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FREESTYLE

Volume 4 Issue 2  
FALL 2004

Introducing the  
Creative World of...  
Holga Cameras!

Compliments of

Freestyle...The Educators' Resource<sup>TM</sup>

# Freestyle Photographic Supplies Presents:

# Freestylin'

## A Quarterly Newsletter

INTRODUCING...  
The Holga CFN 120!



CFN Color Flash  
Camera Is Here!

Get it now...

**\$34<sup>99</sup>**

#146-120

Available only at Freestyle.

Still retaining all of those fabulous and unique features that make the Holga world famous, this new Holga CFN takes Holga photography to the next level. New features include a standard tripod mount (1/4 - 20) and a bulb selector for extra long exposures. Also, no more broken fingernails... the format arrow on the back of the camera easily slides between 12 and 16 exposures. The new Color Flash is a built-in flash which contains a spinning color filter wheel. Choose from red, yellow, clear or blue flash.

### Freestyle Education Department Staff

Our Education Department staff is available Monday through Friday to help you with bids, special orders, product availability and technical questions.

800.292.6137

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### Freestylin' Editorial Staff

Stephanie Morey,  
Patrick DelliBovi, Kristal Burtrum,  
Eric Joseph, Kristina Loughery,  
Marvin Keller, Sherry Lee,  
John Richardson

### LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

"As a long-time Freestyle customer, I want to say that I especially appreciate the wide variety of materials available for traditional photography and alternative processes that you carry. Freestyle's informative staff is always available to answer our questions and solve our technical problems. And Freestyle has always provided my students with exceptional products at competitive prices. Thank you!"

Sandy Carrien -  
Photography Instructor,  
New Hyde Park High School, NY

"I think everyone at Freestyle provides an unimposing environment conducive to student learning."

Lesley Krane -  
Assistant Professor,  
California State University Northridge, CA

# Freestyle Photographic Supplies Presents:

# Freestylin'

## A Quarterly Newsletter

### Introduction

We have devoted this issue of *Freestylin'* to the world famous and ever popular Holga camera. For those of you who may be unfamiliar with the Holga, here is a brief history. Back in the the 1960's and 70's there was a plastic "toy" camera called the Diana, which many photographers found to be a unique image making tool. Far from being a technical piece of equipment, the Diana offered images that were soft and ethereal in nature and offered a "different" look and feel that caught on with fine-art photographers as well as educators. The Diana was discontinued in the late 1970's to the disappointment of all who loved her. In the 1980's the Holga emerged as a suitable replacement. It was not, however, created as a replacement for the Diana but simply as an inexpensive camera for the Chinese market using the popular 120 size film format.

In the last 20 years, educators have relied on the Holga as an indispensable tool for teaching photography. It gives students an inexpensive opportunity to experience medium format film and teaches them to embrace the inherent simplicity of the Holga camera. The creative possibilities of the Holga are extensive, considering that you can scratch the lens, melt it, put liquids on it as well as abuse the camera in ways you would never think of with a Mamiya or Hasselblad.

One of the unique features of the Holga is that it can have light leaks. Some take advantage of this in creative ways, others bring a roll of electrical tape with them to seal them up. Fine-art photographers love the multiple exposure capabilities of the Holga as well as the soft image quality and "different" look. Wedding photographers have been known to offer Holga images as part of their "package" for candid shots at weddings.

The Holga has spurred a cornucopia of Holga accessories including a manual flash, Holga camera bags, and even a Holga enlarger for under \$100 (lens included!) Polaroid has even created a film back for use with the Holga. Freestyle is also introducing a new version of the Holga featuring a tripod mount and bulb setting, as well as a brand new Holga, the CFN. With a built-in flash incorporating a color filter wheel, the CFN allows you to choose different colors to splash/flash your subjects (see newsletter special.) Read on to see other new exciting Holga accessory items as well as featured artists, tips and classroom ideas. ■

Eric Joseph -  
Photographer and Vice President of  
Merchandising & Product Development

### We want to hear from you!

Questions or comments? Ideas for future issues? Let us know. Write us at: **Freestylin' Quarterly Newsletter**, Freestyle Photographic Supplies, 5124 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood, CA 90027; or [newsletter@freestylephoto.biz](mailto:newsletter@freestylephoto.biz). Reach us by phone at 800.292.6137 x119.

### Featured Artist

A Freestyle Interview with Fine-Art Photographer  
and Freestyle Advisory Board Member, Kit Frost.

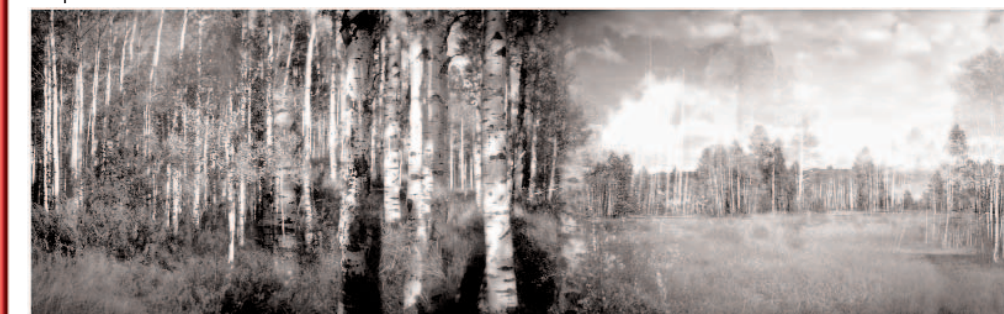
by Kristal Burtrum

Kit Frost is a well-known photographer and educator whose unique Holga imagery pushes the "toy" camera to its limits. Her vibrant imagery captures the beauty of the outdoors with the unique look that only a Holga can provide. She enjoys working with the Holga because of its modest weight, soft focus, and square image format, and believes that it can be a great classroom tool to encourage students in their creativity.

Kit's lifelong fascination with photography began when she was just a small child. From the age of eight she and her camera were a constant presence at family functions and holidays. As an adult, her interest continued to grow, and she spent 22 years teaching photography at Bayonne High School, New Jersey. During that time, she "fell in love with both the process and the product" of photography.

Kit still continues her work in photographic education, teaching privately as the director of Chase the Light Photography and Adventures, and as an instructor at the Maine Photographic Workshops, where she teaches many of the youth workshops. She clearly enjoys teaching others, and, over the years, Kit has found her students' work to be a source of inspiration for her own.

Her career as a professional photographer allows Kit enormous opportunity to work in the outdoors. Her photography reflects her desire to "be part of the landscape;" the luminescent images capture a sparkling sense of wilderness on film. Many of her images are made with Holga cameras, which let her experiment with multiple exposures and image layering. She harnesses the Holga's simplicity to experiment with the interplay of light and space, depth and motion. Her favorite Holga image, *Aspengrove*, was an attempt to capture the experience of walking through a forest. The manual film-advance of the Holga allowed her to create a panoramic, overlapped image that shifts gradually from one edge of the print to the next.

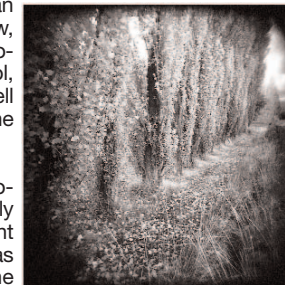


"Aspengrove" by Kit Frost

Kit started working with Holgas in the Maine Photographic Workshops. She began asking students to set aside their usual cameras, set aside the light meters and filters, and make images that spoke of their photographic vision and not just their technical understanding. Holgas can be used in much the same way in a classroom setting.

Using the Holga can be a great way to discuss image content and framing with beginners, rather than frustrating them with technical details. It can also be used as a great mid-semester break in routine to help get students' creative juices flowing again. As an added benefit, Holgas are very affordable for students who may not want to invest in a conventional camera for a beginning photography course.

Kit advises teachers who are interested in adding Holgas to their curriculum to do some research to familiarize themselves with the camera. She recommends shooting at least 10 rolls of film, then examining the images to see where you want to go. "Before you teach the Holga, take it out for a ride. Stop often. Play." Experiment with different effects, have fun with it. Learn what a creative tool it can be in even a beginner's hands. Don't underestimate its creative options just because it has only one F-stop. This "restriction" can force you to look at light in new, unique ways.



"Poplars" by Kit Frost

"Many folks think the Holga can only be used in sunlight," says Kit. "Look at my images. Examine the light. Try overlapping multiple images. Understand density. Have fun." Multiple exposures and other creative shooting techniques breathe new life into your photographic repertoire. They allow you to use your Holga in a whole new set of lighting situations, and can transform an ordinary still-life into a truly original work of art."

Looking online at others' work can also help you channel your ideas. Seeing how other Holga photographers have used the camera's quirks and foibles to their advantage can help you realize the full potential of the little plastic camera. The Holga's primitive controls can be frustrating at first, but, as Kit's work demonstrates, the Holga can help you to find new solutions to tricky situations. ■

# Classroom Spotlight

## How the Holga Forged Trans Pacific Relations and Fostered Adventure

By Stephanie Morey

Leaving your home-turf for new territory is the first step in creative growth. But home-turf is more than geography, it is also psychology – a place where all your previous ideas live. Making variations on an idea is a good creative exercise, but to generate new ideas you have to go somewhere else, because creativity is an adventuresome process. Ultimately, you need to set yourself up for the unexpected.

Perhaps no better example of this process exists than traveling half-way around the world with only a Holga 120S in your camera kit – especially if you have never left the confines of your home country before. That is why Professor of Art, Joe Ostraff is such an advocate of study abroad programs like his Field Studies Program at Brigham Young University. Thanks to an exploratory email exchange with a New Zealand educator and artist back in 2002, each year a dozen BYU students are whisked away from their familiar, landlocked, collegiate environment and dropped into a life along the crashing waves of a foreign shore.



"Untitled." 2004

This year, the program, sponsored by BYUs Department of Visual Arts, selected eleven BYU students from Theatre and Media Arts and Visual Arts Departments to spend an amazing month living and working with the aboriginal Maori of New Zealand, a people known for their unique and beautiful artistic techniques. At the scholarly nexus of it all is the Te Ware Wananga o Awanuiarangi, one of only two certified Maori Universities in all of New Zealand.

Studying together with their Maori counterparts, BYU students shared artistic sensibilities and creative vision through a variety of collaborative projects.

One of the major aspects of this collaboration involved a joint project using black and white photography and the Holga 120S camera. The eleven Brigham Young University students teamed with twenty-five Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi students to explore the surrounding area and record what they saw on film. For four weeks the students shot during the day and printed only at night in a makeshift, light-leaky darkroom.

None of the students, American nor Maori, were familiar with black and white darkroom techniques. But with the help of photographer and BYU adjunct faculty, Brian Wilcox, Professor Ostraff converted a storage closet into a temporary darkroom and taught everyone the ropes. The final outcome was assembled in a group exhibition of black and white contact prints shown at Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi University as part of the dedication of the new art facilities.

"Mechanically the Holga camera is simplicity itself," proclaims Professor Ostraff of the all-black, medium format camera. "The anti high-tech aspects of Holga use freed students from the stifling nature of digital photography, where they had tended to become bogged down with all the features. The simple nature of the Holga placed emphasis on seeing, thinking, and interacting with the environment at hand."



"Untitled." 2004

"Aesthetically, too, we were attracted to the larger 120-size film format. It lends itself to doing contact prints in a travel darkroom with nothing more than a flashlight! Of course, the random light effects and a plastic lens were most definitely a plus."

Once in the hands of the students, the Holga quickly worked its charms on them. "Initially, students found it difficult to take the Holga camera seriously," reports Professor Ostraff. "One student commented, after using it to take photos of people in town, 'They didn't even think it was a camera.' But it wasn't until they had gone through the entire process of exposing the film, processing it and making prints that the potential of the camera started to sink in. By the end we overheard student's saying that they wouldn't go anywhere without their Holga. But I think the fact that most of the students went from exposing 1-2 rolls of film in the first week to exposing 4-6 rolls in a matter of days speaks volumes."

## "The anti high-tech aspects of the Holga's use freed students from the stifling nature of digital photography"

— Joe Ostraff

Professor of Art, Brigham Young University

In the end, everyone grew creatively and went away with a deeper appreciation for exploration and new experiences. They learned that preconceptions about cultures and cameras can be broken if you can bring the two groups together. But were there any regrets from the trip? Just one: "Bring more film," says Professor Ostraff. "Due to the difficult nature of finding 120 film and the high cost of buying it while traveling, we shot much less than we would have preferred. Another thing, we would have jump-started the students by having them expose 3-4 rolls on the first day, developed that night and print the following night. We would have seen in two weeks the level of productivity found in the third and fourth weeks." Hindsight has an infinite depth of field.

### Notes to the Reader

You don't have to travel to New Zealand to find adventure, nor do you have to spend a fortune. A weekend in the local state park and some Holga cameras can get the creative ball rolling. Process film on location or save it for the school's darkroom. Remember to pack plenty of supplies. Film is inexpensive but opportunities are irreplaceable.



"Untitled." 2004

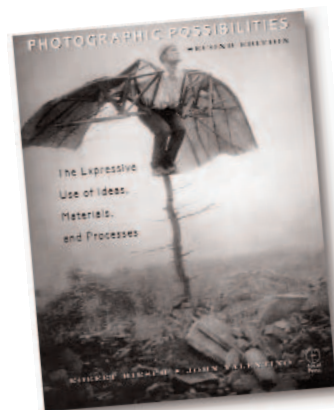
Joseph Ostraff is a Professor of Art currently in his 12th year teaching at Brigham Young University. He is probably best known for his paintings, which incorporate experimental processes with more traditional techniques. Along with exhibiting nationally, Joseph has worked with his wife Melinda, an ethnobotanist, in making documentary films about traditional arts. ■

# Recommended Text

## Photographic Possibilities

Author: Robert Hirsch

Member, Freestyle Advisory Board of Photographic Professionals



In this overview text by Freestyle Advisory Board Member, Robert Hirsch, you will find a rich cache of history, technique and processes that span the photographic spectrum.

As both a reference book and a nonfiction page-turner, the world of photography flows from the chapters of *Photographic Possibilities* in a steady stream of stimulating ideas. Though this, the second edition, is co-authored by John Valentino, it maintains the classic Hirsch upbeat style that keeps interesting what can often be technical and dry.

Working with art appreciation techniques, Mr. Hirsch begins revealing the double-helix relationship between photographic science, movement and art, leisurely discussing the various concepts and figures. In this way he suggests the continual renaissance, or rebirth, of the craft as each new change in tools is discovered. This is important, because there is no other two-dimensional art form that is in a greater state of continual flux.

*Photographic Possibilities* manages to maintain this sense of wonderful discovery even as it accelerates into all things photographic. Like a glossary and an encyclopedia together, this densely populated text covers an extensive array of topics - sometimes briefly, sometimes in depth. But the pages are extremely dense. Every paragraph has a purpose and reveals useful information. Every section, from chemistry to equipment, leaves the reader with a sense of gain, and the feeling that more questions have been answered than asked.

Finally, each chapter has a reference list for those who seek more information. And, yes, this book even mentions the Holga! ■

I also recommended...

"Silver Gelatin"  
by Martin Reed and Sarah Jones

Stephanie Morey –  
Photographer & Freestylin' Editor

# Product Spotlight

## Holga's Latest Additions

Member, Freestyle Advisory Board of Photographic Professionals

by Michelle Bates

Since their discovery by fine-art photographers, simple, so called "toy," cameras have fostered creativity in those who embrace them. These simple tools allow the user to escape from traditional photographic expectations to explore new image-making roads.

These creative people often seek to alter and expand on the simple camera concept by customizing their camera to do something different.



The Holga CFN includes several creative and useful design improvements.

Traditionally, Freestyle, the U.S. distributor of the Holga, has lead Holga innovation, creating a product line that includes camera bags and an enlarger.

This time, Holga has enthusiastically taken the initiative to modify their camera into an inspirational, new concept. Listening closely to customer ideas, they have introduced several important enhancements to the Holga's simple skeleton. They are also aiding Holga users in discovering their personal vision by bringing some fun and exciting bells and whistles to market.

The Holga CFN introduces foam inserts to keep the film reels taut and flush with the film plane and finally keep film rolling on the reels correctly. The bulb setting, activated by a flushmounted switch, means as-long-as-you-want time exposures, a standard, turned brass, tripod mount creates endless long exposure possibilities.



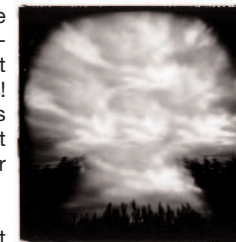
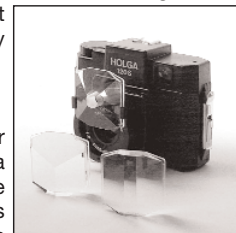
Full Frame Polaroid back for the Holga offers instant art in a larger format.

I believe that the best way to enhance the use of your Holga is with accessories, and the most popular of these is the Polaroid back for the Holga. This great item changes the way the Holga can be used, allowing for instant gratification. Released in the U.S. by Freestyle back in 2001, it now boasts a fantastic full-frame image area that actually gives you a bigger than 120 image on your polaroid film: 2.75" x 2.50"! And when using Polaroid Type 85

film, a negative is also produced so these images can also be enlarged into a fine-art custom print. When combining the Polaroid back with the Holga CFN's bulb feature, instant images can be made in any amount of light!

### Filter Your World

The new Holga filter holder and filter sets open up a whole new world of image possibilities. The holder fits like a cowling over the lens barrel. Once you have the filter holder, the possibilities of what to put in front of Holga's lens are endless! It slips on easily and stays on firmly. Once in place, it accepts any of the filter or lens sets now available.



The Holga split-image lens and green, and can be used set offer a uniquely shaped view of the world.

The colored filter set comes in red, yellow, blue and green, and can be used set offer a uniquely shaped view of the world.



The Soft Surround filter set combines soft vignetting and color into one. Hard to describe, this four filter set has a softening pattern in either red, blue, yellow or neutral.



There is also a Split Image lens set featuring three prism-like inserts that create abstraction as much as they do multiple images. And because the facets are not precision-made, you'll be surprised by your results. The one with four facets and a hole drilled in the middle is a personal favorite.

The filters, Polaroid back and Holga CFN all play into the Holga's natural tendencies to create unique works.

As a user of Holgas for over a decade, I am thrilled with Freestyle's dedication to not only keeping Holgas available, but expanding their offerings of affordable photographic equipment. In this time of the ever-quickening obsolescence of expensive digital gear, Freestyle's commitment to photography as a creative process is refreshing. Thanks Freestyle! ■

To view more images made with these new filters, see our web site at: [www.freestylephoto.biz](http://www.freestylephoto.biz).

You can get back issues of *Freestylin'* Quarterly Newsletter in downloadable PDF format, as well as extended versions of articles, feature photos and other great information on our website at: [www.freestylephoto.biz/newsletter.php](http://www.freestylephoto.biz/newsletter.php)

# It's The End of The Holga as We Know it... And we'll be fine.

by Patrick DelliBovi

The announcement that all Holga aficionados have dreaded is here...The Holga Camera as we know it will be no more! But wait, the Holga is not destined to follow the path of the Diana twenty years earlier. No, this is a positive change to this medium format, plastic camera that should please most Holga users, barring a few purists.

The new Holgas, due out in January of 2005, have a few features that only a Holga shooter would appreciate, including a metal, standard tripod mount (1/4 -20) and bulb selector for extra long exposures.

Your film will now travel smoothly in either 645 (6 x 4.5cm) or 6x6cm formats with the addition of two interchangeable plastic masks. Foam padding behind the advance now keeps the film in place, which means no more little bits of cardboard are required.

Also, no more broken fingernails...the format arrow on the back of the camera easily slides between 12 and 16 exposures.

Those of you that have been Holga users may want to buy a few more of what will become known as The Classic or the Original Holga. Once they are gone...they're gone! If you don't own one of these gems, don't wait long...we have only a few months supply left before the new Holgas arrive. ■

Included with every Holga camera is **The WORLD FAMOUS HOLGA MANUAL**. It is loaded with tips, tricks and little known facts about the Holga camera which will help you maximize your experience with this creative tool. **FREE HOLGA MANUAL** included with every Holga camera purchase. Also available as a free download from our Website!

All products featured in our newsletter can be found on our website at [www.freestylephoto.biz](http://www.freestylephoto.biz)