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GRIFFIN MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANNOUNCES 2013 FOCUS AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mingle with local and national leaders in the art, craft and business of photography at the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester!

WINCHESTER, MA –September 11, 2013 – The Griffin Museum of Photography (<http://www.griffinmuseum.org/>) announced the recipients of its eighth annual Focus Awards.

“This year’s Focus awardees are a stellar group. The Focus awards recognize the hard work, dedication and enthusiasm of a select group of enthusiastic, creative individuals and organizations dedicated to the art and business of photography,” says Paula Tognarelli, executive director of the Griffin Museum. (http://griffinmuseum.org/focus_awards-2013.htm)

This year’s Focus Award recipients are:

- Lifetime Achievement – Mary Virginia Swanson
- Rising Star – Shane Lavalette
- New England Beacon – Phillip Prodger
- Spotlight –Lens Blog, *NY Times*
- Commonwealth – Boston Public Library Digital Projects for Digital Commonwealth

The Lifetime Achievement Award is given to an individual whose ongoing commitment to photography has created far reaching impact; the Rising Star Award reflects an emerging force the photographic community is watching with great enthusiasm; the New England Beacon Award recognizes a local individual whose work brings prominence to the local photographic scene; the Spotlight Award is given to an entity that consistently shines a light on photography resulting in a extensive influence in the field, and the Commonwealth Award honors a local entity whose dedication and efforts have elevated the medium of photography.

Mary Virginia Swanson -- Lifetime Achievement Award

Mary Virginia Swanson is an innovator, educator, author, advisor and entrepreneur in the field of photography. After receiving her MFA in Photography (Arizona State University, 1979) she directed educational programs for The Friends of Photography including the Ansel Adams Workshop, headed special projects at Magnum Photos, and in 1991 founded SWANSTOCK, an innovative photo agency that managed licensing rights for fine art photographers. During her career she has coordinated educational, exhibition and publication programs for a wide range of institutions and organizations. Her seminars, workshops and lectures on trends and opportunities in photography have aided countless photographers in moving their careers to the next level.

Ms. Swanson is the author of *The Business of Photography: Principles and Practices*, and coauthored with Darius Himes *Publish Your Photography Book*. Her forthcoming title *Finding Your Audience: An Introduction to Marketing Your Photographs* will be released in 2014. She has contributed articles in numerous publications, including *Photo District News*, *British Journal of Photography* and the compilation *The Education of a Photographer*. Today she is a sought-after speaker, advisor, juror and portfolio reviewer. She consults with businesses and agencies to

broaden their knowledge of contemporary photography and frequently partners with non-profit organizations to enrich dialogue in their communities. Swanson currently serves on the Board of Advisors of the Houston Center for Photography, New Orleans Photo Alliance and the Director's Advisory Council of the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, and advises Blue Earth Alliance photographers on partnership strategies. She continues her long-term involvement with the Society for Photographic Education (SPE) and the American Society of Media Photographers (ASMP).

Swanson maintains a popular blog on opportunities for photographer, *Marketing Photos* which can be found on her website www.mvswanson.com. She is based in Tucson, Arizona and New York City.

Shane Lavalette -- Rising Star Award

Shane Lavalette is a photographer, the founding Publisher/Editor of Lavalette, an independent publishing house, as well as the Director of Light Work, a non-profit photography organization in Syracuse, New York. He received his BFA from Tufts University in partnership with The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Lavalette's photographs have been shown widely, including exhibitions at the High Museum of Art, Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, Aperture Gallery, Montserrat College of Art, The Carpenter Center for Visual Arts at Harvard University, The Center for Photography at Woodstock, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Musée de l'Elysée, and beyond. His editorial work has been published in various magazines, including *The New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Newsweek*, *Vice Magazine*, *The Wire*, *Pig Magazine*, *CODE* and *SLASH*, among others. In addition to his own photography, Lavalette has worked with artists Sam Falls, Misha de Ridder, and Erik Schubert to publish artists' books through Lavalette and curated exhibitions by a diverse group of artists including Susan Worsham, Jason Lazarus, and Jackie Nickerson, among others, at Light Work.

Phillip Prodger -- New England Beacon Award

Phillip Prodger is an art historian, writer, curator and head of the photography department at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, the oldest art museum in North America. With over 850,000 photographs in its collection dating back to the year of photography's invention in 1839, the Peabody Essex is one of the country's most important centers for the exhibition and study of photography. Trained as a curator of prints, drawings, and photographs, Prodger previously worked at the National Gallery of Canada, the St. Louis Art Museum, and the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University. Phillip's writings on art and photography have been published in nine languages. He received his Ph.D. in history of art from Cambridge University. He also holds a B.A. from Williams College and a Master's from Stanford University.

Lens Blog, NY Times—Spotlight Award

Lens is the photojournalism blog of *The New York Times*, presenting the finest and most interesting visual and multimedia reporting — photographs, videos and slide shows. A showcase for Times photographers, it also seeks to highlight the best work of other newspapers, magazines and news and picture agencies; in print, in books, in galleries, in museums and on the Web. Lens will draw on The Times' own pictorial archive, numbering in the millions of images and going back to the early 20th century.

James Estrin and David Gonzales are co-editors of Lens. Matthew McCann is the producer.

Boston Public Library Digital Projects for Digital Commonwealth — The Commonwealth Award

The Boston Public Library (BPL) has been digitizing photo archives and other library materials. The goal of this project is to grow and support Digital Commonwealth, a consolidated statewide digital library system. This work is done at two, state-of-the-art digitization labs in the Central branch of the BPL in Copley Square. Nearly 100,000 items can be explored and downloaded across a variety of websites. More recently, the BPL has begun digitizing materials from other libraries, archives, museums, and historical societies from across the state.

The digitization work is being funded by a [federal grant](#) awarded by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. The goal of this project is to grow and support [Digital Commonwealth](#), a consolidated statewide digital library system.

Awards Presentation and Celebration

This year's event is being held in Winchester, MA, home of the Griffin Museum of Photography. The reception will take place at 6:00 PM at the Griffin Museum of Photography at 67 Shore Road. The awards ceremony is being held at 8:00 PM at Winchester Town Hall at 71 Mount Vernon Street. The master of ceremonies is nationally recognized photographer Lou Jones. Award presenters include photographer and educator, Susan kae Grant; photographer Susan Worsham; executive editor and host of *Arts, WGBH Boston*, Jared Bowen; documentary photographer, Maggie Steber and Bob Cullum, the grandson of photographer Leslie Jones.

For more information and tickets, please call 781-729-1158 or email frances@griffinmuseum.org. Limited tickets will be available for the private cocktail and hors d'oeuvre reception with the awardees and presenters, followed by the focus award ceremony. Tickets are \$85 before October 12, 2013, \$90 after October 11, 2013. Special student price is \$20 with valid ID (for ceremony only).

The Griffin Museum created the annual awards in 2006 to recognize individuals who have made critical contributions to the promotion of photography. They are one of the few to recognize the work of those who have been instrumental in building greater awareness of the photographic arts in the general public.

This year Panopticon Imaging sponsors the Focus Awards.

The Griffin Museum of Photography is a nonprofit organization dedicated solely to the art of photography. Through our many exhibitions, programs and lectures, we strive to encourage a broader understanding and appreciation of the visual, emotional and social impact of photographic art.

Visit www.griffinmuseum.org and http://www.griffinmuseum.org/focus_awards.htm

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Please credit all photos captured from the Griffin Museum website.

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Susan kae Grant's photo credit © Richard Klein

Phillip Prodger's photograph courtesy of the Peabody Essex