

## Experience Paris with photography exhibition at Mansfield Art Center

MANSFIELD -- Gary Zuercher is bringing his new exhibition to the Mansfield Art Center, featuring 86 black-and-white photos from his book "The Glow of Paris: The Bridges of Paris at Night"

The exhibition organized by the Mansfield Art Center and supported by gifts from Gorman-Rupp Company and Ohio Arts Council begins Jan. 21 and ends Feb. 28.

Zuercher a Wooster native and OSU alum, worked as an entrepreneur for many years. He founded WavvTek a business that manufactured wave-

making machinery for swimming pools. WaveTek was located on fourth street in Mansfield. In the 90s, he and his wife, Dominique, moved from Mansfield to Washington, D.C., where he operated Rain Drop Products--a manufacturer of water playgrounds and custom-designed waterparks. He later sold the business in the early 2000s.

His love for the "City of Love" sparked after meeting Dominique in the Cancun, Mexico airport in October 1979. A month later, they had dinner in Paris, where Dominique lived and worked, and as the saying goes, "the rest is history." The couple bought an apartment in Paris, spending about one month a year in their pied à terre. They later purchased a bigger apartment in Paris, and now split their time between D.C. and Paris each year.

For over 30 years, Zuercher provided photography for numerous companies and advertising agencies needing commercial images for publications, advertising brochures, media and marketing. He views photography as a creative outlet, saying it give him the chance to use his "right brain" which is commonly referred to as the analog brain and controls three-dimensional sense, creativity and artistic senses.

One night while taking photos with his film camera, he captured an image of the Pont Alexandre III, "which is one of the most beautiful bridges in Paris, if not in the world," he said. "The moment I took that photograph I knew that I overexposed it, but I decided when I developed it in the darkroom that I would way under-develop it by about 30 percent, just to see if I could save it... So I did that and the negative came out pretty good ... So I made a print and



Pont au Change with the Conciergerie in the background



Viaduc d'Austerlitz with the fog rolling in

that print just knocked me off my feet -- it swas luminous and it took my breath away.”

This triggered a project that he thought would take about a year to complete. Instead he spent the next five years photographing the 35 bridges over the Seine River at night during the winter months, and another year reserching the history of the bridges in order to create his book. “The Glow of Paris: The Bridges of Paris at Night” has garnered several accolades since its release in January of 2015, including the prestigious IPPY Gold Medal.

Despite the cold and long nights, he found peace and tranquility during the shoots. He used a digital camera to help frame the image, but the final products are shot on film. The film is developed in his darkroom in Paris and he makes the prints in his darkroom in Washington. All made in the traditional chemical darkroom process.

George Whitten, Mansfield Art Center director, called Zuercher's work dynamic. "Out of all photography, I think black-and-white is about as pure as it can get to the art form," he said. Zuercher's photos are arranged in geographic order at the gallery, from the upstream bridges of the east to the downstream bridges in the west. "There's a lot for people to see," Whitten said. And a lot to learn. "It's almost like a documentary/historical show, as well as an art show," Whitten said.

Emily Dech, Staff Reporter

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### *About the Exhibit:*

The exhibition opens with a reception and book signing with Zuercher from 7 to 9 p.m. on Jan. 21. The exhibit features 86 nighttime photos of the bridges, taken by Zuercher over a five year period. These are luminous black and white images of exceptional quality. Zuercher photographed, then developed and finally printed each of these remarkable photographs in his chemical darkrooms in Paris and Washington, DC. They are nocturnal, cold-weather month studies in contrast, lighting, and shadows. His technique maximizes the warmly luminous highlights as well as the dramatic shadows evident in these architectural masterpieces.

For more information, call 419-756-1700 or visit [mansfieldartcenter.org](http://mansfieldartcenter.org)