



★★★★

4-star salute

A new chef brings luxury to Peninsula's gem, Avenues.

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Hip clicks

Photographers embrace imperfect images from cheap, retro cameras

By Christopher Borrelli
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Dan Zamudio carries his camera in a gray ski cap, tucked between folds of frayed knitting. The camera once belonged to his mother. She died six years ago. His father found it and considered throwing it out until Dan snapped it up. The lower half is black and faded, though hardly caked with age; the upper half is teal. Surrounding the lens like a half moon are the etched silver letters of a name—"Diana."

Get snapping
How you can get in the picture.
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Every photo with this thing could be its last. "This camera won't survive," he said. "I know that. I don't want anything to happen to it. It was my mother's. I've taken great stuff with it. But I've made peace with myself that something will happen."

Because it's junk. It's a vintage Diana camera—a chunk of Hong Kong plastic. Even the lens is plastic. Holding it steady requires the patience of a sniper. Press down on the shutter and you half expect a rubber flower to spring from the lens. As for the pictures—Zamudio's favorite subject is fading Chicago, the remnants of neighborhoods in the midst of seismic gentrification, and without exception, not a single thing he's ever shot has turned out sharp. Edges fade into soft crescent blackness. Many have that signature smudgy blur of early photography.

And that's the draw. This may contradict every assumption about contemporary photography you have—that digital cameras have auto-corrected out of existence the goofs of the casual picture taker (they can), that more people prefer the immediacy of digital to traditional film



PHOTO BY DAN ZAMUDIO



PHOTO BY JONATHAN MICHAEL JOHNSON



PERRIE SCHAD WITH PINHOLE CAMERA. ANTONIO PEREZ/TRIBUNE

Diana

Dan Zamudio uses his mother's Diana camera. It weighs next to nothing. Zamudio, of Logan Square, has a book of photos of old Chicago neon signs (like the image above) coming out this week. And yet he doesn't have the patience to learn how to use a camera. "Someone might say I am impatient, and that I don't know anything about photography, and they would be right. But it's the eye that's important here, not the camera."

Lubitel

This multi-exposure photo, far left, was shot by Jonathan Michael Johnson with a Lubitel camera. The camera's viewfinder is at the top. "I wanted to be part of a tradition," he said, explaining why he gravitates to old, dated cameras. "I wanted to understand what it meant to live at a time when people took these cool fuzzy pictures."

Pinhole

A pinhole camera is the oldest kind of camera, essentially a sealed box, with a pin-prick to allow in light (and expose the negative). Perrie Schad (near left), who works for a fashion studio on the South Side, made her camera from an old Transformers lunch box, bundling it in straps of black tape to keep out light leaks. "I don't think digital will ever be as charming as something like a real tangible print of film. The way I do it though, to get anything at all—that in itself is a success."

Tasting runners' goo is a marathon itself

PLUS: A spectator's guide to Sunday's marathon. PAGE 7

FORTY-FIVE THOUSAND PEOPLE are registered to run the Chicago Marathon on Sunday. To wrap your head around this, think of the entire city of Buffalo Grove waking up one morning and running, en masse, to Grant Park. Now imagine what it would take to fuel such a crowd on such a journey. Until someone comes up with something better, they often eat goo, high-energy pseudo food with consistencies that range from paste to snot, don't require athletes to think about chewing and running at the same time, keep their muscles going, replace all those electrolytes and don't taste too hideous. We roped our athletic colleagues (among them, a triathlete, a marathoner and a competitive cyclist) into evaluating 32 flavors of goo that we bought at Fleet Feet (1620 N. Wells St.; 312-587-3338, www.fleetfeetchicago.com). Here's what they said:



CLIF SHOT BLOKS, \$2.49; www.clifbar.com
Flavors liked: Strawberry
Reactions: Received mostly boos. "How do you bring them along? The whole cellophane bag of six?" wondered one. All despised Margarita W/Salt ("like doing a tequila shot"). But one thought the 33-calorie chews would be good for careful rationing over a run.



Best bet

CLIF SHOT Energy Gel, \$1.25; www.clifbar.com
Flavors liked: Mango, Strawberry, Vanilla, Mocha
Reactions: One user of GU loved the idea of an organic gel, found the flavors mild and the consistency perfect. "I might switch!" he wrote. Others complained this had too much sugar.



Carb BOOM! Energy Gel, \$1.50; www.carbboom.com
Flavors liked: Vanilla Orange, Apple Cinnamon
Reaction: Props for easy-open tab and slow-burning complex carbs. One called the flavors too intense. "I can't imagine doing the double espresso mid-run."



Best bet

GU Energy Gel, \$1.13; www.guenergy.com
Flavors liked: Just Plain, Vanilla, Espresso Love
Reactions: Our athletes rate GU highly for its Goldilocks texture. "Good, thick consistency," wrote one. "Others found some flavors too cloying and fake. 'The fruity flavors are very synthetic!'"



BONNIE TRAFLET/TRIBUNE

PowerBar Gel, \$1.29; www.powerbar.com
Flavors liked: Vanilla, Chocolate, Green Apple
Reactions: This gel is way too runny, agreed our athletes. "Would make a mess, drool out of your mouth (ew)," wrote one. But, at least one enjoyed the Green Apple flavor.