

## **Gayle Hoogstraten Arts Leadership Awards**

*David Curl - Gayle Hoogstraten Award for Arts Leadership – Educator*



David Curl has been the central person in shaping many artists passions for history and photography in Kalamazoo. His supportive mentorship approach in the classroom was inspiring and helped instill confidence in many young artists and formed the basis for many teachers in our community. Always approachable, relaxed in manner, with a depth of knowledge of all aspects of the medium, Dave made a significant impact on his students.

It is not an understatement to say that Dave Curl was responsible for many artist's careers as a photographer and educator.

After retiring from WMU, Dave established the long overdue photography program at Kalamazoo College. He designed, implemented the program, and taught classes. The success of photography at the K College led to the Fine Art Department establishing a tenure track position. Dave was instrumental in the decision to hire Richard Koenig for the professorship.

Attend an opening at the KIA and you will see Dave. He is also a docent, and continues to be both an attendee and presenter at Art Break. Dave is always in the audience and is always ready with a thoughtful question or two. Dave Curl is a long standing and important part of the Kalamazoo arts community. His widely adopted college textbook on photography photo/IMAGING, continues to be popular in today's classrooms.

It should not go unsaid that Dave is an artist as well. He continues to make beautiful and evocative imagery. In this and other exhibitions Dave is pointing the way, showing the viewer how to see a select slice of our world.

The great photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson said that taking a photograph "...is a matter of putting your brain, your eye and your heart in the same line of sight. It is a way of life." Dave Curl has mastered this way of life as an educator, mentor and artist.

From David Isaacson:

"For many years Dave has been a docent at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, where he helped me as a mentor not only to learn more about works of arts within the museum's collection and many traveling exhibitions, but also to encourage me to improve my teaching techniques. I have really appreciated

Dave's generosity to me, because, as a non-artist I have only an amateur's knowledge of art. I am only one of hundreds of people, both young and old, who have benefited from Dave's extraordinary knowledge, patience and dedication to connecting people and art works. There isn't an ounce of condescension in Dave: he shares his love and knowledge, making sure that he focuses on the interests of the student first, the subject matter second."

From Ginger Owen:

"My first impressions of David through the text alone was that he was a well versed photographic craftsman with an exceptional handle on translating technical information to a learning/student based audience. My next impression was that he was incredibly active in the art community, both national and local. It wasn't long before we met; he was and continues to be a steward of the arts at all events. David warmly welcomes newcomers, remembers names and continues to forge long term relationships. His generosity to colleagues and passion for art is truly a rarity; David is always a fixture at art receptions adding a sparkle of intelligence to conversation, he is quick to engage artists with a thirst for learning and promotes future interaction.

As a colleague, I have witnessed him nurture and bridge important connections between arts organizations, leaders, educators and artists.

David keeps a keen eye on all photo related community activities. For nearly 20 years, I've lived in this community and I can't think of a single time that David hasn't been present at one of mine or my student's receptions. He always approaches exhibiting artists as a mentor, inspiring them to think and create.