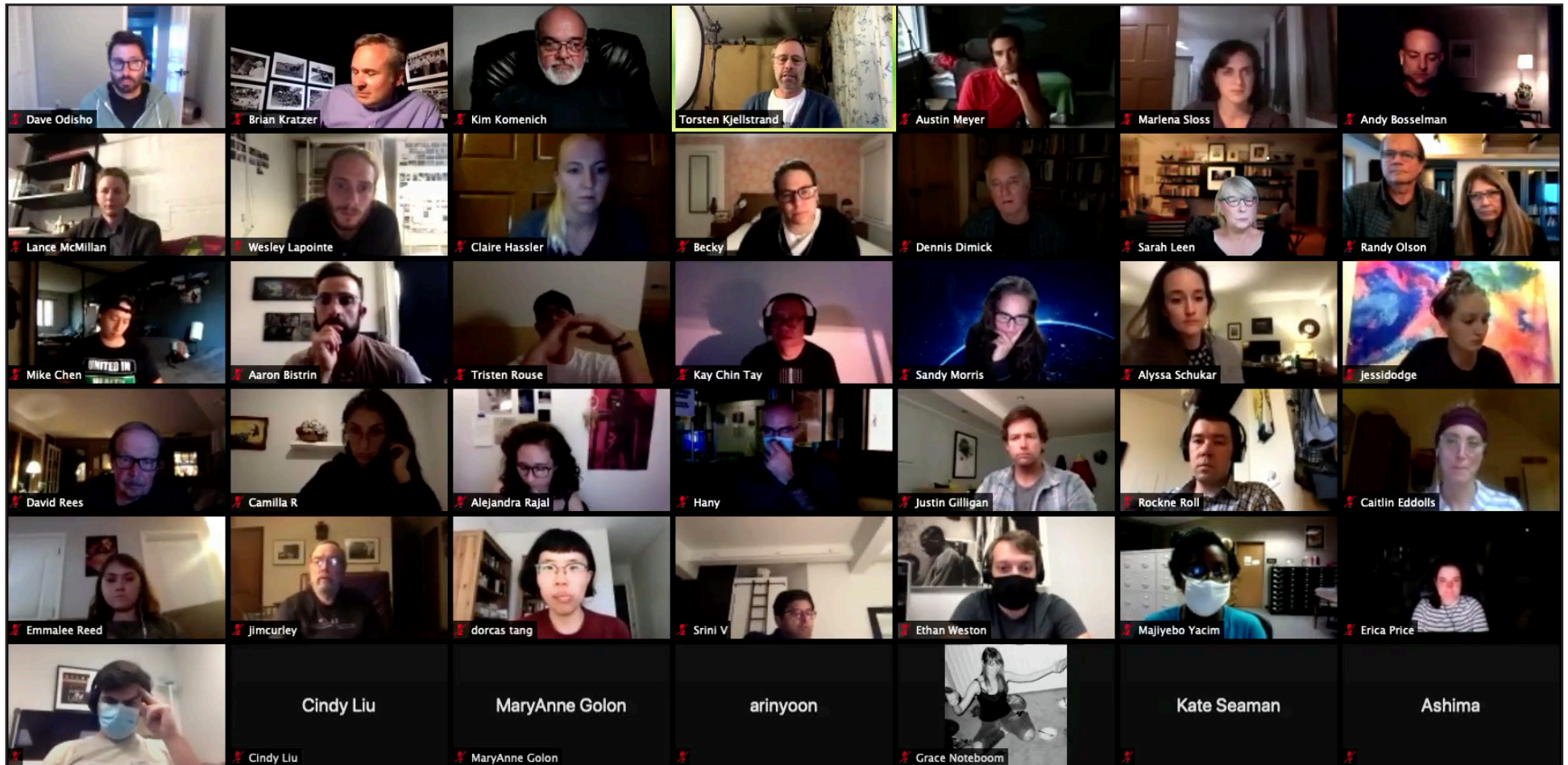


RANGEFINDER

The Missouri Photo Workshop | September 22, 2020 | Volume 72, Issue 3



MPW students, faculty and crew all participate in a zoom Q&A on Monday, September 21, 2020.

Photo by Hany Hawalsy

from photographer to director
THE BRIAN KRATZER STORY

cianna morales



Brian Kratzer talks to members of the MPW crew at MPW.68 in Cuba, Mo.

Photo by Marc Bernard

Brian Kratzer has a long connection to Columbia, the University of Missouri, and the Missouri Photo Workshop. He was a student at MPW.52, which took place in Lebanon, Missouri, and has since taken on the role as director.

Let's take a look at Kratzer's journey to director, and how his experience at MPW has shaped his career.

Kratzer originally moved to Columbia, Mo. in the mid-90s, when his wife Renée enrolled in graduate school at the University of Missouri. He worked as a staff photographer for the Columbia Daily Tribune, and began to learn about workshop when he taught a lighting class with Bill Kuykendall, the then-MPW co-director Duane Dailey.

Kratzer realized what an incredible thing was happening in mid-Missouri. "I was always a little envious of photographers at

the workshop," he said.

Kratzer credits his own experience as a student in MPW.52 as having a profound effect on how he thinks about photojournalism. "The story was about this 16-year-old girl named Mistie," Kratzer said, remembering back to the subject he photographed that week. "Boy, talk about learning so much."

Kratzer met Mistie when he was driving through Lebanon. He saw a young woman, far along in her pregnancy, get out of her boyfriend's car after a disagreement and start walking. Brian, who was out looking for a story, pulled up alongside her solely to offer a ride—approaching her as a person first, not a photographer.

Over the course of their drive, Mistie opened up to Kratzer and told him about her week—her boyfriend had an upcoming

court date, she was going to the doctor the next day for a sonogram, and she spent each night working long hours at a Kentucky Fried Chicken to bring in money for her family. Kratzer asked Mistie and her mom if he could hang out and photograph her for a few days, and he said Mistie was excited to be part of the project.

Kratzer tells one story from the week that has stayed with him for the years that have followed. Mistie was resting on the couch in her living room, and Kratzer was sitting in an easy chair watching country music TV. They both fell asleep.

"Me and the person I was covering were totally comfortable with one another," Kratzer said. It was the first time anything like this had happened to him while he was shooting a story. "No one's putting up fronts here. It's relaxed, and it's honest, and I'm part of living in

their world for a little while."

"The workshop pushed me so far that week to show me what relationship means from the perspective of a photographer," Kratzer said. These little life moments, he said, will give context to the rest of your career.

After being a student in the workshop, Kratzer went on to get his masters degree from the Missouri School of Journalism, and Renée got her PhD. He and Renée moved to Gainesville, Florida for five years, where Renée worked as a professor at the University of Florida and Brian worked at the Gainesville Sun. When there was an open faculty position at Mizzou, Kratzer jumped at the opportunity, and he and his growing family moved back to Columbia, Mo.. He was a three-time (four?) faculty member at the workshop when co-directors Jim Curley and David Rees invited him to join them as a co-director.

"We recognized Brian's affinity with the workshop method and his natural visual leadership qualities. He has done a great job in taking increased responsibility to move the workshop forward. Jim and I after 20 years of being co-directors are proud to keep an association with the workshop and to see Brian's leadership continue to grow." Along with directing MPW, Kratzer is an associate professor and the Director of Photography at the Columbia Missourian.

Kratzer's biggest hope for students this week? In keeping with the theme introduced by other faculty members, and recalling his time spent working with Mistie, Kratzer hopes that photographers discover the path toward humanistic interactions.



Photos by Brian Kratzer

DAILEY'S DAILY ADVICE

advice from Duane Dailey as seen in Rangefinders from years past.



“Viewing the world through your viewfinder, you become responsible for that world view.”

Duane Dailey
MPW.70, Rangefinder 4.

TONIGHT'S TWEET

Keep Up with the night's Presentation via Live Tweets by our MPW social crew

Missouri Photo Workshop @MoPhotoWorkshop · Follow
Tonight's presentation starts at 6 pm Central!
• We'll hear from faculty Kay-Chin Tay @eastpix about finding creativity, Becky Lebowitz about planning a photo story, and Melissa Farlow @mkfarlow about singular images. Get excited!!! #mpw72
5:11 PM · Sep 22, 2020
[Read the full conversation on Twitter](#)
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Missouri Photo Workshop · Sep 22, 2020 @MoPhotoWorkshop · Follow
Replying to @MoPhotoWorkshop
It's all about silent films tonight — lessons cover waffles, how octopi are born, and how to reset time by turning over an hourglass #livetweet
Missouri Photo Workshop @MoPhotoWorkshop · Follow
This is not the first time an #MPW project has taken place out of state — Bruce Dale photographed the Union Star School across the state line into Kansas, the year when the workshop was in Joplin, MO.
6:06 PM · Sep 22, 2020
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The 52nd Missouri Photo Workshop *presents*



Takaaki Iwabu, *The State*, West Columbia, SC

LEBANON, MO THROUGH THE EYES OF FORTY-ONE PHOTOGRAPHERS.



Michael Mulvey, *Dallas Morning News*, Richardson, Texas

Saturday, October 7th, 2000
2:00pm - 6:00pm
Kenneth E. Cowan Civic Center
Exhibit Hall
A FREE PUBLIC EXHIBIT

MISSOURI SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, MISSOURI PRESS ASSOCIATION AND LEBANON PUBLISHING COMPANY WITH GIFTS FROM FUJI PHOTO FILM, U.S.A., INC. AND NIKON

Torsten Kjellstrand's time as an MPW.45 student in 1993 AN ANECDOTE FROM THE PAST

torsten kjellstrand

“At the beginning of that workshop, we met with our team and we showed everybody our portfolio. I was nervous about it because I didn't feel like I was good enough. Howard [Chapnick, one of the faculty members that year], looked at the portfolio and handed it back to me. It was a slide sheet of 20 pictures.

“He said, ‘Torsten, pick out the two best photos in your portfolio for me, would you?’

“So I picked out two and I pointed them out to him and he said, ‘Torsten, I hope you'll forgive me if I disagree with you about that.’

“He was this guy who I thought of as a god in the world of photojournalism, and he was being so polite to me and he was apologizing for disagreeing with me about which of my pictures were best.

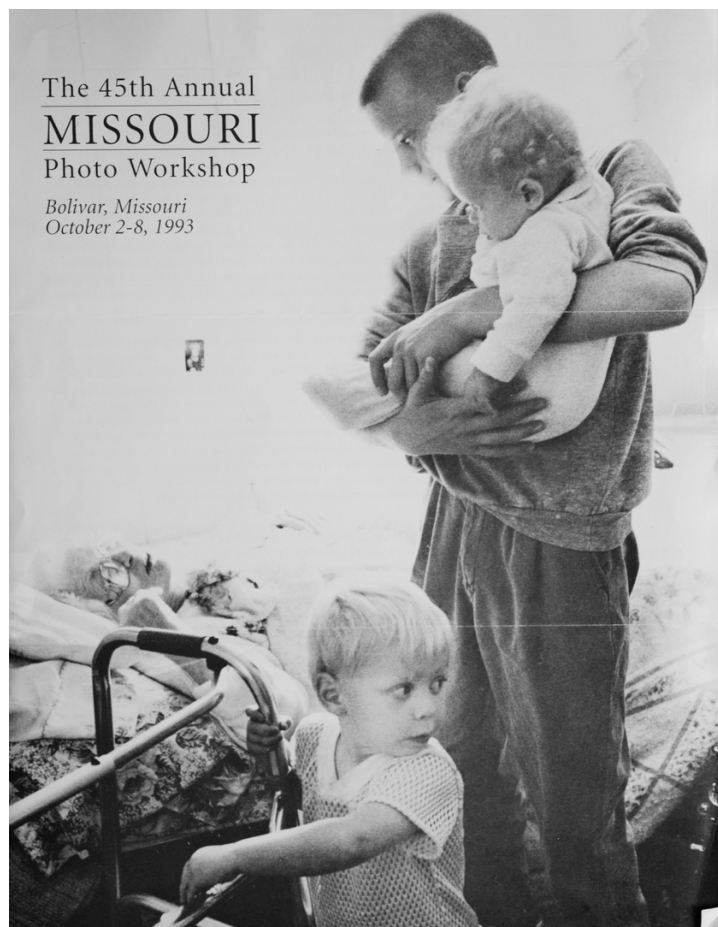
“He could tell that I was uncomfortable and didn't know what to do, and he said,

“The rest of this week, we are gonna teach you how to make pictures and look at your own work and understand what's good about it.’

“I still think about that when I'm out making pictures.

“I did understand by the end of that week why he picked the pictures that he did like. They were more honest, they felt real.

“Now, when I'm teaching, I use that kind of mentoring as my model. I realized that it's the same thing that David Rees and many of my other mentors used. It was never more clearly apparent than it was at that moment, that Howard was there to help me become part of this essential tradition of honest photojournalism in the world.”



The 45th Annual
MISSOURI
Photo Workshop

*Bolivar, Missouri
October 2-8, 1993*

A photo from Torsten Kjellstrand's final MPW story in 1993. The story covered a boy raising his niece and nephew because their mother had substance abuse issues.

Photos by Torsten Kjellstrand