

## **DSU Arts Center/Gallery Hosts Marion Mitchell Photo Exhibition**

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The thoughtful works of longtime photographer Marion Mitchell will be on exhibition until Sept. 23 at Delaware State University's Arts Center/Gallery located in the William Jason Library on campus.



**"The Old Violin" by Marion Mitchell**

The exhibition includes 80 works by this Delaware photographer, who will be honored at an exhibition reception from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 1 in the Arts Center/Gallery.

The exhibition and the Sept. 1 reception are free and open to the public.

Ms. Mitchell, 96, who now resides in Dover at Westminister Retirement Village, dates her photography beginning to a job she got during the Depression years in a small New Jersey photography shop for 25 cents an hour.

She would later move to Delaware where she would go on to cultivate and blossom in her photography skills and become a self-taught photography dark room artist. Over her adult life span, particularly the past 60 years, her works would find themselves on the pages of publications such as the *PSA Journal* and *Southern Delaware Magazine*.

Her photo artworks would also be widely exhibited at Photography Society Association (PSA) salons all over the United States. She would also provide her photography services for the then-Lord Baltimore High School in Ocean View, Del., the Delaware Agriculture Museum and numerous weddings, organizations and other events.

Many of her photography works are landscape, abstract, nature, nautical-themed and still life shots with a particular affinity toward animals and other sights she captured in her travels across the country.

"Photography was my way of finding beauty in everyday things," Ms. Mitchell said. "I didn't have Photoshop, but the results in the darkroom always fascinated me."



**Marion Mitchell and student curator Erica Lokai**

In 2001, the PSA recognized Ms. Mitchell for her 50 years of membership and service to that photography organization. It was about that time when Ms. Mitchell's eyesight began failing and she retired from her photography activities.

Recently, Ms. Mitchell donated more than \$5,000 worth of cameras and other photography equipment to Delaware State University's Art Department to be used in its photography courses.

"If the students can get half to pleasure I got out of it, then that payment enough," Ms. Mitchell said.

Dr. Donald Becker, chair of the DSU Department of Art, said the current digital photography age notwithstanding, Ms. Mitchell's donated equipment is a valuable donation that will be well used by the department.

"We are very much into history, and it is important that we continue to teach black and white wet lab photography," Dr. Becker said. He said that in addition to the traditional art majors, the university's forensic biology majors are required to take photography courses to help them understand the fundamental of crime scene photography. "They will benefit from the donated equipment as well," he said.



**Erica Lokai hangs one of Marion Mitchell's works -- "Winter Night."**

Erica Lokai, a senior art management and studio art major from Magnolia, Del., has had the responsibility of going through Ms. Mitchell's lifelong portfolio, selecting the works to be featured in this exhibition and arranging them in the gallery. Ms. Lokai met with Ms. Mitchell on a number of occasions to talk with her about each photo artwork piece.

"It made me realize what I take for granted," Ms. Lokai said. "Each one of these pictures has a story until themselves, and they have been seen in salons all across the United States."

The Art Center/Gallery – which is located just inside the entrance of the William Jason Library at DSU – is open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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