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UFO UpDates Mailing List

Re: Bruce Maccabee and Gulf Breeze Photos

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From: Bruce Maccabee <brumac@compuserve.com>
Date: Sat, 16 Oct 1999 00:14:59 -0400
Fwd Date: Sat, 16 Oct 1999 11:33:02 -0400
Subject: Re: Bruce Maccabee and Gulf Breeze Photos


 >Date: Thu, 14 Oct 1999 20:46:37 -0500
 >From: Roger Evans <raka@swbell.net>
 >Subject: Bruce Maccabee and Gulf Breeze Photos
 >To: updates@globalserve.net

 >>From: Dennis Stacy
 >>Date: Wed, 13 Oct 1999 14:34:42 -0500
 >>Fwd Date: Thu, 14 Oct 1999 09:17:02 -0400
 >>Subject: Re: Bruce Maccabee and Gulf Breeze Photos

 >>>Subject: Re: Bruce Maccabee and Gulf Breeze Photos
 >>>Date: Tue, 12 Oct 1999 15:29:26 -0400
 >>>From: Mark Cashman
 >>>To: UFO UpDates - Toronto

 >>Previously, Dennis had opined:

 >><snip>

 >>>You express your own doubts about multiple photograph cases, but
 >>>Gulf Breeze goes far beyond that. It is uniquely unique among
 >>>UFO cases. Everytime Ed was handed a challenge (or a new camera
 >>>set up) he came through with supposedly shining colors. This
 >>>came to be taken as proof of the phenomenon rather than, say,
 >>>Ed's own ingenuity.>

<snip>

 >Hi Dennis.


 >More to the point at hand in your posting; much has been made of
 >the difficulty of producing double exposures using Polaroids. In
 >a previous posting I pointed out the error in that line of
 >thinking.

Dear KAGE (Kinder and Gentler Evans)

Didn't require you to point it out. I demonstrated a double
exposure "UFO" hoax with Ed's camera in feb. 1988 as written in
the book 'Gulf Breeze Sightings'.

Only those with little knowledge of Polaroid photogtraphy
have ever suggested it was difficult. But of course,
it requires a "non-normal" use of the camera and so
one must be aware of that capability of the camera to use it.
You can bet your boot disc (modern version of "bet your
boots") that the local investigators watched Ed like hawks
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to find out if there was any hint of photographic interest
beyond minimal, and I payed attention to his photographic
understanding, which I found negligible.

 >In addition, it has been pointed out that the photo(s)
 >showing the UFO going behind trees would have been too
 >complicated for Ed to figure out how to do, especially if he
 >used the "newly discovered Hyzer method" requiring a latent
 >image to pre-sensitize a given area of the negative. I'm sorry,
 >but this technique is not new nor is it particularly
 >complicated. Photographers have known about it for years. In
 >fact, a variation of it called "pre-flashing" was/is used to
 >lower the contrast of motion picture film on a regular basis
 >when available light is going to be the source of illumination.
 >It is also used in the darkroom to lower the contrast of prints
 >done from slides or other positive to positive reproduction
 >methods.

Sure, pros use this stuff. Astronomers sensitize film... or they
used to.... by "preflashing" (they use another term I believe).

Anyway, Hyzer applied scientific reasoning and experiments to
determine how to do it. I particular it required a restricted
range of light levels for the initial exposure.. As I have
p;ointed out, the chance of Ed having known about is vanishingly
small. But there is a more important point that rules this out
regardless of what Ed might have known. Hyzer's method requires
that the "dark covering image" (the tree in this case) be so
dark that even with the very slight exposure of the UFO image
(which, by itself is not enough to make a developable picture)
there is not enough total exposure to make a visible image (the
photo reflectivity hardly changes). Operationally this means
that the tree image in photo 1 should have been so dark that
there was no other portion of the picture that was darker. But
Sainio, using the original, did find areas of photo 1 that were
darker (less reflective) than the tree image. Hence Hyzer's
method was not used. (Had it been used, under te lighting
conditions of the photo the UFO image would not have appeared
"hidden" behind the tree... it would have appear ON TOP OF (or
in front of) the tree). Incidently, I strove mightily using Ed's
type of 108 film to create a Hyzer double exposure, even to the
point of calculating luminances, etc. I was never able to hide
even a very dim UFO image "behind" a totally dark "tree" image.

 >Did Ed use the "Hyzer" method? Bruce seems to believe that he
 >did not because Ed isn't clever enough. I tend to agree, but not
 >because Ed isn't clever. On the contrary, the "Hyzer" method
 >would not even be necessary, ESPECIALLY if one is using
 >Polaroids. Why? Because a Polaroid is unique among cameras in
 >that it's "film gate" (the opening surrounding the actual film)
 >is not a fixed part of the camera. Instead, it is part of the
 >disposable film cartridge. Therefore, it is possible to attach
 >masks to the cartridge that would prevent exposure in the "tree
 >area". Additionally, because Polaroids can be processed
 >immediately and (most importantly) privately, numerous tests
 >could be made to be sure the masking is dead on. Even older
 >"wait and peel" Polaroids would allow variations on this
 >technique.

I must admit that I hadn't thought of a "masked double exposure"
in which the mask was effectively at the film plane. Of course,
if you're going to take the film pout of the camera you have
to be in a dark room... a "darkroom".

 >The recipe would be this simple:

Simple?

 >1. Lock the camera down on a tripod pointed at the treeline
 >intended for use as the background. Snap off a print and
 >process.

No place for a tripod. But for the purpose of argument assume
that Ed could make the camea rigid on a tripod in some way.

You now have the camera placed at the location of the background
scene. Better mark that place accurately cause you will have to
replace the camera there for the second expsure of the double
exposure.

>2. Using a piece of acetate and a fine tip marker, technical
>pen, fine tip paint brush or other marking tool, trace over the
>area of the tree line that is supposed to pass infront of the
>UFO. A steady hand would not be necessary. In fact, the more
>random the pattern, the better.

Yup, Nice.

>3. Using the "film gate" as a registration device, tape the
>acetate square over the opening and place in the camera during
>photography of the model.

Probably could get close enough this way. Of course, the real
problem is the registration (pointing direction) of the camera
for the second exposure. This is the first exposure,. Light from
the complete model hits the area of the "film gate" but is
blocked by the cutout. (Note: my version of masked exposure
involved putting a mask between the model and the camera lens,
or actually cutting the model in some way.)

>4. Without changing anything, double expose the background into
>the shot.

Without changing anything? Whooops. The model is in a dark room
and silhouetted against a black background, but with appropriate
lighting (and being CAREFUL that the light which illuminates the
very bright bottom light of the model does not illuminate the
background cloth).

The outdoor scene is outdoors. Surely you have to change
something.

For example, you have to open the camera and remove the mask. If
you leave the mask, then you won't get the real tree in your
second exposure. Then take the camera, still on the tripod, out
to the location where you first photographed the background
scene. Now somehow manage to assure that it points in exactly
the same direction so that the latent image (undeveloped) of the
left edge of the model where it is supposed to be cut by the
tree is perfectly aligned with the edge of the real tree. I
don't know how you do this. You can't see the latent image. This
is not a reflex camera (the view point is about 3" from the
lens... really sloppy stuff). And Ed managed to take his first
three pictures in a succession that shows clouds moving at a
speed and direction consistent with the known weather. That is,
there were many minutes or many hours between photos. I suppose
he could have used any number of test photos BEFORE #1, but
after #1 he proceeded in a timely manner (presumably to hoax the
rest of them on that first fateful evening).

>Now, someone might suggest that the "hand drawn" treeline would
>be a permanent part of the picture if the acetate is not
>removed. This is correct. But so what? Unless someone compares
>the actual tree line with the one photographed, no one would
>notice. It's my bet that no one ever did. The "fake" treeline
>would simply merge with the darkness of the "real" treeline. The
>mask would not be perfect, but it would not have to be. As long
>as some parts of the tree obscure the UFO, the illusion would be
>complete.

I wouldn't worry about the hand drawn treeline. That would be
the least of my worries with any masked method.

>But the point is this: The camera could already have the latent
>image of the UFO on its film negative, complete with "tree"
>masking, at the time the background is shot.

True,. As I said aboe, my masked method was not exactly like
yours, but it would create the latent model image with the left
edge "cut" where th tree image would then be "placed" during the
second exposure.

<snip>

>The other point that Bruce brings up is the matching blur of the
>UFO and the surrounding lights of the background. If they were
>produced separately they would, indeed, be hard to match. On
>the
>other hand, if the master Polaroid were copied on a Polaroid
>copy stand, it would simply be a matter of moving the print or

>the camera during exposure time. This would produce a uniform
>blur on all information within the photo. By careful
>manipulation of the exposure times and masking, even selected

Yes, yes yes..... all things are possible (?) given enough time,
experience/capability. equipment, money and desire. The idea
that the original pictures were NOT polaroids but large prints
which Ed photographed with his Polaroid camera was also
considered, like 11 years ago?

All this takes photographic sophistication. In order to be in
focus in the final Polaroids it would have been necessary to
have large prints so that the Polaroid camera could be far
enough from them to get a good focus. Of course, in the "full
up" hoax scenario the final Polaroids would not have been taken
with Ed's camera, but some camer with adjustable lenses so that
good focus on primary prints coul be made. The primary prints
themselves would have been blowups from 35 mm fine grained color
film. Naturally the copying process would have been done very
carefully so that there was no indication of glare or unwanted
reflections of the light(s) illuinating the prints. (Ed's photos
were checked diligently for all this stuff. Nothing was found.)

>Did Ed use the "Evans" method to produce the GB photos? If Ed
>were clever enough to know how, he'd certainly be clever enough
>not to admit it. But the truth is that neither act requires a
>great deal of brain-work. I do special effects for a living and
>I can tell you this is all old hat technology dating back to the
>earliest days of photography. If in doubt, go to the library and
>check it out. Nothing new here.

Sure, Any old "hack" could do it. But not Ed. I recall a pro
photo from Florida...name escapes me now... who was very
suspicious of all this until he actually saw Ed taking some
photos (not UFO photos!) with his old camera. AFterward he said
to me something like this "I could tell by the way Ed held his
camera that he doesn't know anything about photography.)

>Are the GB photos fake? Who knows? Obviously just because
>someone can copy the Mona Lisa does not make them a Da Vinci. On
>the other hand, all this discussion about how technically vexing
>it would be to produce these photos on Polaroids is pointless.
>It would be a breeze. Maybe even a Gulf Breeze.

As in any photo case about the best one can hope for is clear
evidence of a fake. Lacking that one has a toss up and then the
proof must fall back on other things, like circumstantial
evidence. One can ask, if the photos are fakes, then would the
photographer have been capable of creating these fakes. My
answer is no.

Also, in this case, Ed's sightings are backed up by other
witnesses who claim to have seen the same thing.

Few people are aware these days of all the argumentation that
went on endlessly from 1988 through 1992 or so and then
continued sporadically over the years. There's hardly a thing
discussed now that wasn't discussed way back when.

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