

FOCUS

SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY NEWS

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Number 8

Join us on April 21st with speakers Jim Craner and Rob Near

April will be the last speaker night for the current SPS calendar year and we will close out the year with a couple of our club members, Jim Craner and Rob Near. Since we had to cancel one of the mentoring programs this year due to bad weather, we will incorporate this mentoring presentation into the April Speaker night.

Jim Craner will do a program dealing with the conversion of color images to grayscale in the digital darkroom. The talk is based on Jim's recent review and comparison of the various conversion methods available in both Lightroom and Photoshop. Jim will present some examples and demonstrations of the methodologies, and his opinions about the processes. Along with conversions to digitally captured images, Jim revisited several of his film originals from the 1970s – captures on Tri-X and Ektachrome. The originals were scanned, and then given grayscale treatments in Photoshop. The talk will include at least one or two prints made from these conversions. So if you would like to improve your B&W conversion method or possibly learn new alternative methods, please mark your calendar and plan on attending.

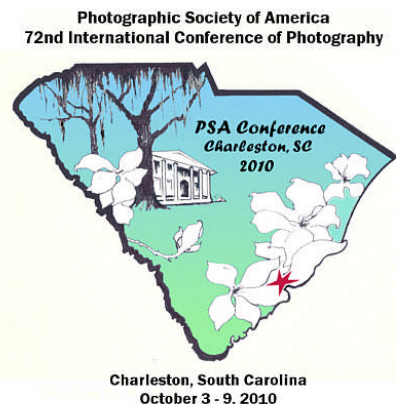
Rob Near will do a presentation on HDR. Crap more HDR! Hang on now; this is an HDR program geared to produce expanded dynamic range images that do not have the HDR or Topaz extreme look. I have recently purchased another HDR software called HDR Photostudio by Unified Color. While the extreme HDR look works with some images and subjects, I have always felt that the world of landscapes is not the subject for the extreme HDR look. I have to thank David Jeffrey for mentioning HDR Photostudio to me. That week after talking to David, I downloaded a trial version; one of the first test images was an extreme range (9 brackets) interior to exterior lighting and the results were downright awful. Before writing this software off, I tried a landscape HDR (3 brackets), and



Image © Linda Buckman

it worked – a natural looking landscape image of higher dynamic range. Continuing to play with HDR Photostudio I then used the incorporated tool to reduce the giveaway HDR halo common with HDR images in areas of light to dark edges. This had me sold! This program did not reduce the halo; the halo was gone, so at that point I purchased the software. I feel HDR Photostudio has to grow and improve this software but for doing natural looking landscape HDR images, this is the tool. Mark your calendar and plan on attending the final speaker night this year for a demo of HDR Photostudio as it applies to landscape photography.

– Rob Near





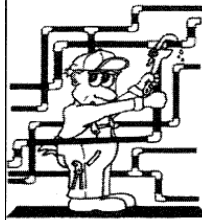
Member News... Congrats!

Ken Deitcher received his fifth star in EID Salon competitions of the Photographic Society of America this January. He also has an article published in the March PSA Journal on an alternate photographic process called Orochrome Processing, accompanied by several photographic examples of this technique. Ken Deitcher's **Snow Day** (SPS Color Print Competition Winner in April 2007, *shown above*) also won first place in [Double Exposure's](#) 'Tis the Season' Contest. Want to learn how to win contests yourself? See Ken's article in this issue!

Jeff Altman has an exhibition at the Spectrum 8 theater lobby, 290 Delaware Ave, Albany, open daily 11:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Exhibit continues to May 4.

Print night program: "What's It To You?"

On **April 7th** Marianne Rhan-Ericson will be doing an demonstration of FotoQuote. In her presentation entitled "What's It To You?" she will discuss and show the Cradoc FotoQuote software, as well share some other information on pricing and valuing one's work that she learned at the American Society of Media Photographer's "Strictly Business" seminar.



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Canon Powershot D10
Waterproof Camera
 by **Jonathan Lawton**



If you are looking for a compact digital camera that can perform in just about any environment, the Canon Powershot D10 might just be the perfect choice. The D10 is the first waterproof and shockproof camera ever offered by Canon. Its rugged exterior casing is fully weather-sealed making the D10 waterproof down to an impressive 33 feet, shockproof from a height of 4 feet, and freeze proof up to 14 degrees Fahrenheit.

Even though the D10 is specifically designed to be a tough, go-anywhere style camera, inside it still offers all the quality people have come to expect from Cannon's Powershot lineup. The D10 features a 12.1 megapixel CCD sensor to accurately capture the detail and color of your surroundings. The 3x optical zoom (35mm-105mm) is also Image Stabilized, allowing you to capture blur-free pictures even in low light when it is typically difficult to hold the camera steady. The camera's posterior is home to a remarkably bright 2.5 inch LCD screen. Whether you are underwater or even in direct sunlight, the vivid LCD makes it easy to compose and review your photos. If you've ever used a Canon Powershot before, you will feel very comfortable operating the D10 as the menu structure remains similar to other Powershot cameras. The D10's control buttons are also rubberized to make it easier to operate in wet conditions and they give the camera a great tactile feel.

The D10 is a great option if you need a camera that can capture a perfect photo, in less than perfect conditions. The Canon D10 retails for \$329 and ships with a lithium-ion battery pack, wall-charger, AV and USB cable, wrist strap and a Canon Software Solution CD-ROM.

Jon Lawton is a sales associate at Hunt's Photo and Video in Melrose, MA. Feel free to contact Jon at 1-800-221-1830 or jlawton@wbhunt.com at the store. If you have any questions on the Fat Gecko Mount or any other photo related topic. Jon is a 2003 graduate from the Rochester Institute of Technology, where he studied photojournalism. He operates a photography business, specializing in wedding and portrait photography. www.jonathanlawton.com

Lightroom Tutorials by Julieanne Kost

For current and would-be Lightroom users, the Photographic Society of America has made available to our Club a DVD of Adobe Photoshop Lightroom Tutorials by Julieanne Kost. Ms. Kost is a regular speaker and instructor who is much in demand at PSA, NECCC and other meetings and workshop. Any member wishing to borrow the DVD should contact Sukumar at one of our meetings.

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March Print Winners



For **Birds of America** (2nd place Assigned), **David Jeffery** collected birds nest, eggs from Home Goods, a book of the shelf and his dad's binoculars. This HDR image from 3 exposures was photographed with a Canon EOS 5DMk2 on a tripod and Tamron 24-135 lens at 135mm and f/11, ISO 400.



Concocting Cookies and Cakes (1st place Assigned, at top right) was set up by **Luba Ricket** on the couch in her living room, with the sun streaming in on an early July morning. She had to keep moving the book, as the sun does not sit still! The shadow was cast by a glass rooster. She is very proud & happy with this simple unmanipulated image using an Olympus C7000 Point & Shoot and sunlight, printed cheaply on Kodak Endura Professional Silk paper by Andorama (11"x14" size for \$1.59).



For **Just A Weed** (1st place Monochrome) **Barb Lawton** picked a sprig of Queen Anne's Lace in her backyard and placed it on her Epson Perfection 4990 scanner. She then tweaked the levels in Photoshop CS3 to get pure blacks and whites, followed by a lot of cloning to get rid of the dust spots that showed up like crazy on the black background.



Mighty Tree (1st place Color) by **Rob Near** is a 5 bracket HDR (1 stop apart) photographed mid-morning in overcast light at Pallenville, NY, with a Nikon D200 on a tripod and remote shutter release, Nikon 18-200mm zoom lens @ 38mm. f/5.0 @ 1/60 to 1/1000 sec. in one stop increments. ISO: 200.

On **Thursday, April 1**, Karin Rosenthal, guest speaker at the Fine Arts Group, will be offering individual 30-min. print critique sessions at Sukumar's home in Troy. Open to any level of photography, digital and traditional. Bring a portfolio of 10-20 prints for evaluation and discussion. You can direct the type of feedback if you have specific concerns about print quality, strength of style or editing. Call 274-2968 or email Sukumar to sign up or for details.

March Slide Winners



After the Shoot (*1st place General, above*) was photographed by **Sean Sullivan** with a Nikon F80 and a 50mm lens. Pan Am railway's **Norfolk Southern Executive Train** (*2nd place Assigned, below*) was photographed by **Jeff Plant** at Emmons, NY, in fall 2009, with a Nikon F100 and Sigma 28-80 mm.f/2.8 lens on Fujichrome 100 film, f/7.1 @1/320 sec.



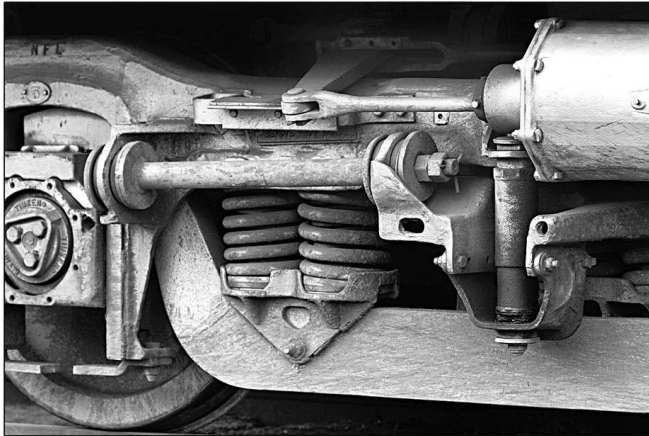
Metal Twins (*1st place Assigned, above*) by **Jeff Plant** is part of a box car door latch. Nikon F100 with Tamron 90 mm. macro lens on Fujichrome 100 film. **Santa Fe Hats** (*2nd place Assigned, below*) is by **Luba Ricket**.



Spring Flower (*3rd place General, above*) is by **Bob Scribner**.



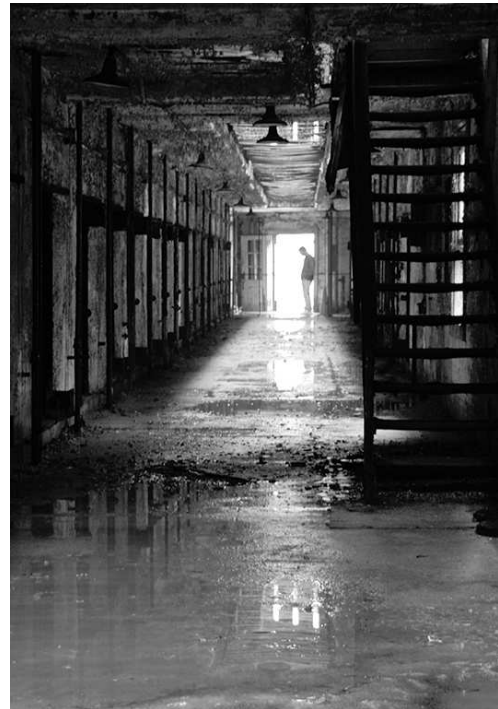
March Digital Projected Winners



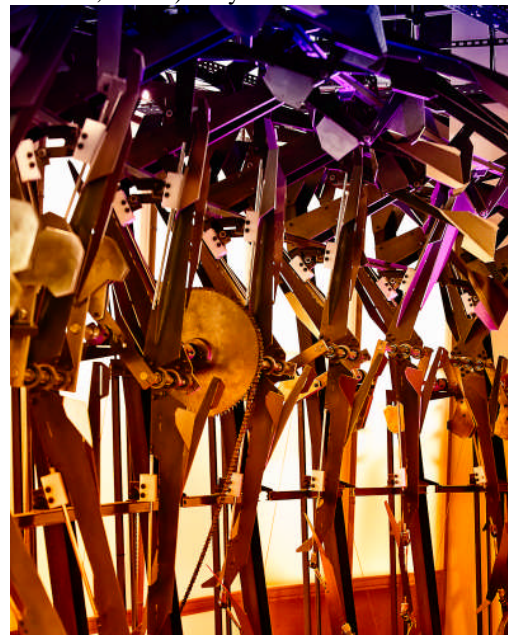
Doug Mitchell is confident **We Can Get You There** (*1st place Assigned*). Photo taken mid-afternoon in overcast light at the Delaware & Ulster Railroad in Arkville, NY. Canon 20D with 70-200 f2.8 lens with 1.4x converter and UV filter; f/5.6 @ 240mm. 1/500 sec; ISO: 800. Curves to pop the mids/highlights some and bring out a little shadow detail.



Slag Pot (*3rd place Assigned, above*) was photographed hand-held by **Ken Deitcher** last summer at the Burden Iron Works in Troy, with a Canon 50 D camera and a Tamron 18 - 270 mm lens. The image was HDR processed in Photomatix and further processed in Topaz Adjust 3.



One More Step (*1st place Assigned, above*) was photographed by **Phil Olivo**. **Shelbourne Museum Barn** (*2nd place General, at left*) was photographed by **Barb Lawton** in late afternoon overcast light with a Nikon D200 on a tripod and Nikon 18-200 IS lens. f/25 @ 1/50 sec; ISO: 400. The original photo was adjusted with Photoshop CS2. Corel Painter 10 was used to render the image painterly. Topaz Adjust was applied as the final step. **Rise Of The Machines** (*2nd place General, below*) is by **Sean Sullivan**.



How to enter and win photo contests

by Ken Deitcher M.D. FPSA

Introduction

What is a good photograph? While a hard definition to write, it can be any image capture you enjoy looking at.

Theoretically a good image should have four elements: composition, exposure, technique, and presentation. An image should capture the interest of the observer or judge. It may be unique or common; but to be a winner, it should stand out from all the other images.

Competitive photographers should compose images that include some of following features:

Point of Interest, Framing, Background and Foreground, Close view, Cropping, Lines, Simplicity, Contrast, Balance, Viewpoint, Direction of Movement, Diagonals, and the so-called "Rule of Thirds"

Most importantly, as a competitor you will want to submit a photograph that you like rather than one that you think judges will like. If you want to please judges, you will never have your own style or individuality. Keep taking images of all kinds, building up a portfolio of images that you can use in the future for competitions, contests, and for your own use. I suggest that you try not to limit yourself to one type of image or you will be "type cast."

Many judges are subconsciously or overtly biased. We have seen this in competitions: for example, a judge may not like "cats" or "digital" images. Bias should not occur in judging, but it does.

Do not "play" to the judge's interests: if a judge is an expert in flower photography, he or she will be super-critical of your flower images or may not prefer flowers at all in his or her judging.

Remember that judges are human, fallible, make mistakes, etc., but are not the last word. An image may lose in one competition, but come in first in another.

Photograph what you like, but try something different, Break the so-called "rules," as that can make for a fine picture!

File photographs so that you know where your images are, in order that they may be easily retrieved. A great image that is lost is an image never taken. Remember too, an image is a capture in time that cannot be repeated.

Why Enter

For the photographer who is confident in his or her abilities and is knowledgeable of the techniques available, entering contests can enable the photographer to compare his or her works with a vast number of competitive photographers.

Winning is a "high" or "ego trip" that increases self-confidence, but rejections are the path to winning. Be prepared to lose more than win. Don't get discouraged! The awards are secondary to the universal recognition and satisfaction of seeing your photo in print.

Where to Start

There are a number of competitions available to the amateur and part-time professional photographer. Several photo magazines, such as Petersen's Photographic and Popular Photography, have monthly competitions. The total submissions are huge, so don't be discouraged – keep submitting. My best advice to the aspiring contestant is to look at past winning photos in these magazines.

Do not enter any competition in which originals are requested and will not be returned. Competitions in which statements "all entries become property of ... and will not be returned or acknowledged" should not be entered. When sending your photos, pack carefully. Prints should be shipped between two sheets of heavy mat board. I suggest all submissions should be sent by certified first class mail, return receipt requested. This will enable you to trace your photos if lost and will show who accepted your work when delivered.

Many competitions do not cost money to enter. Many foreign competitions and PSA salons require a small fee (which can often be paid online through Paypal) to cover processing your submission and preparing and shipping the printed catalog or CD.

Many of the digital competitions can be entered by sending a CD or submitting the images via e-mail. This is very convenient and you do not send your original material.

What to Enter

Many if not all competitions state the explicit categories requested. Select at least two to three times the number of images that you will be entering. Go over slides with an 8X loupe on a light box. Fuzzy, out-of-focus images or images that are over- or under-exposed, even slightly, should be rejected.

Nature should be just that – with no evidence of the "hand of man," meaning no telephone wires, cars, fences, man-made props, houses, etc.

Competitions are judged by an international panel of well-known professional photographers. Look at what was previously selected, but do not imitate the photos of prior years' winners. Most competitions want variety.

Rules I have used over the past 40 years are: 1. Don't submit similar images – if the judge doesn't like them you lose twice.

[Continued on page 8]

March Competition Winners [Continued from pages 4 & 6]



Sean Sullivan would like to know **What's For Dinner** (3rd place Assigned Print). Nikon D700, 24-70mm @ f2.8. SB800 and SB900 in ambient window light.



David Jeffery gained this odd perspective by looking down on **Tight Rope** (2nd place Monochrome Print). Canon Digital Rebel at 25mm, hand held, f/4.5 @ 1/40 sec. ISO100.

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Winning photo contests by *Ken Deitcher*
[Continued from page 7]

2. Submit images that will catch the judges' eyes and interests. If the image is too busy or complicated, the person judging will get confused and pass over your image. 3. Watch for large areas of highlights that take the viewer's eyes away from the main subject. 4. Do not submit images that are not clean or have a "flat" appearance. When viewed under the judges' lighting conditions, the image may lack snap.

Finally, don't get discouraged but keep trying. The photos we see at our club competitions are great, and many could win international awards. The only way to win is to submit your photos. You will accomplish nothing when all you do is read the periodicals and say to yourself, "I could have done that." Actions speak louder than words. Get moving! Start entering competitions! Good luck.

[Adapted from an article by Ken in PSA Journal ten years ago.]



Larry Relyea caught this **Celestial Journey** (3rd place General Projected Image) from his dining room window by the light of the rising sun with his Fuji FinePix S700 and lens set to super macro, focal length 6.3mm. f/3.5 @ 1/56 sec; ISO: 64. Circular polarizing Filter



Here **Saul Aronson** was **Looking Out!** (2nd place Color Print) onto a floor reflection of the Corning Tower, Albany, around lunch time on a sunny day, with a Canon 40D and EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 lens on a tripod. Slight perspective control was employed.

March Print Competition Results

Assigned Topic: Still Life (14 entries)		
1	Luba Ricket	Concocting Cookies & Cakes
2	David Jeffery	Birds of America
3	Sean Sullivan	What's For Dinner
HM	Kim Koza	Book-Egg-Rock
HM	Heidi Ricket	Rock-Paper-Egg
Color (32 entries)		
1	Rob Near	Mighty Tree
2	Saul Aronson	Looking Out
3	Ray Henrikson	In a 16th Century Austrian Room
4	Jess Hohenstein	Bermuda Leaf
5	David Jeffrey	Where's The Broom
HM	Harvey Gurien	Vly Creek
HM	Jeffrey Altman	Rest in Peace
Monochrome (23 entries)		
1	Barb Lawton	Just a Weed
2	David Jeffery	Tightrope
3	Jay Freud	Girl Next Door Series #3
4	Jeffrey Altman	Unity
5	Luba Ricket	Dual Domes
HM	Kim Koza	Billy & Marina
HM	Doug Mitchell	The Postcard

Judge: Jennifer Grainer

Grab Bag Results

Assigned Topic: Affection	
1	Jeff Perkins
2	Jeff Altman
3	N. Sukumar

Best of Show: Jeff Perkins

Judge: David Krause

March Projected Competition Results

Assigned Topic: Machinery Digital		
1	Doug Mitchell	We Can Get You There
2	Sean Sullivan	Rise Of The Machines
3	Ken Deitcher	Slag Pot
4	Cynthia Placek	Antique Farm Equipment
HM	Jack Hurley	Hay Rake
HM	Jeffrey Altman	Music Machine
HM	Luba Ricket	Powerful Pulley
HM	Tom Miller	Round and Round
Slide		
1	Jeff Plant	Metal Twins
2	Jeff Plant	Norfolk Southern Executive Train
General Digital		
1	Phil Olivo	One More Step
2	Barb Lawton	Shelbourne Museum Barn
3	Larry Relyea	Celestial Journey
4	Ruby Gold	Honesty Plant Times Three
HM	Jane Riley	Yellow Flat Iron Building
HM	N. Sukumar	Geyser Pool Abstract
HM	N. Sukumar	Reflected Boardwalkers
HM	Rob Near	Cascade
Slide		
1	Sean Sullivan	After the Shoot
2	Luba Ricket	Santa Fe Hats
3	Bob Scribner	Spring Flower
HM	Connie Frisbee-Houde	Precision
HM	Sean Sullivan	Toe 2 Toe


Judge: Jonathan Covey



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April Calendar

Wednesday, April 7 – Print group:
 Marianne Rhan-Ericson: "What's It To You?"
 Assigned topic: **Night Photography**
 Shoot by moon light or street light but not by sunlight

Wednesday, April 14 – Projected Image group:
 Assigned topic: **Lakes and Ponds**
 Any aspect of a lake or pond, either frozen or liquid
(for digitally projected images AND slides)

Wednesday, April 21 * Speakers: Jim Craner and Rob Near
 *Board meeting at 6:30 p.m

Wednesday, April 28: **Annual Photo Essay Competition**

The *Focus* is published ten times a year by the Schenectady Photographic Society. The organization meets each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. from October through May to promote and present informative programs, activities and competitions in the photographic arts for photographers throughout the Capital District. Members range from novice to expert. Annual dues are \$40.00 for individuals and families. The *Focus* newsletter is included in the membership dues. SPS meets at the First United Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Schenectady, New York. Parking and entrances are on Chapel Street, a one way street off Nott Terrace. Guests are welcome at all regular meetings. **If you change your email or mailing address, let Bob Riccardo know at briccardo@verizon.net**