

Featured Artist - CLIFF WHITTAKER, Photographer

Cliff Whittaker is a photographic artist who specializes in mid-19th century impressionist-style images. He has studied and been influenced by the French Impressionist works of such artists as Van Gogh, Manet, Pissarro, Renoir and others of that period, and his work is often mistaken for oil on canvas paintings.

Cliff has concentrated most of his current work in downtown Clarksville. He feels that his work is a celebration of the renaissance of the downtown area and his impressionist style is appropriate for this type of work. He says that it is more important to capture emotion in an image than it is to capture the details of the scene.

His work involves creating images of every day activities along Franklin Street and inside businesses such as the Blackhorse Pub, the Front Page Deli, Blondie's Sandwiches and Coffee and Hodgepodge. Cliff says that his art is more like that of a contemporary historian in that his candid images show people and places as they are in that instant. And, maybe some day in the future people will look at these images and be reminded of "the warm glow of the good ol' days."

Cliff has another love in photography and that involves landscape scenes in both color and black and white. When he isn't haunting Franklin Street he can usually be found somewhere in the Clarksville area pursuing nature photography. One of his favorite locations is Rotary Park and, unlike the photographs he makes in the downtown area, he is more likely to try to capture as much detail and make these images as "sharp" as possible.

Cliff has been a photographic hobbyist for more than 40 years and in that time he has seen several of his images featured in product advertising and on magazine covers. The one cover that he likes to remember most was for a magazine article called "At Home with Mel Tillis." That one was especially memorable because it was so much fun working with Mr. Tillis who loved to clown around. Cliff's photography was featured throughout the magazine as well as having his portrait of Mr. Tillis on the cover.

Since retiring as a stock broker, Cliff has taken advantage of the opportunity to concentrate on photography. He says that he is deeply appreciative of the advancements in photographic technology in the past few years. Not only is it a tremendous mental exercise but it has also made advancements in the photographic arts possible. As for himself, Cliff says he doesn't miss the smell of the dark room chemicals at all.

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