

The PAI Imagist

September 2010

50th Anniversary 1950-2010

TWA Flight, January 25, 1958



<i>Date</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Address</i>
1958 1-29	George Karas	Life
1-29	W. J. Summits	Life Mag.
1/29	Morris Gordon	Western Electric Co. Inc.

Next PAI Meeting

Thursday, September 16

12 Noon Luncheon

National Arts Club

15 Gramercy Park South | New York City

THE BIRTH OF PAI

Step into our time machine. It's 1952 and a bunch of guys are having lunch at the Palm restaurant, a steak house famed for its pricey beef, sawdust on the floor and casual atmosphere. The same group eats here every week and its called Ralph Baum's lunch (Ralph was founder of the Modern Age Lab). It was formed with no purpose in mind, no aims, no coordinating committee, no speakers, no constitution, no dues. Just a bunch of guys like any other who happened to be in the photographic industry and liked each others company. There was only one rule, NO SHOP TALK. If you broke the rule you had to buy everyone a round of drinks.

It started out with eight or ten at one round table. Some of the early attendees were John Faber of Kodak, Arthur Rothstein of *Look*, Bill Sumits of *LIFE*, John Adams of *Graflex*, Jacob Deschin of *The New York Times*, Ed Wergeles of *Newsweek*, and Milton Freier of *Leitz*. A high power group. But as word of the convivial atmosphere spread, a round table for 10 was too small.

Besides, the group often stayed late in the afternoon, the noise level grew and it interfered with dinner preparations. As a result, the Palm suggested that the group take their luncheon elsewhere.

A number of new venues were tried, leaving a trail of restaurants to accommodate 30, 40, 50 regulars and their guests. The Beverly Hotel, Johnny Johnston's, the Absinth House, Danny's Hideaway, Rosoff's and the Belasco Room at Sardi's. They all recovered but the search for a suitable home went on. The National Arts Club was still some years in the future.



Left: Ralph Baum

By 1957 the German photographic industry had emerged from the destruction of World War II and *Photokina*, a biennial series of trade shows had been established in Cologne. A number of Baum's luncheon group were going to Photokina and Milton Freier of *Leitz* and John Baber of Kodak said, Why

not? Let's get a group together, charter a plane, and go. Easier said than done. To charter a plane at discount rates you had to be incorporated, have a stated purpose, a charter, elected officers, and a paid membership of at least 100. So much for casual luncheons. The group had to have a name. Some suggested Photographic Associates, Inc., while others said Photographic Administrators, Inc. Administrators won out, although not everyone agreed. In later years it was changed to Photography & Imaging, Inc. But it was simply referred to as **PAI**.

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PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGING

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Our sincere appreciation to **SiteWelder**

for its continued support of the PAI mission and for delivering our message to the photographic public via a great website.

www.sitewelder.com

The PAI Vision:

To bring people together who are passionate about photography.

The PAI Mission:

To grow PAI, to share the joy of photography while building camaraderie and inspiring creativity.

The first officers of the newly named PAI were Bill Sumits of LIFE as President, Morris Gordon of Western Electric as V.P., Ralph Baum of Modernage as Treasurer, and John Faber of Kodak as Secretary. Aside from his duties as Treasurer, John Faber designed a distinctive “Busy Bee” icon for membership cards, letterheads, and coffee mugs. Unfortunately the coffee mugs for use at the luncheons became collectors items and were never returned.

On the evening of January 24, 1958, Faber, Baum, Keesing, Freier, and Baughton of TWA met in the LIFE offices to iron out last minute details of the Photokina flight. The next day 200 PAI members, wives, guests and others, were feted to a bon voyage cocktail party at the airport thrown by Ed Hannigan of U.S. Camera. The TWA Jet Stream Constellation four-engine prop plane to Cologne was scheduled to leave at 8:00 pm. By the time the 74 PAI members and their guests took off at 11:30 pm, the bar bill had soared and they were feeling no pain.

After saturating themselves at Photokina, the PAI members and their wives headed out over Western Europe sightseeing and shopping. Some of the scheduled events were E. Leitz in Wetzlar and Kodak in Stuttgart. To cap things off a cocktail party and dinner were arranged by John Faber and Kodak in the Eiffel Tower. The whole experience was greeted with such enthusiasm by those who had gone and those who wished they had, that Photokina was scheduled again in 1960. This time on one of the new KLM jets.

During subsequent years PAI was joined by many distinguished photographers, heads of industrial photo departments, manufacturers, magazine editors, photo reps., and gallery and museum personnel. *The Photographic Administrators Award for Special Recognition was made to Eddie Adams, Cornell Capa, Jacob Deschin, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Harold Edgerton, Fritz Goro, Philippe Halsman, Victor Keppler, Carl Mydans, Arthur Rothstein and others for their unique contributions to photography.*



The one great revolution that affected the photographic industry and PAI was the coming of digital. Even a crude early model camera with less than 1 MB resolution could sell for thousands of dollars. The die was cast and technology and social interactions would never be the same. Photographers no longer had to take their film to a lab to be processed and proofed; they had it all on a little card. And in a relatively short time, they could make their own archival ink jet prints on a reasonably priced printer. Photoshop had landed giving birth to improvements in each succeeding version...CS, CS2, CS3, CS4, CS5 (keep counting). Retouchers with a lifetime of training were out of work. Labs with loyal customers closed. The photographers who waited for their work there and gabbed with fellow photographers were without company. The whole thing had changed. Photography had become more insular. A sense of community was lost. Friendship and fellowship were diminished. Everyone was a photographer. Buy a point-and-shoot and shoot a friend's wedding. Why not?

PAI was always about relationships as much as technology. The opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones is still paramount in its Thursday luncheons at the historic National Arts Club.

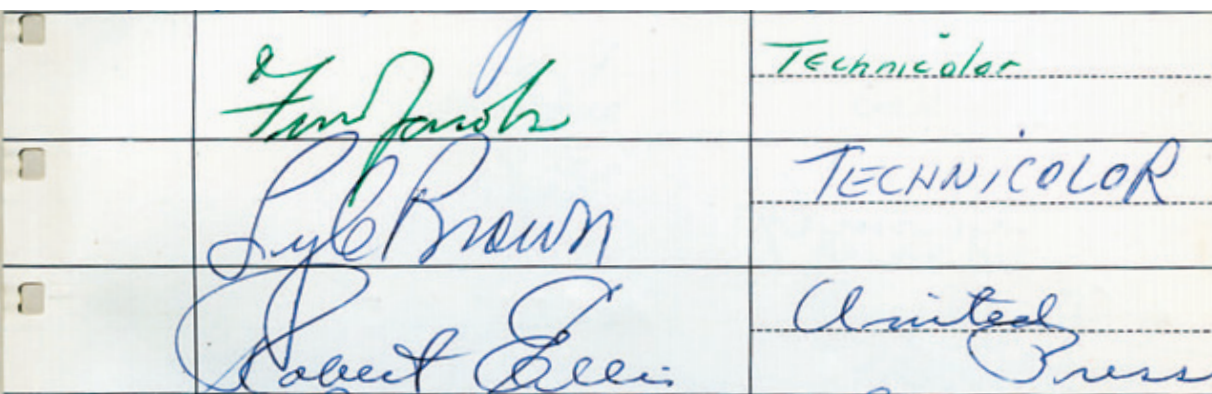
—Bob Sharpe



From top to bottom:
John Faber, Kodak
Ralph Keesing,
Keesing & Keesing
Milton Freier, Leitz
Baughton, TWA

Above left: PAI's “Busy Bee” logo designed by John Faber

Left and previous pages:
details from the Guest Book
from TWA Flight,
January 25, 1958



Exhibitions | News | & Updates

Lee Backer is exhibiting a photograph in *PHOTOCentric 2010*, at the Garrison Arts Center, NY. On view September 3–26. www.leebacker.photoworkshop.com

William Wadman is exhibiting his *Drabbles* series at the Soho Photo Gallery, 15 White Street, NY. Reception Tuesday, September 7, 6–8 pm. On view September 8–October 2. Wadman also announced that the Park West Camera Club requested a presentation of the *Drabbles* series for their meeting on September 9th, 7pm, (at the Soho Photo Gallery). Members from PAI, PWP, and Soho Photo are invited to the event, free of charge, to discover the making of the images, trouble shooting techniques, and the workflow process creating the series. www.sohophoto.com

John Loengard is exhibiting, *Celebrating the Negative*, based on his 1994 book of the same name, at The Fox Talbot Museum at Lacock Abbey, Lacock Village, England. Lacock Abbey is the family home of Henry Fox Talbot who invented the negative in 1835. On view July to December 2010. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/search

Ross Lowell is exhibiting *Time-Trails*, a series of 22 abstract nature photographs on, 5 x 6.5 foot vinyl banners hanging from white pine trees along a serpentine trail at the Ward Pound Ridge Reservation, NY. On view October 10–November 14. www.wassaicproject.org

Stephen Mallon is exhibiting *Next Stop Atlantic*, at the Front Room Gallery, Brooklyn, NY. On view September 10–October 3. This solo show presents a series of photographs capturing the retirement of hundreds of New York City Subway cars on their way to the depths of the Atlantic Ocean. www.frontroom.org

Tony Vaccaro is exhibiting, *Unpublished Pollock Goes Public*, photographs from a 1953 *Life* magazine assignment on Jackson Pollock. The photographs can be viewed online at NPR's, the Picture Show. In addition, the Pollock-Krasner House and Study Center in East Hampton, NY, requested these rare images for an exhibition on display through the end of October. www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2010/08/04/128976766/vaccaro

Viviane Moos, *Trees of Angkor Wat*, can be viewed at *aCurator*, an online photo magazine. www.acurator.com, (Latest Features)

Cynthia Matthews, Len Speier, Richard Bachmann, Michael Sender and Ed Bobrow volunteered their time and knowledge at a photo workshop for the EmblemHealth Bronx Open. The PAI members taught several children basic photography skills using Fuji cameras donated for the project. Members of the New York Junior Tennis League and Sports participated in the workshop, held at Crotona Park in the Bronx.

Harvey Stein is teaching a two-day workshop, *the Beautiful Berkshires*, October 2–3. Photographers interested in landscape photography will learn through lectures, slide presentations, critiques and exciting shooting possibilities. Dottie's Coffee Lounge hosts the weekend in Pittsfield, MA. As Director of Photography for Umbrella Arts Gallery, Harvey announced the showing of *Bed Two*, a show of 43 remarkable images featuring the bed and what we do in it. www.umbrellaarts.com www.harveysteinphoto.com

Susan May Tell announces that her traveling show, *A Requiem: Tribute to the Spiritual Space at Auschwitz*, was selected for a solo show at the Griffin Museum of Photography, MA. *Her Haiku: Christo's Gates, Number 4*, was solicited by The Phoenix Art Museum for their successful auction. Tell, as the Fine Art Chair of the New York Chapter of American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP), co-produced a successful exhibition/fundraiser at the Verge Art Fair, to benefit the 'Doctors Without Borders' relief efforts in Haiti. Currently, her photograph, *Waiting for Train*, is at the RayKo Photo Center, San Francisco, CA in the exhibition *(Por)trait Revealed*. www.susanmaytell.com

Jacqueline L.P. Van Sertima announces her new *Free Form Smoke Series*, "addressing the fluid simplicity of pure black and white imagery generated by its randomly inherent, delicate energy." www.artisticsignatures.com

Cynthia Maris Dantzig's newest book, *Alphabet City: Signs of New York*, (Fotofolio), features 30 of her photographs of signage in the city with a pictorial image substituting for one letter in each sign, in oversize postcard form. Available September 15th.

Peter Brandt announces the launching of a new website showing different bodies of work in architecture. www.PeterBrandt.com

Chaos and Excitement at the June Luncheon

The enthusiastic greeting for our June speaker Saul Leiter, was accompanied by moments of chaos as the normal 35–50 members expected, exploded to 75. "Where do we sit?" "What should we do?" could be heard while guests searched for seating. Tables were quickly set for ten instead of the usual eight, accommodating everyone. Was it worth the wait? No question! Saul is currently the hottest photographer at the Howard Greenberg Gallery, his days of being virtually ignored are over. His street images are bold compositions of color, from a period before color was popular; innovative fashion shots, and the usage of outdated color film, deliberately shifting its colors. Even more compelling was Saul's tongue in cheek low-keyed asides, pithy comments about other photographers, and the unknowable truth of the photograph. It was an unforgettable luncheon with an unforgettable photographer. A man who is finally getting the recognition he deserves.

—Bob Sharpe

PHOTOGRAPHY AND IMAGING

The **PAI** Gallery

**A FORUM
DESIGNED TO SHOWCASE THE WORK
OF OUR MEMBERS**

Please submit 6 x 9", 300 dpi images to imagisteditor@gmail.com

Bliss
from *Free-form Smoke Series*
© Jacqueline L.P. Van Sertima



Early Spring in Central Park
© Herb Fixler



Motion Experiment #1
© Bill Wadman



Untitled
© Scott Ross



Waiting for Train
© Susan May Tell

