

January 23, 2025

Voyageur Media Release

"Capturing Life" documentary

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"Capturing Life" (1839-1869)

A one-hour documentary about our region's remarkable photographic heritage

Public Television Broadcast Premiere

Sunday, February 16 @ 4:30 pm

simulcast on CET (Greater Cincinnati) and Think TV (Greater Dayton)

"Capturing Life" (1839-1869) will have its broadcast premiere at 4:30 pm on Sunday, February 16 when simulcast on the two public television stations serving Southwest Ohio and Northern Kentucky: CET (Greater Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky) and Think TV (Greater Dayton/Oxford). "Capturing Life" (1839-1869) was produced by Voyageur Media Group in collaboration with dozens of scholars, curators and academic institutions. The one-hour documentary examines the first three decades of the region's remarkable photographic history. Tom Law, Project Director, Voyageur Media Group, Inc., says, "Greater Cincinnati was a major center for the development of early American photography. Yet, few know about the scientists, photographers and artist who contributed to our region's hidden visual heritage."

"Capturing Life" (1839-1869) combines interviews with rare archival photographs, original artworks and 4k video for a compelling look at our region's rich photographic history. The documentary features the remarkable careers of American photographic pioneers, including: Dr. John Locke, a chemistry professor who created the first photographs (photogenic drawings) ever displayed in America; Ezekiel Hawkins, a sign painter who established the region's first daguerreotype studio in 1841; James P. Ball, an African-American entrepreneur who not only owned one of the nation's most successful daguerreotype studios, but also served as a leader in the abolitionist movement; Charles Fontayne and William Porter, whose eight-plate panorama, *Daguerreotype View of Cincinnati, 1848*, is the oldest comprehensive photograph of a city in North America; and Charles Waldack who used magnesium light to make the first photographs of a cave system in America at Mammoth Cave in 1866. "Capturing Life" (1839-1869) also explores the impact of photography on such historical events as immigration, western expansion, the abolitionist movement, the Underground Railroad, the Civil War, and post-war industrialization.

"Capturing Life" (1839-1869) earned critical and audience acclaim when presented at a series of public screenings during the Fotofocus Biennial in October. The documentary project features a companion website with additional information, photographer profiles and lesson plans designed to enhance use of the program in homes, classrooms and workshops. Visit:

<https://voyageurmedia.org/projects/the-big-picture-a-history-of-photography-in-greater-cincinnati-home/>

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FOTOFOCUS

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