PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA

VOLUME 20-01, May 2020

WORLD PRESSURE



Hong Kong Unrest by Nicolas Asfouri, 2020.

You might think this World Press image of students in Hong Kong is all about life in the pandemic. However, this photo was taken in the thick of protests over China's bid to insert its stringent political policies into Hong Kong governance. Donning face masks to elude riot police or thwart facial-recognition software became the only means by which protestors could make their voices heard while escaping track-downs, beatings and indefinite jail time.

It might be worth mentioning that just a short time ago, in a pre-coronavirus world, some regional governments closer to home were calling for punitive measures for those who wore facial coverings for religious reasons. Now, with the highly infectious nature of the virus making the re-opening of economies a debatable, delicate and risky task, many of us are being asked to wear coverings, as long as they aren't medical-grade PPEs (Personal Protection Equipment) destined for healthcare workers. Few politicians on the forefront of that now-distant social issue have taken note of the ironic about-face the virus has caused, and none, as far as we can determine, have called for the banning of face masks on the grounds that they contravene political ideological values.

World Press Photo is an annual photo competition that celebrates creative and quality photojournalism, featuring such categories as Photo of the Year, Photo Story of the Year and Online Video of the Year. In past years, the touring exhibition has engaged viewers in the atrium at First Canadian Place in Toronto. COVID-19 makes that impossible this year, but all nominees are available online at:

www.worldpressphoto.org/collection/photocontest/winners/2020

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PHSC NEWS

Editor - Sonja Pushchak Distribution - David Bridge Contributors - John Morden, Louise Freyburger, David Bridge



news@phsc.ca www.phsc.ca

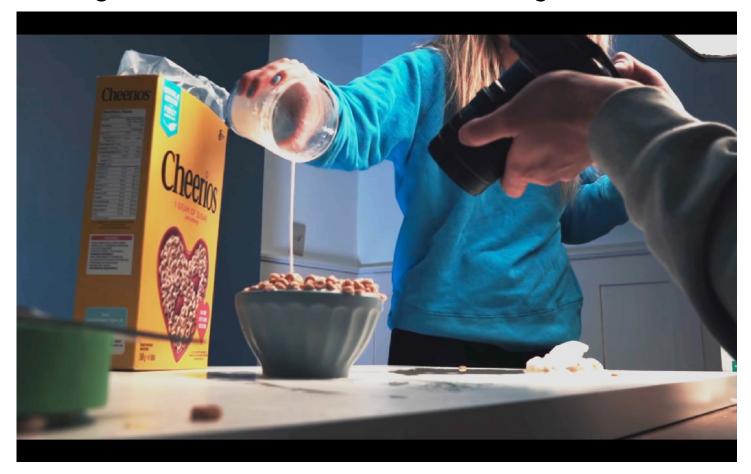


Pictured above: The Mamiya Super 23 Press medium-format camera with a 6x9 roll film back and a Sekkor 90mm 3.5 lens. This camera was introduced in 1967 as a professional press camera at a point when photojournalists had already adopted 35mm cameras as their preferred type. With built-in tilt and swing for perspective correction and depth-of-field control, the Super 23 eventually found a market in the bread-and-butter studio

work of weddings and portraiture, as well as the field of architectural photography.

PHSC PRESENTS (VIRTUALLY)

Making a Cereal Commercial in Your Dining Room



So your child has learned how to fake her presence for a Zoom class meeting, has painted every rock in the front yard with smiley faces and put so much chalk art on the driveway that you inhale a dust rainbow every time you walk to the car. If you're worried that opportunities for expanding her mind have been increasingly slipping away from you, remember that Mark Twain said that education shouldn't get in the way of learning. And while formal schooling is more or less limping during the pandemic, there are other ways to stimulate the forming human mind.

Take the inventive video, "I made a cereal commercial in my dining room." Video artist Daniel Schiffer's tutorial, made in April of 2020, seems to understand how a pandemic lockdown can force people to improvise at home when commercial studios or rental facilities are off limits. Schiffer makes it clear he's not working for General Mills but just had a box of Cheerios lying around. His special effects are surprisingly low-key, starting with masking-taping the cereal box to a light stand so he can get it to swivel. Throwing Cheerios in the air on a cookie sheet gets him a simulated explosion of cereal that he manipulates via software to look like a spewing oaty fountain.

Okay, the guy obviously does a lot of video, so he's got stuff like a flexible LED mat which can project colour onto a standard white back drop and he shoots with a Sony A7 III. His closeups of milk caressing those crunchy little Os are accomplished with a 60mm macro lens. But the point of the entire 7 minute exercise is substitution, extemporization and winging it with whatever's on hand. Ever helpful, Schiffer also directs his viewers to Austen Paul's tutorials, where Schiffer himself picked up some video tips (feel free to watch these nifty how-tos on Youtube). Who knows, catching these online minicourses with the kids may spawn a whole new family diversion in the continuing lockdown. Or your partner may just find you throwing cereal around the house when you should be attending to that paperwork they're paying you for.

I made a Cereal Commercial in my dining room - www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDleKKDXna4

All PHSC presentations in the Burgundy Room of North York Memorial Community Hall in the basement of 5110 Yonge St, Toronto, Ontario are cancelled until further notice. Need info? Check phsc.ca.

PANDEMIC FOLLIES BY SONJA PUSHCHAK

Dying to Have a Commercial Experience?



Denver anti-lockdown protest by Alyson McClaran, April 2020.

COVID-19 photos of empty streets and store fronts have been nudged aside by another kind of image. American Alyson McCLaran is one of many photographers capturing the anti-lockdown and anti-stay-at-home activists, a supposed grassroots swell of support advocating an imposed restoration of economic activity. Her photographs of protestors in Denver, Colorado, raging at medical personnel who have good reason to disagree with ignoring the pandemic's potency, have encapsulated their message and approach. Yet given the documented spikes in virus cases that occur after demonstrations of this kind, chances are high that these same individuals will have to depend on the nurses and physicians they screamed at as their lungs disintegrate in the ER.

We know that some of the American protestors are tangled up in a feeble understanding of their own constitution. They insist that the state has no right to limit their inalienable right to a commercial experience, but maintain that the state has every right to force restaurant and business owners to open in unsafe conditions. Some mention has been made of the selfishness of those who wish to have access to services with no concern for how people who provide these services will manage to protect themselves. At the same time, it's no secret that many in the nation of Trump are suffering financially and wish to return to employment, as those aid packages that the president signed with the flourish of a Sharpie mostly went to alreadyprofitable corporations and their top-earning executives. Even so, proposing an open marketplace as a legal right is bizarre in a country where the death rate from coronavirus continues to shoot to new highs.

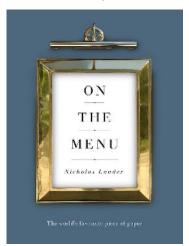
But the question here is not about Americans. The question is why we're seeing the same protests in Canada. The Canadian federal government has gone much farther to distribute money to people who need it. So why are these demonstrations being organized? Recent attempts to trace the founding of the protests here stumbled upon a group called "Free North Patriots." A Michael Boutros was identified as the group's leader. Here's the funny thing about Boutros. He changed his Facebook name to Tony Anderson and changed the company he works for from GCT Security to InSafe to Cube Security. All in one day. Hiding who you are in a way that actually calls more attention to yourself might say bored, oafish teen living in a basement or person of interest to law enforcement. Or, and this is ultimately the most disturbing, it might suggest a disaffected political party member who has failed to make enough personal mileage off people's miseries and tragedies during the virus. Are you a public figure and do we already know who you are? If we find out for sure, we'd love to call for your dismissal.

Sources

"Health Care Workers" by Maïa Booker, April 20, 2020, Time, time.com/5824465/healthcare-workers-protest/

PHOTO BOOK 101 (TPL ONLINE)

You May Want to Eat These Words



Early in this century, the hot topic in academic circles was image versus text. Were we, through our phones and the internet, chiefly communicating with each other visually, via photographs? Were we guilty of shedding the necessity for words like banana peels? Had text asserted its dominance in past centuries only to lose its relevance in this strange new world we were cooking up? Cultural theorist W.J.T. Mitchell established almost an entire university career on the subject,

challenging more than one grad student's ability to stay awake during lecture.

That was about a decade or two ago, so it's time we digested an argument to the contrary. Nicholas Lander's book is tasty proof of words that today are just as powerful as images. A former restauranteur turned restaurant reviewer, Lander grew up with a chef as a father and spent his childhood watching his parents cook while listening to them talk food. He remembers intense conversations around the dinner table about menus. The importance of crafting the culinary description as well as the dish thus became his second nature, turning into a lifelong pursuit of gustatory delights and the cards where they could be found.

On the Menu doesn't just give us photos of menu text as fulfilling reading. It casts that site-specific piece of writing as memento and the most convenient way of travelling to exotic locations. It poses a list of possible meal choices as historical ephemera, tempting the contemporary reader with dinners ordered in Paris while Eugene Atget prowled the streets with his camera. With even greater emphasis, it speaks about design selection in devising a list that stimulates the gastric juices instead of being reminiscent of a client's tax bill. This last point, it asserts, should be taken as a warning by current chefs who dismiss their menus as necessary evils.

With many sit-down restaurants having shut their doors because of the virus, a lot more of us are wracking our brains for new ways of zhushing up our supermarket hauls. On the Menu will either fire you in the direction of your kitchen or have you praying that your favourite local eatery reopens soon. The Toronto Public Library (TPL) offers an extensive array of free ebooks like this one, accessible with your library card number and password. On the Menu is available for download or reading in a browser but, be forewarned, the TPL website, and my copy, were both a bit temperamental.

Sources

On the Menu by Nicholas Lander, 2005 Toronto Public Library <u>eBookswww.torontopubliclibrary.ca/books-video-music/downloads-ebooks/</u>



A drool-worthy haute menu from Quay, Sidney, Australia.

STREAMABLES BY SONJA PUSHCHAK

There's Something Scary Out There On the Ice



The Terror's Captain Crozier (Jared Harris) and the Erebus's Captain Fitzjames (Tobias Menzies) scour the frozen landscape for scarce game, cannibalistic crewmen and that other, even scarier, thing, in this fantasy reworking of the tragedy of the Franklin expedition.

I never quite understood why some Canadians made a fuss over the 175th anniversary of the Franklin Expedition. After all, it was a British expedition, undertaken as shameless Empire building even before Canada was a confederated nation. It was, to put it mildly, an unsuccessful attempt to find the North-West Passage, the sea route from the Atlantic to the Pacific through the Arctic Ocean. And it's likely, although hard to substantiate when all hands were lost and little in the way of record-keeping was recovered, that it was John Franklin's bungling decision to choose a route through Peel Sound into Victoria Strait, where they got frozen in pack ice off King William Island for two years, that sealed the fate of every man aboard the two ships. Franklin had been the wrong man to lead the expedition in the first place. Nearing sixty, he had campaigned the British admiralty to lead the mission for the worst reason: to prop up a faltering reputation after a disastrous publicly-aired conflict with a Colonial Office secretary.

So if you, like me, are a history fanatic who wonders why we celebrate screw-ups of the past, and you're in the mood for some fanciful comeuppance, then The Terror, streaming on Prime Video, is your kind of series. Based on the alternate history novel by Dan Simmons, The Terror takes us along on that fateful Northern voyage by ships Erebus and Terror to see what might be imagined to have happened. We become intimate with the uneasy dynamics between the Terror's Captain Crozier (Jared Harris from The Expanse), Erebus's Captain Fitzjames (Tobias Menzies from Outlander), and the expedition's Commander Franklin (veteran actor Ciaran Hinds). We are in that claustrophobic meeting when Franklin's pomposity rejects Captain Crozier's advice to sail east of King William instead of west, where open water is

known to be. We definitely share the frustration of Crozier and the officers when Franklin shrugs off the suggestion to abandon the marooned ships while the crew are still hale enough to journey hundreds of miles on foot in freezing temperatures. Leaving the ships and thus the objective of finding the Passage will be seen as a failure of the expedition's leader and Franklin is not about to sully what's left of his precious reputation. By the time his insistence on protecting his career instead of his men has doomed any recuperative outcome for the mission, our sympathies are on their way to being primed for Franklin's gruesome fate.

You don't need me to tell you that revenge in the Arctic is best served cold. The plot unfolds in such a way as to hint that the ancient pristine stillness of the North resents not only the British Navy's intrusion but Franklin's insulting arrogance. What follows is a surreal, suspenseful, and inventive weaving of Inuit lore and prehistoric horror that takes Franklin, the rest of the crew, and viewers, by surprise. And while we might have trouble relishing an adventure that has no survivors, author Simmons makes sure that we can count on at least one level-headed individual being the last man standing.

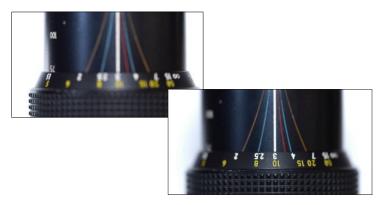
The Simmons novel and the first season end in the Arctic but Season Two takes the viewer to an internment camp in WWII with a totally new cast and threat. There's even a third season. If being confined to your quarters has been difficult to bear the last few weeks, watching what the Franklin Expedition likely endured will have you riveted to your device and truly thankful for your canned soup, grilled cheese and that slightly stale bag of potato chips.



Attempting to find open water and the North-West Passage, both the Terror and the Erebus become fast frozen in the ice. The hopelessness of being marooned in the coldest place on earth is skillfully recreated in this series with CG that you'd swear was a location shot.

EQUIPMENT REVIEW BY DAVID BRIDGE

Focus Stacking: Flattening the Curve with Free Stuff





Left: image 1 (far back in focus), middle: image 11 (front in focus), right: combined stack of 11 images.

Pressed to self-amuse on days when even waiting for the UPS truck is too demanding, PHSC Labs turned to the formidable issue of photographing 3D objects and maintaining depth of focus. This is where the modern miracle of focusstacking shines, a software subterfuge that can combine a range of images, each containing part of the subject in focus, into a back-to-front sharp image. While this technique is primarily crucial for extreme close-ups where no amount of stopping down will result in sufficient depth, PHSC labs wondered if it might also be applied to medium close-ups of cylindrical objects like lenses, or those pre-curved stereo cards

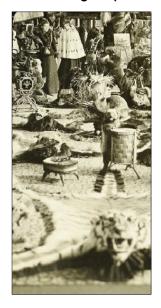


Curvy things to render in focus: a lens and a stereo card.

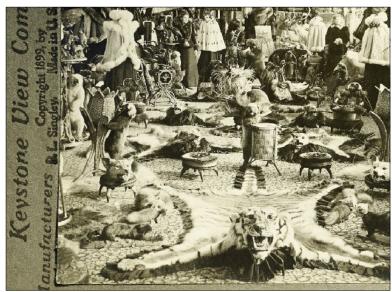
Miraculously, last month's mention of free digiCamControl software (see April 2020 News) has a focus-stack feature. It will automatically drive your camera and autofocus lens to produce a set of images in which focus is incrementally moved through a range to cover the depth of the object. DigiCamControl also has a plugin to merge the series. Many other googlable softwares, including Photoshop, will also put them together into a single, all-in-focus image.

So some software fiddling is required. But your stereo cards, or perhaps just the curly print of your uncle Donald, can be flattened without peril, in less time than it takes to order surgical masks from China!

Left: image 1 (card centre in focus), middle: image 5 (card edge in focus), right: combined stack of 5 images.







PHSC NEWS May, 2020

WEB LINKS COMPILED BY DAVID BRIDGE

Getty uses remote working in effort to preserve photo archive, The Guardian, Lanre Bakare, Arts and Culture correspondent, April 2, 2020.

<u>www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/apr/02/getty-uses-remote-working-effort-preserve-photo-archive</u>

Millions of images – including never-before-seen shots of Marilyn Monroe, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones – are being preserved remotely as one of the largest photography archives in the world attempts to prevent damage during the Covid-19 lockdown.

The Getty Images archive in Canning Town, east London, holds 80m photographs and negatives, some of which are more than 100 years old and need careful preservation and protection to stop them quickly degrading.

Matthew Butson, the archive's vice-president, said a mix of a small onsite team and the use of remote temperature and humidity controls were being used to protect the rare negatives and prints.



The archive includes rare shots of Marilyn Monroe (pictured), the Beatles and Rolling Stones, photo:

Baron/Getty Images.



A man sitting before a camera being photographed... The Trustees of the British Museum.

British Museum launches revamped online collections database early with 1.9M images, DPReview, Brittany Hillen, published April 30, 2020.

<u>www.dpreview.com/news/6643134487/british-museum-launches-revamped-online-collections-database-early-with-1-9m-images</u>

On Tuesday, April 28, the British Museum announced that it is the latest institution to make digitized images of its various collections available for free online. The 'revamped' online collections database now contains 1.9 million images that are offered to the public under the restrictive Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 4.0 license, which allows for non-commercial use with attribution.

Canon's new software will turn select EOS, PowerShot cameras into webcams for Windows 10 PCs DPReview, Gannon Burgett, published April 28, 2020.

<u>www.dpreview.com/news/4796043082/canon-s-new-software-will-turn-select-eos-powershot-cameras-into-webcams-for-windows-pcs</u>

As more and more people desire higher-quality video communication over internet while working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for webcams has increased dramatically, triggering incredibly high prices, sometimes three to four times over MSRP. And that's if you can find one at all.

To help bridge a growing gap, Canon has announced the release of the EOS Webcam Utility Beta, a program for that will, with a single USB cable, turn compatible Canon EOS interchangeable lens cameras (ILCs) and PowerShot cameras into dedicated webcams on PCs running the 64-bit version of Windows 10. [Nikon are you listening? - Ed.]



PHSC PRESENTS

Our former open-to-the-public talks are no longer being held due to the coronavirus. We are currently in the process of exploring other ways to present photographic topics of historical interest. Check page 2 as well as below for online offerings. Presentations are subject to change.

LORNE SHIELDS PRESENTS THE COMPELLING HIDDEN HISTORY OF BIPEDAL TRANSIT March 18, 2020 Postponed.

DOON ARBUS, TALKING ABOUT HER MOTHER DIANE ARBUS April, 2020

Click on our link on page 2 to find Doon Arbus's tribute to her mother Diane, made one year after Arbus's death in 1971. Video features Diane Arbus's own words as accompaniment and voiceover for many of her unparalleled images.

DANIEL SCHIFFER: MAKING A CEREAL COMMERCIAL IN YOUR DINING ROOM May, 2020

Click on our link on page 2 to find Daniel Schiffer's economical little video on how to shoot a cereal commercial at home. Great for those who have some equipment but heavy on winging it with what you've got handy.

Dear members, friends and supporters:

We hope that you and your loved ones are well, and may they stay safe during this unprecedented health crisis.

Due to stricter COVID-19 regulations banning settings of 5 individuals or more, we have suspended The PHSC Programme of Guest Lectures at our monthly meetings.

We will return in Fall 2020 with a new and exciting Programme Season, with great guest speakers and a few new surprises.

Please stay safe.

Celio Barreto PHSC Programme Coordinator

PHSC EVENTS

SPRING FAIR

Sunday, May 31, 2020 TRIDENT HALL



145 Evans Avenue, Toronto (Etobicoke)

(south of the Gardiner, east of Islington Avenue) 10:00am to 3:00pm Admission \$7 / Students free / Free parking Mark Singer - Chairman - fair@phsc.ca

TRUNK SALE ALL SELLERS AND BUYERS WELCOME!

Sunday, July 12, 2020



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 - fair@phsc.ca Details at www.phsc.ca



VI AND DOT

Contemplate the Quirk in movie fan magazines.

Dot: Vi darling, I've got my heart set on a French wave. And maybe I'll try that new hair colour, Platinum Blonde. I'm planning a blissful afternoon at the hair salon where I can catch up on my reading.

Vi: So Madame Fifi now offers a wash, a set, a dye job and a lending library?

Dot: No library, silly. The latest movie magazines and my personal favourite, *Photoplay*.

Vi: Oh yes, *Photoplay*. Established in 1911 with James R. Quirk as vice-president, then as editor. Credited with originating the celebrity magazine format. Filled with envyinspiring glimpses of Hollywood "private" life, rumours of trysts and breakups, health and beauty advice, ads for coming attractions disguised as unbiased reviews, and page after page of studio-issued stills of stars and starlets. The magazine set the standard for the genre. There's always a copy at the hair salon, the dentist's, at Daddy's accountant's office, at the garage; in fact, pretty much everywhere.

Dot: What do you mean, "disguised as unbiased"? That magazine gives us fans the hidden truth.

Vi: Actually, Quirk worked hand-in-hand with the movie studios, generally promoting the pictures and actors he was told to. He made frequent trips to Hollywood for that purpose. That's why he seemed to be a star maker; he was simply echoing the wishes of studio executives.

Dot: What about the magazine reporters? Aren't they hunting for real scoops?

Vi: In a way, but not the way you think. While the magazine features writers like Walter Winchell and Hedda Hopper, who often pride themselves on being bona fide reporters, they are functionaries who actually cooperate with studio bosses. Looking for scandal and innuendo means they keep actors fearful of reprisals from the public, as well as executives who sign their paychecks. Keeping actors in line with moral codes, family values and the Hays censorship office translates into as big a paying audience as possible for the studio's pictures. But if an actor has a complaint about how they are treated, a whiff of scandal gives bosses leverage to force them into bad projects, less pay or dismissal. It's a winwin for the movie moguls: gossip columnists can be the moral police and purveyors of dirty laundry at the same time.

Dot: Ingenious, really. But I'm disappointed. Knowing this takes the fun out of reading it.

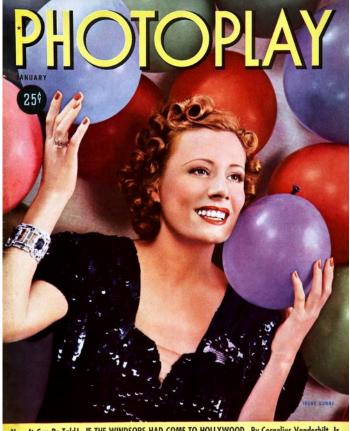
Vi: Don't worry. *Photoplay*, like many print magazines, will punish itself. It will eventually neglect to realize that it only serves a niche market. On top of that, the fact that one person can buy it, get bored with it and leave it lying around so that others read it for free, won't help. Both factors will mean death to paid subscriptions.

Dot: So the days of print magazines are numbered?

Vi: Behold the hidden truth.

Sources

The Talkies: Articles and Illustration from Photoplay Magazine 1928-1940 by Richard Griffith, 1971.



Now It Can Be Told! IF THE WINDSORS HAD COME TO HOLLYWOOD By Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.

How Tyrone Power Won the Lonely Heart of Janet Gaynor

Irene Dunne cover, January, 1938.

THE CLASSIFIEDS

Online Exhibits



Photograph by Annette Seip.

Digital Morphology Exhibit,
Peel Art Gallery
Museum and Archives

Eleven local photographers document the creation of the Jim Tovey Lakeview Conservation Area, a 26hectare project on the Lake Ontario shoreline. Available online at peelregion.ca/pama/morphology/

SCOTIABANK CONTACT PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL

#ScotiaGallery

May 1 to May 31, 2020 For this year Contact is giving everyone a chance to participate. Take a photo of the view from your window, tag it #ScotiaGallery and your photo could be featured in the virtual gallery (at no cost). scotiabankcontactphoto.com/

scotiabankcontactphoto.com/ scotiagallery/

AbundanceBy Shellie Zhang



A sumptuous online exhibition presented by the Patel Gallery at scotiabankcontactphoto.com/exhibition/shellie-zhang-abundance-2/

Online Exhibits



Four-lens CDV camera, c 1880, wood, brass, glass and leather, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, photo: NGC.

Collecting Cards: Cartes-de-visite

An article on the origins of the carte-de-visite (CDVs) by Isadora Chicoine-Marinier, curatorial assistant for digital projects at the Canadian Photography Institute for the National Gallery of Canada. Available online at www.gallery.ca/canadian-photography-institute-blog/collecting-cards-cartes-de-visite



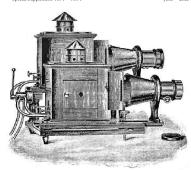
Henri, le Chat Noir Written, directed and narrated by Bill Braden, starring his cat and co-

starring his other cat. Follow the sneering existential musings of Henri, the cat who disdains the bourgeois mediocrity of his life and caregivers. The eleven short videos, with imagined voiceover by Henri, take the viewer through the agony of endless feline boredom and munchy mundanity that only Henri can express. Braden started these as a project for a film class and their popularity has blossomed on the internet. Spot-on funny for anyone who has a furry lounge-lynx of their own; after watching a few, you'll wonder if that's Albert Camus using the litter box.

<u>www.youtube.com/</u> <u>results?search_query=henri+le+chat+n</u> <u>oir+part+1</u>

Now E-Publishing







A New PHSC Supplement!

Partial to Victorian studio exotica? Got something at an auction last year that looked interesting but eluded definition? We get it. That's why we're republishing the "All About" series, first published in *The Photographist*, the journal of the Western Photographic Collectors Association, first released between 1993 and 1996. This compendium of weird and wonderful items that Victorian studio photographers ordered from supply catalogues is a godsend for serious collectors or people who just want to know what that seductive yard sale thingy really is.

On exclusive offer as a continuing supplement to our membership, the *Photographic Canadiana Special Supplemental* is slated to be sent to members' email inboxes. The first instalment of the *Special Supplemental*, "All About Lanterns, Part A," will appear July, 2020. The following six parts will be released at regular intervals between 2020 and 2021.

The Photographic Canadiana, the journal of the Photographic Historical Society of Canada, and now the new Special Supplement, are benefits of membership in the PHSC. Subscriptions can be obtained for a \$35 yearly membership fee. For information, go to phsc.ca.