Adapter

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Inside *Adapter*

"Lucia" by Tina Modotti, Page 7 - History

*Cover
Eloise Carson*

Occasionally articles in the *Adapter* will be illustrated by modern work of members. Please study this work and try to see its relevance to what the author is saying, I think it will make you a better photographer.
    An example appears in "Pictorial Effect in Photography," on page 11.

Until further notice, all meeting will be virtual.

Board meetings will be on the 4th Tuesday of every month, location and time to be announced by email.

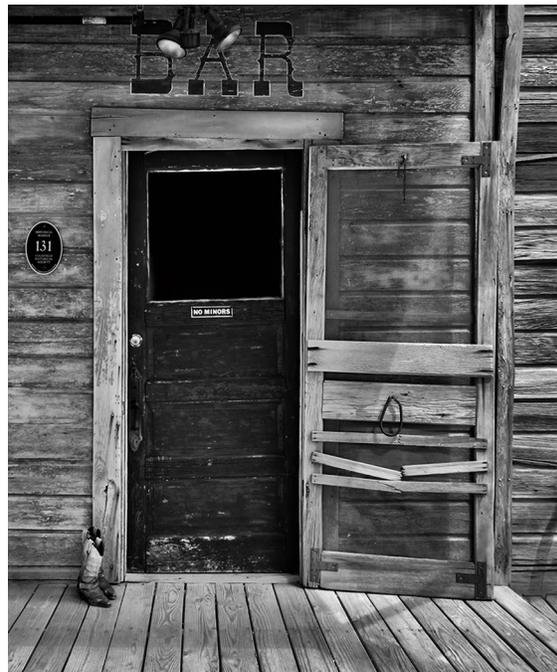# Last Month EID Night - YTD

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Last Month EID Night - Judges Favorites

Doug Fischer   "GoodFishing"

John Craig   "The Bar"
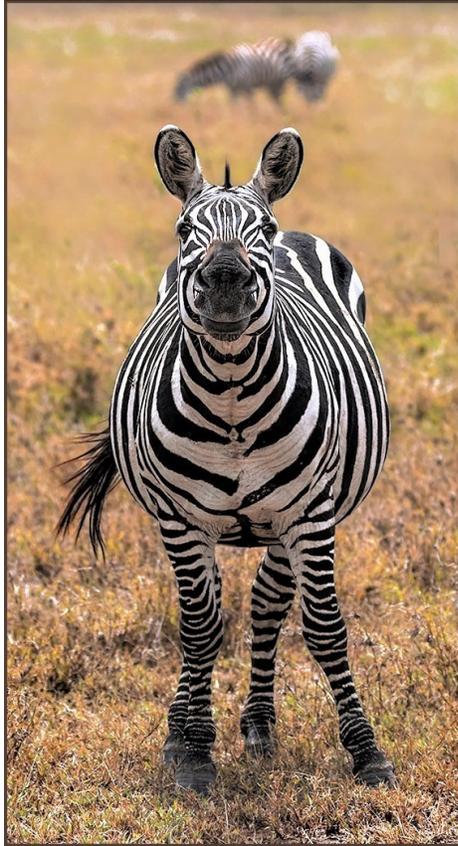

Naida Hurst   "Flower Girl

Howard Bruensteiner   "Weathering In Harmony

Last Month EID Night - Judges Favorites- Contd.

Katie Rupp　　　"Attitude"

Naida Hurst　　　"Portrait Of A Girl

John Craig　　　"Moon Over Water"

What's Going on?

I am constantly amazed at what comes out of the mouths of judges in camera club competition. I am even more amazed at what comes out of my mouth when participating as a judge. I think it might be fun to see if there is any light to be shed on What's Going on.

Over the millennia artists in various disciplines have loosely relied on norms of performance (sometimes erroneously called rules). These norms changed over the years, however many remained as guides to newcomers to art. Certain compositional elements remained favorable, light and shadow, usually an ongoing norm, was revered and used to a great extent by most painters in a similar manner. Compositional elements seem to follow although modified, it appears, to fit the esthetic of the time. Certain elements appear to follow the centuries.

Much of the look of art has changed over time and many of the norms as well. As the look of art began to become true to life new norms arose that were passed on to the future artists. One that is obvious is the element of chaos, multiple subjects. In the early part of the first millennium visual art largely was religious and presented itself quite flat with little dimension. The fresco was a popular presentation. Mankind embraced this esthetic with little question and art progressed carrying long the element of chaos.

Around 1500ce art began to take on a more natural or realistic look, although the religious theme continued to be popular, things began to look real. A bit later, the Dutch became prominent, and their work began to take on the super realistic look of life including its chaos.

Fast forward to the 18th century and little seems to have changed, artists continued to include life as they perceived it.

The 19th century brought painting much like that of the previous century, including the chaos and realistic look of life.

In the middle of the 19th century, along came photography, which was so busy documenting the world, and due to its limitations, little can be found to compare to painting of this time or any other time. Realistic life for photography consisted of portraits of people and landscapes devoid of life. There was a scramble to capture the world as it is, and little attention was paid to artistic norms.

Near the end of the 19th century camera clubs took over the bicycle clubs, many simply changing their name. Organizations such as the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) began conducting competition among its members and encouraging clubs to do the same. Artistic norms now became rules and to be successful in competing members needed to adhere. It was, I think, at this time that the split between photography, and painting, began. To carve a unique place in art; camera club members slowly began to create their own esthetic. This was accomplished by creating a judging structure that was self-perpetuating. To be successful in the future you must comply with the present. Elements, heretofore deemed acceptable in art, were shunned and gradually were considered bad.

A specific example might be the term distraction or busy. What's Going on is someone somewhere decided that nature, or life, contains distractions that should be eliminated from photographs. To be successful one must avoid any chance of a distraction, resulting in the removal of pertinent element in a photograph. This is but one example, there are many more that have been passed down in photography judging.

We live in a fractured artistic environment. On the one hand you want to belong to camera club and compete. On the other hand, you want to be a part of the larger artistic society. Unfortunately, this may be impossible unless you learn to mentally separate the two.

Notice in this fresco, from the early part of the millennium, the chaos depicted, as well as what might be, in camera club; subjects too close to the frame edge with a foot cut off.

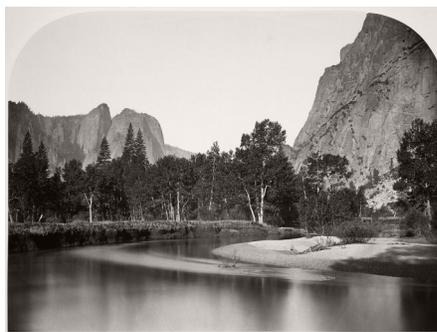A recent discussion regarding too much sky, came to mind here.

I can just hear that the sheep are a distraction as they are too small.

This mid-20th century impressionist landscape holds a fond place in the history of art yet is nearly featureless.

Late 19th century photographers did not spend a lot of time worrying about a busy landscape.

The cloudless sky was taken as a given and seldom considered a negative. (No pun intended.)

Nadar, considered one of the best of the 19th century evidently did not concern himself with cluttered garments or excessive negative space.

The point of all this is to indicate what one must consider in order to live in the larger photographic society, and what one must sacrifice to compete in the camera club world. You must attempt to separate the two.

Ed.

Chuck Geschke, 1939-2021

It's rare for a company name to become a verb. Today we speak of *Photoshopping* a picture, or of *Googling* a certain topic. But these are exceptions. Forty years ago there was another example: if you needed a photocopy of a certain document, you would say, I have to get a *Xerox* of this.

As the king of photocopying, Xerox could afford to spend lavishly on development. In 1970, it opened a research center in Palo Alto and populated it with some free-thinking California types. Since Xerox headquarters were in upstate New York, and Zoom was not yet a factor, the PARC had a lot of freedom from supervision. When the cat's away, the mice will play, and the PARC researchers proved it by developing a mouse, part and parcel of their Graphical User Interface for computers that had not yet been invented.

The PARC folk, unlike their Rochester bosses, understood that it would not be long before documents could be custom-made and printed from a computer, as opposed to being photocopied on Xerox hardware. Therefore, in 1978, they opened an Imaging Sciences Laboratory, under the direction of Chuck Geschke, who died this weekend. His main interest was in page description languages that could be used to drive a laser printer. This was no easy task, because Chuck, whose father and grandfather were letterpress printers, insisted that any PDL needed to be able to carry high-definition font information. And PARC developed just such a PDL, called Interpress.

PARC's work drew the attention of Steve Jobs; the result was Apple Computer. Why Apple instead of Xerox became the leading company in desktop publishing is a long and sad story, but Jobs summarized it thus: "Xerox could have owned the entire computer industry, could have been the IBM of the nineties, could have been the Microsoft of the nineties."

Instead, Xerox went the way of another Rochester company, Kodak, in insisting that its own technology would last forever. Xerox's only attempt at a publishing system in the 1980s was a notorious flop. Disgusted by the lack of support from Rochester, and in particular its disdain for Interpress, in 1982 Chuck Geschke and one of his top hires, John Warnock, walked out and formed their own company in Warnock's garage. They named it after a

creek that ran behind the house: Adobe, and went to work on a new PDL, PostScript.

The love-hate relation between Apple and Adobe began in 1979, when Jobs was permitted some visits to the super-secret PARC in exchange for giving Xerox Apple stock options. Xerox corporate may not have realized that what he saw was the future of desktop computing, but Jobs did, and he found kindred spirits in Geschke and Warnock. So, when those two left Xerox, Jobs immediately offered to buy them out on Apple's behalf, reportedly for $5 million.

They turned him down, but he managed to get a long license to use PostScript on Apple's forthcoming products, enabling the Lisa in 1983 and the Macintosh in 1984. And he guaranteed Adobe's future by decreeing that Apple's products would only support PostScript as a PDL, when IBM was insisting that a hundred flowers should bloom and that *any* page description language should be supported.

Geschke and Warnock were expert programmers. Both specialized in simplifying the construction of graphics so that the tortoise computers of the day wouldn't choke on them. They particularly wanted to be able to generate real typefaces, not the bitmaps. For that, they had developed a font description format based on Bezier curves. This curving technology led directly to three major product lines: 1) repackaging existing fonts for PostScript; 2) Adobe Illustrator; 3) PDF.

In 1988, Adobe bought the rights to Photoshop, and we know the rest of the story. That, I believe, was more of a Warnock decision. The previous three, however showed off Geschke's technical skill and his farsightedness. It guaranteed him a place in modern graphics history second only to Jobs.

Think of how far ahead of its time Adobe was during its first decade! It was longer than that before anybody else could manufacture a decent font. Primitive versions of Illustrator appeared on the Macintosh, but the real shocker, in terms of capabilities, was Illustrator 88, named after its year of release. Meanwhile, the manufacturers of high-end scanners and typesetters had to decide whether these developments were for real. Compugraphic and Crosfield decided to ignore PostScript, and paid with their lives. Linotype-Hell decided to embrace it. My own company, the largest color separator in the U.S. at the time, was dragged kicking and screaming into the desktop era; I wound up leaving the company for more or less the same reason that Geschke and Warnock left PARC, and

got hired back at a huge salary as a consultant when the company figured out that Macintosh knowledge was more essential than they thought.

Anyway, with my squadron of film-based Linotron 300s and a few copies of Illustrator 88, I was capable of making shapes to great precision and stepping and repeating them. So could our Scitex system, which happened to cost hundreds of times as much. And, with a hundred strippers working on all kinds of different jobs, occasionally one would be found where it was much more economical for me to do the premakes in Illustrator 88. That led to a couple of calls from Geschke, who wanted to know what I was up to and why.

Our next encounter was nearly five years later during the development of PDF. In the early 1990s, when his idea was first announced, there was a lot of skepticism. Who would ever take the hour or so needed to transmit a PDF across the country, when you could fax it in a fraction of the time? Who needs to send a PDF to a laser printer, when we can already print directly out of our applications? And why waste several minutes distilling the PDF in the first place?

I didn't share these particular concerns although I did not foresee how ubiquitous PDF would become. What I saw in it was an eventual solution to the terrible problem that was then affecting graphic arts service providers. In 1988, I was outputting Illustrator files at high resolution, but clients weren't. And they had no way to create pages of text. But within five years they did have a way, as Quark introduced a capable page makeup application.

Unfortunately, the handoff of Quark files, supporting graphics, and fonts between client and provider could get forked up in any number of ways. Plus, Adobe's official position was that it was illegal for clients to give providers the necessary fonts to run the job, as the providers were supposed to buy their own. That position was widely ignored, and I suggested to Chuck that it might be better abandoned, when I knew he was in a good mood. He *was* in a good mood because I had just told him that PDF was likely the answer to my dreams, in that it could potentially be configured so that the client-provider handoff would become foolproof. He needed to hear that because many other people were telling him that putting so much energy into creating PDF was a waste of time and effort.

That was the last time I spoke to him. In his remaining years as president of Adobe, Photoshop became dominant,

as did PDF. Adobe acquired Aldus, and with it the PageMaker program that was the intellectual foundation for InDesign, which was released in Chuck's last year before his retirement. The last version of Photoshop developed during Chuck's reign was Photoshop 6. I seriously doubt that he would have approved the release of Photoshop 7, but by that time Adobe was in the hands of the marketers.

Today, Adobe faces some grim realities. Their products are quite mature. Photoshop and Acrobat were fairly competent programs 20 years ago. PageMaker, 25 years. Illustrator, almost 35 years since a truly professionally usable product was released. How much more can they be improved? Plus, computers aren't becoming obsolete as rapidly. In the 1990s, we had to trash our computers every two to three years because the newer models would be so much faster. Today, a ten-year-old computer is suitable for most work. So, Adobe has to resort to certain unpopular moves, making its software rental-only being one.

Big, powerful software companies are always unpopular, unless they have a very unusual type of manager. Steve Jobs had enough charisma to make people fans of Apple, but he wasn't at the company for most of the 1990s, during which time most of the industry held Apple in contempt. Of the other industry leaders, Macromedia had some fans, Microsoft was actively disliked, and Quark was hated passionately.

At the time Chuck Geschke retired in 2000, it is fair to say that his clients generally loved the company he had founded. That is perhaps his best legacy of all.

Dan Margulis

History— Tina Modotti (1896-19420

Tina Modotti by Edward Weston

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tina_Modotti

Tina Modotti — at auction

Tina Modotti
Untitled, Mexico City
Estimate $25,000 - 35,000
SOLD FOR $43,750

Tina Modotti
Sugar Cane
Estimate $70,000 - 90,000

Tina Modotti
Maguey
Estimate $15,000 - 25,000

Tina Modotti
Hammer and Sickle
Estimate £8,000 - 12,000
SOLD FOR £20,000

Tina Modotti
Untitled (bird sculpture)
Estimate $7,000 - 9,000
SOLD FOR $8,750

Tina Modotti
Labor 1 or Hands Washing
Estimate $80,000 - 120,000

Tina Modotti
Roses, Mexico
Estimate $300,000 - 500,000
SOLD FOR $220,000

Tina Modotti
Woman Carrying Olla
Estimate $60,000 - 80,000
SOLD FOR $75,000

Tina Modotti
Edward Weston with Camera
Estimate $25,000 - 35,000
SOLD FOR $25,000

Tina Modotti
Telephone Wires, Mexico
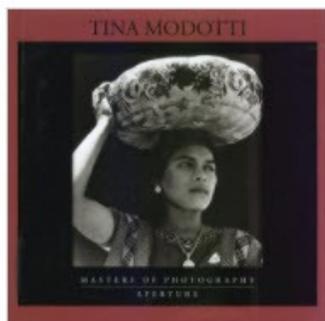Estimate $250,000 - 350,000
SOLD FOR $692,000

Tina Modotti
Campesinos
Estimate $150,000 - 250,000
SOLD FOR $125,000

Tina Modotti
Hammock
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Books - Abe Books - https://www.abebooks.com/

Tina Modotti

Margaret Hooks; Tina Modotti

Published by Aperture Foundation, Incorporated (2005)
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Modotti, Tina] Constantine, Mildred

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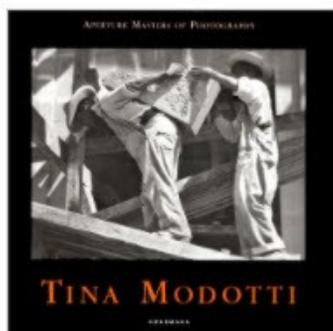
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Tina Modotti (Aperture Masters of Photography)

Tina] Hooks, Margaret [Modotti

Published by KÃ nemann (1999)
ISBN 10: 3829028881 ISBN 13: 9783829028882

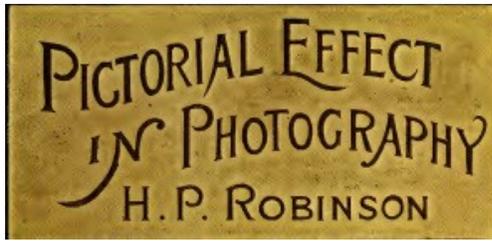(Used) (Hardcover) (First Edition)

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CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTORY.

It has often been asserted that the artist, like the poet, is born, not made; and, within certain limits, the assertion is doubtless true: without a natural capacity for pictorial perception, no study and no amount of industry would produce an artist. "Patience and sand-paper," Ruskin remarks, "will not make a statue.' ' But no matter how great the natural capacity, or how undoubted the genius, certainty in excellence, and permanent success, cannot be attained without a knowledge of the rules, and a study of the principles, upon which pictorial effect depends.***** No mistake is more fatal than a reliance upon genius instead of effort, upon "inborn taste" instead of culture and the application of recognized and certain laws.

In this book I shall have not a word to say on the poetry of art; that is a question on which it is difficult to write so as to be really understood except by those who have had a long education in art. I shall confine myself to what may be called the construction of a picture: in fact, I propose to deal with the body, or perhaps the skeleton, and not the soul; with the tangible, not with the intangible; with that which can be taught, not that which must be felt. Neither shall I attempt to go into the extreme subtleties of the science of composition, which only could be of use to painters, who have command over every line that appears in their works. Photographers, although a wide scope for artistic effect is open to them, have not the facilities, which other artists possess, of making material alterations in landscapes and views embracing wide expanses, neither have they so much power of improvement in figure subjects, although much may be done by skill and judgment; but they have open to them the possibility of modifying, and, being free agents, they have the power of refusing to delineate, subjects which, by no efforts of theirs, will ever make effective pictures. It is a too common occurrence with photographers to overlook the inadaptability of a scene to artistic treatment, merely because they think it lends itself to facility, which their art possesses, of rendering, with wondrous truth, minutiae, and unimportant detail. To many this rendering of detail, and the obtaining of sharp pictures, is all that is considered necessary to constitute perfection; and the reason for this is, that they have no knowledge of, and therefore can take no interest in, the representation of Nature as she presents herself to the eye of a well-trained painter, or of one who has studied her with reverence and love.

It must be confessed, and distinctly understood, that photography has its limits. Whilst it will be necessary to explain the fundamental laws of composition in their entirety, the applicability of these laws in photography is limited by the comparatively scant plasticity of the photographer's tools—light as it can be employed by lenses and chemicals. (*Or post processing*) Therefore, as I proceed with the rules of composition as far as

they have been reduced to a system, or rather a quasi-system, it will be my aim to endeavor to indicate what can be done by photography, and how; assuming throughout, however, that the student is familiar with photography and the capability of the appliances at his disposal, asking him to remember that great technical knowledge is only a means by which artistic power can be exhibited, and not the end and perfection of the photographer's art. In doing this, I shall bear in mind the Italian proverb, "He is a fool who does not profit by the experience of others," and shall not hesitate to avail myself of hints from any author who contains ideas worth placing before my reader, illustrating my remarks with engravings from the works of well-known painters, with occasional sketches of photographs in which the principles defined by the art of composition have aided the photographer in his choice of subject, in the arrangement of his sitter, or in his management of light and shade.

It has been often alleged that, except in its lowest phases and in its most limited degree, art can have nothing in common with photography, inasmuch as the latter must deal with nature, either in landscape or portraiture, only in its most literal forms ; whilst the essential province of art is to deal with nature in the ideal, rendering that which it <u>suggests</u> as well as that which it <u>presents</u>,

refining that which is vulgar, avoiding that which is common-place, or transfiguring and glorifying it by poetic treatment. Photography, it has been said, can but produce the aspects of nature as they are; and " Nature does not compose: her beautiful arrangements are but accidental combinations." But it may be answered that it is only the educated eye of one familiar with the laws upon which pictorial work

Howard Bruensteiner

depends who can discover in nature these accidental beauties, and ascertain in what they consist. Burnet observes, " Nature unveils herself only to him who can penetrate her sacred haunts. The inquiry, ' What is beautiful, and why?' can only be answered by him who has often asked the question.

Charles Boos

The same writer, speaking of Turner's early efforts, describes them as something like very common-place photographs; they were

* For the technical part of the art, the student could have nothing better than Captain Abney's Instruction in Photography (Very technical not relevant), which is written in a clear and comprehensive manner, with a perfect knowledge of the subject and the means of teaching it.

water-color landscapes, "aspiring only to topographical correctness, the unadorned representation of individual scenes." It was only subsequent study, and a higher knowledge of the resources of art, which "gave him a hint that selection of a situation, and clothing it with effective light and shade, ennobled the picture, and placed it more in the rank of a composition than a plain transcript." The same is equally true of portraiture. Although likeness is the quality of first importance, artistic arrangement is scarcely second to it. In some cases, indeed, art excellence possesses a wider and a more permanent value than mere verisimilitude. The portraits by Titian or Velasquez or Reynolds live rather as pictures than as likenesses, and the well-known Gervartius of Vandyke in the National Gallery excites the admiration of thousands who scarcely bestow a thought on the identity of the original. Art-culture, however, materially aids in securing likeness, by teaching the eye rapidly to seize the salient features, to determine the most suitable view, and to arrange the light so as to bring out the effect of character; at the same time giving force and prominence to natural advantages and concealing or subduing natural defects.

To admit that photographers had no control over their subjects would be to deny that the works of one photographer were better than another, which would be untrue. It must be admitted by the most determined opponent of photography as a fine art, that the same object represented by different photographers will produce different pictorial results, and this invariably, not only because the one man uses different lenses and chemicals to the other, but because there is something different in each man's mind, which, somehow, gets communicated to his fingers' ends, and thence to his pictures. This admitted, it easily follows that original interpretation of nature is possible to photographers— limited, I admit, but sufficient to stamp the impress of the author on certain works, so that they can be as easily selected and named by those familiar with photographs, as paintings are ascribed to their various authors by those who have an intimate knowledge of pictures.

It is of importance, at the outset, to prove that superior results are produced by superior knowledge, not only of the use of the materials employed in photography, but by an acquaintance with art, or the whole purpose of the present treatise falls to the ground.

Given a certain object—for example, a ruined castle—to be photographed by several different operators; no exact point of sight shall be indicated, but the standpoint shall be limited to a certain area. What will be the result? Say there are ten prints. One will be so much superior to the others that you would fancy the producer had everything—wind, light, etc. — in his favor, while the others will appear to have suffered under many disadvantages. The best picture will be found to have been taken by the one in the ten who has been a student of art. By his choice of the point of view, by the placing of a figure, by the selection of the time of day, or by over-exposure or under-development, or by the reverse, producing soft, delicate, atmospheric effects, or brilliant contrasts, as may be required, the photographer can so render his interpretation of the scene, either as a dry matter-of-fact map of the view, or a translation of the landscape so admirably suited to the subject, as seen under its best aspects, as to give evident indications of what is called feeling in art, and which almost rises into poetry; the result often differing marvelously from the horrors perpetrated by means of our beautiful art, in the hands of those whose knowledge of photography extends to this, and this only—that if a piece of glass is prepared, and treated in a certain manner, it will result in the production of an image of the object which has been projected on the screen of the camera by the lens.

It is not only the cultivated and critical eye that demands good composition in works of art, but the ignorant and uneducated feel a pleasure—of which they do not know the cause—in a sense of fitness and symmetry, balance, and support.

Lest you feel that Mr. Robinson is nothing more than words, here is a sample of his work. He was a master of the composite in the day. He used many multiple negatives in a single composite.   Ed.

Board Notes

The FPCC Board met on 5/25/21.

Actions:

- Approved appointment of Lois Summers to the vacant Secretary position until the elections scheduled for June 15, 2021.
- Voted to designate the number of Directors to be nine (4 officers and 5 other directors).
- Voted to change the time of FPCC Board meetings to be 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month. This is to facilitate participation by FPCC members who have other obligations during working hours.
- Decided to continue holding Board meetings via Zoom even after pandemic restrictions are removed.
- Decided to continue the current year schedule of FPCC monthly events (Image Discussion Night, Education Program Night, EID Competition Night) Sept. 2021 – May 2022, until further notice. Resumption of print competition nights awaits permission to use an in-person meeting venue and resumption of 4Cs print submissions from member clubs. Resumption of print nights might require adjusting the frequency of education programs or image discussion nights.
- Approved implementing a mentoring program in which a new member would have an experienced member connect regularly to provide personalized information about FPCC processes, interactive advice about image choices, and ongoing encouragement.
- Discussed resuming field trips with participation available to members vaccinated for COVID-19, without mandating proof of vaccination. State guidelines are evolving and may require different requirements.
- Voted in favor of holding an in-person picnic on a Tuesday late afternoon/early evening in August once state guidelines allow and an outdoor venue is available.

President's Note

Annual Meeting. Please attend the annual meeting on Tuesday, June 15, 2021, at 7 p.m. via Zoom. The Agenda has something for everyone.

- Election of Officers and Directors. We need a quorum (50% of members per the new Bylaws), so be sure to join on time.
- EID Awards. We will see many excellent images and announce awards.
- Review of the past FPCC year and preview of upcoming year. The pandemic put many valuable activities on pause. We are planning for resumption as the restrictions diminish.
- Much more.

Removed. Although camera club competitions usually focus on excellence in single images, projects involving multiple images play an important role in the larger world of photography. For an interesting example, see "Removed," an ongoing project by photographer Eric Pickersgill (https://www.removed.social/series). In several locations around the world, he posed people with their smart phones or tablets, but then removed the devices before making the images (a portfolio of 39 images in the US and 60 in South East Asia, with images from India "coming soon"). What do you think about making something obvious by absence? What photographic project would you like to create?

Club Life. Please express your appreciation to Frank Woodbery for his multiple years of service as Program Chair. With his leadership, FPCC has not only provided an impressive set of educational programs but has also shared these programs (with other clubs while the other clubs shared access to their programs with us). We need a volunteer to be the next Program Chair. Frank is ready to share contact information and ideas. The position does not require adding Board meetings to your schedule (thanks to the new Bylaws, approved in May). We already have a program lined up for September. Let me know if you might be interested.

Robert Wheeler, FPCC President