

{visuals}

# Developing Talent

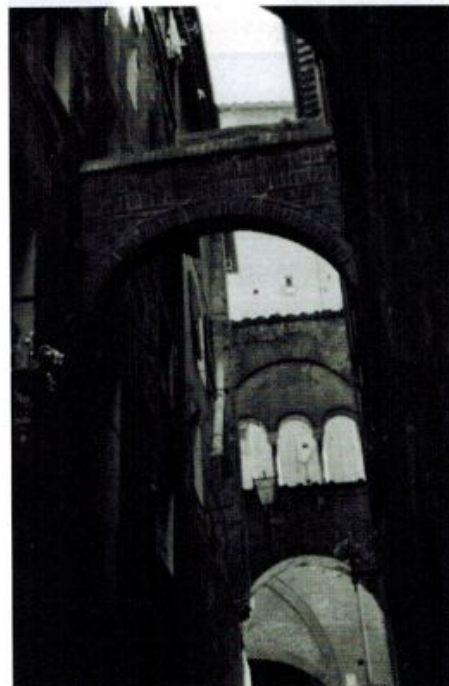
*Photographers are among the newcomers at this year's Columbus Arts Festival*

By Lisa Aurand

**T**hey're both photographers, but each sees the world through a different lens.

Frank Kozarich and Claudia Retter were selected as two of nine artists chosen for the Greater Columbus Arts Council's Emerging Artists program, which each year helps a handful of local artists sell their work at the Columbus Arts Festival for the first time.

The festival is set for June 7-9 at the downtown Columbus riverfront.



Though they've both shown their work at galleries, neither Kozarich nor Retter has sold at an art show on this scale before.

"I've been entering juried shows and doing gallery exhibits for several years," Retter says. "I'd always been curious about doing an art festival, but wasn't sure. It's sort of a daunting process, but I always kind of wanted to open my own shop."

**R**etter, who lives between Upper Arlington and Grandview Heights, set up a small booth at an art fair in Yellow Springs last year to get her feet wet. But the Columbus Arts Festival is a big step up.

"I feel better prepared now for a three-day event because of the assistance and availability of the Emerging Artist mentors to help (us)," she says. "I'm hoping to do more festivals. The Columbus one is a huge one. I figure if I can get through this, I can get through pretty much anything."

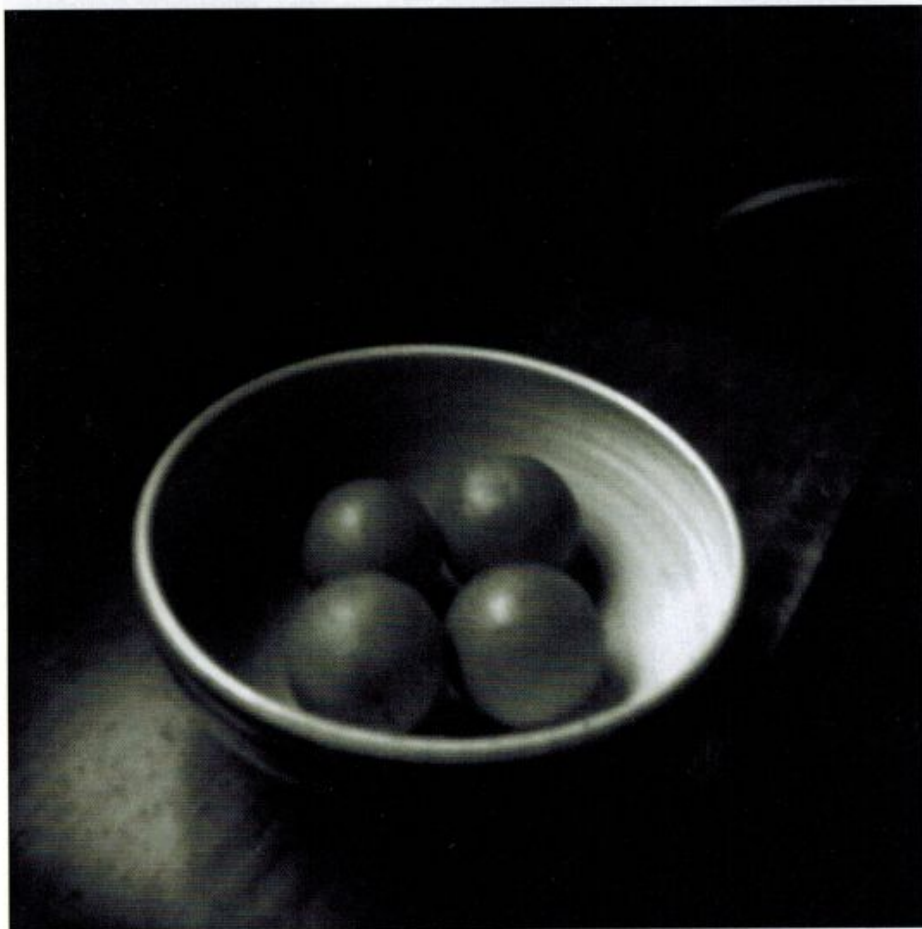
Retter, who was born in Germany and raised in New England, started taking photographs as a child, "stealing" her

**Top:** *Via Galuzza*

**Left:** *Claudia Retter*

**Opposite top:** *Waterlily*

**Opposite bottom:** *Three Fish*



Lynn's Tomatoes

father's camera and using it to document family vacations and travels. A friend in college taught her how to develop film in a darkroom.

"I'm primarily self-taught when it comes to photography," says Retter, who shoots black-and-white film images, as well as some color digital photography. "One of the first things I saved up for was my enlarger. My dad built a cart so I could wheel it in and out (of the closet) so I had a dark place to print. I would carry trays (of chemicals) in and out of the bathroom."

Retter moved to Columbus in 1998 because she had family in the area. She is a full-time photographer, spending time on both her artistic work – faces, places and movie scenes – and wedding and portrait photography.

"I do some portrait work. I also do documentary events where someone may want documentary coverage, as opposed to

posed pictures of things," she says. "I seem to be the person people call when they want something that isn't the status quo."

Having recently earned her pilot's license, she frequently spends her time flying and has created a lot of flying-related photographs. Past projects have included a series of winter landscapes and a hand-stitched storybook with photos of a trip she took to the Pacific Northwest.

"I'm kind of feeling around for new projects," Retter says. "I think it's time to take another trip. I'd like to leave the country to go on a little photo safari, I think."

She still does her own film developing, in the darkroom that's now at her parents' house in Florida.

"When I print digitally, I do that at home," says Retter. "(I've been) printing on etching paper so it still sort of has that old-school feel. I hand-tear the edges and set them into a mat so they almost feel like a print-makers' print."

Kozarich, a north Columbus resident, sticks with digital photography – though he, too, got his start with a 35mm camera.

His interest in art as a child began with painting and drawing and progressed to photography after he saw a photo his sister took of him driving a go-kart.

"That really caught my interest," he says. "My parents got me an old 35mm camera at a garage sale and I just started plugging away, shooting whatever I could."

After his teenage years, Kozarich took a detour from photography – he works as a machinist – until about eight years ago, when he was given a point-and-shoot digital camera for Christmas.

Always a fan of nature, he spent several years as a volunteer photographer for Franklin County Metro Parks and had many of his pictures used in the organization's *Parkscope* publication. But what Kozarich considers his "art" are his macro photos, which came about three years ago after a request from his wife, Angela.

"(She) asked me if I would take some photos of the plants and flowers that she had out in the yard so she could hang them up around the house," Kozarich says.

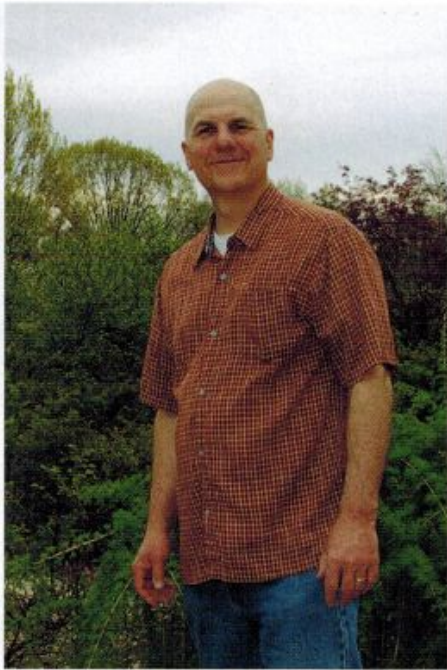
His initial attempts were unsatisfying, so he decided to try a method he'd read about in a photography magazine and was thrilled with the results.

"I was doing extreme close-ups on plants and flowers with a very limited depth of field," he says. "I was creating



Dandy

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Frank Kozarich



Flower

“I was creating these images that really crossed over the threshold of making these flowers look like abstract objects.”

Frank Kozarich




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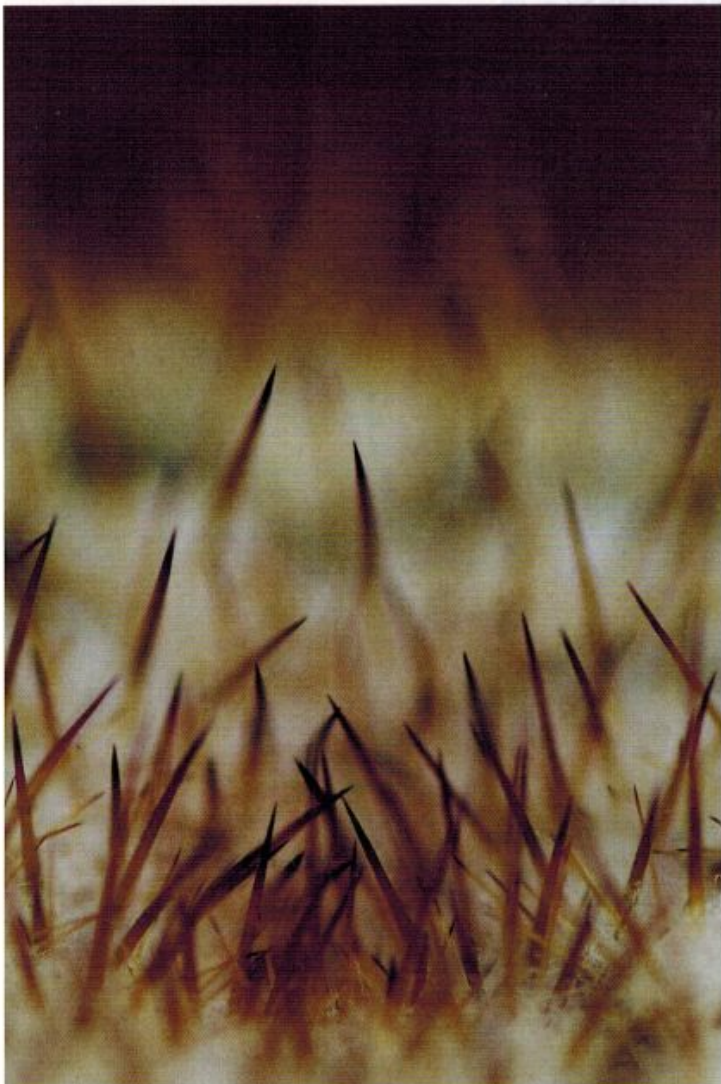
Even though his wife was interested in hanging Kozarich's photos on their walls, he never considered the possibility that others might be interested in his art until friends encouraged him to put together a portfolio. Once he did, he brought it by a party to show it to them, where it caught the eye of Michael Seiler, a Zanesville-based painter and gallery owner who went on to host a showing of Kozarich's work last July.

Kozarich says he is learning a lot through the Emerging Artists program.

“We had a five-hour class that went over so much of what we would need to know,” he says. “They pretty much tried



Above: *Tuft*    Below left: *Sharp*    Below right: *Berry*



to touch base with every aspect of what we're going to be seeing – not just the artistic side, but the business side and the social side of different interactions we'll be having with people.”

His booth at the festival mainly will sell metal prints.

“I really like how what I do looks on the metal prints and I like the quality of it. The longevity of it is much greater than photo paper and much more durable,” Kozarich says. “If I sell my work, I want that person to be able to enjoy it for many years and maybe even pass it on.” **CS**

*Lisa Aurand is a contributing editor. Feedback welcome at [gbishop@cityscenemediagroup.com](mailto:gbishop@cityscenemediagroup.com).*