



OVER THE MOON



The song Paper Moon, popularized in the titillating Hollywood movie musical *Take A Chance* (1933), gave North American audiences the words with which to express their disillusionment with the Great Depression. In 1929, only a few years before, Republican President Herbert Hoover had described the economy as being "bright with hope." With the stock market falling to 20 percent of its value, a quarter of the population unemployed and a dollar devalued by over a third, it was obvious that the president's fantasy of prosperity was as counterfeit as the song's moon over its cardboard sea.

With little cash for formal portraits or consumer cameras, people could still sit for pictures in cheap knock-down photo booths at country fairs or amusement parks. The paper moon portrait booth thus shifted photography culture away from moralistic studios to the less puritan carnival world. As the economy reminded lovers of the uncertainty of tomorrow, many felt emboldened to commit hidden relationships to film. What was left to believe in? Each other. "It's a Barnum and Bailey world, just as phony as it can be, but it wouldn't be make-believe, if you believed in me." www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQpmVVK6ce8



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PHSC NEWS

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Pictured above: The Diana F+ Love Letters 120 film camera with a 75mm plastic lens. The shutter has two speeds: 1/60 sec. or bulb. This camera would have provided a softly focused, slightly distorted image, perfect for sending to a new love interest.

Free Black North: Style, Dignity and Self-Assurance



Unidentified women with Niagara Falls backdrop by unknown photographer, tintype, c1890-1900.

Dr. Julie Crooks is our guest speaker on the subject of nineteenth-century Ontario residents who escaped enslavement in the Southern United States. As an extension of the Art Gallery of Ontario's extraordinary exhibit of rare tintypes, cartes-de-visite and cabinet cards, Dr. Crooks will discuss the difficulties faced by refugees who attempted to establish a dignified presence in racialized Canadian communities. Their efforts to create and assert an identity in unforgiving circumstances are reflected in remarkable surviving studio portraits.

Dr. Crooks received her PhD in the Department of History of Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, U.K. and her ongoing research focuses on nineteenth- and twentieth-century vernacular photography in West Africa and the diaspora. She has instructed courses at the Ontario College of Art and Design University (OCADU), the University of Toronto, Wilfrid Laurier University, and York University. Dr. Crooks currently holds the title of Assistant Curator of Photography at the AGO.

Join us at 7:30pm on Wednesday February 21 in the Gold Room of Memorial Hall, in the basement of 5120 Yonge St, North York, Ontario for Julie Crooks's presentation. Admission, as usual, is free and light refreshments are provided. Need info?

www.phsc.ca

PHOTO BOOK 101

BY SONJA PUSHCHAK

Picturing the Promise: The Scurlock Studio



Effie Moore Dancers by Addison Scurlock, c1920s.

With Abraham Lincoln's death by assassination in 1865, the chance of a peaceful, orderly and equitable Reconstruction after the Civil War was lost. As a way to get around the Thirteenth Amendment (that slavery or involuntary servitude should not exist within the United States), the post-war Black Codes implemented by many southern states placed significant employment limitations on freed black men. They were forms of indenture in all but name. That plus the collapse of the largely agrarian southern economy encouraged black men and women to search out a livelihood in the north.

Many settled around Washington, D.C. When Addison Scurlock arrived there in 1900, the freedoms relative to choosing a living did not extend to amenities like white-only

photo studios. After apprenticing with a white photographer, Scurlock set up a facility in his parents' house to serve the city's African-American community. He followed that with a storefront studio on a Washington main street a few years later. Scurlock's reputation as a craftsman who made his sitters look good allowed him to expand his practice to capturing all important events within the community. As well, it brought the nation's notable black thinkers, talents and entrepreneurs to him, to be documented as Scurlock's "new vision of America."

As a catalogue to the 2010 exhibition at the Smithsonian, *Picturing the Promise* features images from the Scurlock archive, comprising Addison Scurlock's work and that of his sons Robert and George. George and Robert would claim their own place in history for chronicling the 1968 riots after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and being Jacqueline Bouvier's instructors at their photography school. Participating in and eventually taking over their father's business, their greatest challenge was the period between the 1970s and 1990s. As race relations saw some improvement in Washington, the black community resituated around the city, eroding the studio's immediate customer base. At the same time, the growth of the consumer camera industry meant that more people saw photography as a family responsibility. Nevertheless, almost a decade after its publication, *Picturing the Promise* still bears witness to the historical value of an archive that chronicles a community's resoluteness and pride in the face of struggle.

Sources

A Short History of the American Nation by John A. Garraty (1977)
www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/the-scurlock-studio-picture-of-prosperity-4869533/

Picturing the Promise edited by Paul Gardullo (2009)



Picketing *Gone with the Wind* outside Lincoln Theater by Addison Scurlock, 1947.



Murray Brother Printing Company by Addison Scurlock, 1925.

The Photographic Historical Society of Canada

PRESENTS



THE INFAMOUS

CONSIGNMENT

AUCTION!



**RELAXED
CASHIERS**

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AUCTION STARTS 11:00 AM

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Rich and Poor: Under the Skin of American Exceptionalism

In 1985, American photographer Jim Goldberg (1953-) undertook a series of photographs aimed at documenting privileged and disadvantaged Americans in their habitual surroundings. He asked that each sitter annotate their portraits with immediate thoughts and feelings. Some works from this collection are now on display at the Ryerson Image Centre. "Rich" and "poor" have been arranged to occupy opposing walls.

As an exhibit, Goldberg's images are magnetic and uncomfortable all at once. The voyeuristic role one takes on to examine each individual's intimate and often unfiltered thoughts feels like an invasion of privacy even though each subject permitted the public release of their images. Walking from one testimonial to another, it is impossible not to get a sense of how some have been left out of the channels of their nation's advancement. Nor is it possible to ignore the gradual decline of American ideals that, at least for the foreseeable future, will keep them and others like them in the same position. One must keep in mind that these portraits were taken 33 years ago. It is safe to assume that today's America treads more heavily on the same path.

Oddly enough, those who enjoy what constitutes the American dream in the exhibit present their own intriguing version of hopelessness. Goldberg's sitters of means don't censor their thoughts any more than their less fortunate counterparts but appear to be oblivious to the mundane self-interest their words convey. The woman who cuddles her Siamese cat on a glass-paneled observation deck and

complains that the poor "do not have to worry about running such a big house, the boat needing constant repairs or the servants wearing spotless white uniforms," ignorantly infers that poverty grants peace of mind. Yet for all the selfish declarations in which acquiring or enlarging monuments to the self are foregrounded, there are still one or two that speak of unique privilege as a call to be of service to others.

Goldberg once assembled these dichotomous portraits as a way to deal with his coming of age in an America that believed fervently in its own exceptionalism (a special character that makes a group of people superior to all others). His purpose was to show the contradiction in having an "exceptional" America show indifference to so many within its borders. Goldberg thought the series might set the nation back on a course of empathetic goodwill. He still wants to believe this and knows American society is capable of doing so. I join him in thinking that we all want to believe this is true.

Jim Goldberg's exhibition continues at the Main Gallery, Ryerson Image Centre

until April 8, 2018 and admission is free. In addition, Goldberg will present a Tanenbaum lecture on Wednesday, February 28 at 7:00pm. Admission is also free but at this printing all seats have been spoken for. Check the RIC website for updates: ryersonimagecentre.ca/exhibition/jim-goldberg-rich-and-poor/

Sources

Rich and Poor by Jim Goldberg (2013 reprint).

PHSC NEWS February, 2018



Jim Goldberg, 1973.

Going Medieval on the Story of Painting



From left: details from *Lindisfarne Gospels*, England c700; *Utrecht Psalter*, Netherlands c800; *St. Louis* by Simone Martini, Italy 1317; *Madonna and Child* by Daddi, Italy c1345.

Beaumont Newhall, one of the first twentieth-century historians to promote photography as art, saw Nicéphore Niépce, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre and William Henry Fox Talbot as the inventors of different chemical combinations that could "fix" photo images permanently. Their discoveries have generally been accepted as the beginning of photography. But the optical technologies of photography: lenses and mirrors which functioned as lenses, predate chemical processes by centuries. What prompted painter David Hockney, optics researcher Charles Falco and art historian Svetlana Alpers to consider lens use in painting? One of their clues was the relatively few years in which the transition from Medieval art to Renaissance art occurred.

The Medieval period roughly dates from the fall of the Roman Empire in the 400s to the 1400s, and spans the British Isles, France, Northern Spain, Italy, Greece, Constantinople (which is now Istanbul, Turkey) and Northern Europe. It wasn't a monoculture given the timeframe and geography but portraits fashioned anywhere in this period still had notable similarities. The model for portraiture in the Medieval was iconography (symbolic representation), particularly the making of *acheiropoietai* (images not made by human hands). While that may seem contradictory, Christian mythology often explained biblical portraits as

having mystical origins (think of Veronica's veil). As artisans had little anatomical knowledge, they were still able to create mystical-looking icons and iconography by following a set of prescribed style-restricted prototypes sanctioned by Christian authorities (see above). This type of representation was the standard for over a thousand years.

Visual evidence of lens production emerged in painting in the 1430s in Belgium. Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini Marriage* or *Portrait* (1434) shows a convex mirror at the back of the room while Jan van Eyck's *Virgin and Child with Canon van der Paele* (1436) shows the Canon holding a pair of spectacles. Eye glasses meant Belgian craftsmen were grinding lenses, and a convex mirror could be turned into a projecting lens by silvering the reverse (concave) side. But greater proof lay in how figures in the paintings below contrasted with the anatomically-naïve portraits above. How long did it take Europe to adopt this new way of representing the human form? Less than one hundred years. Next month: Using an obscure room and how a mirror works as a lens.

Sources

Medieval Art, Painting Sculpture Architecture, 4th-14th Century by James Snyder (1989)

Secret Knowledge by David Hockney (2001)



Paintings (details) by Jan van Eyck: *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434; *Madonna and Child with Canon van der Paele*, 1436.

Digital Progress: the 2017 Samsung VS. the 2000 Olympus



Here at the PHSC labs, we never shy away from comparing apples to oranges, so when an Olympus C-3000 from the Y2K showed up, we were anxious to see how it stacked up against a mid-level modern phone camera. Although originally selling for around \$800 when new, the Oly was purchased ten years ago for about \$20. The Samsung J7 is available for about \$200 without much of a plan.

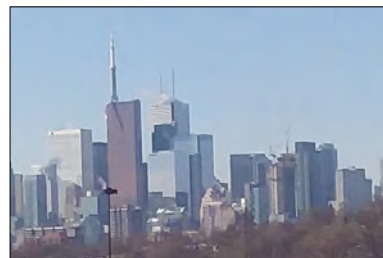
On the technical side, at ISO 100, the phone pictures (all wide angle) looked better, if somewhat underwater, due to processing. Moving to ISO 400, the top limit for the Oly, was an interesting horse race since the Oly's grittier Tri-X look appeared sharper than the phones super-smoothed, jpegged-to-hell, blotchyness. Of course, the Olympus's true zoom lens opens up the possibilities of vantage point that the phone could never offer. Our lab wonks pointed out that the Oly can also produce TIFF files, which should remove any jpeg-itis.

Technical considerations aside, our chief camera philosophers had to pitch in on the camerosity of the two units. Although no miracle of usability, the Olympus has a zooming optical viewfinder, and a number of hardware buttons for important settings. The phone has a lovely display for composing, but suffered from the usual lack of anywhere to hold it without crashing into some kind of menu. Both tended to revert to default settings when turned off, a cursed, horrible behaviour that should result in a software designer's lengthy incarceration. Neither unit's display could be read outside on a sunny winter day - we are awaiting Elon Musk's darkness flashlight! The Oly has program, aperture and shutter priority modes, whereas the phone...who knows how it thinks?

Digital progress? Mostly, it's that the Samsung comes with a built-in telephone.



Olympus's available longer focal length zoom lens (R) permits blurring out the background.



8 Megapixel phone (L) slightly sharper than 3 MP Olympus (cropped image).



ISO 400: Phone noise smeared out by noise reduction (L), Olympus looks noisier and sharper (cropped image).
Odd magenta cast to phone.

WEB LINKS

COMPILED BY LOUISE FREYBURGER

"Who's Who," By Purbita Saha,
Audubon.org, [January - February
 2015]

www.audubon.org/magazine/january-february-2015/whos-who

"These owls may wear the same game face, but when it comes to personality, they're as different as day and night.

"It's not easy to get owls to mug for the camera. Even in captivity the birds remain aloof, unruffled by the flash and unmoved by attempts to bribe them. Photographer Brad Wilson learned that lesson firsthand after trying to win over owls from the World Bird Sanctuary in St. Louis and The Wildlife Center near Española, New Mexico. He spent hours with each bird, trying to capture its direct gaze. 'It's hard to get animals to look at you like humans do,' he says. 'That shot became my holy grail.'"



"Historical Maps of Toronto: a Collection of Maps to Amuse, Delight, and Inform,"

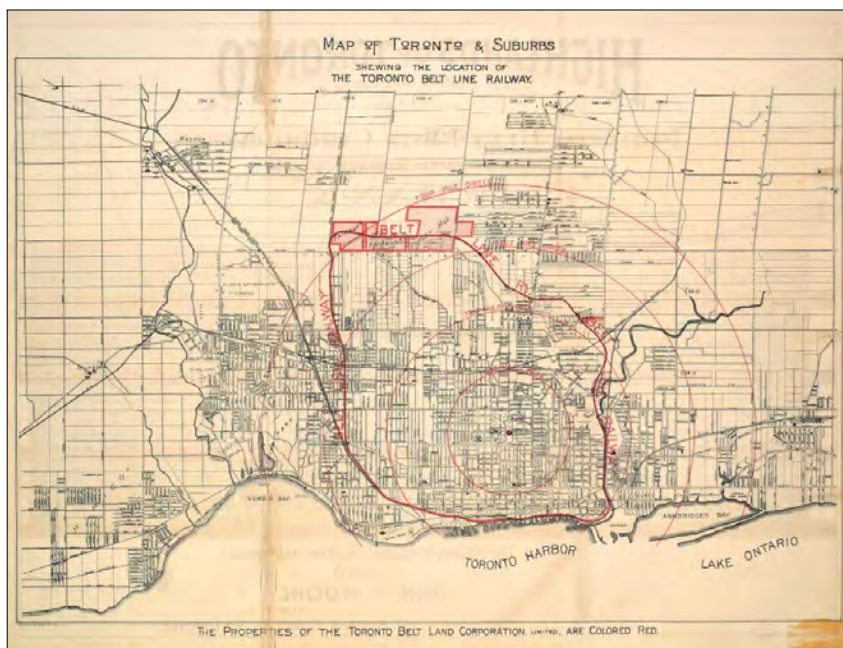
oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/

"Explore Toronto's past through maps...

Featuring simple and free access to a broad selection of notable historical maps of Toronto, this site aims to generate curiosity, and to serve as an easy entry point for discovery and further investigation.

"Toronto's Nathan Ng noticed there's a wealth of historical maps of Toronto, but they're hard to browse; his website posts them in an accessible way for everyone."

Recipient of Heritage Toronto Award of Merit, presented Wednesday, October 22, 2014.



Map of Toronto and suburbs showing the location of the Toronto Belt Line Railway. Published by Alexander & Cable, Toronto.
 Image courtesy TPL.

Norway's Melting Glaciers Release Over 2,000 Artifacts: Spanning 6,000 years, the well-preserved items hint at the history of mountain dwellers, By Jason Daley, smithsonian.com [January 26, 2018]

www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/2000-artifacts-pulled-edge-norways-melting-glaciers-180967949/#miowvtlvHYvg1blo.99

Archaeologists from the United Kingdom and Norway have surveyed the edges of glaciers in Norway's highest mountains in Oppland since 2011 as part of the Glacier Archaeology Program and its Secrets of the Ice Project. They've uncovered thousands of objects that date as far back as 4,000 B.C., including wooden skis, near complete bronze-age arrows and wooden shafts, Viking swords, clothing and the skulls of pack horses.



Archaeologist holding a c1400-year-old arrow.

Talks are free and open to the public on the third Wednesday of every month, from September to June, in the Gold Room of the Memorial Hall, in the basement of 5120 Yonge St, North York, Ontario. Talks start at 7:30 pm unless otherwise specified. Please note: some of the presentations are tentative and subject to change. Check the website for updates.

MAKING KODAK FILM IN 2003

November 15, 2017

Bob Shanebrook talks about the year of peak film production for Kodak.

XMAS SNAPSHOTS FROM THE FAMILY ARCHIVES

December 20, 2017

Join Jennifer Orpana from the Royal Ontario Museum for insights into the personal photography of the holidays while enjoying the annual PHSC Christmas party and gift exchange.

NEW YORK TIMES PHOTO COLLECTION

January 17, 2018

Denise Birkhofer of Ryerson University brings in a selection of images and stories from Ryerson's newest collection of *New York Times* photographs.

FREE BLACK NORTH: STYLE, DIGNITY AND SELF-ASSURANCE

February 21, 2018

AGO's Assistant Curator of Photography Julie Crooks speaks on an extraordinary collection of studio portraits of American refugees taken in 19th century Ontario.

THE WORLD OF THE CBC & DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY

March 21, 2018

Dale Barnes reflects on his 10 years at the CBC during the 1950s and 60s. Vincenzo Pietropaolo is our guide for 150 years of documentary photography.

HOME BOYS & THE DEEPEST PICTURES

April 18, 2018

Sandra Joyce presents on the British Home Children and the effect this immigration scheme had on 100,000 children sent to Canada as farm workers and domestics. Maeghan Ogilvie, award winning underwater photographer, reveals the challenges in capturing the remarkable secrets of the deep.

NIAGARA FALLS & PHOTOGRAPHY THEN AND NOW

May 16, 2018

Anthony Bannon from Buffalo will show us how they do it at the Falls while John McQuarrie presents Photography: Then and Now.

VIDEO AND ITS EDITING

June 20, 2018

Mark Holtze will take us through the complexities of this often encountered and enjoyed visual medium.

PHSC EVENTS

CONSIGNMENT AUCTION

**ALL SELLERS AND
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Sunday, March 18, 2018



**ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION #101
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Auction starts at 11:00am

Free admission & parking

Clint Hryhorijiw - Chairman

Details at www.phsc.ca

SPRING FAIR

Sunday, May 27, 2018

THE BIG ONE!

TRIDENT HALL

145 Evans Avenue, Toronto

(south of the Gardiner,
east of Islington Avenue)

10:00am to 3:00pm

Admission \$7 / Students free

Free parking

Clint Hryhorijiw - Chairman

Details at www.phsc.ca

PHOTO HISTORY

BY SONJA
PUSHCHAK

Kara Walker and the Shadows on the Walls



Slaughter of the Innocents (They Might be Guilty of Something) by Kara Walker, 2017.

When Swiss theologian Johann Kaspar Lavater (1741-1801) spoke of the silhouette machine, a mechanical aid which enabled the tracing of a person's profile by cast light, the practice figured prominently in his discussion of physiognomy (the belief that temperament and character could be read in outward appearance), while it hovered at the edge of pre-photography. Physiognomic theorists like Lavater maintained that facial proportions and expressions could reveal trustworthiness, virtue and the possession of higher, refined emotions. Conversely, faces were also said to disclose duplicity, low birth and racial inferiority. Charles Darwin sought to overturn these assumptions by establishing expressions as common to all people and even animals. Contemporary science has dispelled the notion of physiognomy completely but its residual meaning in the present gives Kara Walker's work its potency.

Walker places her gorgeously elaborate cut-outs in crisp storybook landscapes. They swirl chaotically in room-sized murals, evoking a surreal corrupted Victorian innocence. Making use of recognizable stereotypic slave figures from the antebellum, Walker makes her silhouettes act out the paranoid mythologies spun by white traders and anti-

abolitionists. Wrought to the point of absurdity, her figures underline how ludicrous stories of black malevolence and inferiority have been and continue to be. Juxtaposing these forms with southern belles and plantation aristocrats, Walker unravels scenes of horrific black victimization along with more hopeful tableaux of defiance and resilience. These installations are sometimes displayed as projections on walls in a way that is meant to echo the original practice of creating silhouettes. The viewer cannot help but interrupt the cast images with their own shadow.

Intentionally enigmatic and often metaphorical, Walker draws attention to the many converging presumptions that have turned the discussion of race away from fact toward inane fiction. With the resurgence of racist narratives around the globe, she cautions how little real information there is in a posture, a proportion or a profile.

Sources

Photography: A Cultural History by Mary Warner Marien (2002)

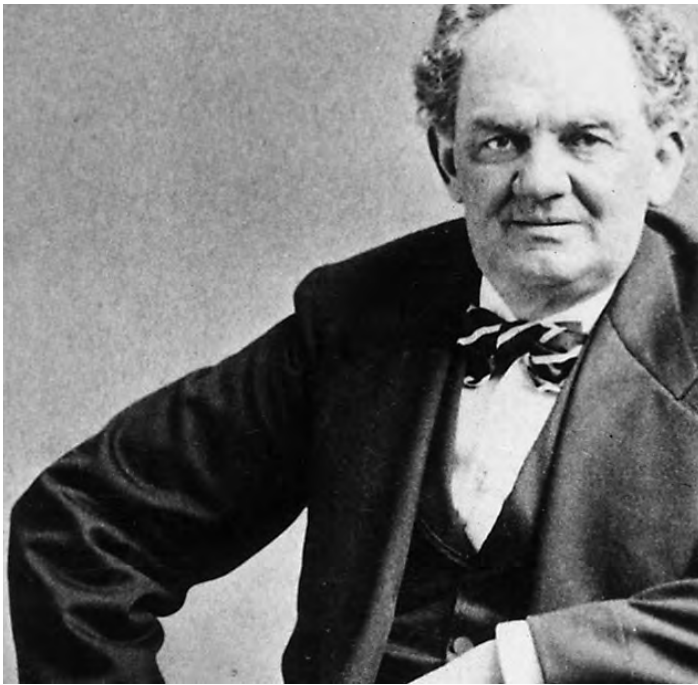
Darwin and Victorian Culture by Jonathan Smith (2006)

Art Now edited by Uta Grosenick (2008)

www.karawalkerstudio.com



The End of Uncle Tom and the Grand Allegorical Tableau of Eva in Heaven by Kara Walker, 1995.



ASK PHINNY

**Our totally temperate titan,
P.T. Barnum, weighs in on life,
love and photography.**

**Dear Phinny,
Just saw the movie *The Greatest Showman*. It
was about you. Loved it. Was it true?**

- EDITOR, PHSC NEWS

My Dear Madam,

Two gentlemen walk into a bar. The first gentleman says, "Hi. I'm P.T. Barnum and this is my colleague Phillip Carlyle. We'll both have whiskey." The bartender says, "Sorry, can't serve either of you." "Why?" asks Barnum. "Because," says the bartender, "you're a leader in the Temperance Movement and Carlyle doesn't exist."



That, Madam, is the long and short of it. My interest in temperance began in 1847. I was 37 years of age and had just been to Saratoga Springs, New York. Saratoga's naturally

carbonated mineral waters reputedly had healing properties. America's fashionable set came by rail for "the cure" and many taking the waters boosted its healing power with other beverages. Drunkenness ensued. The debate regarding the deleterious effects of alcohol on the population had raged for some time at this point. Some opined that the lower classes were more susceptible to alcohol's effects. As I observed at Saratoga, those considered well-bred, affluent and educated were not immune to its influence. I therefore resolved to remove the offending liquid from my cellar and became a common sight on the temperance lecture tour circuit.

I never had an associate named Phillip Carlyle. The film's story of how my wife and I met was also pure humbug. My father a tailor? Well, tailoring was something he could do, along with farming, keeping the village tavern and a livery stable, and being partner in a country store. Was my father humble? Well, with all his enterprise, he didn't have a head for business and died insolvent. But the film neglected to mention that after his death, mother turned the family fortunes around. And while I (and the film) made hay of my "rags to riches" life, we both neglected to mention that my grandfather, Phineas Taylor, was one of the richest men in those parts, a man who, from time to time, made sure that I prospered. In truth, if anyone came from humble beginnings it was my wife Charity. When we met as teenagers, she was just making ends meet as a tailoress.



I didn't sing. I don't dance. We didn't feature spectacular full-house choreography at the museum or in my travelling shows. I respected my "freak" performers, paid them well and understood that the science of my day saw them as individuals worthy of awe; keys to unlocking the mystery of evolution. However, I can't disparage the film as it excelled at humbug, the innocent deception. Sure, it was a morass of inaccuracies but people still got their money's worth with the sets, dance numbers and costumes. Most importantly, the deception did not injure persons or deplete any child's college fund. And if I should wake one morning looking like Hugh Jackman, I would definitely not complain.

Sources

Struggles and Triumphs by Phineas Taylor Barnum (1873)

P.T. Barnum, The Legend and the Man by A.H. Saxon (1989)

PHSC NEWS February, 2018

THE CLASSIFIEDS

Page 12 of 12

Camera Shows

LONDON VINTAGE CAMERA SHOW

Sunday, April 15, 2018

10:00am to 3:00pm

Canada's friendliest camera show. Carling Heights Community Centre, 656 Elizabeth Street, London, Ontario. Admission \$4, under 16 free.

Contact Maureen at 519-473-8333 or

tuckerphoto@rogers.com

londonvintagecamerashow.vpweb.ca

CAMERAMA

Sunday, April 22, 2018

9:30am to 2:30pm

Free parking and lots of vendors ready to buy, sell and trade. Edward Village Hotel, 185 Yorkland Blvd, Toronto, Ontario M2J 4R2.

Admission \$7 (Students \$5)

Contact Gary Perry at 905-550-7477

torontocamerashows@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/TorontoCameraShows

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10:00am to 4:00pm

Everything photographic. Tables are available.

Holiday Inn, 1900 N Ft. Myer Drive, Arlington, VA 22209.

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Contact antiquephotoshow.com



Happy Valentine's Day!

Conferences



PhotoHistory/PhotoFuture Conference

April 20 to 22, 2018

A three-day conference organized by the Rochester Institute of Technology Press exploring the practice, profession, scholarship, preservation of and access to photography's history. See website for details and registration:

www.rit.edu/twc/

photohistoryconference/

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Rochester

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Rochester, NY 14623.

Phone 585-475-1510

RYERSON IMAGE CENTRE

Photography:

The Black Box of History

March 16 & 17, 2018

A symposium in partnership with the Ryerson Image Centre and the University of Delaware with keynote speakers Ariella Azoulay and Elizabeth Edwards. The symposium inquires into photography's conceptualization today, and how recent technological and epistemological transformations have engendered new approaches.

ryersonimagecentre.ca/symposium/photography-the-black-box-of-history/
33 Gould St. Toronto ON M5B 1W1.

Wanted

INFORMATION



Rainbow Hawk-Eye Vest Pocket

The "Rainbow" was manufactured from 1930-33 in Orchid, Rose, Blue or Green, ranging from

\$100 to \$180.

This particular

example has

an unusual

cross design on

the front door.

It's possible

this type of

embellishment

may have been

produced for a

fraternal group

or religious association.

Anyone with

additional information contact John

Kantimyr at ckantymir@cogeco.ca



GRAFLEX Journal

The latest Graflex Journal, Issue 3, 2017 is available for download at

<http://graflex.org/journal>. Plus ongoing

call for articles and for contemporary

photography utilizing Graflex cameras.

Contact Ken Metcalf at metcalf537@aol.com

[aol.com](mailto:metcalf537@aol.com)