



LPE photographer of the month

Marc B. Malin

I have always been drawn to black and white photography and blues music. They both have a stark intensity and tell a story that seems to be factual, yet is all about the feeling inside the image or the lyrics.

It seems to me that transcending the ordinary is often at the root of why we create art. It doesn't matter if it's the tedious life of picking cotton or a mundane existence in suburbia.

In the early 60's, growing up in Newark New Jersey was fairly dismal until the summer when we would all pile in my grandfather's DeSoto and head "down the shore". The ocean, the boardwalk, the rides at Asbury Park -- it was paradise with a soundtrack as transistor radios blared on the beach with the latest hits of the day - the Beatles singing *Love Me Do*, Chubby Checker doing *The Twist* and The Dixie Cups' tune *Iko Iko*. The music was diverse and vital and became a part of me.

Many years later, working as both a photographer and musician, I went to New Orleans and fell in love with the city. Music was an integral part of everyday life there, not just something you performed on stage. It filled the streets everywhere you went -- and not the pop music on the radio-- but real American roots music -- jazz, blues, and funk. I started photographing street musicians and the local music scene. When Katrina hit, I felt compelled to do something to help in an area that was close to my heart. I contacted the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic, an organization that helps provide health care to local musicians and their families. I produced a set of note cards from photographs I had taken down there, and donated all the proceeds to the clinic. *The Tuba Player* came from that series. It was taken in a dark and crowded room at Preservation Hall in the French Quarter. For me, it captures the feeling of those old jazz shots from the 40's -- with the same intimacy of the moment and the music.

Marc B. Malin is the featured photographer in the January/February 2008 issue of *CameraArts*, fine art photography magazine.