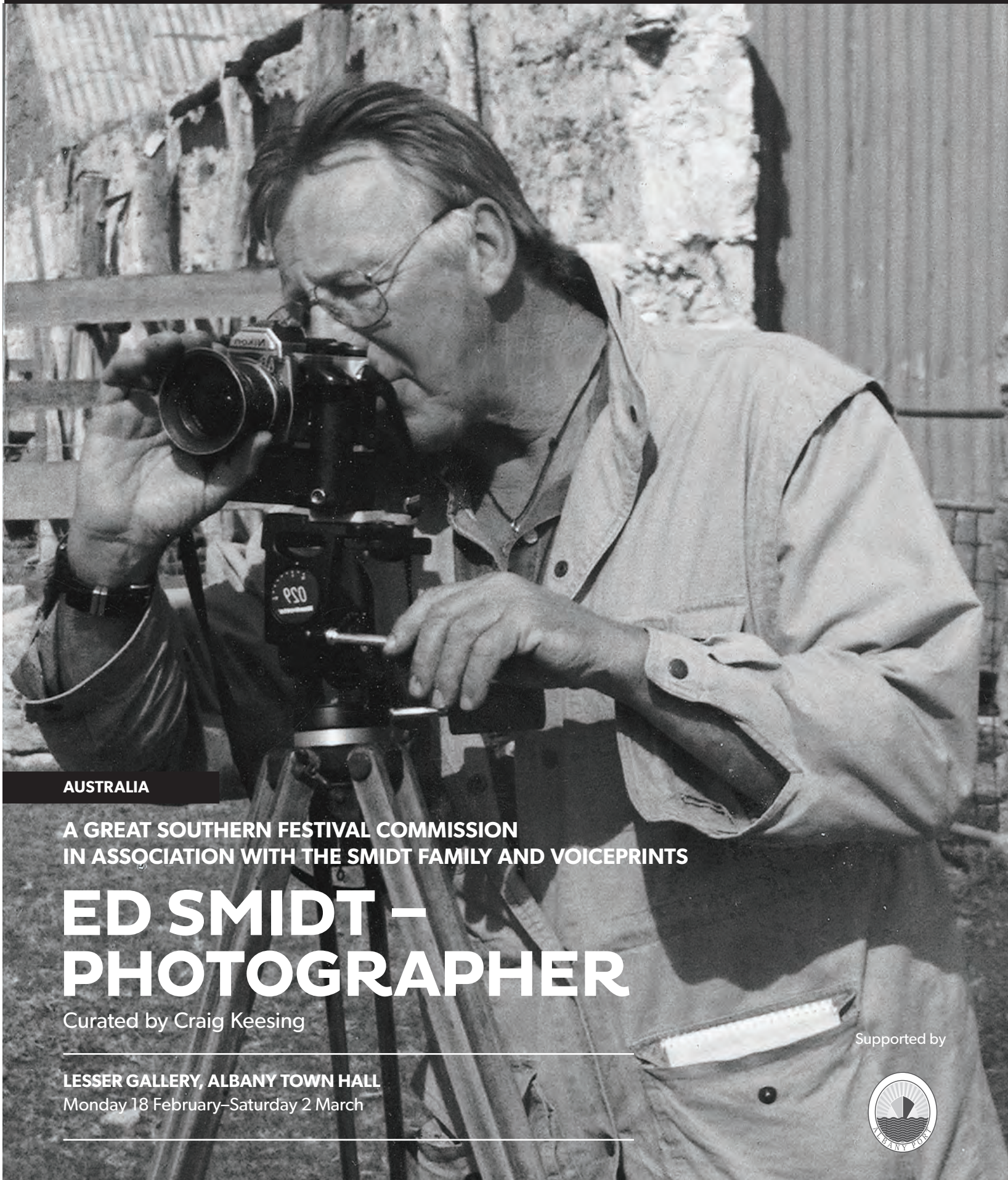


GREAT SOUTHERN FESTIVAL 2013



AUSTRALIA

A GREAT SOUTHERN FESTIVAL COMMISSION
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SMIDT FAMILY AND VOICEPRINTS

ED SMIDT – PHOTOGRAPHER

Curated by Craig Keesing

LESSER GALLERY, ALBANY TOWN HALL
Monday 18 February–Saturday 2 March

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ED SMIDT – PHOTOGRAPHER

FROM THE CURATOR CRAIG KEESING

Ed Smidt (1946–2010) left a lasting impression on all who knew and met him. It is fitting that the photographic images Ed left behind are a lasting legacy and invaluable record of an important period in the development of Albany and Western Australia.

Ed was his own man, but also many things to many people: Ed the photojournalist, the artist, the picture framer, the adventurer, the sailor/navigator, the woodchopper, the father, the partner, the fighter and the joker ... the list goes on.

Ed was an accomplished photographer when film was the only option; with one opportunity to capture that 'moment'. He would then return to the darkroom to process the photograph, discovering whether the moment had been lost or indeed recorded.

Photography and sailing were Ed's life. He was one of the lucky ones who made a living from photography. Outside his working life, the passion for photography continued.

Ed Smidt – Photographer celebrates the artist and some of the stunning images he has created. We observe the man behind the camera with his passion for all things maritime shining through, and we pay thanks for this important record. We marvel at his adventures and the lengths he went to, pursuing the perfect shot.

Ed Smidt – Photographer has been achieved through a collaboration with the Smidt family, Great Southern Festival, Albany Port Authority and Voiceprints. Thank you for your contributions, but most importantly, thank you Ed.

FROM ED SMIDT'S PARTNER LYNN TULIPAN

Ed Smidt vowed he would never pick up a camera again when he finished his newspaper career as a photojournalist.

He took up framing instead, and decided to put together his 'Whaling Collection'. It took him over 18 months and with each new frame he mastered woodwork more and more. Finally he could do the complete product, including cutting the glass. He did the developing in the darkroom under his house, the assembling in his study connected to the darkroom, and all the woodwork in a tiny garage that in the winter washed water under his feet – and he was as happy as a man could be.

It wasn't until he discovered the American photographer Ansel Adams and read about the zone system, that he re-kindled his love of photography, and got out his 'old' Nikon. He started studying all of the original photographers of Magnum and decided to experiment with fine art work.

Around 2005 Ed joined an Australian-wide photography club, where four times a year he sent in his three best photographs. These photographs then went to each of the other members for their helpful comments and marks. This club so improved his work and made it very competitive and exciting for him.

Hence, many of the photographs in this exhibition were purely for this club. It gave Ed the chance to review and mark other photographer's work and to communicate with top black-and-white photographers around Australia.

You will note how many times Ed changes his signature – each photographer he studied had an influence on him. He started using only his initials for a while, then back to writing his signature, then back to his original 'ED SMIDT'. His format, framing and hand colouring all changed as he discovered more techniques and became more excited. He was such a perfectionist – it did not matter how long anything took him to perfect.

He could take a photograph early morning and have the finished, framed picture on his easel by evening. He would then stand with his pipe in hand, pondering the result – that was the perfect day to Ed Smidt.

'I am very proud of my Dad's legacy and his contribution to capturing a snapshot of Albany's colourful history. I share his deep love of this beautiful town and surrounds.'

Ingrid Smidt

AN ENTRY FROM ED SMIDT'S DIARY

'My photographic career started in August 1968, it was a photograph H/S (head and shoulder) of an injured soccer player on the front page of the Albany Advertiser.

Prior to that time I had had very little to do with photography. My father played around with colour slides and slide evenings were not uncommon. My brother John had his own camera and recorded our family in black and white prints. About 1966 dad had lent me his folding Kodak camera that took 120 film. He no longer needed it as he was now using 35mm Agfa range find for which he bought many accessories. One Saturday afternoon I took this camera to the "South Coast". I remember pointing it at wild flowers, a vista of Cable Beach and finally the "Gap". It was at the Gap where I had a vision that I was taking photos that no one else had seen. I felt that they were more daring and portrayed more action than I had ever seen before in anyone's photos. Not only did I take "great" photos I also managed to get myself and the camera saturated with salt water spray. Unconcerned and pleased with myself because of the lengths I had gone to to get close to the action, I drove back to Albany in my white Triumph Spitfire sports car dreaming of a future as a landscape photographer travelling to remote places. The following week after having the film developed the results were a flop and when I looked at that camera again it had seized up and all the chrome bits were rusty. That camera had been my dad's pride and joy for many years, in fact it was nearly 30 years old, older than me at the time. It took me a long time to tell dad.'

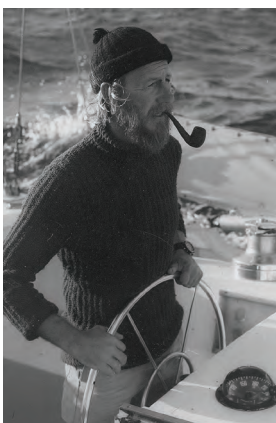
1968 to 1986

'My photographic cadetship at the Albany Advertiser started with learning how to develop the film and print it. "Bill Littleheart" (Radimar Stojilykovic) was my teacher. He was the head photographer at the paper at the time. Although completely a novice I quickly realized this was for me and put a lot of effort and extra time in learning my new trade. I also enrolled in a correspondence course in photography with ICS (International Correspondence School). The results from the tests were sent to the editor for his comments. My enthusiasm soon paid off when the editor pleased with my results organised for me to go to the West Australian Newspapers photographic department.'

20.09.2006

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Lynn Tulipan, Ingrid Smidt, Janny Velda, Graeme Tompkins, Amanda Keesing, Rod Vervest, Malcolm Traill, Chris Pash, Kim Lofts, Western Australian Museum, City of Albany, Albany Port Authority



**ED SMIDT
PHOTOGRAPHER
7.10.1946 – 17.7.2010**

**ED WAS AN ADVENTURER
WHO RECORDED ALBANY'S HISTORY
AND BEAUTY THROUGH HIS LENS**

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