

GORDON STETTINIUS

By Susan Burnstine



Gordon Stettinius has the rare talent of mixing humor and everyday oddities wherever he travels. Whether at a festival, nudist resort, convention, rally or driving across country he has the gift of capturing the collective threads that link us all in a straightforward, honest and often hilarious manner.

Stettinius can't be defined or identified by a particular genre or style as he uses various film and digital cameras, color and black and white. Sometimes it may seem as if he's flying by the seat of his pants, and perhaps he is. But it's this very quality that makes his images become so uniquely all their own.

Stettinius has been making photographs going on 25 years. He studied printmaking primarily at the University of Virginia, graduating in 1988. After graduating, he adopted photography as his principal creative outlet since he was without a printmaking facility for sometime. He's worked commercially, has exhibited nationally and internationally since the early 1990's and is represented in several galleries. In recent years he's been teaching as an adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University. But he's taken the last year off to focus on his new publishing venture, Candela Books and to promote his first book and supporting exhibitions for photographer Gita Lenz.

When asked to explain the core of community within his imagery, Stettinius explained, "It seems that community could be defined as a collection of individuals with proximity or mutual interest OR it might be defined as the particular area that supports the tribe of mutually supporting individuals. I think that as a photographer I have always gravitated towards these collectives. I enjoy the comfort level that people enjoy when like-minded individuals surround them. They are truly able to let their guards down when the atmosphere is supportive of their interests.

This is not to say that I am always at one with the communities I visit. There are times that I am clearly an outsider and so the trick then is to look around without riling up too many people or outing myself as a possible hostile.

Most recently, I have been involved with documenting U.S. Route 1, a road that runs from the Canadian border in Maine all the way to Key West. As this is essentially a photographic survey of an extended geographic area, I explored a number of different communities. Fantasy Fest & Daytona Bike Week & a Tea Party on the national mall, Homeless encampments in Providence, Rhode Island, would be the principal communities I photographed. But I would say that I was afforded glimpses into other communities as well. Beauty pageants in Maine, Best Friends Day (a music festival), Fourth of July in Boston. "

Stettinius is seemingly without limits creatively. His ongoing collaborative series, Mangini Studio Series, portrays Stettinius in various characterizations of individuals we ostensibly have all known in the past, but have emerged from this single personality, Gordon Stettinius. I, for one, can't wait to see what he comes up with next.

To see more of Gordon's work:

www.eyecaramba.com

Susan Burnstine is an award winning fine art and commercial photographer originally from Chicago now based in Los Angeles. Susan is represented in galleries across the world, widely published throughout the globe and has also written for several photography magazines, including a monthly column for Black & White Photography (UK). Nominated for the 2009 Santa Fe Prize for Photography and winner of B&W Magazine's 2008 Portfolio Spotlight Award.

www.susanburnstine.com