



Amy Stein, Jackson Heights, NY

Nursery, 2007

C-print

19 3/4" x 23 1/2"

82nd Annual International Competition: Photography

May 31 – August 2, 2008

Juried by Joel Smith
Curator of Photography
Princeton University Art Museum

Saturday, May 31
Opening Reception 3:00–5:00 pm

This exhibition will travel to
Long Beach Island Foundation of the Arts and Sciences
Loveladies, NJ
September 19 – October 27, 2008

THE
print
center

CONTEMPORARY IMAGES IN PRINT SINCE 1915

Executive Director's Letter

On behalf of The Print Center, I am very pleased to present our *82nd Annual International Competition: Photography*; renowned both for being the oldest such competition in the United States and for the exceptionally high quality works in the resulting exhibitions. Alternating each year between printmaking and photography, the competition regularly draws entries from all over the world.

We are greatly honored to have the participation of guest juror Joel Smith, Curator of Photography, Princeton University Art Museum. Mr. Smith is the author of many monographs, such as *Saul Steinberg: Illuminations*, 2006 and *Edward Steichen: The Early Years*, 1999, as well as exhibition publications including *Making Light: Wit and Humor in Photography*, 2000, and numerous articles on topics from Steichen to Laylah Ali. He has lectured on subjects including Stieglitz, *Japonisme*, and *New York in Film and Photography*. His areas of expertise, including but not limited to photography, are evident in the exhibitions he has developed, such as shows of Andreas Feininger, Saul Steinberg and the *Modern Metropolis*.

We are very grateful to Mr. Smith for the care he devoted to selecting the 37 works by 36 artists from more than 2,100 works submitted by 544 artists. The idiosyncratic nature of selecting works for a competition from reproductions, whether it be from slides or digitally presented images, is a condition that jurors commonly remark upon. In the essay that follows, Mr. Smith has pursued this line of thought a bit further, by considering the effect viewing work on a computer screen has on the audience. His selection of work for the competition also serves as commentary on that process. Many of the pieces he has chosen use the nature of the screen and how it dictates our viewpoint as subject matter, some highlighting the luminosity of color resulting from the backlighting of computer display, some the peculiarly cropped or skewed direction of sight lines, and even one which features the image of a TV screen as the subject. The result is an exceptional exhibition, representative of the wide variety of current photographic practices, with a particular nod to the digital viewer.

We are proud to be able to present over \$3,000 in purchase, cash and material awards to thirteen artists. The Philadelphia Museum of Art Purchase Award continues our relationship with that institution, solidified in 1942 by The Print Center's donation of its collection to the museum, forming the core of their newly founded Department of Prints. This year's prize, selected by Katherine Ware, Curator of Photographs, Philadelphia Museum of Art, was awarded to **Amy Stein** for *Nursery* and was supported by Julie Jensen Bryan and Robert Bryan and the Callan/McNamara Award.

Mr. Smith awarded The Print Center's Honorary Council Award of Excellence (\$500), to **Susan Lakin** for *Elizabeth & Don* and two Honorable Mention Awards (\$50) to **Jimmy Fike** for *Sumac* and **Timothy Fitzgerald** for *Parking Lot – Easton Road*. The Olcott Family Award (\$500) was given to **Irene Imfeld** for *Alcatraz (No. 1482)* and the Florence Whistler Fish Award (\$300) went to **Nadine Rovner** for *In the Meantime*.

Material awards include the Aperture Award (two year subscription) to **Daniel Farnum** for *House and Shadow*, the Blind Spot Award (one year subscription) to **Libby Rowe** for *Modular Dwelling*, The Photo Review Award (one year subscription) to **Devorah Bowen** for *Foot, from the Series Natural Causes* and the Art on Paper Award (one year subscription) to **Sarah Bones** for *House on the Hill*. The Silicon Gallery Fine Art Print Award (\$250 gift certificate) was given to **Jack Ramsdale** for *Out of the Woods, Series 7455*, the Calumet Award (\$250 gift certificate) to **Jennifer Tauber** for *Wastewater No. 7* and the Crane & Company Paper Award (paper valued at \$350) to **Chris Smiar** for *Untitled, Marshall, MN*. The Print Center's Curator of Prints and Photographs, John Caperton awarded prestigious solo exhibitions to **Nadine Rovner** and **Amy Stein**.

Still demonstrating consistent excitement and passion at the venerable age of ninety-three, The Print Center supports printmaking and photography as vital contemporary arts and encourages the appreciation of the printed image in all its forms. The Print Center is an internationally recognized organization providing opportunities for artists to exhibit, exchange ideas and sell work, through group and solo shows, the Annual International Competition, The Print Center Series of continuing education programs and The Print Center Gallery Store. I extend our deepest gratitude to all of the outstanding artists whom submitted work for this year's competition, and to juror Joel Smith for making the *82nd Annual International Competition: Photography* a stimulating and significant exhibition.

Elizabeth Spungen
Executive Director
May 2008

Juror's Statement

In this year's exhibition, and on these pages, are photographs that were made to hang in galleries, serve art directors' commissions, lend reality to news coverage, fulfill class assignments and scratch the itch of the devoted amateur.

Here, alongside black-and-white gelatin silver prints made from film negatives and color inkjet prints from computer files, are hybrids that comfortably span what used to be the chemical-digital divide. There's a collage in which a variety of prints meet up, Frankenstein-style, and there are montages, composed with mouse and keyboard, in which disparate pictorial spaces are bent and blended into a new unity.

Among the residents of these pictures are a seedily-styled couple seated in the autumnal light of a diner's corner booth, a fawn lying blank-eyed amid the breeding trays in a greenhouse, a stag (bronze) leaping over bushes (real), a basketball hovering a few ambiguous inches from the hoop, a set of toes with nails freshly coated in Supergloss Cherry, a house of cards that nearly disappears when viewed full front and a distinctly unstill life that was made (if I'm reading it correctly) using the stationary, curtain-shutter model of camera called a desktop scanner.

If they differ in purpose, technical origin, genre and personality, these pictures have made their way into the exhibition through an equalizing filter whose effect was subtle but potent. The screening process consisted of – in one word – screening. In other words, the photographs on these pages were submitted as slides and picture files, and I chose pictures on the basis of qualities that stood out when they were screened – either projected or (more often the case) clicked on and pulled up on a computer monitor.

The Print Center's name, and its tradition of alternating biennials of photographic and non-photographic prints, bespeak a serious commitment to the print: to printing as a mode of making and to print connoisseurship as a way of seeing and understanding. As I screened and rescreened the submitted works, therefore, I was bound to reflect that the screen I was relying upon amounts to its own genre of craft and vision, one which (as any cinematographer will tell you) is as distinct as print. Once I began asking myself what it means to take the screen seriously as a photographic format, I stopped squinting sideways in an effort to imagine prints I had not seen, and began thinking about the images – the screens – that were actually before my eyes.

I did not set out to impose an aesthetic program, but once a first round of selections accumulated, some affinities became clear, and they persisted through the process. A curator's habits die hard; compelling as the finalists look onscreen, I'm eager (at time of writing) to see them translated into print. For now, discussing works in the exhibition or catalog would feel presumptuous, since in an important sense I have yet to see them.

I offer, instead, three thoughts on the computer screen as a pictorial medium – because the screen was my silent partner in judging this year's pictures, and because it seems worth thinking for a moment about an object which many of us gaze at for too much of every day.

Unlike images held in the hand (those that are printed on pages, for example) – but quite a bit like a frame hanging on a wall – the screen presents the eye with a rigid, upright rectangle. When it is displaying a photograph, the screen becomes a divider: like the surface of a mirror, it separates the envelope of space that surrounds you from the space inside the image, while proposing a kind of equivalence between them. Some of the most striking pictures onscreen are those that play with this curious status of the screen: a window in search of its architectural function.

On an everyday basis, it seems safe to say, viewers of screen images are more apt to be seated, at a convenient height for viewing, than museum visitors are. The screen-gazer is also more likely to be alone before the image; the computer is a solitary venue. Might others feel encouraged – as I do – by comfort and privacy, to linger a bit longer in front of a picture? (So advertisers, and purveyors of pornography, seem to have concluded.) In this sense, the screen might be said to function more like the page of a book or magazine than it does like a museum wall: once pulled up onscreen, even a dense, problematic, complicated image enjoys a good chance of being absorbed by even a rather casual viewer.

Photography is conventionally classed among the "print" media, but that old metaphor only half fits. The Latin root of "print," *premere*, means "to press." A photographic print is unimpressed by block or plate; it is a sensitized surface, touched by light and chemicals – a matrix more akin to the retina, or the cerebral cortex, than to, say, an engraving. Today, for many photographers, time at the computer is what time in the darkroom used to be, and their craftwork does not necessarily lead to putting an image on paper. Is this a loss? A light-emitting monitor (or a projected slide) surpasses the print in at least one respect: its wide range of contrast, from bright to black, comes closer to conveying the light-image that dances on a camera's ground glass – and, arguably, in the eye. Possibly, the rise of the screen as a picture-venue is bringing the optical experience of photography's viewers closer than it has ever been to that of the photographer at work.

Joel Smith

Curator of Photography
Princeton University Art Museum



Paul Adams, Lindon, UT
Red Bob Strange Pants, 2007
Inkjet print
19" x 23"



Alberto Aguilar, Chicago, IL
Finished Painting, 2007
Digital C-print
25" x 35"



Sarah Bones, Malvern, PA
House on the Hill, 2007
Digital print
11" x 16 1/2"
Art on Paper Award



Devorah Bowen, Hallandale, FL
Foot, from the Series Natural Causes, 2006
C-print
12" x 18"
The Photo Review Award



Ellie Brown, Philadelphia, PA
Three Kinds of Fence, 2007
Inkjet print
12" x 18"



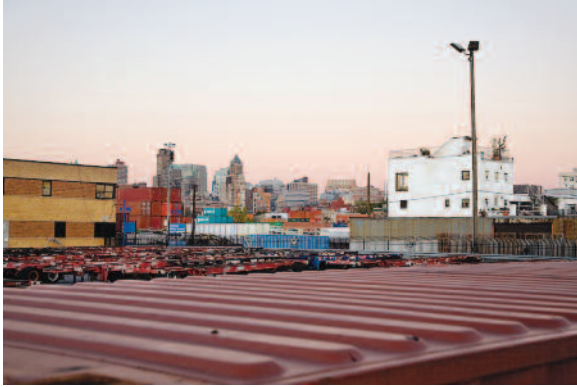
Allen Bryan, Saugerties, NY
Water St. Office, 2007
Inkjet print
12" x 26"



Marshall Clarke, Butler, MD
Untitled, 2007
Inkjet print
12" x 18 1/2"



Phyllis Crowley, New Haven, CT
Painted Blocks, 2006
Inkjet print
16" x 21 1/4"



Carol Dragon, New York, NY
The Red Hook Project #2265, 2007
Inkjet print
20" x 30"



Daniel Farnum, Columbia, MO
House and Shadow, 2006
Gelatin silver print
14 1/2" x 18"
Aperture Award



Jimmy Fike, Athens, OH
Sumac, 2007
C-print
8" x 10"
The Print Center Honorable Mention



Timothy Fitzgerald, Hockessin, DE
Parking Lot – Easton Road, 2007
Gelatin silver print
7" x 7"
The Print Center Honorable Mention



Irene Imfeld, Oakland, CA
Alcatraz (No.1482), 2006
Inkjet print
11" x 17"
Olcott Family Award



Sean Justice, Brooklyn, NY
Untitled (Banner No.1), 2007
Inkjet print
18" x 13"



Stephanie Kirk, West Chester, PA
She Called Me Steve, 2006
C-print
20" x 30"

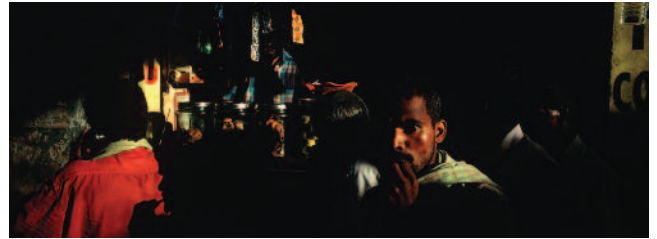


Susan Lakin, Rochester, NY
Elizabeth & Don, 2006/2007
C-print
21" x 26"

The Print Center Honorary Council Award of Excellence



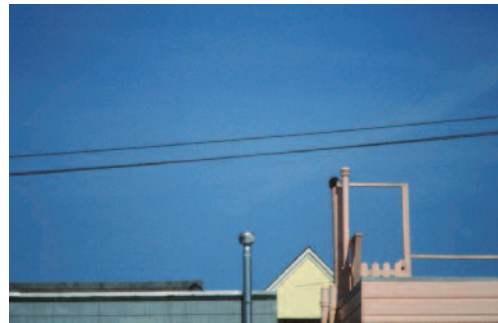
Michael Matsil, Takoma Park, MD
Occupied Territory #16, 2006
Inkjet print
22" x 22"



Mike Mergen, Philadelphia, PA
India Wide #40, 2007
Inkjet print
7 3/4" x 21"



Thomas Porett, Ardmore, PA
Wave Anomaly, 2007
Inkjet print
13 1/4" x 21 1/2"



Robert L. Pratto, San Francisco, CA
Roof-Line Series – Yellow, 2007
Inkjet print
9 1/2" x 14"



Jack Ramsdale, Philadelphia, PA
Out of the Woods, Series 7455, 2007
Digital print
16" x 24"
Silicon Gallery Fine Art Print Award



Paul Rider, Philadelphia, PA
Light Drawing #15, 2007
Inkjet print
16" x 16"



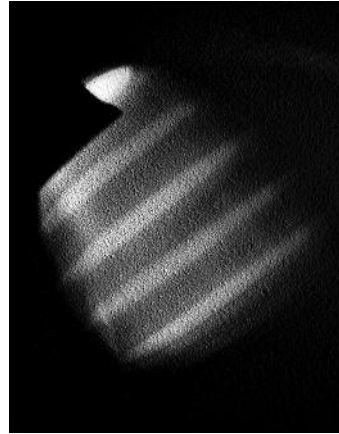
Nadine Rovner, Cherry Hill, NJ
In the Meantime, 2007
Inkjet print
18" x 24"
Florence Whistler Fish Award
The Print Center Solo Exhibition Award



Libby Rowe, Nashville, TN
Modular Dwelling, 2007
Digital C-print
12 1/2" x 19"
Blind Spot Award



Constance Schroder, Rose Valley, PA
Camden Aquarium II, 2006
Gelatin silver print
8 1/2" x 12 1/2"



Robert Shults, Austin, TX
Hallway, 2007
Digital C-print
14" x 11"



Harris J. Sklar, Philadelphia, PA
See the Forrest, 2002
Inkjet print
11" x 17"



Chris Smiar, Minneapolis, MN
Untitled, Little Falls, MN, 2007
Inkjet print
16" x 20"



Chris Smiar, Minneapolis, MN
Untitled, Marshall, MN, 2007
Inkjet print
16" x 20"
Crane & Company Paper Award



Amy Stein, Jackson Heights, NY
Nursery, 2007
C-print
19 3/4" x 23 1/2"
Philadelphia Museum of Art Purchase Award,
supported by Julie Jensen Bryan and Robert Bryan
Callan/McNamara Award
The Print Center Solo Exhibition Award



Stephen Strom, Sonoita, AZ
Mudhills, Near Hanksville, UT, 2006
Inkjet print
24" x 24"



Jennifer Tauber, Dresher, PA
Wastewater No.7, 2006
Digital C-print
21" x 21"
Calumet Award



Daniel Traub, Philadelphia, PA
Migrant Community, Shanghai, China, 2006
C-print
18" x 22 1/2"



David Underwood, Jefferson City, TN
Southern, 2007
Composite color and gelatin silver print
30" x 30"



Matthew D. White, Slidell, LA
Port Arthur, TX 5/07, 2007
Digital print
10" x 15"



Petronella Ytsma, St. Paul, MN
Viet Nguyen, 2007
Gelatin silver print
10" x 9 3/4"



Bahar Yurukoglu, Brooklyn, NY
Doe, 2007
C-print
16" x 24"

The Print Center

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