

Barry Seidman *STILL BLOOMING*

by Chris Hayes



“The real voyage of discovery consists of not seeking new landscapes but having new eyes.”

This mantra by Marcel Proust can be found in more than one spot on the wall of photographer Barry Seidman’s Palm Beach Gardens studio. Seidman’s voyage has spanned several decades, and his eyes have seen more landscapes than most people will see in a lifetime.

Seidman attended Erasmuss High School in Brooklyn, New York. Under his name read the caption, “Plans to enter the advertising field,” which was how he started, at the William Esty Ad Agency, then the thirteenth largest in the country.

“The only way I had to finance my art school was to work during the day,” he said. That institution was the Pratt School of Design, revered today as one of the country’s top design schools.

Eventually, someone at the agency asked if anyone knew how to operate a camera. Barry raised his hand, and from then on, his job was taking pictures.

“They gave me a studio that was eight feet by ten feet, I grew a lot of hair and a mustache and put on a turtleneck.”

Seidman’s client list was by no means limited. He has worked for companies like Coca-Cola, Smirnoff, Panasonic, AT&T and American Express, just to name a few. The majority of his work was still-life shots, but eventually he moved on to people.

Since then, Seidman has been lucky enough to work with actors like Sammy Davis Jr., Regis Philbin and Jennifer Garner, as well as athletes like Carl Lewis, Dale Earnhardt Sr. and Arthur Ashe. In fact, he started taking on so many clients that he was given the option to either retain his salary or work on a freelance basis for William Esty. Seidman moved into his own studio and started his solo career. While in New York, Seidman shot over 2,500 ads...so many that it started to become repetitive.

“I guess it got to be tiring after a while...You’re working every day, you’re working at night, you don’t have a life,” he said.

Four years ago, Seidman moved to Florida and built a home studio. He started to focus more on his fine art work, while still maintaining a presence in the Big Apple. Despite the exciting hustle and bustle of New York, Florida offers certain unique comforts, like being able to put the top down

on his convertible. When asked to name his favorite place out of all the exotic locations he’s seen over the course of his career, Seidman’s answer was simple: “Right here.”

“I’m used to New York City: Mike Bloomberg, Ed Koch; I never met them. Here, the mayor comes to the show. You go to the Green Market on Sunday morning and the mayor knows who *you* are. It’s like with *Cheers*, where everybody knew your name.”

Barry’s fine art work will be featured in an upcoming exhibit called *Aperture Art* at the RosettaStone Fine Art Gallery in PGA Commons. He was originally scheduled to share the show with two other photographers...until Joanne Berkow, the gallery owner, took a look at Seidman’s photographs.

“I’m really impressed with his photography,” Berkow said. “I think he brings a unique set of disciplines to the craft.”

The show, which will run from January 8 to February 1, will feature three of Barry’s sets. The first set is called *Bloomers*. It’s hard to look at one of Seidman’s *Bloomers* shots without having a bit of a double take. The detail of the flowers against a black background makes them look more like a painting than a photograph. So, it makes sense that his final product is printed on canvas.

The second set is called *Bagged*, a series of shots involving brown paper bags juxtaposed with objects like vegetables and fruit.

“I love the way the light plays on the bags,” he said.

The third and final set is *Drinks*, a unique approach to something as common as a bottle or a glass. Barry’s ability to find elegance in the most ordinary objects is one of his greatest strengths.

“I’ve ordered a drink at a bar and just sat there and watched it sweat,” he said.

Seidman’s photos are a testament to the dedication he puts into each piece. Hopefully, in the years to come, he will continue to flourish and open our eyes to beauty that we might otherwise miss. **PBG**

For more information on Seidman’s upcoming show at the RosettaStone Gallery, visit www.rosettastonefineart.com. To see more of Barry’s commercial and fine art work, go to www.barryseidman.com.