

# HillRag



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## Artist Profile: Clifford Wheeler

### Art and the City

By Jim Magner -May 19, 2021

Clifford Wheeler stands in the middle of a time and place, wrapping himself in the moment through a panoramic exposure. In “Long Pond” you are there with him and it folds around you—you are engulfed in the marvel of creation where practically every molecule has equal importance.

Clifford has been taking pictures all his life—freezing moments in place. He captures a collective reality—the split-second in the evolution of life forms and the non-life forms. Usually a photographer stands back, apart from the scene as both observer and captor. Now, Clifford no longer stands back.



The Fort

In "The Fort," you gain the same sensation of entering a frozen moment but with a realization that this is more than information, it's art. The factual is elevated with emotion by beauty. It encompasses the elements of color and design that painters have developed over the centuries.

"Popcorn" captures emotion in a different way: the public emptiness of the times. But getting beyond a certain sadness, all the elements of art are there and make it even more striking and emotional.



Sand Beach

Clifford began photographing the art of other students even before getting his BFA at the Corcoran in the late 70s. In the 80s, he became a member of the Multiple Exposures Gallery and installed the exhibitions. He became an installer of shows for galleries and museums all over the Metro area.



For Clifford Wheeler, it is not just about catching the flash of the reflected light—the lasting image—it’s about “actually creating something tangible—something that can be held in the hand and shared between individuals.” You can see, and own, his work at the current Multiple Exposures Gallery exhibit. (See: “At the Galleries.”)

[www.artline.com/artists/dealers\\_artists/wheeler-clifford.php](http://www.artline.com/artists/dealers_artists/wheeler-clifford.php)

### **Jim Magner’s Thoughts on Art**

Life is not a continuum. It is not one big sweeping expanse of time and experience. Life is a collection of moments held in trust somewhere inside your cranium. Not all moments are equal. Some are worth keeping like rare coins, but most are dribbled away in a rush to buy the next moment and the next and the next million.

Some moments are stubborn and won’t go away—you’re stuck with them. Others are worth wrapping your arms around, holding on for as long as you can. Maybe that is why God invented the camera. Some say it was Louis Daguerre (or his partner Joseph Niepce), but it is a God-like miracle of light—light beams gestated in little explosions of the Divine, traveling millions of miles to take root in a small box.

We all have photographs. I have some taken long ago, back when photographs were special. They materialized from something called film. Moments were selectively captured and pasted on to pages in an album—to be taken out occasionally and applauded by captured friends and even strangers.

From the very beginning, artists were intrigued by the possibilities. Long held qualities of painting—composition, color harmony, perspective and others elements of two-dimensional art—found their way into the pictorial conversation. Photographs were nurtured in the darkroom and hung on the wall.

Then came digital photography. For most, selecting a special moment has been drowned in a blitzkrieg of button holding—like the young lady rambling through the Louvre with an iPhone on a stick accumulating selfies with the masterpieces as props in her personal story.

Clifford Wheeler (see Artist Profile) has been through it all: a journey from Kodak to iPhone. His whole life has been photography and the capture of special moments. He now uses the panoramic option that places him in the center of a panoramic idea. An idea you can hold in your hand and hang on a wall.

## **At the Galleries**

### **Multiple Exposures Gallery**

**Torpedo Factory Art Center**

**105 N. Union St. #312**

**Alexandria, VA**

**–May 15**

This is a terrific all-member show. Each artist exhibits two signature pieces and all are for sale. Clifford Wheeler (see, Artist Profile) exhibits some great new work.