

FOCUS

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY NEWS

Volume 75

September - October 2005

Number 1

Ancient Lands and Peoples

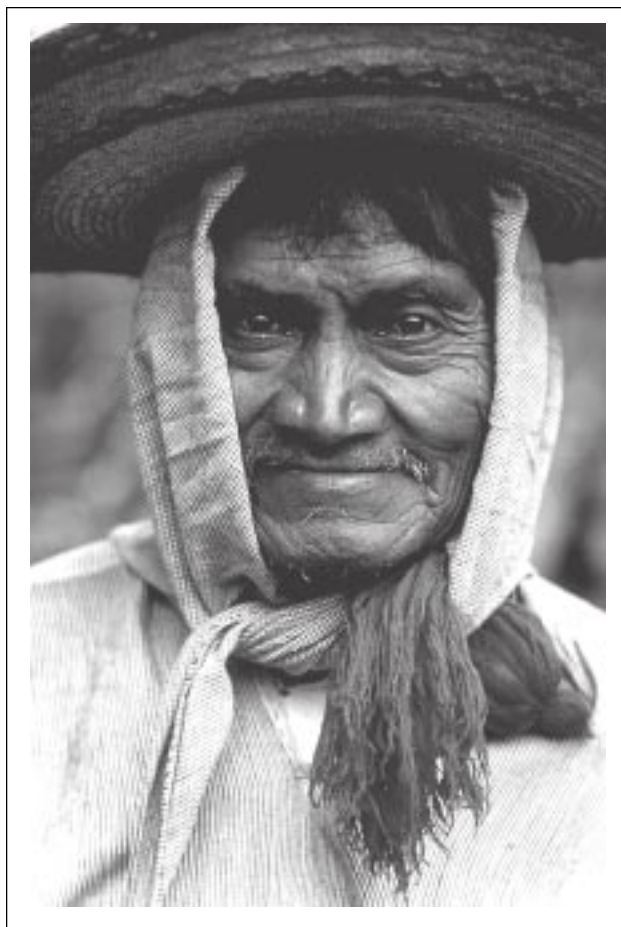
*The Documentary
Work of Jeffrey Jay
Foxy*

will be featured at
the
**Kick-off
meeting,
Wednesday
September 21st.**

Jeff Foxy describes himself as an ethnographic photographer and the title is certainly appropriate. For almost 40 years, Jeff has distinguished himself among documentary photographers with his sensitive and profound images of native peoples and cultures. Even a quick look at a portfolio of his images reveals the personal connection between Jeff and his subjects. The smiles are easy and genuine; his subjects look back, not just at a photographer, but at a friend.

After an early period spent learning the craft and defining his style, Jeff began the tedious job of building a portfolio and prying open the doors of the publishing world. Between then and now, Jeff's client list has grown to include the United Nations; *Life Magazine*, the National Geographic Society, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian; and several book publishers including Hyperion and Harry N. Abrams, Inc, publisher of three of Jeff's books.

The pivotal assignment in Jeff's career was his photography of life in a Mayan community in Mexico. For several years in the 1980's, Jeff traveled over 7,000 miles in an ancient 1971 Volkswagen van. In the biographical notes on his website, Jeff spins humorous tales of life on the road with his venerable Volkswagen and offers fascinating insights into the techniques he used to photograph the camera shy Mayans under difficult conditions. By working with an anthropologist,



Portrait of a Mayan Elder. Photo by Jeff Foxy

already well known among the Mayans, Jeff was able to build bridges and be accepted in his own right. The closeness and trust he was able to establish shines through in the many environmental portraits that are the hallmark of his work.

Jeff's photographs of the Mayan people illustrated a book entitled *Living Maya* published by Abrams in 1987 and now in its 5th printing. This book won the prestigious Anisfield-Wolf Award in Race Relations. Images from the book toured the United States with textiles from the weavers' cooperative in an exhibit also entitled *Living Maya*.

Please see Mayan page 2

Mayan

continued from page 1

Jeff's admiration for the traditional crafts of the Mayan people fueled two additional books. *The Maya Textile Tradition*, published in 1997 by Harry N. Abrams, was written by 5 anthropologists and lavishly illustrated by photographs that Jeff captured, primarily in Guatemala, with some additional images made in Chiapas, Honduras, and Belize. Available, with other books by Jeff at www.amazon.com, this work celebrates the weavers' art. Textiles are seen in real life situations. A series of images – stunning in their compositional simplicity – can be seen at Jeff's website. My favorite from this series, which Jeff captured on a trip through the Andes in Peru, shows colorful blankets spread out to hold potatoes as the farmers dig them from the earth. This photograph crystallizes, in a single image, the fundamental role textile weaving plays in the lives of the native people. The second work is a children's book *Angela Weaves a Dream: The Story of a Young Maya Artist* published by Hyperion Books for Children, 1997. In this inspiring story, Angela learns to weave the Maya symbols from her grandmother. Her dedication and hard work are rewarded when she enters her first sampler in a contest and wins!

Turquoise jewelry is emblematic of the American southwest, and if you have ever admired its earthy beauty and elegant design, then Jeff's book *The Turquoise Trail* will be a great read! Co-authored with anthropologist Carol Karasik, this book is clearly about the art as well as the artist. The photographs simply drip turquoise and silver and each is a feast for the eyes! The lighting and compositions may well reflect some of Jeff's early work in a commercial studio specializing in catalog photography. In just 5 chapters, Jeff and Carol take us on a trip through geology, geography, and time as they celebrate this classic art form.

In something of a whimsical departure from his traditional work Jeff has created an offbeat tribute to the grit and determination of the Cuban people. Together with Christiana Dittmann and Bruce McInnes, Jeff obtained permission to join other artists

Guatemalan weavers with Jeff Foxx



and students in Cuba and began photographing there in 1994. On the streets of Havana, Jeff saw the cars of his childhood lovingly preserved by the enterprising Cubans despite the hardships of the economic embargo. This work is on the one hand a simple nostalgic and humorous look at vintage American cars and the people who love them, but at the same time the work is also a metaphorical glimpse at two cultures sharing a sometimes troubled history from which neither can really ever escape.

Every good photographer creates and fulfills self-assignments. One of Jeff's is a continuing project he has labeled 'Powwow Portraits'. Started in 1984 while he was working on *The Turquoise Trail*, Jeff began photographing native-American powwows and dances as he traveled the southwest. These important gatherings have social, commercial, and even religious overtones and Jeff admits to being captivated by the beat of the drums, the sound of the chanting, and the spectacular regalia worn by the dancers. Powwow is a time when people get together and present the best of their culture for themselves and visitors. His goal is to one day publish this work with a Native American writer.

Jeff's personal collection of favorite images (www.foxxarchive.com) shows him to be a photographer's photographer. Technically superb, graphically simple, and diverse in content; these images reveal Jeff's curiosity with almost everything that wanders past his viewfinder. **At the Schenectady Photographic Society's annual 'kickoff' meeting Wednesday September 21, we will share a special evening with dedicated photographer Jeffrey Jay Foxx.** I hope you will be there to welcome Jeff and enjoy his presentation.


Article written by Jim Craner, V. Pres.

RESTORATIONS

MOTO PHOTO

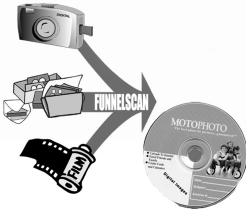
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Print Group to Hear Museum Director

On October 5th, the Print Group will hear Janet Riker, Director of the University Art Museum at the University at Albany, speak on "Museum Director Reflects on Photography Today". Prior to moving to the Capital Region in 2004, Riker was Director of the Rotunda Gallery in Brooklyn for fourteen years. There she developed a highly regarded program of changing exhibitions and innovative educational offerings for children and adults. She served as director of the Queensborough Community College Art Gallery, and Assistant Curator at the Drawing Center, in New York City. Riker received a M.A. degree in Art History from Columbia University and a B.A. from Alfred University. She has organized dozens of exhibitions considering all facets of contemporary visual arts. She has served on numerous selection panels and commissioning bodies, and has lectured widely on contemporary art and artists' issues. In 2004, Riker received the Betty Smith Arts Award from the Brooklyn Borough President and was cited by the New York City Council for her contribution to the arts in Brooklyn. She lives in Guilderland with her husband, photographer Michael Marston, and son Philip.

Mentoring Topics announced for 2005-06

Chair: Jeff Perkins

November 30: Candid People and Street Photography, Techniques and Tips. Jeff Perkins

March 29: Nailing Exposure, Film or Digital. Jeff Perkins



Photo by William Matuszek

Slide group will go Under the Sea

William F. Matuszek is the speaker for the first slide meeting of the year on Wednesday, October 12th.

Bill has been a resident in the Town of Bethlehem for 23 years. In addition, he owns and operates Keystone Architectural Services, a local architectural firm specializing in commercial and light industrial architecture.

He started SCUBA diving in 1998 and began underwater photography almost immediately after he received his diving certification. Underwater photography is his way of sharing the beauty of the oceans with his family and friends.

Bill is a member of the Albany Aquanauts, a local SCUBA diving club. The Aquanauts dive locally and internationally. For more information on diving with the club visit albanyaquanauts.org on the web.

From the Northern Focus newsletter in the Wooler and District camera club in the Northern counties Photographic Federation in Great Britain:

There is still a very strong social side within the club. The "crack and the cuppa" are still very important.

Sounds like our "cookie break."



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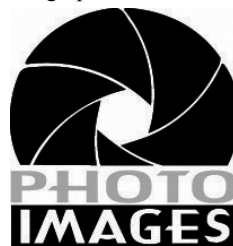
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Schenectady Photographic Society Print Competition Rules 2005 - 2006

The purpose of the competition is to provide a venue for showing prints. The competitive element exists to add interest, and these rules are intended to provide order in the competition and simplify the process of handling prints. Judging is inherently subjective and does not yield a definitive evaluation of the merits of individual images.

1. Monthly Competition October – April

Only dues-paid members may enter

Three categories

Monochrome – Images consisting of one color.

Uniformly toned images are acceptable in the monochrome category.

Color- including partially toned and hand-colored images.

Assigned topic – negatives or digital files must have been made after announcement of topics on May 1, 2005.

Each maker may enter **three prints each month**. However, **one** of the three must be entered in the monochrome category. And no more than two prints may be entered in any one category.

Presentation

*Prints must be 5"x7" or larger. An exception will be made where the process is not conducive to enlargement (eg, Polaroid, contact prints, etc.)

*Prints must be mounted on matboard or foamcore.

*Overmats are optional.

*Mounts must be 8"x10" or larger, but may not exceed 16"x20".

*Colored mounts or mats, and multiple overmats are not allowed. Mounts and mats must be white or black.

*Prints in frames are not allowed.

*Prints requiring special handling are not allowed. The Print Chair may disqualify prints that, in his sole judgment, may present risk of physical harm to other prints.

*Signed prints are not allowed.

*Prints must be submitted to the registrars on the night of competition. Prints will not be accepted after 7:30pm.

*Each submitted print must have a 3x5 card (available on the night of competition) with required information filled in and placed on back of mount.

*The negative, slide or digital file from which the print was made must be the work of the maker. Printing and mounting may be done commercially.

*Prints that "place" may not be re-entered in a subsequent monthly competition. Prints may not be entered more than two times.

2. Judging and Scoring

*An impartial judge will evaluate each print for impact, composition, technical execution, and presentation. The

judging of the assigned topic category will include the additional factor of how well the image responds to the assignment.

*Prints will be displayed on racks under normal room lighting for judging. The arrangement of prints on the display racks will be at the discretion of the print stewards. The judge will not be given titles at the time of judging.

*Judges will be asked to comment on prints that "place", and if time allows, on other prints that deserve discussion. This discussion is intended to help members and visitors discern the strengths and weaknesses that the judges see in the prints.

*For the purpose of the Printmaker of the Year awards, prints that place in competition will be awarded points as follows:

First Place	7 points
Second Place	5 points
Third Place	4 points
Fourth Place	3 points
Fifth Place	2 points
Honorable Mention	1 point

If the number of entries is limited, the Print Chair may, at his/her sole discretion, eliminate one or more of the "places" for that month.

3. Year End Competitions

Print of the Year

*Separate Monochrome and Color Print competitions will be held at the May meeting.

*Only prints that have been entered into a monthly competition during the 2005-2006 season of Schenectady Photographic Society may be entered into the Print of the Year Competition(s).

*Entries must bear the original entry card on the back of the mount.

*Presentation and entry rules are the same as for the monthly competitions.

*Each maker may submit up to **two entries in each** of the Print of the Year categories.

Printmaker of the Year

*Recognition for Printmaker of the Year, Second Place Printmaker of the Year, and Third Place Printmaker of the Year will be awarded in the three categories of Monochrome, Color and Assigned Topic.

*Award selection will be based on total points accumulated during the October – April monthly competitions of the respective categories. In case of a tie, the person with the most first place scores will be judged the winner. If first place scores are tied, then second place scores will be used, etc. until a clear winner emerges.

During judging, no one will be permitted in the judging area except the group chairperson and /or his or her designated assistant(s).

Schenectady Photographic Society Slide Competition Rules 2005-2006

1. Monthly Competition October -April

- * Current member of SPS (dues paid)
- * Submitting slides for competition
 - Competition limited to 35mm format (color and B&W)
 - Put a dark colored dot at bottom left corner of slide as normally viewed
 - Put your name and title of slide on same side as dot
 - Do not use gummed labels that require moistening as they may come off and jam the projector. Pressure sensitive labels may be used
- * Complete a 3x5 card (available on night of competition) with the required information. Submit both slide and card when registering for competition
- * Number of slides allowed each month - **three**
Maker has the choice of entering two slides in assigned and one in general or one in assigned and two in general
- * Alternative processes
 - Alternative processes or manipulations (including digital) are allowed in creating an image. Every element of such an image must be an original creation by the maker
- * Assigned Topic
 - Must have been taken after May 1, 2005.
 - Must meet the assigned topic
- * Entry Time
 - Slide group night of each month between 7:00p.m. and 7:30p.m.
 - No slides will be accepted after 7:30 p.m.

2. Judging

- * Impact
 - Interesting subject, subjects which fill the frame, strong colors, texture, patterns, action, emotion, creativity
- * Composition
 - Strong center of interest, leading lines, framing, vertical/horizontal format, perspective, graphic elements, rule of thirds
- * Technical Quality
 - Focus, exposure, lighting, tonal range
 - Image surface free of scratches, dust and finger prints

3. Scoring

First place	7 points
Second place	5 points
Third place	4 points
Fourth place	3 points
Fifth place	2 points
Honorable mention	1 point

If the number of entries is limited, the Slide chair may, at his/her sole discretion, eliminate one or more of the "places" for that month.

4. Year End Competition and Awards

- * Slide of the Year
 - The slides must have been entered in competition between October 2005 and April 2006 (regardless of score received)
 - Three slides may be entered for Slide of the Year competition
- * Assigned Slidemaker of the Year
 - Award points will be based on total points accumulated during the October - April monthly competitions.
 - * Slidemaker of the Year
 - Award points will be based on total points accumulated during the October - April monthly competitions.
 - * Ties
 - In the event of a tie in any of the categories, the person with the most first place scores will be judged the winner. If first place scores are tied, then second place scores will be used, etc. until a clear winner emerges.

During judging, no one will be permitted in the judging area except the group chairperson and/or his or her designated assistant(s)

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Photographic Essay Group schedules topics for 2005-06 year

Chairs: Connie Houde and Jim Craner

The Photo Essay group is scheduled to meet four (4) times during the 2005-2006 SPS year. One of these meetings is shared with Photo Grab Bag. With a relatively few meetings at our disposal, Connie and I have done our best to come with a list or program topics that we hope will see an increase in the number of entries next spring.

- **October 26 Review top print and slide essays from last year.** Commentary by the artists on creation and presentation. We will be trying to determine who will work on essays this year. Note: it will be three months between this and our next meeting.
- **January 25 Basics of the ProShow™ software.** Time permitting we will also survey Photoshop techniques used to size images, and the use of layering techniques to prepare print essays.
- **March 22 Assessment of progress.** Schedule individuals for help using Software to prepare 'slide' essays. Run through digital essays with those wishing to do so.
- **April 26 Photo Essay competition.**

As you can see from the schedule, the period between October and January will be critical in terms of refining an idea for an essay, and selecting or creating appropriate images. There are really only three working sessions, and only a month between the last working session and the competition. Experience over the past few years shows that projected essays ranging in length from about 5-15 minutes are about right, and winning printing essays have contained as few as 5-8 images.

On competition night last year we saw that while much has changed, nothing is really different. The judges were quick to point out that telling a compelling story is still central to a successful essay no matter what technology is used to present it. Also, over the last several years, winning contestants have mixed images from different sources into a winning combination.

Jim Craner will try to assist anyone wanting to create a digital slide show but lacking the ability to digitize images captured on film. Digital projection equipment will be available for those who create essays needing it. Connie Houde will help anyone wanting to master the analog equipment the club currently owns.

Jim Craner can be reached at renarc@aol.com and Connie Houde at lilyconnie@verizon.net.

Digital group announces topics for 2005-06 year

Digital Chair: Jeff Perkins, Assistant: Bob Riccardo

- October 19:** Expert Panel Digital vs. Film, What Have We Learned. (Members Portfolio)
- November 16:** Photo and Portrait Retouching with Jane Riley. (Members Portfolio)
- December 21:** Artistic Techniques to Enhance Your Photographs with Ken Deitcher. (Members Portfolio)
- January 18:** Photoshop for Beginners, the Basics to get you started with Bob Riccardo. (Members Portfolio)
- February 15:** Unique Approaches to Black and White Digital Photography with Frank Bumbardatore. (Members Portfolio)
- March 15:** Blend Modes Revisited- How to maximize any image using Blend with Jeff Perkins
Also on March 15th, Digital Flower Mastery with Lou Snitkoff. (Members Portfolio)
- April 19:** Optimize Your photos with Levels and Curves- Jim Craner. (Members Portfolio)

Digital Ramblings by Jeff Perkins

As Digital Chairman for this upcoming year, I am very excited about the programming we have put together for 2005-2006. Our digital kickoff meeting on October 19 will include myself, Bob Riccardo, Kenneth Dietcher, Max Tiller, and Lenny Maiselman discussing what we have learned using our experiences with digital versus film approaches to photography. It is sure to be an enlightening evening. Next month I will discuss the programming for the rest of the year. And please see page 7 for an exciting new program we are starting for beginners.

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News You Can Use

Have questions about digital photography?

The digital group is starting a "rookie group" for all our beginning digital photographers. Every third Wednesday of the month, digital night, we will hold a thirty minute question and answer period beginning at 7:00.

If you don't know how to set your digital camera, or are confused about a photo imaging program, or have any other digital questions, come to the digital meeting one half hour early and meet with our digital experts.

Slide competition has a new rule

Due to confusion in logging in and keeping track of the slides that are entered for competition, all slides must either have a title or be listed as "Untitled #1, Untitled #2, if the maker is entering more than one slide in a category and does not wish to put a title on it.

And remember, your name and the **title** (or untitled #1) must be written on the front of the slide.

Jeff Perkins wins grand prize

Jeff Perkins was the Grand Prize Winner in the non-student division of the Popular Photography/ Nikon "Pop-quiz" Lighting competition, held January 2005. Over 3500 entrants submitted a portfolio of images reflecting the many lighting challenges that photographers face, including flash, night photography, portraiture, interior lighting and so forth. Jeff's

images were selected as the best and may still be seen by going to www.pophoto.com.

Two SPS members winners in *Daily Gazette* contest

Two of our members were finalists in the *Daily Gazette's* photo contest this summer. They are Linda Wroble, who won fourth prize and Cynthia Placek who took an honorable mention.

SPS going to the zoo on October 8th

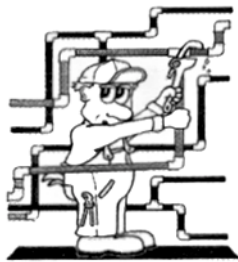
Jeff Perkins has arranged a trip to the Bronx Zoo on Saturday, October 8th. We will travel with Wade Tours. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come. Simply call Wade Tours at 355-4500 and make your reservation. We will have a great time as a group of photo enthusiasts.

For Sale

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Ken Deitcher has picture in *Petersen's*

Ken Deitcher had a picture selected for inclusion in *Petersen's Photographic* magazine's Express Yourself Gallery. He also had an article about digital infrared in the August issue of the *PSA Journal*.



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www.schenectadyphotographicsociety.com

September - October Calendar

Wednesday, September 21	Kick-off meeting: Ancient lands and peoples / Jeffrey Jay Foxx
Wednesday, October 5	Print group: Museum Director / Janet Riker Assigned: Interiors
Saturday, October 8	SPS trip to the Bronx Zoo. See page 7 for details.
Wednesday, October 12	Slide group: Under the sea / William F. Matuszek Assigned: Rocks
Wednesday, October 19*	Digital: Expert panel - digital vs film. What have we learned
Wednesday, October 26	Photo Essay: Review top print and slide essays from last year.

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.