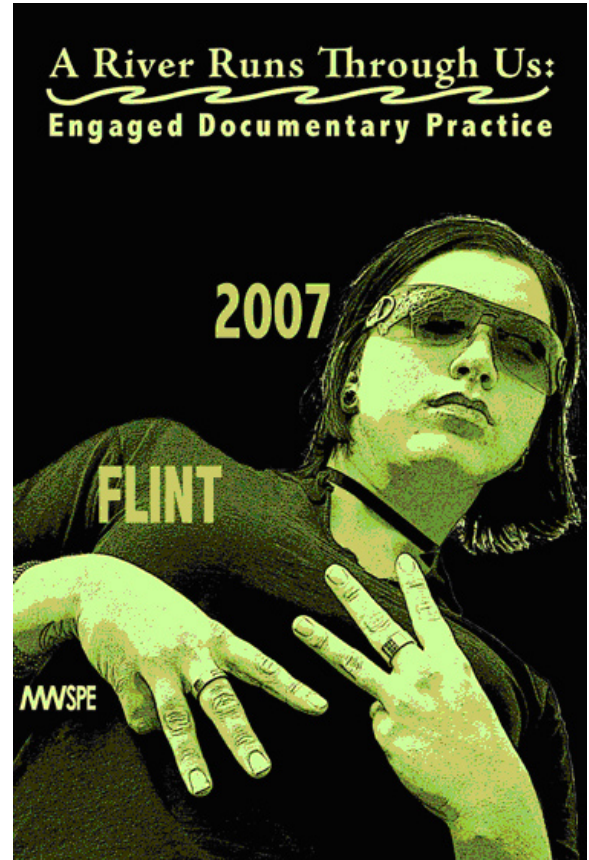


DARRYL BAIRD REFLECTS ON THE FALL 2007 CONFERENCE

The 2007 MWSPE Regional Conference was held at the University of Michigan-Flint the second weekend in November. The conference theme was "A RiverRunsThroughUs: Engaged Documentary Practice" and presented a somewhat focused look at the way we photographers use our cameras and talent to support, demonstrate, and explore our personal positions or commitments towards different causes. The net effect was a holistic view of the state of documentary practices MWSPE members presently have ongoing.

The conference was also the culmination of a three year project at UMF involving several departments including Art, Biology, English, Earth Resource Sciences, and Theater in a project to promote



T-shirt photo by Alisha Smith

environmental awareness and stewardship through art and artist's communication to the public. The project was entitled "The Green Arts Project" (GAP). The conference served as a public forum to display a juried exhibition of conference

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speakers, Flint community activists, and UMF students working with GAP.

My idea as the conference chair was to tie together as tightly as possible multiple threads into a package that would be attractive to academics, the community, and others interested in the topic. The choices for speakers was largely based on their commitment to documentary work and the perspectives they held in their respective positions. Nancy Barr from the Detroit Institute of Art gave the Flint Institute of Art audience a historical review of documentary work the DIA has pioneered and supported over the last three decades, the next evening the same venue (FIA) hosted Edward Burtynsky talking about his life's work on

the issues of sustainability and the pressure on our natural resources we demand through manufacturing and industrialization, and finally John Ganis gave an overview of the history

of the College for Creative Studies, his work, and the direction of future generations of photographers in the area. The closing segment of the conference might have been the best of all worlds when Gary Ciadella hosted a panel consisting of

three photographers -- Steven Benson, John Ganis, and Ed Burtynsky, each discussing different issues and exploring some of the questions raised by the concept of beauty within documentary photography. The audience asked questions as each participant staked out their territory on the topics and positions stated by the others. It was a grand time (IMHO).

*A River
Runs
Through
Us*

DARRYL BAIRD REFLECTS ON THE FALL 2007 CONFERENCE

...continued

Last, but not least, was the closing party hosted by Buckham Gallery which showcased the works of Darryl Baird (me), Steven Benson, Gary Ciadella, Jeff Curto, Dana Fritz, Jennifer Steensma-Hoag, Fredrik Marsh, Susan Moore, Ardine Nelson, Shanon Rice, Fillipo Tagliati, and Liz Murphy-Thomas, while the roll-your-own Dj music was managed by Aubrey Melton. The music played until late and I allegedly danced the "gator" although no photo has surfaced to prove the deed actually took place, so until then I didn't do it and that's the story I'm sticking to... ;-)

A thousand thanks go to the fabulous and tireless UMF student volunteers: Lisa Cameron, Alisha Smith, Rhonda Klenk, Anna (and Frank who stuffed all the trees into bags) Schuller, Aubrey Melton, Kristin Kantz, Andrea Lacy, Jennifer Walker, e-Liz Curran, and others who unfortunately I didn't meet until the conference was afoot. JOB WELL DONE!!!

OK, On to Cleveland!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2008 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS!

The 2008 MWSPE Scholarship Recipients are:

Undergraduate: Lacy Davis (Shawnee State University (Ohio))

Graduate: Kimberly Thomas (University of Nebraska at Lincoln)

Adjunct: Shannon Benine (SAIC and UIC)

A special thanks to Walter Bodle of Youth in Focus for judging the competition.

AN INVITATION FROM THE MWSPE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

MWSPE members are encouraged to submit articles, photographs, critiques, and announcements for future MWSPE newsletters.

I'm pleased to be the new MWSPE Newsletter Editor. Let me know what you would like this newsletter to include.

We'll be publishing the newsletter again in Fall 2008. Submissions should be e-mailed to Katie Miller at kmiller@uwsp.edu. The submission deadline is August 1, 2008.

FACULTY POSITION AVAILABLE
GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR/PHOTOGRAPHY

Successful candidate will have an MFA, or equivalent terminal degree, or an equivalent combination of education and professional/creative experience.

Proficiency in and a willingness to teach digital photography/media and the Macintosh platform required. The ideal candidate will demonstrate a record of interest and achievement in a range of scholarly, creative and/or critical activities as well as a familiarity with the full range of contemporary theory and practice.

Demonstrated excellence in teaching at the college level and a commitment to the ideals of a liberal education preferred.

Teach a wide array of undergraduate photography courses in traditional and digital photography practice, history, and criticism; contributing to the ongoing development of the photography major and curriculum; performing departmental and university service; and maintaining an active artistic/scholarly record.

Submit a letter of application specifying areas of interest and expertise, curriculum vitae, a statement of teaching philosophy, three letters of recommendation, 20 slides of recent personal work or a Mac OSX formatted CD/DVD, 20 slides of student work if available (or CD/DVD), and a SASE for return of materials.

Send to:

Dr. Alex Nesterenko, Director, School of Communications
Grand Valley State University
Allendale, MI 49401

Review of applications begins February 22, 2008. For more information about Grand Valley, see our website at www.gvsu.edu.