

## **Hoboken Sweeps:** Recent Photography by **Jean-Paul Picard**

March 4 – April 9, 2017 at the Hoboken Historical Museum, Hoboken, NJ, USA

The versatile artist Jean-Paul Picard specializes in web design and digital photography. He teaches courses in these technical skills in evening classes at the Hudson County Schools of Technology. But he started out as a graphic designer and photographer back in the days when you used an actual T-square to draw a rule, and mixed chemicals in a darkroom to print a photo.

With a penchant for trying new things, Picard started experimenting with using multiple images in single work to create a story line, after seeing a Richard Avedon exhibit in 2013. Avedon had created monumental, panoramic photographs of people standing in a row by combining several exposures together. Inspired by this and by his affinity for art by cubist painters like Picasso and Braque, Picard started combining a series of separate exposures he had taken at another art exhibit.

Then, he struck on the idea of using the panorama mode on a digital camera, but rather than moving the camera in a smooth line, he learned he could create more interesting effects by sweeping the camera in different ways and at different speeds. Like the cubists, this he uses this technique to show more sides of an object than a traditional single-perspective image offers.

At first, he printed these “sweeps” from his digital printer on white paper, but because of the images’ shapes, there was too much white space on the final artwork for his taste. So he experimented with printing on different types of fine-art paper, first preparing the paper with a digital ground – a field of special white paint applied to the paper to help set the inks and make the image pop.

He devised this approach on his own, inspired by a technique that dates from the earliest days of photography, when photographers applied a silver gelatin halide solution to paper to develop their images. The silver gelatin images usually had rough-edged borders, unseen behind the matte or frame of the final product. But that rough edge appealed to Picard, who incorporates it into his original works of art.

Although the images originate in a digital camera, each of the works on display in the Museum’s upper gallery is a unique edition, or monoprint, containing the serendipitous elements of the artist’s hand. In addition to the Hoboken Sweeps series, Picard is working on similar series with the themes of nature, travel, portraiture, New York City and Québec, where he has family roots. More examples of his work, including his 2009 “*Visage Hoboken*” portraits that were displayed in his first Museum exhibit, can be seen at <http://www.jean-paulpicard.com>.