

Students develop new film skills

University class teaches different photo printing technique

By Glenn McKerrihan
Of the Emerald

A small group of students are learning what it was like to be a photographer before there were Fotomats on every corner and cameras that did the developing themselves.

They are in an advanced photography course, Palladium Printing, which teaches students to use methods and materials more than 100 years old.

Bill Bradish, the course instructor, has been practicing his craft since 1975 when he met and began a two-year apprenticeship with Tom Milea, a master palladium printer in Carmel, California.

The palladium process was invented in England in 1873 by William Willis. The original metal used was platinum. Since then both platinum and palladium have been used to make photographic emulsions.

Like silver today, the two metals were used in commercial photographic paper. But drastic increases in the cost of these precious metals ended commercial production.

Palladium papers have been favored by many creative photographers for the exquisite delicacy of tones possible, but since the 1930s, photographers have had

to make their own. Learning to prepare the palladium coated paper has been an important part of Bradish's teaching.

Palladium printing attracted Bradish, who uses the process almost exclusively. He has since made only occasional forays into the more common silver printing. Bradish exhibited a group of his prints at the Maude Kerns Art Center in April.

The early weeks of the course found students learning to make large negatives, either directly using a large format camera, or enlarged 35mm negatives.

Students then learned to prepare the three-part palladium emulsion, which is brushed onto high quality 100 percent cotton rag paper. Since the paper must be coated evenly to produce a good print, students often found this difficult.

Palladium prints are made when paper and negative are exposed to an ultra violet light source. Spring has meant more students doing their printing out in the sunlight.

This ability to stay out of the darkroom is a quality that endeared the process to Bradish. He also enjoys relying on himself instead of Kodak for the materials to print his images.

Bradish describes the work as

"...slow, methodical and meditative." It is the latter quality that is especially important to him and this has been a frequent topic of discussion in class.

Students are encouraged to reflect on the medium and the images they choose to print. The notion of the image being appropriate to the medium is another important issue for him.

During class reviews the question is often asked, "How well does the image 'work' in this material — would it be more appropriate in silver?" Thus photography students begin to consider the various materials available to their craft as well as the subjects found in their viewfinders.

Janice McCann, a senior painting student, was pleased by the "hands on" quality of the work. Others were impressed by the range of possibilities the course opened for them.

At the outset Bradish described his role of instructor as presenting "an open forum for the expression of individual areas of concern. I wish to create an atmosphere of mutual exploration where each of us is an essential part of the process."

By doing this a small group of photography students are expanding their vision in yet another direction.

Willamette natives' history displayed

By Bob Webb
Of the Emerald

Enter the library. Turn left at the circulation desk and enter, if ever so briefly, another world.

It's an older world, one where basic survival was not a given, where spirits were sought out for the special powers they bestowed, where particular attention was given not only to the climates of the seasons, but also to their sounds. It's a world that never really saw the 20th century.

"The Kalapuya: Native Peoples of the Willamette

Valley" is a special traveling display of the traditional tools, weapons, stories and customs of the Indians who dwelt in the grasslands and forests of the Willamette Valley for thousands of years before the settlers came.

"Linguists and anthropologists have pieced together the lifeways of this now nearly vanished people from archaeological finds, diaries of fur traders, explorers, and pioneers, and the personal stories of a few surviving Kalapuya," said Betsy Hennings, exhibit coordinator.

Highlighting the exhibit is a seasonal diagram describing Kalapuya activities and resources throughout the year, including Kalapuya descriptive names for the months. January, for instance, is described as the month of "burned breast" because the cold forced the elders to sit so close to the fire to keep warm.

A basic part of Kalapuya life focused on subsistence, and the exhibit consists largely of those implements used in obtaining and preparing food.

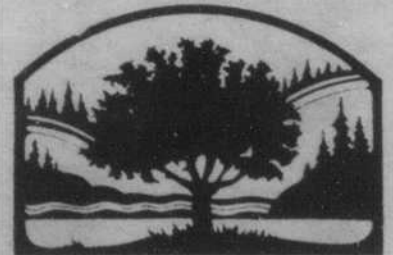
Spirit powers were an important part of life too. Young

Kalapuya, of both sexes, went on vision quests, fasting, and performing hard physical labor to make ready for a visit from a spirit power who would serve as a life-long guardian.

The Kalapuya artifacts are from the collection of the Oregon State Museum of Anthropology at the University. The exhibit is sponsored by the Library and the Museum of Natural History through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The exhibit will continue at the Library through July 9.

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