

Bellingham Photography Club

Issue 53, Rev 1

October - November 2022

President's Message

Hello, everyone.

I'm very pleased to let you know that we have a very special presenter coming to our meeting this week: **Ron Hammond**, black and white film shooter, street photographer, blogger, 'Occasional Rumor' author, and retired "Czar of Stuff" leading the long-running Group f/5.6, my old photo club in Bellevue. Ron writes,

My heroes are the great humanist photographers; Helen Levitt, Peter Turnley, Edoard Boubat, Milton Rogovin, Sabine Weiss, and especially Willy Ronis and Robert Doisneau.

Like my heroes, I am much more interested in people and their everyday lives than in spectacular places or momentous events. One of these heroes, Robert Doisneau, described himself as a "fisherman of images". I like the metaphor of patiently waiting with baited camera at an interesting time and place.

Ron has extensive experience exhibiting his work in myriad venues, and I've asked him to share with us his talk on "How to Get Hung."



You can learn more from his website:

<https://www.ronfstop.com/>

Or from his blog:

<http://notbadbutisitart.blogspot.com/>

Or from this article:

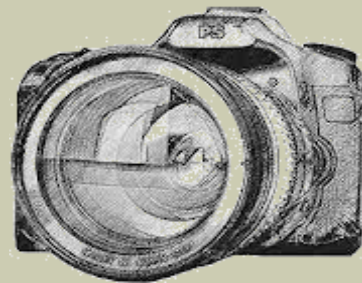
<https://www.lensculture.com/ron-hammond>

And get a taste of his views from his newsletter "Occasional Rumor" reproduced inside this newsletter.

— Lorraine

Bellingham Photography Club Board

Lorraine Day - President	mesmerie1@gmail.com
Alan Alquist - Treasurer	alan@learn2inquire.com
Joanne Frantska - Secretary	jfrantska@gmail.com
George Sanders - Programs	george.sanders@outlook.com
David Johnson - Club Liaison	davidsamishphoto@gmail.com
Lorraine Day - Newsletter Editor	mesmerie1@gmail.com



Next Meeting:

Nov. 9, 2022 7pm

Program:

Ron Hammond:
"How to Get Hung"

Zoom link:

[https://
us02web.zoom.us/
j/85625360322](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85625360322)

Inside this issue:

President's Message	1
BPC Board.....	1
About BPC.....	2
Show Your Stuff!	2
What Our Members are Doing: Brags!	3
From Ron Hammond's "Occasional Rumor".....	4



How to submit

- .jpg format
- Width = 1920 px or less*
- Height = 1080 px or less*
Resolution not important;
150—300 dpi typical.
- File names to begin with
your last name and a
sequential number
(Day 1—Fish House.jpg)
- Total size of email with
attachments: 10 MB max.
- Include exif info in your
email if known

Send images for the website
(Theme, Commentary, or
Members Gallery) to David
Johnson

DavidSamishPhoto@gmail.com

Send images for the news-
letter to Lorraine Day—
mesmerie1@gmail.com

For those who care:

Our website host will resize
your images to a maximum of
1,550 pixels wide by 960 tall. It
does this "to prevent theft of
your originally uploaded full
resolution images and it also
help to ensure that your
images will always load with
minimal loading delay. Your
original image files are
retained and remain unedited."

About BPC

The Bellingham Photography Club provides opportunities for photography enthusiasts to enhance and share expertise. Club activities include, but are not limited to, regular meetings, photography field experiences, photography competitions, and special interest forums.

Our goal is to provide encouragement, camaraderie and educational programs that will motivate photographers to improve their skills.

We are meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, these days using Zoom. We alternate, month by month, between programs and 'sharing' evenings when we can share our monthly theme photos and review photos submitted for critique, and have open photography-related discussion.

If you would like to join a meeting as our guest, please contact our president, Lorraine Day, at mesmerie1@gmail.com.

Show Your Stuff!

The Bellingham Photo Club offers several opportunities for sharing your work. We'd love to see YOUR work in one of these places!

Website and Monthly Meetings:

- **Member Galleries** – Members can each upload up to 20 images to the members' gallery on our website. These can be anything you want – your own personal portfolio that you can share with friends and family!
- **Theme of the Month / Review** – Every other month is a 'sharing' month. A theme is established and members can submit images reflecting that theme to share with the group. The themed images are for sharing, not for critical review (unless you ask for opinions).

Along with themed images, members can also submit images to share with the group for evaluative review. These do not need to be tied to the theme of the month. Both themed images and images for review will be posted to the website and members are encouraged to go online and enter comments.

- You can submit any combination of themed images or images for review, up to a maximum of 5 images total. Don't forget to be clear in your submittal which category your images are for!

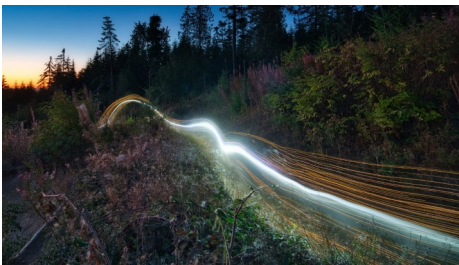
Newsletter – Remember, members can send images to the newsletter editor -- me, Lorraine, at mesmerie1@gmail.com – for inclusion in the newsletter. Especially welcome would be a brief explanation of your inspiration, your technique, problems you tackled and overcame (or failed to overcome!), location, exif data or any other information you'd like to share. Absent this, a brief caption would be great.

Come on; let's show our stuff!

What Members are Doing: Brags!

Our club isn't particularly exhibitionist, but we have a few brags this month.

Scott Pratschner's recent night-time mountain bike project has been chosen to be the photos in the Mountain Bike Coalition's calendar next year. It was a long exposure project with a subject adorned in string lights while mountain biking down a jump line (called Cedar Dust) on Galbraith. Scott used a shutter release cable in bulb mode to capture the rider as he rode past.



Lorraine Day (me!) had two of her selective-blur photos selected for the Jansen Art Center's current all-photography juried exhibit, part of their "Illuminations" exhibit running through December. One of the photographs, "Lummi Island Skiffs," was purchased by a local photography instructor—a high honor indeed.



I believe that street photography is central to the issue of photography — that it is purely photographic, whereas the other genres, such as landscape and portrait photography, are a little more applied, more mixed in with the history of painting and other art forms

— Joel Meyerowitz

Sharpness is a bourgeois concept.

— Henri Cartier-Bresson

Not that it difficult to photograph mundane things, but it's difficult to see them as significant. ...

The hard thing to do of course is to find a way to photograph a mundane subject or a mundane event in a way that makes it exciting.

— Brooks Jensen

The challenge, it turns out, isn't in perfecting your ability to know when to start and when to stand by. The challenge is getting into the habit of starting.

— Seth Grodin

From Ron Hammond's "The Occasional Rumor"
October 2020



"Low Stall" Vendor, Pike Place Market, 1978

October's Print of the Month (or thereabouts) is the latest of my reprints of very old negatives from the Pike Place Market. I'm working on coming up with 20 or so prints in a series I'm calling "Face of the Market" -- emphasizing the people rather than the place.

**The first principle is that you must not fool yourself —
and you are the easiest person to fool.**

Richard Feynman

Richard Feynman's quotation on the home page of my website this month is only one that I have used there that is not by a photographer. My friend Steve emailed me this quotation for my collection (thanks, Steve) and it triggered a memory.

A photographer acquaintance had the extreme good fortune to take a weekend workshop with the great Ruth Bernhard. It turned out to be the last one she did before her death in 2006. In addition to being a gifted photographer herself her reputation held her to be an equally gifted teacher and mentor. Part of the workshop was, of course, a review of portfolios brought by the attendees. Ms. Bernhard looked very thoughtfully and carefully at my acquaintance's portfolio of landscapes. Even

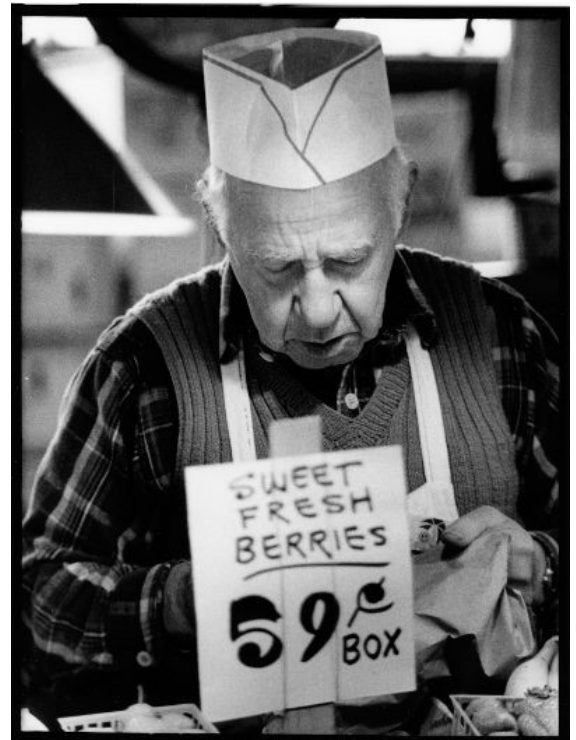
Ron Hammond, continued...

though her own photographs were rarely if ever landscapes she made insightful comments on several of the prints as she looked through them again and again. But she kept coming back to one print without commenting on it. She questioned my acquaintance about his intentions for it and his printing of it. She finally said to him "*You really want this print to work, don't you?*" (yes) "*And you know in your heart that it does not, don't you?*" (long pause -- yes). As Feynman said "*... you are the easiest person to fool.*"

How to we as photographers keep from fooling ourselves -- or at least keep ourselves from doing so frequently? It seems to me that we face two issues: "*How do I want this photograph to look?*" and "*What do I do to make it look like that?*" The second of these is technique -- in the camera settings, in the darkroom or in Photoshop. If I go to a workshop with a master printer I'll be better at it immediately after doing so. The first question has a very simple but much longer-term answer. Look at art. Look at lots of art. Look at all kinds of art. When you see a painting, a drawing, a photograph, a print, a collage, a weaving, a statue ... that excites you try to discover why it does so. Do this a lot and perhaps you can generalize from the specific to the benefit of your own work. (It worked for me -- details below.)

But that's not all. If you look at art with the goal of finding out "what works" -- apply that to your own work as well. Yes, the opinion of someone you respect is helpful and if you listen with an open heart and mind it will help you to look at your next piece more realistically. But it's still you that has to make the decision. Photographer Jerry Uelsmann once did a lecture in which he showed every one of the prints he had made in the previous year - - 50 odd of them. Of those only 6 did he consider successful enough to go into his portfolio.

I now have about 60 candidate negatives for my "Face of the Market" portfolio. Only two days ago I printed one that I really want to work but know in my heart that it doesn't. I'm quite a ways from 20 "keepers". The one above, however, is one of them and here is another.



Morris (Uncle Morrie) Manzo, Pike Place Market 1973

And now the details for the strong of heart.

A couple of months ago a trusted, long term friend commented that she had seen my printing change quite a bit over the past few years. It had and it occurred to me that I had not written that narrative down -- stray notes/journal entries/... but never a coherent statement. (Thanks, Louise.)

Ron Hammond, continued...

The change – improvement – in my printing was a very conscious process beginning 2003 or so. Actually the improvement was not so much doing something different but doing **more** of what made the print sing for me. Prior to that time I would sometimes make a print that sang (and reveled in doing so) but didn't do it on purpose, so to speak.

In 2003 the Portland Art Museum showed a print by Larry Fink “*In Moses Sawyer's Studio*” that blew my socks off. My patient wife practically had to drag my away from it by my ear. Instead of just admiring it, it put me on a quest to figure out what that print had that I wanted. I started pouring over books, paying more attention at galleries, Eventually coming up with a selection of prints from which I tried to synthesis the general out of the specific.

My friend Bryan characterized what I was looking for as “foo-ness” (“foo” in the software world of the arcane LISP computer language – later picked up for use in C and its progeny – is a term for something very important that has not yet been defined). After a lot of mostly circular discussions with Bryan and sundry other friends in 2006 I finally came up with a loose description of foo-ness – a product of:

- A generously exposed negative
- Wide tonal range but emphasis on the dark tones
- Good shadow detail
- Good subject/background contrast with selective depth of field
- Skin tones a bit high

Next issue was how to fold these characteristics into my darkroom practice. I started rating film about ½ stop slower than the manufacturers rated speed. That helped. I developed my own approach to split-filter printing. That helped. Then I printed a lot – blew a good deal of paper trying to make it all come true. Searched my negatives for those that were good candidates even if I didn't like the content. That helped.

Given the humanist work that I love and continue to pursue I don't hit the sweet spot every time. I believe it was Gary Winogrand that said “*Every photograph is a struggle between content and form.*” I want it all but sometimes “content” makes me stop short of the “form” I want. But when I do hit the sweet spot it feels very good .



EMAIL: ronfst0p@mindspring.com

WEBSITE: www.ronstop.com

BLOG: Notbadbutisitart.blogspot.com