

Lewis & Clark ... & Mack

Evanston photographer documents landscapes seen 200 years ago by expedition

Photographer Richard Mack followed in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark, taking pictures at more than 200 places where the legendary explorers traveled two centuries ago.

Mack's photos are currently on exhibit in Chicago, and they're also available in the form of a coffee-table book, "The Lewis & Clark Trail: American Landscapes." Mack, a lifelong Evanston resident, will sign copies Friday at the Book Stall in Winnetka.

Mack says he visited all of the places along Lewis and Clark's 8,000-mile path -- starting in St. Louis, following the Missouri River through woodlands and Great Plains, across Idaho's Bitterroot Mountains and finally reaching the Pacific Ocean -- at the same times of year when Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were there.

To get the timing right, Mack had to cover the territory in many return trips over the course of two years.

"A lot of it has changed, but you can at least find places that look the same," Mack says. "There are stretches in Montana for hundred of miles where it's absolutely unchanged."

Despite many changes, the American landscape is still mightily impressive, Mack says. "It is vast and varied."

Mack released his book through his own book company, Quiet Light Publishing, partly because he wanted control over its design. The 256-page hardcover book, which has 248 color images, sells for \$90. "The Lewis & Clark Trail" is a finalist for the Independent Book Publisher Association's photographic book of the year award.

Mack is mulling over several ideas for his next book, including a photographic essay on grain elevators.

-- Robert Loerzel

'The Lewis & Clark Trail'

Exhibit through June 20

River East Art Center, 435 E. Illinois, Suite 135 (between Michigan Avenue and Navy Pier), Chicago

(312) 321-1001

www.rivereastartcenter.com

Richard Mack book signing

6 p.m. Friday

The Book Stall at Chestnut Court, 811 Elm St., Winnetka

(847) 446-8880

www.mackphoto.com

www.quietlightpublishing.com