

RANGEFINDER

The Missouri Photo Workshop // Sept. 22, 2014 // Volume 66 // Issue 2



MaryAnne Golon, director of photography at *The Washington Post* and Alan Berner, staff photographer at *The Seattle Times* listen intently as Meg Kumin pitches her story, perhaps successfully. For more about today's anxiety, see page four. (Photo by Loren Elliott)

This year's
MPW.66
Photogs



Nick Agro
Long Beach, CA
@agrograms



Paul Colangelo
Vancouver, BC
@paulcolangelo



Benjamin Petit
Bronx, NY
@bendophoto



Pinar Istek
Ankara, Turkey
@pinaristek



Lucas Carter
Indianapolis, IN
@lucascarter



Cheryl-Samantha Owen
Kenya



Anna Surinyach Garcia
Barcelona, Spain



Vivian Abagiu
Columbia, MO
@photovivian



JJ Zhou Zhuangchen
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Bernice Shu Wong
Singapore



Ryan Jones
Brooklyn, NY
@ryancjones



Daniel Gonçalves
Dallas, TX



Kelly Doering
Madison, WI



Emily Koonse
Los Angeles, CA



Rafael Kluzniok
Santa Cruz, CA



Alyssa Schukar
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@alysaschukar



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@chloecoleanmedia



Matt Busch
Boerne, TX



Simon Sharp
Lancashire, UK



Jaime Rojo
San Pedro de Los Pinos, Mexico



Annie Sakkab
Mississauga, Ontario Canada



Kayla Kauffman
Naperville, IL



Kevin Hagen
Brooklyn, NY



Federica Armstrong
Palo Alto, CA



Rachel Yoke
Morgantown, WV



Peter Mather
Whitehorse, YT, Canada



Alexandra Demenkova
St. Petersburg, Russia



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@lisswick



Kathy Jamison
Springfield, IL



Marianella Aguirre
San Francisco, CA



Octavian Cantilli
Kissimmee, FL
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Noelle Swan Gilbert
Los Angeles, CA
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Gaston Lacombe
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Rafael Luevano
Orange, CA



Jeff Woo
Corinth, TX



Jonah Markowitz
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Michelle Siu
Toronto, Canada



Meg Kumin
Lenexa, KS



Monica Herndon
Highland Beach, MD
@monicaherndon



Sara Naomi Lewkowicz
Athens, OH
@saranaomiphoto



Demetrius Freeman
Atlanta, GA
@demetrius.freeman



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Boys Town, NE



Jacobia Dahm
New York, NY
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Alexey Furman
Ukraine
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Melissa Farlow
Scott Sines

Team
Cliff & Vi
Lois Raimondo
Brian Kratzer

Team
Gilka
Erika Larsen
Randy Olson

Team
Lee
Maggie Steber
Rick Shaw

Team
Eppridge
MaryAnne Golon
Alan Berner

QUESTION: PHOTO INSPIRATION?

Liss Fenwick

I look back in history. Alec Soth is one of my favorites. His work is beautiful; he combines different styles in his work. I have a couple of his books. Even further, Josef Koudelka. (top)

Monica Herndon

I really like the Washington Post picture blog right now. I get inspired by things I wouldn't usually shoot. (second from top)

Demetrius Freeman

Lens blog. Also Damien and Dan Winters. I like "Road to Seeing" by Dan Winters.

Ryan Jones

Typically a new place, new environments, new settings.

Alexandra Demenkova

Not going too far. Going deeper. Going near but looking for people that are left behind.

Mike Buckley

Fstoppers.com. I go there to look for ideas and equipment and they have a lot of creative photographers.

Kathy Petite Jamison

Everywhere from journalistic photos like shooting people, which sounds generic but, to fine art like objects with mood.

Paul Colangelo

Wilderness and agency sites like Magnum and Nat Geo. (third from top)

Alexey Furman

I look through a lot of stuff that inspires my style. Noor Photo Agency and good European art house fiction movies.

Nick Agro

Friends. It's cool having friends doing all sorts of things in different places. It's fun seeing their work.

Lucas Carter

APhotoaDay.com



Moth to a flame: Chasing California wildfires at night

In the midst of California's severe drought, a photographer captures majestic scenes of scorched lands.

Nicole Crowder · 3 days ago



September 10, 2014, 10:11 pm Pictures of the Day: Iraq and Elsewhere



A Kurdish youth merges fighter searches marine whale toward Zumar, Iraq, an area controlled by militants aligned with the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Secretary of State John Kerry said the Obama administration would keep the door open to confidential communications with Iran on the security crisis in Iraq.

Vivian Abagiu

My heart. I go for the things that move me and that I care about because those are the stories I most want to tell.

Gaston Lacombe

I look into past experiences. I came into photography late; I had a whole life before this so I always look to see how I can use that to my advantage.

Alyssa Schukar

Tumblr, Lens Blog, Time Light Fox, and photo books when I can. (bottom)

Meg Kumin

Nat Geo, 500px, and Photo Society.

Bernice Wong

My friend's library. He lets me borrow photo books. My favorite is Eugene Richards The Gun and Knife. Also the Invisible Photographer Asia.

Michelle Siu

The Internet, I wish I had a better answer. Aaron Huey and Instagram. There are some good people to follow on there.

Kelly Doering

My favorite at the moment is FeatureShoot.com. Everyday it brings up intros to documentary stories. Also I look at books and documentaries for inspiration.

Jeff Woo

New York Times blog, National Geographic, anything shot by New York Times, Washington Post, and my colleagues.

Jacobia Dahm

Off the beaten path. I think talking to people is the best way to find stories.

—Compiled by Sarah Bell
Rangefinder Editor

TO ASSERT, INSERT YOURSELF

By Duane Dailey, Co-Director Emeritus

A shy person has no chance of finding a story in a strange culture. Right? Wrong!

Sunday night speakers (including shy people) told and showed their secrets – using words and photos (Photojournalism.)

No opening session of MPW has been stronger. I exaggerate, a compensation of a shy person, as I have not seen 66 opening sessions. I have a strong sampling, tho.

Melissa Farlow says she inserts herself into situations, watches and waits. Patience please. Who would insert themselves into a waiting line at the women's restroom?

High society hat ladies at the Kentucky Derby waiting in line had other things on their minds than a camera documenting their finery.

In Coffman Cove, Alaska, where strangers stand out, Melissa went into the store, bought an item, made small talk, observed – and waited.

Here's the message: Ease in, observe and slowly connect.

Entering a culture, and Platte City is one, don't barge in snapping. Enter as a person. Not as a distracting camera.

Establish your presence as a nice person.

Can brushing your teeth be the secret of success? MaryAnne Golon advised taking a good look at you, while brushing, night and morning. Look. Who is that person in the mirror?

Consider the impression you make. You must "be present" to win in the photo-story epic to come.

Workshops succeed in small towns because people are accepting. Local folks at the picnic came because they wanted to learn about you.

Well, they did come in part because they have a very persuasive Mayor. Not a shy person.

His Honor gave not one but two keys to the City. If you want to get inside in this town, ask David or Jim to borrow their key.

A better way to get inside, follow the career of Lois Raimondo. Be a cultural anthropologist. Establish a connection even across enemy lines

in the Afghanistan Ramadan march. Whoa. What an astounding case of being present. In chaos of war, she finds human stories. Follow her lead.

Little human stories give life to big stories. That's what you can do in Platte City. Make your story of real people doing their thing, not doing your thing. Be truthful.

Workshoppers follow the Cliff Edom mandate: Show truth with a camera.

No faking, no fixing, no setting up. It's an all-natural workshop, no additives.

Alan Berner leads a wonderful career of traveling byways and finding story-telling moments.

Take note of Alan's A1 displays in *The Seattle Times*. He has skills of photo stories. Today the reality of print journalism is a story will be two photos, max. But what power those images carry. Readers can't overlook them.

You have power tools in your kit: Words and pictures. The story counts. Telling is in our genes. You are a descendant of ancient storytellers in the clans of your ancestors. You join a tradition, part of life and the Missouri Photo Workshop. It's a culture unique to the world. You become one with this world.

Go. Bring back trophies. We'll become the Iliad and Odyssey of Platte City.

What is expected of you?

David Rees showed a starter list. We expect a lot of you. There are more items in the MPW program book. Be sure to re-read Sunday's Rangefinder.

Each day there will be updates. When waiting to see your faculty, re-read the tips.

Today's hot tips:

Wear your name tag, every day, all day, even at breakfast. It's your badge, your press pass. People will know you are one of those they have read so much about in the Landmark. It's a conversation starter. Most important, it helps faculty get to know you by name.

Read the local newspaper. Take notes. There are people with stories listed there. Even in classified ads.

Eat a powder milk biscuit.



Below, Cheryl Samantha Owen runs her story concept by National Geographic photographer and previous MPW faculty member Jim Richardson. **At right,** Lucas Carter similarly pitches his story as does Bernice Shu Wong, **at far right.**



THE STORY HUNT BEGINS MONDAY JITTERS

By Beatriz Costa-Lima, Rangefinder Editor

As midday drew near, more and more photographers filtered in through the doors, dropped off their test cards with the concierge, and anxiously awaited their turn to meet with their faculty members.

The photographers spent Monday morning shooting and story hunting around town before returning at around 1 p.m. for the open faculty meetings.

Photographers took various approaches to find ideas.

After hearing many community members speak highly of Platte County school system, Nick Agro headed to schools to talk to teachers.

Chloe Coleman sat in Roxanne's cafe and chatted up the former mayor.

"I followed a few leads, but when I got there and talked to the person, I found out another photographer had already been there," Gaston Lacombe remarked of his experience looking for story subjects.

Gaston wasn't the only photographer with this predicament.

During his meeting with faculty, Jeff Woo expressed the same experience.

"Don't shy away because you've heard someone has already talked to the person," Faculty member Rick Shaw told Woo.

When 44 photographers descend on a small town, a little overlap is inevitable.

But instead of resigning, keeping the conversation going can lead to another story, Shaw told Woo.

"If you talk to one subject, they could lead you to another person who might become a better subject," Shaw advised Woo.

As photographers pitched the beginnings of story ideas, faculty members gave feedback and advice.

"Find the people who are conduits," Lois Raimondo noted. "Talk to the people who know 10 people instead of the person who lives alone."

Jacobia Dahn sat down for her faculty meeting and pitched two potential ideas. When they pulled up a test shoot image on the screen, MaryAnne Golon and Alan Berner looked it over, and pointed out details to ask further questions about the potential subjects. With nearly every question, Jacobia had an answer based on her thorough interviewing.

Photographers need to ask more questions and remember to ask the right questions to find good story ideas, Raimondo said.

"Talk in pictures," Raimondo. "Tell us what it looks like."

People need to have more conversations, Brian Kratzer added.

"Find out what that person is doing this week," Kratzer said. "Where are they going to dinner tomorrow and who are they going with? Get their phone number."



TRAVEL STORIES: A COUPLE FROM THE ROAD

Alexandra Demenkova, Missouri Photo Workshop participant, began her travels from Saint Petersburg, Russia on Monday, Sept. 15. She traveled to Syracuse, New York and was picked up by a friend she met during her 2013 Residency in Lightwork.

"I spent time in New York, went to Niagara Falls, then went to Columbus, Ohio, then took a 13-hour bus ride to Platte City." Demenkova's week of travel went smoothly, until her final trek to Platte City.

"My friend was going to drive me here, but he couldn't so I took a bus. But I don't want to ride the bus back

because it was uncomfortable, so now I want to find a ride back."

(Alexandra's 2008 photograph, above, came from one of her last trips to the United States during her boyfriend's show and her attendance at "another" workshop.)

Kristine Bosworth, Nikon representative, flew from Long Island with Southwest on Saturday afternoon. After her delay in Baltimore she arrived in Kansas City at 6 pm. As those from her flight found their luggage, Bosworth

found herself standing with four others and no luggage.

"It is kind of heartbreaking to see the upside down tray coming and you still haven't gotten your things."

Bosworth's personal bag had been sent to Indianapolis.

"I guess the printed tags were just



mixed up or something. After 16 years of traveling this has never happened before."

On Sunday morning, Bosworth drove to the airport to check on her bag.

"Southwest was really awesome. They gave me a \$50 voucher for making the effort to go there. Then they called me when it arrived saying they knew I wouldn't be in my hotel, so they delivered it here."

With all of her luggage back Bosworth can celebrate with a new change of clothes.

TECH STORIES

The Missouri Photo Workshop is about telling the stories of Platte City, Mo through images. Technology, though not the main focus of the workshop, is a crucial part of how work is presented.

Sixty-six years later, the faculty and photographers can benefit from a brand new projector at MPW.

For the previous 10 workshops an Epson 835 has been the workhorse.

"With the old projector it looked like we were looking through a screen door. In a time when cell phones were clearer than our projector, we felt that we needed to make an investment."

The MPW Endowment distribution fund covered the \$3800 cost off the new Hitachi projector that can project onto half a football field clearly.

"It is one more way to make the process transparent. There is less noise in the communication process. Photos are sharper, better saturated, clearer. This way we can concentrate on the content and appreciate the great work of the photographers."

The projector was ordered on Tuesday and delivered to Columbia, Mo. on Thursday and brought up with the MPW volunteers on Friday.

—Stories by Sarah Bell

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