

RANGEFINDER

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Carpri tries to get a sighting of the land before she swims back to shore. Double-crested cormorants sit on the pier in the background. By Brighton Beach on September 22, 2020, in Brooklyn, New York

Photo by Erica Price

single person narrative SIMPLER THAN YOU THOUGHT

marco postigo storel

Before the 72nd edition of the Missouri Photo Workshop, photojournalist Claire Hassler knew she had to focus on the simple things.

“I looked at previous years’ stories... and I looked at every single one from last year,” said Hassler. “I realized that the stories that people told last year were simple, it’s really just about a person.”

Hassler knew she had to combine this simpleness with a common theme in her hometown, Eden Prairie, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis for her picture story. According to her, the city is a suburb where most people come to raise their families and their kids go to its great public education programs, with great middle and high schools.

The story she pitched for Dennis Dimick and Becky Lebowitz, had to reflect on that. Hassler, used to pitching projects in her convergence classes at the Missouri School of Journalism, expected the worst but ended up pleasing her coaches.

“I just went into it knowing what sort of questions they would ask,” said Hassler. “That was my first idea that I brought up to them and they liked it.”

After doing her research, talking to family and friends, Hassler met Abbey Ladegaard, a senior in high school who is also on the tennis team.

The high school Ladegaard attends is currently doing a hybrid version of class due to the pandemic, where they go to its physical location twice a week and go online the other three days. Additionally, the tennis team continues to practice while maintaining social distance and wearing masks.



Photo by Claire Hassler

“She is just trying to have a fun senior year while in the middle of a pandemic”, said Hassler. “There is no huge conflict or anything insanely interesting, it’s just that she is a person who is going through this.”

Claire Hassler expects this week to give more experience to do intimate stories, since she is diving into Ladegaard’s life in the middle of a pandemic. She knows it’s going to be hard, but Hassler feels she is up to the challenge.

For her story, Hassler found Abbey Ladegaard, a high school senior trying to navigate an already complex time in any person’s life made even more complex by the COVID-19 pandemic.

AN UNEXPECTED TURN

amy schaffer

Aaron Bistrin thought he might photograph a mortician for his MPW72 story. He ended up with a florist.

When Bistrin first ran into Karl Yu in San Francisco’s Chinatown at the beginning of the month, Yu was carrying large floral arrangements with images of people’s faces on them. Curious because he wanted to photograph people working with death in the COVID-19 pandemic, Bistrin asked if Yu’s business did funerals. The response was unsettling.

“Oh, we only do funerals.”

The florist did not always operate around death, but during the first two months of the pandemic in the U.S., he was getting requests for covering funerals twice a week. Bistrin



With the pandemic in mind, Aaron Bistrin was looking for a story related to death. He found Florist Karl Yu whose business centers around funerals.

plans on shadowing Yu this week while he prepares gravesites with flowers, works with his parents (it’s a family business), and struggles to keep his floral shop open. As the COVID-19 death rate goes down, so does business.

“I guess, pun intended, their lifeline is death,” Bistrin said.

Bistrin sees his project as a way to honor those working on the peripheries of death, and hopes to challenge himself with documenting the larger themes

of the pandemic from a new angle.

“I’m looking forward to shooting a sensitive subject,” he said. “Doing it in a way that’s tasteful and that isn’t so in your face and is subtle, but still you understand what you’re seeing.”

MPW72 faculty member Becky Lebowitz approved Bistrin’s story on Monday as one of the first projects to get the “okay” this year.

“It wasn’t so much that he was early in the game, but more so that everyone else is late,” Lebowitz said. “He came prepared, he had done his research, it was specific and it was a very visually compelling story.”

DAILEY’S DAILY ADVICE

advice from Duane Dailey as seen in Rangefinders from years past.



“Every photo you shoot contains nouns and verbs you may not recognize or see. Readers (and your faculty) see more than you do in your photos.”

Duane Dailey
MPW.67, Rangefinder 4

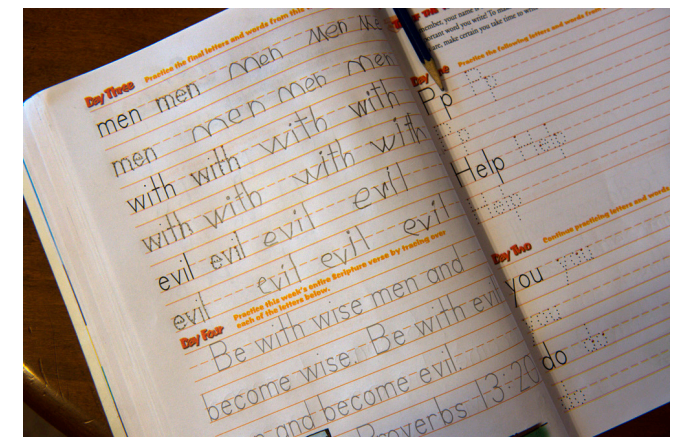
A LOOK INTO THE MPW ARCHIVE

amy schaffer and ethan weston

In a normal year without COVID-19, MPW photographers travel to rural Missouri to capture the essence of small town life. Though their stories vary vastly from one another, there are often themes which continue year to year. Three of those themes that seem to show up time and again through the years are: food, farming and faith.

These three things are pillars of many Missourians' lives; food can bring a story's subject together with family, or it can be enjoyed alone. Farming is an essential occupation for rural Missourians. Religious subjects consistently find ways to incorporate their religious practices into daily life.

We looked at MPWs past and pulled just a few photos from dozens to illustrate these three building blocks.

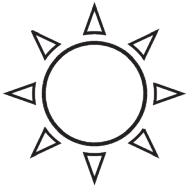


TONIGHT'S TWEETS

Keep Up with the night's Presentation via Live Tweets by our MPW social crew



Cindy Liu



Phnom Penh, Cambodia

It is hot in Cambodia's capital this week! The forecast calls for temperatures in the nineties in Fahrenheit and around 32 degrees Celsius. There is a good chance of thunderstorms the entire week, so Cindy's story will be anything but dry.

Around one thousand Cambodians traveled to Phnom Penh from across the country to ask the government to resolve long-standing land disputes, according to AsiaNews.it via The Cambodia Daily. They are protesting the seizure of land by private companies and businessmen with important political ties. The protestors blocked the roads leading to the Land Ministry but were ultimately forcibly driven out, according to AsiaNews.it.

Austin Meyer



Santa Rosa, California, U.S.

It's also hot for Austin in Santa Rosa this week, with temperatures reaching the mid eighties in Fahrenheit -- around 28 degrees Celsius. Those temperatures will rise even higher Saturday as Austin gets to rest after finishing his story. It will be partly cloudy most of the week.

Santa Rosa is gearing up for a fire weather watch this weekend, according to The (Santa Rosa) Press Democrat. The fire watch is in effect this Saturday through Monday, Sept. 28. It will be quite windy, with speeds expecting to reach up to 55 mph on Saturday.