

CENTRAL KENTUCKY CAMERA CLUB



Promoting the creative, artistic, and documentary aspects of photography for both amateurs and professionals through education, workshops, field excursions and the informal exchange of ideas

November, 2002 / Volume 5 No. 11



One difference between magic and art is that magic can be explained But the artist can never fully account for the alchemical process that turns anatomical knowledge and fresco technique into the Sistine Chapel.

Francine Prose, *The Lives of the Muses*



Alice Liddell as a Beggar Child, 1858
By Lewis Carroll

NEXT MEETING

Monday
November 4, 2002

7pm

An Evening
With

Warren Brunner

at the Brunner Studios in Berea. The meeting will start at 7pm, but, as usual, we'll meet at Papleno's around 5:30 - 6:30pm for dinner. Warren will discuss his upcoming new book and the trials and tribulations of photographing the Appalachian Mountain Religions

Monday, December 2nd / **TOM BARNES**
(at EKU)

Danny Lyon

at UK this
Friday, November 1, 2002
4 PM

New York, New York !!!

Start Spreading the News!!

Susan King is planning a Camera Club weekend outing to New York City for Spring, 2003. Details can be had by e-mailing Susan at susanking@compuserve.com. Preliminary possibilities include visits to The Museum of Modern Art, B & H Photo, The Strand Bookstore, and Central Park. We're also going to try and take the time for a little Broadway play. So, if you have any suggestions, or you're interested in more information, please contact Susan. Does anyone want to see a David Letterman Show?

James Rhem

Scholar James Rhem has written a new book called "Ralph Eugene Meatyard: The Family Album of Lucybelle Crater & Other Figurative Photographs". Meatyard was a Lexington photographer and optometrist who died at a young age and whose images are gaining a resurgence in popularity. Rhem's book has been named one of the top ten photography books of the year by Camera Arts Magazine. Rhem spoke at UK last year and will be signing his book at Joseph-Beth the night of our Camera Club Meeting - or, you can see him at the Kentucky Book Fair, this Saturday, November 2nd.

IMPORTANT CLUB CONTACTS

Neil Klemek / newsletter / membership / (859) 986-3797
Contact Neil for information about getting the newsletter, membership dues or for pictures and/or articles you have that Club Members might find informative

Donna Clore / outings / (859) 236-4484 Contact Donna if you need information about a particular outing, comments about an outing or ideas for outings Club Members might find interesting.

Kara Beth Brunner / speakers / (859) 986-4961 Contact Kara Beth if you have suggestions for speakers or you have a speaker that might be interesting for one of our meetings.

This Sounds Like Fun !

Morehead Art Guild 19th Annual Competitive Art Show

November 8th and 9th, 2002

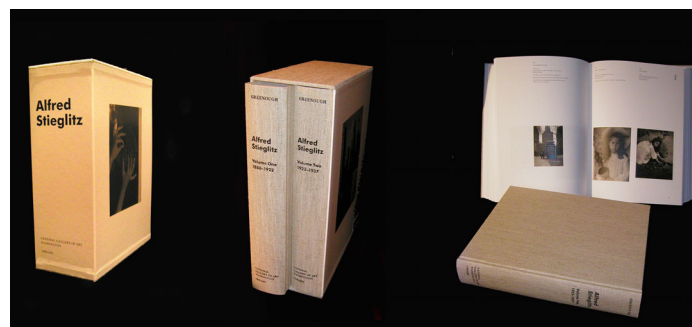
Carl Perkins Community Center

For more information call

Morehead Art Guild Inc.
Pine Grove Framing
&
Gallery of Fine Art

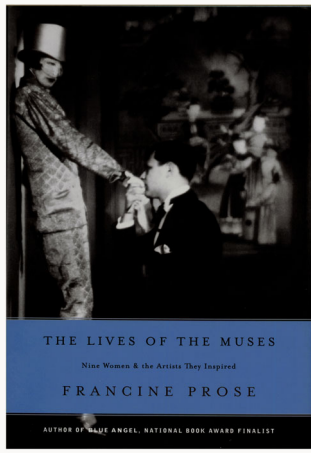
(606) 784-6238

" The Key Set "



Alfred Stieglitz / *The Key Set* / *The Alfred Stieglitz Collection of Photographs*
text by Sarah Greenough, Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers,
New York, 2002, 2 vols. / ISBN 0-89468-290-3 / \$150

Alfred Stieglitz was one of the key photographers of the past 150 years and this is his *Key Set*, compiled by his widow, Georgia O'Keeffe and given to The National Gallery of Art in the late 1940s. Sarah Greenough does a creditable job describing the stages in Stieglitz's career that led to the various images he made, but it's the pictures themselves that make this a must-have book for any serious student of photography. It's also a beautiful book physically - two large gray volumes in a slipcase with duotones by Robert J. Hennessey. At \$150 put it on your holiday gift list. NJK



The Lives of the Muses / Nine Women & The Artists They Inspired

by Francine Prose / HarperCollins Publishers,
New York, © 2002, pp. 420 Hardcover, ISBN 0-06-019672-6 / \$25.95

In Greek mythology, the muses were the nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne. Each muse presided over a different art or science. But today the word "muse" signifies "a guiding spirit or inspiration". Every artist should have his

or her muse at one time or another. This particular book is about nine artists and their muses (Prose must have picked "nine" as a parallel to the original nine of Greek mythology).

Several of the artists discussed in this book were photographers - Edward Weston and his muse Charis Wilson Weston, Man Ray and Lee Miller, and, my favorite, Charles Dodgson (AKA Lewis Carroll) and Alice Liddell (pronounced "Little"). Francine Prose can't do an exhaustive biography of each of these muses in only 400 some odd pages, but she does a wonderful job describing how each of their relationships with the artists were the cause of inspiration and creativity.

Charles Dodgson was a mathematics instructor at Christ Church, Oxford, when he first started an interest in photography in the mid 1850s. Some of his favorite subjects were the children of the rector, Rev. Henry George Liddell. One in particular became the main focus of his attentions. Alice Liddell was about 4 years of age when Dodgson first began photographing her and her sisters. He apparently had a truly legitimate interest in children, their innocence, their childlike interest in all

the things in the world about them and in their beauty and unspoiled nature. On July 4, 1862, he and a friend took Alice and her sisters on a boat excursion. It was on this excursion that the tale of *Alice In Wonderland* was born. After telling the children an interesting story, Alice Liddell asked Dodgson to write the story down. He eventually did just that and dedicated the main character to her. Dodgson also took many inspiring photographs of Alice Liddell, including *Alice Liddell as a Beggar Child* in 1858. This was Alfred Lord Tennyson's favorite photograph, calling it the most beautiful he had ever seen.

Unfortunately, shortly after this excursion, Mrs. Liddell, Alice's mother, forbade Alice to have any further contact with Dodgson. The day this occurred coincided with a day that is missing from Dodgson's personal diary. To this day, there is only speculation as to what happened to end the relationship. One theory was that Dodgson asked to marry the 11-year-old Alice at a time when he was 30. It wasn't entirely unusual for men his age to marry younger women, but usually they at least waited until they were 14 or so. Additionally, Mrs. Liddell had

social expectations for her daughters and would not have wanted Alice to marry a mere mathematician. Another theory, implied at many years later by Alice's sister, was that Dodgson was becoming "too affectionate" with Alice. Whatever the true story, their 7-year relationship ended. Dodgson always kept Alice on his mind, however, even after she had grown and gotten married. She inspired his *Through The Looking Glass and What Alice Found There* (1872) as well as *Alice's Adventures Underground* (1865).

Another famous early photographer, Julia Margaret Cameron, also utilized Alice as a model on occasion and Alice Liddell herself lived until the ripe age of 82. Two of her sons died in World War I and she always carried with her the honor and stigma of being "Alice" of *Alice In Wonderland*. In the spring of 1932, she sailed to New York City, where she was given an honorary PhD from Columbia University for having inspired Lewis Carroll's most famous work. A few years ago, her possessions were auctioned off by Sotheby's, including personal copies of *Alice Liddell as a Beggar Child* and *Alice's Adventures Underground*, both given to her many years before by her friend Lewis Carroll.

I highly recommend this particular book. It was easy to read, flowed well, kept my interest, gave me added insight into musedom and made me wish Santa would leave me a nice muse under the tree this Christmas! - Neil J. Klemek

Photos to Send: Dorothea Lange's Ireland

Susan King

Growing up as a kid in Lexington in the 1950s, I often visited my Dad's family farm in Harrison County. My grandmother never changed her clocks to "fast" time, which reinforced my feeling that the people who lived in the village of Kelat were behind the times in general. As I got older, I realized with the exception of rural electrification, and the use of motor driven tractors, I'd experienced farm life in rural Kentucky that hadn't changed dramatically since the 19th Century. My relatives, some of them first generation Irish Americans, grew most of the food they ate, boiled cistern water to wash clothes on washboards every Monday, milked cows and fed chickens about every day of their lives. They lived in close contact to others in their village. Church was their social life. Most of my father's generation left for WWII and then, permanently, for town. Television, which was slow in coming to the country, changed everything, but that didn't happen for a long while. Rural Kentucky, at mid-century, had much in common with other agrarian cultures, such as the villages in County Clare, Ireland. It was with interest that I looked at the photos in Dorothea Lange's Ireland. The recent film, Photos to Send, by filmmaker Diedre Lynch, brings Lange's photo-essay into the present, in a haunting and alluring way.

In 1954 Dorothea Lange traveled to County Clare, Ireland on assignment for *Life* magazine. Her trip had been inspired by Conrad Arensberg's book The Irish Countryman, and she badgered the editors at Life until they sent her off to shoot the story. Arensberg's book documented and analyzed the social and economic traditions of rural life. Irish county life, where ties to family and land were strong and intact, contrasted sharply to the plight of migrants she photographed in 1930s Dust Bowl America. (Her image of a woman cradling a child at an itinerant pea picker's camp, "Migrant Mother" is said to be the most reproduced American photograph.) She took her adult son, Daniel Dixon, with her to write the accompanying text, and act as driver. They spent approximately six weeks in Ireland, the large part of photographing around Ennis. She made 2400 negatives during this time, many with her old Graflex camera.



Michael Kinneally on his 30 acres at the brow of Mount Callan. The house was built by Michael's grandfather.

Dennis Wylde, a young photographer in Ennis, helped her out on several occasions, repairing her camera, and also acting as a driver. Gerry Mullins interviewed Wylde in retirement and writes that Wylde “was with her for much of her time in Clare. He notes that while she was a very nice person in company, she was very determined in her work. He especially remembers how she would tenaciously pursue a shot until she got it right, even if this meant climbing up a tree, standing on top of the car, or returning to the same place day after day. During her stay in Ireland, Lange never used a flash. Instead she worked in the early morning to make the most of the natural light.” Lange was 59 at the time.

As Dixon recalls, “My mother carried her cameras almost everywhere. Her energy seemed endless and her interest infinite. We worked on the farms, in the cottages, at the fairs, in the markets, in the shops, along the streets, in the churches and schools. She photographed the wild wandering tinkers, the shawlies with a drop taken, the headstones in the graveyards, the black broken teeth of ruined castles, the coarse cloth caps that were worn like an emblem by almost every Irish countryman. And she also photographed their thick woolen suits. These men commonly owned two such suits—one for Sunday, the other for every other day in the week. The everyday suit smelled of dung and sweat and tobacco and beer and peat. It smelled, in fact, like a compost pit. My mother’s photographs defined the queer stubborn dignity of those suits, but not their rich fragrance. Not even Dorothea Lange could photograph an odor.”

When the photo essay appeared in March of 1955, it was an abbreviated version, featuring only 19 images. Much of the spread ended up on the editing floor, bumped by a late breaking news story. (There was no real live television news then, certainly no CNN. *Life* magazine was it.) Little of Dixon’s text was used, and he was given no credit in the final article. Lange was disappointed that the story had gotten so little space. She let the editors at *Life* know it: “she bent some people there out of shape,” according to Dixon. She had, after all, provided the magazine with a “bounty of photographs.” Lange never worked on assignment for *Life* again. She died in 1965. People who emigrated to America were often never seen again on the shores of the Emerald Isle, and the expense of ocean travel and time away from the labor intensive family farm, just to visit relatives in America, was unthinkable.

Lynch has problems before leaving California. The people she wants to interview in Ireland aren’t used to making appointments months in advance. They tell her to just come there and she’ll see who she needs to see. She arrives with few appointments. She finds many of the same people Lange had photographed, living in the same village decades later. Amazingly, she finds Michael Kenneally, and films him standing in the same field on his family farm near Cloonanaha, where Lange first met and photographed him decades before.

“Kenneally is what the Irish call a ‘character’,” Mullins writes. And in some ways he is the star of Lynch’s film. Funny, articulate, teasing, in Lynch’s footage, these quality shine through in the photo Lange took of him when he was in his early twenties. We see him now in his sixties, still tending the family farm, a great storyteller who remembers Lange flapping around like a blackbird under the darkcloth of her camera. He is the one who never left, who is still there, whose grandson, the fifth successive generation of Micaheal Kenneallys to work this land, will eventually inherit and work the farm. As she meets more of the people who remember Lange, or recognize people in Lange’s photos, a different movie emerged than the one Lynch envisioned back in America.

Lynch’s film uses Lange’s photos to prompt reminiscences that document the trajectory of the villagers’ lives. The film is a living time capsule—we, as viewers, eavesdrop on them as they look at their young selves peering out from Lange’s proof sheets so many years before. It’s a haunting experience to watch on screen. Most effecting are the stories of people who are gone, such as the young girl, so alive looking in Lange’s photograph, who died of appendicitis a short time later, or the startled cry of the middle-aged woman who

looks at a contact sheet and sees a photo not published in Mullin's book, of her father. The film is yet another testament to the raw power of black and white photography, and the memories photographs evoke. It's a tribute to Lange's keen eye and Lynch's directorial ability. Photos to Send also includes Lange's own voice as a voiceover taken from an oral history and a film made during the last decade of her life. We see her, too, white haired, at the end of her life, holding and talking about the very photographs we see on screen.

Lynch titles her movie after a notes in the Lange archive. Lange "kept a list of names and addresses in Clare under the heading "Photos to send, and people to go back to." Although she kept in touch with several of the people she met in Ireland, Lange never did go back, but Lynch's excellent documentary takes us there.

Photos to Send (2001/color/88min./Beta SP) Director, Dierdre Lynch. Original music by Irish fiddler Martin Hayes. Winner: Golden Gate Award, 2002 San Francisco Film Festival. www.Photostosend.com

Dorothea Lange's Ireland, Text by Gerry Mullins, Essay by Daniel Dixon. Elliott & Clark, 1994.

The Ireland story, and its photographs were given short shrift in her biography. It's only recently that more of this work has been widely known. Gerry Mullins, a Dublin born photo journalist living in California, discovered the Dorothea Lange Ireland photos in the archives at the Oakland Museum in 1994 while working on a story for *The San Francisco Gael*. Mullins subsequently wrote a text to accompany the photographs, which was published as Dorothea Lange's Ireland in 1996 by Elliot & Clark. It includes an essay by Daniel Dixon.

Almost a half century after Lange's trip Irish-American filmmaker Dierdre Lynch takes Mullin's book of the recently published Ireland photos, copies of Lange's proofsheets from the Oakland Museum archive and a small camera crew to County Clare to retrace Lange's steps. She hopes to make a film showing the economic and social effects of emigration, and trace the path taken by people who'd left Ireland for America. After all, one of Lange's photos features Anne and Catherine O'Halloran in front of the family hearth, shortly before they left for America. Before jet travel, the Irish often held an American wake, rather than a farewell party for friends and family leaving Ireland.



Dorothea Lange in County Clare, 1954