

Artist's Statement

By Craig Law

Making a photograph for me is a complex, enriching endeavor that gives me delight. Most of the time I'm considering a "finished print" as I begin to organize the composition. Thinking about you, the viewer, and how I can best convey the visual experience of the subject, shapes how I organize the image. I think about the many possibilities of controlling the color and tones, to convey what the color feels like as I see it. Also, it takes me time to find the best place to stand with the camera, to share with the viewer the clarity in the image that I see.

A few of the older images in this exhibit involve film rather than digital recording. Using film was a slower process with more complexity, where I was able to take steps that enhanced my ability to edit before I made an exposure. However, even with film exposures, I'll often use digital tools to give me a great range of possibilities to help me adjust the image to my preconceived ideas about the print.

As I am getting older, there are practical considerations to my work. With the distance and weather conditions of certain sites, I am not able to carry the weight of the film gear. Digital tools are about half the weight of film gear. The lighter weight helps me walk further.

Making the print is a major part of my creative process. There must be a feeling of completeness for me before I sign a print. A fulfillment of the memory of the subject that feels accurate. Often, the first printing attempts don't satisfy me. With time and patience, I can get to the essence of what I remember.

When the light's off, I come back later when everything feels right to make the image. I love all of this and, even now, I hope to continue and improve in my ability to convey visual emotions.

Craig Law, one of Utah's most prolific and accomplished photographers, is well recognized in many parts of the country. Born and reared in Utah, he has distinguished himself since 1978, as a member of Utah State University's faculty, and has enjoyed Emeritus status since 2011.

His photographic accomplishments include more than 100 exhibits, from Taipei to Paris, as well as Utah, with jurors and purchase awards in twenty of those. He is included in fifteen permanent collections. He is recognized as one of the nation's leading practitioners in black and white gelatin silver, platinum, gravure and carbon photography.

Law's eloquent body of sensitive human figure works augmented with his large format landscape photographs, are full of light and the essence of the precious metals with which he prints.

His work photographing indigenous pictographs and petroglyphs in Southern Utah was featured in Smithsonian Magazine. In 2008, he received the Oliver Award from the American Rock Art Association for his photographic work on the Barrier Canyon Style Project. He has received grants from The National Geographic Society, the Utah Arts Council, and the George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Foundations. His rock art photography has been traveling in an exhibit with the Utah Division of Arts & Museums, for the last 35 years, and includes new images every 5 years. The exhibit has been traveling throughout the cities and rural areas of Utah to places such as the Utah State Capitol, public schools, libraries, city halls, and museums.

From the awe-inspiring rock art of Five Figures, Grand Canyon National Park, to the striking Waterways of the Arid West, Law exhibits a gentle sensitivity to the art of the indigenous peoples, and to the land and concern of its use.