

FOCAL PLANE

February 2006



Auckland Photographic Society Inc Est 1883

News & Muse

Have you Got the Right Gear?

Canon are bringing out a new camera model soon.

So are Fuji, Kodak, Konika, Minolta, Nikon, Nokia, Pentax, Ricoh, Sanyo, Sharp, Sony, Toshiba well I've probably missed a few, but you get the idea.

We know this without even looking.

Is there any industry moving faster? The dizzyingly short time for a new model to appear that will solve all our problems with the current model makes us approach buying a current model somewhat tentatively. Or does it?

Someone is encouraging them. Those camera manufacturers.

What is it about photographers that makes the new model so seductive? Even if we don't buy it, we like to look.

Perhaps it occurs at that time when we realise we are taking more than a passing interest in photography. Then realise we are not alone. There are others. Others that have been photographing for longer, have better cameras, more time, natural abilities (I question the existence of the last one). What to do to catch up?

Buy a better camera, another lens. That'll help.

Having been down that road myself I am convinced. In that way lies madness. Sure we can easily make the argument that a longer/faster lens will provide more opportunities.

Getting closer will make a better photo (Robert Capa told us so). Of course higher resolution will allow bigger prints. Bigger is better.

A faster motor drive or fps count will make sure we get the decisive moment (thank you mons Henri Cartier-Bresson).

That 12 seg matrix metering is bound to make perfect exposures every time.

But I wonder how much effect these things *really* have on the image.



The photographer still needs the foresight to realise a photograph will occur. Be responsible for getting the camera to the right place at the right time and pointing it in the right direction to get the photo. Operate the camera to ensure the image is captured. Process the file or film so the image can appear in print.

I'd like to propose the not-so-new idea that the small part the features of the camera play in the process of making a good photograph are often given rather too much attention. Strangely, as things move along in my own photography I've found the proportional time and effort occupied by operating the camera is less and less. Or rather the other aspects required to make an image have become more important. Perhaps of no surprise, the photography has become more satisfying too.

The aforementioned Cartier-Bresson was dubbed the 'eye of the 20th century'. He only used one camera and two lenses (mostly *one*). Not zooms either; a 50mm and a 90mm.

There is an exhibition of images currently showing at the prestigious John Leech Gallery by Patrick Reynolds. He used a \$25 plastic camera. Very evocative of summer at the beach they are too. In that arty kind of way. On reflection I'm not sure I could have achieved the same emotional impact with my continuous servo focussing, power sports lens (and lens hood), and twenty two customisable functions. Made me think.

Granted, they are very big. -

APS Calendar

16th Mar Club Night - Movement and Open Competition

4th Apr Workshop / Presentation (details TBC)

11th Apr Club Night - (details TBC)

1st May Workshop / Presentation (details TBC)

What's On

Matakana Pictures

"Achernar" - Various

10th Feb - 2nd Apr

Daniel Malone, Jennifer Frence, John Malcolm, John Turner, Kapil Arn, Kinstry Smythe, Natasha Cantwell, Peter Hannken, sada, Shigeru Takato, Stephen Piper.
Omaha Flats Rd, Matakana, Warkworth RD6. Hrs 10:00-4:00.

PSNZ National Convention - "Capture Canterbury" - Christchurch Photographic Society

19th - 23rd Apr

A fantastic line-up of world-class photographers will be coming to Christchurch to present workshops and to share their wealth of knowledge with attendees.

Speakers include: Freeman Patterson, Larry Hamill, Mike Langford, Jackie Ranken, Maria Sainsbury, Barbara Mullins, Dr Dean Petterson, John Kirk Anderson, Paul Kennedy, John Smith.

Auckland Festival of Photography

2nd - 24th JUN

A city-wide contemporary art and cultural event which takes place within Auckland's major galleries, project spaces, non-gallery venues and public sites during June each year. The programme includes a mix of emerging and established artists and comprises existing works and creation of new work. The annual Creative Exposure Festival is produced by the Auckland Festival of Photography Trust. The Auckland Festival of Photography Trust is a not for profit charitable trust working to further the presence and awareness of photography in Auckland through joint programming, audience development and profile raising activities.

Detailed information is available from the website www.photographyfestival.org.nz

Stan Long FPSNZ

62 Monochrome Portraits.

When: Until 24th April

Where: Puke Ariki, New Plymouth

If you get the opportunity, do see Stan's exhibition. He is a heck of a photographer and a real gentleman.



Pataka Museum and Gallery, Porirua.

11th Feb - 30 April.

Pataka Contemporary New Zealand Photographers is a new exhibition and accompanying book celebrating 20 of this country's greatest photographers. The artists range from senior practitioners including *Marti Friedlander*, *Anne Noble*, *Laurence Aberhart* and *Peter Peryer*, mid-career photographers such as *Gavin Hipkins* and *Fiona Pardington*, through to young and emerging artists such as *Ben Cauchi*, *Yvonne Todd* and *Edith Amituanai*.

Today art photography in New Zealand is widely taught, collected, exhibited and discussed. At its cutting edge, this art form makes a strong contribution to New Zealand's active engagement with the international art world. Interest in photography has grown rapidly over the past decade in New Zealand, with many more collectors and practitioners entering the market. This exhibition, and accompanying book, offers New Zealanders and the rest of the world a glimpse of this controversial and ever-changing art form.

Contemporary New Zealand Photographers is part of PATAKA's NZ International Arts Festival programme.



Jack Sprosen Hon FPSNZ, FPSNZ, ARPS

I want to say a few words about my very good friend Jack Sprosen, who was a Life Member and also the Patron of our club. Jack died in July after a short illness and he is very much missed by all of us who have been privileged to know him - and that is a very large number of people spread across the whole world.

Jack's photographic involvement started in Southland in the 1950's, continued in Rotorua in the 1960's, Hamilton in the 1970's and in Auckland from 1978. He was the backbone of APEX -the APS Audio Visual exhibition group - which, in its day, earned considerable fame, here and overseas. In the 1980s Jack was the APS President and served on the club committee for many years. He was the driving force behind Regional and National conventions held in the Auckland area and an enthusiastic proponent of all things to do with photography, whilst keeping his feet well and truly planted on the ground.

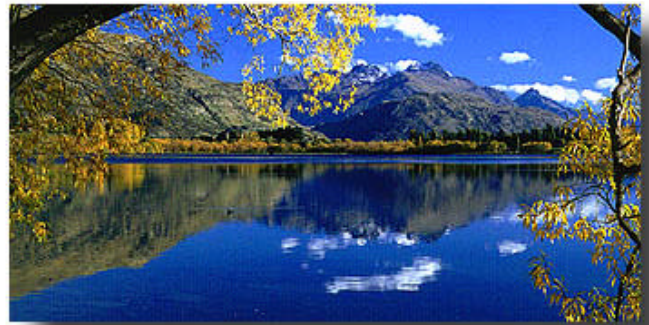
From the 1960's Jack gave outstanding service to the Photographic Society of New Zealand (PSNZ) in various leadership roles, culminating in a term as President. He held an extraordinary number of positions with all the various clubs he has been associated with, including the Royal Photographic Society from which he earned an ARPS. He enjoyed significant national and international exhibition success in various media - particularly audio visuals - had work appear in many publications and was a much sought after judge, at all levels.

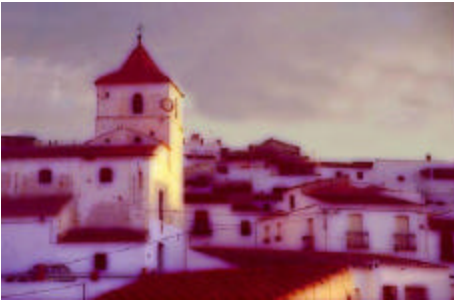
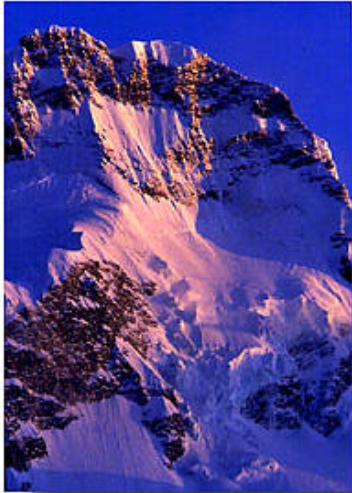
The versatility of Jack's overall contributions showed with his outstanding work in digital imaging, and his PSNZ Fellowship print portfolio was the start of a pre-eminence in the artistic use of this medium. In 2001, for his overall outstanding abilities and contributions Jack was awarded the PSNZ's highest distinction of Honorary Fellowship of the Society - a rare honour which can be held by only seven living members.

Jack was a true gentleman, a great friend, wonderful companion, helper, critic and an extremely talented, active photographic worker, who had a positive influence on all who came in contact with him.

We salute his enthusiasm, his expertise, his love of photography and of his fellow photographers, with whom he so readily shared his knowledge. Jack was one of life's treasures and we extend our deepest sympathy and affection to Ro and their five children.

Brian Cudby.





Collectable Photographs

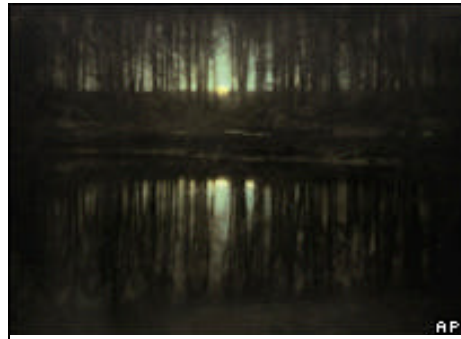
What's happening in the crazy world of collectable photography? Following the trend of increasing activity and values of collectable photographic prints in the United States, a new record has been set for price obtained for a print at auction.

This story thanks to BBC News, Feb 06.

Rare photo sets \$2.9m sale record

A rare print taken by US photography pioneer Edward Steichen has set a world record for the highest price paid for a photograph auction.

The Pond-Moonlight - taken in New York in 1904 - was sold for US\$2.9m (£1.6m), more than doubling the previous record.



The photograph was taken in Long Island, New York 1904.

The 41x48cm photo shows a pond in a wooded area with light coming through the trees and reflected in the water.

The only other two copies in existence are in museum collections. The buyer's identity has yet to be disclosed.

But no doubt he or she feels that owning a piece of photographic history is more than worth the record-breaking price-tag, the BBC's Elettra Neysmith says.

The photograph was put up for sale by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which has another copy in its collection.

Stephen Perloff, the editor of the Photograph Collector, a newsletter about the photography art market, said before the Steichen auction that it would be a "moment of history", the Associated Press news agency reports.

Steichen began experimenting with colour photography in 1904.

He was one of the first Americans to use the autochrome - a revolutionary method of producing colour photographs.

The previous record for highest price for a photograph at auction was set last November by Richard Prince's Untitled (Cowboy). It sold for US\$1,248,000 (£719,000).

Letter to the Editor

Date: Tue, 7 Feb 2006 08:25:19 [07/02/06 NZDT]
From: dave&val <daveval@talktalk.net>
To: editor@aps.net.nz
Subject: photographs

Dear Sir,

My daughter & partner are at this moment on holiday in your beautiful country, your web sight has helped to get an idea of the scenery etc., of Waipu cove.

May I say what talents your members have!

My grateful thanks,
Valerie Bradshaw.

Hello Mrs Bradshaw,

Thank you indeed for your generous message. I shall pass on you comments in our upcoming newsletter for the general membership. Please do enjoy your time in New Zealand and if you are still in the vicinity on the 16th March you would be welcome to visit our club night to view some prints in person.

Labelling Prints

Proper labelling of prints, slides and digital files makes the Convenors jobs much easier!

Please remember to include:

Name

Grade (*Nov, Adv, Sal*)

Title (*optional*)

"*Set Subject*" (or) "*Open*"

Interesting Websites

www.johnpaulcaponigro.com

Fascinating images using a subtle approach to digital manipulation of the natural environment.

www.johnwimberleyphotography.com

Widely acclaimed for his B&W landscape images and figurative images.

www.dykinga.com

Official website of leading photographer of the natural environment. The watermarks on images are irritating, but worth viewing.

www.artwolfe.com

Wildlife and more landscape. Great tips section.

www.rps.org

The Royal Photographic Society.

www.photo.co.nz

Photo and Video International online photographic store (in Christchurch). Best prices, excellent service.

www.photoeye.com

Online photo bookstore, with probably the most comprehensive list of titles on the web. Careful, you may never come out.

Don't forget - if you have something that could be of interest for Focal Plane readers, drop an email to editor@aps.net.nz or post to 'Ed', 3B Webber St, Coss Bay, Auckland.

'till next month - Ed

The camera for an artist is just another tool. It is no more mechanical than a violin if you analyze it. Beyond the rudiments, it is up to the artist to create art, not the camera. - Brett Weston