

Snapshots

2022-2023
Issue 1
for meeting of
September 7
editor
Matthew
Robertson



Girls on the Bus, by Leif Petersen

Our final – sixteenth – regular meeting of the year covered a lot of ground. It was our chance to unwind and simply appreciate photography, with Michael leading a relaxing evening of commentary on our favourites from the past year.

We started with a Year In Review video show put together by Leif, highlighting photos from the season. We also took some time to appreciate the contributions of past Galbraith Trophy recipients, including Tom Yates, who has the distinction of receiving the award in each of four consecutive decades. Congratulations again to Dass for joining this distinguished list.

And finally, in an extra special meeting, we enjoyed a superb presentation by renowned photographer Sam Abell. His unparalleled insights into his methods will undoubtedly resonate through the Forum for years, and we'll be better for it.

Upcoming Meetings

September 7
Leif

September 21
Paul

Thursday October 6
Dass

At the Toronto Focal Forum we share a passion for the printed photograph: it's our chosen means of creative expression, so we strive for artistic and technical excellence. Our candid print reviews are times for diverse work and different ideas, creating an invigorating, ongoing conversation about our experiences in art and in life. These evenings are times of inspiration, honing our craft of clear vision and communication, enriching our photographic pursuits. This is the measure of our success.

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Untitled, by Stephen Starkman

Images Shown, May 4:

Judy Griffin
Autumn Montage

Rhonda Starr
The Wedding Photographer

Jocelyn Ubaldino
Triple Water Drop

Dass
Santa Fe Geometric

Kas Stone
Rising From the Wreckage

Marvin Cooper
Life in the Desert

Laurence Sitwell
Besson

Steve Rees
Social Distance

Tom Yates
Coming Soon

Vince Sheridan
The Beamish House Pub

Marie Algieri-Goldgrub
A Goodbye Hug

Carm Griffin
*CADES COVE, TN
@ SUNDOWN*

Allan Flagel
Morning Light

Stephen Starkman
Untitled

Leif Petersen
Girls on the Bus

Katherine Kates
Frosted Layers

Avi Cohen
Beautiful Light

Matthew Robertson
*The Difference Between
Letting Go and Giving Up*

Michael Anderson
*Street Singer,
San Miguel 2020*

Compose the photo, Sammy, and wait.
– Sam Abell

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Message from the President

by Leif Petersen

As I thought about writing a piece for this piece, I wondered if I should reflect on the past season(s) or look ahead to 2022-23. How about a combination?

Other than meeting virtually and viewing digital images, at least temporarily, this season won't be much different than every one since 1939 in several ways: we'll enjoy each other's company; we'll continue to share each other's photographic knowledge and creativity through our images; and, once again, we'll take advantage of this recent virtual era to enjoy at least one inspirational speaker.

Throughout last season, we also followed a very important theme that Dass introduced last September:

“We should be kind and considerate in communicating our opinions, but we must be honest. The maker must remember the critique is about one particular image and is not directed at the photographer personally.”

We have an obligation to continue following that theme. Critiquing art is a skill, one that comes more naturally to some, but that's one of the things we're here to learn. You can be honest and point out something you feel is a wrong, but do it in a positive, constructive manner. Just as important, on the flip side, is to accept an honest critique as just that. We shouldn't get so emotionally wrapped up in our own image that we can't see beyond that. That's not easy either.

One of the roles of a meeting moderator is to keep us on track, not only with the meeting time, but also how we conduct ourselves. If you have agreed to moderate a meeting this year, please keep this in mind and help keep us on track.

To add some interest, Doris came up with a suggestion that we should consider (thanks, Doris): 'Five Minutes of Fame'. Let's try it! We'll take five minutes at the beginning of our meeting for a member to profile themselves... their photography niche, career, what brought them to photography... whatever they want. Let me know if you'd like to be the first volunteer for our second meeting.

And last, I've been thinking a lot about my vision for the season. I'm finding that quite difficult given the question of whether or not we'll be able to resume live meetings in the second half. In the meantime, and recognizing that not everyone will be able to, the Executive Board will continue looking at technology options to keep everyone involved.

I'm looking forward to seeing your smiling faces on September 7th.

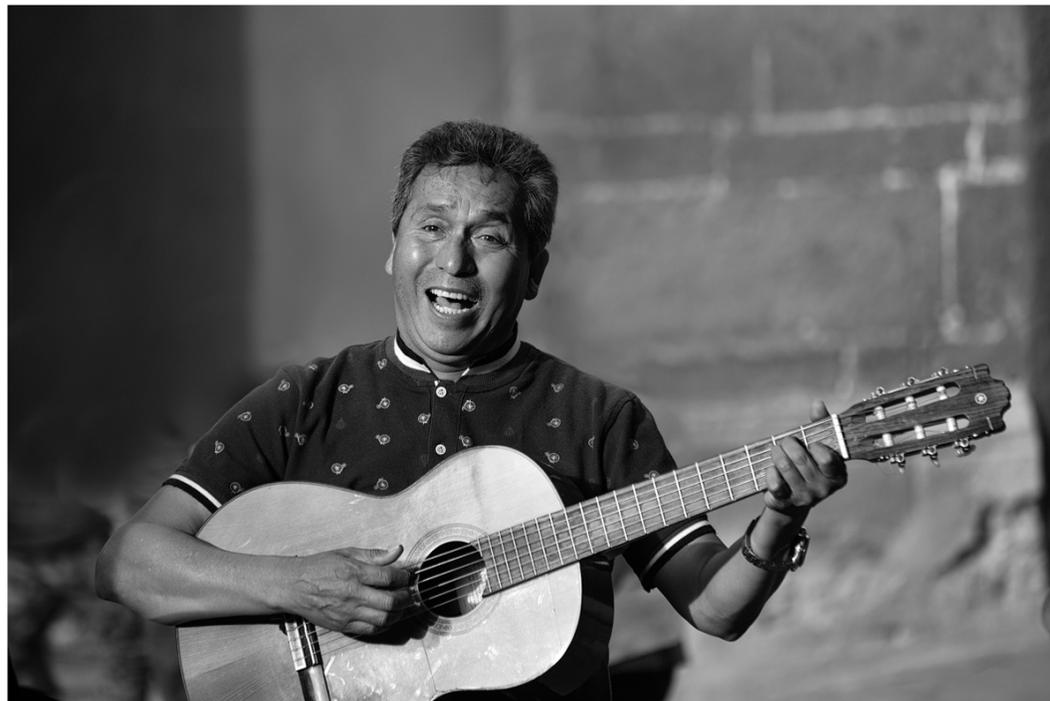
Snapshots is on the web!
focalforum.ca/snapshots

I became an artist because I wanted to be an active participant in the conversation about art.

– Kamand Kojouri

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Left:
Street Singer,
San Miguel 2020,
by Michael Anderson

Below:
the Difference Between
Letting Go and
Giving Up,
by Matthew Robertson



How to hold the reader inside the rhythm, to sing so beautifully some do not know I am singing about freedom.
To contort into such shapes that onlookers mistake battle for dance – that, to me,
is still the ultimate challenge of making political art in these times.

– Maxine Beneba Clarke

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*Right:
Morning Light,
by Allan Flagel*

*Below:
Triple Water Drop,
by Jocelyn Ubaldino*



You keep asking why your work is not enough, and I don't know how to answer that, because it is enough to exist in the world and marvel at it. You don't need to justify that, or earn it. You are allowed to just live.

– Becky Chambers

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Frosted Layers, by Katherine Keates



Beautiful Light, by Avi Cohen



Life in the Desert, by Marvin Cooper

The objects around us – everything from the most mundane toaster to the smartest of smartphones – are all just remixed and rearranged rocks. How elegant.

– Latif Nasser

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Summer BBQ

by Leif Petersen

On June 18th, it was wonderful to get together face-to-face with 15 members and their guests, the first live 'meeting' since spring 2020! The occasion: a BBQ on Leif and Bonnie's patio. For Jocelyn, this was the first time she had met most of the members, since she joined after the pandemic forced us into Zoom meetings.

Between the variety of delicious appetizers, salads and desserts brought by the members, we enjoyed thick and juicy hamburgers served with sautéed onions, bacon and all of the usual fixings. Despite what the picture of Leif at the BBQ shows, there was more than 1 burger!

There was never a dull moment as conversations and laughter carried on throughout the 4 hours or so that we spent together. It was great to re-connect with, not only the members, but also their partners, who we hadn't seen for the past 2+ years.

Thanks to everyone for attending and for taking the time to prepare the food dishes. Thanks also to Steve G. and Dass for taking photos.

You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces – just good food from fresh ingredients.

– Julia Child

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Kingston Pen

by Dass

On August 18th, six Forum members and a guest went to Kingston for a tour of the penitentiary. Marvin made all the arrangements; we had a 2½ guided hour tour of the facility. Built in 1833, it was used until 2013 (180 years). At the time of its closing, it was one of the oldest prisons in continuous use in the world.

We were the first photography specific tour they had hosted, and our guide was sensitive to our needs. While he gave us information when required, he also stayed silent when we were all concentrating on our craft. It worked out well.

An interesting fact our guide told us was that when originally built in 1833 the cells were 8 feet long, 6 feet 7 inches tall, and only 29 inches wide! Prisoners were not allowed to talk, they had to remain silent 24 hours a day to 'better reflect on their crimes'.

It was a nice opportunity for members to get together for some photography. Hopefully we can do more in the future.



*Top: Sharon Janushewski
Bottom: Marvin Cooper*

*Top: The Tour Group
Bottom: Nick Janushewski*

Repressive societies always seemed to understand the danger of "wrong" ideas.

– Octavia Butler

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*Top: Sharon Janushewski
Bottom: Leif Petersen*

*Top: Marvin Cooper
Middle: Dass
Bottom: Marvin Cooper*

Do we police because we fear we can be savages?
Do our barricades from each other belie the blinds that keep us strangers to ourselves?
- angel Kyodo williams