

THE BARCELONA PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP • SEPTEMBER 2008

FIRSTLIGHT



COVER: Richard Owens, who was shooting this dragon and its handlers from the front during the Correfoc, became discouraged by how flames flashing out of its mouth were washing out his images. He shifted to trailing the dragon, using it as a shield from the harsh light fluctuations, and captured this gem.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD OWENS

Toward the end of the Correfoc (see Page 9), Ray Johnson found himself "swaying to the beat in the street, looking for something different" when he decided to drop down "as low as I could."

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY JOHNSON

FIRSTLIGHT BARCELONA

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP



LEFT: When he came upon some stacked mirrors on the way back from market day in the monastery plaza, Ray Johnson waited until someone passed by to capture this shot.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY JOHNSON

RIGHT: Participant Dane Pollock casts a shadow on the wall of Mas Cabre, the home of guest FirstLight instructor Michele Curel, in the town of Vall-Llobrega, inland from the Costa Brava.

PHOTOGRAPH BY LESLIE ROBINSON





During the blaring celebration of Correfoc, Dane Pollock came upon this girl, on the shoulders of a relative, peering from around a corner at the boisterous display of dragons, drums, and firecrackers. "She is hesitantly intrigued, and uses the wall as her barrier to the wildness nearby," Pollock notes.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DANE POLLOCK



A mother and her three daughters show off their smiles and umbrellas on a rainy day in Sant Cugat del Valles.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY JANE KNEISLY

The city of Barcelona, which has a lively culture and wonderful architecture, is a favorite hotspot of Europeans.

FirstLight chose to explore this treasure from a base in Sant Cugat del Valles, a village west of Barcelona where a large international presence mixes easily with a vibrant Catalan community. The town offers a 1,000 year-old monastery and fresh produce shops, fishmongers, breadshops and meat markets where legs of dried hams called paletas hang over the counter. Workshop participants visited several vineyards in the Penedes and spent a morning shooting the rising sun in several different coastal towns.

Each year around September 24 Barcelona honors its patron saint during La Merce Festival, a raucous celebration that bids goodbye to summer, including the Correfoc — “running with fire.” The normal reserve of the Catalans is cast into the darkness on this evening. Starting during the early evening, the city’s youth dress up as devils and run through the streets of the Barrio Gotico (the Gothic neighborhood) with huge sparklers. They dance, drum, and tease onlookers with their “fire.” Things get more frenetic later as the adults take over, the sparklers supersize and menacing of the crowd more intense.

In a tradition unique to Catalunya, up to 75 castellers shape into human castles on the plaza between the governor and mayor’s palaces, standing on one another’s shoulders to reach a height of up to nine stories.



ABOVE: A tourist tries to engage one of the many mimes on the ramblas of Barcelona.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE SCHWARTZBERG

RIGHT: A pedestrian moving along a rambla of shops in downtown Sant Cugat is absorbed in the reflection of a mannequin.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOBBIE BERNSTEIN





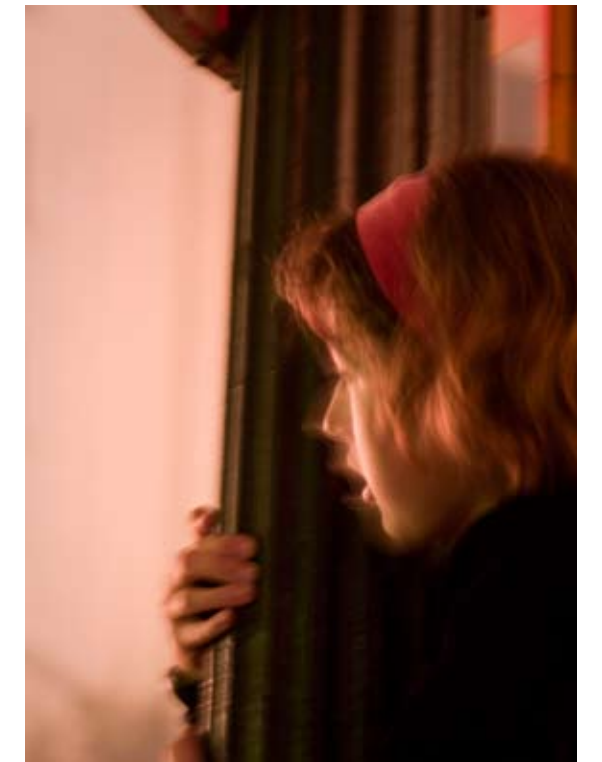
LEFT: Mary Croft came upon this the boat while walking on the beach after brunch in Calella de Palafrugell, a small holiday resort and fishing village on the Costa Brava. "The richness of the colors caught my attention," she says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY CROFT

RIGHT: Richard Owens noticed this solitary man watching fishermen depart for a morning run at 5 a.m. in Palamos, about two hours north of Barcelona on the Costa Brava.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD OWENS





FirstLight's invigorating week concluded with an exhibition in the plaza of the Monastery in Sant Cugat. The closing night reception provides a chance for locals to see what their lives look like through the eyes of the workshop participants, and is often quite a moving experience for the photographers.

Such moments hearten FirstLight founder Jay Dickman, who merges a fascinating location, lessons from a storied career, and an accomplished staff to provide a compelling experience.

"One of our main goals with FirstLight, is to empower our students to discover that creative spark within them," Dickman explains.

ABOVE: The glow from exploding fireworks illuminates a young girl, perched on her father's shoulders, as she clutches a street-light post for balance in order to see over the teeming Correfoc crowd.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BIRD

LEFT: Villagers zigzag from one specialty shop to another along the stone streets in Sant Cugat to procure the ingredients for their daily meals.

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOBBI JO HAYNES-KAMNITZER



TOP: Grapes hang on the vine at Mas Tinell Winery in Vilafranca del Penedes.
PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM SCHWARTZBERG



ABOVE RIGHT: A worker shovels grape skins at the Alsina & Sarda winery.
PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL LANG



RIGHT: Staffers work among the distilling tanks at the Alsina & Sarda.
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOANA GOUVEIA

BELOW: The lights in the cellar of the Bodegas Pinord Winery illuminate bottles of wine produced there.
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARY CROFT

FAR RIGHT: Local chef Martí Capdevila prepares a meal at Cava El Mas Ferrer, a family winery located in the small village of Ca l'Avi.
PHOTOGRAPH BY LESLIE ROBINSON



A spectacular destination such as Barcelona provides a rich canvas for FirstLight participants but state-of-the-art equipment and software help bring the images and stunning color to life.

FirstLight founder Jay Dickman, an Olympus Visionary, relies on his Olympus Systems and collaborates with Olympus Imaging America to support visual creativity. Adobe Photoshop Certified Expert Jay Kinghorn uses Photoshop and Lightroom software to help participants become more proficient in improving, cataloging, and storing their images.

“FirstLight would not be possible without our sponsors on more than one level,” Dickman explains. “I carefully select those companies who make equipment that is ‘real-world’ in terms of what is needed for a working photographer. From Olympus to Adobe, Hewlett-Packard, Acratech, Lexar, Lightware, Wiebetech, Singh-Ray Filters, Unique Litho, Soundslides, and now FotoBiz, I use these manufacturers’ products as a working professional and I feel they are the best equipment available. This is from using the gear in every condition imaginable, when no excuses are accepted.”



ABOVE: During a tour of the Mas Tinell winery, Ray Johnson was attracted to the unique glow cast off by a light box showing the various stages bottles go through to extract unwanted sediment and its reflected light on plastic-wrapped pallets of cava waiting shipment.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RAY JOHNSON

RIGHT: Greg Hartwell captures the rich detail of a wine cave at the Mas Tinell winery.

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HARTWELL



TOP LEFT: Lluís Clapers, a local master violinmaker in his 30s, started as an apprentice at 14 and now owns his own Barcelona shop. "The place, which smells of wood chips and lacquer, cried out to be photographed," Richard Owens says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD OWENS

TOP RIGHT: Sant Cougat artist Nuria Valles graciously allowed FirstLight into her street-side studio to photograph her art, artistic process, and herself.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM SCHWARTZBERG

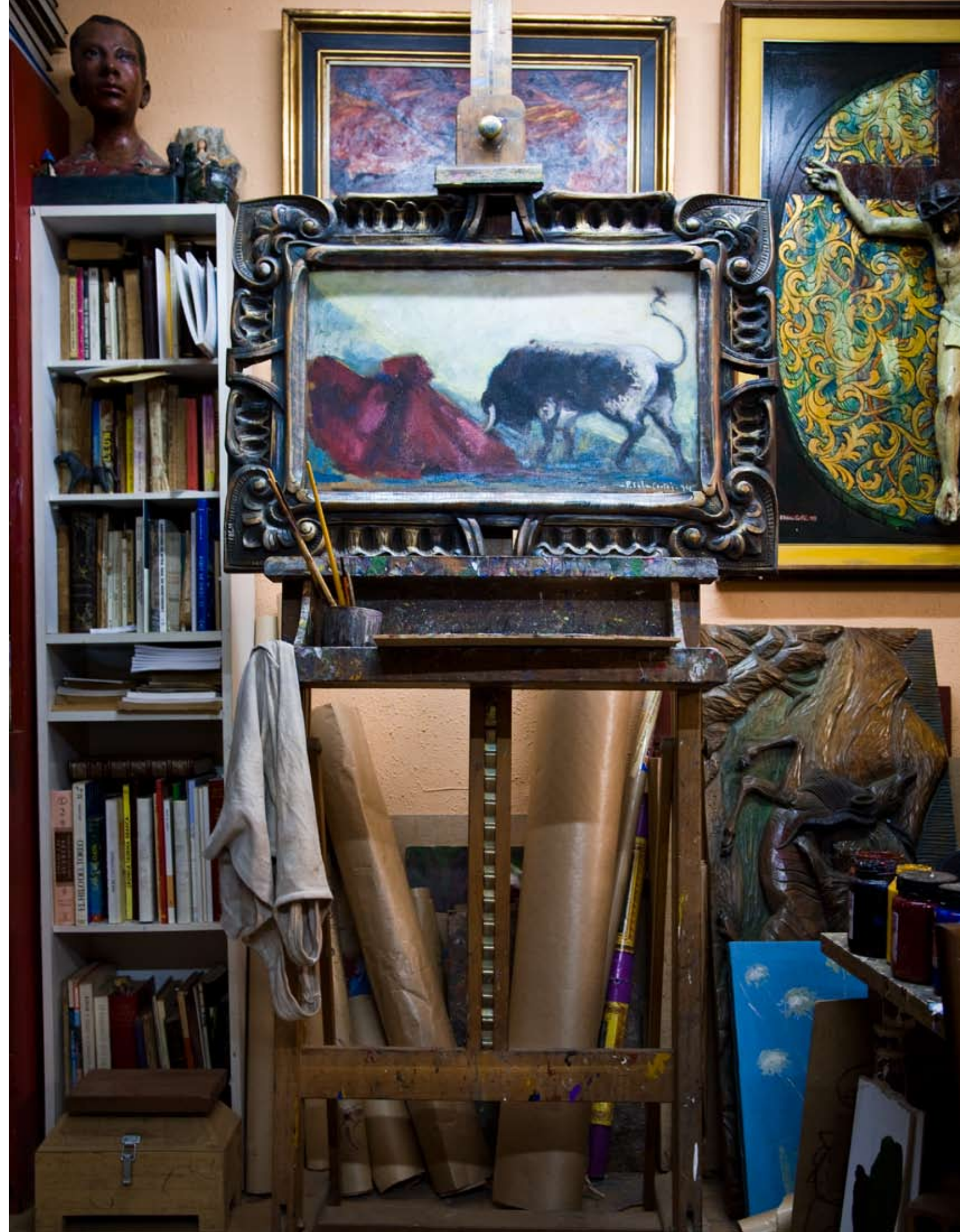


RIGHT: Puppet maker Oscar Plens Bravo, working in a downtown Barcelona artist's studio, constructed this penis puppet for a television comedy that never aired.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF LARKIN

OPPOSITE PAGE: An afternoon in the gallery of Paco Salas in Sant Cugat provided insights into his life as a painter, sculptor, and writer.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOANA GOUVEIA



Visitors can't help but marvel at the agility and strength of *castellers* as they build spectacular human towers during the *La Merce* festival. A small child caps each tower. The child from the tower judged the best is presented to the mayor on his balcony.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF LARKIN





ABOVE: While ambling about the streets of Sant Cugat, Joana Gouveia met these two friends. "They were the type of local people who hug us and make us feel part of the city," she says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOANA GOUVEIA

RIGHT: Castells date back to the 18th century; groups representing cities and towns throughout the Catalonia region build towering human pyramids. "We were lucky enough to have a shooting position on the balcony of City Hall, directly overlooking the competition," Ron Cooper says. "This is the foundation and first level of what will eventually be an eight-level tower."

PHOTOGRAPH BY RON COOPER

BELOW: A man walks his dogs about an hour after sunrise in Calella de Palafrugell, a small fishing village about 2 hours north of Barcelona.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE SCHWARTZBERG





TOP: A group of young parade participants forms a circle and ignites its fireworks during the "young-people's Correfoc."
PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID BIRD

MIDDLE: Devils and dragons light up the night during the Correfoc.
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOANA GOUVEIA

ABOVE: Paul Lang noticed a gauntlet forming to chant taunts at a Correfoc dragon, and captured the dragon's breath of fire and high-adrenaline charge.
PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL LANG

RIGHT: John Stiff steps in the middle of the Correfoc's explosion of light and sound.
PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN STIFF





Bobbie Bernstein was walking through a narrow alley in downtown Sant Cugat when she captured this double take. PHOTOGRAPH BY BOBBIE BERNSTEIN

RIGHT: "We arrived at Calella de Palafrugell, a small fishing village on the Costa Brava, just after dawn," Dane Pollock says. "I was looking for a unique vantage point, and had clamored atop a house only to find this odd and intriguing entity — a chimney that had seen many a dawn." PHOTOGRAPH BY DANE POLLOCK





TOP: Early morning waves break against the rocky shore of Tamariu, on the Costa Brava north of Barcelona.

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE BIRD

MIDDLE: A young crewmember unloads part of the night's catch in the coastal village of Palamos.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL LANG

ABOVE: Fresh fish await buyers at a fishmonger stall in Sant Cugat.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN STIFF

RIGHT: Anke Summerhill captured this vista on a footpath near Tamariu, a small, low-key former fishing village with steep cliffs and pine-covered hills reaching down to the Mediterranean 81 miles northeast of Barcelona.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANKE SUMMERHILL





Greg Hartwell found he was the only thing stirring as lamps ward off the still of the night at a Sant Cugat park.
PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG HARTWELL

RIGHT: Local interpreter Gill Johnson translates for FirstLight founder Jay Dickman during a public slideshow of his work near the monastery of Sant Cugat.

BELOW: The Barcelona workshop included, from left, Jay Kinghorn, Adam Schwartzberg, Julio Arboleda, Ron Cooper, JoAnn Lang, John Stiff, Bobbie Bernstein, Mary Jane Kneisly, Steve Schwartzberg, Joana Gouveia, Ray Johnson, Greg Hartwell, Jeff Larkin, Anke Summerhill, Bert Fox, Bobbi Jo Haynes, Connie Dines, Michele Curel, Paul Lang, Becky Dickman, Dane Pollock, Mary Croft, Jay Dickman, Leslie Robinson, and Dave Bird. Missing from photo: Richard Owens.

FirstLight would like to offer special thanks to Abel Calvet at Acoa Travel for his assistance, Llumi Color for the printers, HP for supplying paper for our prints, The City of Sant Cugat del Valles, Oriol Piera, The City and Mayor of Barcelona for access to the Mayor's balcony during the festival, to Gill Johnson for her translation of the magazine, and to all the folks in Sant Cugat who let us photograph them.

TEXT BY JOHN H. OSTDICK



2008 Barcelona FirstLight Workshop Faculty



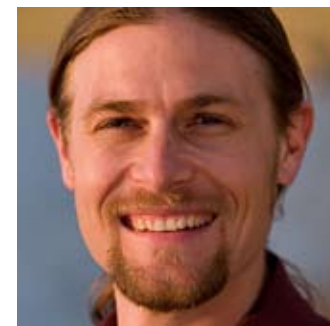
Jay Dickman - Olympus Visionary

Jay Dickman, Olympus Visionary and Lexar Elite Photographer, is founder of Firstlight Workshops. A Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer and regular contributor to National Geographic, Jay's work has won numerous awards in the World Press International Competition. Jay recently co-authored Perfect Digital Photography with Jay Kinghorn, published by McGraw Hill.



Bert Fox - Director of Photography: The Charlotte Observer

Bert Fox joined the Charlotte Observer in 2007 after a decade at National Geographic Magazine where he edited the pictures for over 100 stories, including a 70-page cover story celebrating 50 years of mountaineering on Mt. Everest. His honors include being named "Magazine Picture Editor of the Year" five times by the University of Missouri, in its annual Pictures of the Year (POY) competition.



Jay Kinghorn - RGB Imaging

An Adobe Photoshop Certified Expert, Jay Kinghorn draws upon his background as an assignment and fine-art photographer to develop training programs that fulfill the essential needs of photographers. His approachable, comfortable and efficient training style makes Jay one of the most sought-after digital imaging specialists. In 2003, Jay created a landmark digital imaging survey with ASMP Colorado to assess the adoption of digital photography.



Michele Curel - Photographer

Barcelona-based Michele Curel is a freelance photographer who specializes in hotel, architecture, portrait, and travel photography for editorial and advertising clients in Europe and the United States. Those clients include The New York Times, Newsweek, Time, National Geographic, Vanity Fair, Departures, Sports Illustrated, Forbes, Business Week, Food & Wine, Travel & Leisure, Town & Country, Marie Claire (Spain), Elle (U.S. and Spain), Vogue (Spain), El Pais (Dominical), La Vanguardia magazine, and El Mundo.





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BACK COVER: During the Correfoc, young children, teens, and adults dress up in devil costumes and run through Barcelona's streets with sparkers and fireworks. Ron Cooper captured this young participant with his over-size protective goggles. "I noticed after the evening that my shirt was covered with burn holes," he says.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RON COOPER

"I DIDN'T TAKE THE
DETAILS FOR GRANTED.
NEITHER DID MY CAMERA."

— JEFFREY AARONSON
OLYMPUS VISIONARY

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