

**Bold red texts
are
interactive links!**

FOCUS

**IT'S OUR
94TH
SEASON!**

Volume 92 - No.6

<https://spsphoto.org/>

March 2026

**EVENT
NIGHT**

PHOTO ESSAY NIGHT with Cindy Schultz March 18, 2026 - 7 pm - at FUMC

It's here! Another Photo Essay Competition at SPS—live and in person at the First United Methodist Church in Schenectady. Once again we will include print as well as digital essays.

This year, however, it will NOT be a competition. Cindy Schultz, our guest expert, will critique all of the submissions. It's a great opportunity to get some constructive feedback on your digital and print photo essays.

There's still time to get your digital essays in! Joe Cotroneo will be collecting the essays:



Last Season's First Place Digital:
"The Journey Home - Visions of the Divine"
© Janice Prichett

The Digital Photo Essays must be submitted by a google drive or dropbox link in an email to:

joecotroneo1@gmail.com

Continued...

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Photo Essay Night

(Continued from page 1)



Last Season's First Place Print:

"Small Wonders"

© Joe Cotroneo

Digital Photo Essays must be forwarded to Joe by Saturday March 14 midnight. If you don't get a reply email from him it means he didn't get your essay. Occasionally our SPS mail server may not get email from nycap.rr.com and perhaps some others. Use gmail if you don't get a confirmation that Joe received it.

Please don't wait until the last minute.

Bring the Print Photo Essays the night of the competition by 6:50 pm.

See you—in person—on March 18.

"Photography is not all seeing in the sense that the eyes sees...Our Vision is in a constant state of flux, while the camera captures and fixes forever a single, isolated, condition of the moment."

Edward Weston

EVENT
NIGHT

STREET PHOTOGRAPHY with Caroline Preece

“How to Feel the Fear, Do it Anyway, and Get Great Images”

March 25, 2026 - 7 pm - on Zoom



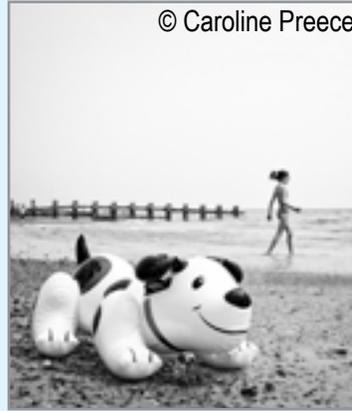
People have often said to me that they really like my street photography, but then the next words which follow are something along the lines of I am not brave enough to do it myself. What they don't realise is that I am not brave and I still get butterflies.....and this is normal. Many top street photographers still have nerves.

In this talk I hope to take you on a journey which will look at what street photography is; what makes a great street image; some simple technical stuff on how to capture and produce your street images; and some thoughts on style. I will also talk about confidence and share techniques and tools which will help you manage your nerves and enable you to go out and get great street images.



Street Photography

(Continued from page 3)



Caroline Preece ...in her own words

Although I did not pick up a camera until 2013, I grew up surrounded by photo books — Michael Kenna, Brassai, Henri Cartier-Bresson — and those images left a mark. Their influence still shapes how I see: simplicity, balance, and storytelling. A relationship break-up was the push that finally got me started in photography. What began as a distraction quickly turned into a passion. I've always believed that when one door closes another opens—and sometimes that change leads you somewhere far better than before.

In photography I am drawn to people, emotion, chance, and connection and the surreal—but I also find peace in the landscape. Being outdoors with my camera gives me space to slow down and breathe. My work has been recognized in competitions including the Minimalist Photographer of the Year, the International Photography Awards, the British Photography Awards, and Landscape Photographer of the Year. It's also appeared in FRAMES Magazine and has been exhibited at the Mall Galleries in London.

I'm a member of Chichester and Loughton Camera Clubs, a judge for the SCPF and EAF, and part of the SCPF Judging Advisory Team. I give talks around the UK and enjoy nothing more than meeting other photographers and sharing ideas.

Check our Caroline's Street Photography and More on her Website:

<https://www.carolinepreecephotography.com>

GET READY FOR THE LUBA RICKET CREATIVE COMPETITION

April 22 - 7 pm

Live at First United Methodist Church

Hosted by: Joan Heffler

Judged by: Lawrence White

EVENT
NIGHT



The Schenectady Photographic Society is excited to announce its 9th year of the Luba Ricket Creativity Awards on April 22, 2026, celebrating the stunningly creative work of a beloved member, Luba Ricket. Those of you who remember her found her to be incredibly warm, willing to share, and hilarious. There is no doubt

she made us better artists and strengthened our club.

While we worked at creating professional quality prints, Luba crafted tableaux with her signature flipped images and printing on used coffee filters. While we explored software and apps, she was constructing three-dimensional illuminated models before it was popular.

As a “creativity award,” members are encouraged to push the boundaries of photographic expression. Your entry is limited only by your creative imagination. Members are encouraged to submit unusual techniques, unusual subjects, triptychs, diptychs, books, videos, and 3D works. Entries may have been created at any time, and two items may be submitted (one digital and one non-digital).

Digital entries must be submitted by midnight, April 18. Here is the link to upload your entry:

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/upload-projected-creative-comp/>

Luba is greatly missed by all those whose lives she touched, but her spirit and creative talent continue to inspire us. This is your chance to be completely creative and unique! Even if you didn't know her, your “Luba bug” is in you. We hope it will inspire you to GET CREATIVE in Luba's memory

Luba was an inventive genius who had a story to tell. I believe you have a story to tell as well. We are delighted to have Lawrence White back as judge. See you in person on April 22 and create away!

With special thanks from Luba's family, we are pleased to again award cash prizes!

Cash Awards for Digital and Non-Digital

1st place	\$100
2nd place	\$75
3rd place	\$50
4th place	\$25
5th Place	\$15

More about Luba Ricket...

Luba Honczak Ricket, an Angel on Earth, became a Heavenly Angel on May 19, 2017, one day before her 71st birthday. Luba was a proud resident of the Village of Colonie since 1969, moving there after marriage. She happily raised her three sons while actively participating in their various school activities, most memorably teaching the students of Forest Park Elementary School the art of pysanky—Ukrainian Easter Eggs—and founding and running a downhill ski club to Willard Mountain. Luba was a continuing education teacher before the birth of her first son. She was also a market researcher, a contributing photographer for the *Colonie Spotlight*, a bookkeeper, and also excelled on her own as a musician and accomplished photographer.

Luba had been a member of Albany Center Galleries, the former Fulton Street Gallery, and most notably the Schenectady Photographic Society (SPS) where she was privileged to learn from so many of the talented members and became an inspiration to many as well. Her works have been

Luba Ricket Creativity Competition

(Continued from page 5)

displayed in numerous galleries, shows, and publications; including Southwest's *Spirit Magazine* feature story about Albany, NY, in 2009. Luba retired from the job that she loved the most at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

As attested to by those who had the privilege of knowing her, she continues to inspire our photographic creativity. We hope to pass this on to the next generation of SPS photographers...YOU!

Here are some samples of Luba's creativity...



© Luba Ricket



Print on coffee filter

© Luba Ricket



© Luba Ricket



© Luba Ricket



© Luba Ricket

House with photos in windows

Luba Ricket Creativity Competition

(Continued from page 6)

Last Year's Winners Non-Digital



Second Place: \$75 Winner
"Strangling Cancer"
© Neil Shapiro



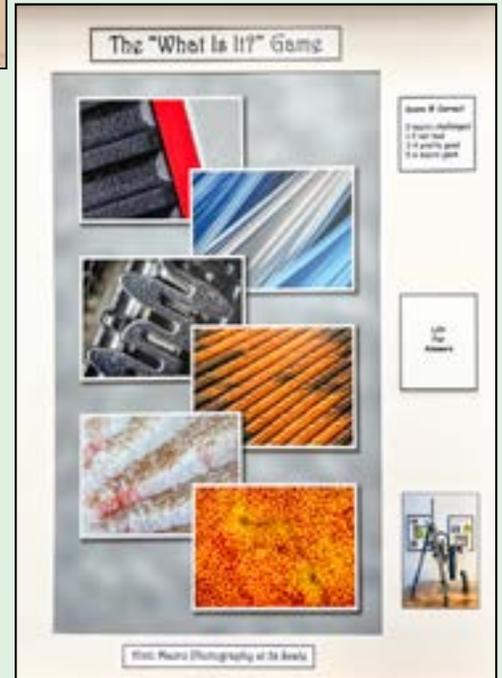
First Place: \$100 Winner
"Vortex"
© Elena Keesee



Third Place: \$50 Winner
"Dogs Make a House a Home"
© Linda Tommasulo



Fourth Place: \$25 Winner
"Wild Blue Lupine on Canvas"
© Dan Steen



Fifth Place: \$15 Winner
The "What Is It?" Game
© Joe Cotroneo

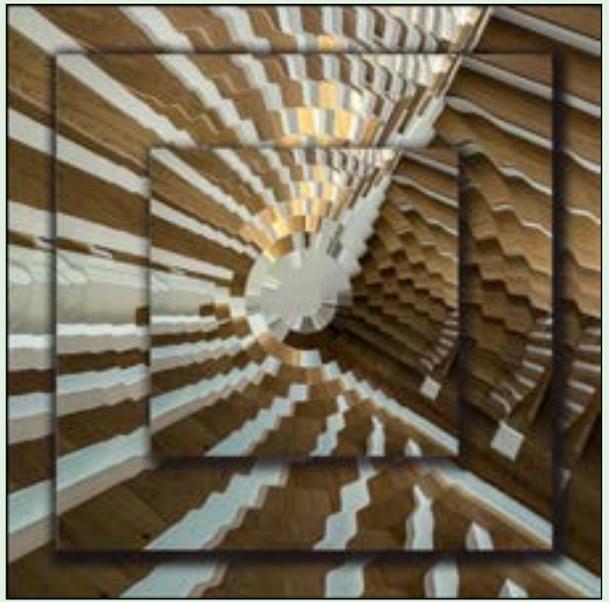
Luba Ricket Creativity Competition

(Continued from page 7)

Last Year's Winners - Digital



Second Place: \$75 Winner
"Origin"
© Neil Shapiro



First Place: \$100 Winner
"Descending"
© Linda Tommasulo



Third Place: \$50 Winner
"Simply S"
© Elena Keesee



Fourth Place: \$25 Winner
"A Man and Two Jaguars
in a Tree Stump"
© Joe Cotroneo



Fifth Place: \$15 Winner
"Abstract Sun on Water"
© M-J Adelman

Our Judge

Lawrence White Fine Art Photography

After 4 years of military service during the Viet Nam War Era, Lawrence White received an MFA in film from the San Francisco Art Institute (75).

Since that time Mr. White's photography has been seen worldwide in publications that include Time Magazine, Rolling Stone, Vogue, Vanity Fair, Le Monde, Der Spiegel, George, NY Times, Boston Globe, San Francisco Chronicle to name only a few.

For a period of time in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Mr. White served as a staff photographer, at Rolling Stone Magazine. After that experience, Mr. White continued to work in New York City capturing images for several agencies worldwide and serving as a fine art photographic printer for an exclusive list of clients.

In 2001 Mr. White won an N.Y. Press Association Award for photographs captured in his downtown NYC neighborhood during, and after the terrorist attacks of 9-11-01.

Mr. White is also an accomplished filmmaker who has won awards from the American Film Institute, Chicago Museum of Art, and the Seattle Film Festival among others. Mr. White writes and performs the soundtrack music for many of his films.

Mr. White also teaches photography courses and workshops. These have included Adirondack College, Saratoga Arts, Art Center of the Capital Region and The School of the Arts / Museum of Dance.

Mr. White was the Chief Photographer for Saratoga Living Magazine for nearly 15 years. Current photographer/writer for 518Profiles Magazine.

lwhite18@nycap.rr.com
347-891-0408

CONNIE FRISBEE HOUDE EXHIBIT AT SAND LAKE TOWN LIBRARY March & April 2026

If you attended Connie's Zoom presentation on January 28, or have seen her wonderful photos in competition, you know a bit about her world travels.

Here's an opportunity to see Connie's images from her Central Asia trip up close and personal.

Reception: March 7, 2026, from noon to 1 pm.

✻ CONNIE FRISBEE HOUDE ✻

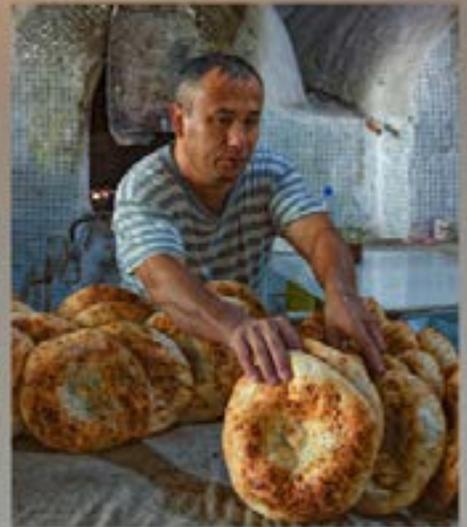
Connie traveled to Central Asia in September 2025.

She photographed the land she walked and the heritage sites she wandered through. Her goal as a photojournalist is to depict the spirit and sacredness of people and their surroundings.

Her work will be on display at Sand Lake Town Library in March & April.

**THE MYSTERIES OF CENTRAL ASIA: KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYZSTAN,
TAJIKISTAN, AND UZBEKISTAN.**

**ART EXHIBITION & RECEPTION: SATURDAY, MARCH 7, 2026 -
12:00 - 1:00 P.M.**



SLTL

8428 Miller Hill Rd, Averill Park

518-674-5050

sandlaketownlibrary.org

FOCUS ON Remembering Dow Smith

Editor's Note: Dow Smith, 83, former SPS member, passed away peacefully on April 2, 2024, at Albany Medical Center. His uplifting spirit and contributions to SPS continue to inspire those who knew and miss him. As an integral part of our Photo Essay competitions, I thought I'd share this "blast from the past":

Remembering Dow Smith.

My Excellent Photography Journey

Unlike some who pick up a camera at an early age, like 8, and instantly find a passion for photography, my love of photography started relatively late in life. Actually, my initial interest in taking photos beyond family snaps was in Vietnam. As a Navy public affairs officer for the "in country" Navy I would shoot stories for release or take photos with accompanying reporters and camera crews to see our operations such as the Swift boats on the coast and the River Patrol Boats (PBR) in the Mekong Delta. Being able to travel outside Saigon I learned Vietnam is a beautiful country with a fascinating culture and wonderful people. Thus, lots of photo opportunities.

Having some art training taught me something about composition and color but little about how an SLR camera worked. I would use a Navy Nikon for the news release photos and take my own camera for personal photos of the people and landscape. Fortunately, these cameras had a built-in light meter on the body, but I still screwed up my exposures. I organized a news event to show what the Seals were doing in Vietnam. Most of my photos show these dark figures repelling out of a helicopter or jumping out of a boat. A lost opportunity.

We had a photo lab as part of our office so I could develop black and white prints but had to send color slides to Kodak out of country. Interestingly when I scanned these slides decades later the Ektachrome slides were mostly ghosts but the Kodachrome were bright and in excellent resolution.



© Dow Smith



© Dow Smith

My work in Vietnam got me interested in journalism. After graduate school at the University of Missouri School of Journalism and a degree in Broadcast Journalism I set off with a wife and, ultimately, four children, on a 25-year career in local TV news. I started as a newscast producer, then newsroom manager and ultimately as a station manager. As you can imagine, there was little time for photography or room for a dark room. Finally, we decided that after moving all over the country, we needed to settle down. I asked my wife where she would like to live, and she said she wanted to go back to Albany and teaching at the Albany Academy for Girls. So, we moved back and I found a job teaching broadcast journalism at Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Public Communications. This was a great experience even if it did mean commuting each week from our home in Delmar.

While I already knew about shooting video and video editing, at Newhouse I got interested in visual story telling. We would bring in great storytellers like NBC's Bob Dotson and Emmy award winning reporter Boyd Huppert from Minneapolis for professional workshops and class presentations. They taught me a lot about blending words and pictures to make an emotional connection with the viewers.

FOCUS ON: Remembering Dow Smith

(Continued from page 10)

The head of the photography program was a great guy and friend. It was interesting to see his wet labs being slowly replaced by computer labs until they only had one wet lab mainly to show students how it worked in the old days. On his recommendation I bought a Nikon D80 and he allowed me to sit in on the photography courses which was invaluable.

After leaving Newhouse and the tiresome commute I started teaching at Siena and then St. Rose and joined the Schenectady Photographic Society. Joining the SPS helped further my understanding of the art and craft. The club is a great opportunity to learn from such accomplished and sharing members. With a background teaching video and storytelling, I was soon recruited by Connie to take over the photo essay contest and have been doing so ever since.

For some 25 years my primary passion was racing a 1958 Morgan Plus 4 in vintage sports car races at most of the major tracks on the East Coast. But when I hit my 70s the safest idea was to sell the car.

So, instead of racing I still enjoy the sport through photography. I cover vintage racing in the Northeast for a couple of national magazines, *Victory Lane* and *Vintage Motorsport* with photos and articles. As a long-time member of the Vintage Sports Car Club of America I shoot and write for the club publication, *Vintage Sports Car*, and provide photos for their FB page and the club website.

Also, in keeping with this combined passion I volunteer for the Saratoga Auto Museum's annual automobile auction. The photos are used for their website and a glossy auction catalog. This has given me a chance to shoot some pretty amazing and valuable cars.

My other photo interest are landscapes. I've taken workshops and tours with Carl Heilman II in the Adirondacks but have fallen in love with Scotland. There is something mysterious in the Highlands with craggy mountains and coastlines with incredible beaches devoid of people and trees. You just know these lochs and glens have stories to tell. We've taken several photo tours of Scotland and hope to do more.

I'm now trying to sharpen my knowledge of Photoshop to see if I can't take more advantage of the program although learning it totally is probably impossible. But one of the things I really love about photography is the challenge of constantly learning and improving my knowledge and skills.



All photos © Dow Smith

FOCUS ON: Dow Smith

(Continued from page 11)



All photos © Dow Smith

TOP TIPS FOR SELLING PRINTS ONLINE USING FINE ART AMERICA

by Liesl Walsh

Are you looking for a way to make money with your photography by selling prints online? The process is easier than you think.

After 11 years of selling my art in person and on different online platforms, I can say without a doubt that Fine Art America is the easiest platform for selling online. It was a slow start for me, but now I'm a best-seller on Fine Art America with over 1019 sales online, hundreds of images licensed to clients, and over 2.4 Million visitors to my website.

Why is it good to sell your prints online?

1. Selling online is the best way to get worldwide exposure for your art.

You only reach local people selling in a gallery or art show, but you get worldwide exposure online. It's good to diversify by selling both in person and online. Selling online helps you reach more people 24 hours a day and increase sales.

2. Selling online is less expensive than selling in a gallery.

It is expensive to be in a gallery. You pay for the print to be made, pay rent, and pay commission when you make a sale. This lowers your profit. You will need to raise the price of your art to cover that, so it will be more expensive for your clients than from your shop online.

When you sell online with Fine Art America your only expense is \$30/year for a personal website. There are no fees or expense when you make a sale. And you choose your profit amount.

This is what I love about selling online using Fine Art America:

- You can live anywhere in the world and sell on Fine Art America, if you can get a PayPal account.
- You can sell internationally with no trouble finding a reliable printer in another country. Fine Art America ships worldwide.

- Fine Art America is print on demand. Orders are printed and fulfilled for you so your site runs itself and you don't need to worry about deadlines.
- Prints are museum quality, made with acid free materials and archival inks that resist fading, made to last a lifetime.
- The types of prints offered are canvas, acrylic, metal, wood, and matted and framed photo paper prints. The types of paper prints are archival matte, glossy, luster (most popular), semi-matte, picture rag, somerset velvet, watercolor paper, and metallic paper.
- Prints are made to a custom size to the exact dimension of your image, so you don't have to crop or distort it. So you can print 16 x 9!
- It is easy to set up your site on Fine Art America with a simple upload process. You can be up and running in minutes.
- Fine Art America makes the mock-ups instantly for you when you upload your image. And you can use their free mock-up generator in their Shopify App to create mockups for your social media posts.
- There is no risk. Fine Art America gives a 30 day money-back guarantee for buyers which protects the seller. They will cover any art damaged in transit, no questions asked, and handle customer service issues for you.
- With Fine Art America you have access to thousands of designers worldwide who spend millions on art each year.

Here are my top tips for selling prints online:

1. Have a strong portfolio with images that stand out from the crowd.

Create images with emotion that easily attract buyers online. Buyers buy with feeling so show a feeling that they would want to hang in their home. Develop a style and niche over time with your art.

Top Tips for Selling Prints Online with Fine Art America

(Continued from page 13)

2. Follow home decor trends, colors, and styles to increase sales.

Create art that would look good with popular colors, and avoid colors that do not sell well. Visit local furniture stores to get inspired.

3. Build a strong website and post only your best work.

Create a strong impression on visitors to your site and make them want to keep browsing your site for more. Weak images encourage visitors to leave your site.

4. Arrange your website so the eye buys.

Make a very strong first impression. Put your best images at the top. Rearrange images so they look good next to each other by color. Arrange images in collections.

5. Connect your website with your social media.

On your website place links to your social media. In the bio of every social media page put links to your website. Say in your bio on every platform that you sell prints. Don't assume that people know you sell prints! Make it easy for people to discover you and your art. Invite people to buy from you.

6. Drive traffic to your website - Most important!

This is the number one thing to do to get sales. If you wait for people to find you, not much will happen. You need to actively encourage people to visit your website. Get eyes on your art as much as possible.

7. On social media posts share links to your Pixels website (personal website with Fine Art America).

Share the link to a photo and not the homepage. Make it easy for people to get to your image in one click. On Facebook put the link in the comments.

8. Connect with people and develop trust.

Create meaningful posts on social media that educate, entertain, and inspire. Posts that are authentic, informative, and meaningful will do better in the algorithm than if you only promote your brand. Focus on stories that engage with your audience, that they will want to watch and talk about.

9. Do a variety of posts about you, not just selling posts.

Create a variety of content: attraction, nurture, and then selling. It's more social and conversational than just selling. Let your audience get to know you and develop trust, which leads to sales. It's building a human relationship. Show how you make your art behind the scenes. Present the message of your art, what inspires you, and what topics are important to you. Share career news, stories, and what you are working on. Educate your audience about what you sell. And invite people to browse your website to see your portfolio.

Things will start to happen when you connect with people on social media. I started making more sales, was published many times, grew client relationships, became more well known locally, and received new business opportunities.

I want the same success for you! Follow these tips to have an easier and faster start than I did selling prints online.

To learn how to boost sales online and build an audience that collects your work, check out my masterclass, "Selling Photos Online: How I Broke The Code", and join my live coaching videos:

<https://www.lieslwalshphotos.com/selling-photos-online-how-i-broke-the-code-BONUS-30-DAYS-COURSE>

Top Tips for Selling Prints Online with Fine Art America

(Continued from page 14)



All photos © Liesl Walsh



Top Tips for Selling Prints Online with Fine Art America

(Continued from page 15)

All photos © Liesl Walsh



ABOUT LEISL WALSH

I am a fine art photographer in Venice, Florida with a background in art education. I teach photography and how to sell prints online using Fine Art America.

In college I majored in art education, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree, and taught elementary art in Pennsylvania for nine years. After moving to Florida I focused on photography and worked with renowned French photographer Serge Ramellias an ambassador in his academy, assisting him in teaching photography online, and filling in for him doing live videos. I also earned a Masters of Photography. I am now a KelbyOne Instructor, teaching photography online to thousands of students worldwide, appearing as a special guest on their podcast *The Grid*. My work has sold in a gallery in downtown Venice, Florida and sells regularly locally and around the world as a best-seller on Fine Art America.

Art and photography have always been my passion. Drawing, painting, colors, and travel excite me. My portfolio includes landscapes and architecture in Florida, Michigan, Europe. I enhance light, shadows, and color when editing to create powerful, dramatic, and peaceful images. Serenity and those “magic moments” that touch deep into the soul... my images show the world as a beautiful place to live and a wonderful place to explore.

A recipient of numerous publications, awards and recognition, I have also had the privilege of creating images for a plethora of companies and associations across the United States. My favorite things to capture are historical and tropical places, pink flamingos, trees, coastlines, and old buildings with charm. I like to give my photos a painterly look while others I'll give dramatic, bold lighting.

There's more: <https://www.lieslwalsh.com/LieslWalsh-About>

CONNECT WITH LIESL WALSH

Get live feedback on your images in weekly zooms, try 30 days for free:

<https://www.lieslwalshphotos.com/mastering-photography-live-with-liesl-walsh-free-30-day-trial>

Get 400 skies for sky replacement: <https://www.lieslwalshphotos.com/liesls-signature-sky-collection>

Photography Courses: <https://www.lieslwalshphotos.com>

Portfolio: <https://www.lieslwalsh.com>

Order Fine Art Prints: <https://liesl-walsh.pixels.com/>

Illustrator of “Vagabonds in France” by Michael A. Barry

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

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/lieslwalshphotography/>

Twitter: <https://x.com/LieslWalsh>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@lieslwalshphotography>

FEBRUARY PRINT NIGHT

February 4, 2026



Members viewing the submissions

Judge
David Fingerhut
joined us again this season
with his valuable critiques.



John Odgen sharing knowledge of his OM equipment



Images displayed for all to see



Whether you do your own,
or use an outside service,
printing is an art-form itself...
cropping, editing, choosing the medium.
**Nothing compares with holding a print in your
hand.**

With the expense of rent and insurance, we really
need more participation in Print Night for this
competition to continue next season.

Join us and try your hand at printing your photos!
You'll be glad you did!

JOIN US FOR FIELD TRIPS WITH JANICE PRICHETT

The Photography Connection has moved to Facebook!

www.facebook.com/groups/906936454705566

The Schenectady Photographic Society participates in field trips organized by Photography Connection. They have moved from Meetup to a Facebook Group. Going forward all outings will be posted exclusively on the Photography Connection Facebook page. Events will be posted as private Facebook events—just click “Going” if you plan to attend. That’s it! For events that require reservations, please only mark yourself as attending if you truly plan to come.

Each month, they’ll post a theme to inspire shooting and sharing. Have a theme idea? Let Janice know!

Members are encouraged to post images from outings in albums on their Facebook page.

They will be inviting instructors to teach in-person workshops at the Clifton Park Library on topics of interest to the group. In addition, they plan to hold two social events a year—dinners, photo-sharing nights, etc., and larger in-person sharing sessions where members can present work or talk about recent trips.

Members can post photography-related announcements (workshops, locations, last-minute outings), and you’re welcome to suggest or lead outings. Janice will be happy to help with organizing and posting.

All SPS members are encouraged to go to the Photography Connection Facebook page, ask to join and wait for approval.. There is no cost.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/906936454705566>



Full moon at Olana © 2025 Janice Prichett

UPDATE:

Kim Koza has volunteered to lead the Smart Phone Focus Group. Members who signed up will be receiving updates shortly.



designed by  freepik.com

THE SPS SMART PHONE FOCUS GROUP

At the suggestion of member, Saul Seinberg, we are in the process of creating a Smart Phone Focus Group at SPS. The intent will be to share and encourage members to shoot with their phones, improve their skill and participate in competitions with smart phone images.

It is in the preliminary stages, and many members have expressed interest.

Stay tuned for more details in this newsletter and through our group email.

OUR "FUN" COMPETITION

ASSIGNED TOPICS COMPETITIONS

Once again, for the upcoming season, we will have Assigned Topics for Print and Digital.
And, to give you a head start, we've announced the Assigned Topics for next season as well!

Digital images may be submitted on our website:

<https://spsphoto.org/competitions/digital-image/upload-projected/>.

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!

ASSIGNED TOPICS: 2025-2026 SEASON

IMPORTANT NOTE: 2025-2026 Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after May 1, 2025.

PRINT ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Doors and/or Windows**

November: **Still Life**

December: **Water**

January: **Architecture**

February: **Abstract**

March: **Landscape**

April: **Animal**

DIGITAL ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Reflections**

November: **Circles**

December: **Fall Colors**

January: **Patterns**

February: **Primary Colors**

March: **City Scenes**

April: **Shadows**

ASSIGNED TOPICS: 2026-2027 SEASON

IMPORTANT NOTE: 2026-2027 Assigned Topics must have been taken on or after June 1, 2025.

PRINT ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Composite**

November: **Symmetry**

December: **Everyday Objects**

January: **Nature**

February: **Multiple Exposure**

March: **Winter**

April: **Silhouettes**

DIGITAL ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Fruit and/or Vegetable**

November: **Barns**

December: **Standing Out**

January: **Car Details**

February: **Intentional Camera
Movement**

March: **Sunrise, Sunset and/or
Sunburst**

April: **Bridges**

PRINT AND DIGITAL COMPETITIONS 2025-2026 SEASON

For the 2025-2026 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.

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 displayed on mat board, foam core or stretched canvas. Mounts must be a minimum of 8" x 10" and may not exceed 18" 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 2400 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/print-competition-rules/](https://spsphoto.org/programs/print/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	Entry #
3rd	4th	
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	Entry #
3rd	4th	
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	Entry #
3rd	4th	
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 – 5 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 both Print and Digital, members are permitted to enter a total of 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!



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

Our “regular” SPS Facebook group (now renamed to “Schenectady Photographic Society FB Group”) 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.

OUR NEW-SPS MEMBERS ONLY-FACEBOOK GROUP “THE SPS LEARNING CENTER”



A new benefit of membership: a forum to share photography-related information, post images for critique and more.

If you haven't joined yet, now is the time!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1073846327661737>

FOLLOW US ON  YouTube



Schenectady Photographic Society

@SchenectadyPhotoSociety · 41 subscribers · 81 videos

Photoessays and other short videos from the Schenectady Photographic Society. Feel [...more](#)

spsphoto.org

We hope to have our YouTube channel up-to-date soon,
Only SPS Members will be able to access Event Night presentations.

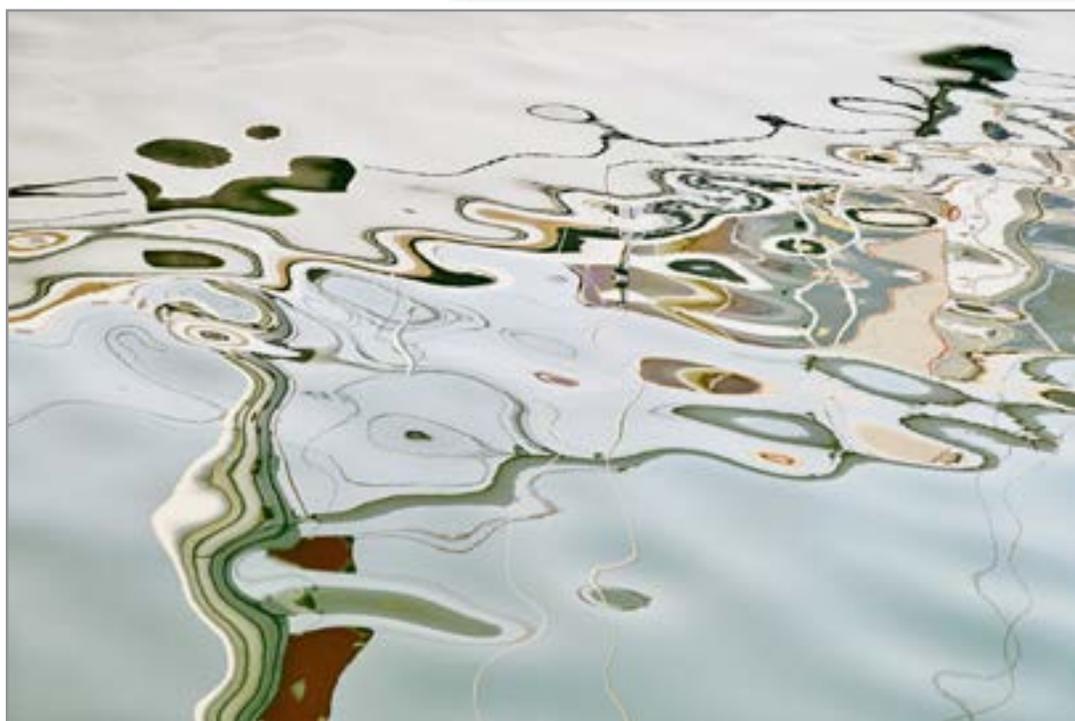
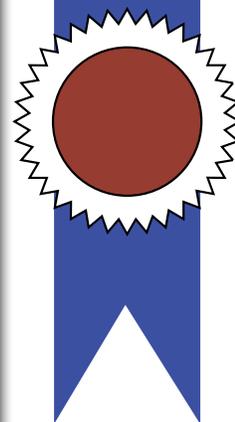
<https://www.youtube.com/@SchenectadyPhotoSociety/videos>

**FEBRUARY
WINNING PRINTS**

**Topic:
Abstract**



First Place:
"Geometry Abyss"
© Bert van Grondelle



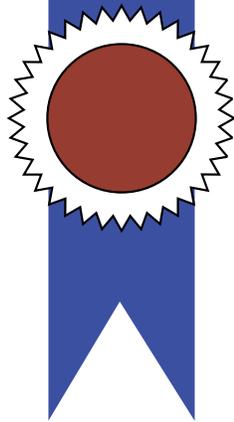
2nd Place:
"Abstract n+3"
© Elena Keesee

**FEBRUARY
WINNING PRINTS**

Topic: Abstract



3rd Place:
"Pipe Dreams"
© Linda Tommasulo



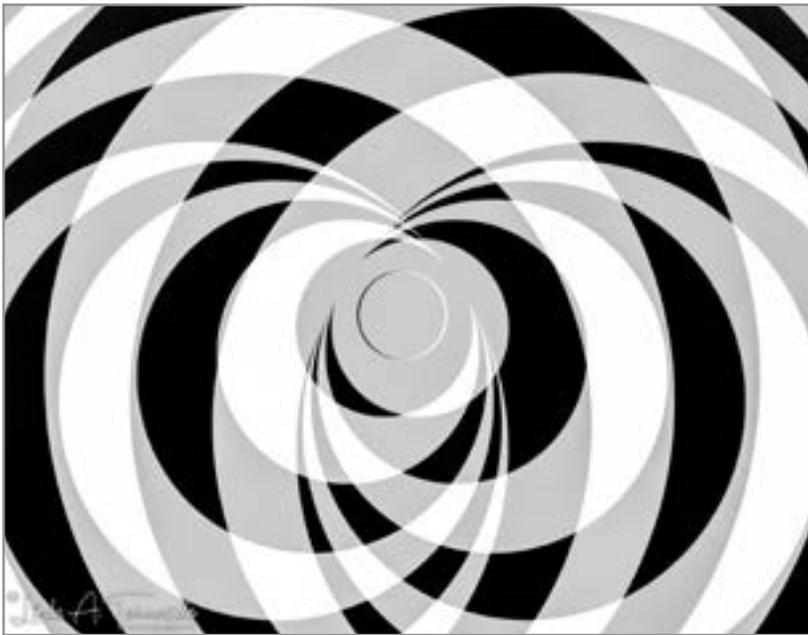
Honorable Mention:
"Arches"
© Connie Frisbee Houde

**FEBRUARY
WINNING PRINTS**

Topic: Abstract



Honorable Mention:
"Cosmic String"
© Joe Cotroneo



Honorable Mention:
"Twirl"
© Linda Tommasulo

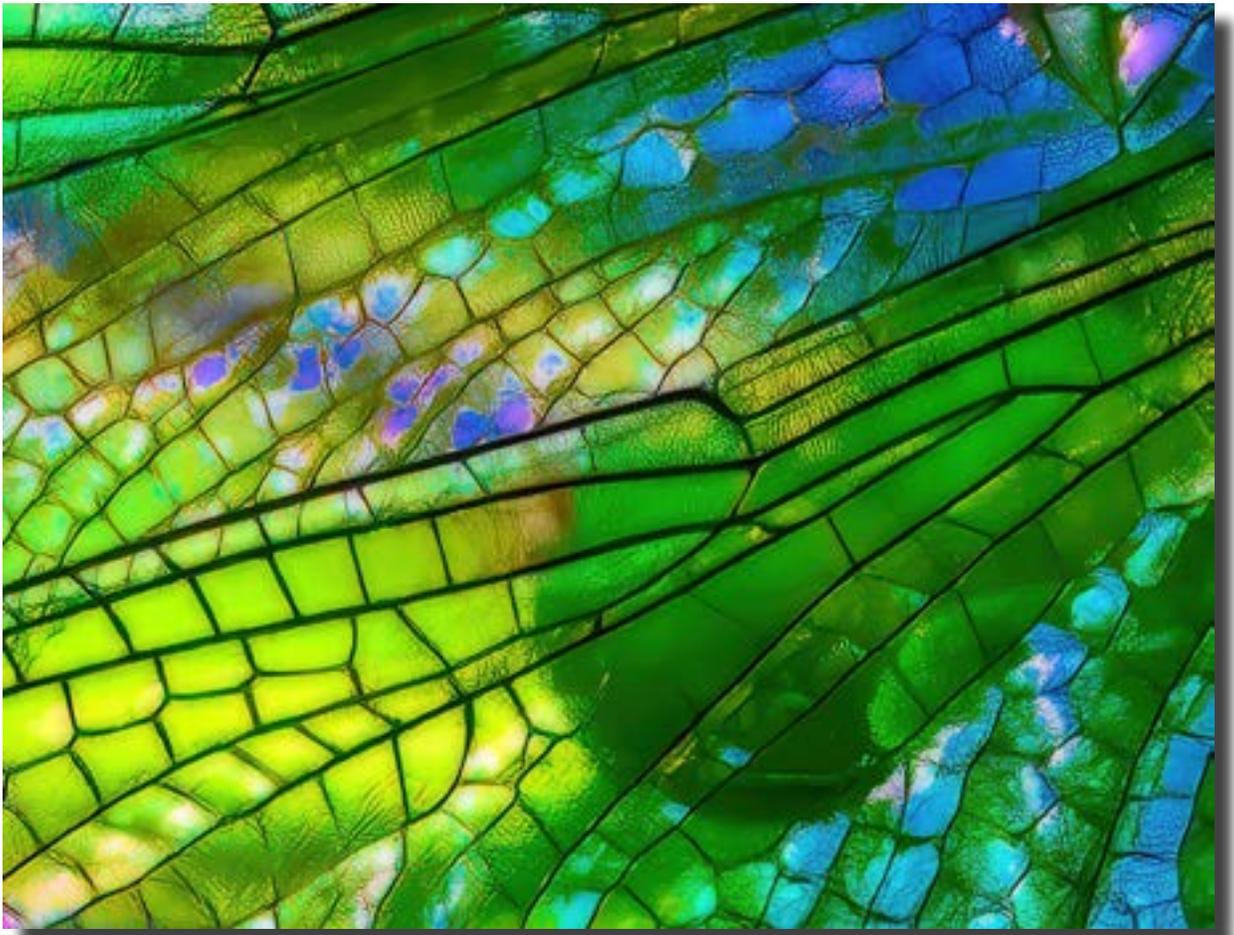


Judge: Stephanie Palazeke

Stephanie Palazeke is a Media Arts teacher at Niskayuna High School teaching film making, photography, and studio art. She previously taught elementary art and college level 2-D Design at University at Albany and The College of Saint Rose.

FEBRUARY WINNING PRINTS

GENERAL



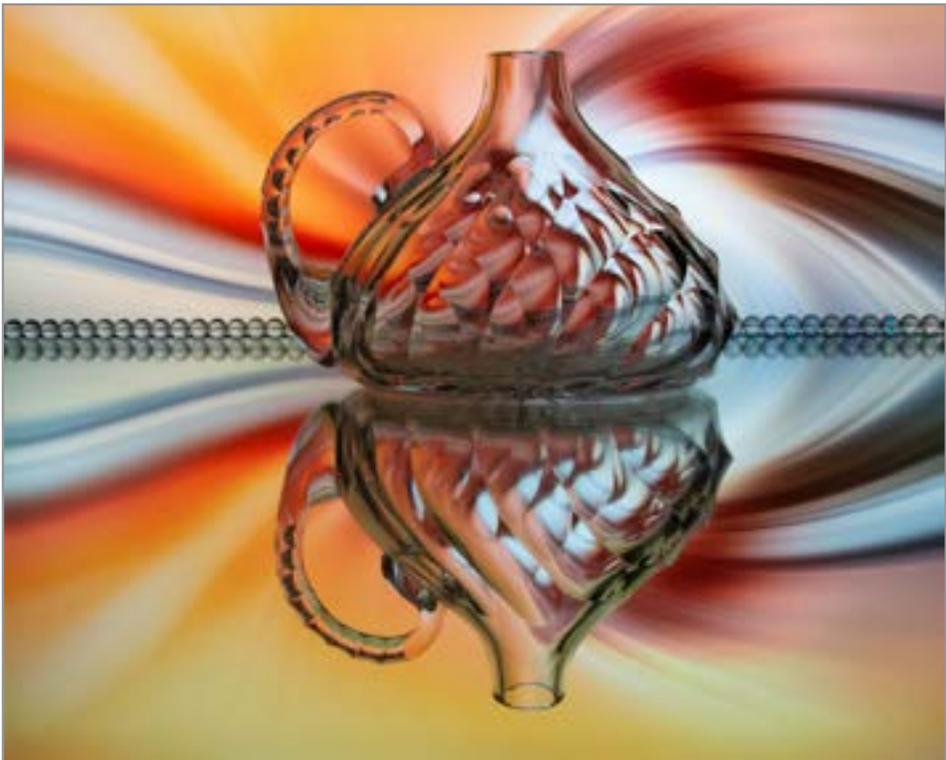
First Place:
"Nature's Mosaic"
© Elena Keesee



2nd Place:
"The Crashing Clock"
© Richard Long

FEBRUARY WINNING PRINTS

GENERAL



3rd Place:
"Glassware"
© Colleen Magai



Honorable Mention
"Happiness"
© Connie Frisbee Houde

FEBRUARY WINNING PRINTS

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Honorable Mention:
"A Relaxing Evening"
© Richard Long



Honorable Mention:
"The Way of the River"
© Neil Shapiro

**FEBRUARY
WINNING PRINTS**



First Place:
"Into the Mist"
© Jan Juliano

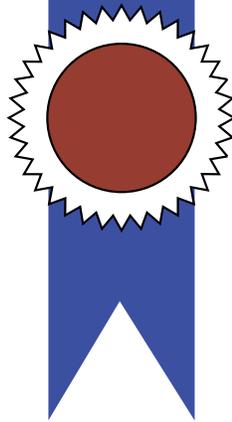


2nd Place:
"Threshold to the Past"
© Neil Shapiro

FEBRUARY WINNING PRINTS



3rd Place:
"If I Had a Hammer"
© Connie Frisbee Houde



Honorable Mention:
"The Impossible Passage"
© Neil Shapiro

**FEBRUARY
WINNING DIGITAL**

**Topic:
Primary Colors**



First Place:
"Colorful Glasses"
© Elena Keesee



2nd Place:
"Waiting to be Seen"
© Janice Prichett

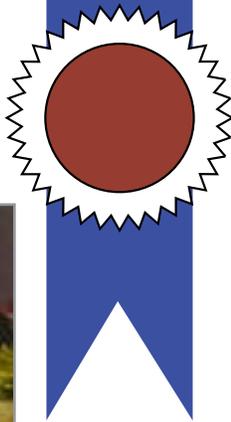
FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL

Topic: Primary Colors



3rd Place:
"Seaside Morning"
© Janice Prichett

Honorable Mention:
"Primary Clowns"
© Joan Heffler



Judge: Johanna Siegmann

Johanna's interest in photography began in 2008, in the aftermath of a bout with breast cancer. As part of her journey she joined DPChallenge, which served as her "education." It was the creation of an image for one of the site's challenges which prompted her into a career in photography. In the first few years, she had four solo shows and seven group shows; was selected as the artist in residence by the National Park Service for a project in the Mojave National Preserve; was both a finalist and received honorable mentions from over 18,000 entries two years running for the Urban Photographer of the Year photo contest; and led a How to Work with Models workshop for Julia Dean's Photography Workshops school. For over eight years she was the photographer of record for the Urban Investment Group at CB Richard Ellis and worked for other major brokerage firms, including Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers International and Grubb & Ellis. In addition, she has worked on numerous TV and film sets providing "behind the scenes" coverage. Her images have been featured in numerous magazines and publications, including the *Royal Photographic Society Journal*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *Vogue Magazine*. More recently, she was a top 100 finalist in the 2023 International Portrait Photographer competition.

FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL

Topic: Primary Colors

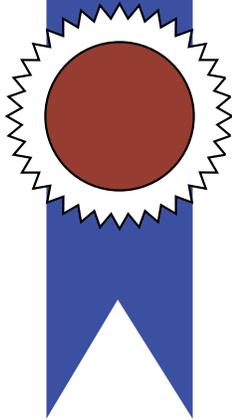


Honorable Mention:
"Brighten Up"
© Elena Keesee



Honorable Mention:
"Two Hands"
© Kim Koza

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FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL

GENERAL



First Place:
"Nice Catch"
© Linda Tommasulo



2nd Place:
"Storm Over Verdant Hills"
© Neil Shapiro

FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL

GENERAL



3rd Place:
"Red Sneakers"
© Nancy Pfuntner



4th Place:
"Portrait of a Ruster"
© Elena Keesee

FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL

GENERAL



Honorable Mention:
"Winter Silence"
© Janice Prichett



Honorable Mention:
"Spring Tulips"
© Janice Prichett

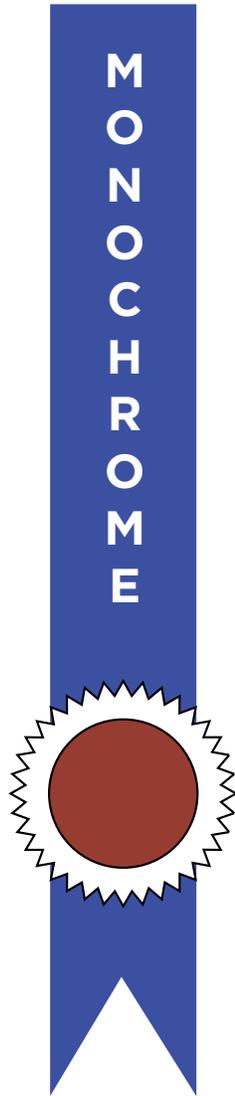


Honorable Mention:
"Fishing Shanty"
© Kim Koza

FEBRUARY WINNING DIGITAL



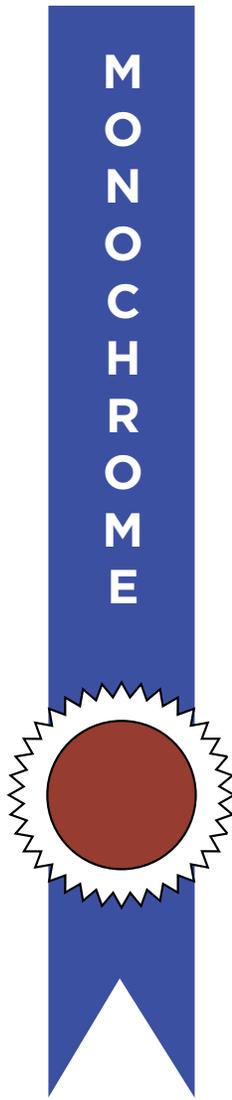
First Place:
"The Narrowing"
© Neil Shapiro



**FEBRUARY
WINNING
DIGITAL**



2nd Place:
"In the Cathedral"
© Elena Keesee



3rd Place:
"Smooch"
© Nancy Pfuntner

FEBRUARY
WINNING
DIGITAL



Honorable Mention:
"The Standout"
© Neil Shapiro



Honorable Mention:
"Spring Trees"
© Linda Tommasulo

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 organized by the Photography Connection Meetup. 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 2025-2026

President Alan Wiggins
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 Open
membership@spsphoto.org

Print Group Joe Cotroneo
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..... Photography Connection
| <https://www.facebook.com/groups/906936454705566>

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/schenectadyphotographicsociety>

Members Only Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1073846327661737>

YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@SchenectadyPhotoSociety/videos>



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

THE FOCUS NEEDS YOU! For articles, suggestions, and member profiles (Focus on: YOU!).

Contact Linda at newsletter@spsphoto.org.

SPS 2025-2026 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, 2025

10/15/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Doors and/or Windows

JUDGE: EVAN LAUBER

<https://www.sphotosbyevan.com>

10/22/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Reflections

JUDGE: LISA CUCHARA

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

November, 2025

11/5/25.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Still Life

JUDGE: FRANK RAPANT

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

11/12/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Circles

JUDGE: TOM CUCHARA

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

December, 2025

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

Assigned Topic: Water

JUDGE: FRED NEUDOERFFER

<https://neustudios.com/>

12/10/25.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Fall Colors

JUDGE: BUTCH MAZZUCA

<https://butchmazzuca.com/>

January, 2026

1/7/26.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Architecture

JUDGE: RICHARD LOVRICH

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

1/14/26.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Patterns

JUDGE: CHRIS MURRAY

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

February, 2026

2/4/26.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Abstract

STEPHANIE PALAZEKE

<http://www.stephaniepalazeke.com>

February, 2026 (Cont'd.)

2/11/26.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Primary Colors

JUDGE: JOHANNA SIEGMANN

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

March, 2026

3/4/26.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Landscape

JUDGE: DAVID FINGERHUT

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

3/11/26.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: City Scenes

JUDGE: LIESL WALSH

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

3/18/26.....**PHOTO ESSAY COMPETITION @ FUMC**

JUDGE: CINDY SCHULTZ

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

April, 2026

4/8/26.....**PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC**

Assigned Topic: Animal

JUDGE: HANNAH ZEL

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

4/15/26.....**DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom**

Assigned Topic: Shadows

JUDGE: NIKKI McDONALD

<https://fineartamerica.com/profiles/nikolynmcdonaldphotography/shop/framed+prints>

4/22/26.....**LUBA RICKET CREATIVE
COMPETITION @ FUMC**

JUDGE: LAWRENCE WHITE

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

May, 2026

5/6/26.....**PRINT IMAGES OF THE YEAR @ FUMC**

JUDGES: DINO PETROCELLI

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

RICHARD LOVRICH

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

5/13/26.....**DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE YEAR on Zoom**

JUDGES: NICK PALMIERI

<https://nicholas-palmieri.pixels.com/>

ELLEN STEIN

SPS 2025-2026 SEASON CALENDAR

For Assigned Topics, images must have been taken on or after May 1, 2025.

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!

September, 2025

9/24/25..... OPENING DAY@ FUMC
Bring a favorite photo (print or digital)
to share and discuss

October, 2025

10/1/25..... NO MEETING (YOM KIPPUR)
10/8/25..... EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Alan Shapiro: Creative Still Life
10/15/25PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Doors and/or Windows
10/22/25DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Reflections
10/29/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Joe Brady - Taking Your Images From Good to Great

November, 2025

11/5/25.....PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Still Life
11/12/25DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Circles
11/19/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Rad Drew - Getting the Most & Best from your iPhone
Camera
11/26/25NO MEETING (THANKSGIVING)

December, 2025

12/3/25.....PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Water
12/10/25DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Fall Colors
12/17/25 EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Jeff Perkins - Street Portraiture
12/24/25NO MEETING (CHRISTMAS EVE)
12/31/25 NO MEETING (NEW YEAR'S EVE)

January, 2026

1/7/26.....PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Architecture
1/14/26.....DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Patterns
1/21/26..... EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Ray Schneider: Intentional Composition
1/28/26..... EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Connie Frisbee Houde: Travel Photography -
Phone vs. Full Gear, Italy and Central Asia

February, 2026

2/4/26..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Abstract
2/11/26..... DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Primary Colors
2/18/26..... EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Chuck Kimmerle:
Nostalgic Black and White
2/25/26.....EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Hazel Meredith: Getting Creative with
Smart Photo Editor

March, 2026

3/4/26..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Landscape
3/11/26..... DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: City Scenes
3/18/26..... PHOTO ESSAYS @ FUMC
Constructive Critique by Cindy Schultz
3/25/26.....EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Caroline Preece: Street Photography - How to
Feel the Fear, Do it Anyway and Get Great Images

April, 2026

4/1/26.....NO MEETING (PASSOVER)
4/8/26..... PRINT COMPETITION @ FUMC
Assigned Topic: Animal
4/15/26..... DIGITAL COMPETITION on Zoom
Assigned Topic: Shadows
4/22/26..... LUBA RICKET CREATIVE
COMPETITION @ FUMC
Judge: Lawrence White
4/29/26.....EVENT NIGHT on Zoom
Butch Mazzuca: Beyond the Rule of Thirds

May, 2026

5/6/26.....PRINT IMAGES OF THE YEAR @ FUMC
5/13/26.... DIGITAL IMAGES OF THE YEAR on Zoom

June, 2026SPS AWARDS BANQUET
Date: TBA

**HAVE A SAFE, ENJOYABLE
AND PHOTOGENIC SUMMER!**