

Alleywayz Production

Vol. I, Issue I



Art began when, "Chaos covered the deep and God said, 'Let there be light' and there was light".

Mythology is the psychology of antiquity.

Psychology is the mythology of modernity.

James Hillman,
"The Dream and the Underworld"

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Reviews

"Amherst Area: Symbols of Life" Exhibit

Reprinted from article written by Bruce Watson,
Staff Writer/Amherst Bulletin

Sated by the Fauve's colors, the sane viewer will seek refuge in subtle shades. The best use of black and white

to grace gallery walls in many years has just opened at the Amherst Community Gallery in North Amherst.

Orlow Kent Nygren, known as, O.K. Nygren when he shot Amherst for this paper, has collected his memorable scenes of local life in "Amherst Area: Symbols of Life" Exhibition.

Nygren's photos are both a blast from Amherst's recent past and an artistic tribute to valley life from Puffer's Pond to Cummington farms. It is not uncommon to see familiar faces on the gallery walls or to hear onlookers telling stories of one place or face in a photo. There's James Baldwin at a book signing several years ago. And Robert Francis in a thoughtful pose. Stanley Ziomek is caught as "The

"Each photo, wonderfully evocative and artistically composed...."

'Official' Mr. Ziomek" in his umpire's outfit, and some stars of Town Meeting are depicted in action and at rest.

Familiar scenes should spark reminiscences for many. The building of Fort River School playground, the dedication of the Peace Pagoda, and Nygren's famous "Lighting of the Merry Maple" in which a small child is beautifully lit by candles, are among the 40 photos on display.

But the quality of Nygren's work transcends its familiarity. Each photo, wonderfully evocative and artistically composed, captures a moment as only a photograph can.

Nygren is now a freelance photographer, roaming the Pioneer Valley in pursuit of subjects. The current show is the first of two parts, he said. A second show, tentatively planned for October, will include recent valley scenes as well as the work of special

studio projects.

Nygren's show runs through...and shouldn't be missed. ■

Alleywayz Productions: A Brief History

by Orlow Kent Nygren

Alleywayz Productions began as a small consortium of artists producing and promoting music concerts in the early 80's. Individual artists and professionals worked together to sponsor events, create promotional materials, coordinated sales, and book artists for events in the Amherst/Northampton area of Massachusetts.

As individuals changed, moved, and developed professionally, Alleyways evolved to encompass various artists' work. The Internet facilitated the opportunity for people to continue to collaborate on projects, both personal and professional. Alleyway Productions has a designers and marketing, web design, photography, video

productions, and more. We are dedicated to providing the best talent for a project. Whether it's a web site, multimedia presentation, or advertizing, we team together to do the project depending on the need of the client and their budget.

Contact us to learn how we can serve you. If you have any questions or ideas, please send us an e-mail at orlow@alleywayz.com. Individuals and businesses we work with are listed inside. ■



"Alter Image" Exhibition

Art Historians consider it no accident that the muted tones and fuzzy images of Impressionism were introduced not long after the development of the camera. What had been the role of art-as a picture-perfect window on the world-began to change once the camera made image-making easy. Some photographers are not satisfied with perfect images, however.



Orlow Kent Nygren whose crystal-clear black and white photos of the Pioneer

"...each image is evocative and interesting..."

Valley scenes have been featured in local newspapers and galleries, has discovered a way to blend the impressionism of paint with the precision of the lens. In "Alter Image," on display through Aug. 23 at the Amherst Community Arts Center, Nygren offers 34 scenes of Amherst and its environs altered by heat and an artist's touch.

While shooting Polaroids around town, Nygren discovered that if the instant image was heated, its chemicals could be easily smudged. Some parts of a photo could be melted, others twisted or left alone. Soon Nygren was heating his photos on car hoods, creating images that are not quite photos but not painting either.

Nygren's altered images present a power beyond their small size. His eye for the subtle, everyday serenity of Valley has led him to capture the flavor of places and the moods of peoples. Though each image is evocative and interesting, their size eventually wears the viewer who must stand within inches of the small squares.

Perhaps, given the Polaroid medium, this is unavoidable, but the best pictures demand to be larger. In two frames, Nygren has enlarged his work by lining up six photos of the same scene from adjacent angles, creating a windowed effect of, in this case, a greenhouse, and elsewhere a farm couple gathering onions. Merely for their enlarged detail, these are the most effective of the show. ■

Reprinter form article by Bruce Watson,
Staff writer/Amherst Bulletin

Art is
unique to Man.
G.K. Chesterton

"[Art]...is very
seldom a matter
of saying things;
it is a matter of
showing them."
Flannery O'Connor

Venus Descends a Bit too Far

"Well, Kent Nygren," said the subject to the Northampton photographer when he suggested hanging photos of her stout nude figure in Amherst, "this isn't your basic white middle-class suburban show, you know that."

And if Amherst were your basic white middle-class suburb, Orlow Kent Nygren's photographic exhibit "Venus Descending" might send the police descending on the Eli March Student Gallery in Fayerweather Hall at Amherst College. As it is, Nygren's 17 photos of a rather unconventional potter in Maine, on display until June 2, will disturb some and delight other with both their sexual explicitness and their technical skill. Yet some might ask the "Mapplethorpe Question": should a beautifully rendered image of a private sexual act which makes many viewers profoundly uncomfortable be considered art?

Last year, the late Robert Mapplethorpe's homosexuality explicit photos raised the wrath of

conservatives and led to obscenity charges against a gallery director in Cincinnati. "Venus Descending: should not threaten Amherst's community standards, whatever those might be, but the question lingers nonetheless.

The Venus in question is Patrikyia, a potter and erotic poet Nygren met at a photo workshop in Maine. The two became quick friends and Patrikyia, who is known primarily by her first name, agreed to let Nygren, better known for his photojournalism, into her life for a few days of photography.

True to his photo-journalistic integrity, Nygren presents what he found, untouched and unapologetic. But what he found was a rotund woman in her '50's who knocked about her book-strewn shack in the buff, penned erotic poetry to match her vaginal-inspired sculptures, and had no qualms about being photographed in either sexually explicit or cloyingly innocent poses.

Nygren's skilled hands, "Venus Descending" throws a challenge to its viewers. Laugh or be shocked if you will, but this, and not your fashion-model slimness, is the human form in all its vainglory. Patrikyia is seen at her potter's wheel, showering relaxing, and ultimately, gratifying herself sexually. Nygren even penetrates his subject's thoughts by photographing an open page of her journal which, given his precise eye for minute detail, can be easily read as it overlays some of her publications in feminist journals.

"I'm confronting a lot of stereotypes here," Nygren admitted. "In society, if you don't have that classic body type, you're out to lunch. Fashion photography is all essentially the same woman, but this," he said of his model, "is the person we meet all the time."

Nygren, who has often been in attendance during the Marsh Gallery's usual hours (Tuesday to Sunday, 2-6 PM.) has heard a wide range of responses to Patrikyia and her frank sexuality. From disgust to open admiration, the show evokes strong feelings. "Venus Descending" is not a slide show of pretty pictures. As a free-lance fashion photographer, Nygren makes enough of those.

Instead, he has chosen to portray Patrikyia as he found her-fascinated with fashioning her own image into erotic art. Despite Nygren's masterful use of angle and shadow, her frankness is not easy to look at. But the great majority of photos in the show provide a worthwhile antidote, albeit a strong one, to the processed purity of women in the media. Nygren and his model are quite comfortable with their work and they dare the viewer to be at ease.

"If someone says it's disgusting, I have no problem with that," Nygren said. "If they think it's beautiful, fine. If they didn't have those reactions, they'd be dead. I'm not dead and I feel the push-pull the tension in it. That's what I wanted."

The Mapplethorpe question, then? Well, Kent Nygren, you're an excellent photographer. But there are some acts, no matter how public

some would like to make them, which do not do art or free speech any service. Given the power of the other images, especially the show's striking portrait of wounded innocence, the more explicit pictures will only harden the walls of stereotype and sexual repression which you so skillfully bombard as Venus descends.

Those who have honed their talent for presenting life as it is, in words or images, need to decide how much of life to present. If they find no taboos, if they cannot draw the line, the community at large will often be more than glad to draw the line for them, a line much more restricted than they may have chosen for themselves. With a talent for angle and shadow, surely the show's more graphic photos could have been suggested with more subtlety. As presented, Venus descends somewhat lower than the angels and threatens to bring the show's considerable merit down with her. ■

Reprinted from review by Bruce Watson, Staff Writer/Amherst Bulletin



"Venus Descending" throws a challenge to its viewers... the human form in all its vainglory."

"I am just learning the ABC's of my art."

Michelangelo
Age, 93



"Truth is Stranger than Fiction."

Creating Art and Advertising

The writer Flannery O'Connor once said, "The only way, I think, to learn to write short stories is to write them, and then to try to discover what you have done." The idea relates to any creative process as a whole, particularly creating images.

A few years ago, a client of a collectable clothing store needed advertising photos. As we discussed ideas for the photographs and the advertising budget,



"J", in an attempt to demonstrate her idea, stood up, backed away for the counter, and said, "I need to show people how something like this top looks." As she said this, she turned around to show me the black, lace embroidered sweater she was wear-

ing. She stopped, put her hands on her hips, shifted her weight to one side,, and said with a quizzical look, "You know what I mean."

There was the image. At that moment, I wanted to photograph her with exactly what she was wearing, in exactly that pose, with that exact expression. She looked perfect, natural, and was wearing her own ad.

I didn't know if she'd like the idea, but I told her anyway. "What if *you* advertise the clothes. We can pho-

Interactive Multimedia Developments

The newest venue and medium for producing and exhibiting photographic work is the Internet. It's advent produced a host of new work, themes, and methods of presenting images (including the digital imaging). Photographers discovered new clients, methods work, and processes for presenting that work, particularly interactive multimedia.

Interactive multimedia provides the photographer with the option of intergrating photography, video, audio, animated elements, and navigational controls into the presentation of their work. The media available to show work is numerous and accessible to a worldwide audience with a computer and an Internet connection. The presentation can take the form of a web page on the Internet or Intranet, a CD or DVD player, and who knows what else.

Orlow Kent Nygren does some web design and interactive multimedia as an extension of his art. He's produced interactive multimedia presentations of his profolio, virtual reality tours of High Schools for law enforcement, and navigation elements on web sites such as the Springfield Police Department, Carter Computers, Commerical-Supply, and Dreammeyer. Visit Alleywayz for more infotmation. ■

tograph you being you, wearing clothing your sell. We can photograph you having a coffee at B's, lunch on the park bench, and wandering around town window shopping, or whatever."

She would "model" the clothes in and around the environment she lived and worked. The project provided a simple and inexpensive alternative to studio shoots, hiring models, and set design. The locations were accessible and using a documentary/portrait style of image would keep the costs low.

It worked. The public relations was affective and generated sales. People came into her store saying, "I saw that new photo of you. It was great. Do you have anything else like that hat you wore in the ad?" Or, "Hey, your the women in the ad, that's so cool."

The ad campaign worked. We produced a series images of "J" wearing her wears while sitting on a bench, having coffee at an outdoor cafe, wandering around town pushing a clothing racket, or reclining against a hot, sunlit wall in lingerie.

The whole affair created public interest as well. We keep the quality of work interesting and fun, the budget low, and the clothing sold. Did we plan it all before hand? No. A comment and gesture generated the idea. The execution produced an image. The image created a campaign. And, the public interest fueled new work and ideas. It was all serendipitous. We just did it and discovered what we did worked. ■

Orlow Kent Nygren

Just Do It!
Nike

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