

Maryland Masters: Edwin Remsberg's Portraits of Maryland Traditions



**Written by Meg Dibley with Commentary
by Edwin Remsberg**

Maryland Masters: Edwin Remsberg's Portraits of Maryland Traditions

September 5, 2011 through November 5, 2011

RECEPTION

September 27, 2011 5:00 to 8:00p.m.
Gallery Talk by Edwin Remsberg at 6:30 p.m.
Elaine Eff Recognition to follow

LOCATION

Maryland State Arts Council | James Backas Gallery
175 W. Ostend Street, Suite E, Baltimore, MD 21230
Free Parking

HOURS

Gallery hours: Weekdays 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Please call or email for special accommodations: msac@msac.org
410.767.6555 | TTY 1-800-735-2258



Maryland Masters: Edwin Remsberg's Portraits of Maryland Traditions is a collection of images that reveal the unique flavor of Maryland and its distinctive community traditions. These traditions have been handed down from generation to generation, from master to apprentice. Edwin Remsberg, Maryland photographer and Maryland Traditions collaborator since 2008, has captured these rituals in this series of portraits of men and women performing their individual practices. It has been through his passion for creating images that celebrate Maryland and his fascination with one's sense of place that Remsberg has developed this collection.



Edwin Remsberg, 2011 Maryland Traditions Folklife Festival, Creative Alliance—Photo by Meg Dibley

As a photographer, one has the power to create iconic images and to establish a sense of identity for both the subject and the viewer. The images in *Maryland Masters* embody the people and practices that make Maryland *Maryland*. Baltimore pictorialist and former *Baltimore Sun* photojournalist A. Aubrey Bodine has been an inspiration to Remsberg. “The genius of Bodine,” Remsberg asserts, “was that he created these visual icons that define Maryland’s identity.” Remsberg emphasizes the importance of “creating visual touchstones that define what constitutes the culture of *place*.” Remsberg believes the same idea applies to the subjects in *Maryland Masters*; the photographer is helping them to define and reinforce their identity through the image. “It is very easy to take a picture of someone that looks silly,” Remsberg remarks,

“and so a photographer truly has a responsibility to give people their dignity and to reflect back to someone the best likeness of himself or herself.” He emphasizes the impact this concept has not only on the subject, but on the viewer as well.

For Remsberg, one of the most rewarding aspects of the creation of *Maryland Masters* was his opportunity to photograph people who are passionate about what they are doing. He explains with delight, “to work with people who are passionate about their work is wonderful, because I’m passionate about photography, so it is a great match.”



Louis Campbell—Lumbee Indian Regalia Maker, Baltimore



Ronald “Mack” McGlaughlin—Boatbuilder, Cambridge

For Remsberg, the experience of photographing these traditions was truly remarkable because, “people tend to be less self-conscious when you are not so much photographing them but photographing what they do and they happen to be in the image. So you have these people who are passionate about their craft, their art, their music... they define who they are through what they do and you can see that in the image, in their hands and on their faces and in the way that they move and settle into position. There is a love and a passion for their work. That makes my work a lot more fun!”

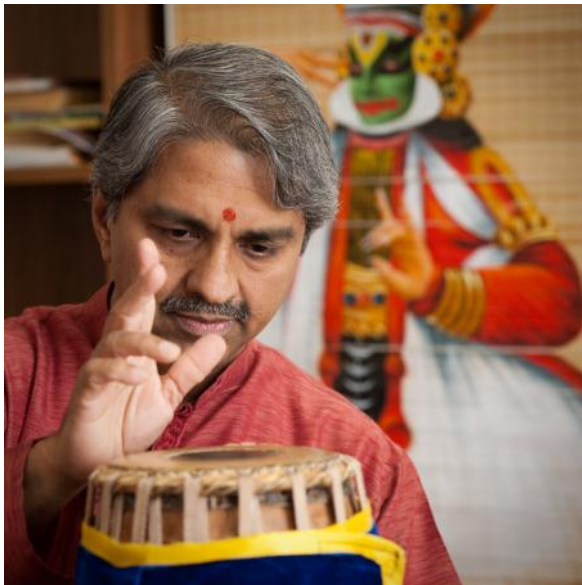
“For me, the photograph is not an end in itself but rather a tool for transmitting information, telling stories and educating,” says Remsberg.

“Photography is a means to bring these incredibly rich and interesting worlds to people who would not otherwise get to see them. The content and the story is what matters. I am passionate about Maryland. The idea of ‘sense of place’ is very important to me, because I have a long history with Maryland. I believe our sense of



John Oktavec—Screen Painter, Pasadena

place comes not only from our geography around us, but from this human geography of who we are and the culture we create.” Remsberg aims to provide Marylanders with the opportunity to gain a sense of their local identity, giving them something to appreciate and love.



P.K. “Swami” Swaminathan—Mrudangam Master, Burtonsville

The visual experience offers individuals the chance to see themselves as unique but also for a larger culture to see itself as unique

“There is something about our places, our people, and our time that is special. By isolating it and celebrating it, it gives one the ability to appreciate it. If I can make images that cause people to see their world and themselves in a new way then I have done my job.”

-Edwin Remsberg



Wendell Brooks—Gospel Quartet Singer, Princess Anne

Gallery Images:

1. Burton DeBusk & Hugh Campbell, Cecil County/Elkton, Appalachian Gospel Singers
2. Ann Jones & Frances Nicholson, Grantsville/Oakland, Coverlet Weavers
3. Wendell Brooks & Terrell Taylor, Princess Anne, Gospel Singers
4. Newell "Sky" Quinton & Allen Quinton, Jr., San Domingo, Scrapple Makers
5. Paul "Spike" Piker & Keith Kuhn, Dundalk/Pylesville, Train Garden Builders
6. Andy Shaw & Darwin Weigel, St. Mary's City, Broomes Island, Spar Makers
7. Bob Cicero & Szymon Kaniowski, Baltimore, Letter Press Printers
8. Herman "Dick" Orrell & Linda Kautz, Wye Mills, Beaten Biscuit Bakers
9. Shanthi & Aishwariya Chandrasekar, North Potomac, Indian Kolam Painting
10. David Reed & Sam Hopkins, Rising Sun/Colora, Bluegrass and Clawhammer Banjo Players
11. Bill Kirchen & Marcy Marxer, Owings/Sykesville, Dieselbilly Guitar
12. Kathy & Carrie Holter, Jefferson, Tailors
13. Louis Campbell & Jason Warwick, Baltimore, Lumbee Regalia Makers
14. Carla Tomaszewski & Alysa Younger, Piney Point/Marbury, Pisanki
15. Jay Young & Tony Shore, Baltimore County/Baltimore City, Fox Hunters
16. Lafayette Gilchrist & Ethan Simon, Baltimore City/Columbia, Jazz Pianists
17. Becky Marshall & Capt. Marc Van Pelt, Rock Hall, Netgearers
18. Mary Ida Marshall & Kristen Manzo, Tylerton, Smith Island Cake Bakers
19. Ronald 'Mack' McGlaughlin & Frank Antes, Hoopers Island/Tyaskin, Boatbuilders
20. P.K. "Swami" Swaminathan & Ajay Ravichandaan, Burtonsville/North Potomac, South Indian Mrudangam Players

21. James Cooper & Leonard “Felix” Wills, Baltimore City, Arabber Wagon Restorers
22. Anuradha Nehru & Lavanya Thamire, Bethesda/Germantown, Kuchipudi Dancers
23. Donna Long & Matt Mulqueen, Baltimore City, Irish Traditional Pianists
24. Tom Lagana & Joseph Lagana, Crapo, Taxidermists
25. Martha Hopkins & Kerry Stagmer, Baltimore City/Marriottsville, Silversmiths
26. Samia Mahbub Ahmad & Irum Ahmad, Bethesda, Hindustani Classical Musicians
27. John Oktavec & Monica Broere, Pasadena/Baltimore City, Screen Painters
28. Cheick Hamala Diabate & Greg Adams, Adelphi/Germantown, Ngoni Musicians
29. Carl Grubbs & Lafayette Gilchrist, Baltimore City, Jazz Musicians
30. Pat Egan & Laura Byrne, Baltimore City, Irish Balladers
31. Gustavo Nieto & Edwin Lozano, Montgomery County, Vallenato Accordionists
32. Tatiana Sabinska & Elin Zurbrigg, New Market/Takoma Park, Bulgarian Folk Singers
33. Kevin Enoch & Pete Ross, Beltsville/Baltimore, Banjo Inlayers & Engravers
34. Daryl Davis & Douglas Cooke, Silver Spring, Boogie-Woogie Pianist
35. Robert Giron & Beverly Giron, Montgomery County, Guatemalan Marimba Musicians
36. Shobha Subramanian & Ashwin Subramanian, Burtonsville, Bharatanatyam Dancers
37. Stephen Sullivan & Jason Sckupakus, Dorchester County, Martin House Builders
38. John Childers & Alfred Wright, Grantsville/Accident, Millstone Dressers
39. Dr. Ali Analouei & Giti Abrishami, Rockville, Persian Classical Percussionists
40. Junious Brickhouse & Desmond L. Howard, Bethesda, House Dancers
41. Lalitha Swaminathan & Anjna Swaminathan, Burtonsville, South Indian Carnatic Musicians

**Prints are available for purchase:
\$300 (framed), \$250 (print only)**



Andy Shaw—Master Boatswain, Historic St. Mary's City



About Maryland Traditions:

Maryland Traditions is the folklife program of the Maryland State Arts Council, created in 2001 with additional funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. Maryland Traditions builds networks of individuals and communities, practitioners and professionals, artists and presenters. Together we discover, share, and carry on traditional arts and culture through formal partnerships, public events, fieldwork archives, apprenticeships, project grants, and awards. Our aim: Pass it on.

For more information on Maryland Traditions visit www.marylandtraditions.org



Maryland State Arts Council

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