

Thank you very much for taking time out of your day to support this CPA event. Your attendance shows support of this group and your dedication to photography. I hope my efforts are worthy of your attention this evening.

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In the past few years, we've seen presentations on project photography. The presentations concentrated on really big book projects. To me, those are exceptional projects; exceptional in terms of artistic, temporal and financial commitment by the photographer. Not everyone has the wherewithal to commit to such grand endeavors. What can we do for personal projects?

What we have to do is spend our time wisely to create smaller projects that we can pursue to completion. I have worked on creating projects that have anywhere from ten to twenty images. This size project can be completed in a reasonable amount of time.

In my professional life, I was geared toward completing projects, reaching goals, celebrating success, recording the lessons learned and then moving on to the next project. I also approached my photographic projects in the same manner.

The Professional Project Manager knows projects are temporary and have endings. Photographers know that. But sometimes, the projects themselves don't understand that and what started out as a project just doesn't want to end. I used to think this was bad and fought the projects. But then I started thinking non-photographic artistic projects?

Let's look at writers and movie makers. Writers have characters that move through multiple books. James Bond, Jack Reacher, Harry Bosch and many other characters appear in many sequential books. Books are complete works of art, but these characters survive the book endings and go on. Mulder and Scully have been investigating for decades. These start as projects and when successful, they become franchises. This taught me an important lesson.

It's OK that projects don't end. I'm trying not to fight it so much anymore. If the project wants to continue, grab hold tight and hang on for the ride. Use the experience from these franchise projects in your other works. Maybe the franchise will help your other projects and the other projects can help your franchise.

I have two such franchises; *The Labyrinth* and *Academy Street*.

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Tonight's presentation is partially based on the last presentation I made to the CPA a few years ago. The presentation is still on my web site. The links are highlighted. Tonight's presentation will be there, too.

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The two projects followed different paths because they are different types of projects.

I control the changes and I record the changes made by others.

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Labyrinth 1.0

I took this photograph, printed it and looked at it for a year or two before I figured out what I liked about the image.

Three Photographs

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Single Images based on “Two ways out” were created to show an image with a dark exit and a light exit.

The images were published in a LensWork computer edition. During the design of the publication, three single images were pushed together by the designer and accidentally made a triptych as part of the layout.

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Labyrinth 2.0

Understanding the value of serendipity I decided to re-work the project as a series of triptychs.

All the images were now in play to make the triptychs and the images were published in LensWork. A few physical prints were made and the biggest ones were 11x24 or 12x36 inches. I recognized that the images would look really great if they were much bigger than the versions I could make on my desktop printer.

One of the other innovations that I began working on but I don't think made it into 2.0 was to do a “horizontal flip” of the images to increase the number of panels I had to work with.

Four Photographs

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Labyrinth 2.5

While much later in the developmental sequence because it occurred in the time between Labyrinth 6.0 and 7.0, it is an evolution of Labyrinth 2.0. This is the “kinda big” print version of Labyrinth 2.0. The FENCE project was able to allow me to print these images 30” tall and 5’ to

10' in length. It was important to gain recognition for these prints as well as prove to me they could actually scale to a much bigger size.

Two Photographs

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Labyrinth 3.0

I saw the RTA wanted some large art to put on the sides of buses. I thought this would be an opportunity to see if the prints would scale as well as expand from a triptych to a pentatych (if that's even a word). I created some five panel images and submitted them. They were rejected. The good thing about this iteration was the ability to look beyond three images to five and to get it off a wall and on to a bus.

Three Photographs

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Labyrinth 3.3

Once I thought about having more than three component images lined up in a row, I considered a fan fold book. A fan fold book is a long piece of paper that is folded so that it becomes a book. The presentation could be as a book of single images, or expanded and become a presentation as a multi-tych.

I didn't do much but determine that this idea would be a lot of work for a very small return. But I did like the idea and might use it someday in some other project.

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Labyrinth 4.0

The first conceptual iterations. Why limit myself to five images? Create a web based presentation and would allow the viewer to click in the image to move forward through the Labyrinth.

While the point and click version was kind of interesting, it was going to take a lot more time to code that I wanted to spend on the project. The, someone invented virtual reality. A virtual reality presentation of the Labyrinth would be really a great way to experience this form of art. Again, I didn't have the time to deal with this great thought experiment.

Page 22 and 23

Labyrinth 5.0

The second conceptual iteration. I liked the idea of five images in a row and I thought that it would be interesting to have a photographic sculpture that was life size and reminiscent of the

labyrinth experience. Life size was quite a challenge and I thought making prints using a vehicle wrap printing process on aluminum panels would make the sculpture suitable for outdoor exhibition. The major problems would be structural to account for wind loading on large aluminum panels.

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Labyrinth 6.0

Photography and technology are close coupled. Technical advances mean that artistic advances are right behind. Mural size prints are now possible. I saw a local studio promoting mural prints that could be made eight feet tall. The mechanism for creating a life size Labyrinth now exists.

In that same time frame I came up with an innovation to make viewing these images a better experience. I think that the Labyrinth mural photographs could be printed on one wall and directly across from the murals (forming a hallway) would be either a mirror or Mylar film. The audience would walk down the hallway and be able to look at the reflective surface and see themselves in the Labyrinth.

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Labyrinth 7.0

This version is based on having many more than 5 images combined as a mosaic rather than in a straight line.

Four Photographs

Here's an extension of the Labyrinth 7.0. So far, everything is been described in two dimensions. I think the presentation is still two dimensions. Is there a way to make it three dimensions and create some form of photo sculpture? If we could have mosaic type arrangements, would I figure out a way to make the mosaic arrangement three dimensional?

Page 29 - Generic Academy Street Photograph

The Next Project for Academy Street

My longest term project has been photographing Academy Street. I moved to Cary in January of 1987 and shortly after that I was challenged by a friend to create photo projects. Academy Street became that first project for me. Academy Street has given me many projects and has been a very good subject for my photographs.

When we moved to Cary, the population was about 38,000 people. The current population is about 160,000. What this means to me is that about 75% of the current population of Cary was

not here when I moved here. They have not been here to know what small town Cary really looked like.

I first thought that Academy Street was impervious to change, but I was wrong. Throughout the two years of construction on Academy Street I thought it was time to go back and take a look at my original photographs and re-photograph Academy Street from the same spot. New residents will now be able to see the changes over the past thirty years by looking at two photographs of the same place.

There's a limit to a project like this. It's limited to the good photographs of Academy Street I made thirty years ago. At that time I was using a view camera and I did not make many pictures because of the time and expense in making large format negatives and platinum printing. I was worried I would not have enough old photographs to make a good project.

Turns out this fear was unwarranted. Once I changed the criteria for acceptance of usability for this new project, then I knew I had more than enough photographs for the complete project.

Page 29 – 38 images from Academy Street Projects

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The new exhibit is *After the Memories* and is based on the following thoughts.

People die
Buildings are demolished
Memories are forgotten

After the Memories are forgotten
All we have are the photographs

Here is a sample of some drafts of how this part of the project is being assembled. Before and After photographs and an extended caption/reflection/statement with each group of photographs.

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As I was going through the project design, I wondered if I could push this a little bit farther. The changes in thirty years were pretty big. What happens if the changes were shown for fifty, sixty or maybe even ninety years? Then the question comes how to show the magnitude of these changes so the contemporary viewer can have their mind blown over the changes in Cary?

I referred back to the photographer who invented the re-photographic project, Mark Klett. Mark re-photographed the American West. He took the earliest photographs of the American West by

O'Sullivan, Jackson and others, went back to find the exact spots and re-photographed the scenes one hundred years later.

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The ToC has a library of vintage photographs of Cary to assist with creating this portion of the project. I have received many digitized files from them and have found a very small number of them that I can use for my project. The number was small because of the original scans were done for web display and measured in the area of 500 by 800 pixels. That's small even for web standards. Fewer than ten per cent of the images were good enough to use in modern high resolution prints.

Here are some of the first efforts in attempting to do the re-photographic projects of Cary.