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Raritan Photographic Art Society excites interior of Alfa Art Gallery



Photo by [Jeffrey Gomez](#) |

The Mason Gross School of the Arts welcomed students, faculty and staff back with a showcase of their previous artwork.

The Raritan Photographic Art Society covered the walls of the Alfa Art Gallery in New Brunswick at the opening of its showroom last Friday, Feb. 3.

The Alfa Art Gallery has been an established nonprofit organization since 2007 and holds around 10 different exhibitions each year, consisting of many different forms of art.

“Our goal here at the Alfa Art Gallery is to bridge the gap between artists and the community,” the group said during their presentation.

The Raritan Photographic Art Society was founded in 1929, making it the oldest photography club here in New Brunswick. The club is made up of professional and amateur photographers practice styles ranging from photorealism to abstraction.

Now if you are anything like me, and do not completely understand photography, I highly recommend that you make it a point to visit this exhibit within the next few weeks to experience the moving exhibition.

The second you walk through the door you are faced with intense photography laid out around the walls, with cello played by Brianna Tagliaferro and the piano played by Kevin Madison playing in the background, both seniors in the Mason Gross School of the Arts.

The photography does not only capture your attention with vivid details and diverse pieces of scenery and objects, but overwhelms you with a whole array of feelings that brings about past experiences or new thoughts.

I was fortunate enough to speak with photographer Jamie Shombert, whose pieces hold a special place close to her heart, being taken at the home of her parents.

“(My objective is) to express my story and what I am seeing in the most emotional way possible,” she said. “It's not that I want to make the viewer cry, but if I could that would be awesome.”

One piece of Shombert's was a photograph of her father's hand with extravagant detail of his skin's texture, showing his age.

The advice she gave to aspiring photographers was, “Make sure that it touches you first.”

Susan Powell's photographs are titled “After the Storm” and “Glow of the Shoreline” and portray places on the beach and the boardwalk.

“I am not looking for anything specific,” she said. “It is more so where am I going to wonder to and how can I make my audience see it the way that I did.”

All of these artists capture a wide span of environments. Kedar Wani's photograph “Start of the Canyon” explored a more natural landscape, while Bill Petscavage, who is currently photographing monuments and memorials in Washington D.C, featured shots of the man-made world.

Richard Doerr, the current president of the Raritan Photographic Art Society, was also featured in the gallery. His photograph “Lifeguards in Competition” is an action shot, while another piece shows leaves that fell on the pavement in his piece “Fallen.”

Ellen Reardon's photographs, “Backlit Hibiscus” and “Dahlia” are both photographs of flowers that she “finds to be shy and brazen, bold and timid, and simple and terribly complex.”

These were just a few of the photographers that are featured in the show, which you have to experience first hand to feel the vibe of the exhibition. The diverse group of artists did a fantastic job at photographing what they find different about such simple things. The complexity in this art gallery is hidden, but the moment that it is found it is breathtaking.