equipment is cumbersome to transport, and as the number of projectors increases, the possibility of mechanical failure is multiplied.

As laptop computers came into more common use, software appeared which replaced the function of the dissolve unit. This not only opened the door to the use of better quality digitized music, it made synchronizing the audio much more efficient. However, since the computer was still driving a battery of conventional slide projectors, its full potential was unrealized. Finally as higher quality digital projectors became available, and more images were being routinely digitized, specialized software began to appear enabling the photographer to leverage the full potential of computer and projector technology.

Very high quality software created specifically to prepare slide shows from digital image files can be acquired for about \$65-75. While some software is available for both the PC and Mac, the above two products are presently only available for the PC. Visit www.smoothshow.com and www.photodex.com to learn more about their cost, features, and to download a trial copy.

Since the slide show is entirely created using software, the photographer does not need ongoing access to an array of bulky equipment in order to develop a show. The look-and-feel of the software is very intuitive, and basic slide shows can be created quickly. Both products offer the option of automatically

adjusting each display and transition time based on the length of the audio. For example if a sound track is 4 minutes in length, and the photographer has 40 slides in the show, the software would determine that each slide can appear for 6 seconds. This might result in an on-screen time of approximately 4 seconds with a 2 second dissolve between each slide. The timing can be fine-tuned from that point by cueing each slide as the music plays. One advantage of a digitized soundtrack during development is that a show can be quickly stopped and restarted from any slide as adjustments are made. The computer will always know the correct location in the audio track. Transitions are not limited to dissolves, and the current releases of both *SmoothShow* and *ProShow* include the type of pan and zoom used so effectively by Ken Burns in his award-winning documentaries. Both products also include the ability to use text not only to caption individual slides, but also to create title and credit slides.


Digital slide shows can be output in a number of formats including screen savers and web-page modules. Completed shows can be transported using CD and DVD media, and may be able to be sent by e-mail (depending on size). The recipient need only install the completed show onto his/her computer, the software used to create the show is not needed.

Several opportunities will exist during the 2004-2005 SPS meeting season on both digital and photo-essay nights for club members to see examples of slide shows that were entirely created on the computer, and to have the use of the software demonstrated.

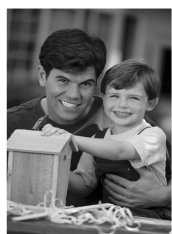
If you don't have a fill flash and you're photographing people in the daylight, try to get a neutral wall in back of you, facing the subject. The closer the subject comes to the wall, the more fill you have.

Ken Deitcher

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Photos on CD



Mealy

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writing style was sometimes hard to follow, and even caused the publisher to print Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* in two different type-faces to assist readers' comprehension of the text.

We could probably use two different type-faces to follow Cliff Mealy's life-long connection with photography. Cliff has noticed photography bringing different worlds to him: taking him to Somalia as a war correspondent in 1990; linking him to Native American actor and activist Russell Means; and giving him a role as a Black re-enactment actor on a PBS special.

Cliff began making pictures as a child, but he did not become serious about his craft until he was 19 or 20 when he really took notice of the technical aspects of photography. He focused his attention on F-stops and lighting. "I became aware of more than just going 'click,'" summarizes Cliff.

After dropping out of high school (where Cliff jokes that he studied "avoidance") he joined the Navy, and finished his education. Later, he majored in Media Communications at Dutchess County Community College. Thanks to some understanding teachers, Cliff was able to study aspects of radio, print, and television, but keep them all linked to photography.

Besides having a love for the great outdoors, Cliff really enjoyed working with animals, so he spent some time at horse farms, and as an operation room technician at a veterinarian clinic in New York City. Interestingly, it was the vet clinic administrators who pushed along Cliff's photography knowledge by sending him to photo workshops. By attending some Bio-medical Photographer's Association lectures he learned about medically-related photography techniques. Most importantly, since Cliff carried his camera wherever he went, he began getting requests for photographs. The requests have continued throughout his career.

Cliff tried using photography as his sole source of income, but, he laughs, he wasn't making money. In fact, his most prestigious contest win netted him a plaque, and a trophy, but not a single penny. Cliff's humor keeps him going when he muses, "The highlight of my career, and I don't get any money!" That first place win in the 1984 Kodak Tetrahedron Award did get him an official display of his work, enlarged to gigantic proportions, and strategically placed in Epcot Center.

Money isn't the most important motivating factor in Cliff's photography career. Rather, he is constantly amazed that art and photography can introduce him to new worlds and interesting people. Cliff acknowledges a mix of Black and

Native American ancestry in his family, but he admits that he was never able to fully appreciate the combination or recognize how it all worked together until he attended the 1976 centennial celebration of General Custer's battle. Though none of the battle's "victors" nor "hostiles" were invited to the celebration, the American Indian Movement showed up with activist Russell Means in tow. Cliff was overwhelmed by the presence of all the group's members standing in a large field. He grabbed his camera and took a long horizontal group portrait to record the moment.

In 1992, Cliff heard that Russell Means was to speak at Skidmore College as part of a recognition of the 500 years that had passed since Columbus arrived in America. To honor Russell Means, Cliff drove to Skidmore to hand-deliver a copy of the group shot he had made years earlier. Means was delighted, and also impressed with another portrait Cliff had made of the activist. Fast forward again to 2003 when Means appeared at an upstate New York high school. Cliff delighted the activist once more by presenting him with the portrait as a second photographic gift.

Cliff thinks he received an interesting gift when he was asked to photograph a PBS crew filming a documentary at an historic site in Lake Placid. The movie, about abolitionist John Brown, required some

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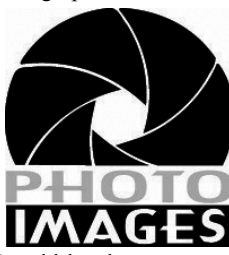


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Mealy

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Black American actors, so Cliff gladly changed into the costumes lent to the production by the Smithsonian. Soon, the crew asked Cliff to include his young son in the film, and before he knew it, Cliff was bringing a whole bunch of friends up to the site to act as extras. Little did he realize that his "acting career" would continue.

Cliff's experience re-enacting parts of Black history encouraged him to go beyond his previous involvement of simply photographing the world of historical re-enactment. He met some other re-enactment actors who suggested that Cliff chose a specific character to play. Solomon Northup was the perfect choice. He was a free Black man who could read and write, which was very unusual for that era. Northup lived in Washington County, but was kidnapped into slavery for 12 years. After his release, he wrote a book about his experiences.

Cliff has also portrayed a man who was a miller for Philip Schuyler's grandfather, and he has done re-enactments at historical sites, and as part of Black History Month. A love of history is apparent when Cliff says, "I heard Solomon Northup played the fiddle, so I want to learn it also, so I will be more accurate portraying him."

The arts and a love of nature extend beyond Cliff's hobbies, and into his

personal life, as well. His wife, Wendy Liberatore is a writer for the Schenectady Gazette, who specializes in dance and the arts. Even son Clark has picked up a camera and made some beautiful photographs, though his interests at age 11 seem to center around being a basketball player, vet, or farmer.

Currently, photography allows Cliff to connect his career-world to his recreational-world because he is the official photographer for the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. Cliff photographs NYS historic sites, the activities that happen at state parks, and the people associated with the department. One such assignment is to capture on film the graduation ceremony of the Park Police. Another task may take him to a winter festival at a park, where he shoots images of cross-country skiers and snowmobile enthusiasts.

He is responsible for covering approximately 168 parks, and 135 historic sites. With that many job sites, Cliff claims, "There is no such thing as a typical day." The seasonality of the activities at the parks make for enjoyable out-door-time. Cliff also photographs people fishing, canoeing, golfing, and swimming so that the parks department can use the images for promotional advertising.

On the down-side, as in every job, there are budgetary restrictions and administrative constraints. For example,

Cliff may want to shoot images of a certain bird during migration through New York, but job requirements may have him tackle a different task for a few weeks. By then, the migration is over, and so are the photo opportunities. To make matters more difficult, Cliff gets many requests from corporate giants wanting to spare money on their own advertising budgets by requesting specific photographs from Cliff. All in a days work...

But not for long! Cliff is retiring in December, 2004, and he already has his plans for the future. "I want to have a good time, basically," chuckles Cliff. Specifically, he intends to photograph birds-of-prey in migration, learn some more about food and fashion photography, and even self-publish a limited edition portfolio book of his work. He also plans on seeing more shows by other artists, because, as Cliff believes, "The only thing better than making pictures is looking at pictures!"

Please be with us on Wednesday, December 8th to hear this amazing photographer.

You can visit Cliff and see his work at www.cliffordoliver.us

Groan

A photojournalist decided to get a scoop by photographing the phantom that lived in an old mansion. When he entered the house, armed with only his camera, the ghost descended upon him, moaning and wailing and clanking chains. "I mean no harm; I just want your photograph," the photographer said bravely. Pleased at this chance to make headlines, the ghost posed for a number of shots, and the happy journalist rushed back to his darkroom to develop the photos. Unfortunately, they were so underexposed that nothing could be seen. He was distraught, and went to a pub to drown his sorrows. His friends asked what was wrong. Not wanting to tell the whole story, he simply said: "The spirit was willing, but the flash was weak."

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November Competition Results

Prints

Color 41 Entries

* Kim Koza	Lady Bug	1
Kim Koza	Burgate Lane	2
Jennifer Young	Untitled	3
Stew Sacklow	Pansy Printed on Canvas	4
Nick Argyros	Untitled	5
Jim Scribner	Good Year	HM
Jim Scribner	Balloon Above	HM
Bill Delaney	Michael Jackson at the Fair	HM
Ray Henrikson	Impressions No. 6	HM
Jeff Perkins	Plotterkill Woods	HM

Assigned Topic Racing 13 Entries

** Kevin Sarsfield	Pan-Demonium	1
Jeff Perkins	Morning Workout	2
Karl Becker	Getting Ready to Race	3
Bill Delaney	Good Luck	HM

Monochrome 28 Entries

*** F. Bumbaratore	Peeling Paint	1
F. Bumbaratore	Singer	2
Helen Penna	And Baby Makes Three	3
Jane Riley	Entering the Tate Gallery	4
Kevin Sarsfield	Tack Sharp	5
Colleen Magi	Keys	HM
Ray Henrikson	Untitled	HM
Stew Sackow	Aruba Lighthouse #2	HM
Kim Koza	Summer Days	HM
Connie Bush	Wheel	HM

Judge Joe Malone

Program Joseph Schuyler / Digital Delights and Dilmemas

Winner's Notes:

*Kim writes: This image was scanned into the computer via the scanner.... no film, no filters, no lens and no particular time of day... what did make this a better shot was I had no idea there was a ladybug on the leaf! Until the leaf was scanned in, I did not know it was there and it totally made the image!

**Kevin took this on a photo field trip with a Leica M5 on a tripod, a 135 mm f4 Tele-Elmar lens with Kodak Tri X film. He chose to mount the camera on a tripod to make the pan easier to complete. He tried a number of different shutter speeds to get the effect he desired. He suggests you pan with the subject and have fun trying this technique.

***Frank took this winner with a Canon G3 digital camera on a tripod. It was an old building that he was working in. He printed it on matte paper with a matte ink.

Slides

General 30 Entries

* Ray Hull	See the Light	1
David Lilac	Grand Mesa Aspens #1	2
Jeff Plant	Spring Ice at Sunset	3
Linda Heim	Rainbow Daisy	4
Jennifer Young	Serenity	HM
Nick Argyros	Are you Listening	HM
Linda Heim	Untitled	HM
Karl Becker	Untitled	HM

Assigned Topic Morning 17 Entries

** Jean Burton	Sunrise on Lake St. Mary	1
David Lilac	Mesa Verde Morn	2
H. Johannessen	Untitled	3
Connie Bush	Dawn	HM
H. Johannessen	Untitled	HM
Jean Burton	Going to the Sun Mountain	HM

Judge Frank Bumbaratore

Program Joyce Anastasia / The Power of Creative Expression

Winner's Notes:

*This winner was taken with a Leica M6 TTL, a Leica Summicron-M 28mm 1:2 ASPH lens and Agfa RSX, II, asa 50 film. Ray used a Heliopan UV filter when he took this photo in Berne, one mid-afternoon in September. He writes: "nothing special, just another motorcycle ride with my Leica aboard."

**Jean took this winner with a Canon EOS, a 35-70 lens and Kodak Elite film. It was taken while she was camping at Glacier National Park. They rose at 5 a.m. to catch the sunrise. While waiting for the sun to appear, she was dazzled by the soft light on the lake.



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is a member of the
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Black and White Printing-You can do it!

Jeff Perkins, Asst. Chair-Digital Group

On December 15 we will explore pathways to making high quality digital prints from your inkjet. The advances in B&W techniques from digital capture, image darkroom work (a.k.a. computer manipulation) to printing options, will be reviewed. No, you won't be printing like Ansel Adams, but you should be able to significantly improve your monochrome images.

Mentoring Night-December 22

Jeff Perkins, Chair, Mentoring Group

This presentation "Photographing from the Heart-Pathways to Creativity" is designed to help you get in touch with your artistic self. Technical knowledge of picture taking is great for taking real estate shots but alone will not help you become a more creative photographer. We will explore how you can enhance your photography, and more importantly, your experience in photography.

Musings of an Old Photographer

Ken Deitcher M.D. FPSA

I have been enjoying photography for over 60 years as an avid amateur. I have graduated from a darkroom in a bedroom closet to my wife's laundry room. The magic of imagery is still there whether traditional or digital.

I have always been amazed by the magic of an image slowly appearing on a white piece of paper soaking in a chemical soup through the dim red glow of the safelight over my trays of developer, short stop and fixer. The image I exposed under my enlarger would gradually, magically reveal itself. The process reminds me of a symphony conductor directing his opus at Carnegie Hall. The magical musical movements of dodging and burning selected areas on photo paper under the enlarger light are similar to the conductor leading his musicians to produce a magnum opus.

The conductor's job doesn't end there. It continues with the placement of the exposed paper in the warm developer with gentle agitation and sometimes applying hot developer to specific areas to increase contrast or flashing the partially developed image with a weak flashlight. The musical symphony is still there but different with digital imaging. The magic

has changed but the application of filters, plug-ins, layers and levels are still magical but in a different way.

You can still conduct the orchestra but now from a soft chair in daylight.

The true magic is gone but so is the mixing and disposal of toxic chemicals, the wasted paper, the tedium of hours spent in the dark to accomplish minimal productivity.

That is my odyssey in photography. The past was always fun and enjoyable but the present is equally enjoyable and self satisfying.

The productivity and creativity are still there.

All those who have never worked in a darkroom have missed an enlightening and educational experience. The traditional darkroom photographer who graduated into digital imaging is and will be a much better creator of images.

To the novice photographers, I suggest accepting the technologic changes in the present and in the near future. Major changes in photography are here and are advancing rapidly into the Twenty Second Century. What are major advances now will be every day occurrences in a few years.

Enjoy the craft of photography and grow with it. If you don't, you will be left behind.



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News You Can Use

Bill Allers having an exhibition

Bill Allers is having an exhibit at the Clifton Park Half Moon public library during the month of December. This exhibit "From New York to Florida and in between" will have over 30 matted and framed photographs for sale.

Hanaford Market displaying SPS prints

The Hanaford Super Market photo department in Clifton Park has two 20 x 30 photographs of SPS members. One is a beautiful horse portrait by Jim Gold and the other is a colorful hot air balloon by Bill Allers.

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Call for Entries

The 27th annual Photography Regional will be held from April 12 to May 21, 2005 at the Albany Center Galleries, 161 Washington Ave, Albany, NY

Albany Center galleries invites submissions of photography for consideration. All entries must be postmarked no later than Friday, February 1, 2005.

It is open to all artists who live within a 150 mile radius of Albany, NY and are 18 years or more of age.

The juror is Anthony Bannon, the seventh director of George Eastman House, the International Museum of Photography and Film.

Up to 5 slides may be submitted; they must be marked with the title, year of

completion, media, the name of the artist, dimensions, and the indication

PEG files may be submitted via email to Albanydg1@capital.net as an alternative to submitting slides. Up to five JPEG files may be submitted as attachments to a single e-mail. The file size of each JPEG attachment must not exceed 75 KB.

The entry fee is \$25.00 for non-members of ACG and \$20.00 for members of ACG. Up to 5 slides may be submitted for the one entry fee.

For further information:

call 518-462-4775

email: albanycg1@capital.net.

Web site www.albanycentergalleries.org

Dates to remember:

Application Postmark:

February 1, 2005

Notification and return of slides:

March 20, 2005

Delivery of work:

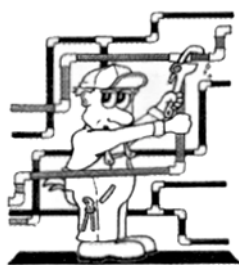
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Web Page Address

www.schenectadyphotographicsociety.com

December Calendar

Wednesday, December 1

Topic: Program / Critique night

Assigned: Assigned topic this month. There will be topics next month.

Wednesday, December 8*

Topic: State of a New York State Parks Photographer /

Chin Mealy

Assigned: The color blue

Wednesday, December 15

Digital: Digital Avenues to fine Black and White Prints / Jeff Perkins

Assigned: Digital Black and White

Wednesday, December 22

Mentoring: Photographing from the Heart - Pathways to Creativity / Jeff Perkins

Wednesday, December 29

No meeting

Meetings are at 7:30 p.m.

*Board meetings are at 6:30 p.m.

Happy Holidays

The *Focus* is published nine times a year by the Schenectady Photographic Society. The organization meets each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. from October through May to promote and present informative programs, activities and competitions in the photographic arts for photographers throughout the Capital District. Members range from novice to expert.

Annual dues are \$30.00 for individuals and families. The *Focus* newsletter is included in the membership dues. SPS meets at the First United Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Schenectady, New York. Parking and entrances are on Chapel Street, a one way street off Nott Terrace. Guests are welcome at all regular meetings.