

Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



Marc Silber

Carousel, Jardin des Tuileries is one of the many images photographer Marc Silber captured on a recent trip to Paris.

Stilling a world in motion

Atherton man returns to photography after career in business

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

It's been 42 years since Marc Silber first saw images he had captured on film come to life in the tiny darkroom at Peninsula School.

He was 12 years old, and "learning the darkroom was like being led on this mystical adventure," he recalls. That adventure and his growing interest in taking pictures set the young Atherton boy on a path toward a world in which he could live and breathe photography.

Then came the fork in the road, and when he chose it, the dream of a life as an artist made way for a life in the business world.

During the past year, Mr. Silber resumed the journey he began all those decades ago at Peninsula, a progressive private school in Menlo Park. After a long career as a management consultant, he sold his San Jose business last fall and once again took up the camera full time.

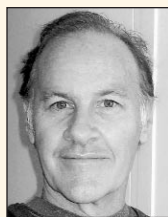
And the journey, while far from complete, is leading him "home" this weekend: On Saturday, Mr. Silber will exhibit a range of his photographs at Peninsula School from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and will be on hand to discuss his work. There is no admission charge.

Mr. Silber, who still lives in Atherton, will also present a free program at the Atherton Library at 7 p.m. Thurs-

day, December 8, during which he will show some of his work and share tips on improving camera skills.

Influences

It wasn't only the darkroom sessions at Peninsula that enchanted the 12-year-old Marc. He also got a chance to rub shoulders with an



'I was finding my own voice in photography, and no school can teach you that.'

MARC SILBER

Olympian of the photographic world when Ansel Adams came to the school, bringing with him some of his work and insights and making a lasting impression on the boy.

After that encounter, "I read his books and emulated his work," Mr. Sil-

■ INFORMATION

Marc Silber will exhibit his work from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, November 19, at Peninsula School, 920 Peninsula Way in Menlo Park. The event is free. He also will present a free program on photography from 7 to 8:30 p.m. on December 8 at the Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane.

ber says. That exploration led to the works of other photographers, and he soon discovered the work of another master whose work influenced him greatly: Henri Cartier-Bresson, known for his "street work" and considered a pioneer of photojournalism.

Whereas Ansel Adams is known for his willingness to wait — sometimes for hours — for the right moment to photograph one of his majestic outdoor subjects, "with Cartier-Bresson, everything is in the moment," Mr. Silber says. "I'm somewhere in between."

After high school, Mr. Silber studied photography at the San Francisco Art Institute. He also became a student of mountaineering, and a camera was always part of his gear during his excursions in the high country.

"I was finding my own voice in photography, and no school can teach you that," he says.

As time went on, though, devotion to his art began to take a back seat to the demands of making a living — an age-old story for countless creative souls. But the desire to make photographs never left him, he says.

Recently, Mr. Silber's sons, Web site designers, put together a site for him, giving him a chance to post photographs he had taken since his years at

Celebrating Kesey, Garcia

A celebration of the lives and work of writer Ken Kesey and Grateful Dead icon Jerry Garcia is set for Saturday, November 19, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Menlo Park Library.

The event, organized by Skyline artist Leah Lubin, is free.

Ms. Lubin said those who knew either man, or were touched by their work, will be invited to share their stories in writing. Her son, filmmaker Daniel Raim, will videotape people wishing to speak about their experiences with Mr. Kesey or Mr. Garcia, she said.



Leah Lubin

See LUBIN, next page

Woodside Priory School stages four comedies: classics and originals

Woodside Priory School's theater department presents "Comedy, Comedy, Commedia" — a series of four one-act plays — November 17 through 19 on the Portola Valley campus.

"The Jealous Husband" and "The Flying Doctor" are by the French writer Moliere, considered one of the world's greatest playwrights.

Director John Sugden and cast members wrote "The Thorns of Fashion" and "A Sheep in Love's Clothing."

"Commedia" features a 23-member all-high-school cast.

The one-acts are presented in a style of theater that combines sophisticated wit with slap-stick comedy, said director Sugden.

"It puts outrageous characters in even more outrageous situations, and then pokes fun at the concerns and assumptions of the world," said Mr. Sugden.

Show times are 7 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, November 17-19, with an additional 2 p.m. performance on Saturday.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for adults. They may be purchased in advance at the Priory's school store during the week or at the theater on the night of the performance. Will-call ticket orders can be placed online at dcastelli.woodsidepriory.com and picked up at the door.



Woodside Priory School photo

Woodside Priory School senior Diego Moncada, left, gets in trouble with Michael Cauley and Allison Littlefield in a Moliere one-act play.

See SILBER, page 34

CALENDAR

continued from previous page

Stanford Theatre, 221 University Ave., Palo Alto. Call 324-3700. www.stanfordtheatre.org.

Environment

Birds of S.F. Bay. Sat., Nov. 26, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. With docents Marilyn and Bill Bauriedel. Leisurely-paced, 2-mile hike. The docents will have a spotting scope to zero in on birds. Bring a bird book, binoculars, and/or a spotting scope. Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Study Area, Los Altos. Call 691-1200.

The Slumbering Giant. Sun., Nov. 20, 1-3:30 p.m. With docents Keith Johnsgard and Jack Daane. A leisurely 1.5-mile stroll atop the San Andreas Fault. Los Trancos Open Space Preserve, Los Altos. Call 691-1200. www.openspace.org.

Tour de Skyline. Sun., Nov. 20, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. With docents Stretcher Smith and Patty Ciesla. 12 mile bike tour of four preserves

around Page Mill Road/Skyline Boulevard. Appropriate for experienced mountain bikers. Moderately-strenuous climbs. Bring a light lunch. Russian Ridge/Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserves. Meet at the Skyline Ridge parking lot, Call 691-1200. www.openspace.org.

Et Alia

Disease Management for Rhododendrons. The De Anza Chapter, American Rhododendron Society will feature a program by Barrie Coate. Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. Free. Hillview Community Center, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. www.deanza-ars.com.

Non-Fiction Book Group. Meets the third Thursday monthly, 1 p.m. Nov. 17: "The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down" by Anne Fadiman; Dec. 15: "The Great Influenza" by John M. Barry. Historic Schoolhouse, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley. Call 851-0560. www.smcl.org.

Clothing Drive. For Kashmir earthquake

relief held by Castilleja students. Through Nov. 21. The clothing will go directly to the Hidayat Foundation. Donate used warm clothes, blankets and money to cover shipping. Castilleja School, 1311 Emerson Street, Palo Alto. Call 328-3160 x 197. www.castilleja.org.

Ibdaa Dance Troupe. A Palestinian folkloric dance group composed of youth from Dheisheh refugee camp, Pakestine proceeds to benefit Ibdaa Cultural Center. Sponsored by Coalitions for Justice in the Middle East, a Stanford student organization, and by Middle East Children's Alliance. Wed., Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m. \$20/\$10 children under 12/ free for students. Kresge Auditorium, 559 Nathan Abbot Way, Stanford. Call 796-6686. www.mecaforpeace.org.

Fautographs. Artwork by Don Beck will be on display through Dec. 4. Peabody Gallery, 603 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. Call 322-2200. www.peabodyfineart.com.

"California Scenes and Plants." Through Nov. 27. A solo exhibit of watercolor and colored pencil works by traveling artist, Katherine McKay. Gallery hours: Thursdays-Sundays, 1-5 p.m. Free. 1870 Art Center, 1870 Ralston Ave., Belmont. Call 261-1086. www.1870artcenter.org.

Tellabration. An evening of storytelling. Benefits Gift of Reading. Tellers are Willy Clafflin, Brian Conroy, Jean Ellisen, Tom and Sandy Farley, and Pauline Young. Sat., Nov. 19, 7 p.m. Requested donation \$10, students/seniors \$8. Tickets at the door. United Methodist Church, 2000 Woodside Rd., Redwood City. Call 494-1383.



In Woodside

Curley (Danny Martin) and Laurey (Jamie Lease) in the Woodside Community Theatre's production of "Oklahoma." Curtain time is 7:30 p.m. November 17-19 at the Woodside High School theater at 199 Churchill Ave. For tickets, call 365-6404. For information, check woodsidetheatre.org.

SILBER

continued from page 32

Peninsula School. Going through all his old negatives "lit the fire again," he says, adding that it was then that he decided to sell his busi-

ness and return to his first love.

Resuming the journey

In resuming his pursuit of photography, Mr. Silber has left behind one of his earliest inspirations: the darkroom. Shooting now with a digital Nikon, he has no need for the chemicals, canisters and trays, but he says he still feels the thrill of seeing his images emerge, albeit on a computer screen.

His portfolio includes a number of images from his earlier days as a photographer, such as a series he shot while studying building crafts in Mexico his senior year in high school.

It is also rich in images from near and far — from Big Sur to Paris, from which he returned several weeks ago. An exhibit of his work in the Phoenix Gallery in Nephenthe, Big Sur, has just been extended through the holidays, he says.

He is experimenting again with a style he explored in the past, in which motion combines with the immovable, he says. For example, he recently made a photograph in Paris' Jardin des Tuileries anchored by two trees and a park bench — a space that invites you to sit, to think, to allow time to stand still for a while. But a whirling carousel occupying most of the photographic frame reminds the viewer that time never really stands still.

Mr. Silber struggles with the quintessential question faced by all artists: How does one present the world with an idea, a musical statement, an image that is fresh and has something new to say?

For a photographer, the question is particularly relevant. "Our current culture is so loaded with pre-made images," Mr. Silber notes. "We're competing against this world of ready-make images."

But as he attempts to meet the challenge, he says, he is reaping many rewards from taking up a camera once again.

"Photography gives me the chance to not just be an idle visitor — a vacationer," he says.

"It puts me in the moment, and lets me stop and look at the world — not just see it rush by." ■

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