

**Bold red texts  
are  
interactive links!**

# FOCUS

**IT'S OUR  
92ND  
SEASON!**

Volume 90 - No. 5

<https://spsphoto.org/>

January 2024

## **GETTING STARTED IN NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY**

**EVENT  
NIGHT**

**by Beth Ruggerio York**  
January 17, 2024 - on Zoom

Whether you are an experienced night photographer or a novice, you will gain valuable knowledge from this presentation guiding you through the fundamentals of night photography. All of the components needed to successfully photograph stars as points, star trails, Milky Way, and the Moon will be covered, along with other types of night photos. You will learn about the gear needed, focusing techniques, and choosing settings. There will be time for questions and answers at the end of the presentation.



*Continued...*

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\* These pages repeat in every edition of the *Focus*.

# Getting Started in Night Photography

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I have written two books: *Fun in the Dark: A Guide to Successful Night Photography*, *Flying Alone: A Memoir*, and co-written a third: *Everglades National Park: A Photographic Destination*.

My workshops include night and day landscape photography for Arizona Highways Photo Workshops and for my company, Ruggiero Images LLC, in the United States, Europe and Asia.

If you are looking to expand your photographic experience into the night, or just go further with your day images, I hope you will consider joining me on the journey.

My name is Beth Ruggiero York, and I am passionate about photography.

I love teaching other photographers how to use today's advanced cameras to photograph both day and night, as well as to experience the quiet beauty of night photography in the field. Through my workshops, books, seminars, and one-on-one custom instruction, I can guide you through this learning process.



**Check out Beth's images -  
both night and day -  
on her website:**

<https://www.bethruggiero.com/>

# PHOTO ESSAY INSPIRATION

## By Our 2023 Photo Essay Winners

January 24, 2024 - on Zoom

On January 24 each of the 2022-2023 Photo Essay winners will share their Essay and talk about it's creation. Hopefully these will inspire members to participate in the 22023-2024 competition which takes place on March 20, 2024.

*FIRST PLACE  
"The 92nd Year"  
by Claudia Jakubowski*

My photo essay, "The 92nd Year," is a tribute to my dad's 92nd year and the moments we shared while living together. It is a personal project that I embarked on to capture the small, mundane, everyday moments of our time together. When I started the project, I had no idea that the images that I took of my dad would be the last pictures that I had of him. After his unexpected passing, the intimate moments I captured became a more universal portrait of a daughter's love for her father. I hope that my love for my dad comes through in the images I took of him.



*SECOND PLACE  
"Maple Sugaring Season"  
by Pattie Garrett*

In making the story, I gathered my photos from over the years, organized them to show a visit from start to finish, when the syrup is gobbled up in a delicious dish.

March is mud season, not winter and not yet spring. March can't decide whether to be warm or cold, rain or snow. But it is perfect for maple sap to flow. That's when I get out and visit sap houses to see maple syrup being processed and to purchase a few quarts of fresh syrup. It's an annual tradition that I've carried on for years. Just as each sap house is unique, so are the people as well as the syrup.

I used the software program, Photodex which provides music. I like to add a little motion to the photos, think Ken Burns. Too much movement can be dizzying so caution is needed. Organizing the photos to match the music can be a challenge. In the end, I hope I've motivated some of you to visit our local maple syrup producers.

## Photo Essay Inspiration

(Continued from page 3)

THIRD PLACE  
"Waves, Water and Wind -  
Journey to Iceland"  
by Janice Prichett



My photography trip to Iceland surprised me in some very unexpected ways. I found the land, sea, and atmosphere of Iceland to be an incredibly diverse geological environment. I felt profoundly aware and connected to the dynamic features of this country as I visited glaciers, volcanoes, geysers, waterfalls,

hot springs, ice beaches, lava fields and lava formations, and the elusive northern lights. Iceland sits on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates which are constantly moving and creating significant tectonic activity which in turn leads to the well-known geothermal energy. My experience there was full of wonder as I felt the land and the earth as never before. I created my photo essay and titled it "Waves, Water, and Wind; Journey to Iceland" with the goal of communicating the dynamic wonder of my experience in Iceland.



FOURTH PLACE  
"A Collection of Macro and  
Close-Up Photography"  
by Joe Cotroneo

I've been on a fascinating journey exploring macro and close up photography. In this photo essay I share some of my better shots. Dragonflies and bees are among my favorite subjects. There is a series showing the development of a Christmas Cactus Blossom over time and another series showing the phases of pine cone growth. Many of the shots were taken in my own yard. There are also some from the Albany Pine Bush and a sunflower garden in Round Lake. The shallow

depth of field in macro photography can be a challenge, sometimes requiring small apertures and/or selective focusing. My preferred lens for macro and close up photography is a 100mm macro lens that can get a true 1:1 magnification. I use both full frame and crop sensor cameras with the full frame giving the advantage of less noise for small aperture, high ISO images and the crop sensor giving an extra boost in magnification. I will also use a telephoto lens which is advantageous for skittish insects since you don't have to get as close. Macro photography gives one a view into a world that is often overlooked. The details of an insect or a flower can be very interesting and sometimes even alien.

Continued...

# Photo Essay Inspiration

(Continued from page 4)

HONORABLE MENTION  
"Abandoned  
and Forgotten"  
by Phil Olivo



With all the beauty that the world has to offer to photographers, why would one want to photograph old abandoned and neglected structures? The answer partly lies with Diane Arbus, the "Spirit Photographer" for this essay.

Arbus observed that "I really believe there are things nobody would see if I didn't photograph them." That viewpoint combined with my philosophy of looking for the overlooked, uninteresting and the mundane compelled me to create this essay.

In addition to the textures and colors these buildings offer to photographers, there are also the

questions they raise. Who lived here? What was their life like? Were they happy or stressed? Why was the structure left to fall into disrepair? Many questions and few answers.

Editing was mostly done in Lightroom Classic with mostly basic edits including minor saturation and clarity increases to emphasize color and texture.

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## ***SPS PHOTO ESSAY COMPETITION***

March 20, 2024 - at First United Methodist Church

# Photo Essay

**Digital Essays** are a collection of images that will be projected in some fashion, typically, but not necessarily, accompanied by a soundtrack. The presentation should be in a format that is compatible with the projection equipment available on the night of the competition (i.e. .mov or .mp4). To ensure compatibility with the club's hardware and software, Digital Essays must be submitted prior to the competition date. Members will be notified in advance of the required deadline.

**Print Essays** are a collection of prints displayed in some fashion, including a book (such as available from vendors including Shutterfly, Snapfish, Blurb, and others), a poster, a storyboard, or any method of presenting a collection of prints that can be physically managed by the entrant.

*Prepared by: Joe Cotroneo  
With Credits to: Dow Smith*

# SPS Photo Essay Competition

(Continued from page 5)

## The rules for entry are as follows:

1. One entry per person per category [print and digital].
2. The maximum length of a digital projected essay is 8 minutes. The maximum dimensions of the projected essay is 1920×1080. Suggested and preferred length is 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Participants are encouraged to use only their own images. Other images may be used only if they are vital to the narrative quality of the essay. Any images not made by the participant must be credited. No more than 10% of the total images may be non-participant images.
4. It is the participant's responsibility to know the rules. Submissions outside of these guidelines will not be accepted. Digital essays must be submitted by the previously announced entry deadline, which will be no later than midnight the Saturday before the competition date. (The earlier the better). This is to ensure compatibility with the club's hardware and software.

## Submitting Your Entry

### Digital Photo Essays

1. Must be submitted by midnight Saturday, March 16, 2024
2. Save as a video file with .mov or .mp4 format
3. Email to [President@spsphoto.org](mailto:President@spsphoto.org) via a link to a large file app such as Google Drive (preferred) or Dropbox

### Print Essays

1. Must be submitted between 6:30pm and 7:00pm the night of the competition, March 20, 2024.

## Photo Essay Topics

### Show us your passion

1. A collections of photographs that are tied together  
Flowers, pets, babies, models, old cars ...
2. Event  
parades, protests, fund raisers ...
3. Location  
Myrtle Beach, Lark Street, NYC ...
4. Type of Work  
Macro, Landscape, Impressionistic ...
5. Story  
Day in the life, visit to an attraction, visit to a park ...

## Editing

### Lots of different editing programs

Adobe Express (free version available)  
Premiere Rush (comes with Adobe Photography Plan)  
DaVinci Resolve (free version available)

And many more

Check out the online tutorials

## Music

### Vital for a photo essay video

1. Sets mood of essay
2. Determines pacing
3. Match the music to the story

### Copyright

1. Copyrighted music without a license is not allowed
2. Buy Music: Pond5, Triple Scoop, many more
3. Free with credit: Bendsound, Musopen

# *EYE VS. VISION*

## by Cole Thompson

January 31, 2024 - on Zoom

I remember when I was first challenged to find my "Vision." I had no idea what Vision was. Sure I had heard the word used before and generally understood the context of how it was being used, but I really had no idea what it was.

Over the years I've tried to find different ways to describe Vision, but I've always found words to be inadequate. Vision is such an ethereal concept, that it's hard to describe.

So instead, I'd like to give a visual depiction of Vision. For some of my favorite images, I will first show what I saw with my eyes, and then what I saw through my Vision. Sometimes the difference between the two is rather large.

I hope that this approach will better explain what Vision is and inspire others to seek out theirs.



Jim Bridger Power Plant - Before  
© Cole Thompson



Jim Bridger Power Plant - After  
© Cole Thompson

# Eye vs. Vision

(Continued from page 8)



Plant and Rock Detail - Before  
© Cole Thompson

Plant and Rock Detail - After  
© Cole Thompson

See more of  
Cole Thompson's  
black and white fine art  
photography at:  
[https://colethompson  
photography.com/](https://colethompsonphotography.com/)



## *About Cole Thompson...*

Cole Thompson is uniquely unqualified to speak on photography.

“I’ve never taken a photography class or a workshop.

I don’t have a degree in art.

I’ve never worked as a photographer. I don’t have gallery representation.

I’m not a Canon Explorer of Light.

And I only have three lenses and none of them are primes.

Do I have any qualifications?

Just one...my images. Nothing else matters.”

# FOCUS ON Before the Fall by Phil Olivo

I am a born and raised Jersey boy who was always fascinated by the World Trade Center. Living in Union County, NJ It was a short drive into Lower Manhattan on a Sunday morning. We would take our sons there frequently as well as any visitors, especially overseas visitors, to see them.

The events of September 11, 2001, did not affect me physically but left an emotional impact that lasts to this day. Those feelings came to the surface last year as I attended a funeral for a cousin. He was a Bayonne, NJ Firefighter who worked at the World Trade Center for weeks after that day. He suffered respiratory problems and cancer directly attributable to the days at the pile.

After his services I looked at 35mm slides that were in storage for years. Unfortunately, many

slides faded, and most colors had shifted. It was time to preserve them for the next generation.

These images were taken from the inside and exterior viewing areas, a Circle Line boat tour, and the 1976 Operation Sail. The OP Sail images were photographed from abandoned piers in Jersey City, New Jersey directly across the river from the Twin Towers.

Rescuing these slides required extensive editing in Lightroom, Topaz Photo AI and Photoshop. Color was restored as close as possible, or they were converted to monochrome to save the image.

Journey back in time and enjoy the Twin Towers before the fall.

Domination



The Tourist

# Focus On: Before the Fall

(Continued from page 10)



A Curious Juxtaposition. Newark Airport Circa 1970

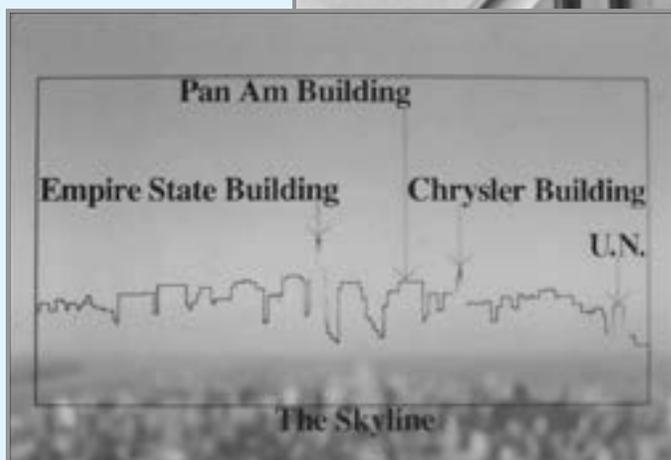
Getting Tickets For The Observation Deck.



# Focus On: Before the Fall

(Continued from page 11)

Interior  
Observation  
Deck.  
Notice the step-  
down to the high  
windows.



Viewing Guide.  
Can you find the Empire State Building in  
the image below?



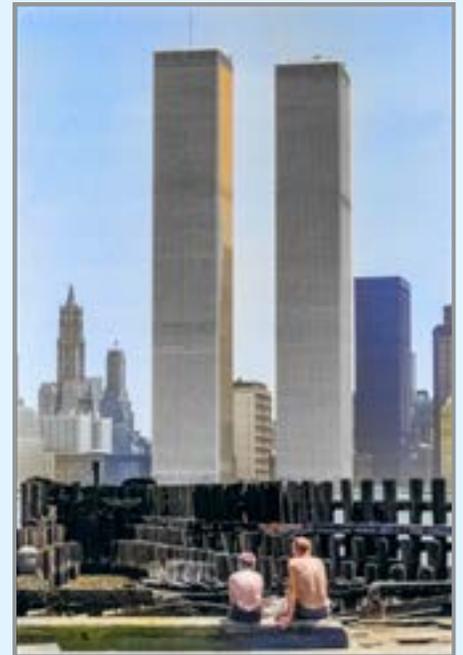
Exterior  
Observation  
Deck  
looking uptown

# Focus On: Before the Fall

(Continued from page 12)



Exterior  
Observation  
Deck  
looking toward  
the Brooklyn  
Bridge



Op Sail 1976. View from the Jersey City docks.

Op Sail 1976. Best seats in the house!  
Check the fashions!

# Focus On: Before the Fall

(Continued from page 13)

Never Forget



## FOCUS ON?????

We are “booked” for *Focus* articles for this season, but would love to start working on articles for 2024-2025.

If you have special images, stories or destinations to share, email: [newsletter@spsphoto.org](mailto:newsletter@spsphoto.org).

Any questions, feel free to contact your editor, Linda Tommasulo, at [newsletter@spsphoto.org](mailto:newsletter@spsphoto.org).

# IS IT TIME FOR NEW PHOTOGRAPHY GEAR?

by Joe Brady

Reprinted with permission

Photographers are really into their gear, but do you need more, do you need the best? More importantly, what does “the best” mean?

Let’s face it, I admit to being somewhat of a “gear hound,” and I also happen to be married to one. We love new and shiny tech but we are both at the point where we question if we really need anything else.

Blasphemy!

Since I have been a full-time pro for over fifteen years and have worked in the photo business for almost 30 years, I have had the opportunity to own and/or use pretty much every camera and lens system available. I’m going to limit this discussion to those two elements of camera and lens, because I don’t want to go down the rabbit hole of tripods, bags, straps, and accessories. These are things that are useful and fun, but don’t usually affect the quality of your photography. I’m also not going to tell you what camera or lens is “best”, because that choice is going to be different for most anyone. So how do you choose? You have to first answer the biggest question ...

## ***What are you going to do with the images?***



© Joe Brady Photography

When I run into someone who has the biggest, “best” most expensive top-of-the-line camera system and they tell me that they simply share

their images online, it makes me scratch my head and give them that scrunched-up face, head-tilt, quizzical “what?” look. Diane just got the new iPhone 15 ProMax phone for her video and stills, so if you are only posting online, why not just use one of those?

As I have said before, the best camera for you is the one that feels comfortable in your hand, makes sense in its layout, and excites you when you look through the viewfinder. Sensor size, burst shooting, focus tracking, video capabilities are only important if those capabilities have a big effect on the type of photography you do. How about lenses? What’s the “best” one?

Well, what do you want the lens to do? If you are a full-time wildlife or sports photographer, then investing in a big, heavy, fast and expensive long lens is important. But if you are like me, and having along reach is an occasional nicety, then an inexpensive choice makes more sense. I have a lens for my OM-1 and OM-5 that is the equivalent full-frame focal length of 150-600mm and it cost around \$500. Is it as sharp or fast as the OM Zuiko 150-400mm (300-800mm full frame equivalent) f4.5 at \$7499? Of course not, but for my uses, I am quite happy with the quality, and my lens weighs

15 oz. compared to over 4 pounds. For everyday, walking around and landscape photos, most people will shoot 90%+ of their images with a lens that covers the range of say 24-70 or 24-120mm.

## ***So What’s the Next Step?***

You need to learn and/or get better at processing and enhancing your images.

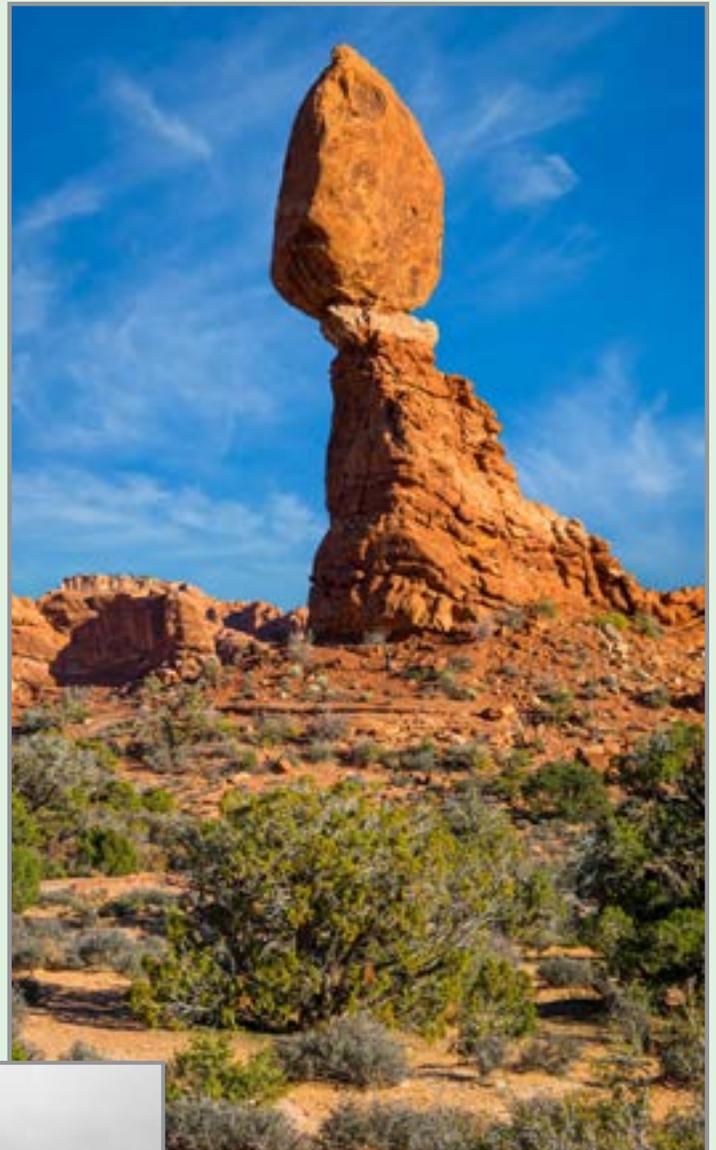
# Is it time for new photography gear?

(Continued from page 15)

As the before/after images below illustrate, image editing is not optional—it's a set of tools we need to bring out the beauty in the raw data. Think of it as taking any raw ingredients and cooking them into something wonderful.

Until our cameras add the computational photography that our phones already have, you need to know how to take the raw ingredients you camera captures and cook them into the beautiful photograph that made you stop and take the picture in the first place. One of the reasons (of many) I switched to the OM-1 was that the computational photography this camera system offers is more advanced than most, but it still comes nowhere near to what our phones can do.

The real answer for the future is to give cameras the computing and software power that drives photography and video on our phones. We don't need more megapixels, we need cameras that capture images the way our eyes see them.



## ***Why settle for this?***



***When this  
is hiding  
in the raw  
file!***

Before and After:  
Stormy Eilean  
Donan



# Is it time for new photography gear?

(Continued from page 16)

## A New How-To Image Editing Video From Joe! Visualizing the Final Photo

Improve Your Photos with Light, Color and Shape

Is there a beautiful photo hiding in the raw image below (left)?

Watch the video to find out: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq8gl8jx7E8>

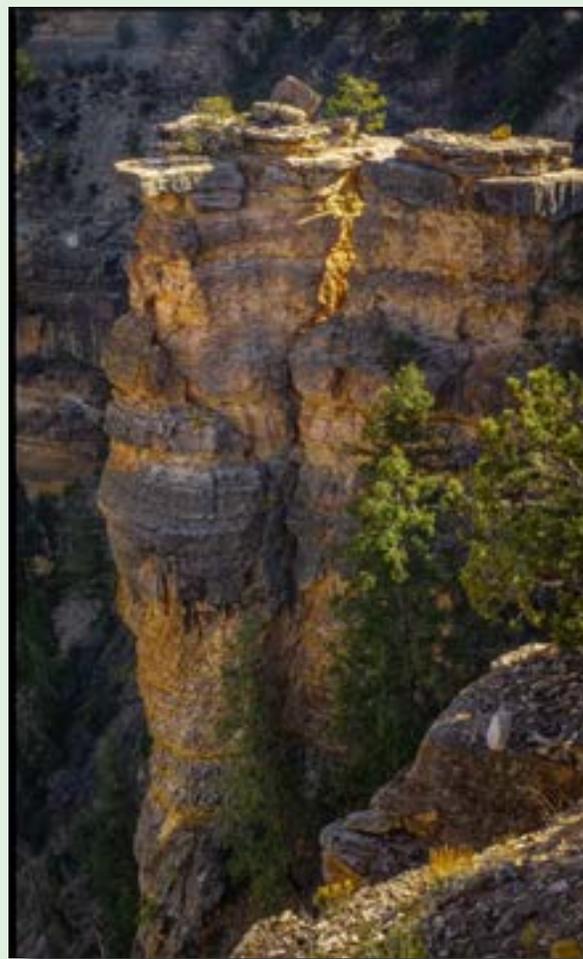


During a stop at the Grand Canyon last month, I came across an interesting rock pillar that was illuminated with a beautiful sidelight from the sun. The rocks were glowing yellow, and the top of the pillar had a wonderful collection of rocks and plants—almost like a planned garden.

The challenge of the scene contained a very high contrast ratio from light to dark, and it was critical that the bright light on the top of the pillar was preserved. If it was overexposed, the image would have been worthless. Unfortunately, when you adjust your exposure to protect the highlights, because of the contrast curve automatically applied to raw files when opened in Lightroom, the shadows get really dark. In addition, the colors were really washed out—again something common for high contrast scenes when they are brought into software.

In this video I used Lightroom Classic to bring back the color and shadows and also used some light painting to direct you up the pillar to the beautiful natural garden at its top. The final edit was to find the best crop for the image so that only areas that contributed to the composition remained.

Visualizing the final image is a skill that will improve your photography dramatically. When you focus on composition and protecting important highlights, a simple edit can transform a bland raw file into a beautiful photograph!



Check out Joe's amazing landscape photography, sign up for his blog and more at:

<https://www.joebradyphotography.com/>

# FIVE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION IDEAS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

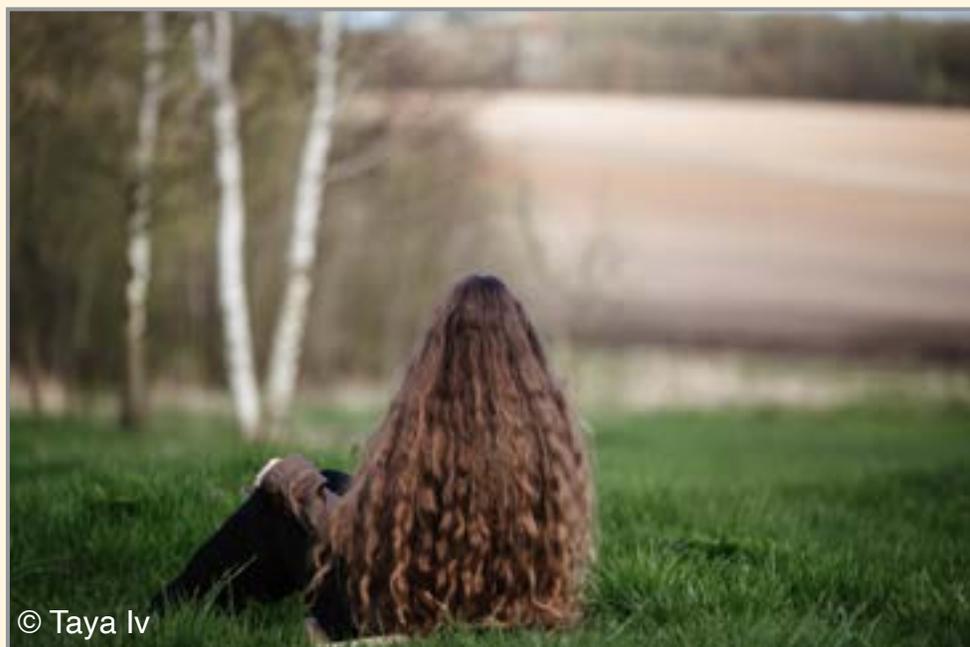
by Taya Iv

Reprinted with permission from Photo Masters. Access the original article [here](#).

A new year [is here], prompting everyone to start over and try something different in their lives. Even though New Year's resolutions aren't for everyone, having a few things to look forward to as a photographer may help you stay motivated.

In this post, I'm going to share five photography-themed resolution ideas that could help you improve your work, grow your network, and find excitement in your life every single day.

## #1 Experiment With a New Genre Every Month



Personally, I don't believe in stressing yourself out with massive to-do lists, but I do believe in the power of consistency. The new year is a great time to leave your comfort zone. Why not commit to experimenting with a new photography genre every month?

You can make a list in advance or go with the flow. Here's an example:

- January - portrait photography
- February - black & white photography
- March - street photography
- April - pet photography

...and the list goes on. Be as flexible as you like. Pursue genres that spark ideas!

No matter which route you choose, you'll have plenty of refreshing photo opportunities every month. Instead of aiming for perfection or mastery, aim for enjoyment and new knowledge. A different genre can refresh you and provide you with invaluable photography skills.

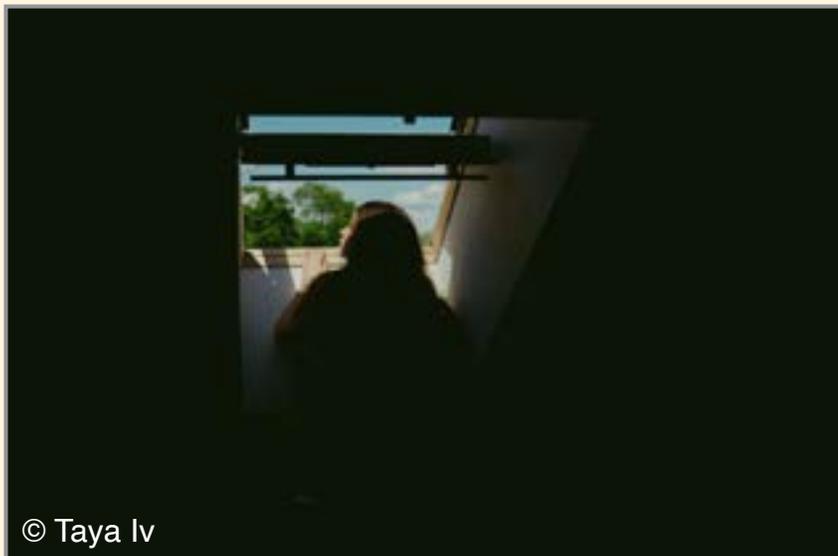
## #2 Find Inspiration in Mentorship

[If you're part of] Photo Masters, you know the power of photography communities. Being a part of a group, whether on-line or offline, can boost motivation and help you find purpose every day.

You can take it further by finding a mentor or being a mentor. This could be an amazing source of motivation in the upcoming year!

If you need guidance, find a photographer who can help you improve by:

- Answering your questions
- Guiding you during photoshoots
- Providing you with one-on-one sessions online
- Introducing you to editing techniques



# Five New Year's Resolutions for Photographers

(Continued from page 18)

Alternatively, mentoring a photographer could help you strengthen your knowledge, inspire someone else, and maybe earn some money. (As a bonus, teaching can open your eyes and help you discover new things about yourself as a photographer.)



© Taya Iv

## #3 Ask Questions Regularly

“Don’t be afraid to ask questions” is the most common advice I received as a beginner. At first, I was too shy to ask about things like “bokeh” (I didn’t even know what it was called!) and “composition,” so I experimented on my own.

Problem-solving is a great skill to have, but too much independence can make you feel isolated or frustrated. It’s okay to do research on your own, but it’s also okay to ask questions.

Why not make “ask more photography questions” a new resolution? Ask your favourite photographers questions. Be curious in online communities. Get creative and push your boundaries by pursuing knowledge consistently.



© Taya Iv

## #4 Commit to Taking Personal Photos Weekly or Monthly

If you’re a full-time photographer, you might be busy making a living by working with clients. If you’re a hobbyist, you may have another job or responsibility that takes up a lot of your time.

Because of all these things, it can be difficult to commit to personal photography projects. By “personal,” I mean the kind of photography that you do for yourself. Maybe it’s the kind of work that you don’t even share online. To put it simply, anything that gives you joy!

Instead of committing to daily photoshoots, which is unrealistic for many, why not commit to taking personal photos every week

or every month? Goals like this can be a sustainable alternative, and they can also give you something to look forward to in your busy life.

# Five New Year's Resolutions for Photographers

(Continued from page 19)

## #5 Spend Quality Time With Your Photography

As Alex Benetel wisely said in a recent Photo Masters interview, "Not everything you create or take has to be published for everyone to see. Allowing yourself to breathe and ignoring the pressure helps."

It's easy to be hypnotised by social media. What will people think of my work? Will I get enough likes?

Even if you're not active on social media platforms, you might still feel pressured to take high-quality photographs for your portfolio. In the age of information overload, it's important to take a step back and spend quality time with your photographs.

Your photography is beautiful and worthy of attention, but you also deserve to feel comfortable and happy with what you produce. Why not make this one of your New Year's resolutions?



© Taya Iv

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### **About Taya Iv**

Taya Iv is a photographer, editor, and podcast host from Russia. Taya is also a 500px Ambassador and regularly contributes to Licensing. Her photography often focuses on intimate, quiet, and personal moments. She hosts the *Great Big Photography World* podcast, where she discusses photography trends and themes with her peers.

A portrait photographer with over 10 years of experience, Taya is also a major bookworm and a pizza enthusiast who enjoys connecting with photographers from all over the world.

My Instagram is @tayaiv  
Access her flickr account [here](#).

### **About Photo Masters**

Photo Masters is a source for premium photo education from top pros. They can help you become the best photographer you can be.

Explore the collection of helpful articles and videos to advance your skills as a photographer.

Join as a PRO Member to unlock access to premium photo education resources.

And build your photo bucket list with their Photo Wonders project.

Access the Photo Masters website [here](#).

# OUR "FUN" COMPETITION

## ASSIGNED TOPICS 2023-2024 SEASON\*

For the upcoming season, we will have Assigned Topics for Print and Digital. Note there are no detailed descriptions this season. You may interpret the topics as you wish.

Digital images may be submitted on our website:  
<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/upload-projected/>.

**IMPORTANT NOTE: All Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after May 1, 2023.**

See the following page for details on submitting entries for both Print and Digital Competitions.  
Deadline for submission of digital images is midnight on Saturday (Sunday am)  
before the competition date—no exceptions!

### PRINT ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Outside at Night**

November: **Nautical**

December: **Flowers**

January: **Reflections**

February: **Landscape in Black & White**

March: **Transportation**

April: **Heat**

### DIGITAL ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Balance**

November: **Music**

December: **Multiple Exposure**

January: **Decay**

February: **Wood**

March: **Stacks**

April: **Triangles**

## JOIN US FOR FIELD TRIPS WITH JANICE PRICHETT and the Photography Connection Meetup Group

The Schenectady Photographic Society sponsors field trips so that its members (and non-members) may meet together at places that offer a wide variety of photography opportunities. We have sponsored outings to the South Street Seaport in NYC, Lake Minnewaska for Mountain Laurel, Peebles Island, Blue Ledges on the Hudson, Troy Farmer's Market and a sunflower farm. Future field trips are posted on the Photography Connection Meetup Group. To sign-up for this meetup group go to:

<https://www.meetup.com/photography-connection/>

Photography field trips are also shared on the SPS Facebook page and through the SPS group email. Field trips are posted on an on-going basis. If you would like to make suggestions or have questions, please contact Janice Prichett at [fieldtrips@spsphoto.org](mailto:fieldtrips@spsphoto.org).

*Schenectady Photographic Society is not responsible for anyone's health or accident on any scheduled event. Attendance at this event by both SPS members and non-members signifies acknowledgment, agreement and compliance to the **SPS Liability Waiver.***



© 2023 Janice Prichett

\*With new members joining every month, this page will repeat in each issue of the *Focus*.

# PRINT AND DIGITAL COMPETITIONS 2023-2024 SEASON

For the 2023-2024 season we will be returning to Print Competitions, as well as continuing with Digital Competitions on Zoom. Both will have an Assigned Topic component.

## **PRINT COMPETITIONS:**

With the exception of our opening meeting, Print competitions will be held on the first Wednesday of the month. As many of you know, making a print is an art in itself...choosing the size and the paper are just as important as composition.

Due to physical space constraints, members may submit up to **three (3)** images in our Print Competitions. Categories will include General (i.e., color), Monochrome and Assigned Topic. You may submit up to **(2) in any category**. For example, two in Monochrome and one in Assigned Topic. Or one in each of the three categories.

Prints must measure at least 5" x 7" or a maximum of 16" x 24". They can be matted and mounted on mat board, foam core or stretched canvas. Mounts must be a minimum of 8" x 10" and may not exceed 16" x 24". Panoramic prints may be entered if the mounted entry does not exceed 12" x 26"

Prints **MUST** include an Entry Card affixed to the back in the upper left corner. For your convenience, a copy of the Print Competition Entry Card (4-up) is included on the following page.

We hope you will consider entering prints this season. Check out the Print Competition Rules on our website for additional details.

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/print/print-competition-rules/>



\*With new members joining every month, this page will repeat in each issue of the *Focus*.



## **DIGITAL COMPETITIONS:**

We will be continuing our Digital Competitions on Zoom. With the exception of our opening meeting, Digital Competitions will be held on the second Wednesday of the month. As with prints, Digital Competitions will contain three categories: General (i.e., color), Monochrome and Assigned Topic. Participants may enter a total of **four (4)** images, with a maximum of **two (2) in any category**.

Digital images should be jpeg, sRGB color space and sized no more than 2800 pixels wide and no more than 1800 pixels high. Maximum file size is 10MB.

Check out our website for details on preparing your images for Digital Competition:

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/digital-image-preparation-guidelines/>

Details on Digital Competition Rules can be found here:

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/digital-image-competition-rules/>

Paid/active members will be supplied with a Zoom link a day or two prior to the meeting.

REMEMBER THAT:

*Alternative processes, composites, and manipulations are allowed.*

***Major elements in a print must be the maker's own work and the majority of the elements must be photographic in nature.***



# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARDS

You may enter a total of three (3) prints,  
with a maximum of two (2) in any one category:

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

Print sizes: Minimum 5" x 7" up to Maximum 16" x 20"

For complete rules:  
[https://spsphoto.org/programs/  
print/competition-rules/](https://spsphoto.org/programs/print/competition-rules/)

# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARD

(Affix to upper left corner of back of print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Month (Circle Month): \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

Print Category (Select One):

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

## PLACE:

1st	2nd	_____
3rd	4th	Entry #
5th	HM	_____

# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARD

(Affix to upper left corner of back of print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Month (Circle Month): \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

Print Category (Select One):

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

## PLACE:

1st	2nd	_____
3rd	4th	Entry #
5th	HM	_____

# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARD

(Affix to upper left corner of back of print)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Month (Circle Month): \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

Print Category (Select One):

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

## PLACE:

1st	2nd	_____
3rd	4th	Entry #
5th	HM	_____

# HOW DO OUR COMPETITIONS ACTUALLY WORK?\*

**Print Competition Rules:** <https://spsphoto.org/competitions/print/print-competition-rules/>

**Digital Competition Rules:** <https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/digital-image-competition-rules/>

Do you wonder why your images have to be in by Saturday midnight before the competition? Well, our Digital Chair, Sean Sullivan, downloads all of the images and forwards them to Wednesday's judge. This gives the judge a lot of time to review the images, score them and provide valuable critique at our virtual meetings.

You should be aware that this is generally very different from the way other clubs handle competitions. Judges do not get the images in advance. They see them for the first time on competition night (either virtually or live), and must quickly provide a score. Sometimes they are permitted a quick "run through."

The links above detail everything you need to know about how our competitions are run, including scoring:

First Place – 10 Points  
Second Place – 7 Points  
Third Place – 4 Points  
Fourth Place – 3 Points  
Fifth Place – 2 Points  
Honorable Mention – 1 Point

If the number of entries is 20 or less, first through third places will be awarded. If 21-30 entries are judged, first through fourth places will be awarded. If more than 30, first through fifth places will be awarded.

The number of honorable mentions awarded is at the discretion of the judges and may not exceed the number of places awarded.

*Note that once entered, you are giving SPS permission to publish your images in our newsletter and on the website. Copyright remains with the photographer.*

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## SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRIES

For Print, members are permitted to enter a total of three (3) images, two (2) in any one category. For Digital you can enter up to four (4) images, two (2) in any one category.

Images that receive a winning place or an honorable mention may not be re-entered in any subsequent monthly Digital Image Group or Print Group competitions in perpetuity (that means forever!). This does not exclude them from any "special" competitions that may be held.

Once your images are submitted you will receive an email confirmation. This is a great opportunity

to check whether or not your images were entered in the proper month and category.

It is important that digital images be sized correctly for viewing. Specific instructions can be found on the SPS website here:

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/digital-image-preparation-guidelines/>

End of Year is handled differently. Members who participated in digital competitions during the season will receive an email with their submissions from which they can choose those to be entered. Rule links in the page heading provide details.

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## WHY COMPETE?

Win, lose or draw, participating in competitions gives you an opportunity to share your work with fellow SPS members. It also provides you (hopefully) with valuable input on how to make your images better and improve your photography.

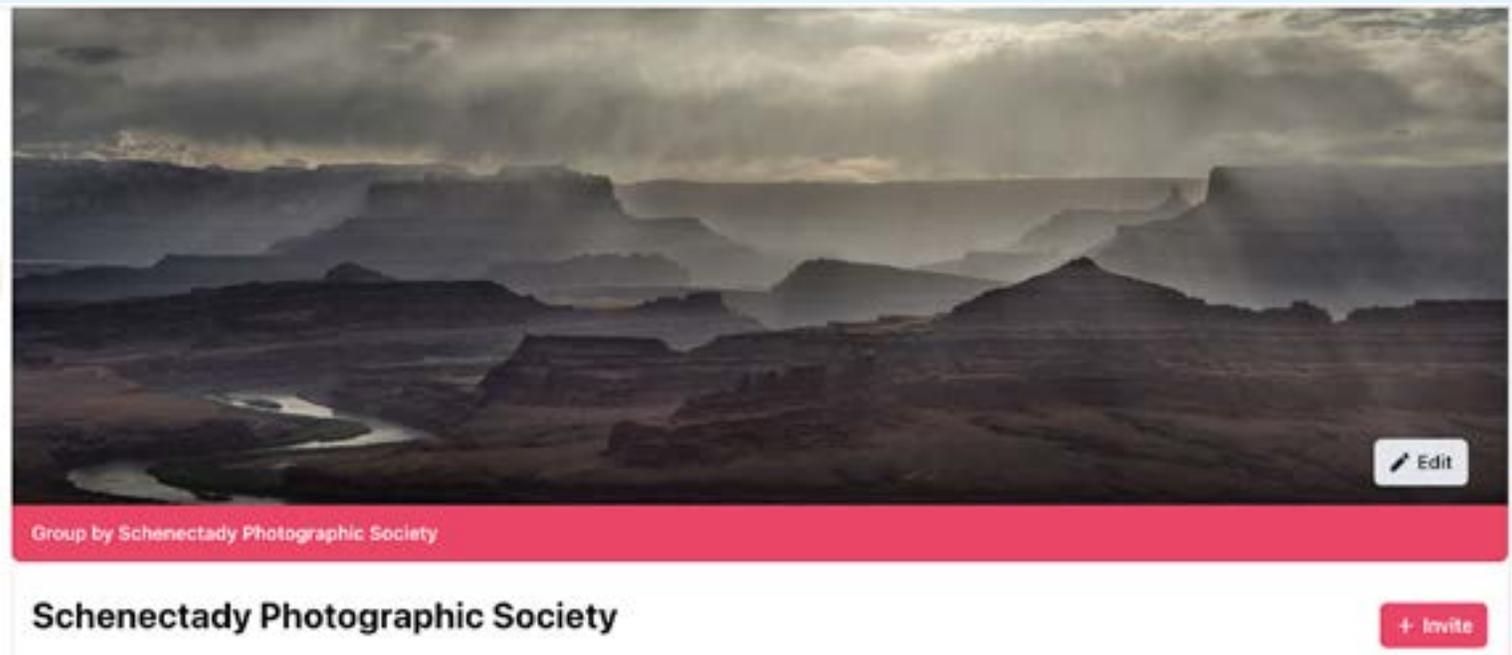
And, the best part...it gets you out and shooting.

Assigned Topics especially get you photographing out of your comfort zone.

We hope to see more members participating this season.

\*With new members joining every month, this page will repeat in each issue of the *Focus*.

**JOIN ~~LIKE~~ US ON FACEBOOK!\***



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/152200768242>

Our “regular” SPS Facebook page is open to all interested photographers.  
Participants must request permission to join.  
It’s a great forum for all things relating to photography.



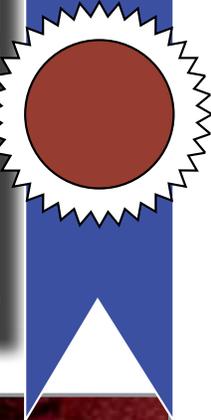
<https://www.facebook.com/schenectadyphotographicsociety>

Our “community” SPS Facebook page is where we post notifications, events, etc.

\*With new members joining every month,  
this page will repeat in each issue of the *Focus*.

DECEMBER WINNING PRINTS  
Topic: Flowers

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**First Place:**  
"Morning Stretch"  
© Janice Prichett



**2nd Place:**  
"Day Lily"  
© Joe Cotroneo

## DECEMBER WINNING PRINTS



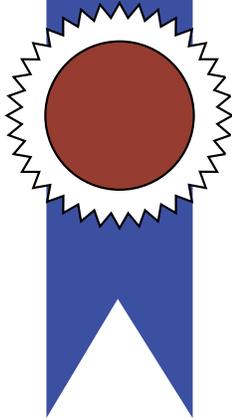
3rd Place:  
"Monochrome Flora"  
© Linda Tommasulo

## Honorable Mention



"Spring Thaw"  
© Janice Prichett

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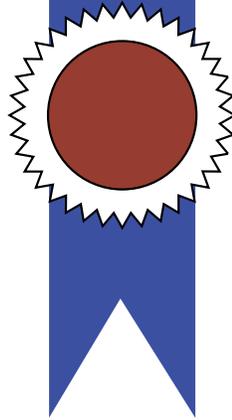
## DECEMBER WINNING PRINTS



### Honorable Mention

"Yellow Roses"  
© Dennis Johnston

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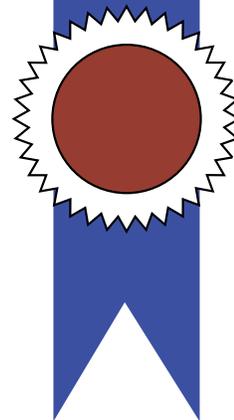
**Judge: Angela Breyette**  
based out of Albany, NY, specializes in wedding, portrait, and nature photography. She is also the organizer of the Capital Region Photography Meetup Group.

"I love photographing people, nature, architecture, landscapes, and still-life, capturing the beauty and life of the world around us. I find it very gratifying when I can seize the moment with my camera."



"Flower Fantasy"  
© Joe Cotroneo

# DECEMBER WINNING PRINTS



**First Place:**  
"Ivy Island in Blue"  
© Alan Wiggins

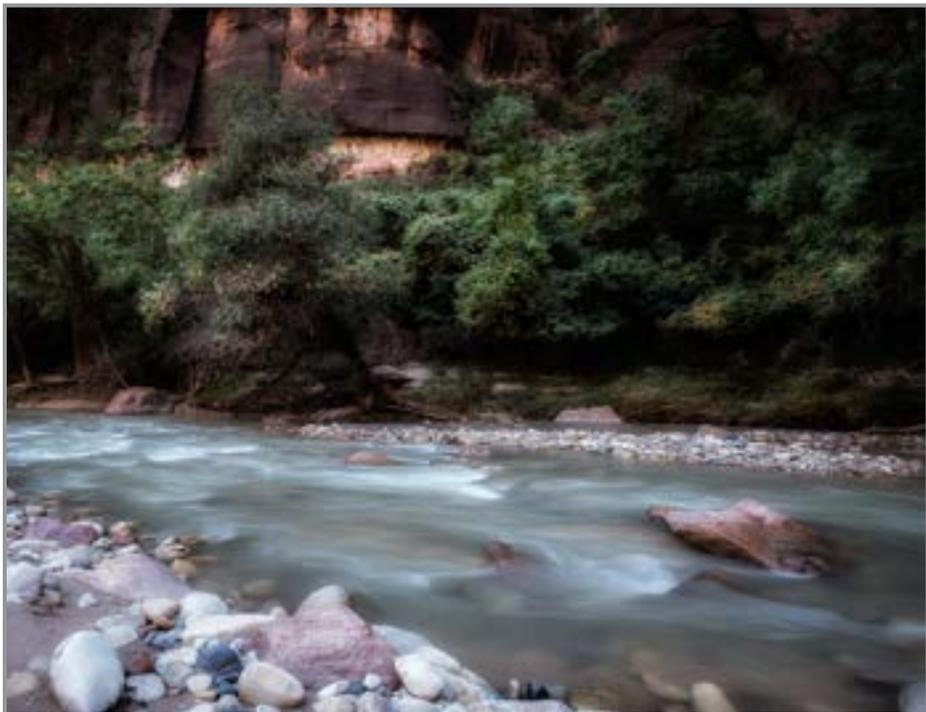


**2nd Place:**  
"Hello Moon"  
© Kristina Young

*Continued...*

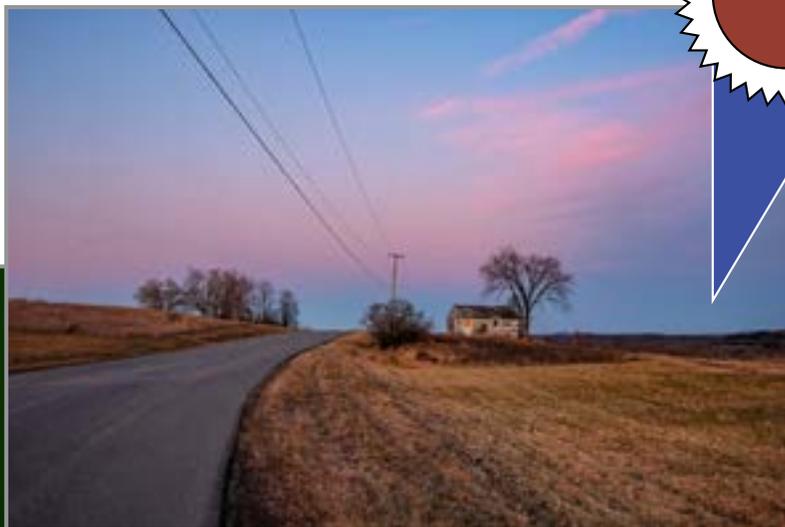
**DECEMBER  
WINNING PRINTS**

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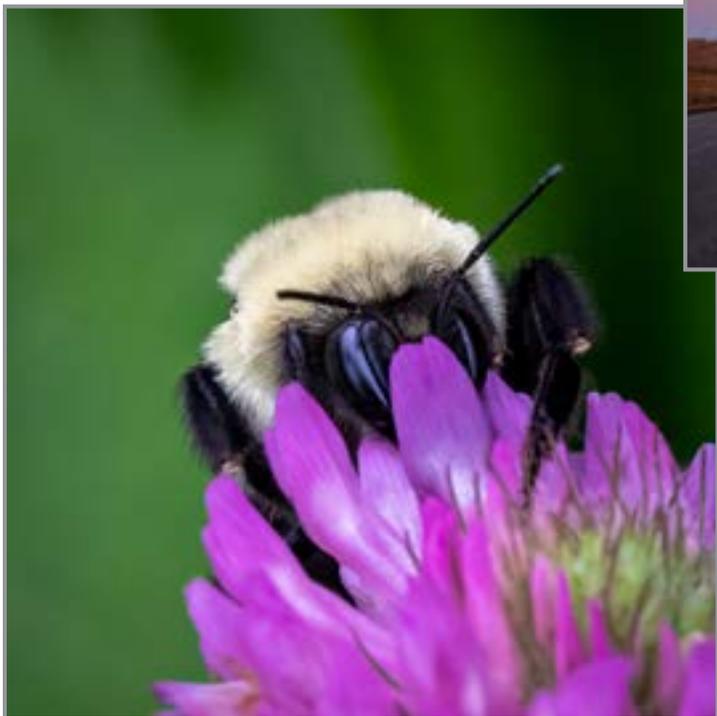


3rd Place:  
"The Virgin River"  
© Ron Klein

**Honorable Mention**



"Long Road Home"  
© Janice Prichett



"Peekaboo Bee"  
© Joe Cotroneo

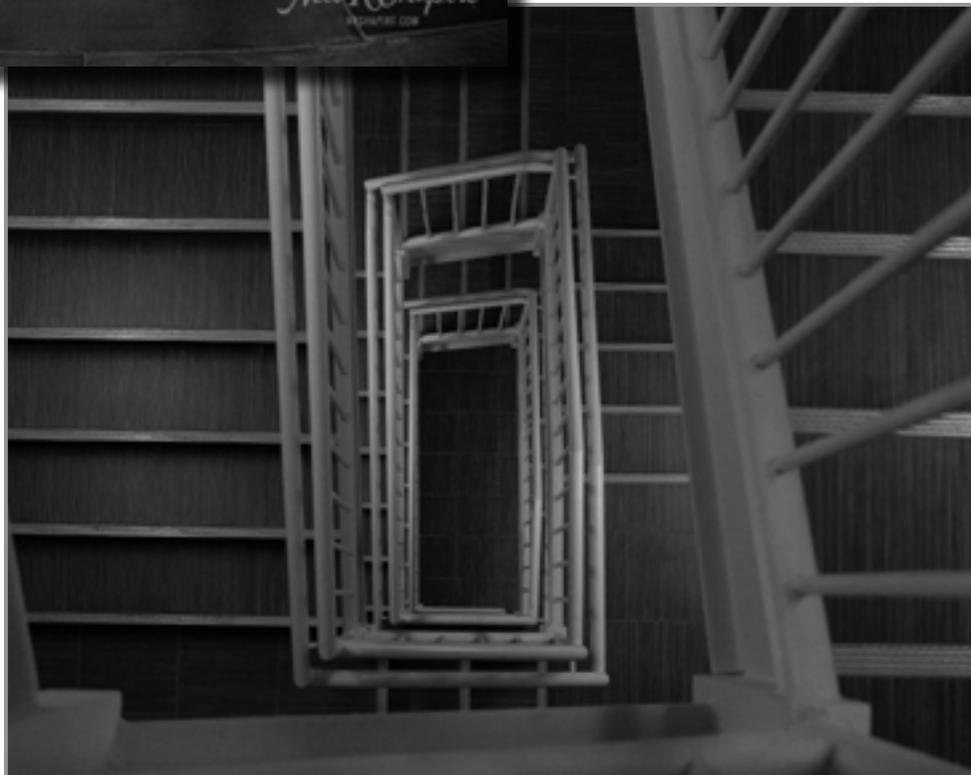


"Red House, Dingle Peninsula"  
© Phil Olivo

Continued...



**First Place:**  
"Yes, It's Nott"  
© Neil Shapiro



**2nd Place;**  
"Up or Down"  
© Kristina Young

# DECEMBER WINNING PRINTS

MONOCHROME



3rd Place:  
"Ashford Mills"  
© Ron Klein

## Honorable Mention



"Whiteface"  
© Alan Wiggins



"Autumn Dreams"  
© Linda Tommasulo

DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

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Topic:  
Multiple  
Exposure

**First Place:**  
"Fabulous Fern"  
© Linda Tommasulo



**2nd Place:**  
"Carousel"  
© Joe Cotroneo

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3rd Place:  
"Snake Plant"  
© Marguerite Hill

## DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

**Judge:**

Lisa Cuchara, PhD, Cr.Photog., M. Photog., M. Artist,  
HonNEC

<http://www.lisaandtomphotography.com/>

I love any chance to take photographs! Photography gives me superpowers, LOL, I can freeze time. My husband, Tom, and I love to Teach/Mentor/Motivate. We would love an opportunity to inspire you with our "Creativity is contagious, pass it on" philosophy and our "Don't shoot what it looks like, shoot what it feels like" approach.

Tom and I are both OM SYSTEM (formerly Olympus) Ambassadors. We specialize in decorating homes with nature and UrbEx art. We enjoy taking "straight out of camera" photographs and equally enjoy creating ART from our photographs. Both allow us to capture the moment as our mind's eye sees it.

We love to teach photography and editing classes, and we lead photo tours and workshops. We offer a variety of photography classes for photographers of all levels.

## Honorable Mention



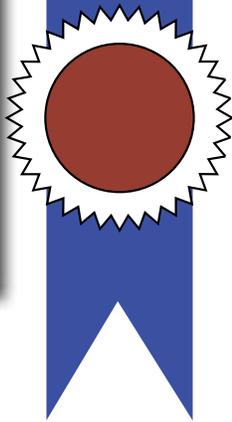
"Happy Pine"  
© Linda Tommasulo

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



**First Place:**  
"Special Collection"  
© Neil Shapiro

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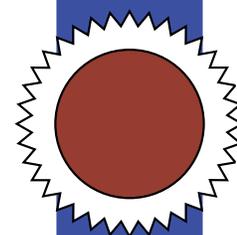


**2nd Place:**  
"Star of Canada"  
© Neil Shapiro

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



3rd Place:  
"Window Light Portrait"  
© Kim Koza



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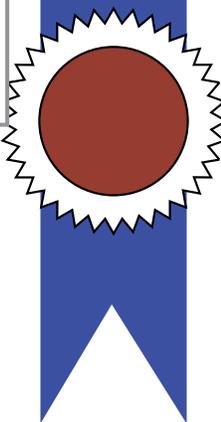


4th Place:  
"Blue Hour"  
© Linda Tommasulo

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



5th Place:  
"Bergamo Alta Citta"  
© Ron Klein

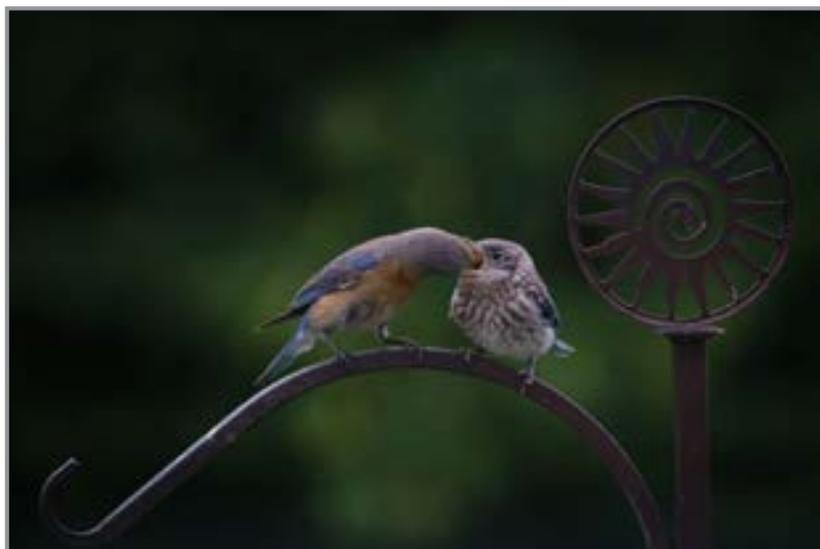


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## Honorable Mention



"Doorway to the Past"  
© Dan Steen



"Feeding Time"  
© Greg Efner

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



"Looking for Dinner"  
© Greg Efner

**Honorable Mention**

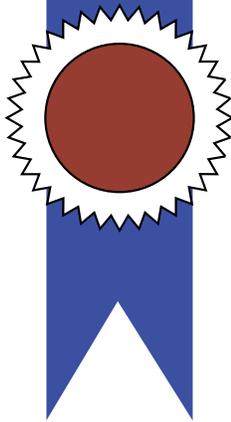
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"Peacock Feather at 5x"  
© Joe Cotroneo



"Beach Huts"  
© Kim Koza



DECEMBER  
WINNING  
DIGITAL  
IMAGES



**First Place:**  
"Black Rose"  
© Joan Heffler



**2nd Place:**  
"Busking on a Cold Day in NYC"  
© Alan Wiggins

*Continued...*

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

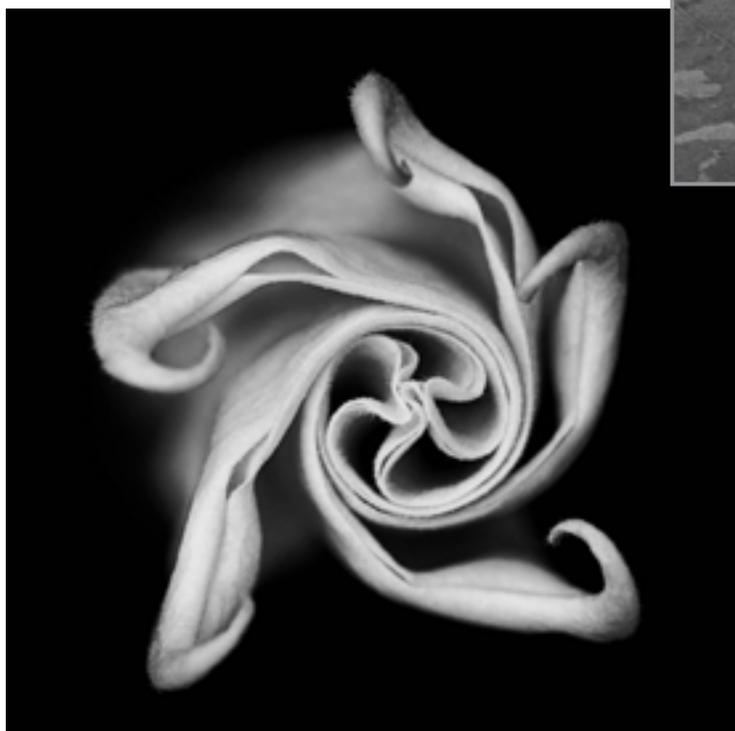
MONOCHROME



3rd Place:  
"Flippy Flower"  
© Joe Cotroneo



4th Place:  
"Me and my Shadow"  
© Alan Wiggins



"Vortex"  
© Elena Keesee

## Honorable Mention

Continued...

# DECEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

MONOCHROME



"Through the Woods"  
© Kristina Young

## Honorable Mention



"Orthodox Priests"  
© Ron Klein



"Train Car #2"  
© Sean Sullivan

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**Hunt's**

[www.huntsphoto.com](http://www.huntsphoto.com)

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Hunt's Photo and Video offers a wide array of classes, workshops, and photo adventures, located in our classrooms, or several picturesque locations inside and outside of the United States.

Socialize with us for the latest events and specials.



@ [huntsphotovideo](#)



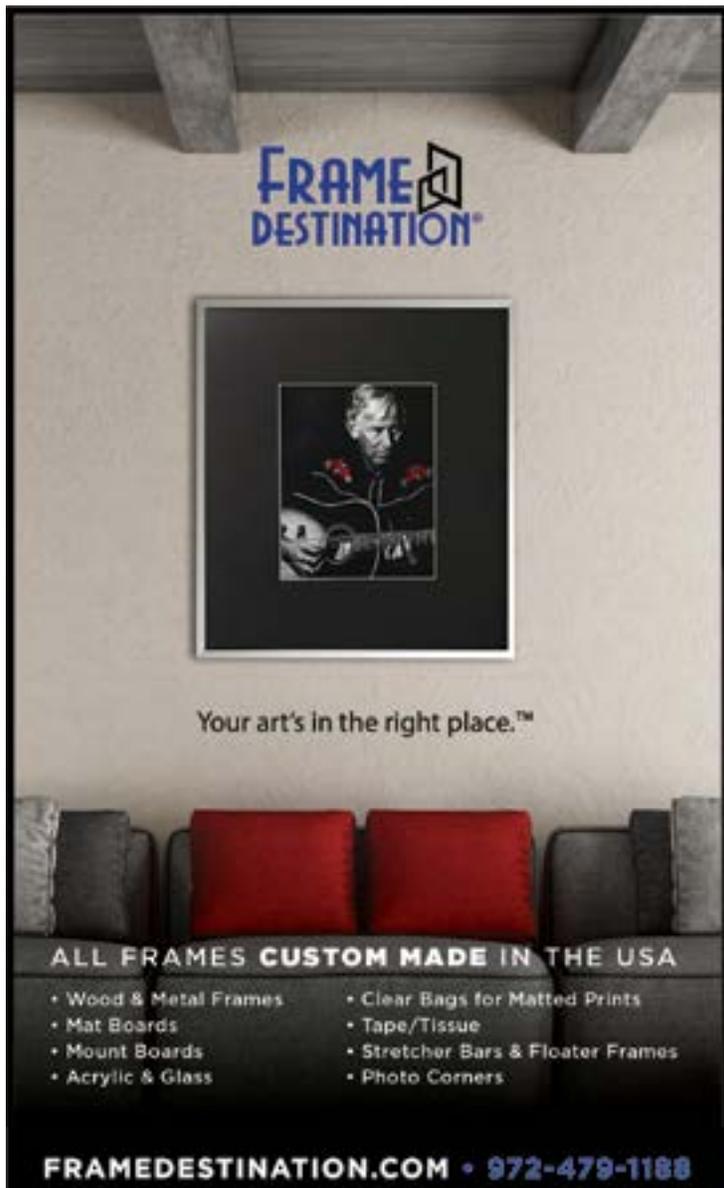
@ [huntsphoto](#)

***For Camera Club Specials...  
Ask for Alan Samiljan, at (781) 462-2383.  
His usual hours 8:30-5:00pm,  
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday.***

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



## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS



*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](mailto: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).

To learn more about us you can check out our About Us Video here: <https://www.framedestination.com/about-us>

## NOT A MEMBER OF SPS YET? JOIN (OR RENEW) YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

SEASON STARTED WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4.

Membership:

Individual: \$55 / Family (Same Address): \$65 / Student: \$25

NOTE: All members will be supplied with links to meeting recordings (unless prohibited by the presenter).

These links SHOULD NOT be shared to non-members.

Check out the season calendar on the last page and see what you're going to miss if you're not a member!

Click here to join/renew:

<https://spsphoto.org/join-the-schenectady-photographic-society/>

# ABOUT THE SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



For 90+ 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 (and beyond, thanks to Zoom!) meet on Wednesday nights to engage in various competitions (digital, photo essay and more), share their vision with like-minded photographers, enjoy guest speaker presentations and other member benefits to further their knowledge, creativity and inspiration.

As part of our monthly 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 inspirational and a great learning opportunity.

With COVID behind us, we are meeting again in person (see calendar on the last page of this newsletter). And you can join us on Field Trips once again. Stay up-to-date with SPS on our website: [www.spsphoto.org](http://www.spsphoto.org).

The Schenectady Photographic Society is an enthusiastic and energetic group. Our camaraderie is infectious.

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

## SPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

President ..... Joe Cotroneo

[president@spsphoto.org](mailto:president@spsphoto.org)

Vice President ..... Linda Tommasulo

[vp@spsphoto.org](mailto:vp@spsphoto.org)

Treasurer ..... Pat McCormick

[treasurer@spsphoto.org](mailto:treasurer@spsphoto.org)

Recording Secretary ..... Paula Keefe

[secretary@spsphoto.org](mailto:secretary@spsphoto.org)

Newsletter Editor ..... Linda Tommasulo

[newsletter@spsphoto.org](mailto:newsletter@spsphoto.org)

Webmaster & Annual Report Editor... Sean Sullivan

[webmaster@spsphoto.org](mailto:webmaster@spsphoto.org)

Membership Chair: ..... OPEN

[membership@spsphoto.org](mailto:membership@spsphoto.org)

Print Group ..... Alan Wiggins

[printchair@spsphoto.org](mailto:printchair@spsphoto.org)

Digital Group..... Sean Sullivan & Alan Wiggins

[digitalchair@spsphoto.org](mailto:digitalchair@spsphoto.org)

Photo Essay ..... OPEN

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Judge Coordinator ..... Neil Shapiro

[judging@spsphoto.org](mailto:judging@spsphoto.org)

Field Trip Coordinator ..... Janice Prichett

[fieldtrips@spsphoto.org](mailto:fieldtrips@spsphoto.org)

Communications ..... Sean Sullivan  
& Linda Tommasulo

[communications@spsphoto.org](mailto:communications@spsphoto.org)

### **LUBA RICKET CREATIVITY COORDINATOR**

Joan Heffler

### **TRAVELING EXHIBIT COORDINATORS**

Bert van Grondelle, Jerry Boehm,  
Rich Schreiberstein

[travelingexhibit@spsphoto.org](mailto:travelingexhibit@spsphoto.org)

### **REFRESHMENT COORDINATORS**

Judy Breslau & John Ogden

## Connect with the Schenectady Photographic Society:

Website: [www.spsphoto.org](http://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](mailto:newsletter@spsphoto.org).

# SPS 2023-2024 SEASON CALENDAR

For Assigned Topics, images must have been taken or after May 1, 2023.

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

**Meetings start at 7pm. For Zoom meetings, members will receive appropriate link to sign in via email.**

**This schedule is always work in progress and is subject to change!**

## October, 2023

10/4/23.....**OPENING NIGHT @ FUMC**

Mark Joseph Kelly: The Life & Photography of  
Brendan Fahy Bequette

10/11/23 .....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Outside at Night  
Judge: Frank Rapant

10/18/23 .....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Balance  
Judge: Johanna Siegmann

10/25/23 .....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Alan Shapiro: Street Portraiture

## November, 2023

11/1/23.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Nautical  
Judge: Fred Neudoerffer

11/8/23.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Music  
Judge: Wendy Nelson

11/15/23 .....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Sarah Marino: Creative Approaches to Photographing  
Plants and Flowers

11/22/23.....**NO MEETING (THANKSGIVING)**

11/29/23 .....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Mark Fitzgerald: Masking in Lightroom Classic

## December, 2023

12/6/23.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Flowers  
Judge: Angela Breyette

12/13/23 .....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Multiple Exposure  
Judge: Lisa Cuchara

12/20/23 .....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Matt Payne: Creating a Website to Sell Your Prints

12/27/23.....**NO MEETING (CHRISTMAS WEEK)**

## January, 2024

1/3/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Reflections  
Judge: Stephanie Palazeke

1/10/24.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Decay  
Judge: Lev Tsimring

1/17/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Beth Ruggerio: Getting Started in Night Photography

1/24/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Photo Essay Inspiration - 2023 Winners Discuss Their Essays

## January, 2024 (Cont'd.)

1/31/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Cole Thompson: Eye vs. Vision (Black & White)

## February, 2024

2/7/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Landscape in Black & White  
Judge: Kevin Q. Gray

2/14/24.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Wood  
Judge: Steve Simon

2/21/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Tony Sweet: The Surreal World of Infrared Photography

2/28/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

James Maher: From Cities to Suburbs (Street Photography)

## March, 2024

3/6/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Transportation  
Judge: David Fingerhut

3/13/24.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Stacks  
Judge: Thomas Robinson

3/20/24.....**PHOTO ESSAY COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Judge: Cindy Schultz

3/27/24.....**EVENT NIGHT on Zoom**

Silvana Della Camera: Color, Contrast, Lighting &  
Composition

## April, 2024

4/3/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Heat  
Judge: Richard Lovrich

4/10/24.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Triangles  
Judge: Tom Cuchara

4/17/24.....**LUBA RICKET CREATIVE  
COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Judge: Lawrence White

4/24/24.....**NO MEETING (PASSOVER)**

## May, 2024

5/1/24.....**EVENT NIGHT @ FUMC**

Peter Bosco: The American Snapshot

5/8/24.....**PRINT IMAGES OF THE YEAR @ FUMC**

Judges: Natalie Cartz & Mark McCarty

5/15/24.....**DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE YEAR on Zoom**

Judges: Chris Murray & Shannon Calvert

## June, 2024

**Awards Banquet - Date & Location TBA**