

Photography book celebrates Wright Brothers history

In 2016, I listened to the audio version of David McCullough's book, *The Wright Brothers*, while working in my studio office. Afterward, it occurred to me that I had never visited Huffman Prairie, even though Dayton, Ohio is my hometown and also the home of the Wright Brothers. So, on a cold and slightly snowy day in February, I took my camera and visited the site where the brothers perfected flight. Standing alone in the field that day, I felt the past and the present converging, and I could almost see and hear the Wright Brothers' plane above me. David McCullough's biography was so vivid that the story of Amos Root witnessing the 1904 flyer circling Huffman Prairie popped into my head. The experience transformed me. Although I only took a few exposures that day, and I didn't know it at the time, this vision planted within me the seeds for this series of photographs.



Dan Cleary
Cleary Creative Photography

Wright Brothers: Then and Now is about the past mingling with the present. The Wright Brothers were interested in photography and even sold cameras in their bicycle shops. They used photography in their process of discovery. Through research, I found many original historic images taken by the Wright Brothers and others, whose locations I could still access. I began traveling to places like Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Washington, DC, Detroit, Michigan, New York City, Le Mans and Pau, France, as well as locations in Dayton to create my photographs. I then digitally combine my images with the historical pictures in Photoshop, blurring the divisions between then and now and creating a world where past events and modern-day activity blend. I include a written narrative within each photograph that gives context and life to the image and the people behind the history.

PRESS RELEASE

Dayton Photographer Takes a Fresh Look at the Wright Brothers' Achievements in Flight

March 19, 2021 (DAYTON OHIO) -- Renowned Dayton photographer Dan Cleary breathes life into the expression "there's nothing new but the old." He has published a new book that mingles historic photos of the Wright Brothers at the turn-of-the 20th century with contemporary images of his creation taken in the 21st century.

"The Wright Brothers were avid photographers. They took many photos that documented their historical experiments with flight. Many other pictures were taken of the Wright's at the many places in the United States and abroad that they did flight demonstrations," Cleary noted. The Dayton photographer was "struck by how they use photography in their process of discovery." In addition to being pioneers in flight, the Wright Brothers were avid photographers. The pair also sold cameras at their Dayton bike shops. Cleary's extensive research into these inventors' history revealed that photography in that era was a very labor-intensive process that required a lot of knowledge of this relatively new and evolving science at the turn of the 20th century. The brothers built a darkroom in their backyard shed at 7 Hawthorne Street to process film and created their prints, including the famous photograph of the first flight on December 17, 1903.

The photographs in the book combine images from the Wrights' extensive photo files with Cleary's images at the same locations. Then he digitally overlays both sets of photos. The result is a scintillating comparison and contrast that reveals how far aviation has come over the past hundred years.

"Dan's images represent moving back in time while standing in the present day. This historical, engaging project is filled with images of flight and other kinds of transportation from both the past and the present, including ships, cars, and horse-drawn carriages. As a photographer, it must be a powerful experience to document these places while imagining the Wright Brothers flying overhead! His images offer proof of events largely unknown by the rest of the world. Cleary reminds us that the present could not be possible without all the events that occurred at these same places in the past." LensCulture reviews.

In the book, there is a picture of Wilbur Wright taken in 1908 at the Les Hunaudières racetrack in Le Mans, France. The flying demonstration he conducted at this site proved to the world that man could fly, and it was the Wright Brothers who made it possible. Cleary visited Le Mans, France, in 2019, where he took photos at the 24 Hours of Le Mans racetrack and later digitally merged the photograph with Wilbur's 1908 flight demonstration with a picture he took at the track.

The book blends 27 such photos with narratives that provide historical context with Cleary's experiences that retraced the brothers' footsteps. The book *Wright Brothers: Here and Now* can be purchased directly from Dan's website, www.ClearyFineArtPhoto.com, at the Carillon Historical Park, the National Museum of the USAF, and Boonshoft Museum bookstores in Dayton, Ohio and soon many other locations.

The book *Wright Brothers: Then and Now* contains 27 photographs with a written section accompanying each picture that describes the inspiration for and the history behind each image.



The introduction to the book is about Dan's father, Frank Cleary. A WWII veteran who flew a small artillery spotter plane while serving in Patton's 3rd army, and how his father inspired Dan to become a photographer.



The modern photograph was created at the Wright Brothers National Park in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. The historic photograph and modern photographs were both taken from the top of Big Kill Devil Hill.



In 1908 Wilbur Wright made the first public flight demonstrations to the world in France. Dan created this modern day photograph at the same flying fields in Pau, France.



In the fall of 1909, Wilbur Wright made flight demonstrations in New York City as part of the Hudson-Fulton Celebration. Wilbur made several flights up and down the Hudson River and thrilled hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.

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Cranbrook Academy of Art MFA 1982
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Wright State University BFA 1980
Fairborn, Ohio

Part time adjunct faculty at University of Dayton 1987-1989

Part time adjunct faculty at Ohio Institute of Photography 1990-1992

Dan is the owner of Cleary Creative Photography, established in 1988. He specializes in family, high school senior and children's portraits. He supplies photography services for many small businesses and corporations. He creates photographic artwork for public display in many hospitals and other commercial buildings. He teaches photography and business practices to amateur photographers and aspiring professional photographers. Dan is a Certified Professional Photographer by the Professional Photographers of America.

In 2015 Dan was named a "*Proud Dayton Original*" by the City of Dayton Commissioners and Mayor.

CV Of Art Exhibits, Art Commissions, Awards and Lectures:

Exhibitions:

Works on Paper, Juried group exhibit, City of Kettering, Rosewood Gallery: 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2020

Dayton Visual Arts Center Members Group Shows: 2014 2nd Place, 2015 Honorable Mention, 2017

Dayton Visual Arts Center - The Contemporary 2017 Art Auction Reveal: One of five individuals chosen as "Artist To Watch."

Wright Brothers: Then and Now photography series - Wright Memorial Library, Oakwood, Ohio, solo exhibit, January 27, 2018 - March 4, 2018. February 4, 2018.

Art On The Commons - outdoor art fair, Kettering, Ohio, 2018, 2019, in 2020 Dan was selected as the Featured Artist for the art fair.

Octoberfest, outdoor art fair, Dayton Art Institute, 2018, 2019

Crane Studios Market, Dayton, Ohio. Visiting Artist with solo gallery exhibit, October 2018. My Treasures Are Within: 12th Annual Ohio Online Visual Artist Registry Juried Exhibition held at the Columbus Metropolitan Main Library, November 2018. Accepted piece from Wright Brothers Series "*Flying Kites*". Purchased by Todd Kleismit, Director at Ohio History.

The Diversity Of Southwest Ohio Group Photography exhibit. Middletown Arts Center. November 16, 2018 - January 10, 2019. Three accepted pieces from Wright Brothers series, "*Flight #41*", "*Flight #85*" & "*Brothers*".

Meadowlark Restaurant - Art On The Commons. Dan was one of four artists selected to exhibit their work at Meadowlark Restaurant to help promote Kettering Art On The Commons outdoor art fair. July - October 2019

Salvation Army Dayton, Ohio - Popup solo show - Salvation Army national conference at the Kroc Center in Dayton. Dan was asked to show his Wright Brothers - Then and Now photography series during a national conference. September 2019

Photography exhibit at Grace United Methodist Church, Dayton, Ohio Madonna Hall gallery, solo exhibit of Wright Brothers - Then and Now & Marie Aull - Aullwood Garden photographs, February 27 - March 30, 2020.

The Light Factory - 12th Annuale group photography exhibit. Charlotte, North Carolina, April 23 - July 31, 2020 Julie Grahame, eCurator magazine, Juror. One of five photographers from an international search for this juried exhibit.

Crosby Festival of the Arts, outdoor arts fair, June 26th, 27th & 28th, 2020 Toledo, Ohio, rescheduled for 2021

Academy Art Museum, Easton, Maryland, New Photography II: Inaugural National Juried group exhibition, Philip Brookman, juror. consulting curator, department of photographs, National Gallery of Art, April 24 – August 31, 2020

Ann Arbor State Street Art Fair, outdoor art fair July 16, 17, 18 & 19th, 2020, rescheduled for 2021

Downtown Dayton-Montgomery County Public Library 2nd Floor gallery, solo exhibition, Scheduled 2021

Artist Lecture:

Wright Memorial library Sunday lecture series, *Wright Brothers: Then and Now* artist talk, Sunday, February 4, 2018.

Middletown Historic Society, Lecture about *Wright Brothers: Then and Now* photography project, June 13, 2018.

Crane Studios Market, Dayton, Ohio. Visiting Artist, October 2018. Artist gallery talk Friday, October 28, 2018.

Artist talk, Huffman Prairie Aviation Society, National Park Service Wright Brothers Memorial, Wright-Patterson AF Base, *Wright Brothers: Then and Now* photography series, September 9, 2019.

Awards:

2015 - Dan named a Proud Dayton Original by the City of Dayton Mayor and Commissioners. The Contemporary - Dayton Visual Art Center - Artist Fellow program 2018.

Dayton Visual Arts Center – The Contemporary: Community Sponsored Artist, Recipient 2018, Marie Aull - Aullwood Garden piece titled “Faith Is A Bird That Sings.”

Montgomery County Ohio Arts and Cultural District, administered by Culture Works, Artist Opportunity Grant recipient 2019. Dan received a grant so he could travel to France and create images for his series *Wright Brothers - Then and Now*.

Book:

Wright Brothers: Then and Now, published April 2021.

Press:

Dan Cleary named a Dayton Original, Dayton Daily News, July 19, 2015

A Familiar Landscape, Miami County Advocate, March 7, 2016

1500 Images In A Four Day Blitz, Dayton Daily News, March 20, 2016

Dan Cleary earns Certified Professional Degree from Professional Photographers of America, Dayton Daily News, May 15, 2016

Art On The Commons 2020 Names Featured Artist, Dayton Daily News, August 5, 2020

Grace Church Turns Space Into Gallery Showcasing Local Artist, featuring Dan Cleary, Dayton Daily News, March 5, 2020

Photography Book Celebrates Wright Brothers, Dayton Daily News, April 4, 2021

Art Commissions:

“A Week In The Life Of Miami County”, created 50 color landscape photographs for new Kettering Health Network building in Tipp City, Ohio, October, 2016.



“A Week In The Life Of Warren County”, created 25 color landscape photographs for new Kettering Health Network building in Springboro, Ohio, May, 2017.

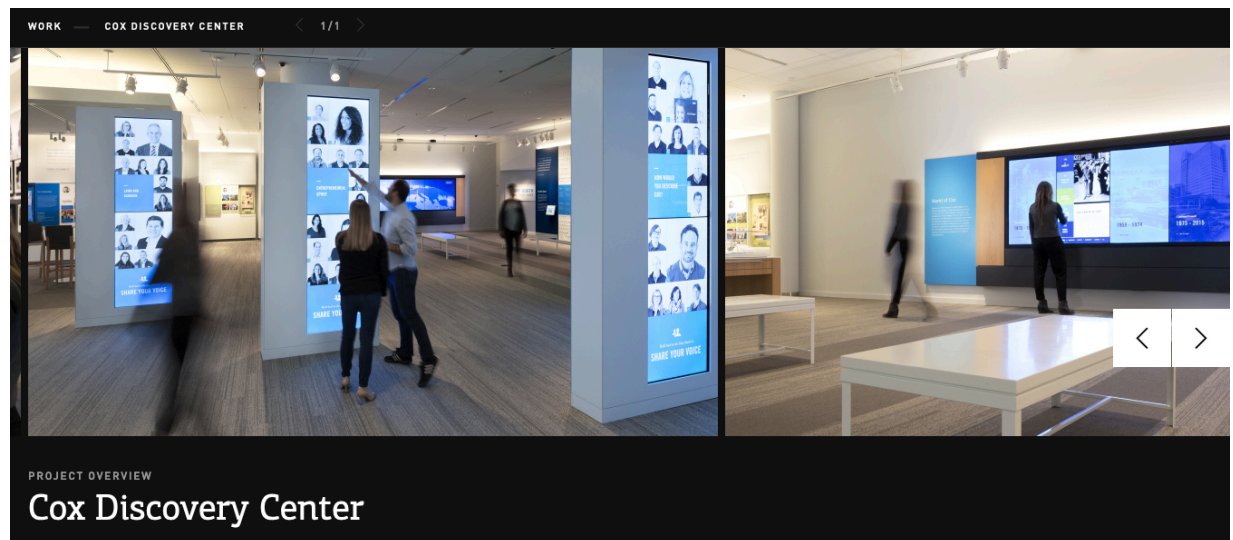


Mural photograph of Dayton night skyline for Grandview Hospital emergency room.
20' x 5', April 2018.



COX Enterprise World Headquarters, Atlanta, GA

Cox Discovery Center, 24 ' x 3 ' photograph of Gov. Cox boyhood farm in Middletown, Ohio
to be used in the Cox Discovery Center.



ReImagining Works, Dayton Metro Library. Artist Commission at the Wilmington-Stroop branch. 10' x 5' tryptic titled "Kettering, Deeds and Delco" hung in the Community Room. Installation April 2019.

