



Newsletter of the Center City Residents' Association

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## CCStreetwise

# Reclaiming Urban Alleys from Cars, Trash and Rats

By William West

In Philly we have big streets, like Market Street; we have regular streets, like Walnut; and we have little streets, like Addison in, say, the 1700 block. I love this block. It's a narrow street, with no curbside parking allowed. The trees are decorated year-round with strings of white Christmas lights. (I'm told they're LEDs, so this exercise in whimsy may even be reasonably green.)

Sometimes these little streets are called alley-streets, but we also have genuine alleys, which are even narrower, and rarely beautiful.

### Matchbox Cars

Let's have a look at the 1700 block of Waverly, which lies directly north of Addison. Here it is, tucked in between Addison and Pine, which is also a very

attractive block. Waverly is a mess. The main culprit is the parked cars, which are shoehorned at odd angles into small spaces behind the houses facing Pine and Addison. This little alley looks somewhat like my living room floor years ago, after my son had finished playing with his Matchbox cars, and before we had agreed to clean up.

There are alleys like this all over the neighborhood. We tend not to notice them. Why walk up 1700 Waverly when you can walk up 1700 Addison? I started paying attention only when I was working on an inventory of parking spaces for CCRA, and I had to traverse these alleys. That's where the parking was.

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Andy Nicolini

2000 block of Moravian—an uninviting, underutilized urban alley.

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## Photography Tips Offered as Part of Street Scene's New Photo Contest

By Michael Stern

As a component of this year's Street Scene garden competition, I presented a workshop at Schuylkill River Park Community Garden in July, geared toward the new photography contest, providing tips for getting the most out of your photographs. Although the August 15 deadline for submissions has passed, the information provided at the workshop is useful to anyone wishing to make top-notch pictures. Here are some highlights from the workshop.

When you set about taking any photo, think about the **objectives**. For the competition there were two categories: promotional and artistic. Photos for the first category promoted the mission of City Scenes, beautifying our Center City streetscapes. The second category provided freedom for an artistic vision, allowing maximum possibilities for composition and creative effects.

**Lighting** is the most important factor within your control. For photos of plants and flowers, the soft light of early morning or late afternoon is best. Mid-day light tends to be "hot" and harsh, creating hotspots that are distracting and hard to edit out. See if you can get the flowers lit from behind: This will reveal structure and provide a pleasing glow. Turn off your flash, unless you have a detachable flash. Most flashes that are mounted close to the lens are great for shots of people, but will create hotspots and an



Workshop instructor Michael Stern, center, discusses the finer points of photographing flowers.

unbalanced exposure when photographing plants and gardens.

For **composition**, think in "thirds." Rather than positioning the main subject in the center of the photo, try shifting it a third of the way over in the frame. Dividing the screen display into thirds can be done with an iPhone and many cameras. The goal is to create a dynamic balance and interest that leads you through the image. There are great explanations of the "rule of thirds" available online.

In terms of **subject matter**, for individual flowers pay equal attention to the back, and

the way the flower attaches to the stem. Take care to get good contrast between the subject and the background. Make sure there are no distracting elements, such as a trash can or dead flowers. Consider including people in your photos, both posed and spontaneous. Does the image "tell a story" about the idea or subject you want to portray?

Finally, take time to slow down and consider the process of looking and enjoying the subject. In the case of the second annual Street Scene competition, these window boxes, tree pits and more are lovely "gifts to the street," that we all can share.

## Come See Ettinger's Etchings on Open Studio Tour in October

By Bonnie Eisenfeld

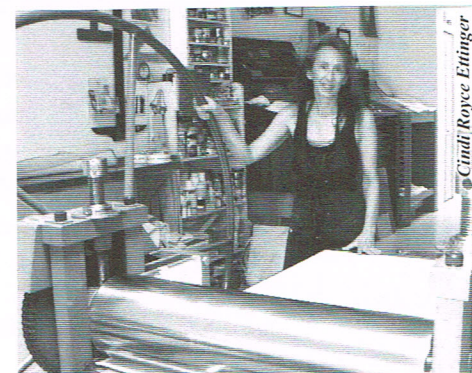
The C. R. Ettinger Studio, owned and operated by Cindi Royce Ettinger, is the only professional etching studio in the Philadelphia area. Many artists, relying on Ettinger's expertise in intaglio and relief techniques, collaborate with her on their print projects. After the artist makes the plates, Ettinger editions the prints, and the artist signs them.

In her gallery, Ettinger exhibits artwork from the studio and also mounts other print-related shows. Working as a master printer for over three decades, Ettinger has exhibited artists' works locally and abroad.

Ettinger came to Philadelphia from New York in 1975 to attend the Philadelphia College of Art (now the University of the Arts). After graduating, she co-founded a print studio in New York and then in 1982 she started her own studio in Old City Philadelphia. In 2012 she relocated the studio to its current spot on South Street.

During the Philadelphia Open Studio Tour, the public is welcome to visit the C.R. Ettinger Studio Gallery at 2215 South Street, on Saturday, October 17, or Sunday, October 18, starting at noon. The gallery features exhibitions of prints and printmaking-related works. Normal hours are noon to 6:00 p.m.

Monday through Friday, but contact first. <http://crettinger.com/home.html>



Cindi Ettinger in her studio with the press.