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Portland Photographers' Forum

Newsletter

Portland Photographers' Forum meets from 7:00-9:00 p.m., Monday, November 21, in Room 30 of the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Highway, Portland.

[\(See Map\)](#)

November, 2011

President's Message

Making Images with Impact

by Pete Gomena



This month we look deeper into photographs to see what we might find. Our "feedback session" will be a community critique of members' work. Members are encouraged to bring one or a few pieces to be discussed. It is better to bring pieces that are somehow related rather than "greatest hits" from different bodies of work. I will serve as moderator to move the discussion along, keep it on track, and generally maintain order.

Criticism is a very sensitive subject for many people. At some point in your development as an artist, you have to step up to your peers and ask them what they think. Constructive criticism, carefully applied and taken in the spirit in which it is offered, will advance your work. (A good argument is spirited and constructive without being cruel. PPF exists to promote members' work, not a critic's ego.)

A few months back, PPF member Sam Blair presented his ideas on what elements a picture must contain in order to be a good photograph. The ensuing discussion nearly caused an air traffic control outage over PDX. Well, maybe not, but it certainly got folks thinking and talking.

What Sam communicated was his personal mental checklist that comprises his intuitive process for making a picture. Sam has embedded this matrix of points so firmly in his subconscious that it is seamlessly incorporated into his visual approach to any subject. He made some very good points, and we'll incorporate them, and other ideas, into our discussion at Monday's meeting.

Here's a checklist for you to consider. Sit down with your prints and ask yourself these questions, ponder the technical and aesthetic. If you can't find satisfactory answers, bring your questions to the meeting! (Note: The "why" questions are the hardest and ultimately the most enlightening when examined closely.)

The General - *Motivation and Communication*

1. What was your intent? (Why did you make this picture? What is its purpose? What was your idea?)
2. Does the picture succeed in communicating your intent? (What worked, what didn't and why or why not?)
3. Does the image stand on its own? (Does it "speak without words," or does it need its context explained?)

The Specific - *Factors supporting the success of the image*

1. Content (Subject matter matters! What makes your subject interesting and why?)
2. Composition/Visual Design (Cropping, positioning of subject, pose and posing, graphic elements, perspective, point of view, volume/illusion of depth and space, filling the frame, "leading" the viewer's eye through the image.)
3. Lighting (direction/angle, contrast, color, specularity/diffusion, brightness - how effectively were these qualities of light used or managed?)
4. Time and Motion (How well are subject motion, shutter speed, panning, etc. used to convey a sense of time or timelessness? Did you capture a "decisive moment?")
5. Focus (How well was sharpness/softness manipulated to emphasize important elements in the image? Can you define "bokeh," and can you resist the urge to slap silly anyone pretentious enough to use the term?)
6. Emotional Impact (How or what does the image make you feel? What mood does it convey or generate?)

7. Execution (Craftsmanship, finesse, printing, presentation, "bringing all the elements together," the overall impression of the work.)

These will be our guidelines for discussion, a framework for evaluating each piece. I hope to see you, and your work, at our November 21 meeting.

Annual Holiday Party - Monday, December 19

Food, Festivities, Photographs

featuring our annual print exchange!



December's PPF meeting is distinctly different from the rest of the year's gatherings as we meet and mingle over holiday treats, hand out door prizes and engage in our annual print exchange.

This is one of our most popular events, where members get a chance to catch up with each other and socialize a little. Our regular meetings are just too short for this kind of merriment and falderal, so we save it for the last meeting of the year.

PPF will supply soft drinks, cups, plates, napkins, and ice. You are asked to bring a potluck holiday treat. Please do not bring alcoholic beverages - save that nonsense for the Lucky Lab after the event if you want.

The print exchange is simple - bring an anonymously gift-wrapped, mounted, matted (not framed) print. Put it on the designated table with all the other gift-wrapped prints. Write your name on a slip of paper and put it in the "hat." When your name is called, you pick a print from the pile to add to your collection.

Give as nice a photograph as you'd like to receive. It's a compliment to your talent and vision when a friend or acquaintance thinks enough of your work to display it in their home.

Opportunities

Calls to Artists

three upcoming events to consider

Check out the **Lake Oswego Festival of the Arts'** 2012 juried show. The Festival's special exhibit is titled "Photography: Pinhole to iPhone" and encompasses all aspects of photography. Jurors include Julia Dolan, the Portland Art Museum's photography curator, and digital photography artist and pioneer Dan Burkholder. If you want your images seen by people in the know about photography in a venue that attracts more than 20,000 people each year, [click here](#) to find out more. Entry is on-line, deadline is Friday, January 20, 2012. A complete prospectus is available on the site.

Newspace Center for Photography invites photographers to submit images for their annual themed exhibition. This year's theme is "Black & White", intended to investigate and celebrate the beauty of black and white photography in all its glory, exploring the many methods and techniques available to photographers today, be it alternative process, digital, or traditional film. Entry deadline is 6:00 p.m., Friday, December 16. [Click here](#) to find out more.

Chehalem Cultural Center in Newburg is featuring an Oregon Artists' Showcase that runs from January 31 - March 30, 2012. Entry deadline is Friday, January 6. Note that you'd better have your work framed and ready-to-hang on short notice. [Click here](#) to see their website for information.

PPF Holiday Group Show

Go! Look! See!

Cedar Hills Recreation Center, 11640 SW Park Way, Beaverton area, through January 1.

We had so many PPF members respond to this opportunity to show work that Loren Nelson had to manage the crowd with a flyswatter.

Seriously, we ran out of space to hang everyone's work. Fear not, PPF purchased more rail and hangers so the last dozen images can go on the wall. We'll get them up ASAP.

You owe it to yourself to see what's on the wall - it's a treat.

2011 PPF Board of Directors Election

Don't Forget to Vote!

electronic voting ends at 9 p.m. Sunday



Steve Blair

Ken Hochfeld

Don Nelson

Evan Schneider

PPF MEMBERS - Choose today three of these four nominees to represent you on the 2012 Portland Photographers' Forum Board of Directors.

There are three open positions. Evan Schneider and Don Nelson are incumbents running for new terms. Patrick Kolb is retiring from the Board, opening a third seat. Ken Hochfeld and Steve Blair are nominated by the Board as candidates to provide members a selection. All terms are for two years.

Members were sent a link to the electronic ballot in a bulletin last Sunday. If you haven't opened your e-mail, look for it there. Your vote is confidential, but you must enter your name in the space provided or we can't count your vote.

Electronic voting ends at 9:00 p.m. Sunday, November 20. If you wish to vote by paper ballot, you must attend the Monday, November 21 meeting. All voting concludes at the end of Monday's meeting. Results will be announced by bulletin November 22.

Other News You Can Use

Northwest Center for Photography

First Anniversary Celebration

You are Invited to NCP and i witness gallery's 1st Anniversary Celebration
1-6 p.m., Saturday, December 3, at the gallery, 1028 SE Water Ave., Suite 50,
Portland.

Celebrate this milestone while enjoying Alan Berner's GONE West exhibit.

The Center's 2012 Workshops include classes on delving into the world of
post-production workflow. To start with the basics, check out these workshops:
Raw and Photoshop-a combined workflow, Jan 12-Mar 15
Lightroom Basics, Jan 17-Feb 14

For more information, see the NCP website, <http://www.nwcenterforphotography.com/>

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Portland Photographers' Forum
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