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Photo festival growing, on track

By Jacob Stockinger

The Capital Times

The first Madison photography festival — slated to open citywide during the first week of March and run until the end of April — is on track to be even bigger than originally planned, according to organizers.

"We're up to about 35 venues, and the list is growing," says curator Daniel Swadener, who is based in Akron, Ohio, and who organizes art exhibits for the Promega Corp. in Fitchburg. "I initially thought we'd get a few, but 35 is way out of the range I expected."

"The festival has already exceeded my expectations so it's a no-lose situation," he added.

Swadener has been working closely with the local Center for Photography at Madison (CPM) in putting together Madison Photo-fest 2000.

Some of the most recent organizations to sign up are Olbrich Botanical Gardens and the Fanny Garver Art Gallery.

So successful has the festival been in recruiting participants that seven businesses — Capelli Design Studio, David's Restaurant, Espresso Royale, Espresso Royale Cafe, Pyfe's Corner Bistro, La Mop, and Mildred's Sandwich Shop — are looking for individuals or groups willing to exhibit their work.

Plans call for many openings to be held citywide during the weekends of March 3-5 and 10-12 as

well as the week in between, Swadener said.



Plans also call for a poster and the publication and distribution of a free brochure with locations, show titles and a map.

In addition, Madison Magazine will feature a story on the festival in February, and Isthmus is planning some kind of coverage this month, Swadener said.

Recruiting venues and artists has been the worry of Jan Krieger, an officer with the CPM, who has done an excellent job, according to Swadener.

"Everyone I've spoken to is thrilled to be showing photography," Krieger said. Some venues that had already booked nonphotography shows this year, she added, would like to participate in the festival.

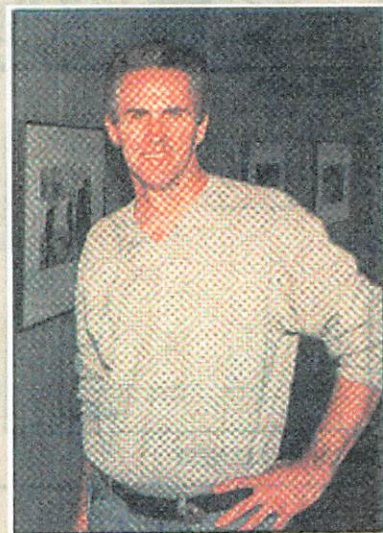
"It's great we've got some of the bigger names to go along with it," Swadener said. "That really helps."

How likely is the festival to become the annual event that organizers hoped to start?

"Everybody I talk to has ideas," Swadener said. "If we do it every year, we'll get a lot more involvement from people who want to ride the wave. Then you get more outside money coming in."

"But we'll know after we regroup and see how much work everybody has to put in," Swadener said. "We'll see if people are burned out or want to pick up the ball and run with it. It will depend a lot on the Center for

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JACOB STOCKINGER/THE CAPITAL TIMES

Organizer Daniel Swadener — seen here in Fitchburg's Promega Gallery, which he curates — says the first Madison photography festival is on track for its March launch and will be bigger than he anticipated.

ie Capital Times ■ Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2000

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Photography. This could split it up or unite it. We're going to make some mistakes, but you have to learn."

This year's festival has come together too late to allow for getting grants from the various public agencies and private foundations that might be interested in supporting it, said Swadener, who added he has discussed the festival with George Tzougros, the head of the Wisconsin Arts Board. Next year's festival would allow more time to bring in institutional support.

"It looks like a lot of local photographers are taking part," Swadener said.

The festival has no overall theme.

"We've tried to embrace all sorts of photography and not narrow it to a theme that could polarize people," Swadener says.

He remains optimistic about the festival and its future.

"It just lit a fire under Madison, I can't believe it," Swadener said. "I'm excited about it. It turned out to be more work than I envisioned. But it's already a success far beyond my dreams."

Here, according to Krieger, is a list of venues confirmed to host shows:

■ Ancora Coffee Roasters, 112



The King's Foot Gallery, 2725 Atwood Ave., is among the 35 venues lined up for the first citywide photography festival.

King St. — "Before" and "now" shots of Madison by local photographer Zane Williams.

■ Bon Appetit Restaurant.

■ Cafe Montmartre — Bob Rashid and Jim Schwall of Madison.

■ Camera Co. on the Square — Darryl Sherman of Madison.

■ Canterbury Booksellers — Foreign images by Jesse Krumpfen.

■ Commonwealth Gallery — Well-known Wisconsin photographers including John Shimon and Julie Lindemann of Manitowoc, Francis Ford of Milwaukee, Bradley Meinz of Milwaukee, and Jan Krieger of Madison.

■ DeRicci Gallery at Edgewood College — Images of women by Susan Kaye of Madison.

■ Etes-Vous Prets — Anette Hansen and Claire Ruzicka of Madison.

■ Fanny Garver Gallery — Photoetchings by Christina Hope.

■ Ground Zero Coffeehouse — Madison artist Erich Schroeder.

■ Rubin's Gallery 323 — Works by three nationally known artists: Yvonne Viner's close-ups of quartz crystals; Leonard Morris' black-and-white abstracts; and Paul Taylor's photogravures.

■ Hyperion Studio — Group employee show.

■ King's Foot Gallery. The "f5" group, including work by Carol Chase Bjerke, Dede Bangs, Jan Krieger and Kim Sholly of Madison, and Deone Janke of Milwaukee.

■ Madison Art Center — Works from the permanent collection and other works.

■ Madison Civic Center — Member show of Center for Photography at Madison.

■ Michelangelo's Coffeehouse — Sam Chung of Madison.

■ Mother Fool's Coffeehouse — Black-and-white local portraits by Ely Griswold of Madison.

■ Olbrich Botanical Gardens — Dede Bangs of Madison.

■ Promega Corp. — Four non-local photographers, including Swadener.

■ Savoir Faire Cards and Gifts — John Hoffman of Madison.

■ State Historical Society of Wisconsin — Preview of a documentary about south Madison.

■ Sunporch Cafe and Gallery — Local landscape show.

■ Sunroom Cafe and Gallery — Works by UW students.

■ Steep and Brew — Mark Duerr of Madison.

■ Wendy Cooper Gallery — Internationally known photographer Michael Alexander.

■ Wisconsin Union Galleries — "Dancing With Gandhi in Afro-Brazil." Photos by Provina Shukla, exhibition coordinator at the department of anthropology of the American Museum of Modern History in New York.

■ Wisconsin Veterans Museum — "Citizen Soldiers: The Wisconsin National Guard in Action" by Madison photographer Joe Oliva.

■ U-Frame-It, 857 E. Johnson St. — Landscapes and other work by John Murray Mason of Madison.