

STEAMBOAT ART MUSEUM

ROD HANNA

Photographer's Notes

I remember when I first started making photographs that I was concerned about what the pictures said about me. Perhaps this was an outgrowth of my years studying philosophy in college. Now, 50 years later, I'm less sensitive about that and more interested in making images that please me and, hopefully, others as well. Perhaps it's the confidence that comes with decades of time looking through the lens.

Getting my feet wet as a photographer within the discipline of a newspaper definitely has had a long-term effect on the way I look at the world photographically. I do know that I have a reporter's outlook even now as I go looking for pictures from our natural world. There are innumerable talented photographers at newspapers and I was fortunate to learn from some of the best---first the staff at the Davenport Times-Democrat and then from the incredible photographers at the Topeka Capital-Journal and Director of Photography Rich Clarkson---who instilled in me a level of confidence and standard of excellence that sustains me to this day.

Newspaper photographers are unique in that they are our view into a daily world that sees the full spectrum of life---capturing moments of the ordinary and mundane but also of ultimate triumph and accomplishment to times of death and despair. I've tried to share some of that in the beginning of this retrospective to give the viewer a feel for the 50-year experience of being first a journalism and documentary photographer to the world of advertising and sports to the quiet and peaceful pursuit of nature photography. The transition is apparent to me as I see the progression in these pictures from photographing people and events to seeking extraordinary light in nature landscapes.

Shortly after I got serious about chasing the light after "retiring" from a marketing career with the Steamboat Ski & Resort Corporation, I made the switch to digital photography and have never looked back. I'm sometimes asked, do you tweak the resulting digital files? The answer is yes---all photographs are imported into Photoshop and color corrected and sized before printing or for publishing in a book. Photoshop is the digital equivalent to the darkroom in the film era of photography.

STEAMBOAT ART MUSEUM

Speaking of equivalency, I subscribe to the words of one of photography's great landscape photographers, Ansel Adams: "Alfred Stieglitz's doctrine of the equivalent as an explanation of creative photography opened the world for me. In showing a photograph he implied, 'Here is the equivalent of what I saw and felt.' That is all I can say in words about my photographs---they must stand or fall, as objects of beauty and communication, on the silent evidence of their equivalence."

This is what you can expect in my photographs---to me they are the equivalent of what I saw and felt when making the photograph. And Ansel would have loved the digital age of photography.

These days, I am privileged to have the time and circumstance to pursue my passion and share my work through books and by showing and selling my prints at Wild Horse Gallery. I plan to keep on doing this for many years to come, but I'm so grateful for this opportunity now to share this part of my life at Steamboat Art Museum.

Rod Hanna

May, 2012