

Emmet Gowin

PHOTOGRAPHER

BORN: December 22, 1941, Danville, Virginia

Even when the landscape is greatly disfigured or brutalized, it is always deeply animated from within. When one really sees an awesome, vast, and terrible place, we tremble at the feeling we experience as our sense of wholeness is reorganized by what we see.....

This is the gift of a landscape photograph, that the heart finds a place to stand.

-- Emmet Gowin, April 1994

Emmet Gowin is one of Bucks County's most distinguished and well known photographers. His work is often described as poetic, personal, and evocative and has become widely sought after for both public and private collections. Gowin's early work, begun while still in graduate school, was focused on his wife's large and closely knit family located in Danville, Virginia. With four generations of the family living side by side and welcoming Gowin to explore their world, the young artist was granted access to an intimate and otherwise private place where he felt free to investigate themes of family and community through his photography.

In 1980 Gowin's work expanded to include aerial photographs of the devastation caused by the Mount St. Helens eruption in Washington. His initial project evolved into a passion for aerial photography and he has since photographed locations such as Kuwait, Japan, and the Czech Republic. Differing from typical aerial photographers, Gowin does not set out to convey a clear message with his work; rather, his photographs are intentionally ambiguous, representing a landscape while simultaneously abstracting it beyond immediate recognition.

The Philadelphia Museum of Art organized a major traveling retrospective of Gowin's work in 1990, which was followed by another traveling retrospective organized by the Yale University Art Gallery in 2002. Further exhibitions of Gowin's work have been held at a number of other institutions including the Princeton University Art Museum, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Pace/MacGill Gallery, and the James A. Michener Art Museum. His exhibitions at the James A. Michener Art Museum are specifically *The Bucks County Invitational Four, The Art Gene: Anthonisen, Dodge, Gowin, Osterman* (2000), *Emmet Gowin: Changing the Earth* (2004), *Objects of Desire* : *Treasures from Private Collections* (2006), *Art Speaks: Celebrating the Bucks County Intermediate Unit Collection* (2011), *Facing Out, Facing In: Figurative Works from the Michener Art Museum Collection* (2011), and *Parting Gifts: Artists Honor Bruce Katsiff, Director/CEO, 1989 – 2012* (2012).