

Gearhart photographer finds inspiration locally

BY ISA KAUFMAN-GEBALLE

Don Frank is a professional photographer and documentarian based in Gearhart. His most recent gallery exhibition "Summer of Letters" opened last spring at Imogen Gallery in Astoria.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, Frank has continued shooting photos for his commercial photographer business. He also has documented local people and businesses affected by the pandemic.

Coast Weekend: How did you get started with photography?

Don Frank: It was always a hobby as a child ... I became the photo editor for the college paper, which was the first real responsible photography thing I did. I just really enjoyed being in the darkroom. What I realized was that photography gave me access to places backstage at political rallies or concerts that I would not have normally been able to see.

CW: How did you transition into your professional career and how did that bring you out here to the Oregon Coast?

DF: After college, I started working

and that kind of stuff in another field and realized I didn't really enjoy that as much. I had a come-to-Jesus moment. Like, "What do I want to do?" I decided I want to be a photographer. Then, I started trying to figure out how to do that ... And so I wound up becoming a photo assistant for a couple of studios in Portland, and that's where I learned how to be a photographer and a business person. Then I went out on my own in 2001 and moved out to the beach 19 years ago.

CW: How would you describe your photographic style?

DF: Well, most of everything I shoot is out in the world. I'm a commercial photographer. I shoot for businesses, hotels, cities, golf courses, restaurants. The hospitality industry is one of my biggest clients, so that's on location ... I have had studios out here. Now I can set up space for people for those kinds of things. But I usually travel to where they are.

CW: Can you tell me about your photography exhibition at Imogen Gallery last



A self-portrait of Don Frank.

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