

# FOCUS

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY NEWS

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## Timothy Cahill to speak at November print group meeting

Timothy Cahill was for many years art critic and arts writer for the Albany *Times Union* and Fine Arts commentator for WAMC radio. A year ago, he left both positions to explore new avenues of creation, including fine art photography. He will be our guest speaker on print night, November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

"I had seriously pursued photography in the 1980s, when I was in my 20s, including solo and group exhibitions, but gave it up in 1990 to devote all my energy to writing," Tim explains. "I thought I was done with photography, but it evidently was not done with me.

Five years ago, while on a fellowship at Columbia University, I picked up the camera again. I was wary of returning to picture making, but something powerful inside me was making demands. My position as art critic at the *Times Union* did not allow me to

exhibit locally, so for several years I was exposing a lot of film and not making many prints. It was a long gestation period.

"I left the paper in October 2004 to pursue other writing opportunities, which eventually freed the path for me to begin exhibiting. I had my first major exhibit in more than 15 years at Firlefan Gallery in Albany in June of this year. My work will appear in various group shows in the area and will be featured in the Spectrum Theater Gallery in November. Other shows are being discussed."

David Brickman, reviewing Mr. Cahill's exhibit for Metroland, wrote the following: "Timothy Cahill hasn't exactly been hiding his light under a bushel basket these past 10 or so years, but his re-

*please see Timothy Cahill page 4*

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## Slide group presents Nate Simms

Nate Simms will be our featured speaker on slide night, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Nate writes: I was born in Washington, D.C. and lived in Charlottesville, Virginia; Athens, Greece; and Chicago, Illinois before my family moved to Troy when I was eight years old in 1978. After graduating from Troy High School in 1988, I attended Middlebury

College in Vermont and majored in psychology. Upon graduation in 1992, I moved on to compete on the World cup circuit in snowboard racing for eight years.

For the past four years, I have been the Head Women's Tennis Coach and Assistant



*Photo by Nate Simms*

Alpine Ski Coach at Middlebury College. For the past eleven years, I have spent my summers in the Capital Region working for the 15-love Tennis Program, a not-for-profit organization that provides free tennis and life-

*please see Nate Simms page 6*

# Digital Ramblings

Jeff Perkins, Digital Chairman

In the first article of this series, I talked about how you can get your feet wet in digital photography. If you recall, the least expensive way to see if you like the digital process from the photographic “development” part is to place your film images on a photographic CD and then learn how to manipulate the images in the computer. Now I want to talk to you about the options to consider if you’re contemplating purchasing your first digital camera.

Purchasing a digital camera can be extremely exciting and as most of us in the digital world have found, extremely rewarding. I have had over 12 years of experience with digital cameras and have learned a great deal about them; they have their advantages and also their limitations.

The overall advantages of a digital camera include being able to edit your images on the fly. Delete those images that you don’t like without spending money on film. Instant feedback is most gratifying. You can control the effect of the light on the digital sensor or “film” by choosing the proper white balance or creating a custom white balance. You have the option, with the exception of digital SLR cameras, to record video. You can have much greater control over the exposure process, if your digital camera has a histogram, which should be considered a modern version of an exposure meter. By learning how to use and read a histogram, you can tell whether or not your exposure is spot on. With film camera exposure metering, most photographers have to do some compensation to adjust for the exposure that the camera meter reads, especially if using slide film.

Some of the disadvantages of digital cameras, especially the non- SLR types, include the inability to have a shallow depth of field unless that is created in the computer post processing. For some cameras, slow focus and capture after the shutter is released can be extremely frustrating. Initial cost investment, can be a serious disadvantage for many people. Excellent film cameras, even SLR’s are relatively much less expensive than the equivalent digital cameras. Digital point-and-shoot cameras are much more costly than film point-and-shoot cameras. Most of us believe, or would like to believe (!) that the initial cost of getting involved in digital photography is well compensated by not having to purchase film and develop it.

Basically, in purchasing a digital camera you have four general classes of cameras to consider. First are very thin compact point-and-shoot cameras, second are larger but still pocketable cameras with point-and-shoot and some with advanced features, third are prosumer cameras that are almost like a digital SLR, generally in the 6-8 megapixel range, and lastly digital SLR cameras.


As a member of the Schenectady Photographic Society, you are probably reasonably serious about your photography and would want a camera that would allow you maximum camera control, if possible. Generally, you will have the most camera control with a digital SLR camera. Some of the prosumer digital cameras, have many of the features of digital SLR’s and will offer you a wide variety of controls. The problem however with an all-in-one prosumer digital camera is that because of the makeup of the digital sensor and lens relationship, it is extremely difficult to capture in camera shallow depth of focus. However, if your main desire is to have images

with large depth of field, these types of cameras are perfect. Even at shallow f-stops, significant depth of field can be obtained. Other advantages of prosumer digital cameras often include the extremely useful flip out and twist LCD screen. If you have never used a digital camera with a flip out and twist LCD screen, you are missing an entire world of photographic options. In the film world, the closest thing is the mid-1950s twin lens reflex camera with the large viewfinder on the camera top. Those cameras allow for waist level shooting and are great for landscape work and even candid street photography. With the twist out and flip

*please see digital ramblings page 3*

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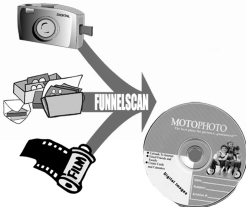
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## Digital ramblings

*continued from page 2*

LCD screen, you can easily photograph over your head, from ground level upward, even behind you!

Additional features that I think are important in any digital camera: affordable price, at least five plus megapixels, optical zoom from at least 35 mm to 110 mm in film format equivalent, image stabilization if possible, the ability for manual focus, white balance override, the ability for slow shutter speeds and even bulb mode for nighttime photography, built-in flash and the ability for external flash, aperture and shutter priority modes, affordable storage media (CompactFlash still seems to be the most affordable per megabyte), optical viewfinder (in bright sunny days, the LCD screen is often not usable), and the wonderful flip out and twist LCD. Also, cameras that have the ability to capture infrared are extremely useful and can be used to create beautiful black and white infrared photographs. Fast focus capture and minimal if any shutter-lag are extremely important features

Now I am not going to tell you which cameras are the best in every class. This is extremely subjective and depends upon your individual needs. However I will give you some resources in order to do your diligent research! Probably the best starting point is the wonderful web site by Philip Askey, called DPreview.com. There you will find the latest digital photography news, detailed camera reviews, wonderful buying guide tools, galleries of photographs taken with cameras you may be interested in purchasing, great forums on almost every digital camera type and tremendous links. An extremely valuable web site is Imaging-Resource.com with its image "compare-o-

meter". This feature compares hundreds of digital cameras images with each other. It is extremely easy to use and you can see the differences between camera images.

The important thing, in conclusion, is that rather than make yourself crazy about this detail or that detail, narrow down your search between two or three cameras that would suit your needs and acquire one. Also, you do have to accept that your camera model will likely be replaced with a more advanced model in 6-12 months. Such is the nature of electronic products and marketing. Nevertheless, I predict that you will find your photography to be much more enjoyable as you become involved in the digital process.

Jeff Perkins, E-mail address: perkster46@yahoo.com

## Jeff Perkins to show us how to approach candid street photography

On mentoring night, November 30, Jeff Perkins will review the equipment, both film and digital that can be used to capture candid street photographs. Cameras, lenses, type of film, exposure, focal length settings and camera techniques will be explored. Issues of model release will be discussed. Approaches in how to deal with your own feelings about photographing others with and without their permission will also be reviewed. Bring in your photographs of your candid street shots for discussion.

**Digital mentoring  
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7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.**



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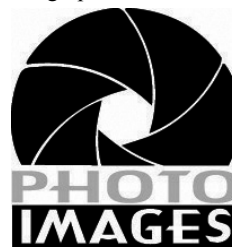
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## Levels and Curves – Controlling Tonality in Photoshop

Tonal control is fundamental to reproducing images regardless of whether the image is handled in the digital or conventional darkroom. At the November Digital meeting, Jim Craner will demonstrate and demystify the use of both these tools. Related topics such as the interpretation of histograms, the use of the 'Info Palette', and how to preview highlight and shadow detail loss will also be reviewed.

### Timothy Cahill

*continued from page 1*

emergence from journalistic exile into once again making and showing art is most welcome. Not surprisingly, the writer is very much present in these 14 black-and-white photographs taken from 2000-2004 and printed in an intensive marathon this spring. This is evident in both the evocative titles and the poetic sensitivity of the images.

"Most of the pictures are taken in close-up as flower and insect photographers do, but from a natural distance that allows comfortable scrutiny of the subject within a narrowly bounded context. So we peruse a pair of dead sunflowers, individual fallen leaves, a single pine cone set among waves of needled branches, or a gathering of natural detritus frozen into ice as micro-environments signifying themselves but also intended as metaphors.

"The intimacy of the pictures, in terms of distance, is matched by true intimacy from the artist. By taking the risk of letting us know how he feels, Cahill is making connections with his art. ... [His] gentle foray into photographing nature at its nadir, in late fall and winter, has produced subtly life-celebrating results. Mr. Cahill is currently art and photography correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* and art columnist for *Berkshire Living* magazine. His book about the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, "Art and Nature: *The Clark Inside and Out*," is forthcoming in November.

The talk will be called "Beyond Criticism." It will be about his transition from professional observer to the type of engaged, active seeing required to make art. It will also be about the process of freeing the creative mind from self-criticism, and opening up to creative discovery. The conversation can, of course, open into technical issues if the members are inclined to talk shop. He works with 35mm B&W film and makes his own silver prints. So far, nothing digital.

Plan to be with us on print night, November 2<sup>nd</sup> for a very stimulating talk.

## Digital Corner

### Screen Views

*Jim Barthman*

*Jim Barthman is a certified PhotoshopAce. His web site is <http://photoshophelp.blogs.com>*

Sometimes I just want to see the picture. No tool bars or palettes or funny graphs. Just the picture.

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To see your image all alone on a black background with NO system menu bars, Press the **TAB** key.

### Selection Tips

Painting a Quick Mask is a much more intuitive way to create a selection. Here's another good tip, rather than feathering a selection to soften it's edge, blur it instead. That's right, running a Gaussian Blur over a Quick Mask is a great way to soften the edge of a selection. Because you can see exactly what's happening, it's a much better way to blend isolated modifications.



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# October Competition Results

## Prints

### Color 31 Entries

* Barb Lawton	Twirlers	1
Jane Riley	In the Crystal Ball	2
Ken Deitcher	Enlightment	3
Warren Burton	Cade's Cove Abode	4
Bob Warner	Flower and Butterfly	5
Connie Bush	Lunch Time	HM
Kim Koza	Shaker Broom	HM
Jane Riley	Preening	HM
Ken Deitcher	Beetle #1	HM
Drue Sokol	A Rose is a Rose is a Rose	HM

### Monochrome 20 Entries

** Jennifer Young	Million Dollar Baby	1
Bob Gough	Untitled	2
Jeff Perkins	Shadow Runner	3
Ken Deitcher	Wrought Iron Egress	4
Kevin Sarsfield	Cathedral Ruins	HM

### Assigned Interiors 18 Entries

*** Ray Henrikson	Worcester Art Museum	1
Jeff Perkins	Cathedral All Saints	2
Luba Ricket	Enter	3
Connie Bush	Truck Patriot	4
Larry Basch	My Fridge as Seen by the Little Man who turns on the lights	HM

**Judge** Stan Blanchard

**Program** Janet Riker / Museum Director

#### Winner's Notes:

\*Twirlers was taken with an Olympus C7000 compact digital, set on Program with an ISO 400. The photo was taken off the TV screen. Barb was experimenting with her new camera, taking pictures of anything and everything, including the TV. Focusing and shutter speed were slow, resulting in a blurry photo. She softened it more in Elements3 and added the Warming Filter #85. It was printed on an Epson R2400 on Strathmore Velvet paper.

\*\*This was taken with a Nikon 70 and an 18-70 lens. It was taken behind Jennifer's studio around 3 pm.

\*\*\*Ray's winner was taken at the Worcester Art Museum with an Olympus C 60 digital camera placed on a museum bench for the 1 second exposure. The image was manipulated, minimally, with Picasa 2 and printed on an Epson Stylus CX 4600 printer.

## Slides

### General 21 entries

* Sue Gersten	Hands	1
Connie F. Houde	Barbershop	2
Ken Deitcher	Reptile	3
Ruby Gold	Reflection in a Stockade	4
	Doorway	
Luba Ricket	Two Dollies	HM

### Assigned Rocks 16 Entries

** Jeff Meyers	Sacandaga River Rocks	1
H. Johannessen	Pemaquid Lighthouse	2
H. Johannessen	Maine Coast	3
Judy Breslau	Exploring the Rocks	4
Kevin Sarsfield	Waiting for the Blade	HM

**Judge** Chris Gould

**Program:** William Matuszek / Under the Sea

#### Winner's Notes:

\* Sue took this black and white photo with film and then re-photographed it with Scala slide film, a Minolta Maxxam 800si camera and a close-up lens.

\*\* Jeff wrote: I took this photograph while out on a motorcycle ride along the Sacandaga River near Hadley. The river was low, revealing many rocks and the water line on them. I stopped, parked the bike, ran down among the rocks and took several shots without even removing my helmet! I used my Canon Powershot Pro 1 digital camera at a shutter speed of 640 and aperture of 5.0. I did some minimal tweaking for color, contrast and sharpness, and brought it as a ".tiff" file to McGreevy for conversion into a slide.



**Schenectady Photographic Society**  
is a member of the  
**Photographic Society of America**

## Award winning photographer to hold dance photography workshop

Photographer and gallery owner Lawrence White will be holding a photo workshop series in conjunction with the National Museum of Dance. The workshop will cover all aspects of photographing dancers up to and including final exhibition. Selected artwork of attendees will be displayed at Mr. White's new fine art gallery "Les Fauves" in Schuylerville. The workshop dates are November 5 from 11am to 4pm and then again at 2 pm on November 12th in Mr. White's gallery to select and edit the photos for the exhibition. Tentative date for the exhibition is mid January of 2006. Opening to be provided.

Mr. White's teaching method cuts right through the confusion that photography can present, and goes directly to the core issues of the art form such as recognizing light, choosing a frame, working with a dancer in motion, lens selection, and the various technical aspects of photography involved in collecting dynamic images. Mr. White's style is to simplify the technical aspects so that the attendee can learn at an accelerated rate, and ultimately learn to rely on a more intuitive sense of how to gain the perfect image. The workshop will also cover photo editing, and selection, printing methods, and ultimately the proper display of an image under optimum conditions.

The actual photo session will involve professional dancers of several disciplines in a class setting at a beautifully lit local dance studio. The photographer/students will not only receive input from Mr. White, they will also have the opportunity to collaborate with the dance instructor as well as the dancers themselves.

In the past Mr. White's photographic images have been published in such periodicals as *Time/Life*, *Rolling Stone*, *Boston Globe*, *Albany Times Union*, and *Le Monde*. In 2001 he won the

NY Press association award for his images of the terrorist attacks in NYC on 9/11/01, and his independent film work is in the collection of the Smithsonian's Archives of American Art. Mr. White's previous workshops have been inspirational to those who attended, and this one will be even more so.

The cost of the workshop is \$350 to be paid upon the date of attendance. A maximum of 12 attendees will be accepted. Pre-registration and deposit of \$100 are recommended to save a spot for the workshop. Make out check to Lawrence White and send C/O National Museum of Dance.

### Nate Simms

*continued from page 1*

skills classes for local youth. I took up photography in 1996 with the goal of using my images to promote land conservation.

I believe that a photograph can effect an emotional connection to its subject, and it is this connection that I hope can contribute to its preservation. My photographs represent an attempt to contribute to the creation of an identity for the land in Rensselaer County so that people will see inherent value in the farms, forests, and towns as they exist rather than only seeing the land as a resource to be used up.

I do not have any particular artistic drive at all, and I began taking pictures only as a means to an end. After a few years of shooting and learning, I developed more strategies for making pleasing images, but I always thought of these strategies as mostly the simple accumulation of technical knowledge rather than any sort of artistic refinement. My worry in using words like "art" and "creativity" is that for so many people, color landscape photography is a very literal and very cliché discipline. For many, it is fundamentally devoid of creativity, and rather than debate the un-debatable, I think of my hobby as landscape picture-taking and no more.

I was raised in the outdoors and spent summers on my grandfather's farm and in the mountains with my family. I was also fortunate to have lived in urban environments throughout my life, and I think that my varied experiences growing up have given me a different perspective than many other people have. I have always valued what I call "pure" forms of existence, whether they be cities and towns, farms, or forests, and my photographs are an attempt to celebrate these forms. I hope that they can portray these places in a positive light and help people see why I feel they should be valued.

Plan to be with us on November 9<sup>th</sup> to hear an inspiring talk by Nate Simms.

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# News You Can Use

## Focus receives top honors

The *Focus* newsletter was awarded first place in the large club division and received the Arthur P. Henricks, Jr. Memorial Award for Best Of Entries in the Photographic Society of America's annual International Bulletin Contest.

SPS records with sorrow the death of long time member Norm Hagadorn. Due to physical infirmities, Norm hasn't attended meetings recently but he continued to win many honors for his photography.

## Bill Allers had photograph selected

Bill Allers, recently had a photograph selected by Mary E. Murray, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Munson - Williams - Proctor Arts Institute, Utica, NY for the juried art show, *Saratoga: Inside-Out* held at the Saratoga County Arts Council from July 24 to September 3, 2005

Bill, also had another show at the Wise Bldg., 10 Rail Road Place, Saratoga Springs. These 19 photographs were on display from September 1 to September 30.

## Linda Buckman wins honors

Linda Buckman received two first places and one Best of Show at the Fonda Fair.

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## Rebekah Sokol receives first prize

Rebekah Sokol, one of SPS younger members, has received a first prize in the American Association of Physics Teachers High School Physics Contest this month. She was one of several hundred students who submitted images for judging.

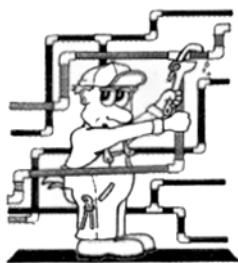
The winning photo submission describes a situation where objects were manipulated to produce a physics phenomena and describe it.

This image will be on the October cover of the *The Physics Teacher*; a monthly bulletin for high school science teachers and will be in a poster as well as a calendar for 2006.

## Ken Deitcher wins Italian digital circuit

Ken Deitcher won Best Animal Portrait in the Italian Digital Circuit - Grand Tour Colline - Section Trofeo Pratomagno. Awards are to be given in November 2005 in the Circolo Fotografico in Via Roma.

*Ken Deitcher is entering an international digital competition in England. They have a similar logo for their club 'Smethwick Photographic Society' SPS.*



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**November Calendar**

- Wednesday, November 2     Print group: Beyond Criticism / Timothy Cahill  
Assigned: The Color Red
- Wednesday, November 9     Slide group: Rensselaer County Landscapes / Nate Simms  
Assigned: City Life
- Wednesday, November 16\*     Digital: Optimize your photos with levels and curves / Jim Craner  
Digital mentoring 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 23     No meeting. Happy Thanksgiving
- Wednesday, November 30     Mentoring: Candid people and street photography, techniques and tips / Jeff Perkins



Meetings are at 7:30 p.m.  
 \*Board meetings are at 6:30 p.m.

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.