



Guy D. Biechele

Not the human eye

New England seen in a 'different light' at Jaffrey Civic Center

By **AMANDA BOROZINSKI**
Companion Staff

JAFFREY — The photograph shows a barn nestled in dense foliage. It's a familiar New England scene, and yet something seems odd ...

Each of Guy D. Biechele's infrared photographs is ghost-like, reminiscent of a film negative, but still not exactly a reverse contrast of the world.

From now through Dec. 21, Biechele's work will be on display at the Jaffrey Civic Center. The show, titled "New England in a Different Light," includes infrared images, as well as others, from wildlife and

landscapes in New Hampshire to lighthouses and seascapes in Maine.

The human eye sees a narrow range of electromagnetic radiation, from ultraviolet to the colors of the rainbow, Biechele explained.

"However, most digital camera sensors are sensitive to near-infrared light, which we cannot see with our eyes," he said.

By attaching a specialized infrared lens to his digital camera, Biechele effectively allows the viewer to see the world in a way they otherwise could not.

Near-infrared photographs look nothing like heat-sensing images (far-infrared) most people associate with infrared.

"To me they have an other-worldly, serene quality," Biechele said. "I was intrigued by them because objects reflect visible light so differently than infrared light."

Clouds and foliage seen through a near-infrared lens — leaves and grass, for example — reflect high amounts of light. They seem white and bright in photographs. Water or blue sky, on the other hand, absorb the infrared light and look very dark.

"People tend to either really like it (infrared photography) or they don't get it," Biechele said.

Most photographers prefer to shoot in the morning or at dusk, when light is more interesting, Biechele explained. But with infrared the middle of the day interestingly yields the most exciting images.

"Now," Biechele said with a chuckle, "I can shoot morning, noon and night."

Biechele, who lives in Athol, Mass., with his wife and two college-age children, is by trade a craftsman/woodworker. He builds guitars, harpsi-

chords and reproduction early American and Shaker furniture. But, even as a college student studying natural resource conservation, photography was always his passion.

Biechele became interested in landscape and natural photography as he went on hikes and tramped through the woods.

In 2000, when Biechele was taking an advanced digital imagery class as part of his certification in AutoCAD, the professor showed Biechele her digital camera.

He was blown away.

Using a digital camera, Biechele could control image capture and using computer programs he could also control printing and developing of the image — immediately. Instead of worrying about wasting film, digital cameras now allowed Biechele to look at a shot while he was still "at the scene."

"I found it exciting to control the entire process," he said.

With his new digital camera Biechele now felt free to try "crazy" shots he would probably not have attempted with a film camera. "If shots don't come out you can just erase them," he said.

Just one year later Biechele was into digital photography full swing. He became active on photography Web sites and chart-rooms and began exhibiting his work in galleries across New England.

"Internet competitions and forums have been very rewarding," he said. "I've gotten to meet and share photographic ideas with people from around the world."

One of the people Biechele met was James Geddes a photographer from California. Geddes invited 21 photographers from around the world, including Biechele, to sub-

mit work to create a joint show. The idea, Biechele explained, was to highlight the state of digital photography at that time.

After the show, which was very successful, the photographers subsequently formed Digital Photography Internationale, an awareness group promoting digital photography as a viable art medium.

"These are 21 photographers from across the world who have never met but were able to exhibit images for two years across the country," Biechele said.

After the Asian tsunami disaster in 2004, Digital Photography Internationale embarked on a group project with Lulu Publishing, creating a book of digital images titled "Images to Brighten Our World," with a portion of the profits going to non-profit organizations dedicated to helping tsunami victims.

"I think people all over the world were very concerned about this disaster. It was certainly one of the largest disasters I can recall in my life time," Biechele said. "I wanted to help out, and to be able to use my art to do that was very appealing."

"We wanted to create uplifting images that would lift people's spirits and give aid to people whose lives had been devastated," he said.

Copies of Images to Brighten Our World are still available on the Web through Lulu.com.

Guy Biechele's show, "New England in a Different Light," is on display through Dec. 21 at the Jaffrey Civic Center. Hours are Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesdays through Fridays from 1 to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Ad-

'New England in a Different Light' in Jaffrey

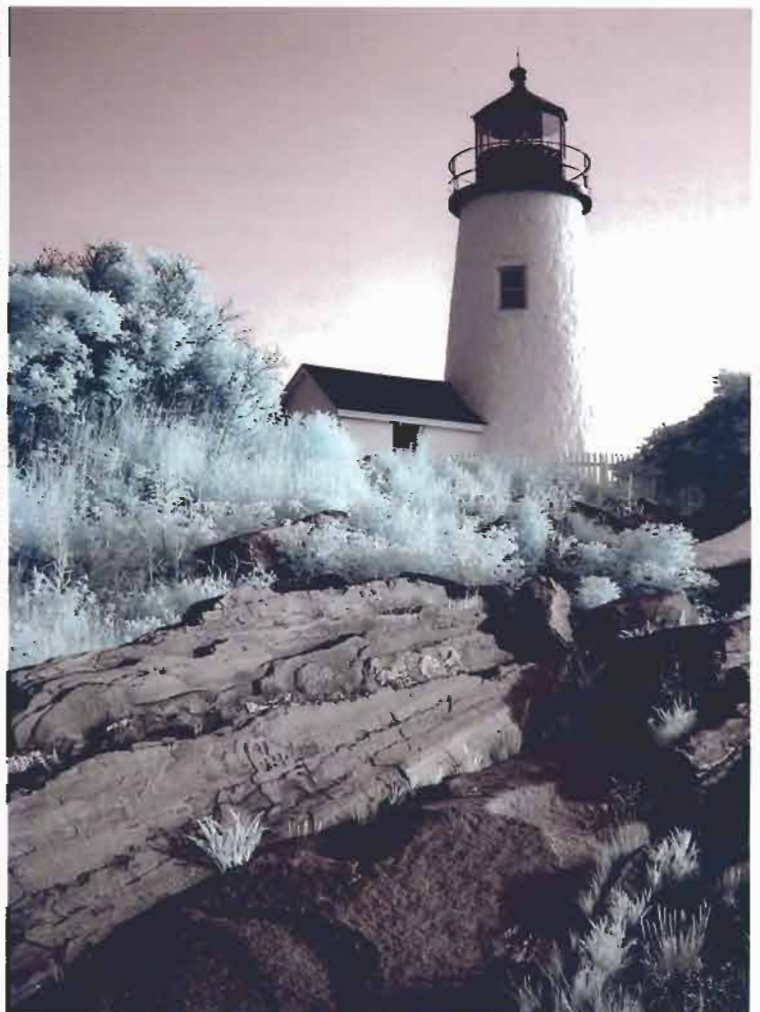
mission is free. For more information, call 532-6527, or visit on the Web: www.guybiechele.com.



"Quabbin" in infrared



"Maine Barn" in black and white



"Beacon" in infrared