

**FP**

# FOCAL PLANE

AUCKLAND PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2003



**WORDS FROM THE EDITOR**

Welcome to the first Focal Plane of the new year. No doubt you will already have noticed the visual changes that have taken place in the newsletter. It will be interesting to know what people think of it. Content side, there will be pretty much more of the same. The same amount of emphasis will be placed on subjects relating to upcoming competitions and issues. Additional to that I will be printing some relative news articles that I have come across and think that you would enjoy reading. Of course there will be the usual club news and events that will be happening, and a listing of any local photography exhibitions.

I would like to take this opportunity to appologise to everyone at the club for the lack of material coming from me over the last few months. What I have done is not only let the club down and everyone in it, but let myself down as well. I have gained my energy and enthusiasm from the support that everyone has given me at the club and I realise that I have let people lose alot of respect for me. I can only say I am deeply sorry and hope that over the coming months when the Focal Plane comes out on time, that the respect you all once had for me will return. Please enjoy this months Focal Plane.



**CONTENTS**

**The Role Of Lines ..... 3**

Have a look at the possibilities for the February club meeting on the value of lines, curves and patterns in photography.

**Photo Creates Controversy ..... 5**

Renowned photojournalist Edward keating has left the New York Times amid controversy.

**Focal News..... 7**

All the upcoming avents at the club.

Editor: Terry Bowyer

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As you may know, our next club competition involves the subject of curves, lines and patterns. They don't need to be all in the photo at the same time but would ideally contain at least one on them. I thought it was interesting to talk about the importance of using lines in photography as a way of drawing the viewers' attention towards the subject.

Lines are incorporated within most all pictures. Whether subtle or dramatic, the use of lines is important for a photographer to understand when arranging their composition. Lines are used to move the viewers' eyes into and around the picture. Put a line in the wrong place and you risk blocking the viewer from feeling your message.



The line can be of any shape or angle. It has been said you don't see a straight line in nature and I believe that is true. A line may be single like the stem on a flower or repeating like repetitive lines in a range of mountains separated by foggy or hazy ridgelines.

Of course, lines don't have to be confined to nature. Diagonal lines in a picture, such as that formed by this gondolier's pole, tend to give the image extra vitality. This, and the strong tonal differences between the foreground and background, rivet the eye to the figure.

The horizon line is a good example of a line often used to show perspective in a landscape photographers' composition. If the horizon line has been placed high, at the top of the picture, emphasis is usually being placed on the foreground. When the horizon line is low, towards the bottom, the sky is said to be more prominent. Generally, the horizon line should be placed to divide the picture into unequal parts. The photographer controls this line placement with composition using lines to lead the viewer's eye towards the centre of interest.

A row of tree-tops may angle to the centre of interest in your composition. Shadows form lines on the ground, which also may be used to lead to the point of interest. Curved lines, like curving lines created by branches on trees, curves in lakes and bays are a good example of how to move the viewers eye towards your point of interest. Curves are found often in nature. Rocks, creeks, hills, flowers, are all proof of this. Don't forget, clouds have curves and lines too. Crooked lines can be found where the earth has moved (expansion and contraction). Examples of jagged lines are in dried mud

left from a hot summer. Cracks in ice, rock and stones, cliffs, trees bark showing growth, and edges of leaves are all part of nature and are abundant.

A repeating line is the start of a pattern as in the bark of some trees. This also happens with ripples in water. Clouds, leaves, bird



feathers, and shadows all create patterns as well. Notice how the windows of the buildings above form a pattern. How about the skin of a snake or the coat on a mammal? Look how flowers and bushes have layered lines from the foliage. Take a quick look up

in the sky next time you're outside when there are clouds, and notice the repeating lines created by wind and the turbulent atmosphere. Dew drops, snowflakes, and spider webs all form patterns and are filled with great photo opportunities for the close up macro photographer. Let lines bring the viewers eye into the picture, not block them out.

Lines help to create depth in a composition. The angling or tapering seen from converging lines when using a wider focal length lens is a great example of how lines affect your composition with perspective. A feeling of depth draws the viewer into the picture, producing a feeling of involvement, a sense of being there. A word of caution is needed here. When overdone, convergence will ruin an otherwise great image. The photographer must learn to temper use of equipment but never temper the use of creativity.

A photographer must pay attention to all of the elements within a scene to make sure they are consistent with the message of the picture and with the photographic techniques being applied.

Just remember, lines help the viewers "see" what you are communicating.

Words: Terry Bowyer/ Dale Proctor

Pictures: John Hedgecock

# FP PHOTO CREATES CONTROVERCY



The photo above ran in the national edition of *The New York Times* on September 20, the fruits of a difficult assignment earlier that week. *Times* photographer Edward Keating's job had been to illustrate a community in Lackawanna, New York, that was home to six men of Yemeni descent accused of being part of an al Qaeda sleeper cell. The shot was pulled from later editions after editors decided that it was not relevant to the story. But the picture had another problem, and what happened after Keating pushed the button sheds light on how seriously photojournalists and their editors take the job of recording reality.

By September 16, three days after the suspects were arrested, national and local media were combing Lackawanna for follow-up stories. Late in the afternoon, Keating and *Times* reporter Marc Santora turned up at the intersection of Wilkesbarre and Lebanon streets, where FBI agents had raided a grocery store. The store was closed, but across the street was a house with a porch full of people, including six-year-old Brandon Benzo and his mother. Journalists had dropped by throughout the day to gather quotes and borrow the bathroom. Some

had kidded around with Brandon, who was playing with a toy gun. When Keating got his shot, the only journalists on the scene — other than Keating and Santora — were three photographers: Charles Lewis, of *The Buffalo News*; Shawn Dowd, of *The Rochester Democrat & Chronicle*; and David Duprey, of *The Associated Press* in Buffalo. They watched Keating walk with Brandon across Lebanon Street from his house to the store, pose him on the steps of the store and on a ledge running across the front of the store, and take pictures. "It looked like a fashion shoot," says Dowd. "The photographer was pointing or gesturing to the boy. The boy looked right and left, pointed the gun in different directions. We were all looking at each other like we can't believe this is happening." Dowd photographed Keating as he photographed Brandon (left). Duprey went over to Keating and asked him who he was. (AP spokesman Jack Stokes says corporate policy does not allow Duprey to speak on the record.) None of the three heard the conversation between Keating and the boy, but Dowd and Lewis felt it was clear that Keating had orchestrated the photo. "Had this been a genuine moment," says Lewis, "we would have been all over it."

Back in their newsrooms, Dowd complained to a colleague who complained to CJR. Joan Rosen, an AP photo editor, says that after

hearing Duprey's concern she instructed her photo desk to not pick up the shot. Lewis's complaint was relayed by an editor at The Buffalo News to Times picture editor Margaret O'Connor.

Thus, two investigations ensued: CJR's, and the Times's to see if its rules against posing news photos had been broken. The Times's initial investigation turned up nothing definitive, only differing interpretations about what Keating did. But the editors revisited it after hearing additional information from CJR.

On October 25, the Times published an Editors' Note that says Keating acknowledged "that the boy's gesture had not been spontaneous," and that the paper "regrets this violation of its policy on journalistic integrity." Keating, for his part, says the accusations are "totally false," but declined to elaborate or address the Editors' Note. Times editors, when asked about Keating's denial, said only that "The Editors' Note speaks for the paper."

The incident gets at an ongoing debate in photojournalism. Kenny Irby, who teaches photo ethics at the Poynter Institute, says that there has been a broadening of what is considered legitimate in photojournalism. The key, he says, is the photographer's intent, which should be made clear to the reader. "What is the purpose of the photo?" he asks. If it is to illustrate, he says, then there is more creative license.

If the purpose is to report, he says, then the photo must accurately and honestly represent the experience as it was revealed to the photographer. The Times apparently concluded that in this case that standard wasn't met.

— Brent Cunningham, with Gloria Cooper and Adeel Hassan

## TOP WEB LINKS

For those of you out there that have access to a computer and the internet, below are some links to popular photography sites that I know. I will try to make this a regular feature in the newsletter. Let me know if you have any of your own that you wish to share. No doubt you will already know some of them. Hopefully I can surprise you by giving you a few gems that I have uncovered.

[www.photo.net](http://www.photo.net)

A great site where you have the ability to upload your own photographs so others can give you their opinion on it.

[www.shutterbug.net](http://www.shutterbug.net)

A great site of a great magazine. News, tips and tutorials.

[www.revue.com](http://www.revue.com)

Eight French photographers (and occasional guests) collaborate to produce theme-based feature exhibits accompanied by individual artist's portfolios.

Not much in the way of news this month. There are a few items though.

- Remember that the February meeting of the club will be the Annual General Meeting. Its an important meeting as not only is there wine and cheese, but as an added bonus, you get to decide who is going to be running the club this year. You don't have to bring a plate. Just yourselves.

- The first APS outing has been confirmed for Whatipu for Sunday 9th and Monday 10th February.

Whatipu is an hours drive from Auckland city travelling via Titirangi and Huia. The drive itself offers many Photographic opportunities as will the whole region of Whatipu, offering views of the entrance to the Manukau Harbour, sand dunes, caves, wildlife bird sanctuary, rocky outcrops, walking tracks, historic places and a camping ground. Accomodation will be at the Whatipu Lodge at the cost of \$30 per person. Camera, film and tripod sufficient food and drinks for your party and sleeping bag or duvet (for those staying over). Arrival time is 3pm on Sunday 9th February. If any other information is needed, please contact Alan Bilam on (09) 8187994 or E-Mail: [profedge@clear.net.nz](mailto:profedge@clear.net.nz)

- The new subscription rates for the club in 2003 are in and they are as follows:

Individuals	\$50
Couples:	\$65
Students:	\$30
Superannuitants:	\$45

- Below are the new grades changes that were made at the last committee meeting. Please be aware that you may per APS rules, anyone is allowed to have their grade reviewed by the committee.

- Janet McLeod got broken into last night and a large amount of camera gear was stolen. Sorry to hear about that Janet. Below is a list of the gear. If anyone is on the look out for some second hand camera gear and comes across simular equipment, to contact Janet ASAP on Hm. 5227115, Bus. 9177363, e-mail. [janet.mcleod@nzam.co.nz](mailto:janet.mcleod@nzam.co.nz)

Black Camera Backpack holding:

Canon EOS 3  
Sigma Lens F2.8 70-200mm  
Sigma 2x converter  
Sigma Lens 28-135mm  
Sigma Flash  
Remote Shutter Release  
Numerous filters  
Plus numerous films, cleaning kit etc.

Also a Black Water Proof Camera Case holding:

Canon EOS300  
Canon lens 28-80  
Canon lens 70-300



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