

# FOCUS

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY NEWS

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Number 3

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## Print group presents photo-journalist

*Norb Kosinski*

**O**n December 5, 2001, we have the privilege of hearing Michael Farrell present a program on photo journalism and documentary photography. He will share both images and insights into the creation of a photo story.

Michael was born in an inner city neighborhood in Buffalo where his immediate family consisted of underage uncles, his parents, grandmother and a blind grandfather. Since he was the firstborn, he quickly became his grandfather's companion and set of eyes. He passed the time and amused himself and his grandfather by

playing descriptive games with the sights he saw on daily walks. He knew that he wanted to be a photographer by age twelve and has pursued that goal since high school, through college and to the present time.

He attended the Rochester Institute of Technology and received his degree in photo illustration, working and interning in a variety of photo fields including Bio-medical photography, studio, corporate photography and photo journalism. While in college, Michael discovered the work of documentary photographers Robert Frank and Garry

*Please see Michael Farrell page 6*

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## Monochrome photo-artist to present program

*Jay Freud*



*Focus, New York City. Photo by Curt Miller*

**C**urt Miller is one of our area's finest photographers. He is local to this region and is an SPS member. He is a winner of many area awards and a winner of many SPS monochrome print nights. One of his latest achievements is

noted on both the covers of our tri-fold flyer and of our annual yearbook. Last month he won second place in the black and white/monochrome category. In October, he took

*Please see Curt Miller page 3*

# insect photography

Ken Deitcher

Insect photography can be as exciting and rewarding as photographing big game, raptors and sea life. Although insects are the most prevalent forms of life on earth and are found on all continents, you have to look for them. Nearly all insects are secretive and hide much of the time. They are active during the most unpleasant part of the day when it is extremely hot and humid. If you know where to look, you can find strange creatures beyond your imagination. Photographing these creatures can be a challenge and a delight.

My equipment for photographing insects has been employed in this country as well as in the jungles of the Peruvian Amazon and hills of Trinidad. It includes a 35mm camera, the Canon A2E. My primary lens is a Canon 100 mm macro lens with a 2X tele-extender. This can give magnifications from 1X to 2X life size. To get higher magnification, use a Nikon 3T (3 diopters) and a Canon 500T 58mm close-up auxiliary lens. The problem with extenders, used on occasion, whether tele or extension tubes, is a marked loss in light and this requires an increase in exposure by using a larger f-stop or a longer exposure time. I use Fujichrome Velvia rated at ISO 40 and Provia 100. As you increase your magnifications from 1/2 life-size to 1X, 2X and even 4X the amount of light decrease can be 4 to 16 times. These magnifications also decrease the depth of field to 1-2 millimeters. At these ranges focus has to be extremely accurate.

When photographing in the field, I exclusively use a flash (disregarding overcast days or the extreme brightness and contrast on very sunny days - a Canon MacroLite MU Ringflash that has TTL exposure capability. It has a circular

flashtube that goes around the lens to give an even subject illumination. The MacroLite has a build-in light that helps in focusing on your subject in subdued light. My usual exposures range from f/



Grant bug. Photo by Ken Deitcher

4.0 with extenders to f/8-11 using just the macro lens. I use manual exposures with shutter speed set to 1/250 to 1/45 of a second. The slower speeds are used to record more ambient light to give a more realistic photo with depth. The higher speeds render the background black, isolating the subject. Both of these techniques are acceptable and are used frequently by nature photographers.

A tripod hinders the mobility needed for chasing down flying insects such as beetles, moths and butterflies. However, in extreme close-ups on a windless day, a tripod is invaluable. A focusing rail enables the tripod-mounted camera to be moved accurately, minute distances, forward and back, as well as side to side, to focus and compose your image.

When you start into a trail, walk slowly, looking constantly into bushes and on small flowers for movement, bright colors or for leaves that are partially eaten. It is under and around these plants that you may find some interesting, tiny creatures. Keep your mind open to anything. You may find caterpillars, pupae, aphids, spiders, moths, butterflies, insect predators, bees and very small flies. Plan on your expedition taking 1 to 3 hours and using 1 to 4 rolls of film. On different days and times entirely different species can be seen.

Use an insect repellent on your pant legs as well as on your arms, face and neck. Wear a hat for insect and sun protection. Move slowly when photographing stinging insects. If you are going into deep brush, keep your

*Please see Insect photography page 6*

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## Curt Miller

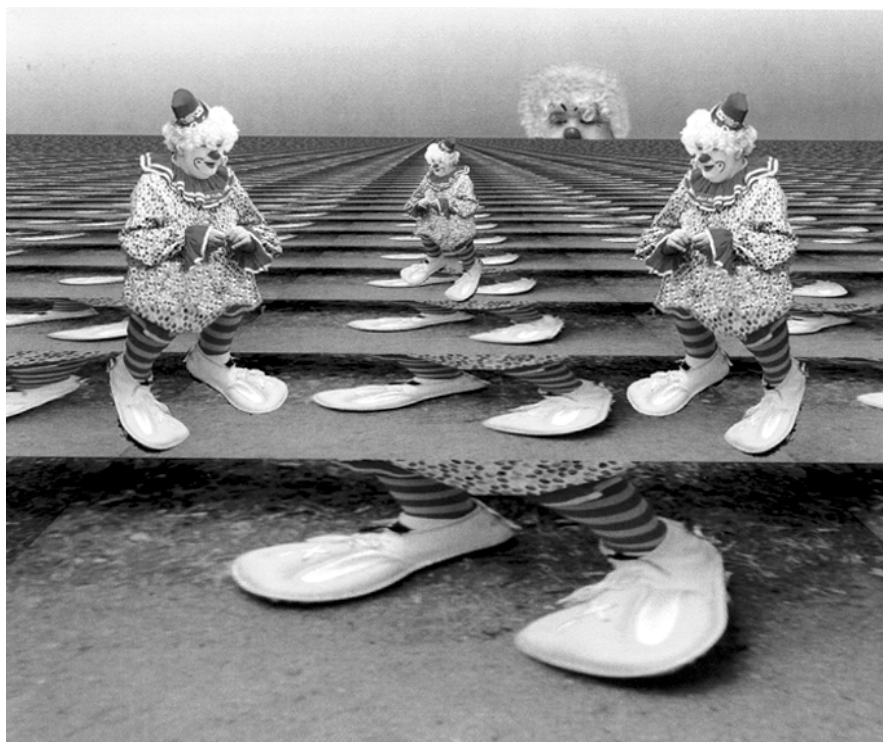
*continued from page 1*

first and second place in the monochrome category.

Curt lives in Massachusetts and works in Albany. He is very involved with SPS, ADK, Pittsfield Camera Association, his work in Albany and with his family. He recently attended and photographed a retirement party for a very good friend, Joe Kraussman of the State Legislature Staff. Curt used a wonderful vintage early 1950's Leica most of the time with a full complement of lenses. At times he switched to a medium format camera of the same era. His ease and use of these cameras in a crowded room, capturing faces and emotions was wonderful to watch.

Curt loves the vintage 35mm and roll film 120 size of the 1950's; he is a black and white artist. He is very quick with modern film in an antique camera in fast situations. This in itself is somewhat of a lost art form. He has his own darkroom and does almost all of his own lab work. The joy of printing remains still another facet of this artists work.

Plan to be with us on Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup> to hear Curt Miller and see many of his award winning images. And to hear about vintage camera equipment in a digital fast food era.



Clowns. Photo by Ken Deitcher

## Digital program planned

*Ken Deitcher*

The digital program on December 9th will be a digital projector show of the acceptances in the 51<sup>st</sup> Singapore International Salon of Creative Photography 2001 and the 7<sup>th</sup> ARCG International Salon of France.

The Singapore salon had entries submitted on digital media for judging. In the Digital Group there were eleven countries represented with 96 entries and 31 acceptances. Submissions were made

in the print (512 entries, 141 acceptances) and slide divisions (671 entries, 165 acceptances.)

Total countries represented: - 36, entries - 1284 and acceptances - 337

The winning entries were placed on a CD and sent to all entrants.

The ARCG International Salon had all acceptances placed on a CD and also sent to entrants.

The images represented are quite unique and exceptional. A real treat for your eyes and I'm sure will get your creative juices flowing.

Assigned topic for the evening is vegetables / fruit.

*When photographing  
any subject matter:  
turn around, look the  
other way, and see  
what's happening with  
the light in the other  
direction.*

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Pete Turner

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# So you want to buy a digital camera?

Jeff Perkins

**You have given this some thought. You can't let go of it. I know, it feels like your being unfaithful to your film camera but you just can't help it. So what goes into this? What do you look for?**

Of course you will need to decide on its use. Is the camera for web shots or producing photo quality 11x14 prints for sale or display? For the former you only need to spend \$300, for the latter \$700 or more.

Here are some of the points I have discovered over the last several years using four digital cameras, an Epson PC 600, an Olympus 340 DR, a Fuji MX 2900 and currently a Canon Powershot G 2.

**Lens:** Look for a glass aspheric lens that opens up to at least f2.0, you'll need this for those times you want to blur the background (portraiture). Remember that digital camera lenses have inherently a greater depth of focus at any f-stop than film camera lenses.

**Storage:** Lack of adequate storage in the field is a big pain. Who wants to schlep a laptop on a trip? My favorite is any camera that takes a Microdrive. You can buy a 1Gig Microdrive for about \$300 and

store about 900 best quality JPEG images on it. Compact flash cards are not faster in tests than the Microdrive but cost more per megabyte. Smartmedia cards are costly and have limited storage compared to CF or the Microdrive. Optical disks are an option that provide inexpensive, good storage. Sony's Memory Sticks are costly and can only be used in Sony cameras (remember the BetaMax?!)

**Focus lag and write times:** Cameras are improving in this area. Those digicams that are slow to focus and capture the shot can cause you to scream when you miss that critical expression because of slow auto focus. Write times to the media, when slow, annoy you, as you have to wait till this is done so the camera can take the next shot. Obviously faster is better on both issues.

**LCD screen:** the most usable are the ones that turn and twist allowing you to compose shots at waist level, overhead or behind you. Examples are the Nikon Coolpix 995 and the Canon G 2. Definitely you want a separate optical viewfinder as well. The LCD's are great for dim light or indoors but can be challenging to use outdoors on a sunny day.

**CCD:** bigger is better. A 4-megapixel sensor will give you a better, sharper print than a 1.3 sensor (unless you only want to print 2x3 inch photos!)

**File Types:** Every digicam will give you JPEG options. Lots of pics can be taken because of the compression but image quality is lost. TIFF is essentially lossless but creates potentially huge files,

depending on the size of the CCD sensor, that will suck up storage space quickly. RAW mode is probably best in that there is a little compression but insignificant to effect the image quality and allows for more images on your card. Also, RAW is an unadulterated image, "what you saw is what you get" and allows for the sharpest photos.

**35-mm features:** You'll want features as exposure and flash compensation, auto-bracketing, light balancing and adjustable ISO speeds. The more manual control features your camera provides the greater control you have over the image.

**Download features:** You'll want USB transfer as your best choice over card readers. Forget about using a serial cable to download images to your computer, it takes forever!!!! Aaaaaarrrrrrggghhhhh!

**Software:** Compare software bundled with the camera. Ideally you want PhotoShop LE software for great photo-editing flexibility as well the camera manufacturers software.

**Battery Life:** You don't want the camera pooping out after one hour of shooting. You want a camera with a big, long lasting Lithium type battery. Also, look for quick recharge times. It is always a good idea to have a back up charged battery available.

So, here are some of the features to keep in mind. Finally, visit Phil Askey's web site, [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com) to check out everything you could want to know about digital cameras. Phil has great links to the top digital web sites out there. Have fun!



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# November Competition Results

## Prints

### Monochrome 17 entries

* Louie Powell	Highland Beach, Truro	1
Curt Miller	"Focus" New York City	2
Ken Deitcher	Model in Sepia	3
Connie Houde	3 Monks	HM
Connie Houde	Women of Acteah Mexico	HM

### General Color 38 entries

** Linda Heim	Morning Paddle	1
Tom Barber	Last Sail	2
Kathleen August	Derelect Cabin# 2	3
Jane Riley	Into the Garden	4
Harvey Mendelson	Winter Window	5
Kim Koza	Champs Elyse	HM
Kim Koza	Cotswald Wheels	HM
Jim Craner	Bug Talk	HM
Connie Houde	Grand Old Man	HM
Linda Heim	A Touch of Green	HM

### Assigned Cemeteries 34 entries

*** Chris Marotta	Ascension	1
Herb Dieck	Reverie	2
Sue Gersten	Cemetery	3
Joe Condra	Cap't David Foster	4
Tony Hilferty	Final Rest	5
Tony Hilferty	The End	HM
Herb Dieck	Cemetery Tall	HM
Curt Miller	Marilla, Washington, Mass	HM
Luba Ricket	Under Arches	HM
Luba Ricket	Arthur	HM

**Judge:** Joan Oliver

**Program:** John Leverett / Landscape and wildlife photography

### Winner's Notes:

\* Highland Beach, Truro was made using a 4x5 Crown Graphic camera and Arista 400 film. A lens shade was essential to prevent flare when the negative was exposed conventionally at mid-morning because the sun was almost directly in front of the camera but well above the axis of the lens. The display print on Arista (Ilford) variable contrast FB paper was printed "down" to emphasize the highlights on the water.

\*\*Linda's winning photowas taken with a Samsung ECX-1 camera, a 38-140 lens and Kodak Gold 100 film. The morning light kept the canoe in dark shadow but created rim light on the edge of the canoe. The morning mist helped create the quiet mood of the image.

\*\*\*Chris took this photo with a Nikon 8008, a 50mm f5.6 lens, Kodak High Speed Infrared film and a #25 Red filter. It was taken lying down and aiming the camera between the two headstones at St. Anthony's Cemetery in the early afternoon.

## Slides

### General 38 entries

* Jean Palm	Untitled	1
Harvey Mendelson	Looking for an Evening Snack	2
Sue Gersten	Old Shoe	3
Jeff Plant	Spring Meltoff at Sunset	4
Kim Koza	European Wheels 2nd time	5
Warren Burton	Untitled	HM
David Lilac	Morning Mist Glens Falls	HM
Ken Deitcher	One in Every School	HM
Kim Koza	Amish Study	HM
Frank Bumbaratore	Cat	HM

### Assigned Emotions 28 Entries

** Carole Tannen	Near Tears	1
Kim Koza	I Love You	2
Luba Ricket	Pretty Please	3
Carole Tannen	Sweet Kiss	HM
Connie Houde	Thoughtful	HM
Jeff Perkins	The Family	HM

Judge Colleen Skiff

Program Joan Barrett / Creating Myth and Magic

### Winner's Notes:

\*Jean took this picture of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. at 10 a.m. while it was crowded with visitors and school children. The flag, reflected in the stone, captured her attention, as representing the sacrifice of so many young people. She used a Canon EOS 3 camera, a 75-300 lens and Ektachrome VS film.

\*\*Carole took this winner in the morning with a Canon EOS 10S camera on a tripod, a Canon 35-105 lens and Sensia 2 film. Carole writes "He is my soulmate - my first grandson and after silliness, and my pleading with him to stop fooling around, his expression changed 180' and I caught it.



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

## **Insect photography**

*continued from page 2*

clothing tight around your wrists and ankles. You can use rubber bands or masking tape around your pants or put your pants into your stockings to protect yourself from the annoyance of biting insects. If you are highly sensitive to poison ivy or similar plants, wear long sleeved shirts and boots.

Bring water on your treks into the woods. On warm days you can lose quite a bit of body water through evaporation and perspiration. You can quickly become dehydrated. Put granola or trail mix in your pocket for a much needed energy boost.

Don't attempt to classify your finds in the field. You will be too busy photographing creatures. When you find a subject, don't just take one photo. Work your subject just as big game photographers do. The second or third shot may be more interesting. Once, while photographing aphids, I noticed a slightly larger specimen and witnessed an unusual phenomenon in insect life – a live birth by a parthenogenetic female aphid. The fascinating life histories of insects will make an insect hunter of you. I have

spent several hours shooting Argiope Spiders and their interesting webs.

In macro work, use manual focus and prefocus to determine magnification. Move toward or away from your small subjects in order to focus. This way the only manual control you have to worry about is pressing the shutter. This technique allows you to concentrate on composition and following your subject. Always focus on your subject's eyes. This is true for larger animals, as well as tiny ones.

The most interesting and exciting feature of macro photography of insects is the revealing of things that are rarely observed by most people. Some examples of the details revealed are the intricacies of insect mouthparts, compound eyes, pollen sacks on the legs of bees, scales on butterfly and moth wings, and the unusual shapes and patterns used as camouflage.

The real work starts when you begin to classify and identify the insects after your slides have been developed. Many good reference books are available with color photos to compare to your own. By taking multiple images of your subjects, you can better classify specimens that have subtle changes in color, pattern or size.

## **Michael Farrell**

*continued from page 1*

Winogrand which altered his passion and direction on a permanent basis.

After college Michael began working in the field of art administration, eventually becoming an assistant director at the Center of Photography at Woodstock. Following that pursuit, he moved to New York City and was a photo assistant for a variety of commercial and editorial photographers.

Since 1991 Michael worked for various daily newspapers in New York City and California. He settled at the Albany Times Union in 1997 where he is currently working.

Michael relates "though employed as a Photo journalist, I consider myself a Documentary Photographer, photographing as much (if not more) as when I am working for the newspaper." That statement truly exemplifies his enjoyment of the art of photography, creating images, not out of necessity, but out of love. He will share with us some of those images, discuss his creative process and discuss how we can progress in documentary photography.

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# News You Can

## Freeman Patterson will speak in Albany

The Schenectady Photographic Society is bringing internationally acclaimed outdoor and nature photographer Freeman Patterson to Albany on Saturday, April 20th. He will be giving a one day workshop at the Clark Auditorium of the New York State Museum.

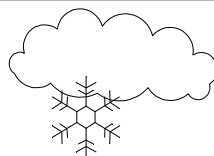
Please put this date on your calendar. More details will be published in future issues of the *Focus*.

## Sue Gersten has shown work on TV

SPS member Sue Gersten was on Channel 13 with Benita Zahn talking about and showing photos that she took at Ground Zero recently. Her photos were not of the destruction but of the people around the area.

She has also appeared on the Schenectady Access Channel 16 with Ann Parillo showing her photos of Cuba.

## Winter weather advisory



Since we live in the great northeast, we can expect a little snow and ice during the winter months. The chairperson of that evening will decide if a meeting should be cancelled. If you are not certain whether you should start out, call the chairperson - he/she is listed on the back page of the *Focus*.

The chairperson will call WRGB, channel 6 and radio station WGY with the cancellation news.

## Print group reminder

Print competition entries must be mounted on matboard or foamcore. Overmats are optional. Colored mounts or mats and multiple overmats are not allowed. Please use white or black mats and do not double or triple mat your prints. They will have to be disqualified. Please see the rules in the Sept-Oct *Focus*.

## Do you love photography?

Then you belong in PSA. It is the only photographic organization anywhere that promotes the arts and sciences of photography through teaching, exhibition and program services for all photographers, novice to advanced, amateur and professional, individuals and groups, in all branches of photography.

The Photographic Society of America has eight special-interest divisions to administer its educational and program services - Color Slide, Pictorial Print, Nature, Video and Motion Picture, Photojournalism, Stereo, Photo-Travel and Techniques. Within these divisions you can learn and practice virtually every type of photography, from fine art to contemporary, from micro to fish-eye, from almost-forgotten print techniques to the latest computer-imaging.

The monthly PSA Journal, which goes to all members, publishes a wide range of technical and how-to articles, along with photographic news and guides to exhibitions and Society services.

For membership information, write:  
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**December Calendar**

Wed. Dec 5\*                      Print group: Photo Journalism / Michael Farrell  
    Assigned Topic: Night Scenes

Wed. Dec 12                      Slide group: Monochrome and vintage cameras / Curt Miller  
    Assigned Topic: Pictures that show motion

Wed. Dec 19                      Digital Group: Digital Projector Show  
    Assigned Topic: Vegetable/Fruit



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.