

## ONE CITY, TWO LENSES

*The Photography of Sergio Saravia and Randall Henningson*

**August 6 - 29, 2012**

The Nancy Dryfoos Art Gallery  
Kean University Library

Opening Reception: Thursday, August 9, 2012 from 4-6pm



My first camera, a Diana plastic camera, was a Christmas present in 1967. A Diana creates 16 4.2cm square images on one roll of 120 film. I managed to locate five images taken with my first Diana camera in a photo album; one is included in this document, as an example. The Diana, along with other simple plastic cameras, has seen a small resurgence of interest. The International Center of Photography gift shop, for instance, has been selling reproductions of the Diana for sometime. One might even say they have something of a cult following. Whether it was a sense of nostalgia, or fondness for the sometimes dreamy quality of the images, but something caused me to begin a project documenting the streets of New York with inexpensive plastic cameras. Quite possibly the primary challenge was that these cameras use film, which is becoming obsolete, and my personal supply was reaching expiration. Processing was also a challenge for the 120 film used in the Diana. I only found one camera store in my

area, which could arrange processing for this film. One of my goals with this project was to show that film images can still be viable as art, and possibly enhanced by the use of cameras with simple plastic lenses, without the need for excessive computer manipulation.

Two of the images in this exhibition were shot with a vintage Diana I acquired as an adult. I left a black border on these images to show the bowed edges of the Diana's 4.2cm format. A similar black border was popular with "purists" in the 80's and 90's, because photography instructors had used phrases like "fill the frame" and "compose in the camera" for years. Photographers would enlarge the opening in their negative holder to prove they were printing the complete image frame on their film. The majority of the images I have on display here are printed with little or no cropping, and with minimal computer manipulation. Other images were shot with one of two "disposable" cameras, which, as you can see, are more than capable of being re-loaded with another roll of film and used repeatedly.

The technology we use to create our images continues to evolve, yielding overwhelming amounts of detail in an image. Is this suitable for all photographic disciplines? I believe high-end digital cameras take some of the charm, and, mystery away from the art of capturing images. I am by no means attacking technology. Digital imaging has enhanced aspects of photography. For instance, the speed at which photographs of important events can be shared around the world. The popularity of camera phone apps like Hipstamatic, and Instagram, show that many people still have an affinity for square images with less than perfect sharpness and color. Why else would digital photography applications emulate the traits of film and low-tech lenses? At a time when digital photography is capable of ever-increasing levels of detail, there is still a place in the world of photographic art for film-based images from a few soft-focus plastic lenses.

### **Randall Henningson**

2012

I use photography as a means of self-expression. I make pictures for myself to better understand my reality and to express my interpretation of the world around me. I like to explore fragments of life as an abstract form and to see people as part of a fragment captured by the lenses. My goal is to use my camera to take you to a place of curious self-expression, and to see the world from unique angles, not your typical framed images.

My photography evokes the passage of time. My imagery comes from a deep desire to capture the stories that unfold around me. I seek the normal and I look for the angles and lines that frame our daily routine. I try to capture the stories that are not at first obvious and the uncommon in the common. I photograph the animated and inanimate in their specific environments to preserve moments that can be easily overlooked.

I use a Canon PowerShot SX130 IS point and shoot camera. I started this project in order to capture the unique scenes that present themselves in one of my favorite places in the world, New York City.

### **Sergio Saravia**

2012