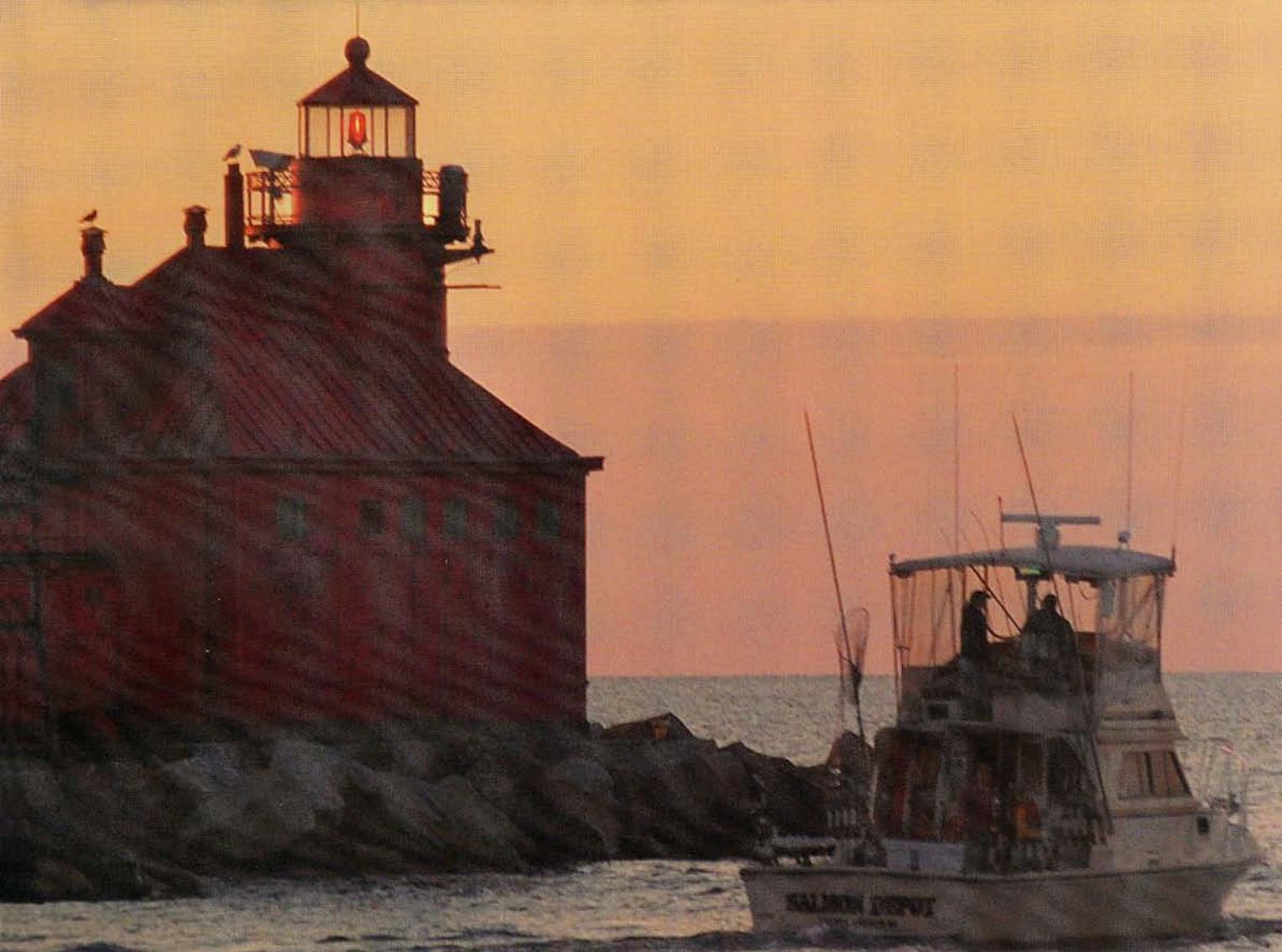


Volume 8 issue 3

DOOR COUNTY LIVING

CELEBRATING THE CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE OF THE DOOR PENINSULA



Time to Leave the Lakes Alone?

Easy Riders - Motorcycling Door County

Accidental Icon - Thumb Fun

Restaurant & Lodging Guides

autumn 2010

“One eye sees, the other feels.”

Suzanne Rose: Fine Art Photographer



from Winter Landscape workshop “dancing trees”

How many

people receive original black and white Ansel Adams-type photographs embedded in an email or a Sally Mann-influenced image of an eight-year-old daughter printed on a linen note card? One never gets used to such elegance and artful generosity as a friend of Suzanne Rose.

The word “elegance” embraces the ideas of grace and sophistication, but its literal meaning, “using only that which is appropriate,” suggests the contemporary term “minimalism,” a more accurate description of Suzanne’s artistic sensibilities. This is her style and it can be observed operating in most areas of her life: in her home, the clothes and colors she wears, even her work

area is artfully and simply arranged. This personal style is reflected and extended into the images she creates – it was even given a name by a *Washington Post* art critic: “[She is] a straight shooter with a kind of spare visual poetry that speaks volumes in a mood of ‘Zen Americana.’”

Suzanne calls herself a “mindful minimalist,” and it is this quality of mindfulness that



“in-between”



“baby’s rocker”



“fresh bar of soap”

has shaped her career. She uses German Expressionist painter Paul Klee's phrase, "One eye sees, the other feels," to describe the gestalt of the in/out, ying/yang, real/imagined working together in zen-like synchronicity and purposefulness in her work and in her life.

Photographic masters believe that clicking the shutter is not about reproducing images; it's about the light. Using Ansel Adams's legacy of "painting with light," Suzanne's compositions often take on the quality of a still life – the Renaissance in black and white. Her process is simple and because she has a strong resolve for traditional photography, she uses classic dark room techniques. She uses a Hasselblad medium format film camera, develops and enlarges the negatives and then prints her usual 9" by 9" images. Her latest area of exploration has been the printing process, and she's accepted the benefits of digital scanning in order to make larger prints. In typical fashion, she committed herself to taking this new step by accepting a commission for these larger 23" by 23" pieces at Mercy Medical Center's Cancer Center in Oshkosh.

Suzanne studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she met husband Jim, a fine art furniture fabricator and artist. They live with eight-year-old daughter Delilah in a restored 100-year-old farmhouse in southern Door County with a garden lovingly tended by all three. Jim's studio, where he crafts award-winning steel furniture for an international market, is just down the road. Though they travel to Chicago and other cities for an "urban fix," they are truly tied to their community, evidenced in Suzanne's first major exhibition, "In Walking Distance." The preface to it is revealing: "When we walked through the door of the old brick farmhouse, I turned to my husband and said, 'I'm home.' At that moment, we became part of a small rural crossroads town in northeast Wisconsin... a community that all residents seem to mutually respect and hold dear... This has been a lesson in seeing what is. Looking no further



Portrait of Suzanne Rose.

than one's own community to find beauty, substance, fulfillment, possibly even sanctuary – to connect with one's own personal landscape and to celebrate all that is within walking distance."

Her second series, "Close to Home," in 2006, used the same lens, same eye looking at the gems right in front, but her introduction goes deeper in capturing the essence of her photography and the woman behind it: "When our daughter came, our home embraced a family. Life became richer, more

vibrant, more real than ever before. I began to see our daily life in our surroundings with fresh eyes. All became intensely vivid, finding beauty in the simplest things. The living became clearly separate from the in-between moments... The moments I find the quiet within myself, my family, our home. The meditative moments so close to my heart... so close to home."

It is hard to imagine when looking at Suzanne's credentials today that she began photography with a class taught by David



"Laundry Day"



Currie at the Peninsula School of Art only 11 years ago. Her emergence as a professional in such a short time can be attributed to her marketing skills and “grantsmanship,” but mostly to the clearly defined personal vision used in choosing quality and challenging projects, workshop opportunities and exhibition possibilities. Her growth as an artist has been methodical – well thought out and executed imaginatively with a focused progression.

For her efforts, she has been rewarded handsomely: she was a recipient of a three-year residency in Miami Beach, Florida from the National Foundation for the Advancement in the Arts; received financial awards granted by the Peninsula Arts As-

sociation and the Wisconsin Arts Board for her projects (“Close to Home” and “In Walking Distance”); and she has the distinct honor of being the first individual artist to receive the Fred Alley Visionary Award from the Peninsula Arts Association.

Her images can be found in many public and private collections, including the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; the Racine Art Museum in Racine, Wisconsin; the Chazen Museum of Art, in Madison, Wisconsin; the Mercy Medical Center in Oshkosh, Wisconsin; and in the private collections of Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton and Ellsworth and Carla Peterson.

Her most recent accomplishment outside of Door County was with the Paine Art Center in Oshkosh where as artist-in-residence for 10 months she exhibited “Meditations on Oshkosh” and penned an online journal: “Writing the journal was one of the most soul searching and rewarding projects I’ve done, pairing my images with text and exploring history as well as my own creativity,” she says. To Suzanne’s delight, the Mercy Medical Center in Oshkosh purchased the entire 22-image exhibit titled “Portrait of a Community,” which she created for them in conjunction with the Paine project.



Peter Sherrill - Doctor + Poet

Despite making a name for herself statewide, Suzanne is dedicated to supporting local talent. She heads the Photography Department at the Peninsula School of Art and teaches classes there, as she does for The Clearing Folk School in Ellison Bay. She mentors young aspiring photographers through the “Exposure to Creativity” program offered to Gibraltar students by the Hardy Gallery, recently teaching a class in “Traditional Photography and the Dark-room.”

As a teacher, one holds in highest regard the opinion of your mentor and so this statement from master photographer Dan Anderson is possibly Suzanne’s highest reward to date: “Suzanne Rose has become a



Portrait of a Community series

ART SCENE

dear friend in the short while that we have taught together and photographed together. I deeply admire her work. She lives her photography in a way that few photographers are able to do and never seems to 'turn off' her photographic vision. She has a singular ability in her work to show us the beauty and quiet nobility that resides in the commonplace objects of our lives. I always look forward to what next she chooses to celebrate with her camera. Simply put, she inspires me."

Suzanne has experienced several major career jumps but nothing compares to two events coming up. In 2011, she will travel to China as artist-in-residence at the Linden Centre in the Yunnan Province and will co-teach a photography workshop, "Spirit in the Middle Kingdom," with international photographer, Doug Beasley. In 2012, the Miller Art Museum in Sturgeon Bay will exhibit their first one-woman photography show entitled "Journey to the Middle Kingdom" – a retrospective of Suzanne's images from her China experience.

One can only hope for a preview photo embedded in an email from the Yunnan province. Namasté, Suzanne.



If interested in participating in the China workshop contact www.lindens.cn. To contact or to order Suzanne's prints, visit www.suzannerosephotography.com.



"Fourth of July"