



1966 "PROTEA" INTERNATIONAL SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY

(Address by Dr. J. K. du Toit, A.P.S.(S.A.)—Voorsitter)

HIERDIE internasionale uitstalling van fotografiese kuns behels 137 foto's, gekies uit 'n totale inskrywing van 694 werke vanoor die hele wêreld. Die Fotografiese Vereniging van Suidelike Afrika kan gelukkigwens word met die feit dat 15 lande daaraan deelgeneem het, en met die hoë standaard wat bereik is. Hierdie sg. Protea-uitstallings of Fotografiese Salon het in 1953 hier te lande begin en die groei is volgehou deur die jare—vanjaar is die eerste oorskryding van die 600-merk met inskrywings—'n feit wat veel goeds vir die toekoms inhou. Mag die Protea-onderneming van die Vereniging van krag tot karg groei! Dit is ons almal se hartewens, want daardeur versterk ons 'n band met mense in ander lande, tot voordeel van ons kamerageesdriftiges sowel as van ons vaderland.

Vir my as absolute leek op die gebied van die fotokuns is hierdie versameling van deskundiges se werk 'n openbaring. Ek het nie kon dink dat 'n mens soveel met 'n kamera kan doen nie. Die voorsitter was so vriendelik om vir my, sommige van die kunsgrepe wat hier aan die dag gelê word, te verduidelik. Ons hoef net te kyk na die drie hoogste toekennings. Die eerste prys het gegaan na Nr. 66, Chun Tung Ngan se „Carving Study”—daar het u 'n vroue-figuur wat lyk asof dit nimmer as te nooit met 'n kamera gemaak kon gewees het nie. Tekstuurskermis is gebruik om die verskillende patroon-effekte te verkry en die grysskakerings wat normaal in 'n swart-wit foto te voorskyn kom, is verminder van 'n tiental na 'n viertal. Die resultaat is iets unieks. U sal toegee dat dit glad nie meer soos 'n foto lyk nie. Nr. 60 het die tweede toekenning gekry — „Refuge Seeker” van Shu-Kuen Moy. Op die voorblad van die katalogus kom die werk voor wat geen fotografiese truks behels nie—ongetwyfeld geïnspireer deur wat in die wêreld van die skilders as „Op Art” bekendstaande—lyne wat in skynbaar-bewegende patrone gebruik word om die oog te fascineer. Die fotograaf is Chung-lim Chow, en dit het die derde keuse van die beoordelaars geword.

Die resultaat is dat die drie beste werke hier deur Chinese kundigheid tot stand gebring is, aldrie van Hongkong. Dit hoef geen verbasing te wek nie, want Hongkong word sedert jare reeds geag die bakermat van die kunsfotografie te wees. By al die uitstallings dwarsdeur die wêreld oorheers hulle die toneel. Van die 137 wat hier te sien is, is nie minder as 53 nie van Hongkong afkomstig. Blykbaar is dit 'n tradisie van die Chinese altans van die Chinese van Hongkong. U sal opmerk at hulle dié liefhebberij ook in ons land voortsit—van die 40 S.A. werke wat aangeneem is, is tien die werk van drie S.A. Chinese.

Maar om terug te keer tot die aangrypende vindingrykheid van die fotografe. Daar is ontelbare tegnieke en prosesse wat aangewend word om nuwe, of kunstige effekte te verkry. Twee of meer aparte foto's kan saamgestel word tot een finale produk: kyk na 110 van Rossini—die „Verenigingsbeeld”; daar kan 'n totale toonskeiding tot wit, swart en een grysskakering wees soos in 104 van Mike Gous se „Afgaets”; daar kan sg. solarisasie plaasvind soos by Nr. 32: die negatief tweemaal van lig blootgestel of 'n toonskeiding plus die gebruik van 'n tekstuurskerm soos in 109, „Grassaad” van Lewis: of jy kan die positiewe transparent effens uit register bo-oor die negatief plaas en 'n afdruk van die twee saam maak, sodat daar 'n driedimensionele effek ontstaan wat hulle bas-relief noem; of jy kan 'n kombinasie van die verskillende tegnieke aanwend soos in Nr. 1 sodat dit na 'n ets of houtnee lyk; of jy kan met die negatiewe swart-wit werk of met die negatiewe kleure. En so is daar talle meer. En dan kom jy by die eenvoud self—Nr. 56, „Rowing in a Calm Morning”—geen kunsmatige tegnieke hoegenaamd nie—'n enkelvoudige foto waarin al die elemente van die beoogde stemming natuurlikerwys bymekaar gekom het. Of 129, 'n studie in enkelvoudige gryns.

This exhibition raises a number of intriguing questions, for the layman at least. You will have gathered from what I have said, and even more so from the exhibits, that modern photography appears to know no limit to the number and variety of tricks or techniques or processes it employs to achieve novel and arresting results. Some of you no doubt would ask: Is this still photography? What prevents a photographer from becoming, in part at least, a painter or draughtsman and to touch up what the camera has done? I put that question to the chairman. The answer is a simple, straightforward one: whatever is done photographically is permissible, i.e. whatever processes by camera and chemical reaction in the darkroom can be applied are permissible, but the plate negative or print may not be touched by any instrument or means the painter, etcher, graphic artist or draughtsman uses. The photographer is restricted to mechanical and chemical techniques for filling the final print and colouring it.

In that way an easily recognisable line of demarcation exists between photography on the one hand and the fine arts of painting and graphic work on the other. The photographer may use neither a brush nor a pencil, as it were. His lines are camera made, his colours chemically applied. No doubt there is room for cheating but nothing which an astute adjudicator cannot spot.

Of course, out of this arises the further question: need a photographer if he is rather more keen to be an artist than a photographer pure and simple limit himself in this way? In other words, why should photography and painting or drawing remain two distinct activities? Is there any good reason why painters should not use photographic aids, and why photographers should not encroach on the field of the artist proper? Half a century ago not many people would have had the courage even to put such a question. It would have been dismissed with contempt as crazy or sheer heresy.

Fortunately the tradition of classifying every human activity in watertight compartments—the pigeonhole trend of the Middle Ages and of the last century—has crumbled before the onslaught of the rebels of the 20th Century. There are now painters whose works might as easily be called sculptures, and in the so-called pop-art no clear distinction survives between photography, painting (or drawing) and sculpture. Many of the old school are horrified at this bastardisation, but they lose sight of the important fact that conventions are made for man—for his guidance and discipline, not as supra-human laws he has to obey for all eternity. The moment he finds that theyirk him or limit his creative impulses unduly he is at liberty—of course at his own risk—to discard them. Let me mention a simple example: our grandmothers never dreamt of making a flower arrangement out of anything but flowers and possibly a few leaves. Now flower arrangements frequently have no relationship whatever with flowers. Purely from the aesthetical point of view I can see no reason at all why photography and painting should not overlap.

Which brings me to the most important point of all: why do we photograph at all for salons of this kind? Is it to represent nature beautifully and truly? Or is it to show technical excellence as photographers? Or is it simply to create beauty, regardless of what the natural or so-called real state of affairs is?

If I am not mistaken this exhibition gives the answer “Yes” to all three questions. And in that I see the great merit of this salon, that it has something for each of us whatever our basic view of the photographer's function. Take the prize-winning entry—the ‘speckled’ girl—is it *not* a true representation of nature? The natural form is no more than a suggestion. The primary object was obviously to create a work of created beauty, therefore a work of art. The fact that it was achieved by means of a large variety of techniques or processes seems to me to be incidental. Take the third choice—“Attractive Lines”—No. 46—it is a product of good workmanship but its primary object was clearly not to reproduce the face of an attractive girl—the

photographer had in mind a composition of parallel lines to which the realistically reproduced face of the subject is no more than incidental. Look on the other hand at the portrait of a woman—No. 13—“Medeia”, where the photographer purposely accentuated certain characteristics of a woman—portrayed as an evil woman—in order to convey a specific preconceived idea. In No. 46 the design is all-important, in No. 13 the character, atmosphere, aura created by the subject matter.

To be brief, the craft and art of the photographer seem to me to be capable of an orderly classification in exactly the same way as one might apply it to painting. At the first step the photographer must be so technically efficient that he can photographically create any required technical effect faultlessly. The second stage would be where he creates an artistic effect in the portrayal of a mood or idea or story but does so deliberately and therefore in a degree artificially. The third stage is the one where technique and nature no longer matter, the point where artistic creation commences, the glorious breakthrough into the sphere of unsayable things. Photographers, handicapped and circumscribed as they are by the laws of mechanics and chemistry, obviously find the last stage more difficult than the painters whose materials permit them to depart at will from the figurative concept. That is where abstracted reality merges into the no-man's land of non-representational work. On that road, I say, the photographer can follow only with great difficulty, but it is not closed to him at all. You will notice a number of photographs here where the architectural lines of buildings have been used to create what is in effect abstract compositions. In another I have noticed the so-called table top technique has been used. In Wellington Lee's “Madeleine”—reproduced in the catalogue on p. 16—an elaborate frame was evolved—apparently in part photographic illusion but certainly in part materially constructed. The question I now ask myself is whether photographers would not, and should not, boldly encroach on the area of painting proper, not by using a brush or pencil on their photographic negatives or prints but by photographing what amounts to non-figurative or abstract constructions—whether these be painted, constructed, drawn or otherwise brought into being. It would not be converting photography into painting, it would be putting to use in photography all the techniques developed over centuries, but particularly in the last 30 years, by the painter artists. I would be equally surprised if it should not open up new avenues of great promise to those photographers who have already graduated from technical mastery to creative work. It is merely a suggestion I put forward as a challenging thought.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Accepted Monochrome and Colour Prints

Country	No. of Authors	Prints Submitted	Prints Accepted
Austria	10	40	10
Canada	1	4	—
Czechoslovakia	15	52	—
Denmark	1	4	—
England	1	3	—
Finland	3	12	4
Germany	14	56	15
Hongkong	26	104	54
Italy	4	16	1
Malaysia	1	4	—
Mexico	1	4	—
New Zealand	1	2	—
Republic of South Africa	85	329	41
Switzerland	2	8	—
United States of America	14	56	12
Totals	179	694	137

Colour Slides

Country	Authors	Slides	Accepted
U.S.A.	23	92	32
S.A.	141	564	70
Austria	6	40	9
Canada	3	12	3
Chile	1	4	0
England	1	4	3
Germany	1	4	1
Lourenco Marques	1	4	0
Mexico	1	4	4
Malaysia	1	4	3
Totals	179	702	125

FORTHCOMING SALONS

Durban Camera Club (July). P.O. Box 1594, Durban, for information.

Benoni Ciné Foto Festival (30th July). Enquiries: P.O. Box 301, Benoni, Tvl.

Welkom Salon (November). P.O. Box 14, Welkom, O.F.S.

18th EXPOSICAO MUNDIAL DE ARTE FOTOGRAFICA

To be exhibited in Rio de Janeiro in October.

Closing date for entries: 20th August, 1966.

BLACK-AND-WHITE AND COLOUR PRINTS

COLOUR SLIDES.

Entry forms from:

Sociedade Fluminense de Fotografica,
Caixa Postal 118 Niteroi,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

9th DURBAN COLOUR SLIDE SALON

Closing date for entries: 8th July, 1966.

Entry forms from:

Durban Colour Slide Salon,
P.O. Box 1594, Durban.

21st IRISH SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY

August 14th to 28th—in Dublin.

Closing date for entries: 1st July, 1966.

Entrance Fee: One Dollar (all categories).

Entry forms from:

21st Irish Salon of Photography,
c/o Mr. Randall Miles,
175 Clonkeen Road,
Blackrock, Dublin, Ireland.

19th WITWATERSRAND INTERNATIONAL SALON OF PHOTOGRAPHY

and

5th WITWATERSRAND SALON OF NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY

Presented by

THE CAMERA CLUB OF JOHANNESBURG.

Closing date for entries: 17th August, 1966.

Judging will be carried out on 21st August.

Sections: Black-and-white and Colour prints, Nature prints, Colour slides, and Nature slides.

Awards:

P.S.A. GOLD MEDAL FOR BEST SLIDE.

3 P.S.A. “LION” AWARDS.

THREE PLAQUES—GOLD, SILVER, AND BRONZE.

Entry forms from:

Mr. Vin Sawyer, P.O. Box 30, Northcliff, Transvaal.

CIRCULAR LETTER FROM THE MOTION PICTURE DIVISION OF P.S.S.A.

“Use the Film Library”

How often is your Club stuck for a good film to show at meetings? Quite often, I guess! It is for this very reason that the M.P.D. Film Library exists. It contains approximately 20 amateur ciné films, all of high standard. Quite apart from the entertainment they offer, they provide excellent examples of how a high-grade amateur film should be made, and can be useful for stimulating discussion at your meetings.

This is one of the major services M.P.D. provides to Clubs. Many Clubs have made good use of it—other Clubs fail to do so. If the films are not hired sufficiently frequently, then funds to purchase more good films will just not be available and we cannot expand the Film Library as we would like to do. It is up to your Club to support this worthwhile service.

Write to Mr. Graham Cousins, M.P.D. Film Library, Box 1038, Bloemfontein, for the latest list of all available films. Hire charges have been revised slightly recently, and it should be noted that the costs of postage and insurance are additional to the hire charge.

“The Thousand and Second Night”—Made by Pierre Robin, Paris.

This is the latest film to be added to the M.P.D. Film Library. It won the top award in last year's South African

International Amateur Film Festival, organised by the Johannesburg Photographic Society. While Pierre Robin was out here (his prize for the top film) he agreed to sell his film at cost price to M.P.D. It thus becomes available for all Clubs in South Africa to see it.

This South African award was the latest of its many successes. Previously it had won a U.N.I.C.A. Gold Medal—generally regarded as the peak any amateur film can achieve in International Contests—and many other National and International awards.

To comply with our South African "Publications Act" (i.e. "Censorship Act") a number of cuts have had to be made in this fine film, but although there is a slight resultant loss in continuity in a few sequences, the film remains an outstanding example of all that is best in amateur cinematography. When your Club screens it, watch out for the wonderful sets, the imaginative camera work, the tight editing and, above all, the artistry which has gone into its construction and execution. Incidentally, when you show it at your Club, do invite along any local people interested in artistic dancing—the "Python Dance" on which the film ends will fascinate them.

U.N.I.C.A. Film Contest and Congress—September, 1966

Last year my appeal to local Clubs to nominate films to represent our country at this Inter-nation Contest produced no response—not one film was nominated by Clubs and your M.P.D. Committee had to rely on local films known to it. These did quite well, South Africa coming 11th out of 21 competing nations, i.e. exactly halfway. We want to do even better this year. If your Club knows of suitable high-grade films fit to represent us, and which the owner is prepared to let us have to send out of the country, please let me know as soon as possible. The three categories at U.N.I.C.A. are fiction or story films, documentary, and genre or abstract. In nominating films remember that there is a serious language difficulty at the judging sessions—there is no common language shared by the judges. Therefore films that tell their story without commentary, or with a minimum of the spoken word, are much more likely to succeed than those relying heavily on commentary. Short films tend to do better than long ones, and above all, the films must have impact.

We do want the South African entry this year to be representative of the whole country. Please give this matter urgent attention and send me your nominations now.

I attended the Film Contest and Congress last year—it was in Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia. It was a fascinating 10 days spent in the pleasant company of approximately 300 really keen amateur film-makers, mainly from Europe of course, but there were also delegates from Canada and the Argentine. This year's Congress is in Marienbad, Czechoslovakia, early in September. If anyone from South Africa can spare 10 days there (at his own cost, unfortunately) he will be appointed the official South African delegate. Do let me know if there is anyone interested.

Legal Responsibilities of Photographic Clubs and Societies

A new circular has been compiled summarising the legal responsibilities of Clubs in respect of Censorship of amateur films and colour slides, Recording Rights from gramophone records and Performing Rights of music played in public, which includes Club meetings. These aspects are important to all Photographic Societies and Clubs, but particularly to those involved in screening films and slides, especially when sound-tracks are involved. P.S.S.A. has obtained special facilities for its member Clubs in connection with all three items; those facilities cover individual members as well as Clubs.

Information on these subjects was sent to all Clubs some years ago, but many Clubs have lost their copies of the original documents. If you want a new copy please let me know.

Associateship

June 15th is this year's closing day for applications for Associateship.

The honour of Associateship is conferred on members of P.S.S.A. with one year's standing, who satisfy the Honours and Awards Committee and Directors, in one of the following categories:

Monochrome Prints or Slides.
Recorded Slide Programmes.
Colour Prints.
Colour Slides.
Ciné Films.
Documentary or Literary.
Service to Photography.

Full details as to the number of slides, prints or films to be submitted, are detailed in the Society's application form. Some additional information in the category "Service to Photography" may, however, be necessary.

No greater honour could be bestowed on a member of your photography club who has performed outstanding service than to propose him, or her, for Associateship in this category.

Applications should only be made by office bearers of your Club. On the usual application for Associateship form, the service which the nominee has performed must be detailed fully. Thus, particulars must be furnished of the type of service which has been given, not only to the nominating Club but to other Clubs in the area. Dates must be mentioned, in which connection ten years' service is considered the minimum period. Particulars of any success in any branch of photography or associated arts which the nominee has obtained, should be given.

Further, should the nominee not be known to Directors of our Society, or to members of the Honours and Awards Committee, especially detailed information must be provided.

Finally, in accordance with the revised conditions, candidates may now apply on their own behalf.

Yours sincerely,

DERRICK G. BEADLE,
Chairman, M.P.D.

P.O. Box 11309,
Johannesburg.
13th April, 1966.

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. M. T. Basson, c/o Huletts Sugar Corp., P.O. Amatikulu, Zululand.
Mr. W. H. H. Bradley, 214 Regent Street East, Observatory, Johannesburg.
Mr. A. G. Whitfield, P.O. Wofa, via Idutywa, Transkei.
Mr. B. I. Campbell, U.58 Oribi Village, Pietermaritzburg, Natal.
Mr. C. J. Jansen, P.O. Box 1928, Windhoek, S.W.A.
Mr. K. A. Bell, 25 Ridge Road, P.O. Bergville, Natal.
Mr. Bernard Mayrhofer, P.O. Box 202, Bramley, Johannesburg.
Mr. and Mrs. R. V. Melrose, 226 Underwood Road, Sarnia, Natal.
Mr. John Nothling, 382 Celliers Avenue, Lyttelton, Pretoria.
Mr. A. Bartie, 77 South Road, Regents Park, Johannesburg.
Mr. R. Brodersen, 12a Villa Marina, Mouille Point, Cape Town.
Mr. G. J. de Jongh, P.O. Box 2010, Windhoek, S.W.A.
Mr. B. R. Busby, P.O. Box 62, Mufulira, Zambia.
Mr. J. A. L. Mew, 40 Frankfort Drive, Evander, Transvaal.
Mr. R. Mitchell, P.O. Box 88, Mandini, Zululand.
Mr. J. H. F. Wagener, M.102, West Rand Cons. Mines, dist. Krugersdorp.
Mr. C. L. Hayes, 108 Herrick Avenue, Mufulira, Zambia.
Mr. R. Mitchell, 38 Bell Street, Butterworth, Transkei.
Mr. B. G. Cohen, P.O. Box 81, Mayville, Durban.
Mrs. S. L. Sanborn, 17 Sixth Avenue, Parkhurst, Johannesburg. (Joint.)
Mr. F. J. Sanborn, 17 Sixth Avenue, Parkhurst, Johannesburg.
Mr. David Moore, 146 Francois Road, Glenwood Ext., Durban.
Mr. Robert Goldberg, 16 Elder Street, Fairmount, Johannesburg.
Mr. T. M. Elderfield, Private Bag 240, Pretoria.
Mr. C. N. Gaunt, 132 Coronation Avenue, Greendale, Salisbury, Rhodesia.
Mr. A. O. Zaayman, c/o N.P.R., P.O. Box 787, Pretoria.
Barberton Camera Club, c/o H. P. Holtzhausen, 42 Peacock Street, Barberton.
Paarl Ciné Group, 12 Flambeau Street, South Courtrai, Paarl.