

In Focus

Vol 6, No. 3

Winter I

December 2004

Photographing Father Christmas

The holiday season brings many photographic opportunities, and many challenges. How do we tell a holiday story while avoiding the trite snapshots of family and friends posing among mounds of colorful tissue paper? And, while the light displays are beautiful, it takes some thought to frame a photograph that reflects both imagination and excitement.

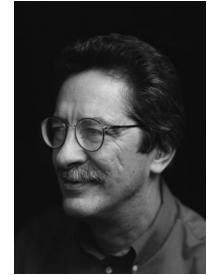
This year, I decided to shoot my subjects near windows and other sources of existing light. This eliminates the problem of artificial sources of light on daylight film. Flash is used as a fill-in, but the main source is the softer light of daylight filtering through the window.

After photographing a number of guests in holiday poses, my attention drifted to tabletop decorations. This required a tripod and a short macro lens. A 12-inch statue of St. Nick drew my eye as I envisioned a larger-than-life subject.

First, I placed the little saint on a table near a window. A white flannel sheet was draped over a lamp behind him, and the table was covered with puffs of white cotton. Nick's bright red velour coat provided a strong contrast to the winter white that surrounded him. Best of all, he didn't move, which gave ample time to frame the poses, and to think about what I wanted to accomplish.

This same strategy can be used for any holiday decorations, including ornamental groupings on a Christmas tree, manger scene or window box. Soft light combined with a neutral background can deceive the eye while presenting a smaller subject as life-size. An added bonus is that these shots can be taken after the holiday season, or anytime, when the hustle and bustle is replaced by a peaceful moment.

Charles J. Trimberger,
December 26, 2004



January's presenter will be Adam Yopp. The subject is "The Calling of Photography."

Mr. Yopp expresses his spiritual calling through digital photography. He will give two shows of 15-20 minutes each using metaphors of water, light, lighthouses, and nature. This promises to be a warm, uplifting presentation on a cold winter's night in January.

December's meeting saw the club print competition, and the club's judging of the Wisconsin Print Competition Circuit.

Best of Show for the club competition was awarded to new member Ted Tousman for a wonderful digital print of trees in fog, shot in color with black and white themes.

We also participated in the Wisconsin Print Circuit competition, in which we all ranked a large number of excellent photos from around the Wisconsin Area Camera Club Organization (WACCO).

Please see Charlie if you're interested in helping fill an office for the club: several glamorous and exciting opportunities are available now!

See page 2 for the eBay View Camera!

The Riverside Camera Club is a group dedicated to learning about photography that meets monthly in the Fall, Winter, and Spring at the Urban Ecology Center.

Meetings of the Riverside Camera Club are held on the first Thursday of the month at the Urban Ecology Center at 2808 N Bartlett Ave (2 blocks southwest of Locust and Oakland) behind Riverside High School, at 7:00 PM sharp. For more information, call 414-964-8508, or email rcc@yeah.org.

Our members will want to know about the PSA Wisconsin Chapter's new web site at:

<http://www.psawisconsin.org/>

Each member club offers this web site as a benefit to individual members. Charlie Trimberger will have a report about the latest chapter activities at the January meeting.

The eBay View Camera

I recently invested in a view camera for a friend living out west. We found an older Calumet Wood Field camera on eBay for a reasonable price, and while it was not shipped here in time for Christmas, we'd also ordered it at the last minute.

View cameras can use a variety of film stocks, but most commonly use sheet film in two-sheet holders (one on each side), and single-frame instant material in paper envelopes (usually Polaroid). They can also take medium format roll film (with different adapters) 2 1/4" wide, instant pack films made by Polaroid and Fuji, and "readyloads", made by Kodak (including TMAX) and Fuji (including Velvia!) in paper envelopes that can be loaded without darkroom, darkbag, or dust.

While my friend already uses an 8x10 field camera, he and his wife are looking for something more portable for a trip overseas. A 4x5 wood

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Urban Ecology Center

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Mike Crivello's Camera Center

Larry Orzwalla, Owner
Mon-Fri 9-5:30 Sat 9-3
1700 E. Capitol Dr.
414 322 1550

Riverside Camera Club Officers

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|------------------|--------------------|--------------|
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field camera with lens can weigh as little as a couple of pounds, less than even a mid-sized SLR with lens. The camera we found measures less than 7 inches square, less than 4 inches deep, and packs easily into even the smallest of backpacks or large handbags. However, it has full movements: tilt, the ability of the lens and film plane to swivel about the horizontal axis, swing, the ability to swivel about the vertical axis, vertical shift of the front standard, useful for having more of a building in the shot, and less of the street, and even a rotating back, giving the option of vertical or horizontal film orientation.

For less than the cost of even a mid-range modern SLR, we found a 30 year old camera that shoots film 14 times larger than 35mm, and will quite happily make 16x20 prints at only 4x magnification: both tack-sharp, and with fine detail.

Submissions for In Focus, the club newsletter, delivered in electronic and print forms, are due by the second Thursday of the month.