

Business from 1A

Shawn continued, "And a camera on them at all times. When you see a picture of something, there's going to be a hundred different versions of that picture at every single angle that everybody has their phones out. Everybody thinks they're a photographer. For news, it's great, but it does change the way pictures are taken now. Pictures aren't special anymore."

This begs the question, are any photographs special in the way Monroe's are? Particularly when it comes to the photograph hanging on the wall?

"Does the digital image cheapen the overall value of the image because of its commonality and availability?" Jones asked. He is one of two restoration technicians for the business. "The printed image is like a substantial thing, an object. A piece of art. The digital screen is transitory. Does the general consumer want more than just a transitory image?"

This is something Shawn could answer.

"I collected baseball cards, but they've changed where there's also digital cards that you trade and collect," he said. "Real money is paid for these rare digital baseball cards. To

my son, that digital baseball card means the same, or more, than the old-fashioned cardboard card he has in his hand.

"The new generation might not care about a print on the wall. They care more about the picture on the phone."

Online digital images represent one of the biggest battlegrounds for The Archives. While it frequently put its photographs online for promotion and educational purposes, unauthorized uploads can become a huge drain on its resources, both through loss of sales and hunting down images.

"Policing is an ongoing nightmare," Greene said. "Asia is notorious with Alibaba."

Alibaba is China's version of Ebay, combined with Amazon.com. It also sells knock-off prints of Milton's work.

"Every time I go there, I'll spend a whole day," Greene said. "I'll find at least 150 infringements, but I can't do anything about it. Alibaba won't take them down. You can't go after them like you can Ebay, because that's protected by American law. The law in China is that they don't care about copyright infringement and intellectual property."

If Alibaba retailers sell the unauthorized prints outside

China, Greene could use international copyright infringement laws against the sellers.

"But if you're making it in China and selling it in China, it's a closed market. And I see Marilyn Monroe prints in lots, minimum orders of 140, for \$45 a piece. What am I going to do?" he asked.

Those struggles focus on physical prints sold online. But what about photographs that are downloaded to websites?

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act of 1998 was supposed to protect artists from having their work posted without permission. The act allowed for media to be used for education or information, but it barred websites from using copyrighted work for commercial purposes. That was the intent, anyway.

For example, an informational Google search of Monroe pulls up thousands of online photographs of the icon. But when the picture is clicked on?

"A company's website is embedded into it. You click on it, and it's a hardware store. Or it's selling sweaters," Greene said. "There was a guy who had over 100 YouTube videos with Milton's pictures in it all put to music. It was the worst music I ever heard, which offended me even more."

The Archives had that video pulled, but as one goes down, dozens more pop up.

"There's only so much you can do," Shawn said. "You have to do the cost/benefit analysis. Is this worth my time? So, you try to pick the most egregious ones."

That's not to say that The Archives is against all uses of Milton's images.

"We're very close with the Marilyn fan base," Greene said. "That's been very important to us. All those fan sites that people have, use our pictures with our graces."

All they ask is that those websites give credit to Milton and The Archives, and people

are generally more than happy to do it.

Another problem is artists stealing Milton's work and incorporating it into their own art, what Greene calls "derivative work." One of the greatest offenders is Richard Prince, a visual artist who sets photos — most of which are not his own — into frames similar to those seen on Instagram.

"This guy is a scumbag," Greene said.

Shawn explained.

"Basically, he did an exhibition of all these Instagram photos. It's just the Instagram posts with the comments. And he sells them as his art."

Instagram is an online application where users can share pictures. The problem with Instagram, Greene believes, is that once someone puts a photograph on the application, the photographer gives up their copyright. While this may be acceptable when photographers put their own images on the application, people are putting other works on the site, like Milton's.

"Prince has taken the ownership of photographs because it was on Instagram," Shawn said. "He thinks he's manipulating them enough to get outside the law. And he basically dared you to sue him. One photographer was not happy about it. Somebody put a picture of his print on Instagram. And so, he's trying to say that, 'I didn't put it, somebody else did. So, I didn't give this permission.' That's the angle he's going after."

"Am I going to put Milton's pictures on Instagram?" Greene asked. "No way."

These issues lead The Archives to wonder what the future of photography is in an online world. The question comes up with a company named Corbis.

"Bill Gates is the founder of Corbis," Greene said. "He believed everybody was going to have flat screens on their walls instead of framed pic-

tures, and they would put digital imagery in. And they wanted multiple images to be able to stream to change out your artwork. When you think about it, streaming, like Netflix, is most of the way people entertain themselves now."

But does digital imagery trump the tactile nature of printed medium?

"There's a certain level of permanence with having a good quality print on the wall," Welles, The Archives' other restoration technician, said. "Whereas, if you're just looking at something on a screen, you're talking about technology that is always changing. The prints we're making here are good for several generations before there's degradation. I think there's that aspect of it that will continue to exist. At some point, we'll get through the science fiction of it all, with walls that are images."

And there may be a backlash to the technology, which has yet to fully catch on with the public.

"You're going to see a lot of hipsters and young people wanting to get back into the darkroom," Shawn said. "There's always going to be people that want to put a print on the wall."

While that technology's future is still to be written, Corbis did create a fundamental shift in how photographs are purchased and distributed.

Corbis, which was later bought out by competitor Getty Images, began purchasing the rights to huge collections of photographs for the project. It also used the collections to sell to traditional print publications.

"They became the Walmart of licensing and they pushed the photographers out of the business, as far as the price and the value of buying photography to put in magazines," Greene said. "They made deals for a lump sum, annual fee.

People Magazine will pay \$25,000 to Corbis. And they'll have access to millions of images throughout the year at no additional expense. And it makes sense if you're going to be a publication that needs that imagery. If you break it down, you're paying \$100 a picture. So, when they come to people like us, where we're asking \$5,000 for a picture or \$1,500 for a page, they say, I'll pay you \$150. Well, that's fine, but if you want an historic picture of Marilyn Monroe, you're going to have to pay more."

Greene said the business has both gotten harder and changed since he created The Archives.

"Even with the release of brand new pictures in our book, I had to surrender to getting publicity versus getting the money. The exposure became more important than that money," Greene said.

"The Essential Marilyn" costs \$65 retail. If The Archives was to sell the prints individually, it could have made hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"I'm happy to report that we just got our first royalty statement, and we have paid for the printing of the book already, which we expected it would take 6 months to a year," Greene said.

However, that's through the sales of a book. How do the prints that The Archives create make it out to the general public? According to Greene, there's two primary areas where his fine art prints are used.

"There's the sale of fine art photography in a gallery," Greene said. "The other place is exhibitions, where the focus is to show the work, not to purchase the work. We're doing a show next week down in Beverly Hills. We have 15 pieces down there. These prints vary between \$7,000 to \$15,000 a piece."

See **BUSINESS 8A**

DentureMasters™

& Implant Center

45%

OFF Implants NOW

FREE CONSULTATION

Dr. James Ridley, DDS

206 Nopal Street
Florence, OR 97439

CALL NOW

541-997-6226

See the DentureMaster's difference, we do it all right here!

Windermere REAL ESTATE



JANELL EARLEY, BROKER

541-745-9789

janellearley@windermere.com



STEVE EARNSHAW, PRINCIPAL BROKER

541-999-8410

steve@steveearnshaw.com



DESIREE JOHNSON, BROKER

541-999-2260

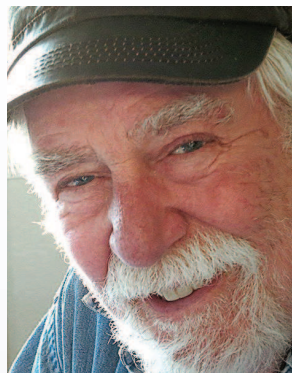
desjohnson@windermere.com



DALE SAARI, PRINCIPAL BROKER

541-999-0511

dale@florencere.com



ALLAN MUIR, BROKER

541-991-7803

allanmuir@windermere.com



LORI MUIR, BROKER

541-991-7421

lorimuir@windermere.com



VANESSA WEST, BROKER

541-999-9778

vwest@windermere.com



ROB SHEPHERD, PRINCIPAL BROKER

541-991-0607

Mr.ListIt@gmail.com



LAURA WILSON, BROKER

541-449-0229

lwflorencere@gmail.com



PHIL WILSON, BROKER

541-590-9246

Philwilsonrealtor1@yahoo.com



ELLIOTT WOOD,

MANAGING PRINCIPAL BROKER

541-465-8123

ewood@windermere.com



MATT R. POWELL, GENERAL MANAGER

541-465-8100

mattpowell@windermere.com

Windermere Real Estate/Lane County
1625 12th Street, Florence, Oregon

541-997-5926

windermere.com