

estevan art gallery & museum

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Byron Fichter Statement:

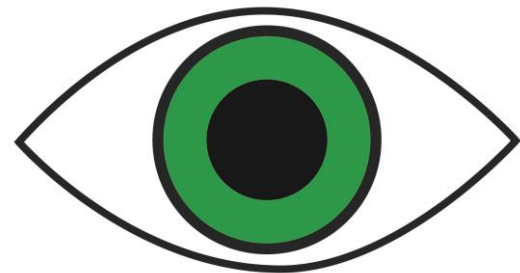
Photography is the worlds fastest growing art form. There are around 2.5 Billion smart phones in the world. Effectively supplying nearly one third of the Earth's population with the tool necessary to capture images. It was estimated that 1.2 trillion photographs were taken in 2017 alone. While not all photographs are necessarily art per say, the method in which to begin one's photographic journey is right in your hand. Some might dismiss a phone camera as a tool for creating art. Truth be told that is how I began my photographic adventure. The best camera is the one you have on you. Some of the images in this very exhibition were captured with an iPhone. The challenge of this collection was to push the limits of gear and technique while not sacrificing valuable space in my backpack.

So, what constitutes photographic art? I believe in the expression that a photo is worth a thousand words, and the telling of these words, or stories, is significant part of what transforms a photograph into a work of art. *One Man, One Camera, One Tripod* is a story of adventure, through deconstructive view of my photo book and accompanying journal, in which my camera was/is a tool which connects me to a beautiful Costa Rican world waiting to amaze with its beauty.

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Front Cover: *Hammock View*, Digital Photography, 2018

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One Man, One Camera, One Tripod

Byron Fichter | November 23, 2018 – January 18, 2019

One Man, One Camera, One Tripod

Byron Fichter

Curated by Amber Andersen

The following is an interview I had with Byron Fichter regarding *One Man, One Camera, One Tripod*. This interview took place on November 22, 2018.

Amber Andersen) Why Costa Rica as a focus for this exhibition? What is your connection to that particular place? Was this about capturing a trip or is there a spiritual connection?

Byron Fichter) I think at the time I didn't really have a location in mind. I was in a transitional period in my life where I knew I wanted to travel more and I needed to ground myself. My friend suggested Costa Rica because it's a good gateway country for backpacking. It's clean, safe, English is spoken throughout the country, etc. I definitely had a spiritual experience connecting with nature and just being out in the jungle.

Originally the plan was to do mostly landscape photography, without knowing how abundant the wildlife really was. After a few days I definitely switched gears. Doing some exploring on our (my) own, as well as hiring guides. We also spent a lot of time in art galleries and even had the opportunity to do some studio visits with local artists. I think the purpose of the trip was to refocus myself on photography. Sometimes to do that you need to get lost somewhere in a place you are not familiar with, and my trip to Costa Rica was that moment, it allowed me to reconnect to nature.

AA) You have generally done landscape photography in the past, what draws you to landscape as a subject matter?

BF) I think to truly capture a great shot you have to have a connection with your subject. You camp out for hours leading to a sunset or you return multiple times to a captivating area awaiting the right moment/mood. I think once you finally share that spiritual connection with your subject it

opens up to you and gives you the right shot. Definitely with the toucan photo I believe this to be true. It's apparently very rare to get really close to a wild toucan. One afternoon I was sitting out at the jungle edge writing in my journal and the troop came within 20 feet of me when I was able to take the shot of that one.

AA) What was one of your most memorable experiences while there?

BF) It is somewhat hard to pick one specific moment. It was so amazing to meet different travellers from all over the world. I got to meet a lot of local people and expats. I am truly at my happiest anytime I am learning about a new culture, cuisine, language or making new friends. I did really enjoy being in the jungle the day I photographed the monkeys and sloth. The jungle is so alive with wildlife you get to be a kid again, observing, learning, and interacting with animals.

AA) In capturing the moments in your trip that spoke to you, what do you hope the viewer(s) garner from *One Man, One Camera, One Tripod*?

BF) I think there are different things I want people to take away from this exhibition. First and foremost, to encourage them to take the path less travelled. Get off the resort and actually experience the countries for what they are. There is so much to do and see, life's too short to take those experiences for granted. There is nothing more replenishing for the soul than to get out, and reconnect with nature. I think I want to inspire other photographers as well. I wanted to really push the limits of a really small gear pack. Sometimes the best camera is the one you have on you. Some of these were shot with my iPhone. It's also really important to document what is happening when you take a photo, and research the subject. I think the knowledge and stories behind a photo mean even more than the images itself sometimes.

AA) So what is the story behind the title of this exhibition? I think you have already touched upon it but I think explicitly there might be a little more to it....

BF) I think just going back to recognizing you don't have to pack a ton of gear to come away with amazing memories from your trips. This ties into a photo class I taught with the photo club and classes I plan to hold in the near future. Having gear is nice and preparing for your subject is great, however when you travel you are often tied to a schedule with limited luggage space. I just wanted to demonstrate that if you properly utilize the gear you do have, you can still come away with a rewarding collection of images to remember your adventures by.

AA) Do you have an idea of what your next project will be?

BF) I don't have anything specific as far as shooting goes. I want to continue to travel, and work on my travel blogging. I also want to continue to develop and teach photography classes.

AA) For anyone just starting out in photography, what are some suggestions you could give to them about where to start?

BF) It's important to practice. Learn to understand the relationships of the exposure triangle. I think people get too caught up, or overwhelmed with all the fancy buttons and functions on modern cameras, or thinking the camera they have isn't good enough to produce quality images. Fundamentally all cameras work the same. Learn and practice the basics and start adding from there. I'm the worst when it comes to knowing all the buttons on my camera. My primary focus has always been on composition. What makes a photo pleasing to look at, what about it draws the viewer in.

AA) What has it meant for you, or your practice, to go through this year long process working on an exhibition with us, specifically for this space?

BF) It's been stressful to a point. Not because of the show so much as having a major glitch with my external raid storage device. For a while I thought I had lost all the art work for the show all together. Luckily that was something that I was able to repair and not lose the information. As for the process it has helped me grow in a lot of ways. It's easy to say it's important to tell the story of a photo in order for the viewer to share the spirituality you felt at the time when you captured the image. It's a whole another thing to take the time to put that together and truly appreciate what it is as a complete item.

Image List: All Works Presented by Byron Fichter

Blue Visitor, Digital Photography, 2018
Dancing Traveller, Digital Photography, 2018
Day Dreams, Digital Photography, 2018
Desire, Digital Photography, 2018
Dream of You, Digital Photography, 2018
First Caffeine, Digital Photography, 2018
Foolish Desire, Digital Photography, 2018
Hammock View, Digital Photography, 2018
I See You, Digital Photography, 2018
Insatiable, Digital Photography, 2018
It's Love, Digital Photography, 2018
Magic Van!, Digital Photography, 2018
Park Side, Digital Photography, 2018
The Pose, Digital Photography, 2018
Rhythm, Digital Photography, 2018
Sun Tanning, Digital Photography, 2018
Twisted Ficus, Digital Photography, 2018
Wicked Game, Digital Photography, 2018