Editor’s Corner

Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the eternal and the immovable.

- Charles Baudelaire (French Poet, 1857)

Dear Readers,

Lately it seems as though we are living in a constant state of transition in every corner of our planet. Change is in the air; therefore, we have dedicated this distinctive issue of ChildArt to the Ephemeral Arts.

As you will soon discover, ephemeral artists “live in the moment.” From Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s environmental works (p.10) to the delicate sand mandalas of Tibetan monks (p.5), ephemeral art’s existence is shaped by the effects of time. For that reason, to view an ephemeral artwork is a truly unique experience.

Hopefully this issue will expand your definition of art and encourage you to embrace our changing world. Time is fleeting, so capture a moment…just like building a sand castle to be eventually washed away by the sea.

Happy reading!

Ashfaq Ishaq, Ph. D.
Editor
Another great example of ephemeral artwork is the Tibetan sand mandala. What is a mandala? Mandala is a word that comes from the Hindu religion and translated mandala means “circle” or “completion.” Usually it is used to describe a chart or a shape that represents the universe. A mandala can be many different shapes and sizes and can be made out of many different materials. Most often, mandalas are used as part of religious teaching and to help with meditation since making mandalas takes a lot of focus. Many different religions use some form of mandala, but probably the most well-known type of mandala is the sand mandala, which a group of Buddhist monks designed. A sand mandala is usually made on the floor of a Buddhist temple by a group of trained monks who memorize all of the sand patterns that have been created in the past. This type of mandala has a large outer circle with a small inner circle or square. A circle is used because a circle has no beginning or end so it is seen as a symbol of perfection. In the inner circle or square the monks will usually make symbols that are important to the Buddhist religion and in the outer circle they will make decorations and patterns that describe what is written in the inner circle.

To make the mandala the monks first sketch out a pattern. Then they take a metal rod and rub it against a metal tube filled with colored sand that is bumpy on one side (similar to a washboard). This makes a small amount of the sand come out of the tube a time so the monks can control where the sand goes. It takes a long time to make a mandala and the monks must be very careful not to blow the sand away (sometimes they wear masks), but when they are done they are left with a brightly colored and beautiful design.

Although, all of this work seems kind of silly because a couple of weeks or even just days after making the mandala the monks scoop up the sand and either throw it into the wind or a flowing body of water, such as a stream or river to spread the blessings of the mandala. They also do this to show how things are temporary in life because that is one of the main ideas of Buddhism. Additionally, it symbolizes starting over and starting new.
After shaping, constructing, and polishing one of my sculptures or when I see someone wearing a piece I have created, I wonder how long this object will exist in the world and if it will have significance for others in the future. However, while the metal object may endure for many years and may be meaningful to someone, I hold onto the special memories of making the artwork. The metal object will likely have a long existence, while the act of creating the works is short-lived. However, the process is valuable for it brings a unique and vivid experience to my world.

Julian Beever is an artist known for his ephemeral art, using chalk to create vibrant and life-like scenes on city streets and sidewalks all over the world. His pavement art features the technique of trompe l’oeil, a method of rendering that tricks the eye and mind into seeing an image as real. For example, Beever’s images appear so life-like that some people have swerved in order to avoid the potholes he had drawn onto the pavement (Loat, Pavement Picasso, 2006). Beever spends several days working on a project knowing that the effects of the weather, as well as human and automobile traffic, will eventually wash away or erase his images.

Beever is sensitive to the way in which his artwork will relate to the surroundings, no matter if he is working under a summer sun or a winter light. He plans each image with care, using a camera on a tripod to guide the angles and determine the shapes that will form the illusions that viewers see. His images are anamorphic, which means that they must be seen from a particular angle to achieve their trompe l’oeil effect. Beever creates his images from the perspective of his camera, constantly moving between the drawing on the sidewalk and his camera’s eye to check the accuracy of the illusion. People enjoy talking with Beever while he works. The short life of Beever’s pavement art reminds people to experience it now, even if the chalk art will fade with time and weather. The vividness of his imagery may live in the minds as memories of those who see his art and affect how they see things.
Ephemeral art is special because it requires that we pay attention to the small and beautiful moments that unfold in life, celebrating the everyday.

Ephemeral art is intended to be temporary. Sometimes these fleeting works and their influence about the way we think about art and time may leave a deep and lasting impression.

“Edge of Wildness” by Vicki Daiello

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Have you heard it said that works of art “must stand the test of time” before they can be considered masterpieces? For some people, only works of art that are old can be great or meaningful. Some people also might think that in order for a work of art to be meaningful, many art critics have to have written about it or many people have to know about the artwork. These particular ways of judging art may be useful for some artwork but not for all. On the other hand, some art is not made to last forever; this is ephemeral art.

When something is ephemeral it lasts for a short period of time and then is gone. For example, you might remember walking outside after a rain to see a rainbow in the sky. Your memory of the rainbow may last for many weeks, months, or years, but the actual rainbow that you saw in the sky was only there for a short time, perhaps a few minutes.

Some artists have created works of art that are intended to be temporary. Sometimes these ephemeral works encourage us to think about the concept of time. Some artists create ephemeral art to display in galleries and museums while other artists create works of art that are meant to be seen outdoors in a natural setting. Ephemeral works are often seen by only a few people—the artist or witness (curator, archivist, researcher, and observer). The artist must capture the work by photograph or video tape so that other people can know about them after they are gone.

There are artists who are well-known for their ephemeral artwork. Two such artists are Dominique Mazeaud and Andy Goldsworthy. Their works have been exhibited, discussed, and written about for years, but the actual works of art they create do not last long.

One of Dominique Mazeaud’s most famous ephemeral pieces was called “The Great Cleansing of the Rio Grande River.” This work took seven years to create but did not exist beyond its creation. Mazeaud first intended the work to be “a monthly ritual to clean up the river” by picking up trash and objects in the riverbed. Each month Mazeaud walked along the river and removed objects that other people had discarded. Performance artworks, such as this one by Dominique Mazeaud, are not long lasting and are not performed frequently. An artist may use one’s own body or a group of people as materials in their performance art, an art form that is ephemeral.

Although some of his sculptures are permanent, another artist who is known for making ephemeral art is Andy Goldsworthy. Like Mazeaud, Goldsworthy creates works of art in nature. Goldsworthy’s art is different from Mazeaud’s in that he uses materials found in nature—twigs, stones, leaves, rocks, ice, and snow—to create sculptures. He does not use glue, nails, or other materials to join the parts of his sculptures together. Many of Goldsworthy’s outdoor artwork eventually disappears from the natural effects of sun, rain, wind, and time. For example, the sculptures he creates with large pieces of frozen river, pond ice, or icicles eventually melt when they are exposed to the sun. Goldsworthy knows in advance that these changes will occur but still chooses to make art, even knowing they will be gone, sometimes in a few moments. It is the process of playing with nature that is fascinating and inspirational and valuable to Goldsworthy; the goal is not to necessarily keep his art forever.

Ephemeral art makes us think about time and helps give meaning to viewers because we will consider and value the artwork, knowing that it will be gone instead of taking it for granted because it will always exist. Although it is made to last for a short time, our memories of these fleeting works and their influence about the way we think about art and time may leave a deep and lasting impression.
Christo and Jeanne-Claude are artists who work together and create large-scale environmental works. These works are temporary and they are removed from the site where they are installed, typically after about two weeks. Christo and Jeanne-Claude choose part of an environment in which to make their art and people then see the whole environment with fresh eyes, even after the artwork has been removed, for it remains in the memories of people who have viewed the transformed environment.

One exception is Valley Curtain in Rifle, Colorado, between Grand Junction and Glenwood Spring, where a group of workers fastened an orange curtain made of woven nylon fabric in the Grand Hogback Mountain Range. The Valley Curtain project took 28 months to finish. On August 11, 1972, twenty-eight hours after completing the Valley Curtain, a gale estimated at 60 miles per hour made it necessary to start the removal. The owners of the east slope and west slope of the valley in which the work was installed asked that Christo and Jeanne-Claude leave the main foundations of the work installed in the mountain as a memento and said they would be sad if it was removed. So, Christo and Jeanne-Claude left the main foundations of the work installed in the mountain at the landowner’s request.

The second exception is Surrounded Islands, a project in which the artists did not put back the forty-two tons of garbage from the beaches of the islands in the Biscayne Bay of Miami, Florida, which they had removed in order to create the work. Eleven of the islands were surrounded with pink woven polypropylene fabric covering the surface of the water, floating and extending out from each island into the bay. There were eleven islands, but on two occasions, two islands were surrounded together. The fabric was sewn to follow the contours of the islands. The Surrounded Islands were designed to be seen from the buildings, all around the Biscayne Bay, from the bridges, from the roads, by boat, and also from the air. The shiny pink fabric was in harmony with the growing tropical plants and grass on the island, the light of the Miami sky, and the colors of the shallow waters of the bay. Their use of fabric or cloth highlights a fragile, sensuous, and temporary nature in their art.

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Christo and Jeanne-Claude describe the actual installation of their projects as the “hardware” part of their work and describe the preparation and drawings as the “software.” The software period is the time during which the project exists in the form of Christo’s preparation drawings and in the imagination of both artists, their collaborators.
and all of the people from whom they must obtain permissions to create their work. It sometimes takes Christo and Jeanne-Claude many years, sometimes decades, to receive permission to build their work in some locations.

The environmental art of Christo and Jeanne-Claude has elements of painting, sculpture, architecture and urban planning. As they explain, “Nobody talks about a painting before it is painted and nobody talks about a sculpture before it is sculpted.” Architecture and urban planning, however, are always discussed before they are constructed. Many people talk about the possibility of a new bridge, highway, or airport before those are built.

Similarly, many people discuss Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s environmental art projects before they are installed. While Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s work draws the public into the process before it is built, the public responds to the work. The public does not shape the work, but their comments and ideas about the proposed work help determine whether the artists receive the necessary permits and are allowed to proceed with the project.

There is an important difference between Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s works of art and typical architecture and urban planning. Christo and Jeanne-Claude pay for their works of art with their own money. They sell their art to museums, art collectors, art dealers, and galleries. The money from the sale of Christo’s original drawings is used to pay all the expenses of the preparation, completion, maintenance and removal of their projects, such as the materials, labor, shipping, insurance, engineering, staff, rentals, and legal expenses. The reason that Christo and Jeanne-Claude pay for their projects themselves is because they want to work in total freedom, which is why they never accept grants or sponsors.

Throughout the millennium, for 5000 years, artists have tried to input a variety of different qualities into their works of art. They have used different materials: marble, stone, bronze, wood, fresco and paint. They have created mythological and religious images, figurative and abstract images. They have tried to do bigger or smaller works and a lot of different qualities. But there is one quality they have never used, and that is the quality of love and tenderness that human beings have for what does not last. For instance, they have love and tenderness for childhood images, figurative and abstract images. They have tried to do bigger or smaller works and a lot of different qualities. But there is one quality they have never used, and that is the quality of love and tenderness that human beings have for what does not last. For instance, they have love and tenderness for childhood because they know it will not last. Christo and Jeanne-Claude wish to donate this quality of love and tenderness to their work, as an additional aesthetic quality. The fact that the work does not remain creates a urgency to see it. For instance, if someone were to say, “Oh, look on the right, there is a rainbow,” one would never answer, “I will look at it tomorrow.”

They make their art because they believe it will be joyful and beautiful.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude never create the same artwork twice—for example, they have already surrounded islands, and they will never surround other islands. They may decide on an urban or a rural environment but never choose a place that is deserted. They want places that are used by people or managed by people for human beings.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude create their projects for themselves, but the fact that many people will also see their work is a bonus for them. They make their art because they believe it will be joyful and beautiful.

For further information, please visit www.christojeanneclaude.net.
Ice is nice...most people would think that for art it would be the most ephemeral or temporary substance, but in the north, ice lasts for months. Art that is made from ice is beautiful because it traps light, magnifying and reflecting the light. Children who live up north have come to love the wonderful art that can be made from ice. Winter ice art galleries can be found in many northern countries such as China and Russia. In one city, Fairbanks, Alaska, United States of America, young people are learning to make their own ephemeral ice sculptures, and love working with ice because it is temporary.

Fairbanks, Alaska, is home to the World Ice Art Championships, an event organized by Ice Alaska that takes place every March. Artists come from all over the world (France, China, Russia, Japan, Finland, Morocco, and Malaysia are just a few of the countries) to create huge sculptures of ice, some as high as a two-story house, in large scenes with magnificent dragons, delicate butterflies, or shining knights in armor. Before the competition, the sculptors practice their skills creating a big Kids Park with ice slides, mazes with secret rooms, playhouses, and animals. Each year the park has a theme, for example “Jur-ice-ic Park,” (with dinosaurs), “Sugar and Spice and Every-thing Ice” (with ice sculpture candies). This year’s theme is “Celebrating the North,” in honor of the International Polar Year.

Every year, the schools bring students to this ice art gallery and amusement park. Sculptors have been visiting the schools and teaching classes in ice sculpture for about fifteen years. The idea of a Junior Ice Art Championship for high school students was a natural outgrowth of this program, and will hold its third competition this year.

How do the young sculptors feel about the fact that their art is ephemeral? Tori Middelstadt, who won Third Place, Realistic Category in the 2007 Junior Ice Art Championship writes: “…no art lasts forever. Working with ice gives you a new creative outlet. The ice is a special product to work with and it allows for mistakes. The ice is forgiving but at the same time, it shows impurities. I like to work with the ice because of that unique balance...as an artist I tend to get tired of my work so it is sad that the ice melts but at the same time I can just move on and create something new.” [SIC]

As the ice melts, the water runs back into the pond that gave the ice, waiting over the summer for the next year to be frozen and sculpted again into new masterpieces to delight the children of Fairbanks.
Do you consider your “art by the brick” sculptures (figures created with LEGO bricks) to be ephemeral — in the sense that they may be displayed in a public space for a short period of time before being dismantled, taken away, or removed?

The sculptures in my museum exhibit, The Art of the Brick, are large-scale pieces that are created solely out of LEGO bricks. I do glue the bricks together so that the sculptures can be shipped around the world without damage. Without the glue, I would imagine that the works would be ephemeral in that they would definitely not remain together over time.

Although a bunch of my works are on permanent display in certain museums, most of my works do not stay on permanent display in public space as they move from venue to venue. These works could be considered ephemeral because they are removed over time.

Following on the previous question, if you consider your “art by the brick” to be ephemeral, why do you create art that will not be permanent?

I do not create art with the goal of being immortal. That is, I realize that my art will not stand the ultimate test of time; otherwise I would use a much more permanent, long-lasting medium. I create art for myself and for the awe it inspires in others, so the fact that it may be considered ephemeral does not influence the creative process.

How does your art being ephemeral affect the process of making art?

When I am creating art, it is to express what I am feeling, and I do not focus on whether the final piece will be permanent. I would imagine that when children create artwork, they are doing so for the joy of creating and not with the idea that the artwork will remain permanent.

What do you hope to communicate with the audience through your sculptures?

I hope to inspire others to explore their creativity. I have received countless letters and e-mails from people who have told me that after seeing my museum exhibit they have gone home to create with LEGO themselves, which I think is amazing.

How delicate is your art? Can you transport it or do you have to “re-make” each time, for a new location?

I glue all of my sculptures together so that they can be transported safely. Sometimes I build the larger sculptures in sections so that they can be taken apart to get through doorways. I then have to re-install the sculpture at the next venue.

Of course, since my sculptures are built out of LEGO bricks, they can be a bit delicate. I work with some great art shipping companies to make sure everything stays together.

Does the installation take on a different meaning by changing its location, for example?

I try and keep the meanings of my work within the sculpture so that the location is not a major factor. At this point, I know that the sculptures I am creating will be on tour being exhibited in many different venues, so I build works that can be enjoyed in different locations.

Does ephemeral art change the way you perceive art or what you consider to be artwork?

No, I do not think the permanence of a work has anything to do with whether it is art or not. When a child is building with LEGO bricks, that creation is artwork, even though it might be taken apart minutes later. The process of creating is what is important.

As a lawyer, how can the artist protect his or her Intellectual Property Rights regarding his/her ephemeral art?

Although I was a corporate attorney for a few years before I became a full-time artist, I did not practice intellectual property (IP) law. I would recommend that any artist seek the advice of an IP attorney with regard to protecting their works.

Does ephemeral art have any contribution to make in the debate for Intellectual Property Rights versus open-and-free systems?

As an artist, I would hope that artwork would be protected by intellectual property law whether or not the work was ephemeral.


Día de Muertos is a festive few days in which the dead are honored and remembered in a joyful way. Death in Mexican tradition is a natural part of life and therefore it is said that on the night of the 31st of October through the night of the 1st of November, the dead come to visit amongst the living to share and to celebrate with them.

In order to entice the dead to visit each home or tomb, an altar is set up to welcome and honor those that come from the heavens. The altar is adorned with zempasuchitl (a type of marigold) and many other types of flowers. These flowers are typically in season and have the characteristic that they maintain their freshness for two to three days, even without water. They are bright orange and have a scent that perfumes the air in the markets and later the homes of those who welcome their dead. Many motifs are made with the flowers from crosses to pre-Hispanic designs. Some are carpets to show the dead their way to the altar while others are for beauty. The flowers give the altar and the festivities a sense of peace and joy.

Another important element for the altars is the papel picado, brightly-colored papers that are designed to illustrate the character of the person who has died. In pre-Hispanic times, the Aztec culture used papel picado to cover their dead and accompany them to the after-life. Nowadays, the papel picado are cut into the shapes of the qualities that have defined the honored person who has died. For example, they may be the Catrina (a woman that is dressed in her best outfit), the Musician, the Dancer, or Death itself. All of these are skeletons that are adorned with flowers and details that make the characters cheerful and each paper a work of art that will decorate the altar for a couple of days.

As an offering to the dead, the living make the delicious dishes that were the deads’ favorite and place them on the altar. These will be shared with the living, as the food is eaten on the 2nd of November, as well as the pan de muerto (bread of the dead, a sweet bread made for this occasion with bones made from dough placed in a decorative way).

For the children, this celebration of death has an extra activity. On the 1st of November, they go around asking for their calaverita (tiny skull). People give them money so they can buy a sugar skull with their name on it and then eat it. At the markets one can find all sorts of skulls, big and small, made out of sugar, chocolate or amaranth, all decorated in detail with brightly-colored sugar to sweeten the senses.

The entire festival, from the night of the 31st of October to the day of the 2nd of November is a work of art, artwork that despite its temporary nature transcends life itself.
Most beautiful things do not last: the scarlet leaves of an autumn maple, northern lights, the song of a thrush on a summer evening, or the taste of chocolate birthday cake. The world is full of flowers that bloom for just one day. Music is by nature fleeting—we cannot catch it, and can only enjoy it while it is there. So if a flower or a feast can be enjoyed for just a moment or an hour, why not enjoy visual art in the same way? Does art have to last forever? Can it be something that just lasts an hour or a day? Fine Art does not have to be made of paint and paper, clay or bronze. I love flowers and leaves, birdsong and beaches, so these are the things with which I work. I also love to make things. Creating something gives me a deep pleasure and I do not need to keep what I have made.

Because I love being on the beach, I once spent eight months making art almost every day on the seashores of Victoria, Vancouver and Saltspring Island in British Columbia, Canada. I called the project Gesture, as I wanted it to be about a moment of movement—a gesture where nothing is final. Sometimes I drew patterns in the sand with a special wooden rake, so the sand looked like a Japanese garden. The tide would come up and wash the designs away, or people would walk through them, but that was not a problem. I expected it. Either, I would make the image again or I would do something different. One of my favorite projects was to collect a basket of the most common empty seashells and then make shapes in the sand with them. I would lay the shells out in spirals, squares, circles, triangles, lines and wiggly waves. They looked beautiful placed like this. If I had time before the tide washed them away I would photograph it, but often I did not have time, and the images I made would only have been seen by forty or fifty people who were out walking the beach that day. But that was the point of doing these artworks on a public beach—I wanted people to see these ephemeral artworks outside in the real world, not just as photographs.

I have also made temporary artworks indoors. I made arrangements of stones, leaves, and shells on the walls or floors of art galleries. When the show was over, I collected everything up and took it back from where it came. I took the leaves back to the forest and the stones back to the beach. I enjoyed making the work and having other people seeing how the colors and shapes of stones look like when they are hanging on a wall, or what the brilliant whiteness of shell pieces look like on a velvety black carpet. Placing leaves on a wall, or making a mandala out of flower petals is exciting.

Do you want to try making art this way?
How to Make a Paper Boat Sculpture

One thousand plus paper boats made by 1,000 plus children from local schools.

Andrew Crummy, Yvonne Murphy, and Joanna Mawdsley

Have you ever made a boat out of paper for yourself or that could be part of a giant sculpture?

We know the true story about a girl who made a paper boat and later could not fall asleep until she went to see her paper boat. Her parents brought her down to an unused harbor while she was in her pajamas. It was late at night and very dark. As she got closer she could see hundreds and hundreds of beautifully painted paper boats floating on a “sea of blue light.” Walking among them, she was excited when she saw how many different colors and designs there were—blue ones, red ones, patterned ones, some with anchors drawn on them and some even had sails.....

Where was her paper boat?

The boats were arranged as one big fish or maybe two...or three!

Then, she saw hers—she found it!

Every time she passes the empty harbor she remembers that magical night with the paper boats, and how it made a lot of people smile.
If you were an archivist, how would you document the following works of art?

* a dance performance
* a magazine
* a landscape installation
* an outdoor mural
* an artist’s interactive website
* a Mardi Gras parade
* a DJ’s multimedia session (sound and images)

“Being temporary is part of the work; it contributes to the meaning of the work.”

We usually think of architects, painters, and sculptors who create work to last for a long time. Sometimes they create objects or events that are not intended to be permanent. Think about graffiti artists who spray paint walls that they know will be covered over or Buddhist monks making intricate mandala sand paintings that will be swept up at a closing ceremony. Being temporary is part of the work; it contributes to the meaning of the work.

I built my dream sand castle on a beach in San Diego. It was low tide, and I had to fetch buckets of water from the ocean to fill the tiny moat. When it was finished, I took a picture of my castle with an old-fashioned camera; this was long ago before they had digital cameras. Then the tide came in and washed it all away. I saved the snapshot but now it, too, is gone. Both the castle and the photograph exist only in my memory. They were ephemeral.

The word ephemeral means “beginning and ending in a day.” We have come to use it to describe anything that is short-lived or brief. For instance, a musical performance is ephemeral. Although the same musical work may be performed again and again, each performance is unique and short-lived. It may be documented by an audio or video recording, but the recording never fully recreates the experience of being there in person.

A related word is ephemera, or “printed matter of passing interest.” The ephemera from a performance would include things such as posters, programs, and tickets that were printed for the event. All of these things—recordings and ephemera—become part of the historical record.

Librarians and archivists help to collect and preserve the history of our culture. Historical records can be factual or merely hints about what happened, clues that must be interpreted thoughtfully by future researchers. When we document something, we try to be accurate. Since artists often create works that are complex and ambiguous, as well as short-lived, preserving an accurate record can be challenging.

Anything from a hand-written note, a drawing, or a photograph to a computer file, a podcast, or a website can provide a record. Unfortunately, any of these may also become ephemeral, and information may have to be transferred to different formats as materials deteriorate or as equipment and technologies change. If I could find my photograph of the sand castle, I could save it on my computer. I could then print the new image out on paper or share it on a website. Transferring records to other formats is part of the strategy for saving them. If one format becomes out of date, we have to find another.

Trying to collect, record, and preserve the history of ephemeral works of art can be hard but these unique works of art are worth the effort.
Photographing the Ephemeral

Eliot Porter made photographs of things that seem still, like beauty in the natural environment, but he said, “Never put off taking the picture...nothing is permanent. Everything is changing.” Photographers are intrigued by time. They are fascinated that they can “freeze” an instant of fleeting time with the click of a camera. They sometimes show us things we cannot see with our ordinary eyes. In the early days of photography, Eadweard Muybridge made thousands of sequences of photographs of people and animals as they moved so that we can actually see, for example, how a horse’s legs move when it gallops. Harold Edgerton was a scientist who made photographs of even faster moving things that the unaided eye could not see, such as bullets flying through the air. Photographers know that the world is in motion and that everything changes from second to second, moment to moment, day to day, season to season, and year to year.

Tony Mendoza is a contemporary photographer interested in the temporal. He bought his first camera when he was eleven and has been taking pictures ever since. He shows his photographs in books and art museums. He makes photographs of subjects that are close to his life: his family, including himself, his pets, and flowers in his backyard. He likes to tell stories with his photographs and often uses words with his pictures.

One story took him ten years to make, but he only worked on it one day each year—Halloween. The story is about his daughter, Lydia, and her Halloween costumes. It began when she was three and it ended when she turned twelve and wanted to go to parties with her friends rather than dress up for trick-or-treating. Her father recalls that Lydia always had clear ideas of whom she wanted to be on Halloween, based on something she had read or a movie she had seen. Her mother sewed her costumes. On Halloween nights, in their living room, her father set up his camera, lighting, and a dark background. He took many pictures of Lydia, trying to get “just the right moment” as she played her character. Then he saved the ones he thought were best.

When Lydia was Cleopatra, Queen of the Nile, she was nine years old, and when she was Audrey Hepburn, a famous actress, she was eleven. Lydia will never again be nine or eleven. However, due to the invention of photography, she and her parents can relive their Halloween memories through these pictures. Although she is now an adult, we can see a young girl as she was on Halloween in 1998 and 2000. We have permanent views of the ways she was in those fractions of seconds when her father clicked his camera years ago. We have time to look at the details of her costumes. We can notice how she changed in two years. We can study her expressions and wonder what she was thinking when she posed as Cleopatra and as Audrey Hepburn.

Terry Barrett, Ph. D.
Eliot Porter made photographs of things that seem still, like beauty in the natural environment, but he said, “Never put off taking the picture...nothing is permanent. Everything is changing.” Photographers are intrigued by time. They are fascinated that they can “freeze” an instant of fleeting time with the click of a camera. They sometimes show us things we cannot see with our ordinary eyes. In the early days of photography, Eadweard Muybridge made thousands of sequences of photographs of people and animals as they moved so that we can actually see, for example, how a horse’s legs move when it gallops. Harold Edgerton was a scientist who made photographs of even faster moving things that the unaided eye could not see, such as bullets flying through the air. Photographers know that the world is in motion and that everything changes from second to second, moment to moment, day to day, season to season, and year to year.

Domino Day and Domino Art

Domino Day is a world-record attempt to topple the most number of dominoes. Each year it is led by Robin Paul Weijers, who is known as “Mr. Domino.” He is from the Netherlands and owns Weijers Domino Productions, which holds the current Guinness world record for topping the most number of dominoes. Every year on Domino Day, teams of domino lovers from around the world work together on domino sculptures where they make detailed designs in order to set it up just right so that all the dominoes in the display will fall in a chain reaction caused by toppling just one starting domino. They start building the sculptures in advance, but topple them on Domino Day.

You can learn more about Mr. Domino and his company as well as Domino day on these websites:

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