



GRIFFIN MUSEUM ANNOUNCES 3RD ANNUAL FOCUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

May 8th ceremony honors contributions to the promotion of photography

April 10, 2008 (Winchester, MA) With its annual *Focus Awards*, the Griffin Museum of Photography recognizes the work of people who are not photographers, but who have been instrumental in increasing awareness of the photographic arts among the general public.



Awards are presented in three categories: *Lifetime Achievement*, given to an individual whose ongoing commitment to photography has far-reaching impact; *Rising Star*, awarded to an emerging force the photographic community is watching with interest; *New England Beacon*, recognizing an individual whose work brings prominence to the local photographic scene; and the *Spotlight Award*, given to an entity that consistently shines a light on photography and enhances the art form.

Recipients of the 2008 *Focus Awards* are:

Photographer unknown



Lifetime Achievement: Deborah Willis, curator, author, educator, historian, photographer, and chair of the department of photography and imaging at the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU. During a career of more than 30 years, Willis has made a significant contribution to the field of photography as an art photographer and one of the nation's leading historians of African-American photography. As curator of the landmark Smithsonian exhibition, *Reflections on Black: A History of Black Photographers, 1840 to the Present*, she presided over the largest exhibition exploring the breadth and history of black photography in the United States.

Willis was awarded a MacArthur Fellowship in 2000, and was named a Guggenheim Fellow and an Alphonse Fletcher Fellow in 2005.

Photo: Zach Klein



Rising Star: Jen Bekman, owner of the Jen Bekman Gallery in New York. An innovative gallery owner, Bekman has used her knowledge of the Web to change gallery culture. After years of managing Web development teams at Netscape and Disney, she used her Internet skills and interest in photography to create a vehicle for connecting emerging photographers with potential buyers on the Web. She writes a blog, *Personism*, and is founder of the international photo competition, *Hey, Hot Shot!* Her latest endeavor is 20 x 200, a place to buy editioned prints and photos at affordable prices. She has been featured in many publications and was named Innovator of the Year by *American Photo*.

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New England Beacon: Henry Horenstein, photographer, educator, and author. Horenstein's textbooks on photography have been used by hundreds of thousands of photography students during the past 30 years. *Black & White Photography: A Basic Manual* is in its third edition. His other photography textbooks include, *Beyond Basic Photography: A Technical Manual* and *Color Photography: A Working Manual*. He is the author of many monographs including, *Honky Tonk*, *Humans*, *Creatures*, *Aquatics*, *Canine*, and *Racing Days*. His newest book, *Close Relations*, is a collection of photographs he took as a student at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in the early 1970s. Horenstein is a professor of photography at RISD.



Spotlight Award: Nikon Corporation. Photographers recognize Nikon as a world leader in digital imaging, precision optics, and photo imaging technology, as well as in setting new standards in product design. Photographers also consider Nikon's consumer and professional equipment, noted for its performance, as the best available.

Photographer unknown



Master of ceremonies for the evening is Brian Clamp, director and owner of ClampArt in New York, a gallery that specializes in modern and

contemporary art, with an emphasis on photography. He was the first Focus Awards Rising Star in 2006.

Presenting the awards are Anna Maria Horsford, acclaimed television and feature film actress; Omar Wasow, cyber guru and founder of blackplanet.com; Tom and Ray Magliozzi, award-winning hosts of *Car Talk* on National Public Radio; and Rick Friedman, photographer, educator, and president of the Boston Press Photographers Association.



Photographer unknown



Photographer unknown



Photo: Richard Howard

The *Focus Awards* are presented at a reception at the Griffin Museum, 67 Shore Rd., Winchester, Thursday, May 8, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$45. Space is limited. For reservations, call 781-729-1158.