

Bold red texts
are
interactive links!

FOCUS

Volume 87 - No. 4

www.spsphoto.org

December 2020

**EVENT
NIGHT**

MIRRORLESS CAMERAS Presented by Noah Buchanan of **Hunt's** December 9

The mirrorless program will inform and educate members on the pros and cons of Mirrorless cameras, as well as clear up misconceptions that are commonly known about them.

The program will touch on the following topics.

- Mirrorless vs DSLR
- Lens options
- Explanation of the electronic viewfinder
- Adaptability of old lenses and different mounts
- Entry level and professional level options.
- In body stabilization
- And more!

Click the logo above to
get directly to
Hunt's home page.



There's a host of mirrorless options.

You can get great photos with a mirrorless camera. Check out Noah Buchanan's images on page 2...

Continued...

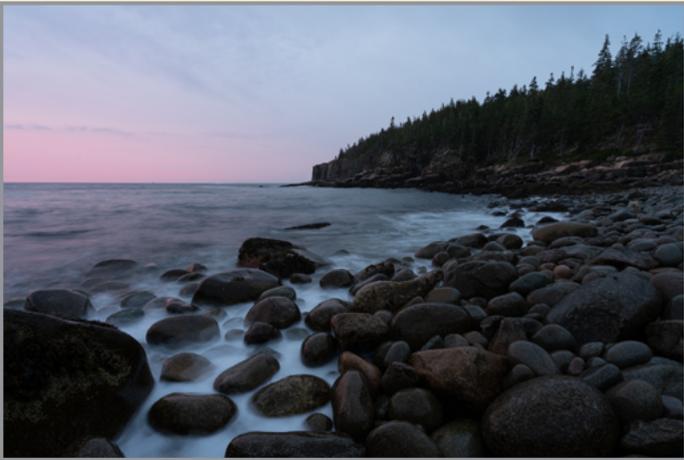
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Mirrorless Cameras

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rich Schreiberstein

What Would Jeff Do?

Cole Thompson talked about it during that webinar on his black and white photography last month. Sean Tucker and Jamie Windsor, two of the few photographers I follow on YouTube, have spoken about it in recent videos. I've been thinking about it for many months. Vision. What is my vision, what is your vision about your photography? As I have no idea what yours is, I'll necessarily have to write about the path my photography and my photographic vision is taking.

We're inundated and distracted, at least I am, by the latest gear, techniques, post-processing software, seminars, presets, blogs, reviews, and all the not-to-be-missed offers that saturate our on-line lives. I'm often envious of long-time Schenectady Photographic Society member Jeff Plant, who steadfastly refuses to enter the technological age.

When I first met Jeff, I was surprised to find he was the only current SPS member who had not adapted to the technological wonders of digital photography. You see, Jeff is a throwback, he only shoots film. He takes his film to McGreevy ProLab in downtown Albany to develop and have prints made. You newer members don't know Jeff because he doesn't own a computer. You won't see him at our virtual meetings, and he won't read this.

Jeff has vision. You will always know a Jeff Plant print because he has developed a technique of shooting objects through warped and crinkled cellophane, plastic, garbage bags, or whatever else is readily available. The colors are stunning, and he has to explain his technique to the judge at every competition because we never know what we are looking at, but we are captivated, nevertheless. I've never had a discussion about photographic vision with Jeff. I don't need to. His vision is apparent.

Mine isn't. I'm all over the place. I primarily shoot street scenes but will dabble in landscape, architecture, the occasional portrait, macro, still life,

and flowers. Boy, do we love our flowers. Our assigned topic competitions can take us outside our favorite genres and focus us on subjects we never considered. How many of you had a portfolio of toilet paper shots to choose from?

But I'm not sure vision is always topic relevant. The look and feel of a photo can be a reflection of your vision. While I choose street photography, I've reviewed my collection and no vision is apparent. Some are taken with my quirky Lensbaby collection, some with vintage lenses, others with a telephoto, most with a prime, but not the same prime. Some are in monochrome, some in color, and nearly all processed differently. When I look at the works of iconic street photographers such as Cartier-Bresson, Gary Winogrand, or Fan Ho, I immediately know their work. Does having a vision require you evolve to a readily recognizable style, concentrating on a specific genre? I believe it does. Does that mean that participating in our assigned topic competitions is contraindicative of vision? I could make that case.

I'm seriously considering lightening my gear load. I have lenses I use sporadically, if at all. I'm toying with the idea of swapping out all my gear for a Fuji X100V, a fixed lens camera with a 23mm f/2 (a 35mm-equivalent full-frame lens). Nothing makes you focus on your technique like a fixed prime lens. You get familiar with what your camera will do because you can't change a damn thing. You begin looking at scenes and composing them in your mind before lifting the viewfinder to your eye. You become hyper-aware of what's in your frame. Things I should already be constantly aware of but ignore because of the ease of zooming or swapping of lenses and knowing I can always fix it in post. The admission of a lazy photographer. Mea culpa.

I want to become more like Jeff.

Rich

ZOOM BOMBED!

It was very disconcerting to be “Zoom Bombed” at a recent SPS meeting. What is Zoom Bombing? Basically, it is when uninvited, complete strangers join the meeting and cause chaos with noise, unseemly videos, bad language, etc.

Initially we had hoped to simplify things for our members by using the same link each week, and not requiring a password. As it turns out, this is a red flag for Zoom bombers. It makes it really easy to hack in.

Sadly it has not just affected us. There have been instances of Zoom bombing online classroom learning sessions. Yikes!

So, we had to change our approach. Now, Sean Sullivan (our webmaster) will send out a different link each week, as well as a password. You will need both the link and the password to enter the meeting. We have also updated to the latest Zoom software, which hopefully contains precautions against this practice. The link and password will only be sent via email (to splist@googlegroups.com). We cannot post it to the Facebook pages, and we ask that you do not share the link without prior permission.

The moral of the story: Check your email before each meeting for a new link and password. And join us (hopefully bomb free!).



Sean Sullivan, Webmaster, is inviting you to our scheduled Zoom meetings.

Topic: SPS Meetings

Time: 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Dates: See Calendar on last page

CHECK YOUR EMAIL FOR INFORMATION ON THE ZOOM LINK AND PASSWORD.
LINK AND PASSWORD WILL CHANGE FOR EACH MEETING!

FOCUS ON Nick Argyros

All photos in this article © Nicholas Argyros. All Rights Reserved.

My Photographic World...

How to summarize and describe my 65-year love affair with photography? Let me count the ways.

Early Years

In the 1950s, my parents bought a Kodak movie camera (Magazine 8) to record family events. They allowed this pre-teen burn up 50-foot film reels (containing only a few minutes of 'action') to document what I spliced together as "My World." A box Brownie and folding Kodak camera was my early "exposure" to still photography.

In 1959 my first 35mm was an Ansco Regent (also sold in Germany by Agfa) with no meter, no rangefinder, no motorized film advance—I would guess the exposure and distance and did quite well with Kodachrome (ISO 25).

My high school math teacher gave me a Minolta with macro lens with which I explored nature, as most of us have done and do. I appointed myself ad hoc school photographer for the yearbook. Since then, photography has been an adjunct in my life, a valuable hobby behind which I could hide during parties and other social gatherings.

During the ensuing five decades I have grown in my skills and expanded hugely in my photographic interests, in part due to my SPS involvement.

Schenectady Photographic Society

I joined SPS in the late 1970s, and together with my soon-to-be wife, we became corresponding secretary and newsletter editor, which I created on a manual Remington typewriter. To mail the newsletter, member's addresses were embossed on metal plates that resembled dogtags. When inked, these were stamped directly on each newsletter. Times change.

Up until the early 1980s, the third monthly SPS meeting was devoted to projecting member's movies. With the advent of Sony's Betamax and Panasonic's VHS, amateur film movies soon became obsolete. Times change.



"Study in Lavender"

© Nicholas Argyros

Draped nude contemplating the new day alone
(scan from 3200 ASA slide)

In 1986 I became vice-president, transitioning to president the following year, the typical order of succession at the time. At this time, I proposed and the board agreed to double SPS meetings from two Wednesdays per month to four.

Together with the group chairs, we were challenged to expand programs, instructions, judges and presentations. With these added activities, SPS membership grew to exceed 200. Over the years I also held several group chairmanships, all while honing my camera skills inspired by the

outstanding prints and slides shown by the SPS masters of the day, especially Ken Deitcher and Max Tiller.

Times change—we no longer have annual inter-club competitions with other photo groups in the region (they have folded) or annual photo scavenger hunts (limited to one roll of slide film assigned to participants to find and photograph 24 objects or locations).

In my mind, SPS was beyond a typical "camera club." It was a Photographic Society and I am happy to see it continue to perform as such, in the broadest sense, with image excellence, helpfulness, a melding of cooperation and friendly competition, and artistic growth.

Continued...

Focus on Nick Argyros

(Continued from page 5)

From 2005

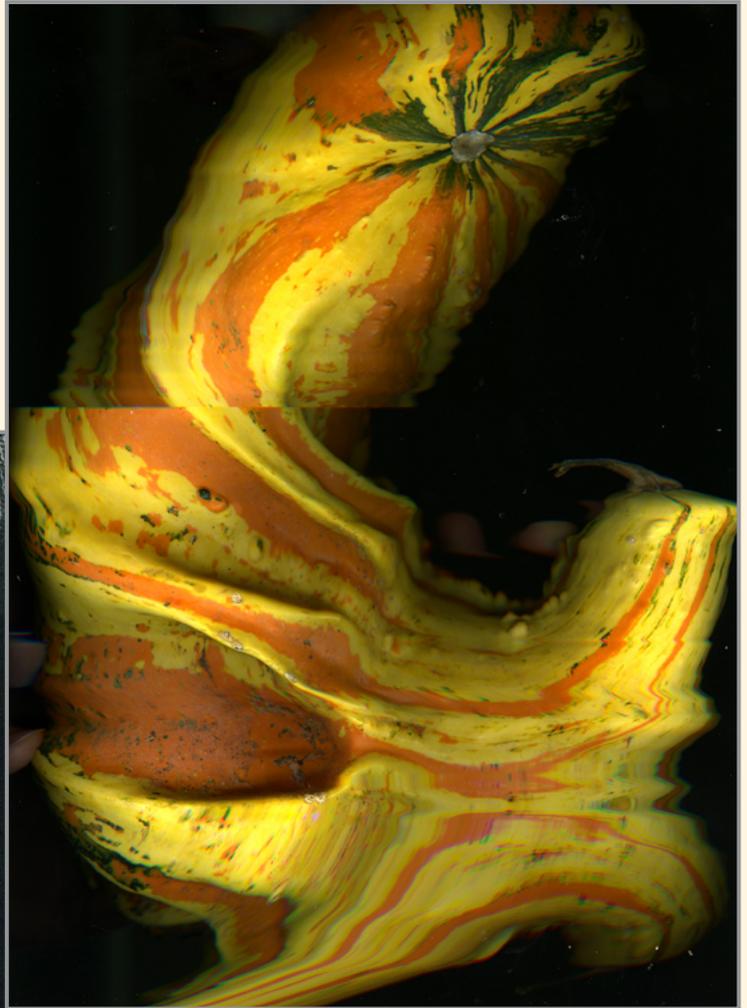
My interests in all aspects of photography expanded to impossible proportions over the decades. At home, my library of photo books outgrew available shelf space; my basement darkroom was crowded out by a growing collection of cameras; my collection of contemporary photographs could no longer fit on our walls. I did some wedding photography (loved it). I co-managed the bi-annual Camera Shows which once had 100 dealers and 600 attendees (abandoned 3 years ago when attendance had shrunk to 15; times change). My patient wife allowed these indulgences, at least to a certain point.



"Body Curve" - © Nicholas Argyros
draped in gauze
(scan from B&W Polaroid slide film)

My retirement 15 years ago coincided with the availability of a building in downtown Troy. A perfect solution to housing my expanding interests

in photography. And best of all, we could have a gallery to show the works of some of the most talented and creative photographers in the region, some of whom are also personal friends. Many SPS members have participated over the years.



"Colorful Squash" - © Nicholas Argyros
(in motion on a flatbed scanner)

Within two years after extensive renovation, The Photography Center of the Capital District came into existence, complete with exhibition Gallery, Camera Museum and Photo Library (now exceeding 15,000 books). We have exhibited hundreds of photographers. We have hundreds of cameras that trace the history of photography from the 1840s. We have images in the archives that embody examples of almost every process used throughout photography's history, from Daguerre-type to digital.

Continued...

Focus on Nick Argyros

(Continued from page 6)



“Mature Olive Trees, Greece” - © Nicholas Argyros
(digital infrared-converted camera)

In the earliest years of the PhotoCenter, with Director Katherine Wright, we conducted workshops covering many aspects of photography—digital software including Photoshop, Lightroom, HDR; shooting workshops of food, fashion and figure. Before Netflix, we introduced movie nights (double features). We hosted monthly dinner nights for members. And monthly Salon Nights for peer reviews and feedback. Only the latter activity has survived the growth of resources available elsewhere, like YouTube instruction; the tethering of our interests to online clickbait, Instagram, et al; and recently Covid-19. Times change.

In the most recent decades, we have witnessed and participated in probably the most dynamic era in photography. Digital technology has unlocked the huge variety of visual creativity embodied in our latent capabilities. Times change. It has become difficult—nay, impossible—to keep up with the improvements in software and equipment.

Aesthetics

Wherever we are as individuals with our acquired skills, photography offers us an ever-expanding source of knowledge and creativity.

I have come to see our photographic pursuits anchored with two poles: “Found photography” and “Created photography.” Most images comprise a bit of both, with heavy leanings toward one pole or the other. If an image is “found” as in nature (a landscape, a flower, a building), in order to be worth our attention, the artist imparts the creativity that will hold our interest. A “created” image starts as an artist’s blank canvas, as in a still life or product depiction. It depends even more on creative and controlled use of lighting and composition.

In its own classification, photojournalism captures a “found” instant which, with editing to select the perfect decisive moment, informs us.

These are the principle constructs I apply when viewing or making photography.

My aesthetic vision has been vastly expanded by participating in workshops by Elizabeth Opalenik. A visit to her website will richly reward you: www.elizabethopalenik.com. Some of her numerous publications and photographs can be seen at the PhotoCenter.

Continued...

Focus on Nick Argyros

(Continued from page 7)

The photographic and spousal team of John Eastcott and Yva Momatiuk informed me of the endless possibilities the creative eye can find in the world. A selection of their vast library of images are here: <https://www.momatiukeastcott.com/> and here:

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/contributors/m/photographers-eastcott-momatiuk/>.



"Stairs, Boboli Garden, Florence" - © Nicholas Argyros
(digital infrared-converted camera)

I would be remiss without also talking about the portrait photographer Lady Ostapeck, a dear friend and extraordinary portraitist, whose work is unique in all the history of the medium. Her work is online here: www.ladyostapeck.com.

The PhotoCenter will soon publish the third volume of her photographs. Two video biographies have been produced, and a biography by Eira

Hernberg has been published in Finland (in Finnish). (Her birth parents were from Finland, and Lady Ostapeck is rock-star famous there.) All these items are available by special order from the PhotoCenter.

I look forward to re-starting the exhibition functions of the PhotoCenter when the pandemic danger subsides to nil. Meanwhile, visitors can be admitted in limited numbers during regular open hours Thursday and Friday 5 to 9, and Saturday and Sunday 12 to 6.



"Nippled Nautilus Shell" - © Nicholas Argyros
(back lit)

Continued...

Focus on Nick Argyros

(Continued from page 8)



“On a Tourist Tour, Florence”
© Nicholas Argyros
(digital infrared-converted camera)

You are invited to visit the
PhotoCenter’s website to see some of
my images from earlier times:
[http://www.photocentertroy.org/
member-gallery/member-gallery.html](http://www.photocentertroy.org/member-gallery/member-gallery.html).



“Arch Ruins, near Rome da Vinci Airport”
© Nicholas Argyros
(digital infrared-converted camera)



“Wash Day, Tuscany”
© Nicholas Argyros
(digital infrared-converted camera)

ENHANCING MOOD

by Eric Bennett

(Reprinted with permission from Nature Photographer's Network.)

Access the original article here: <https://npn.xyz/mood>

All photos © Eric Bennett. All Rights Reserved.

mood

/mōod/

A temporary state of mind or feeling.

What's the point of taking pictures of things? We lug our heavy cameras and tripods around for a lot of different reasons: personal enjoyment, creativity, exercise. But I think it has a lot to do with sharing the things that we see and love with other people, to try and influence how they feel about them.

As nature photographers—now more than ever—we have a great opportunity to teach the world the value that nature has in its pure, unaltered state. I strongly believe that by photographing the little wilderness we have left, in an effective way that makes people feel how we feel, we can help change the way the world perceives nature and hopefully cause people to have a greater reverence and respect towards it.

Lately I have noticed more people recognizing the mood within a scene, by comments like “amazing mood!” or “this is so moody!” A “moody” image means it directly conveys a strong feeling or evokes a clearly recognizable emotion. I think as artists, all of us hope to create images that make people feel something. When a photographer intentionally creates an image, the decisions made such as subject matter, lighting, composition, processing, and the weather conditions they shot it in, are all in order to create a scene with a certain effect that they wish to have on the viewer. An artist should know beforehand how they want people to feel upon looking at the image they are in the process of creating, so that everything done can be towards achieving that.

A well known way to convey mood in an image is by weather conditions (an epic storm will bring a whole load of emotion) which I won't cover as a main point in this article since it is a very obvious factor and largely out of our hands. Also, I

personally never sit around at a location waiting for a certain kind of weather to give mood to my scene. So instead, I will focus on things that are in your power, that you can intentionally use in order to effectively convey the mood you feel best suits the scene you are hoping to capture.

Intentional Lighting

I would say the greatest contributor to mood in a scene is the lighting in which it is captured. When you find a subject that you want to photograph and you decide which mood would best convey the feeling you want to associate with the scene (dramatic, ominous, peaceful, tense, ethereal, delicate, bold, etc.), you will need to think about what kind of lighting would help create that effect for the viewer. Do you want strong light, that will boldly accentuate the subject and dark shadows that will hide the other things around it? Do you want even light that will showcase more details in the scene around the subject and allow for an overall brighter feeling? These are questions you should ask yourself and decide on before you start shooting a scene. This will determine what time of day you should be there (for angle of light, direction of light, quality of light), and what kind of weather you should be looking for.



Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 10)

Big Boquete (pg. 10)

In the scene of wildflowers (pg. 10), I wanted to convey a peaceful, light feeling that I felt suited the subject matter. I also wanted to highlight the entire flower bed showing a great variety of different flowers, I didn't want the focus to just be on a small patch or single flower within them. This is why I shot it in overcast lighting, which creates a softbox effect, while the light was bright and even, not creating intense highlights or shadows. This allowed me to raise the exposure of the scene and create a brighter, ethereal feeling. Direct, intense sunlight would have had the opposite effect, and would have created a stark and heavy contrast which would have given the scene a completely different mood, which in the moment I was not feeling.

Pingora Sunrise (right)

In this image, the strip of intense light piercing through the cloudy sky helped to enhance the mood of this scene, and make the center peak stand out, feeling more imposing and large than it is in reality. This kind of lighting draws more attention to the subject, but also creates dark shadows all around it which contribute to the overall majestic and dramatic feeling of the scene, which I felt lends itself well to these mountain peaks. Were the lighting different, perhaps more even or soft, I would have composed an entirely different scene.



Subject Matter

While I always try to avoid making rules for photography or creating a box around someone's vision, certain subjects you will encounter in the field will have different kinds of feelings that best suit them. Of course, you can do anything you want as an artist, and should never feel that a particular subject requires a specific kind of lighting, composition, or weather conditions. These kinds of things will only limit your creativity while searching for scenes in the field.

However, it is important to be conscious of what kinds of subjects are generally associated with

certain feelings. For an obvious example, mountains and flowers each make us feel very differently. Mountains tend to evoke a sense of awe and power in most people, since they are rugged and tower over everything else around them. Flowers tend to make us feel calm and at ease, being more delicate and associated with mostly positive things like love and friendship. Other subjects that are less common may inherently evoke a feeling of mystery because of their uniqueness.

It is important to also keep in mind that with certain kinds of lighting, weather, compositions, and processing, these common associations can be overcome and it is possible to create a new feeling that is not usually paired with that kind of subject. The important thing is that it always be intentional, so that it can be done effectively in a way that viewers will clearly recognize.



Cinque Sunrise (left)

It would be safe to say that the majority of us enjoy bright, colorful fields of flowers as well as beautiful, vibrant sunrises/sunsets. They tend to evoke positive emotions in us. In this scene, I went the easy route and shot it in bright sunlight highlighting the flowers and the warm, colorful, soft light of the sunrise in the sky that further enhanced that feeling this kind of scene would commonly be associated with. A beautiful summer meadow we'd all love to frolic in. To me this lighting and weather felt appropriate for this kind of subject matter.

Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 11)



Ice Reflection (above)

In general, I'd argue that ice is usually perceived as cold and uninviting. But in this scene, with the glowing, warm light reflecting in the water and the ice, the soft contrast, and the simple, intimate composition (Exclusion), this scene feels serene, calm, and heavenly. It almost makes me want to jump into the water and float next to these small icebergs and experience this feeling of bliss, despite that in reality it would be extremely shocking and uncomfortable.

All photos © Eric Bennett.
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Exclusion

Another way to create mood is by removing context. If you include too much, a scene can become too obvious for a viewer, not engaging them for long enough to feel anything. However, if you are more deliberate about what you choose to show, you can create all sorts of feelings in an image. An image that asks more questions than it answers can create mystery, awe, grandeur, and tension for the viewer.

Motukiekie Rocks (below)

Normally, when thinking of the coast, I'd assume most of us imagine a warm, soothing paradise. The beach is usually associated with carefree feelings of vacation and relaxation. Along this coastline, this particular subject I decided to focus on of the jagged rocks gives us a completely different feeling. With the monochromatic look in this scene from twilight and the simplified composition excluding the sky over the horizon, this beach instead feels a bit more rugged and foreboding, contrary to what the coast would traditionally cause us to feel. The lack of color accentuating the lines created by the dark rocks and the cool blue tones surrounding them make this scene feel a little less warm and inviting.



Starfish Water (above, right)

In this image it looks like a violent tide is battering the starfish with rough waves. However, in actuality, the water was quite calm this day and only an occasional wave would be just big enough to splash over the rock like this. By zooming in and excluding the rest of the sea, I was able to create a dramatic, intense mood that makes it feel like the starfish is hanging on for dear life.

Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 12)

Lost Temple (right)

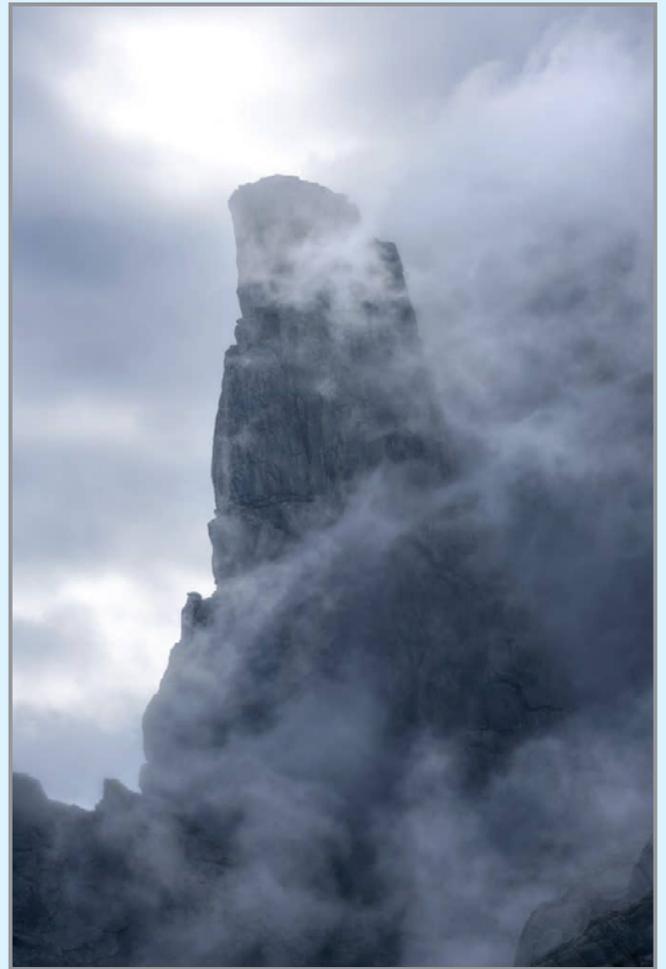
In this image, by excluding the larger mountains and the rest of the surrounding scene around this smaller mountain peak, it makes it look larger than life, and adds a greater feeling of grandeur to its scale. There is nothing here that tells you how high up from the ground this spire is, and the surrounding atmospheric clouds also add to that feeling of it being high up in the sky. When you exclude context that directly gives away an object's size, you can then make it feel however big or small as you want. You may have also noticed there is hardly any color to this scene, which also contributes to the mood. Let's examine that next.

Color Tones

The kinds of colors in a scene will greatly affect the mood it conveys. Warm colors will have a more intense feeling as they draw more attention and advance towards you, while cooler colors will have a more subtle, calm affect, receding and pulling you into the scene instead. A lot of this can be done in processing, either by enhancing the colors to make them more vibrant or dialing them back a bit to be more subdued. Knowing what kind of mood you would like to convey will tell you in which direction you should go with each color in the scene. You can also remove all color in a scene, going black and white or monochrome, which can also make a scene feel either more dramatic or quiet.

The lighting you shoot your scene in can also affect the colors you capture. Shooting in strong low angled light can warm up the colors, shooting in even light can make them more intense and true, or shooting in low light (such as twilight) can wash the colors out all together. These are all important things to consider while you are capturing the scene in the field.

In the previous two image examples I gave for "Exclusion," the color palette I created both in my composition and post processing also contributes to the mood. In the starfish scene, "Resistance," you may have noticed that the main color in the scene is orange, which we see in the subject, the starfish. The rest of the scene around the starfish is either monochromatic, or a darker, subtler red. This color contrast draws the focus onto the starfish that is clinging on for its life and creates more tension.



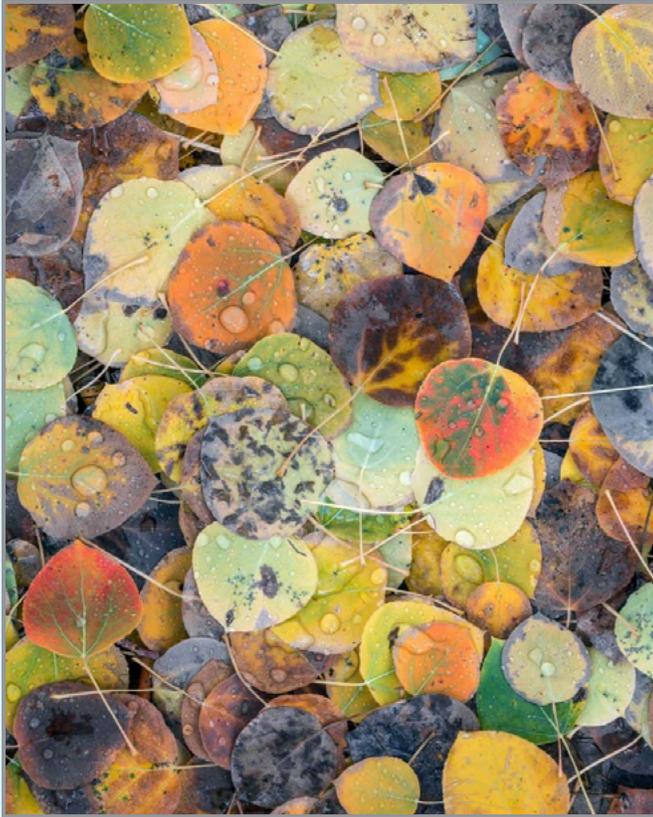
In the mountain scene, "Lost Temple," I pointed out that there is no color at all. I did not desaturate the scene to make it black and white—the lack of color that contributes to the dramatic mood of the scene occurred naturally, both because of the lighting and the exclusion of any colorful objects around the subject. Removing all color in the scene and creating a monochromatic color palette makes more room for attention on other aspects of the scene, such as the shape of the jagged profile of the sheer spire and the texture of the clouds and the cracks in the granite, helping to accentuate the intensity of the scene.

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Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 13)



Aspen Carpet (above)

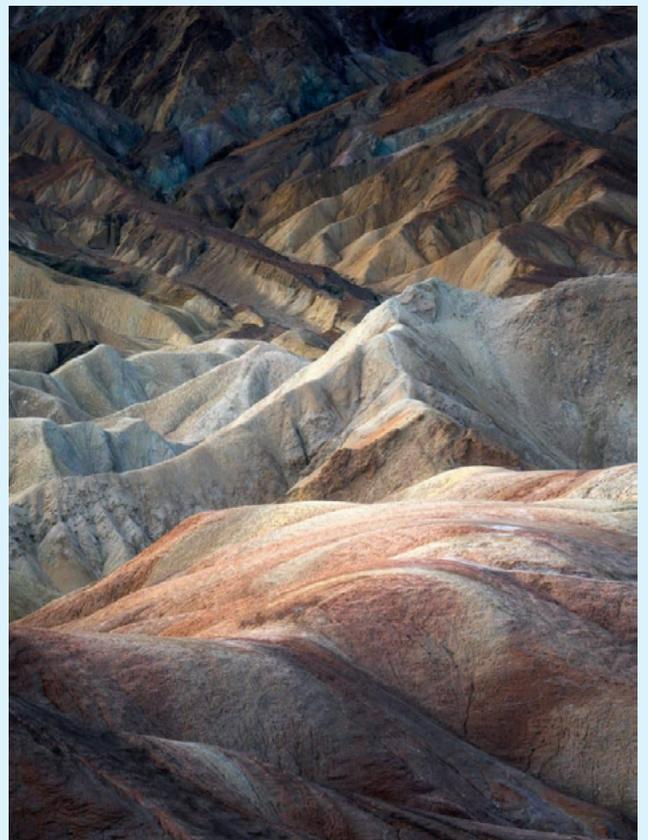
In this scene, we can see another example of how color can affect the mood of an image. This time, with a colorful palette showcasing a variety of different tones and hues. The vibrant warm and cool colors of this scene, brought out by the even lighting, give this image a playful, joyful look. The even distribution of warm and cool colors help the image to be exciting and energetic (warm colors) without being too overly intense as they are balanced out by receding, subtler tones (cool colors). On another note, the lack of anything else around this pile of leaves (exclusion) gives it a feeling that it goes on forever, and the water droplets (weather conditions) give these dry, dead leaves a more lively, fresh feeling, both of which help to accentuate the happy mood.

Vignettes

Adding a vignette to your scene in post processing can help to draw focus more towards the center of the frame or towards your subject, by darkening the surrounding area. While I add a slight vignette to virtually every image that I create, adding bolder, more obvious vignettes can really enhance a dramatic mood within a scene. I usually do this when I am shooting an intimate scene in more even light where there wasn't a natural spotlight making a certain object stand out from its

surroundings; I will try to create this effect in post processing instead. Sometimes a more obvious, strong vignette will look off in a scene, telling you that it doesn't work by how much it stands out. In other scenes an intense vignette, while being noticeable, won't draw attention or feel distracting if it is actually helping to improve the overall feeling.

I like to achieve this by either using Exposure, Levels, or Curves in conjunction with gradients—usually radial but sometimes linear—in Photoshop or Camera RAW/Lightroom. Each of these tools will effect the image differently: When you use the Exposure adjustment, you will see that the effect darkens the scene while not adding any saturation or contrast along with it. While using the Levels adjustment along with the 'Luminosity' blending mode, you will see that it darkens the edges while adding contrast, but does not intensify the colors at all. When using the Curves adjustment, you will see that it darkens, adds contrast, and intensifies colors as well. Depending on the scene, one of these three techniques will look best.



Zab Vert

Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 14)



Kaleidoscope (above)

A heavy vignette was added to both of these scenes (left and Zab Vert, pg. 14), which were shot in soft, even lighting, in order to create a strong spotlight effect and demand focus in the center of the frame where the subjects are. Without this strong vignette, these scenes lose a lot of their intense mood, and feel less mysterious with the surrounding area equally bright instead of darkened and more hidden.

There are dozens of different kinds of moods you can portray in your images. The more variety you show in your portfolio, the more interesting it will be. You will also develop more skills as an artist as you create a wider range and greater diversity of scenes. I encourage you to always go out with an open mind, and pay attention to the weather and lighting around you. Think about what it is making you feel, then think about what kinds of subjects would pair well with that feeling. This will help you to be more prolific, enjoy photography more, and create a deeper connection with the light and the landscapes you encounter in nature.

All photos © Eric Bennett.
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The following are some examples of what mood I feel each image conveys. What contributes to the mood of each image in terms of Lighting, Composition, Weather, and Color? How does the Processing enhance the mood? Was Exclusion used to enhance the mood? Does the scene convey the feeling that the subject is usually associated with, or something distinct?



Serenity
A Happy Medium



Ominous
Cloudy Cadini

Continued...

Enhancing Mood

(Continued from page 15)



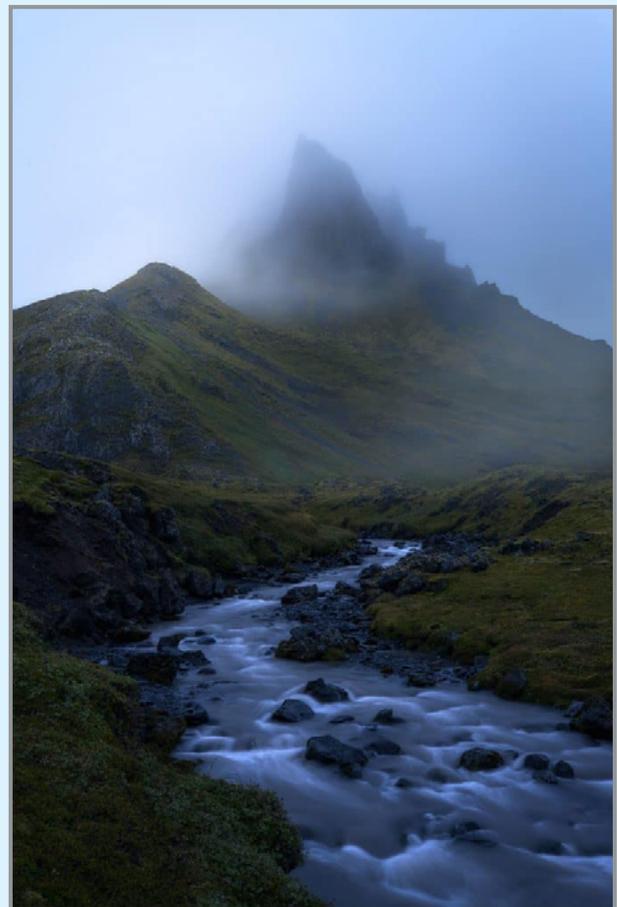
Mystery
Sandstone Squid



Quietude
Jewel of the Sea



Awe
Saw Blade



Solitude
Moody River Peak

Eric Bennett

I believe that landscape photography has the power to cause people to fall in love with the remarkable, natural beauty of our planet. My travels are motivated by this idea that if I can capture a place in the right way, it can give the world a glimpse of its true value in its unaltered, natural state. I hope that my imagery can inspire a desire in others to protect and conserve the little wilderness we have left.

See more examples of Eric's mood-evoking images and the full article here: <https://nnp.xyz/mood> and his website: <https://www.bennettfilm.com>

There's lots more on the Nature Photographers Network group. Check it out!
naturephotographers.network

A VERY SPECIAL EVENT NIGHT

“Why Black & White” with Cole Thompson

It was a privilege and a real treat to attend Cole Thompson’s presentation on “Why Black & White” at our Event Night meeting on November 19.

We were all inspired by his images and his words...and, of course, his unique vision. I thought I’d share a few of his “Colefucious Says” quotations here...

“One of the keys to finding your vision is learn to ignore what other people are doing.”

“There is no need for rules when you find your vision.”

Cole’s Rule of Thirds:
“A great image consists of:
1/3 vision
1/3 the shot
1/3 processing.”

“I can teach you to dance,
but you must hear the music.”

“We can learn the technology with our
mind, but we must hear the music.”

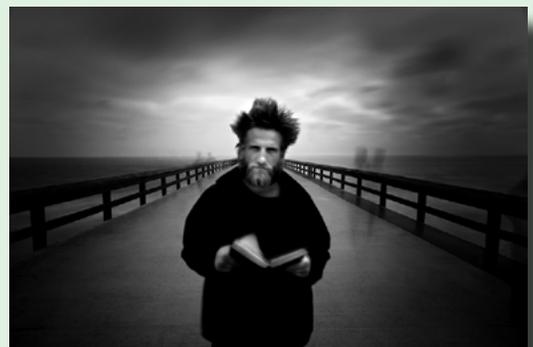
“Do I like it...
and would it look good on my wall?”

“Learn to see
where you’re at.”

Just. Let. Go.

Thank you so much, Cole!
And congratulations to Paula Keefe who won a print of “The Angel Gabriel.”

“The Angel Gabriel”
© Cole Thompson



SAVE THE DATE! AN SPS SPECIAL EVENT NIGHT February 24, 2021

Join professional landscape photographer **Nic Stover** talking about an area of photography seldom explored:
The Psychology of Photography.

The psychology of photography goes beyond making pretty pictures and starts to examine the deeper questions beyond the creation of our images.

1. How are we drawn to patterns, shapes, lines, and what do they mean to our subconscious?
2. What is the relationship of these elements to our emotional response to scenes in the field?
3. What are the different schools of psychology and how the brain forms thoughts and how you can work with that.
4. What models of creativity can we look to follow and understand where we are in the creative process?
5. How does our formation of limited beliefs and our belief system dictate who we are as photographers?
6. Are there definable stages of our growth that we experience as photographers?
7. What are the types of biases and how do they influence our artistic and creative journey?



Nic Stover
Nic Stover Photography

stoverphoto.com

The last portion of this presentation includes a participant-submitted CONSTRUCTIVE and positive image critique / image review with feedback from Nic and hands-on demonstrations on how to make changes to your images for greater impact. This will be mainly conducted in Lightroom with some minor modifications / highlighting of the times you might want to use Photoshop.

Editor's Note: Link to upload images for review will appear in the January edition of the Focus. Due to time constraints, it is possible that not all submitted images will be critiqued.



© Nic Stover Photography

NOVEMBER ASSIGNED TOPIC #1
Turn Ordinary Kitchen Object(s) into Art

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Check out these winning images and more competition photos on our website:

www.spsphoto.org

First Place: "Fork Art"
© Barb Lawton



Second Place: "A Pair of Glasses"
© Joe Cotroneo

Continued...

NOVEMBER ASSIGNED TOPIC #1

Turn Ordinary Kitchen Object(s) into Art

Third Place: "Way to the Top"
© Elena Keesee
(Image Not Available)

Honorable Mention

JUDGE:
SPS Member, Joan Heffler,
is a Saratoga Springs/Schenectady/
Albany wedding, corporate, portrait and
event photographer with the eye of an
artist and the technical expertise of a true
professional. She captures unforgettable
images of bar and bat mitzvahs, corporate
events, portraits, and weddings.



"Pop in for Tea"
© Barb Lawton



"Ms. Potatohead"
© Sharon Silversmith



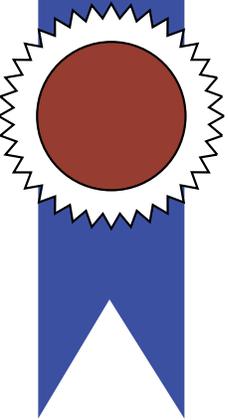
"Forknado"
© Joe Cotroneo

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NOVEMBER ASSIGNED TOPIC #2
What's That Outside My Window?

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First Place: "Rainy Sunset"
© Kim Koza



Second Place: "Ready for New Tenants"
© Barb Lawton

NOVEMBER ASSIGNED TOPIC #2
What's That Outside My Window?

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Third Place: "Early Spring in the Rain"
© Marguerite Hill

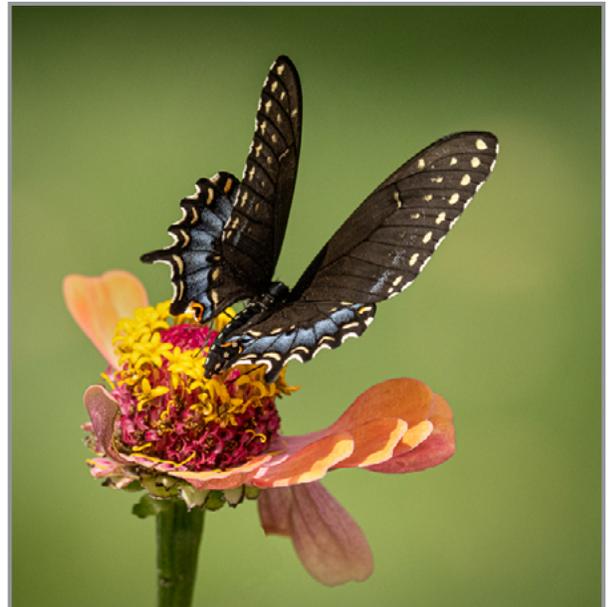
Honorable
Mention



"Sunbathers" / © Ron Speier

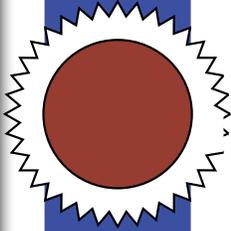


"October Snow"
© Linda Tommasulo



"Black Swallowtail"
© Linda Tommasulo

NOVEMBER DIGITAL IMAGE
GENERAL



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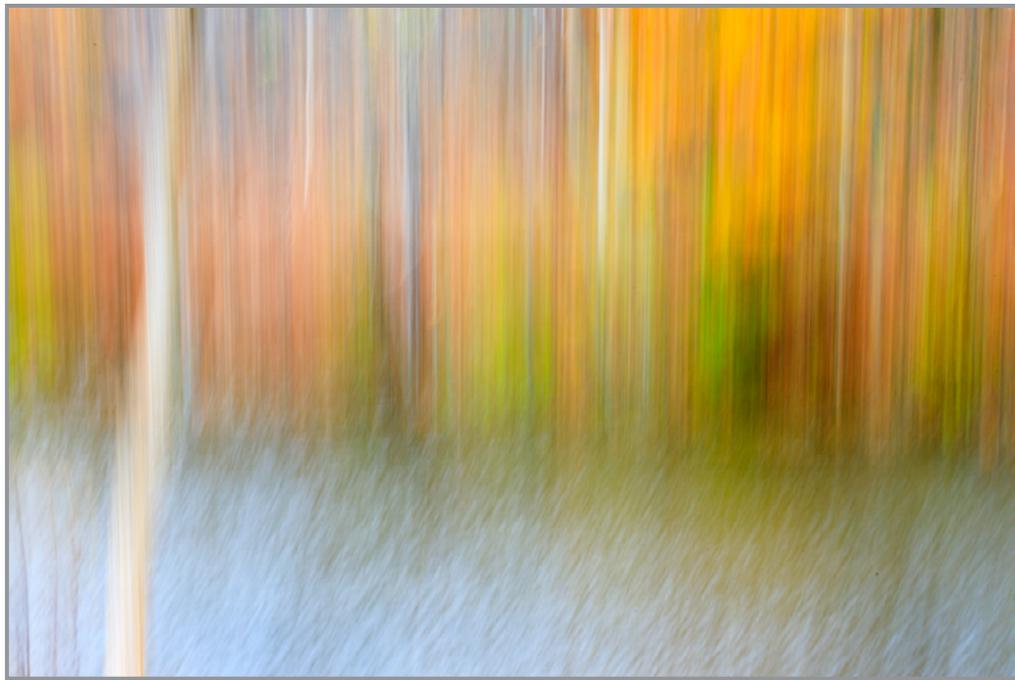
First Place:
"Fall Theatre"
© Neil Shapiro



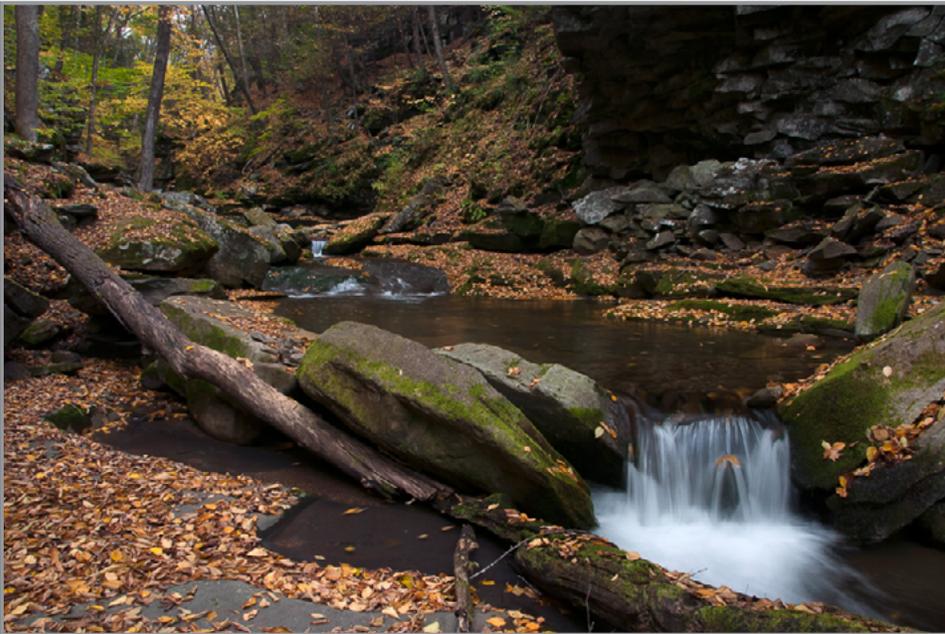
Second Place:
"Grand Champion"
© Rich Schreibstein

Continued...

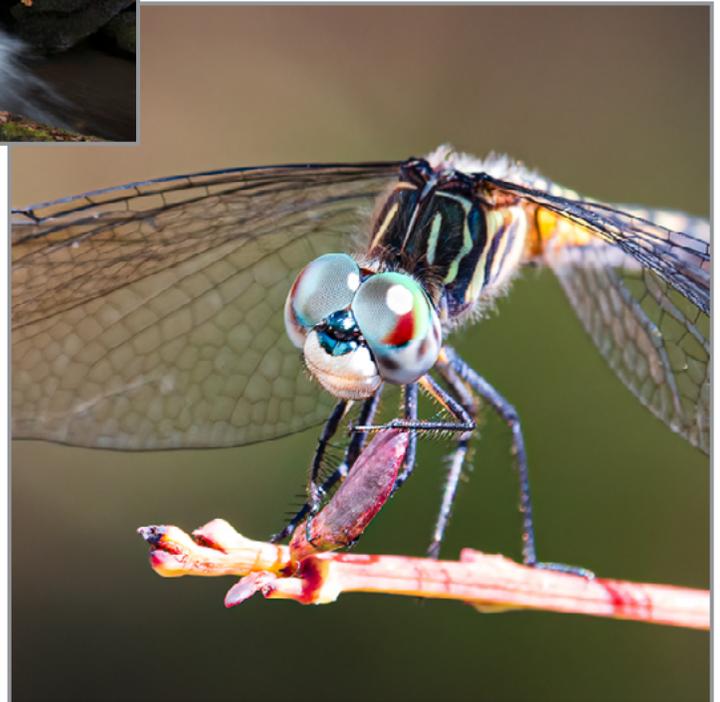
**NOVEMBER
DIGITAL IMAGE
GENERAL**



Third Place:
"Up and Down in the Woods"
© Carol Bell



Fourth Place: "Woodland Stream"
© Bill Lanahan



Fifth Place: "Smiling Dragonfly"
© Joe Cotroneo

Continued...

NOVEMBER DIGITAL IMAGE - GENERAL



"Looking for Relatives"
© Bill Lanahan

Honorable
Mention



"Dad's Brushes"
© Kim Koza



"Allium and Insect"
© Marguerite Hill

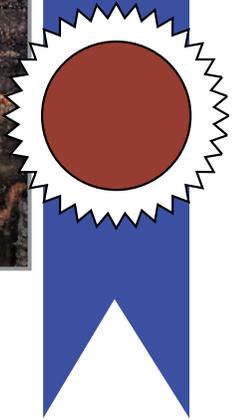


"Tulip No. 3"
© Stephen deWall Malefy



"Mothra in Orange"
© Sean Sullivan

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Check out these winning images and more
competition photos on our website:

www.spsphoto.org

NOVEMBER DIGITAL IMAGE - MONOCHROME

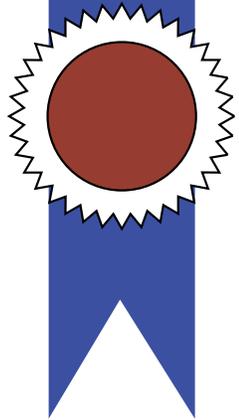


First Place:
"Peony"
© Kim Koza



Second Place:
"Light Out of Darkness"
© Bert Schreibstein

MONOCHROME





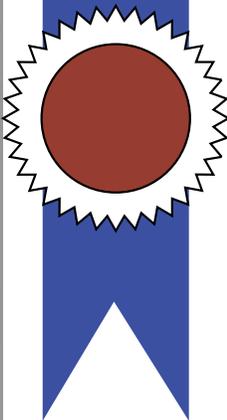
Third Place:
"Foggy Boat Ride"
© Kim Koza

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Fourth Place: "Forest Fog"
© Bill Lanahan



Fifth Place: "Valve"
© Sean Sullivan

JUDGE: Greg Cuda

Greg is a lifelong photographer who has stepped outside editorial work and began showing fine art photography. His photography has been featured in *Simply Saratoga*, *Adirondack Life*, *Wilderness Adventure Press*, *The Countryman Press* and numerous newspapers and journals.

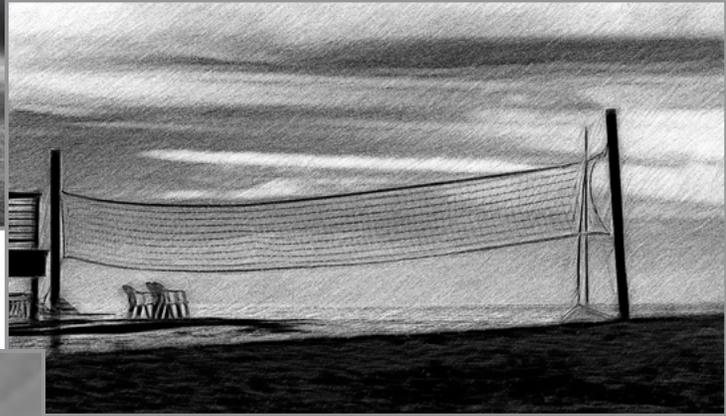
**NOVEMBER
DIGITAL IMAGE
MONOCHROME**

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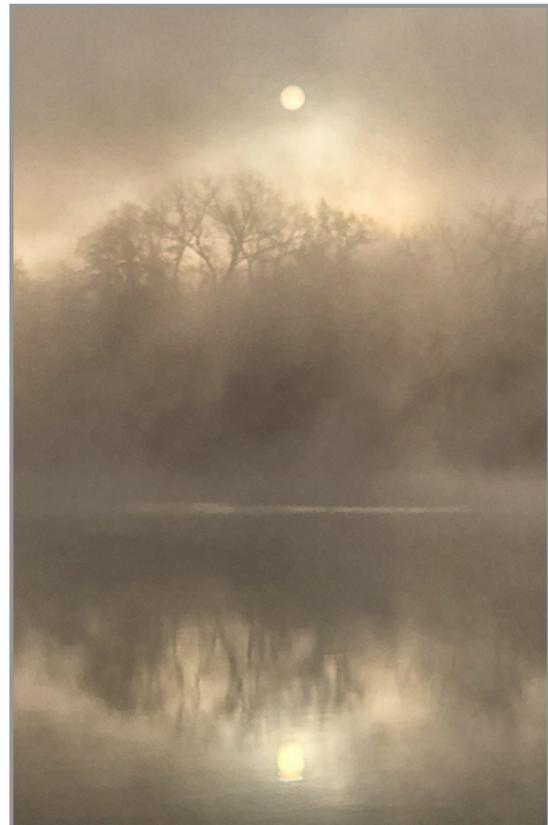
"Early Morning Bite"
© Alan Wiggins



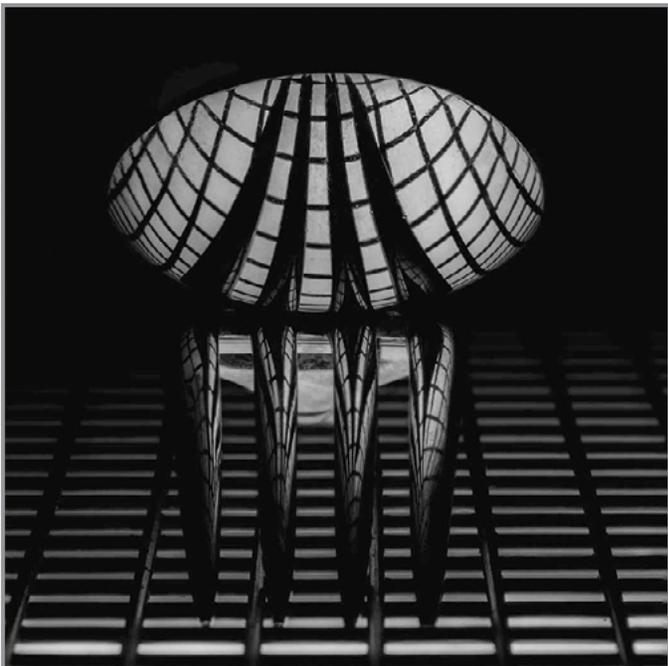
"The Players Are in Quarantine"
© Barb Lawton



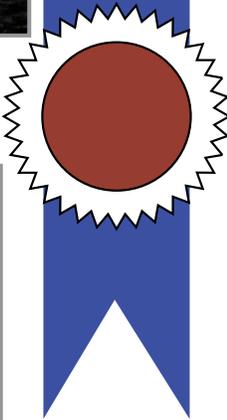
"Daylily"
© Joe Cotroneo



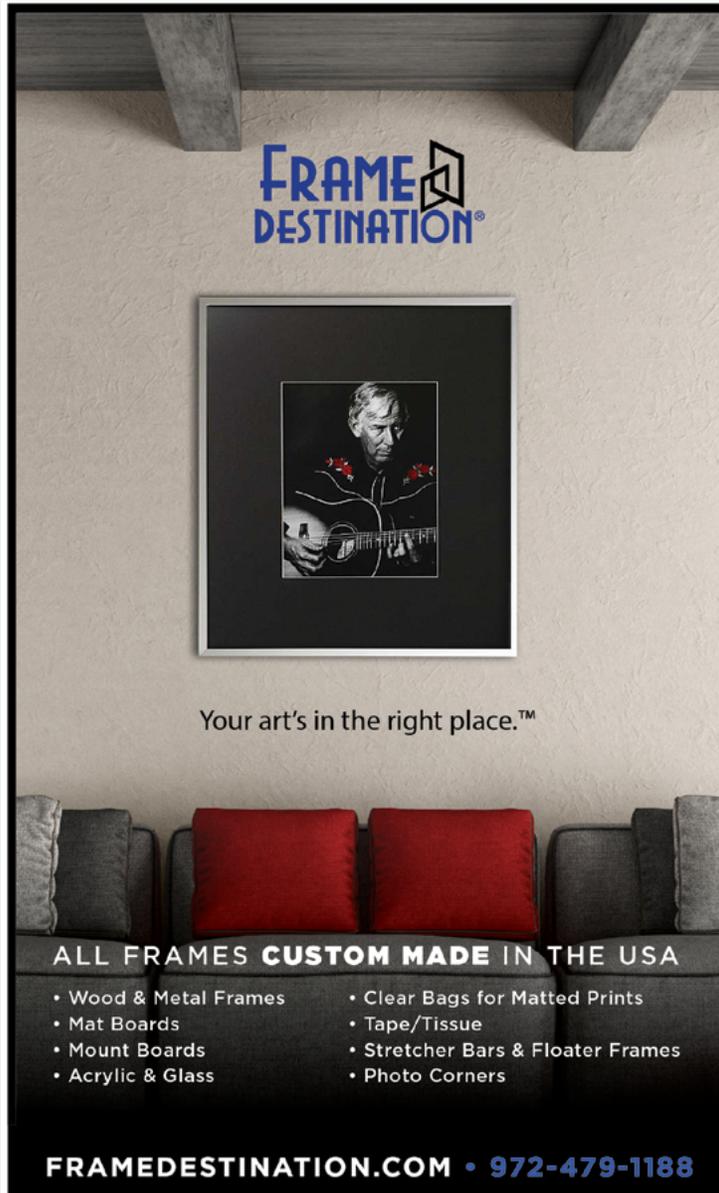
"Misty Sunrise"
© Connie Frisbee Houde



"The Fork Takes the Cake"
© Jeana Caywood



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Ask for Alan Samiljan, at (781) 462-2383.
His hours are usually 8:30-5:00pm,
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday.**

**Leave a message or send an email
(asamiljan@huntsphoto.com),
and he'll get right back to you.**

New Camera's Alert!

**Canon 90D, Sony A7R4, and just
announced to be released, Nikon D6!**

SPS members can get 10% off all their orders with Frame Destination!

You must be a registered user of the Frame Destination website as a SPS member. (Note: The discount is not valid with other discounts, and will not work for non-members.) To become a registered SPS member on our website follow these steps:

1. Click "Login" in the upper right of section of our site - <https://www.framedestination.com>
2. Click "Create an Account" in the middle of the page.
3. Chat or send an email to info@framedestination.com saying you are a registered user and need your account set for SPS membership.

To see how easy it is to order custom frames on our website you can check out the video "How to Order a Custom Picture Frame..." in our video gallery: [framedestination.com/video-gallery](https://www.framedestination.com/video-gallery).

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- Bruce Byers - a professional photographer. A guide with a wealth of photographic knowledge, stories and humor – all at your daily disposal.
- My overall experience as member of the travel/photography workshop was above par. Having a guide with Bruce's skills and background makes for an excellent experience and adventure!

Join us on one of our exciting worldwide **photographic adventures.**

Cuba Starts Dec 2020

Nepal and Bhutan April 2021



NO 2020-2021 DUES DUE FOR '19-'20 SPS MEMBERS
New Members Can Join This Season for \$20 (\$30 Family)



We're making you an offer you can't refuse. Join the Schenectady Photographic Society for our 89th year with full membership for \$20, and \$30 for a family (all residing at the same address). This lets you enter our twice-monthly judged competitions, and participate in our event nights with video presentations by skilled photographers. You will also be eligible to join the SPS Back-To-School Facebook page where you can post your photographs and receive member critique to help improve your skills. You can join by clicking on the button below. Note that this offer is to new members only, current members do not need to renew this season.

Join Now

Wishing everyone a happy and safe
holiday season.
Looking forward to 2021.



ABOUT THE SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



For more than 89 years, the Schenectady Photographic Society has been the meeting place of photographers of all levels—from beginners to serious amateurs to professionals—with the goal of exploring and sharing their love of photography. Members throughout the Capital Region meet primarily on Wednesday nights to engage in various competitions (print, projected, photo essay and more), enjoy member round-table discussions, guest speaker presentations and hands-on mentoring to further their knowledge, creativity and inspiration. Occasional field trips* give us the opportunity to expand our photographic vision; and frequent exhibits* in the local area allow us to share that vision.

In addition to our monthly print* and projected competitions, we are challenged with an assigned topic—encouraging participants to venture out of their comfort zones. Members participating in competitions receive specific commentary and suggestions to take their images to the next level. Don't wish to compete? That's OK too. Observing competitions is always an inspirational and learning experience.

The Schenectady Photographic Society is an enthusiastic and energetic group. Our camaraderie is infectious. Check out our calendar on the last page (season runs from late September to mid-May) and join us! Visitors are always welcomed...especially those who have a passion for photography.

*It's not about being better than everyone else...
it's about being better than you were.*

*Postponed for the 2020-2021 season due to Covid-19.

SPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020-2021

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president@spsphoto.org

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Connect with the Schenectady Photographic Society:

Website: **www.spsphoto.org**

Facebook Group: **https://www.facebook.com/groups/schenectadyphotographicsociety/**

Facebook Page: **https://www.facebook.com/schenectadyphotographicsociety/**

Instagram: @schenectadyphotographic

THE FOCUS NEEDS YOU! For articles, suggestions, and member profiles (bios/photos).

Contact Linda at **newsletter@spsphoto.org**.

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY VIRTUAL 2020-2021 SEASON CALENDAR

Meetings start at 7pm via Zoom. Members will receive appropriate link to sign in.
This schedule is always work in progress and is subject to change!

Note: All competitions are DIGITAL. For Assigned topics, with the exception of October, images must have been taken on or after May 1, 2020. October Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after May 1, 2019.

Images which previously placed (in print or digital) may NOT be resubmitted.

Members may enter a total of four (4) images, no more than two (2) in any one category.

Deadline for submission of digital images is midnight on Saturday before the competition date—no exceptions!

September, 2020

9/16/20.....2019-2020

Digital Image of the Year Competition

9/23/20.....2019-2020

Digital Photo Essay Competition

October, 2020

10/14/20.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

10/21/20.....*Event Night*

Dow Smith, "Photo Essay Inspiration"
and Jeana Caywood, "Photo Stacking"

10/26/20.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Fairs and Festivals
Topic #2: Show Us Your Curves

10/28/20.....*Virtual 2019-2020 Banquet*

November, 2020

11/4/20.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Turn the Ordinary into Art
Topic #2: What's That Outside my Window?

11/11/20.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

11/18/20.....*Event Night*

Cole Thompson, "Why Black & White Photography"

December, 2020

12/2/20.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Hands
Topic #2: It's Just Tee Pee

12/9/20.....*Event Night*

"Mirrorless Cameras" presented by Hunt's Photo
plus vendors TBA

12/16/20.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

January, 2021

1/6/21.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Bubbles, Splashes and Drops
Topic #2: We All Stayed at Home

1/13/21.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

January 2021 - Continued

1/20/21.....*Event Night*

Mark Bowie: "Envision: The Art of Seeing Creatively"

February, 2021

2/3/21.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Things Broken
Topic #2: Juxtaposition

2/10/21.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

2/17/21.....*Event Night*

Sarah Marino: "Creative Approaches to Photographing
Plants and Flowers"

2/24/21.....*Special Event Night*

Nic Stover: "The Psychology of Photography"

March, 2021

3/3/21.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Back to Basics
Topic #2: It's not Always What it Seems

3/10/21.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

3/17/21.....*Photo Essay Competition*

Hosted by Dow Smith

April, 2021

4/7/21.....*Assigned Digital Competition*

Topic #1: Time of Year
Topic #2: Food Deep Dive

4/14/21.....*General/Monochrome Digital Competition*

4/21/21.....*Event Night*

Joe Cotroneo: "Macro Photography"

May, 2021

5/5/21.....*Assigned Digital of the Year*

5/12/21.....*General/Monochrome Digital Image of the Year*

June 9, 2021.....*Awards Banquet*