

# Les Rencontres d'Arles

In discovering that 'rencontres' means 'meetings' John Henshall meets some great photographers

**L**es Rencontres d'Arles is one of those very French photographic events which I have to confess I've been afraid to attend, despite its huge reputation.

I may have been afraid that it would be very pretentious and require a much greater command of the French language than I possess. I was wrong.

The event is one which you should attend at least once. And then I think you'll return year after year.

I went as the guest of Hewlett-Packard, after a thrilling few days at its facility in Barcelona.

What delighted me about Barcelona and Arles was the stature of the photographers I met there – Elliott Erwitt, Douglas Kirkland, Don McCullin, Joel Meyerowitz, Stephen Johnson, Peter Marlow, Eli Reed – to name but a few.

There were also the doyens of printing – Jack Duganne, Harald Johnson – and the world's leading expert on the permanence of prints, Henry Wilhelm of Wilhelm Imaging Research.

'Meetings' is exactly what 'rencontres' means and the great strength of Arles is

the warm relaxed atmosphere in which you can meet some of your heroes.

But meeting photographers who are not yet so widely known was one of my enduring pleasures. Photographers such as Mark Alberhasky, from Bowling Green, Kentucky, USA, who for me was one of the inspirational highlights of the trip. And such a lovely warm man.

Mark is a photographer with a wonderful eye for pictures full of strong colour and graphical design elements, together with off-beat dynamic framing.

Mark supplies images to both Nikon and LowePro for their brochures, mainly using a Nikon D200. But he always carries a Nikon CoolPix S6 with him, ready to catch the unexpected.

The image of the clown on page 37 was captured in the morning market in the town of St Rémy-en-Provence, where we stayed, not far from Arles.

Mark explains, "I came across a street performer named Mathias, who happened to be working in light that made his blue outfit turn full on. The building in the background was shaded, helping bring him to the forefront all the

more. I made several images as he worked the crowd, and then suddenly he crouched down and looked at me, as if to study me instead of me him. That moment brought something unique to the frame, almost as if a fairy from another dimension had dropped into our realm to see if reality is all it is cracked up to be." (Nikon CoolPix S6 ISO50 1/256 sec f/3)

Another example of Mark's keen eye is the image of the girl in blue on the same page. The strong primary colours, steep lighting and slightly zany framing really make this image.

Mark says, "I was strolling the side streets of Madrid midday and was



Les Rencontres d'Arles is totally bi-lingual in French and English. The event takes place at various locations all over the beautiful old town of Arles. The workshops and symposium take place in the week 4-8 July but the many exhibitions run until 17 September 2006. For full details please refer to [www.rencontres-arles.com](http://www.rencontres-arles.com).

LEFT: People of all nations waiting for the opening on 4 July 2006. ABOVE: A late-night projection at the Théâtre Antique Roman amphitheatre. (Canon 1DsMkII ISO3200 2sec f/4.5 Sigma 12-24mm hand held available light.)



Believe it or not, one of the subjects of these two pictures is in both of them. No, Marilyn Monroe has not changed into John Henshall – I have to admit that my figure just isn't the right shape. The lucky three year old is Joshua Greene, also seen above with yours truly in the streets of Arles.

The picture was taken by Milton H Greene, Joshua's father. Milton Greene first met Marilyn on a photo shoot in 1953 for 'Look' magazine. The young starlet was enamoured with the notion of the famous fashion photographer, 'Color photography's wonder boy', taking pictures of her. Over the next five years, Milton created over 5000 images in over 50 sittings. These are now available at [www.archiveimages.com](http://www.archiveimages.com)

The relationship did not end there. Milton built a trust with Marilyn and they formed Marilyn Monroe Productions, their first film together being 'Bus Stop' (1956). Their work was a match to please our eyes.



Photograph by Milton H Greene Copyright © 2006 Joshua Greene [www.archiveimages.com](http://www.archiveimages.com)

stopped by the wonderful rich colors of the wall in the strong sunlight. I found the composition of lines that worked and then waited for my blue seniorita." He makes it all sound so easy. (Nikon CoolPix S6 ISO50 1/70 sec f/10)

I loved Mark Alberhasky's anecdotes, which illustrate his philosophy perfectly.

Take his story about the shot of the racing cars.

"I recently had the good fortune to attend a photo lighting workshop taught by Joe McNally, a legend in the industry whose work has graced virtually any great magazine you could name.

Besides the wonderful technical information I gleaned, it was truly inspirational to hear the stories behind how a number of his memorable images were made.

His take home message?

**'Don't quit before your vision has been realised.'**

Sometimes this means don't stop shooting until you run out of memory cards or you lose your subject.

Other times it means don't get stuck between having the vision in your head and getting the chance to push the shutter button.

Shortly after his workshop, I had the

opportunity to take a high performance driving course with my two sons, a wonderful father-son bonding experience. But that's another story.

While I was driving on the racetrack, I couldn't help but think, 'There is a very cool image of speed here somewhere.'

Now, when you are approaching a tight curve on a racetrack at 100 mph, this is not where your attention should be.

Perhaps this is why I am safer behind a lens than a high performance steering wheel.

At any rate, I decided to approach the school administration and pitch my inspiration for a speed image on their track.

They bought into the concept and tentative plans were made for a shoot the next day, at the end of the class session.

But by the end of the next day, I was tired, the driving instructors were tired, and while we waited for the track to become available, everyone disappeared.

My initial reaction was, 'Bag it. This idea may not even pan out and getting it to happen is going to be a pain.'

I was a blink of an eye away from heading home. My son Brandon said, 'Dad, you should make this happen.' And

he was right.

So I sucked in a deep breath, cajoled the drivers into suiting up, and we headed out on the race track.

My vision was three cars, tightly packed at speed, conveying the exhilaration of the track.

I wedged my back against the back of the front passenger seat, and braced my leg against the back seat.

I then hung out the rear window, from the waist up, backwards at 70 mph, while two Corvettes chased us around the track.

Needless to say there are dents in my camera body from where my fingers gripped it.

The image rocks! But... I was 99.5% ready to call it quits, when I was only a minute away from making it happen.

**When you're ready to quit, you're closer to succeeding than you think.**

Put this in writing and tape it inside the top of your camera bag.

For that matter, write in on the wall of your office, on the door of your refrigerator.

Your best effort, and the success you envisioned, may just be one more exposure, one more phone call, or one more sit-up away.

**Stick with it 'til you get there.'**

## John Henshall's Chip Shop



Copyright © 2006 by Mark Alberhasky

One day we visited the Domaine de Malaga, in the Carmargue, where bulls are reared for bullfights in Spain and France.

There, a beautiful stable girl operated a unicycle-kind-of-pretend bull. She immediately caught the attention of all the photographers present.

Later, while we were being shown around the stables, Mark saw the girl – Angélique – at the open doorway and photographed her in beautiful side light.

Minutes later, he had her signed model release, countersigned by her father as she is under eighteen.

Meanwhile, the other photographers – me included – were still dreaming.

When I asked Mark to let me have this image, he wrote:

“You know only too well the story of this image. It is the stuff of romance novels and movies. The discovery of true beauty in the stable girl who, in sweaty work clothes and without makeup, radiates 10,000 Volts of charisma bringing a whole flock of men to their knees. Helen of Troy circa 2006 with real horses.”

Mark Alberhasky was a speaker at *Focus On Imaging* 2006 but I was at PMA in Orlando and missed him.

I'll make sure I'm at his next UK speaking engagement.

In the meantime you can see Mark's work online at [www.imagemma.com](http://www.imagemma.com)

I almost forgot to mention – Mark is also a medical doctor – a pathologist.

Strange that that would make him ineligible for membership of at least one professional association in the UK. Yet he is definitely one of the most professional photographers I have ever met.

Another American whose company I had the pleasure of sharing in Spain and France was **Joshua Greene**.

It was not until Henry Wilhelm of

Wilhelm Imaging Research Inc showed a screen grab of a restored Ektachrome of a young boy of three photographing Marilyn Monroe that I learned that this was none other than Joshua Greene, who was the life and soul of our parties.

The picture was one of around five thousand images of Marilyn taken by Milton H Greene, Joshua's father.

Milton Greene first met Marilyn on a photo shoot in 1953 for 'Look' magazine. The young starlet was enamoured with the notion of the famous fashion photographer – 'Color photography's wonder boy' – taking pictures of her.

Over the next five years, Milton created over five thousand images of Marilyn in over fifty sittings.

These have been carefully restored by Joshua and are now available at [www.archiveimages.com](http://www.archiveimages.com)

The company also has books of his father's photographs of the screen legend, 'Milton's Marilyn', available online for US\$59.97.

Milton encouraged Marilyn to become a more serious actress and they formed Marilyn Monroe Productions together. Their first film was 'Bus Stop' (1956), a co-production with the studio to which she had been contracted, Twentieth Century Fox.

The new company then went it alone with 'The Prince and The Showgirl', co-starring Laurence Olivier.

Marilyn Monroe would have been eighty this year but – thanks to the photographs – she will always remain a beautiful thirty-six year old.

Immediately before Arles, I had the opportunity to see something of the beautiful city of Barcelona and I walked around many of the Gaudi creations in the company of **Bruce Fraser** and his wife and **Stephen Johnson**.

Bruce is the author of such books as



The Frasers



Stephen Johnson

**Real World Camera Raw with Adobe Photoshop CS and co-author of Real World Adobe Photoshop CS and Real World Color Management.**



Stephen Johnson is a landscape photographer in the footsteps of Ansel Adams. Ansel Adams climbed Yosemite's Half Dome with a view camera and eight 11x14in darkslides and Stephen Johnson climbed it with a view camera fitted with a Betterlight scan back and laptop which could hold just eight high-resolution digital files.

You can see Stephen's beautiful work at [www.sjphoto.com](http://www.sjphoto.com)

Stephen berated me when I said that I had cloned Linda McCartney's closed eyes from another scan. The picture is of her with a plateful of vegetarian food. He suggested that I should read the chapter on ethics in his forthcoming book.

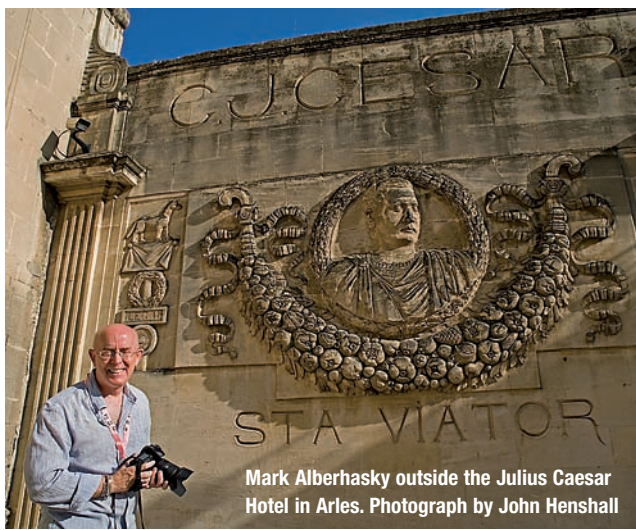
Then we arrived at a Gaudi-designed apartment block which had a huge crane jutting from the skyline behind it.

“That's exactly what Photoshop's Healing Brush Tool was invented for, John!” quipped Bruce. Stephen just screwed up his face in abject disgust.

**Aren't these Rencontres wonderful?**



Copyright © 2006 by Mark Alberhasky



Mark Alberhasky outside the Julius Caesar Hotel in Arles. Photograph by John Henshall



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mark alberhasky © 2007

Mark Alberhasky is a photographer with a wonderful eye for pictures full of strong colour and graphical design elements, together with off-beat dynamic framing. Spending a week in Barcelona and Arles with Mark and his wife Cindy, I never ceased to be amazed by his eye for a picture and know that I learned a lot from him. Mark supplies images to both Nikon and LowePro for their brochures, mainly using a Nikon D200. But the images of the clown and girl in the street (ABOVE) were both captured on a Nikon CoolPix S6. The story behind the image of the cars (LEFT) is a real lesson in why you should never give up and hang on in there for the shot. As Mark says, "The temptation to quit will be greatest just before you are about to succeed." Read the text for details.

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