



THE

LAST FRAME

March 2008

St. Albert Photo Club's Monthly Newsletter



Jim Gaa in front of a print taken in the French Quarter of New Orleans in 2007.

Jim Gaa - architecturally

When it comes to landscape photography, many visualize images of mountains and canyons, lakes and rivers, or perhaps massive thunderstorms raging across endless prairie fields of aromatic alfalfa or golden canola.

For Edmonton-based fine art photographer, Jim Gaa, his preferred

landscapes are comprised detailing the urban landscape, focusing his camera lens on man-made structures and the relationships between these structures.

He refers to his subjects as objects in "the built environment", often extracting their architectural nuances.

Born in Michigan where he lived until 1980, he first picked up a camera when he was 10 years old.

Initially exposing and developing his own black-and-white film before switching to transparency film, he has been capturing his images digitally for the past four years, using a Canon 20D DSLR.

APRIL GUEST
SPEAKER
TBA

APRIL
COMPETITION
"Water"

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MAY
GUEST SPEAKER
TBA

MAY
COMPETITION
"Roads"



His two favorite lenses are most telephoto zoom lenses, a Canon 28-135mm and a 70-200mm.

Jim said he prefers photographing with the longer optics as compared to wider lenses as the former tends to flatten the perspective, creating a sense of compression of his compositional elements.

He also likes to keep his images simple, at times eschewing the conventional “rules of composition”; he has no hesitance, for example, to center his subject or perhaps incorporating light-toned elements along the edges of his camera frame.

The use of telephoto lenses, thus, helps simplify his images.

Many of his images employ a heavy emphasis on colours, shapes, and the relationships of circular shapes to straight lines.

Utilizing the way shapes play off against each other, he may introduce the shadows of one building cast onto another, simple as a compositional tool.

By photographing under overcast conditions he can get details where he wants them and not have to deal with the high contrast

issues of blocked-up shadows and blown out highlights that plague images photographed under bright, sunny conditions.

Overcast conditions also give him options when he intends to convert his digital captures into monochrome prints.

While his professional career at the University of Alberta enables him to travel to wonderful cities around the world, often with hundreds or even thousands of years of architectural history on display, the time he has available to pursue his photography there is often limited.

As a result, most of his photography is performed without a tripod.

Hand-holding his camera speeds up the photographic process, and there is also the issue of safety – the optimal location could actually be from the middle of a busy intersection!

Many buildings, Jim mentioned, have a definite life-cycle.

Some wind up being restored and preserved while others simply return to nature.

Historical buildings and



Bank of China in Hong Kong taken in 2007.

those with character are frequently found in a state of decrepit decay.

Images in Jim’s portfolio often reflect this “things that were once in better shape than are now” theme.

The permanence of the building is often contrasted with the impermanence

of its broken, cracked, or plastic-covered window frames.

While on the subject of windows, when he is out photographing more modern buildings he is on the lookout for window glass that is somewhat transparent, revealing to the viewer what may be

<p>St. Albert Photo Club</p> <hr/> <p>Vol:7 Issue:6 PUBLISHED MONTHLY September - June</p>	<p>President</p> <p>Derald Lobay </p>	<p>Treasurer</p> <p>Allen Skoreyko </p>	<p>Web Master</p> <p>Tracey Guzak </p>	<p>Club Contact</p> <p>Doug Poon 973-7035  dougpoon@shaw.ca</p>
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Train station in Detroit in 2006.

going on behind them.

When he is out capturing his streetscape images, this often means aiming his camera lens at an upward angle, producing images that have “keystone” effect.

Once he views his images on his computer and finds this effect unappealing, he will then open the image in Photoshop CS3 and straighten out these lines.

Photoshop, then, just gives him options.

His streetscape images often include one building juxtaposed with individual buildings.

Alleyways, graffiti in their associated alleyways, plus more industrial scenes of factories and their associated chimneys

and smokestacks also find their way into his work.

Details of bridges and the configuration of its lines and shapes also interest him.

Jim finds painted signs on walls very intriguing.

What he finds as striking imagery is what was painted as a sign many years ago, was then subject to many years of weathering, both through climate and seasonal changes, only to be repainted over again.

The end result is a layering of paint and/or graffiti.

One photographic theme Jim is currently developing on a more local front is that of cemeteries and gravestones, as well as its corollary of highway

markers of roadside fatalities.

From a photographer’s standpoint it is unfortunate that many of these locations are difficult, if not impossible, to access.

They tend to be found along blind corners on highways, and either uncontrolled or extremely busy intersections.

If there is anything that he would like viewers of his photography to come away with, it is to encourage them to look at the urban landscape and all things within it they would normally just pass by, and to see things the way most people don’t normally look at them.

Article-Derald Lobay

FOR SALE: Swiss Arca Ball head for sale. Canon wireless LC-4 Controller (remote fire for Canon bodies), Canon angle finder C. (flower pictures, macro work attachment) Richard Wear. r.wear@telus.net

FOR SALE: Nikon D2H \$750 obo. Dan Riedlhuber. Phone 780.460.1985

WANTED: Bolex H16 movie camera. If anyone out there has any ideas about where I could get one, please let me know. Model from the 70’s is preferable but I would also look at older models. Deb Tetz. dtetz@sturgeon.ab.ca

Club Point Standings

PRINTS

- 19 - Al Popil
- 04 - Sandra Boser
- 03 - Dave Paris
- 03 - Allen Skoreyko
- 03 - Dan Wiggins
- 02 - Sieg Koslowski
- 01 - Mark Pesklewis
- 01 - Trevor Zahara

DIGITAL

- 13 - Allen Skoreyko
- 11 - Al Popil
- 03 - Derald Lobay
- 03 - Sieg Koslowski
- 03 - Andrew MacLeod
- 02 - Muffy Mathewson
- 01 - Jim Herchak

