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EXPLORE THE FILM PHOTOGRAPHY INTEREST EXPLOSION AT FLOWER CITY ARTS CENTER

(ROCHESTER, NY– January 13, 2023) — Explore the “explosion” of interest in film photography at Flower City Arts Center, located in a historic former firehouse at 713 Monroe Ave. The Photography and Digital Arts department (formerly known as Community Darkroom) of Flower City Arts Center was established in 1977 by Visual Studies Workshop graduate student Anne Beach. For the past 45 years, FCAC has offered photography classes in many different processes; community access to the facilities which includes darkrooms, an alternative process space, a digital lab, and a lighting studio; exhibition spaces; and special grant and donor supported programs for city of Rochester youth ages 11-14.

During the emergence of digital photography, many educational programs eliminated their darkrooms. Not Flower City Arts Center. Through a gift from photographer Dan Neuberger, another 6-enlarger darkroom was added. A space known as the Silver Den was also established, complete with a UV exposure unit. The Silver Den enables photographers to experiment with alternative processes such as cyanotype and kallitype which both utilize digital negatives. Watercolor paper or cloth can be coated with light sensitive emulsion and contact printed in the darkroom.

“We saw digital as another photographic tool, not as a replacement for film”, says Sharon Turner, the Photography Director at the arts center from 1978 to 2018.

Today, the Go Retro with Film class is filled with adult students of all ages who are experiencing film for the first time or refreshing darkroom skills they have not used in a while. Stay Retro, a follow up class which focuses on maintaining darkroom skills, also fills. Specialty classes such as Large Format Photography, Color Film Processing, Scanning Negatives and Slides, Kallitype, Anthotype, and Lumen Printing are also offered periodically.

Studio 678, an after-school program in analogue photography and writing currently has forty 6th-8th graders enrolled. Students use 35mm film donated by Kodak Alaris, go on field trips in the community to take pictures, and make their own prints in the darkroom. An awards ceremony, exhibition reception, and book release are scheduled for March 31, 2023, at City Hall. This is the 25th year that Studio 678 has provided this experience for city of Rochester students.

“The excitement of the darkroom never gets old. It will always be a magical experience to see photographs develop in the chemistry whether it’s the first time or the hundredth time. It’s always amazing! We are proud to still offer a community darkroom experience along with the digital tools that we have grown accustomed to.” Juliana Muniz, Director of Photography & Digital Arts at the Flower City Arts Center.

Both morning and evening sessions of Go Retro with Film start in mid-January and Stay Retro starts in mid-February. Registrations are being taken now and these classes are already half full. You can see all of our class offerings and sign up for classes on the Flower City Arts Center’s website www.flowercityartscenter.org or call 271-5920. You can also inquire about facilities use and how to become a member!

About Flower City Arts Center:

The Flower City Arts Center has been operating since 1970. Flower City Arts Center is a darkroom, photography and digital arts facility, a ceramics workshop, a printmaking and book arts center, and continues to expand to include other forms of community art resources. The Center uses its resources to provide youth programs in schools, offers over 300 classes to the general public, and rents space to artists and others interested in the visual arts. Internships, facilities for advanced students, and resources for anyone interested in visual arts are also available. Three galleries in our building serve as exhibit space for local, regional, and national artists. Our comprehensive studio facilities and access available to our artists-in-residence and studio artists is unparalleled in the region. For more information, contact the Flower City Arts Center Office at (585) 244-1730, or visit our website at www.flowercityarts.org.