

## A LONELY ROAD



**WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AND WHAT HAS BEEN** This dream-like image of four bathers is an icon in fashion photography history. Taken by Clifford Coffin (1914-1972) and published by *Vogue* magazine in 1949, it followed a trend that was made au courant by surrealism and the work of Salvador Dali.

No different than Dali, Coffin became notorious for the obsessive quality of his work. The highest paid photographer in fashion at the time, he sought perfection with a compulsiveness that drove models and editors to the brink. Most important to Coffin was the image itself, to the exclusion of safeguarding either his career or his life. He kept insane hours, used alcohol and drugs to be constantly on the job and died at just 58, leaving no publications, gallery shows or family attachments to his credit. Today, most of Coffin's work remains unknown and buried in *Vogue's* archives.

Many in the arts today feel they must emulate Coffin's work ethic. A better strategy lies in acknowledging the value of work-life balance. Like the enigmatic bathers above, it might be better to pause, contemplate, and hold something back for the future.

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## PHSC NEWS

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**Pictured above:** Keystone K25 Capri movie camera from c1946 - 1950s. The dry land camera is mounted in a housing built for submersion that carries no brand name. Possibly a prototype unit made to develop new civilian uses for the aluminum casting techniques used in WWII military aircraft. A wrench is attached for removing the mounting bolts.

## The Magical Mystery Makeover Studio Tour



The makeover dates back to Betty Davis in Warner Brothers' *Now, Voyager* (1942). In it, Davis's totally ignorable character gets treated to an industrial-strength overhaul at a chic sanatorium. Then sporting the beloved 40s square perm and jewelled cape with anvil shoulders, she goes on a South American cruise, the inference being that all makeovers come with cruises to South America. The makeover gauntlet then languishes in the lost and found of the Hollywood props department until *Working Girl* (1988). Melanie Griffith plays a forgettable drudge in the secretarial pool who makes the leap to executive upper class-dom by throwing on a heck of a lot of beige and carrying a designer briefcase. Her outfit causes her vocabulary to change, the inference being that makeovers are as magical as a graduate degree from Hogwarts.

Yvette Bessels can attest to the bewitching power of the makeover, especially in the UK. Having worked in the exotic portrait studios of MakeOver2000 and New<ID, in the heyday of the makeover photograph as a thrilling gift for spouse, fiancée and extended family, Bessels will share her experiences as attendant to the Meghan-Markle-for-a-day aspirations of the client lists. If you think the British did a good job of ransacking the White House, that's nothing compared to what portrait seekers managed to do with the studio props.

Yvette Bessels holds a bachelor degree in Religious Studies from the University of Nijmegen and a Masters in Medieval Literature from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. She has spent considerable time in commercial consumer photography, trades in vintage photography and antiques, and works in medium format film and wet plate collodion. Her images can be found on [yvettebessels.com](http://yvettebessels.com).

**NOTE! We are now in a different room at the same location. Join us at 7:30pm on Wednesday, June 20 in the Burgundy Room of Memorial Hall in the basement of 5120 Yonge St, North York, Ontario for this informative presentation. Admission, as usual, is free and light refreshments are provided.** Need info? [www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)



## A Collaboration with Nature



**Sweet Chestnut Green Horn continuous spiral each leaf laid in the fold of another stitched with thorns, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Bretton, 9 August 1987.**

Joseph Mallord William (J.M.W.) Turner (1775-1851), the Romantic painter known for pictures of ships in storms of biblical proportion, interpreted nature as a uniquely personal emotional vision. Following the philosophical trends of his age as conceived by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who felt the world existed first and foremost in the human mind, Turner injected his feelings about nature into its sublime momentary truths.

Romantic artists like Turner interpreted nature. But nature interprets Andy Goldsworthy. Contemporary photographer Goldsworthy has been documenting the temporary constructions he fashions out of found organics, water and minerals for decades. Using only what he happens upon on at the sites he visits, he lets the raw materials suggest the ultimate form a piece will take. Provocatively, each photograph thus represents the paradoxical state of existence: the preservation of the temporary and the erosion of stasis.



**Dandelions newly flowered not as yet turned to seed undamaged by wind or rain a grass verge between dual carriage ways, near West Bretton, Yorkshire, 28 April 1987.**

Goldsworthy welcomes the transience of each of his works. He has stated no intention to dominate or diminish nature but creates installations that present a fleeting moment in time with objects that might never have come together in just this configuration. While Goldsworthy calls attention to change, he also manages to recapitulate the precious events of convergence responsible for creating life as we know it.

The Romantic reverence for nature was revolutionary, inspiring hiking and mountaineering societies and countless excursions into countryside well into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the current political climate, where misguided political ambitions sell off parklands and nature preserves for development, Goldsworthy's work prompts us to remember the lush fragility of this altarpiece and to imagine a world without it.

### Sources

*Andy Goldsworthy: A Collaboration with Nature* by Andy Goldsworthy (1990)



**Cherry leaves, Swindale Beckwood, Cumbria, November 1984.**



**PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA**  
presents



# THE TRUNK SALE

An outdoor flea market of photography equipment and other fun stuff!

**Sunday July 15, 2018**

**8 am to 1 pm**

**TRIDENT HALL PARKING LOT**

**145 Evans Avenue, Toronto M8Z 5X8 (south of Gardiner Expressway)**

**FREE ADMISSION**

Clint Hryhorijiw - Chairman  
416-919-9617

[fair@phsc.ca](mailto:fair@phsc.ca)  
[www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)



***See you there!***

## The Before Fix Identification Game

We've given you some idea of the long history of photographic technology and how certain components of its mechanics were known and used before photography was 'invented.' But what good is it if you can't have fun



**Sir Richard Southwell by Hans Holbein, 1536. Holbein became known for this window-type portrait.**

identifying paintings that were constructed via early optics? This final instalment gives you some of the clues in paintings by old masters.

Any photographer will tell you that every kind of camera lens produces a certain kind of image. Use of the obscura by painters was no different. Its main limitation was the portion size of what it could project and the little window of the room through which the artist saw the sitter's head and shoulders. That's likely why Hans Holbein (1497/8-1543) painted a lot of head-and-shoulders portraits. Holbein was taking advantage of a means of working he was familiar with which took the guesswork out of pose and execution. He did a few full-length portraits but these would have required painstaking repositioning of lens, canvas or panel, possibly the model and careful alignment of pieces of a photographic mosaic: seriously more effort.

As centuries advanced, and patrons demanded larger, more magnificent works for cathedral or villa, some painters became adept at moving all the various parts of the capture system so that the fresh part of the canvas would match seamlessly with what had already been painted. But even with all the skill artists brought to bear on the task, suspicious-looking anomalies still occurred. Caravaggio (1571-1610), previously mentioned as creating amazingly photographic canvases, outdid himself with his Supper at Emmaus, painted between 1596 and 1601. A piece of great complexity, it presented the intimate meal that the disguised resurrected Christ shared with two of his disciples. The disciple with a clamshell on his chest spreads his arms in surprise at recognizing Jesus as the other grips his chair in astonishment. But look at the hands of the clamshell disciple and you notice they are strangely the same size in the painting even though the hand further away should appear smaller. The same is true for Christ's hands: the outstretched one which is closer to us should appear larger but doesn't. Since



**The Supper at Emmaus by Caravaggio, 1601. The hands say it all.**

natural perspective was already common knowledge by this date, it can be assumed that Caravaggio had difficulties with adjusting the lens. But as capture by this method was known for a very shallow depth of field (only a very narrow plane of the image could be in focus; nothing in front or behind) adjusting the lens so that deep focus and perspective both lined up would have been a problem for any painter.

There are many obscura anomalies but the final one we'll mention would have appealed to the vain. If painters had to move lens or canvas to piece together the subject for a full-length portrait, there was nothing to stop them from making the shorter patron look taller. Sometimes they made them impossibly tall. An average human might be seven head lengths in height but in some works, you get men and women that are ten to twelve head lengths like today's Marvel superheroes. So if you find yourself in a national art gallery this summer, give those royal portraits a second look.



**Portrait of Henri II by Anthony van Dyck, c1634. In centuries when people were naturally shorter, there were some ridiculously tall portraits.**

### Sources

*Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters* by David Hockney (2001)



## Summer Close-Ups with the Olympus SP-320



**Poppy with a background blur of irises, shot with the obliging Olympus SP-320.**

A ten-dollar box of unwanted early digital point-and-shoots found at a recent PHSC auction yielded a nice little Olympus SP-320. Senior scientists at PHSC labs recalled great fondness for the early Olympus digitals, particularly their close-up mode, which allowed shooting at ridiculously close distances while manually controlling aperture and focus.

Although maybe not as fast as modern cameras, the incredible convenience of being able to push one button for macro mode was a revolution for many who at the time were sampling their first digital camera. And although current

cellphones can focus at a short distance, this Olympus allows shooting close while in telephoto mode, and at full aperture, to provide at least some degree of desirable background blur.

This 2006 beauty uses the idiosyncratic Olympus XD Picture card, and fortunately our sample came with one: these cards and their readers are not household items! On the positive side, the unit runs on two rechargeable AA batteries, and has a genuine zooming optical viewfinder. A basic sound movie function is also included.

And did we mention the close-up mode?



**The lovely Blue Hosta up close.**



**The Silver Olympus, not as close.**

# WEB LINKS

COMPILED BY LOUISE FREYBURGER

## Dorothea Lange in Oregon

**The Oregon Encyclopedia, David Milholland and Kenneth R. Coleman, 2018 - Portland State University and the Oregon Historical Society**

[oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/lange\\_dorothea\\_in\\_oregon/#.Wx07VSCQwb](http://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/lange_dorothea_in_oregon/#.Wx07VSCQwb)

One of America's best-known photographers, Dorothea Lange captured some of the most evocative and recognizable images of Oregon during the Great Depression. From 1935 to 1939, she worked as a field investigator and photographer with the Resettlement Administration, a New Deal agency that was subsumed by the new Farm Security Administration in 1937. In the late summer and fall of 1939, Lange traveled through the Pacific Northwest, producing over five hundred photographs of the people and rural environment of the Columbia Basin, Willamette Valley, the Rogue River Valley, the Klamath Basin, and Malheur County. These photos, along with Lange's terse yet observant captions, provide a rare glimpse of the social and cultural realities of rural Oregon during the Depression.



**Dorothea Lange, 1936**

Courtesy Library of Congress, CPH 3c28944.



**Traffic on the Q.E.W. when it was still Middle Road, 1938.**

## The Q.E.W., *Vintage Toronto*

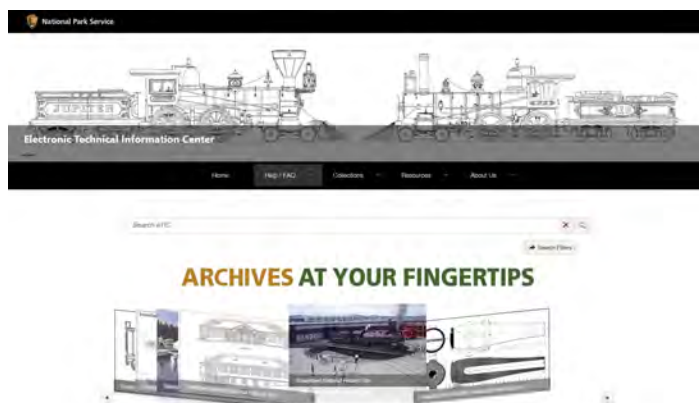
[www.facebook.com/pg/VintageToronto/photos/?tab=album&album\\_id=629883577081630](https://www.facebook.com/pg/VintageToronto/photos/?tab=album&album_id=629883577081630)

The Queen Elizabeth Way. The history of the Q.E.W. dates back to 1931, when work began to widen the Middle Road in a similar fashion to the nearby Dundas Highway and Lakeshore Road as a relief project during the Great Depression. Following the 1934 provincial election, Ontario Minister of Highways Thomas McQuesten and his deputy minister Robert Melville Smith changed the design to be similar to the autobahns of Germany, dividing the opposite directions of travel and using grade-separated interchanges at major crossroads. When it was initially opened to traffic in 1937, it was the first intercity divided highway in North America and featured the longest stretch of consistent illumination in the world. While not a true freeway at the time, it was gradually upgraded, widened and modernized beginning in the 1950s, more or less taking on its current form by 1975.

## Archives at Your Fingertips!

<https://pubs.etic.nps.gov/>

The [U.S.] National Park Service has launched a new public website: [pubs.etic.nps.gov](https://pubs.etic.nps.gov/) that makes more than 32,000 NPS records available to the public. Academic researchers, students, history enthusiasts, educators, and the like will discover a multitude of collections. For example, the collection contains documents like the original drawings of the main immigration building at Ellis Island, a concessionaire shop from 1933 at Muir Woods National Monument, and historical documents and drawings of the home of Booker T. Washington.





Talks are free and open to the public on the third Wednesday of every month, from September to June, in the Burgundy 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.

## 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 a trip through 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

**May 16, 2018**

Anthony Bannon reveals recent research on the photographic history of Niagara Falls.

## THE MAGICAL MYSTERY MAKEOVER STUDIO TOUR

**June 20, 2018**

Our Program Director Yvette Bessels recalls her quirky experiences at the height of the makeover portrait studio craze in the UK.

## SUMMER HIATUS

**July / August, 2018**

Yes, on hiatus. See you in September.

## WET PLATE COLLODION

**September 19, 2018**

Stephen Brûlé will discuss his shift from the sterile nature of digital photography and its workflow, to the wet-plate collodion process which is tactile, requiring hands-on hypertension at every step.

## BICYCLE PHOTOGRAPHY

**October 17, 2018**

Lorne Shields brings in some of his most striking finds in bicycle photography.

**November 21, 2018**

Ryerson FPPCM Masters thesis prize winner Daphne Yuen speaks. Victor Caratun also presents on recollecting Toronto.

## SHOW AND TELL & SILENT AUCTION

**December 19, 2018**

The Xmas party for members and guests, along with the Show and Tell and silent auction.

# PHSC EVENTS

## TRUNK SALE

**ALL SELLERS AND BUYERS WELCOME !**

**Sunday, July 15, 2018**



**TRIDENT HALL 145 Evans Avenue, Toronto**

(south of the Gardiner, east of Islington Avenue)

8:00am to 1:00pm - Free admission & parking

Clint Hryhorijiw - Chairman

Details at [www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)

## FALL FAIR

**Sunday, October 14, 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

Mark Singer - Chairman

Details at [www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)



# PROBLEM OF THE PAST

## A Long Trail of Misinformation

In the 1960s and 70s, Laura Jones had a photography gallery on Baldwin Street. Actually, she had a few galleries, some named the Baldwin Street Gallery, one called Sight & Mind, but all located along Baldwin Street over a number of years. Jones's galleries displayed the work of many Toronto photographers but they gave special consideration to images by women photographers.

If you google Michel Lambeth (1923-1977), you'll find tributes to a photojournalist and filmmaker who worked for *Star Weekly*, *Saturday Night*, *Maclean's*, *Time* and *Life*. What is not mentioned is the bag of excrement which he delivered in person to Ms. Jones, or the rock he flung through her door, in protest of the support she was giving women in their shared profession. To top it off, Mr. Lambeth made his deliveries with offensive, puerile and unprofessional comments. It takes little imagination to guess what they might have been.



**Welcome to Baldwin by Laura Jones, c1974.**

I wish I could say that Mr. Lambeth's act was an isolated one or that this misguided misogyny has drifted away from our present like so many other bereft ideas. I wish I could write something that would dissuade such thinking but that is also futile; the misinformed often remain so by choice. But perhaps, as a historian, I could let you know what might have inspired it.

Charles Darwin got a lot of things right about evolution. Understandably, the years following *The Origin of Species* (1859) made Darwin a Victorian star. By 1864, he'd won the most important science prize of his day, the Copley Medal. Without going into the minutiae of Darwin's day-to-day life and his many other publications, *The Descent of Man* (1871) was his next big book on the subject. In it, Darwin noted that female birds do the selecting in mating. What this revealed was that the selection females exercised over time directed evolutionary development in species. It was what he had observed in his research. But that wasn't going to harmonize

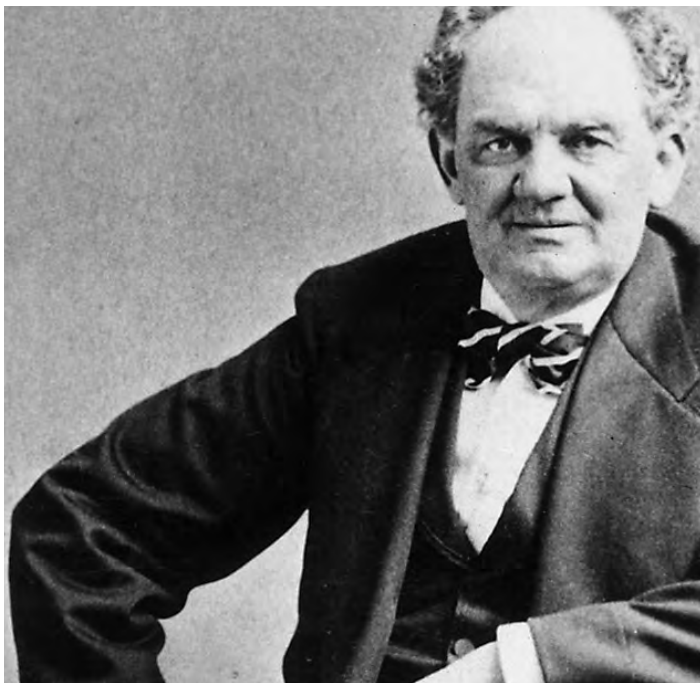
with what white Victorian upper and middle-class males of his day wanted to believe about their important role in evolution or an insignificant role in evolution of the female sex.

Historians have pointed out, on the subject of human reproduction, that Darwin decided to side with nineteenth-century patriarchy in his book. An intelligent man but ultimately a product of his time, he not only contradicted his research on birds, he intentionally disregarded all the animal kingdom examples in which powerful and skilled

females ensured the survival of their species. In the chapters in which he spoke about Victorian women, he offered a jumble of unsubstantiated and unscientific assumptions, such as one suggesting that adult women were "intermediate between the child and the man" in terms of having evolved. In effect, it proposed that all women were inferior because they hadn't gone through as many evolutionary cycles

of development as men. If you think about that for just one minute you realize, like any contemporary biologist, how that is physically impossible.

Darwin's theory of natural selection holds up to modern science's scrutiny. Yet the most absurd of his social constructions about women, the ones that have no basis in fact, seem to have a greater lifespan. Currently, professing to be a man heading a new era of masculinity, Jordan Peterson exhibits a form of craven Victorian male hysteria, one with which Darwin would have been familiar. What Peterson, Lambeth and even Darwin have in common is that such frantic emphasis on subordinating women demonstrates insecurity and fear, not confident masculinity. Ms. Jones will never receive an apology from Mr. Lambeth, now deceased. But she can be confident that capable women like her, women photographers and maybe all women everywhere, scared the absolute living daylights out of men like Lambeth.



# ASK PHINNY

## Our Jester of Jollity Justifies Jumbo and Jumps Ship

**Dear Phinny,**  
**So what's the big deal about an elephant? And how did you handle the acquisition of Jumbo? Should we be critical?**

**-A. FULLER BUCKET**

My Dear Sir,

Indeed, I have been criticized by those who believe I took this magnificent animal out of the wild where he might naturally belong. But Jumbo had already been an "institution" at London's Regent Park Zoo when I purchased him. In fact, the zoo had received Jumbo in poor condition from another stakeholder and had nursed him back to health. So Jumbo had long been away from his natural habitat before I even came on the scene.



Cabinet card of Jumbo, c1881.

It wasn't just that Jumbo was an elephant: he was a big elephant. At the time I acquired him, Jumbo was about 21 years old, stood 11 feet tall and weighed approximately 6 tons, easily the largest elephant in captivity. Getting him to the ship bound for America took a specially constructed crate and ten horses that barely managed to pull their load. How did the animal fare during the trip? It is rumoured that Jumbo had a taste for exotic beverages and so received a shot of whiskey with a bottle of port to steady his nerves. Good port, I hear. Apparently not a willing candidate for abstinence.

I thought my America was ready for the biggest elephant ever. It was. It commercialized the living hades out of Jumbo's arrival, for one thing. There were "Jumbo" hats, neckties, earrings, prints and trading cards. An editor at the *New York Times* got on board and added to the excitement by revealing intimate details of the supposed special relationship between Jumbo and Queen Victoria. While he wrote that the Queen romped with Jumbo, had him beg for lumps of sugar at high tea and played with him in the "backyard" at Buckingham Palace, he noted that Jumbo was proving to be too large even for her capacious facilities. The elephant reportedly got tangled in the palace clothesline and knocked over a terrified laundress. This seemed to precipitate the elephant's sale, although it supposedly "wrung" the Queen's bosom with "vain regret," whatever that might mean to those wacky Brits.

Suffice it to say that Jumbo was the star of "The Greatest Show on Earth" for four seasons. Finishing a performance in St. Thomas, Ontario, an unscheduled freight train came down the track toward him. The smaller elephants hurried off and Jumbo's attendant tried to get him to follow suit but Jumbo typically didn't do what he didn't want to do. The engine struck him from behind and he died shortly thereafter. Though tragic, it was good that his end was swift. I will take the cue and also retire swiftly. Adieu, my faithful readers and may you all enjoy a pleasant summer.



Death of Jumbo, St. Thomas Ont., September 15, 1885.  
 (Toronto Star File Photo)

### Sources

*P. T. Barnum the Legend and the Man* By A. H. Saxon (1989).

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# THE CLASSIFIEDS

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## Camera Shows

### CAMERAMA

Sunday, September 23, 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

Contact Gary Perry at 905-550-7477

[torontocamerashows@gmail.com](mailto:torontocamerashows@gmail.com)

[www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/TorontoCameraShows/)

[TorontoCameraShows](https://www.facebook.com/TorontoCameraShows/)

## Exhibitions



### VIVIAN MAIER

"Vivian Maier: Street Photographer"

June 16, 2018 - January 6, 2019

AGH - Art Gallery of Hamilton

123 King Street West

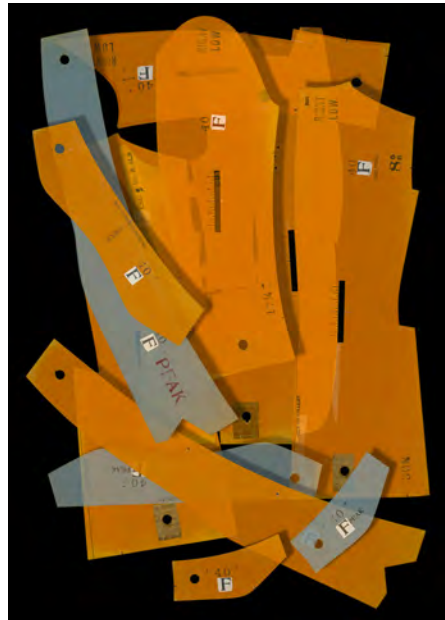
Hamilton, ON, L8P 4S8

[www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/plan-your-visit/](http://www.artgalleryofhamilton.com/plan-your-visit/)

Dubbed the "secret nanny-photographer," Vivian Maier (1926-2009) always had a Rolleiflex camera around her neck, yet zealously hoarded the photographs. AGH presents her troubled, talented photo-diary.

**NOT A MEMBER OF THE PHSC?** Join Canada's best photo-historical society! A great venue for lectures, auctions, fairs, and publications. Only \$35.00 for a one-year membership. Paypal accepted. Join at [www.phsc.ca/](http://www.phsc.ca/)

## Exhibitions



### SARA ANGELUCCI

"Piece Work"

June 2 - July 4, 2018

Stephen Bulger Gallery

1365 Dundas Street, Toronto, ON

This exhibition evolved out of Angelucci's many visits to Hamilton's Coppley Apparel, her mother's employer. At this company of over 300 with many departments (pattern making, cutting, ironing, etc.), Angelucci became fixated with the sewers. She has imagined her mother's daily life on the sewing floor, symbolically recreated in clever abstractions of pattern pieces.

## Publications

### GRAFLEX Journal

The latest Graflex Journal, 2018 is available for download at <http://graflex.org/journal>. Plus ongoing calls for articles and for contemporary photography utilizing Graflex cameras. Contact Ken Metcalf at [metcalf537@aol.com](mailto:metcalf537@aol.com)

## Hive-Minding



To answer last month's question on how to clean 35mm photographic slides, the Hippocratic oath seems to apply here: first do no harm. Scan the slides in question before undertaking any attempt at cleansing. A backup image is vital if everything goes horribly wrong. If you're desperate, the scan can be photoshopped to bring the image to a useable state. Better yet, do nothing yourself. Consult a professional conservator.

Once you decide to proceed with a method, test it on unimportant slides. We hope this is a no-brainer. To clean, first try methods of low impact: lint-free cloth, camel hair brush, kimwipes or rocket-style blowers for dust (avoid canned air). Some respondents advise distilled water and Photo-Flo (a mild concentrated wetting agent used to wash gelatin prints). It is suggested that any moist method will ruin paper mounts so have a supply of plastic replacement mounts on hand.

Kodak Film Cleaner (1-1-1 Trichloroethane) was said to be the previous cleanser of choice but has reportedly been banned as a chemical compound which depletes the ozone layer. There's PEC-12 Waterless Photographic Emulsion Cleaner, for non-water based stains and markings ([photosol.com/pec-12-faq/](http://photosol.com/pec-12-faq/)), available at Vistek. Whatever other solutions you try, check these for toxicity against the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheet) found online and use with ventilation.

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