

minolta manual focus convention

2nd to 5th september 2005

ITINERARY

Friday 2nd September

The convention will open on Friday with a get-to-know-you dinner and drinks at "Zum Schneider", a Bavarian style beerhall at the corner of Avenue C and East 7th St, about ten minutes walk from the Union Square Inn. Friday night in NYC can get busy so to secure our tables we will be heading there early.

The group will leave from the lobby of the Union Square Inn at 5.15pm and head down to the bar, which has an extensive range of German beers on tap plus a good wine list. I expect dinner will be had at about 7.00-7.30pm so any late arrivals can simply make their way direct to the Bar and meet the group there. After dinner participants can return to the hotel, take a cab up to Times Square and visit this NYC icon, or join New York local Bernard Ente and myself as we visit "Bar 55", the great New York underground music venue immortalized in my "American Journey" travel journal. The band playing is the Michael Packer Blues Band, featuring Bernie's friend Felix Cabrera on harmonica. For those still willing to party-on this will make a great finish for the evening.

Saturday 3rd September – Morning (8.00 – 12.00)

The first full day of the conference will commence with a walking tour from lower Manhattan to Brooklyn, across the Manhattan Bridge. We will leave the hotel lobby at 8.00am sharp and catch the subway down to Canal St, where after a short walk we will get to our tour starting point, the intersection of Canal Street and The Bowery, in front of the old Dime Savings Bank (SW corner). The tour will commence from here at 8.40am, with a walk across the Manhattan Bridge, where we will admire the majesty of Brooklyn Bridge and the city skyline. Touching down in Brooklyn, good food and restrooms are available at the neighborhood delicatessen. We can enjoy our meals in Brooklyn Bridge Park, which is situated directly between the Manhattan and Brooklyn bridges. After that, we will walk over the Brooklyn Bridge, which is quite interesting with its stone towers and myriad of cables. On the Manhattan side, we will visit City Hall Park and then head downtown via Broadway. After passing Wall Street and possibly the World Trade Center Memorial we arrive at picturesque Battery Park, the southernmost tip of Manhattan. This will be a long walk of about 3-4 hours, so make sure you are wearing comfortable shoes.

Saturday 3rd September - Afternoon

From Battery Park we will take the free ferry to Staten Island where along the way we can view the Statue of Liberty and get some great views of the Statue of Liberty. We will stay on the ferry as it returns to Manhattan Island and if our legs can still carry us we will take the subway up to West 86th Street, to have a walk through Central Park, visiting some of the more famous landmarks within and around the Park. Naturally opportunities for photography will abound, and group members will be free to continue to tour with the group or strike out on their own to explore Central Park and its surrounds in smaller groups.

Saturday 3rd September – Evening

After a quick dinner Bernard Ente will lead a tour across to Brooklyn (weather permitting) for those interested in photographing the city skyline at night. Bernard, the moderator of the Yahoo Minolta XK group, is an experienced NYC tour guide as well as a professional photographer, so he knows where to get the best shots of the city, and how to get participants there and back with confidence. For those seeking a more relaxed evening after the rigors of the day, you can rest for the evening in your hotel or strike out on your own or with a group to enjoy some of NYC's famous hospitality.

Sunday 4th September – Morning

After breakfast the activities of the day will commence with a photographic "Hunt and Shoot" competition between 9.30am and 11.30am. All participants will receive a 24 shot roll of film, and be given 2 hours to photograph images that will best reflect 15 different subjects/concepts, details of which will be provided on the day. At 11.30 all films must be returned to the event coordinator, who will arrange for processing during the day.

Sunday 4th September – Afternoon

On Sunday afternoon we will leave from the hotel lobby at 1.00pm and make our way to Central Park for a Minolta manual focus gear-a-thon in Central Park. This will be your chance to see some of the rarer lenses in the Minolta range, from the 7.5mm and 16mm fisheyes, right through to the 1600mm f/11 RF! Convention attendees will be able to borrow and try out many of the rarer Minolta lenses, and see the wonderful results that they can deliver. Cameras from many eras will also be available to borrow and evaluate. This will likely be the first time ever that

such an array of Minolta glass will be gathered in the one place, and available for your use. It will certainly be a highlight of the convention for many participants.

For convention attendees not interested in trying all of the gear, this can be time to explore the many wonderful sights New York has to offer. For those seeking a cultural experience on the West side of Central Park is the incredible American Museum of Natural History, with its unparalleled collection of dinosaur skeletons, and on the East side of the park is the incomparable Metropolitan Museum of Art. While both of these destinations deserve a full day, group members may choose to take the opportunity to visit either of these magnificent establishments, or just to wander the city taking in some of the wonderful sights that make it one of the greatest cities in the world.

Sunday 4th September – Evening

On Sunday evening we will be having the formal dinner for the conference, and the judging of the “Hunt and Shoot” competition. Participants in the event will receive back their shots and have half an hour to select their best shot for each of the 15 categories. The top five shots in each category will receive points, and at the end of the judging the winner of the competition will be announced, and the prizes awarded to the winner and placegetters. After dinner a night-time visit to the Empire State Building will be undertaken, with group members getting a chance to see New York City from an entirely new angle.

Monday 5th September (Labor Day Public Holiday) – Morning

For those wishing to visit the Empire State Building in daylight a visit to the tower will be held first thing in the morning (8.00am) to beat the crowds. After that we will be making a visit to B&H Photo, the world’s largest camera store (opens at 10.00am). With over 130,000 different products in stock and over 35,000 square feet of shop to explore, it is a Mecca for photographers worldwide. As well as its exhaustive displays of new equipment it has a large used and collectible department, and a film supply area with discount film and consumables. There is sure to be something for everyone at B&H.

After visiting B&H we will have a final lunch for the conference, and call the inaugural Minolta Manual Focus Convention to a close. Most participants are staying through to the 6th of September, and so I am sure that many of us will choose to do a little exploring in the afternoon together.