



Staten Island Advance

Sunday, July 21, 2013

Focus group: Staten Island Camera Club steps into the Spotlight Gallery at Wagner College

By MICHAEL FRESSOLA



Classic subjects — a female nude, a mountainscape, a garden view, a beautiful child — are never too familiar for members of the Staten Island Camera Club, a remarkably modest organization.

The 59-year-old club recently put up “Wide Eyed,” a 20-piece show, in the tiny Spotlight Gallery in the library at Wagner College.

In an era that’s overrun with photo-imagery (multitasking personal devices, phones and iPads are the culprits) and photo-trickery it’s good to see enthusiastic photographers playing (mostly) by the classic rules.

SICC enrolls amateurs. Members seem to be people who love photography but don’t have to make a living at it. They are curious. The beauty, weirdness and ambiguities of nature are favorite topics. Geography, the American scene and man-made marvels are subjects too.

They travel. Egypt’s a favorite. National Parks, Hawaii and the Canadian Rockies are represented. There’s no Venice this year; Venice almost always makes the cut.

As small as it is, “Wide Eyed” still has room for imaginative flights, for photographs that require viewers to pay extra attention to fairly ordinary events.

Two participants, Eric Mayr and Barbara Hoffman, both shot sunset on the day of the summer solstice, the longest and most light-filled day in the calendar, from the same vantage point on a Manhattan street.

Here’s what seems to be happening. It’s a low-humidity, clear evening and the sun is sinking into the reflective Hudson River which is doubling the radiance, sending floods of light into the grid of streets.

Both Mayr and Hoffman catch the effects of this blinding brilliance. It guilds building facades and ignites windows and other shiny surfaces. It haloes passersby. In Mayr’s photograph, people in the street are turned away from the dazzling light. It’s a little strange. The moment seems so extraordinary, how come they’re not awe-struck?

But in Hoffman’s take on this moment, passersby are moving towards the light, like so many souls headed for eternity. Both compositions make the same point: Photography is all about finding the light.

Anthony Penza’s mysterious “Alone” raises more questions than it answers. It’s a photograph of a lovely but worried-looking, dark-haired young woman, nervously perched on a kind of beat-up old loveseat. The scene might be outdoors.

The subject is naked but modest. She’s leaning forward and her arms cover her chest. There’s fear in her face. And yet, it’s probably a set-up: The model looks too glossy, too sleekly turned out to be a woman in harm’s way.

Of all of the work in the show, history may determine that the most valuable print is Dennis Arculeo’s “South Shore.” Photographed B.S. (meaning Before Sandy), Arculeo’s wide

sunset shot takes in a sweet little section of beach, a fresh green stretch of wetland, a marina and the edge of a waterfront residential area.

It looks like heaven. As for how it weathered the superstorm, "Wide Eyed" doesn't say.

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ARTS & LEISURE

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JULY 21, 2013



PHOTO BY PAUL KELLY

DANCE REVIEW

Pilobolus at the Joyce

Venerable modern dance troupe settles in for magical month-long run in Chelsea

By MICHAEL I. FRESSOLA
 Staff Writer

At 45, Pilobolus still acts like a restless teenager, skipping out of modern dance one instant and into acrobatics the next. One of its eye-riveting and into-gymnastics and how about some biological choreography? The term Pilobolus refers, after all, to a lively invertebrate.

The other night in the A program of the company's month-long Joyce Theater run, it reprised one of its canons. The new piece, called "one" (for escape) was a tributary re-enactment of historic escapes pulled off by Harry Houdini. (Pain & Teller drew in from Las Vegas for the opening night performance, to introduce and narrate a video-over will replace them for the rest of the run.)

The "one" several performers restrained to ghostly-looking bondage routines. One was ligated, hanged and locked into a box that was constructed during the intermission by audience volunteers. Another was taped, cut off, tied into a chair and nearly asphyxiated with a plastic bag tied over her head. Two others, clad only in thongs, were bound to each other and to a pole.

OUT OF BOUNDS

All, inevitably, wriggled free in record time. It came as no surprise to any Pilobolus fan. They have seen what happens on TV. No dance move, dance dance looking, requiring strength, speed, balance or agility is beyond them. So "one" is really business as usual at Pilobolus.

That's true choreographically too. Pilobolus are made to show more than an organism and choreographers (four or more in some instances) often have periodic cooperation, modeling, cooperation. Invisibility is less important than belonging to the company. It's a lovely world, inhabited by creatures of extraordinary grace, strength and beauty.

Also on the A night, the company is dancing "Maracas" (score by Appalachian Max Roach) a six performer piece in which mirrored pairs (The Ladies Class) effect the patterns "All in Not Lost" in another prop-driven work. This time the dancers perform on a suspended sheet of glass.

Two vintage pieces "Cecilia" and "Cry Two," easily demonstrate the cause of their longevity.

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Staten Island Camera Club members step into the Spotlight



Chinese Scholar's Garden at Song Harbor by Paul Keller

LIBRARY OF THE JOHN WILSON CENTER FOR

FOCUS GROUP

By MICHAEL I. FRESSOLA / STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

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"A Mist Day" by Mary Fella



Left, a fish by Dennis Inouho. Above, "Sebor's" Chadra Beer through the Museum of Science's wall of windows" by Diane Griffin.

WIDE EYED

New works by the Staten Island Camera Club, up through Aug. 11.

When: Spotlight Gallery in the main library, Staten Island, 1 Campus Rd., Staten Island.

When: Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Saturday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; closed Sundays.

How much: Admission is free.

More info: Call 718-390-3400 or visit SICCC.photographyclub.com.

ADVANCE BUZZ

New awardees

A new Song Harbor Artist in Residency Program (SHARP) exhibit, showcasing English Corners and Anna Scazzano (whose work, "Red Shoes," is pictured), will open Aug. 3 (12 to 4 p.m.) in the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art on the grounds at 1000 Richmond Ter. The reception is admission free and all are welcome.

