

**Bold red texts
are
interactive links!**

FOCUS

**IT'S OUR
93RD
SEASON!**

Volume 91 - No. 3

<https://spsphoto.org/>

December 2024

**EVENT
NIGHT**

LAYERS & MASKING DEMYSTIFIED *by Hazel Meredith*

December 18, 2024

Learn why layers are important—and useful—when working in Photoshop. I'll review the various types of layers and how they can make your workflow easier. I will also show you how to apply masking to a layer...a task many feel intimidated by. It's easier than you think!



© Meredith Images



© Meredith Images

Continued...

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Hazel Meredith: Layers & Masking Demystified	1-2
Our November In-Person Meeting	3-4
10 Things I Learned in my 55 Years, Cole Thompson.....	5-8...
The Story Behind the Image, Cole Thompson	9-10
Focus on: To Thine Own Self Be True, Phil Olivo.....	11-15
Assigned Topics.....	16
Print & Digital Competitions 2024-2025.....	17
Print Entry Competition Cards	18
How Do Our Competitions Actually Work?	19

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Join us on Facebook	20
November Winning Prints.....	21-26
November Winning Digital Images	27-34
Please Support our Sponsor	35
Join SPS.....	35
About SPS & Board of Directors.....	36
2024-2025 Season Judges.....	37
2024-2025 Season Calendar.....	38

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Layers & Masking Demystified

(Continued from page 1)



ABOUT HAZEL MEREDITH

Hazel Meredith is an award-winning photographer and a sought-after teacher, speaker, and competition judge. She began teaching in 2007, and now does seminars at camera clubs and conferences across the U.S.—both in-person and virtual. She offers her own workshops and webinars, and has done webinars for several software companies.

She has written two eBooks on working with textures, and released two creative courses. She and her husband, Dave, produce the “Virtual Creative Photography Conference” with attendees from around the world. Hazel



loves the creative aspect of photography and postprocessing, especially the use of textures and software to create unique images. She is actively involved with the photographic community, and has held leadership roles and received honorary distinctions from several organizations. In the Fall of 2020 she was the recipient of the *Ashbrook Award for Digital Imaging Instruction* from the Photographic Society of America.



Website: <https://meredithimages.com/>

Blog: <https://meredithimages.wordpress.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MeredithImages/>

OUR NOVEMBER IN-PERSON MEETING



Dale Willman presented "Ethics in Street Photography"

Our November In-Person Meeting

(Continued from page 3)

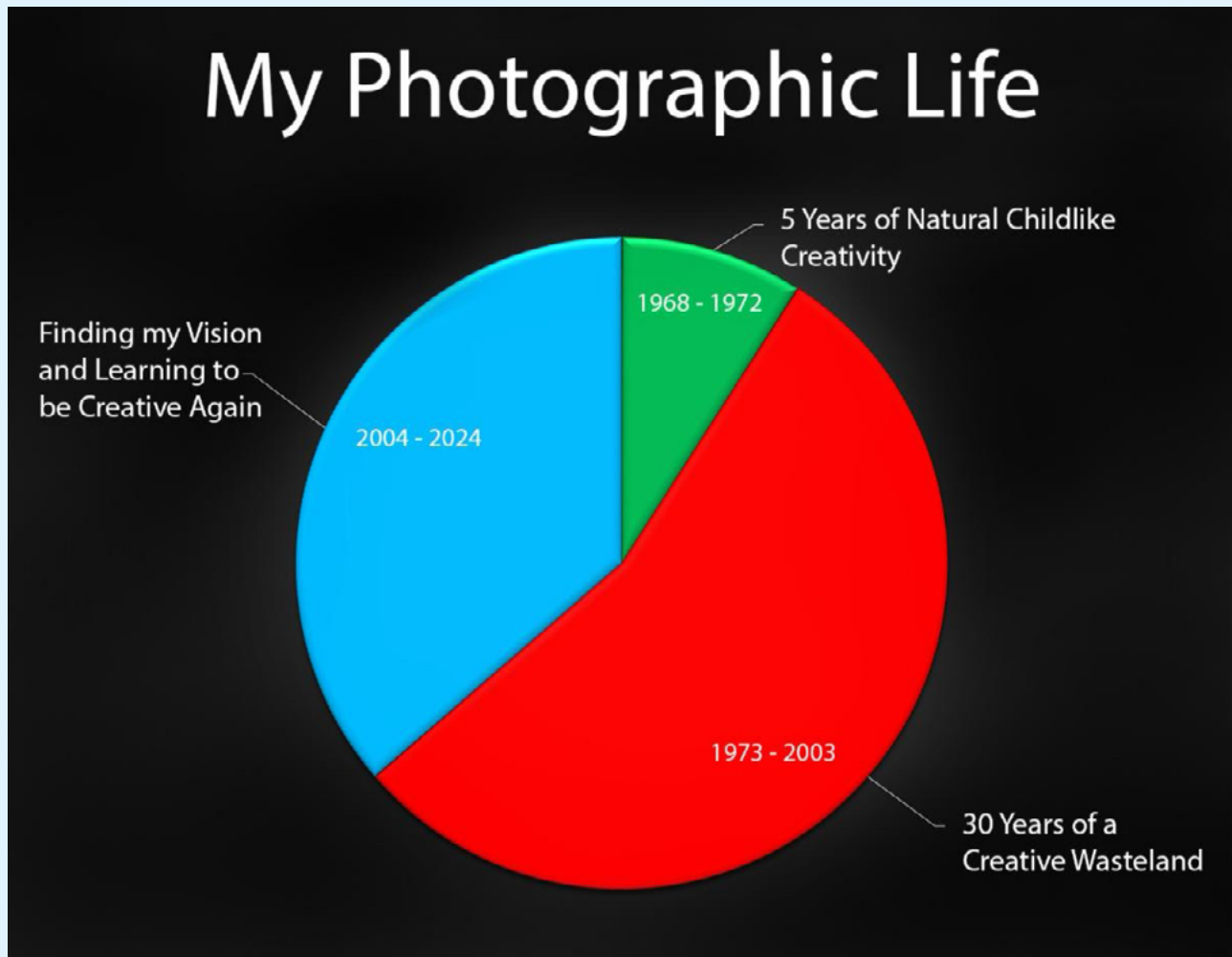
Richard Lovrich judged our
Print Competition.



10 THINGS I LEARNED IN MY 55 YEARS

by Cole Thompson

Reprinted with permission.



The Three Phases of My Photographic Life

If you read this title and think that I'm 55 years old, you would be mistaken mon amie! I'm MUCH older (and wiser?) than that. But I've been a photographer for 55 years and these are the ten things I've learned during my photographic lifetime.

I divide my photographic life into three phases: the first 5 years which were wonderfully creative, then a 30 year wasteland, and finally the last 20 years where I found my Vision and returned to creating like a child.

And most of my photographic life-lessons have been learned in those last 20 years.

Here are the 10 things I've learned in my 55 years of photography:

1) Vision is everything!



10 Things I Learned in my 55 Years

(Continued from page 5)

Finding my Vision changed not just my photography, but my life (this is not an exaggeration!) Vision is simply how "I" see when I ignore all the other voices in my head that are telling me how I should photograph (mentors, teachers, judges, social media and rules).

Vision gives you power and the strength to be independent, and to not care what others think about your work. It gives you internal satisfaction, which is the exact opposite of external validation which only lasts for a short time.

And I learned that Vision is not just about photography...it's about life.



3) Be open to Inspiration and then follow it.

Several times in my photography I have felt inspired, and I've learned that when this happens, I must act immediately...not next week or tomorrow. But right now!

How do I know when I'm being inspired? I just feel it.

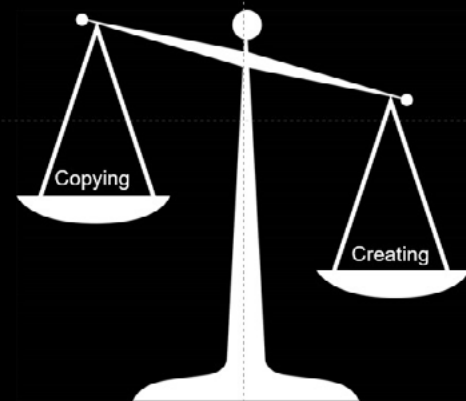


2) Follow Your Passion.

Finding subjects that I am passionate about is critical to creating a successful project. When I am passionate about the subject, it opens up new opportunities, new ways of seeing and it helps me to be creative.

I believe my best work is created at the intersection of Vision and Passion.

Create honest work



4) Create Honest Work

10 Things I Learned in my 55 Years

(Continued from page 6)

I do not believe in the philosophy that “good artists borrow, great artists steal.”

I want to create honest work where the idea is mine, the Vision is mine and I’m creating for myself. Only then do I feel good about my creation.



5) Understand why I photograph and then define success for myself.

Once I honestly identified my motives (and that was soooo very hard), was I able to define what success looked like to me. And it turns out that it wasn't fame, fortune, a big name gallery and a book deal.

My definition of success: to create images that I love.

6) Listen to myself



Much of the advice (often unsolicited) that I received over the years just didn't feel right. It took me over 35 years to learn to trust my instincts and to listen to myself.

“Most of the advice we receive from others... is evidence of their affection for themselves.”

Josh Billings



7) Rules are for fools.

Rules are derivative and were created by observing the work of creative people. However, following rules is the exact opposite of being creative.

*“Follow the masters!
But why should one follow them?
The only reason they are masters
is that they didn't follow anybody!”*

Paul Gauguin

10 Things I learned in my 55 Years

(Continued from page7)



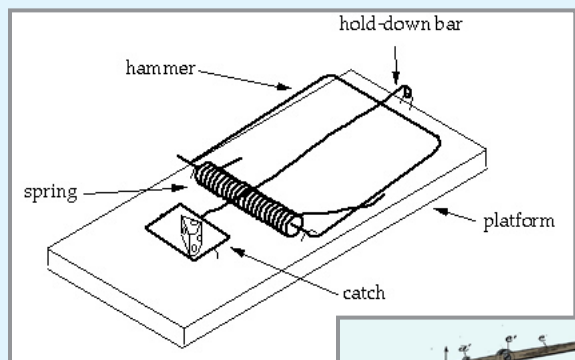
8) I am creative!

I spent most of my life believing that I was not creative...and so my work reflected that. Once I found my Vision, I was surprised to find myself becoming creative and realized that I had been holding myself back.

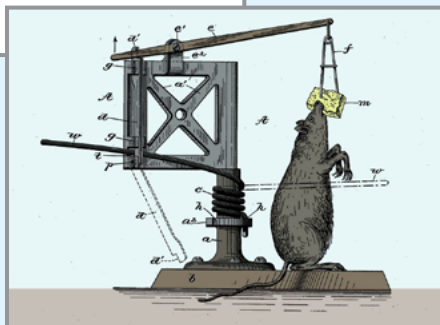
I believe that I am creative.

I believe you are creative.

I believe that we are all creative.



9) Simpler is better than complicated.



Einstein said: "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler." I have learned that the simplest approach is generally the best approach, and I have applied this "simple" philosophy to my equipment, my processing and, unexpectedly, it has spilled over to my images.

10) Projects are better than greatest hits



Creating greatest hits is fun and easy, but working in projects has caused me to explore, to see deeper and to become more creative.

I am now addicted to projects!

MORE FROM COLE...

The Story Behind the Image My Big Mistake

I had created Harbinger No. 60 just before I published my last newsletter, and even though I knew better, I rushed the image so I could include it in the newsletter.

Big mistake.

The Story Behind The Image

(Continued from page 8)



My normal procedure is to process it, let it sit for a few days, then look at it again and make more changes. I repeat that process over and over and over again until I no longer make any changes, and that process sometimes can take a month.

Only then do I know that the image is finished and ready to be released.

But in my haste to get it into the newsletter, I only made two processing passes. As I included it, I had this subliminal feeling that there was something wrong with the image, but I pushed that thought into the back of my mind, rationalizing that the image was “good enough.”

Then I showed the image to a friend who kept looking at the bottom of the image, and then he asked if the ground was right below the crop line. At that moment I realized what was wrong with it; it was poorly cropped.

It just felt wrong.

And so I re-cropped it to include the ground, and that made all the difference in the world! I hope that I would have figured this out eventually, if I had followed my normal routine of revisiting the image over and over and over again.

But I was in a hurry.

And so I’ve learned (once again) to slow down, take my time, there’s no rush.



The Story Behind The Image

(Continued from page 9)

ABOUT COLE THOMPSON PHOTOGRAPHY... *Classic Images in Black & White*

At 14 years of age, I knew I was destined to be a fine art photographer. While hiking in Rochester, NY I stumbled across the ruin of an old home that George Eastman had once owned. This piqued my interest and I read his biography. I was fascinated with photography and before I had completed the book, before I had even taken a photograph or seen a print develop in the darkroom, I knew that I was going to be a photographer. For the next 10 years photography was my complete existence, if I wasn't taking pictures or working in the darkroom, I was reading every book and looking at every image I could find. There was nothing in my life but photography.

Even at this early age I found myself drawn to a particular style of image, one that would literally cause a physical reaction in me. They were dark images created by Adams, Weston, Bullock and others. I knew that I was destined to create such images.

I am often asked, "Why black and white?" I think it's because I grew up in a black-and-white world. Television, movies and the news were all in black and white. My heroes were in black and white and

even the nation was segregated into black and white. My images are an extension of the world in which I grew up.

For me color records the image, but black and white captures the feelings that lie beneath the surface.

My art has appeared in many exhibitions, publications and has received numerous awards. And yet my resume does not list those accomplishments, why?

In the past I've considered those accolades as the evidence of my success, but I now think differently. My success is no longer measured by the length of my resume, but rather by how I feel about the art that I create. While I do enjoy exhibiting, seeing my work published and meeting people who appreciate my art, this is an extra benefit of creating, but not success itself.

I believe that the best success is achieved internally, not externally.

Some have asked about my qualifications given my non-traditional resume and I answer: "My images are my qualifications, nothing else matters."



Egg in glass, taken in 1968 at age 14



Self-portrait on a train in Alaska, 2019

COLE'S WEBSITE: <https://colethompsonphotography.com/>
SIGN UP FOR COLE'S NEWSLETTER: <https://colethompsonphotography.com/newsletter/>

I've used a camera for the last 50 years. However, I've only been a photographer for less than 16 years.

During the first part of my photographic journey I learned the technical side of a camera and become adapt at all settings using both film and digital cameras. My evolution to a photographer began when I joined the Schenectady Photographic Society around 2008 and gained the creative part of being a photographer.

This major leap was due to the friendship, mentoring and learning from the membership as well as being exposed (pun intended) to seminars and other photographers' work. When you're with a group of creatives that you admire you want to emulate them.



Bastei Sandstone Cliffs, Germany - The red house, on the right, sets the scale of this image

I later ventured into Street Photography. Even working with accomplished street photographers didn't hone these skills. I lacked the understanding of the decisive moment where something will happen and missed those opportunities. I did take a couple of images that might fit that technique.



Watchtower – Coastal Scotland

Landscape photography was my start. I learn two priceless techniques: Scope and Scale. Simple, but complicated in application. How much of the scene do you want to show and how are you going show the vastness of that view?



No Room at the Inn

Focus On: To Thine Own Self be True

(Continued from page 11)



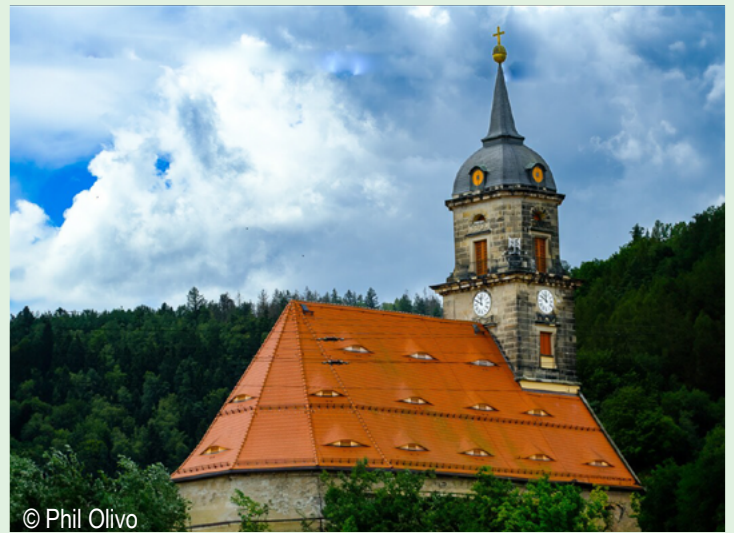
Spare Change

© Phil Olivo



Karate Kid Part Two - Edmond, Washington

I now understood that Street Photography wasn't my calling and most of my street images were really Cityscapes. I moved into that calling.



© Phil Olivo

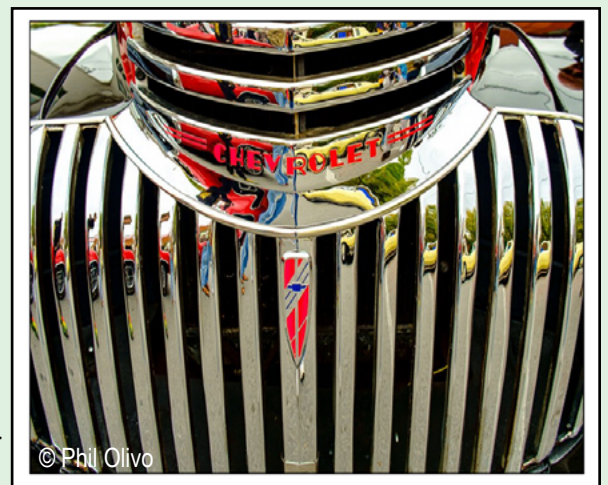
Think I'm Being Watched! Bad Schandaum Germany



© Phil Olivo

Blue Jacaranda Tree, Cambridge University, England

I did Monochrome work driven by slight color blindness as well as valuing the essentials of form and function over color. Post competition member feedback helped me understand that, stripped of color, sometimes less is more.



© Phil Olivo

Reflections in a Chevy Grill - Color

Focus On: To Thine Own Self be True

(Continued from page 12)



Reflections in a Chevy Grill - Monochrome

Around this time I felt that I was advancing nicely in my photography. Although I felt a pull to other subjects. I just didn't know which ones. COVID hit hard in 2020. Like the rest of the country I remained sequestered at home hoping for the best. Reading and working on improving my image editing took up a good part of that time. Two good reads, a biography of Diane Arbus and a program on organizing a messy photo file structure, had a profound impact on my future work.

The Arbus quote "I really believe there are things nobody would see if I didn't photograph them," and an in-depth review of my now organized filing system revealed what I had been missing: I was drawn to **mundane street scenes, the abandoned and forgotten, doors and windows, storefronts and signs.**

That was a major shift in focus (pun intended) and raised the question, Why these things? I now understood that it was the questions these subjects asked. Who lived here? What were their lives like? What was the culture that was reflected in the storefronts? Many questions and stories without answers.



Pink Shoe Laces



© Phil Olivo

You're Out of Luck if You Need Gas. Upstate, NY



© Phil Olivo

Fine Dining in Seattle



© Phil Olivo

Red Door and Windows, Ireland

Focus On: To Thine Own Self be True

(Continued from page 13)

Holland's.
The culture of the Republic
of Ireland is reflected in this
storefront.



© Phil Olivo

Grand Staircase - Saratoga Homestead

Focus On: To Thine Own Self be True

(Continued from page 14)



© Phil Olivo

The Sycamore Motel



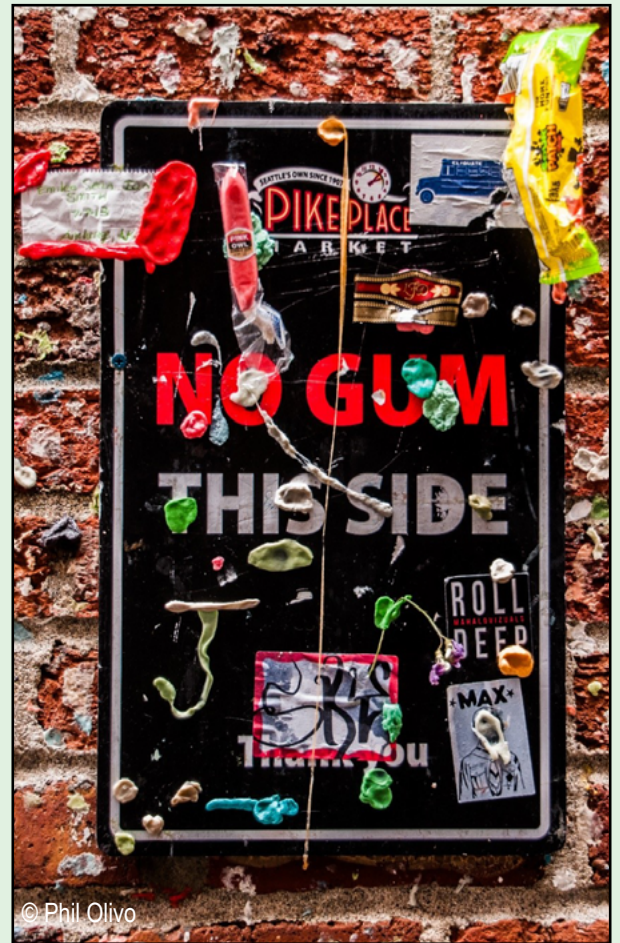
© Phil Olivo

Thank God She Moved

I'll never pass up a beautiful landscape or Cityscape. However, I've found a type of photography that makes my heart sing. I adopted a philosophy that seeks the overlooked, uninteresting and the mundane, and I find a way to make those things beautiful and interesting.

Find and embrace what makes your heart sing!

Comic Relief



© Phil Olivo

Civil Disobedience



© Phil Olivo

Spellcheck Needed

Once again, for the upcoming season, we will have Assigned Topics for Print and Digital. 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, 2024.

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: **Arches**

November: **Blue/Blues**

December: **Old Things**

January: **Harvest**

February: **Odd Couples**

March: **Close Up**

April: **Anything Railroad**

DIGITAL ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **The Color Yellow** (no flowers)

November: **Planes, Trains & Automobiles**

December: **Construction**

January: **Out of Place**

February: **Staircases**

March: **Stacks**

April: **Something Starting with
the Letter "P"**

*Our Assigned Topics get you shooting out of your comfort zone.
It's a fun way to expand your photographic horizons.
Try it - in print or digitally!*

PRINT AND DIGITAL COMPETITIONS

2024-2025 SEASON

For the 2024-2025 season we will again hold print competitions in person at First United Methodist Church. Digital Competitions will continue on Zoom. Both will have an Assigned Topic component. NOTE SOME RULE CHANGES BELOW.

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.

Members may submit up to **four (4)** 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 each in Assigned Topic and General.

Prints must measure at least 5" x 7" or a maximum of 18" 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".

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

5th HM

Entry # _____

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

5th HM

Entry # _____

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

5th HM

Entry # _____

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.

SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRIES

For Print, members are permitted to enter a total of four (4) 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.

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.

JOIN ~~LIKE~~ US ON FACEBOOK!



Group by Schenectady Photographic Society

Schenectady Photographic Society

<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.



Schenectady Photographic Society

301 likes · 326 followers



[Visit Group](#)

[Liked](#)

[Message](#)

<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*.

NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

Topic: Blue/Blues



First Place:

"Starry, Starry Night Sky"

© Linda Tommasulo

Judge: Richard Lovrich

Richard Lovrich began his career as a Photographer, graphic artist and producer in New York City working in banking, pharmaceuticals and fashion. As the *Albany Times Union's* first art director he spearheaded new sections and special editions, winning awards for illustration, design, general excellence and writing along the way. Hired as Proctor's first Art Director in 2007, he ushered the theatre's image through its period of explosive growth and acquisition, eventually serving as the Creative Director of Proctor's Collaborative. Richard's current studio serves clients across a broad range of industries. Richard has recently released his book of short stories, *HAVE A VERY BAD DAY*. Throughout he continues to capture portraits of creatives, many included in his 2018 Albany Center Gallery retrospective *MAKERS 365*.

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

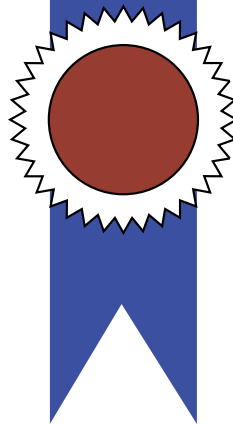
3rd Place:

"Karner Blue"

© Linda Tommasulo

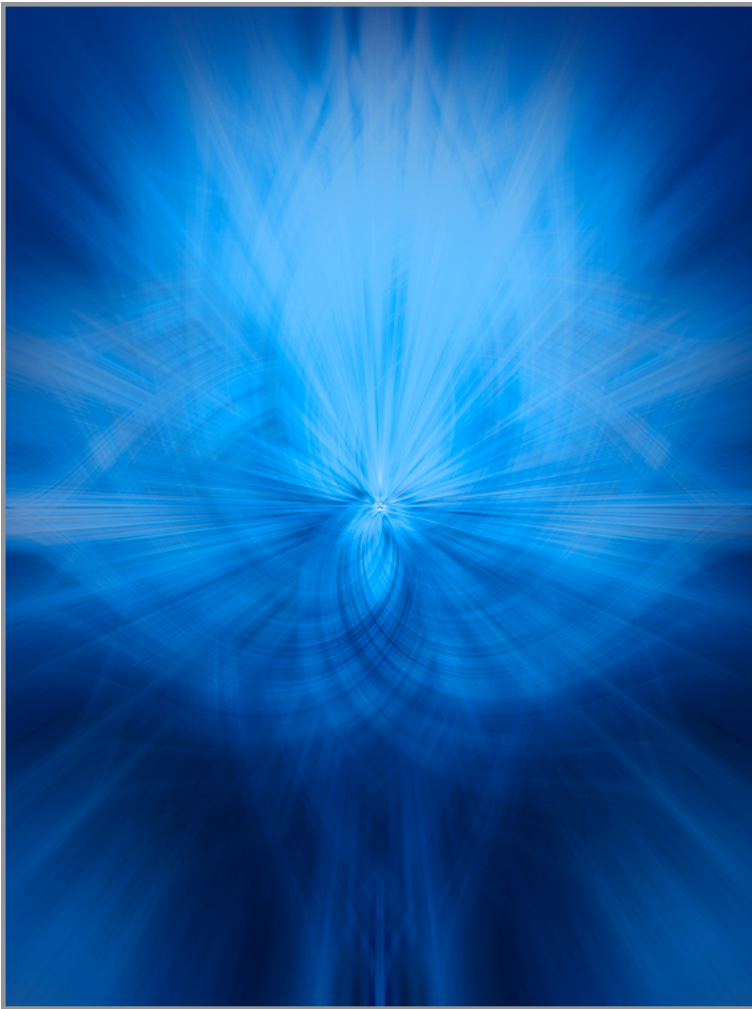


A
S
S
I
G
N
E
D



NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

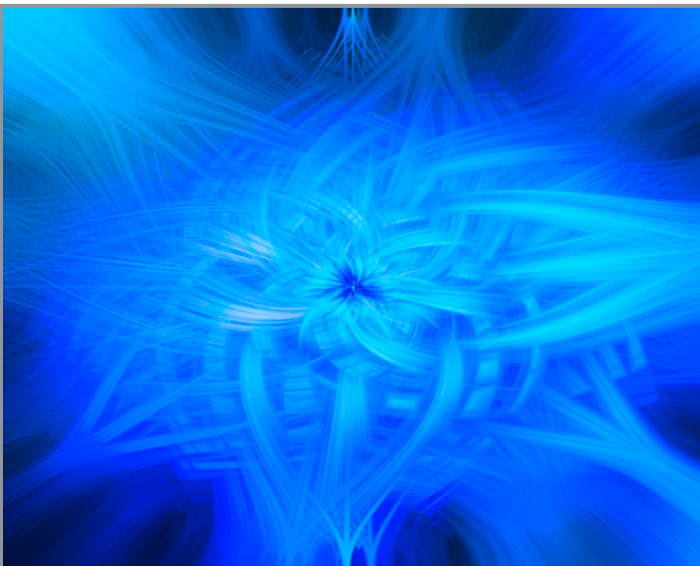
A
S
S
I
G
N
E
D



2nd Place:
"Blue Twirls 2"
© Kristina Young



Honorable Mention:
"Endless Summer Hydrangea"
© Alan Wiggins



Honorable Mention:
"Blue Swirls"
© Kristina Young



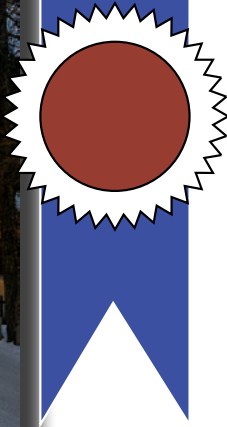
Honorable Mention:
"Kennedy for President"
© Alan Wiggins

NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

First Place:
"Matterhorn Morn"
© Neil Shapiro



G
E
N
E
R
A
L



2nd Place:
"Great Blue Heron"
© Joe Cotroneo

NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

GENERAL



Third Place:
"Rensselaer Falls"
© Greg Efner



Honorable Mention:
"Surprised"
© Jim Craner



Honorable Mention:
"A Night on the Farm"
© Kristina Young



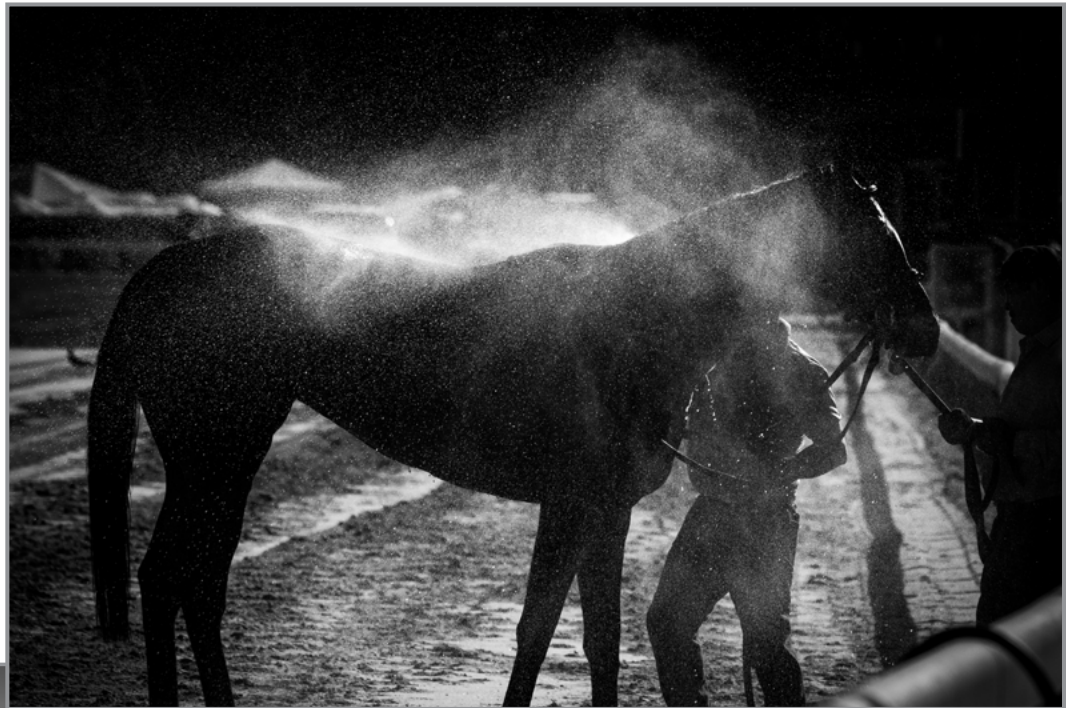
Honorable Mention:
"On Target"
© Richard Long

NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

MONOCHROME



First Place:
**"Still Standing
Since 1775"**
© Neil Shapiro



2nd Place;
"Dark Horse"
© Alan Wiggins



3rd Place:
"Daisy Drop"
© Kristina Young

Continued...

NOVEMBER WINNING PRINTS

MONOCHROME



Honorable Mention:
"Abyss"
© Greg Efner



Honorable Mention:
"Falls"
© Linda Tommasulo



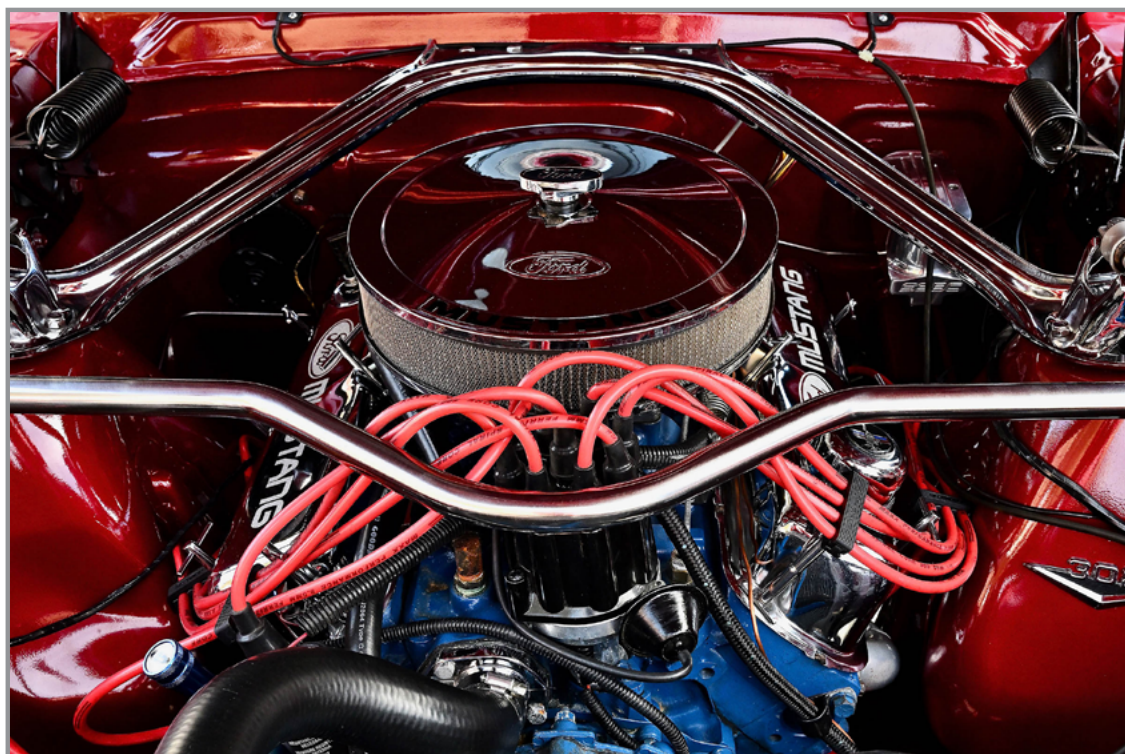
Honorable Mention:
"Criss Crossing"
© Alan Wiggins

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

Topic: Planes, Trains and Automobiles



First Place:
"Locomotive Graveyard"
© Neil Shapiro



2nd Place:
"The Inner Beauty"
© Elena Keesee

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

A
S
S
I
G
N
E
D



3rd Place:
"Frecce Tricolori"
© Alan Wiggins

4th Place:
"Two Out of Three Ain't Bad"
© Linda Tommasulo



Honorable Mention:
"Mid-Air Tango"
© Alan Wiggins



NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

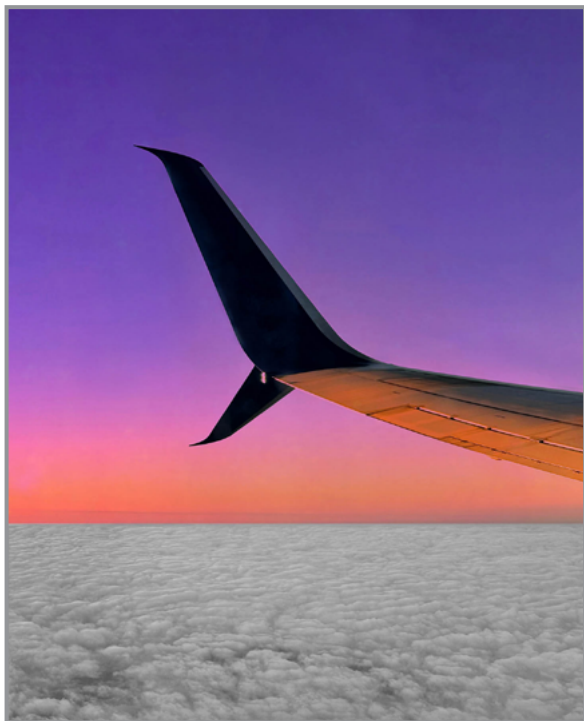
A
S
S
I
G
N
E
D



Honorable Mention:
"Vintage Car with Trailer"
© Dan Steen



Honorable Mention:
"Mail Delivery"
© Kristina Young



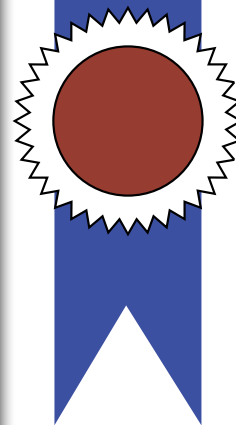
Honorable Mention:
"Morning Flight"
© Kim Koza

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



First Place:
"Weight is Too Much"
© Neena Kumar

G
E
N
E
R
A
L



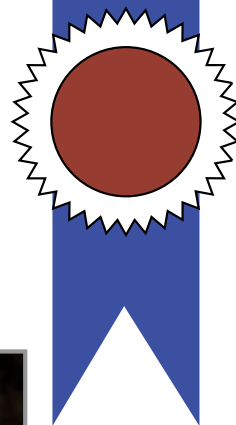
2nd Place:
"Oh, What a Night!"
© Linda Tommasulo

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



3rd Place:
"Taos, Pueblo"
© Dan Steen

G
E
N
E
R
A
L



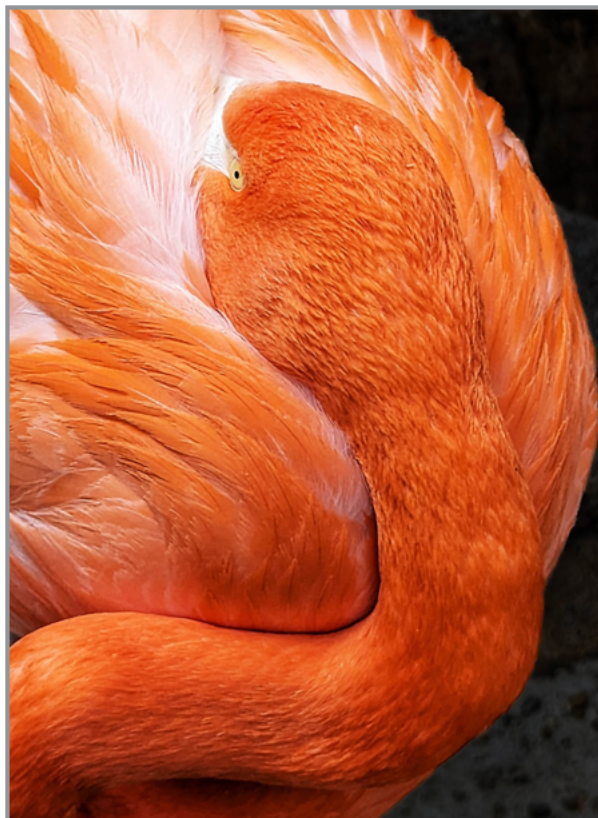
Digital Judge: Lisa Cuchara

Lisa and her husband, Tom are the "Dynamic Duo" of Photography. They love any chance to take photographs and Teach/Mentor/Motivate. They relish the opportunity to inspire with their "Creativity is contagious, pass it on" philosophy and "Don't shoot what it looks like, shoot what it feels like" approach.

The Cucharas are OM SYSTEM (formerly Olympus) Ambassadors. They specialize in decorating homes with nature and UrbEx art. They enjoy taking "straight out of camera" photographs and equally enjoy creating ART from their photographs. Both allow them to capture the moment as their mind's eye sees it.

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

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



4th Place:
"Flamingo, Close-up"
© Colleen Magai

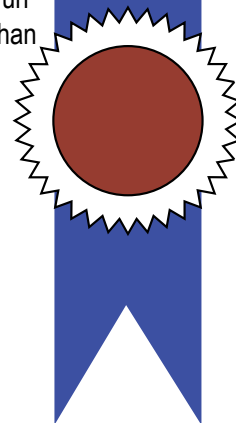
NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



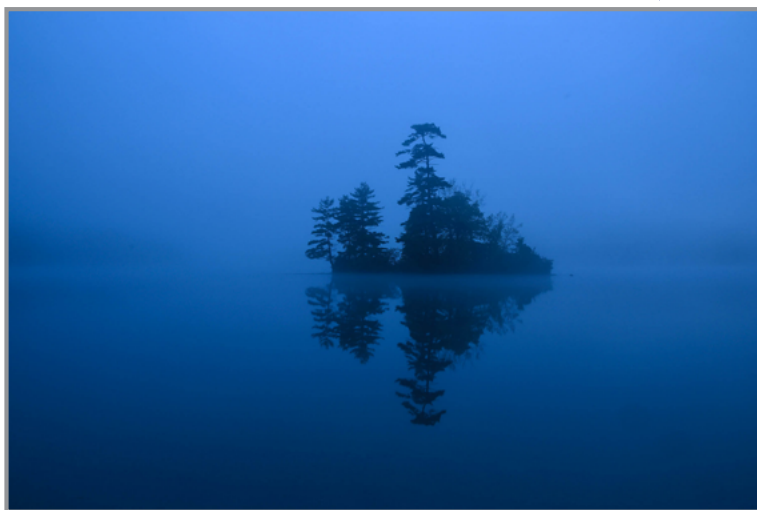
Honorable Mention:
"A Gentle Fall Breeze"
© Neil Shapiro



Honorable Mention:
"Fear or Fun"
© Bill Lanahan



Honorable Mention:
"Shaker Simplicity"
© Sharon Silversmith



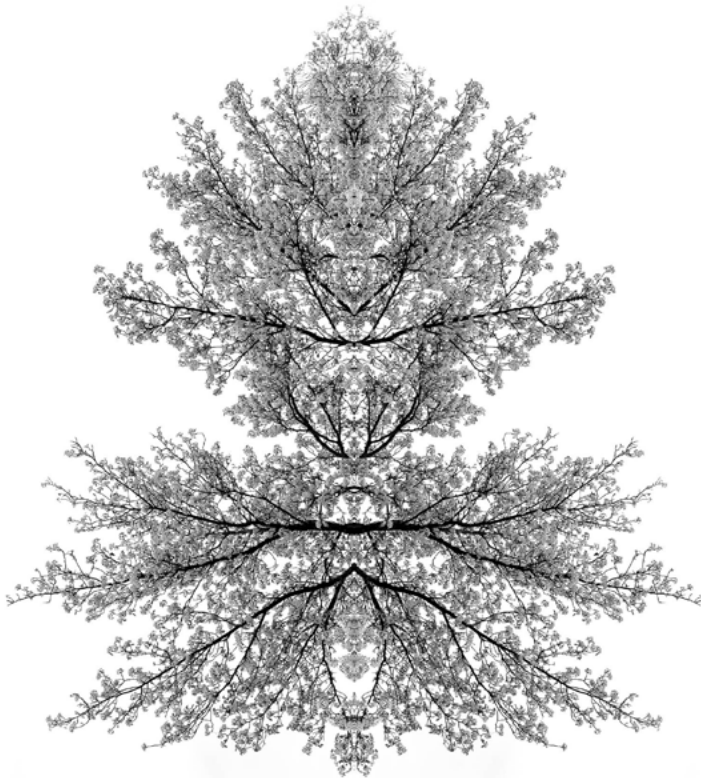
Honorable Mention:
"Ivy Island Blues"
© Elena Keesee

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

MONOCHROME



First Place:
"Alice's Mushroom"
© Linda Tommasulo



2nd Place:
"Branch Abstract"
© Joe Cotroneo

NOVEMBER WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

MONOCHROME



3rd Place:
"Icy Morning"
© Kristina Young



Honorable Mention:
"The Enigmatic Stranger"
© Elena Keesee

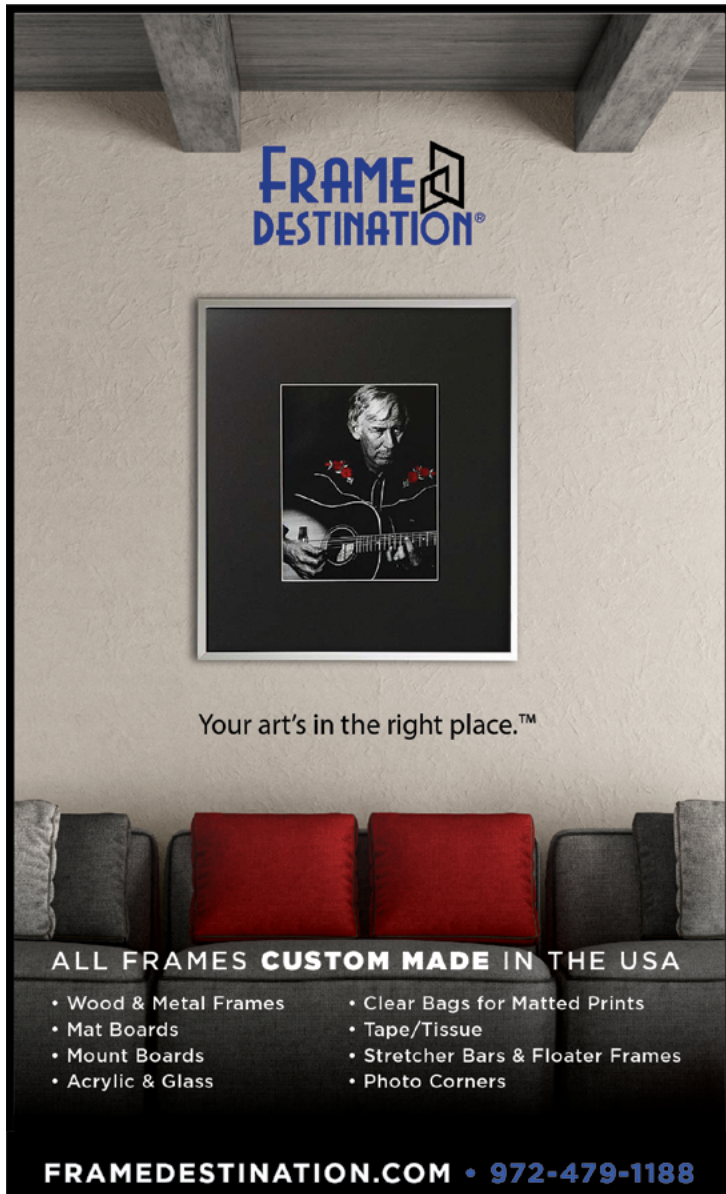


Honorable Mention:
"Fort Niagara Door"
© Colleen Magai



Honorable Mention:
"Pastoral Landscape in
Infrared"
© Joe Cotroneo

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSOR



FRAME DESTINATION

Your art's in the right place.™

ALL FRAMES **CUSTOM MADE** IN THE USA

- Wood & Metal Frames
- Mat Boards
- Mount Boards
- Acrylic & Glass
- Clear Bags for Matted Prints
- Tape/Tissue
- Stretcher Bars & Floater Frames
- Photo Corners

FRAMEDESTINATION.COM • 972-479-1188

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."
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..." <https://www.framedestination.com/blog/picture-frames/how-to-order-a-custom-picture-frame>

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

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

SEASON STARTED WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2024.

Membership:

Individual: \$60 / Family (Same Address): \$75 / 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). Stay up-to-date with SPS on our website: 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 2024-2025

President Joe Cotroneo

president@spsphoto.org

Vice President Linda Tommasulo

vp@spsphoto.org

Treasurer Pat McCormick

treasurer@spsphoto.org

Recording Secretary Paula Keefe

secretary@spsphoto.org

Newsletter Editor Linda Tommasulo

newsletter@spsphoto.org

Webmaster & Annual Report Editor... Sean Sullivan

webmaster@spsphoto.org

Membership Chair Kristina Young

membership@spsphoto.org

Print Group Alan Wiggins

printchair@spsphoto.org

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

digitalchair@spsphoto.org

Photo Essay OPEN

Judge Coordinator Neil Shapiro

judging@spsphoto.org

Communications..... Linda Tommasulo
& Sean Sullivan

communications@spsphoto.org

Field Trips OPEN

LUBA RICKET CREATIVITY COORDINATOR
Joan Heffler

TRAVELING EXHIBIT COORDINATORS
Bert van Grondelle, Jerry Boehm,
Rich Schreiberstein, M-J Adelman
travelingexhibit@spsphoto.org

REFRESHMENT COORDINATORS
Judy Breslau & John Ogden



Connect with the Schenectady Photographic Society:

Website: <https://spsphoto.org/>

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

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/schenectadyp photographic society>

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

Contact Linda at newsletter@spsphoto.org.

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

SPS 2024-2025 SEASON COMPETITION JUDGES

This is the schedule of judges for the season.
Note that, depending upon availability, this may change prior to the competition dates.

October, 2024

10/9/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Arches

JUDGE: STEFANIE PALAZEKE

<http://www.stephaniepalazeke.com>

10/16/24**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: The Color Yellow (No Flowers)

JUDGE: TOM CUCHARA

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

November, 2024

11/6/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Blue / Blues

JUDGE: RICHARD LOVRICH

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

11/13/24**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Planes, Trains & Automobiles

JUDGE: LISA CUCHARA

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

December, 2024

12/4/24.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Old Things

JUDGE: NATALIE CARTZ

<https://nataliecartzphotography.com/>

12/11/24**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Construction

JUDGE: TATE DAVIDSON

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

January, 2025

1/8/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Harvest

JUDGE: FRED NEUDOERFFER

<https://neustudios.com/>

1/15/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Out of Place

JUDGE: JOHANNA SIEGMANN

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

February, 2025

2/5/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Odd Couples

JUDGE: KEVIN Q. GRAY

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

February, 2025 (Cont'd.)

2/12/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Staircases

JUDGE: NICK PALMIERI

<https://palmieri.photoshelter.com/index>

March, 2025

3/5/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Empty Chairs & Benches

JUDGE: THOMAS ROBINSON

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

3/12/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Close Up

JUDGE: FRANK RAPANT

<https://www.frankrapant.photography/>

3/19/25.....**PHOTO ESSAY COMPETITION @ FUMC**

JUDGE: CINDY SCHULTZ

<https://cindyschultz.photoshelter.com/index>

April, 2025

4/2/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Anything Railroad

JUDGE: EVAN LAUBER

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

4/9/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Something Starting with the Letter "P"

JUDGE: LEV TSIMRING

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

4/23/25 **LUBA RICKET CREATIVE
COMPETITION @ FUMC**

JUDGE: LAWRENCE WHITE

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

May, 2025

5/7/25.....**PRINT IMAGES OF THE YEAR @ FUMC**

JUDGES: ANGELA JORCZAK

<https://www.picturesofyou.net/browse/>

DAVID FINGERHUT

<https://davidbfingerhut.zenfolio.com/>

5/14/25.....**DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE YEAR on Zoom**

JUDGES: SKIP ROWLAND

<https://skippix.biz/>

SHANNON CALVERT

<https://hireimagination.com/>

SPS 2024-2025 SEASON CALENDAR

For Assigned Topics, images must have been taken on or after May 1, 2024.

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 a work in progress and is subject to change!

Judges will be announced in the Focus prior to the scheduled competitions.

September 2024

9/25/24..... OPENING NIGHT @ FUMC
Program: Janice Prichett - Journey to the Eastern Himalayas

October, 2024

10/2/24..... NO MEETING - ROSH HASHANAH
10/9/24..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Arches
Program: Phil Olivo - A Photographer's Evolution
10/16/24 DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: The Color Yellow (No Flowers)
10/23/24 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Mike Moats: the Properly Equipped Macro Photographer
10/30/24 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Huibo Huo: Personal Expressive Black & White Photography

November, 2024

11/2/24..... PORTRAIT WORKSHOP @ FUMC
with Doug Mitchell
11/6/24..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Blue / Blues
Program: Dale Willman - Ethics in Street Photography
11/13/24 DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Planes, Trains & Automobiles
11/20/24 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Matt Suess: How to Photograph the Night Sky
11/27/24..... NO MEETING (THANKSGIVING)

December, 2024

12/4/24..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Old Things
Program: CANCELLED
12/11/24 DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Construction
12/18/24 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Hazel Meredith: Layers & Masking Demystified
12/25/24..... NO MEETING (CHRISTMAS)

January, 2025

1/1/25..... NO MEETING (NEW YEARS DAY)
1/8/25..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Harvest
Program: Doug Mitchell - A Quick Day Trip to Maine
1/15/25 DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Out of Place
1/22/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Photo Essay Inspiration - 2024 Winners Discuss Their Essays

January, 2025 (Cont'd.)

1/29/25..... EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Rick Hulbert: Architectural Photography -
Buildings Inside and Out

February, 2025

2/5/25..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Odd Couples
Program: Joe Cotroneo - Infrared Photography
2/12/25 DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Staircases
2/19/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
David Johnston: Waterfall Photography - A Deep Dive
2/26/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
M-J Adelman: The Island of Madagascar - Lemurs Call it Home

March, 2025

3/5/25..... DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Empty Chairs & Benches
3/12/25 PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Close Up
Program: M-J Adelman - Two Castles, The Dunsmuir Saga
3/19/25 PHOTO ESSAY COMPETITION @ FUMC
Judge: Cindy Schultz
3/26/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Rita Nannini: First Stop Last Stop - From Project to Book

April, 2025

4/2/25..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Anything Railroad
Program: Ron Klein - 4x5 on the Road
4/9/25..... DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Something Starting with the Letter "P"
4/16/25 NO MEETING (PASSOVER)
4/23/25 LUBA RICKET CREATIVE
COMPETITION @ FUMC
Judge: Lawrence White
4/30/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Essdras M. Suarez: Street Photography -
Finding the Extraordinary in the Ordinary

May, 2025

5/7/25 PRINT IMAGES OF THE YEAR @ FUMC
Program: Greg Efner - Shooting Birds, Tips & Tricks
5/14/25 DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE YEAR on Zoom

June, 2025 - AWARDS BANQUET Date/Location TBA