

**Bold red texts  
are  
interactive links!**

# FOCUS

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

Volume 90 - No. 8

<https://spsphoto.org/>

April 2024



## **SPS 2023-2024 LUBA RICKET CREATIVE COMPETITION** April 17, 2024 - In person at FUMC

*Be Creative*

*As a "creativity contest," members are encouraged to push the boundaries of photographic expression. Your entry is limited only by your creative imagination. You are encouraged to submit unusual techniques, unusual subjects, crazy composites, triptychs (triptych is a painting made up of three sections), diptychs (a painting or relief carving made of two parts) or whatever your imagination can conjure up!*

*You may submit two entries in each category: digital and non-digital.*

*Continued...*

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

# THE 2023-2024 LUBA RICKET CREATIVE COMPETITION

Hosted by: Joan Heffler

Judged by: Lawrence White

April 17, 2024 - In Person at FUMC

Fellow Photographers!

This is the day you've been waiting for all year. April 17th is the Luba Ricket Creativity Awards Competition. This is the time when you can really push the boundaries while winning money.

Luba Ricket was a long time member of SPS. Her photographs were incredibly creative and unique—like printing on used coffee filters or flipping images when flipping was unheard of. Sadly, she passed away. To celebrate her creativity, this competition is about creating works of art facilitating your unique expressions, your individuality. The sky's the limit. Your entries can be digital and non-digital (print, 2D, 3D, digital, story book, diptych, triptych). You can enter a total of four submissions, two for each category.

Luba was an inventive genius who had a story to tell. I believe you have a story to tell too. And we are delighted to have Lawrence White back as judge. See you in person on April 17...and create away!

Cash Awards are as follows:

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

Digital submissions must be in by midnight, Saturday, April 13. Here's the link to upload your images:

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

Non-Digital entries should be brought to the meeting by 6:45 pm on April 17.

See the Non-Digital Entry Form on page 5.



# 2023-2024 Luba Ricket Creativity Competition

(Continued from page2)

Last year our competition was held on Zoom and was digital only.

Here are the 2022-2023 images that placed first through fifth:



**1st Place**

"When Toasters Fly"

© Sally Willse



**3rd Place**

"House with the Blue Door"

© Kim Koza

# 2023-2024 Luba Ricket Creativity Competition

(Continued from page 3)



**2nd Place**  
"The Banker"  
© Doug Mitchell



**4th Place**  
"Wizard's Coffee"  
© Elena Keesee



**5th Place**  
"Beach Walk"  
© Janice Prichett

LUBA RICKET  
CREATIVITY  
COMPETITION 2024

April 17, 2024

*Non-Digital Entry*



Name:

---

Title:

---

PLACE:

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

Entry #

LUBA RICKET  
CREATIVITY  
COMPETITION 2024

April 17, 2024

*Non-Digital Entry*



Name:

---

Title:

---

PLACE:

1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

Entry #

# FOCUS ON: DAN STEEN

## Spain with one Camera and one Lens

This is a tale of two journeys. The most obvious is the trip itself, the other is where I am on my photographic journey. That is the story of one camera and one lens.

In the spring of 2023, my wife, Pat, and I took a 14-day transatlantic cruise departing from Fort Lauderdale with stops in the Azores and Gibraltar. In Spain there were stops in Cadiz, Málaga, Alicante and finally, Barcelona. We then stayed in the city center for six days before returning home. This was not primarily a photo trip. Often, we visited places in the brightest part of the day, returning to the ship before Sunset. In truth, I think most of us travel with these limits, despite judge's admonitions to go back at the right time of the day. You just must take the shot when you are there knowing that most photos will be "just" snapshots. This is fine with me.

On trips like this in the past I would take one or more camera bodies and every lens I owned, just in case. One must be prepared for all eventualities, after all. I would be lugging a Pelican Air 1535 hoping no one would weigh it at airline check in. However, now spinal issues make being loaded down with gear unwise and a burden on my wife. For this trip I took only my new Leica Q2, which is a full frame mirrorless camera with a 47-megapixel sensor with a fixed 28 mm f 1.7 lens. This was a spectacular Christmas gift from Pat, having heard my frustration with the difficulty carrying my gear. My kit included an extra battery, charger, UV and CPL filters, and a tabletop tripod (which I never used). I took several SD cards so I could switch out every couple of days to protect at least some photos should disaster strike, as I took no means to back up

my photos. It all went into a small shoulder bag that I could put inside my trusty backpack which was my carry-on. I also used a Peak Designs Capture Clip on my backpack. This worked great for when I needed both hands to board tour buses. It was also useful if in an area where security was an issue. Once snapped into the clip, any thief would have to kidnap me to get the camera. I knew with this set up I would miss some shots that my bag full of Nikon gear would allow, but would get other shots I would miss while fumbling around with a lot of stuff I could not easily manage.

We boarded ship on 4/8. Cruisers either love days at sea or get bored very quickly. My wife and I enjoy the relaxing pace of the days on board as a prelude to the several days of landings and arrival at our destination. Shipboard activities—or lack thereof—usually do not offer photo opportunities that require more than a cell phone.

Our first stop was in the Azores on Ilha de São Miguel where we visited the beautiful village of Sete Cidades and the adjacent lake filled caldera. A truly spectacular place, and a bit of overcast helped get a few keeper shots.



© Dan Steen

## Focus On: Dan Steen

(Continued from page 6)



On Gibraltar none of the ship-sponsored tours seemed attractive. We took a chance on a taxi tour that saved us a good deal of walking and took us to the top of the rock. Here I got one of my favorite shots of the trip. There is a troop of Barbary Macaques, who ambush unwary tourists as they exit their vehicles in the hopes of a better view. The macaques brazenly ransack packs stealing candy and fruit. We saw one woman knocked down! One Macaque stole a man's ball cap. I still wonder what the monkey does with a hat, but guess I will never



Gibraltar

## Focus On: Dan Steen

(Continued from page 7)

know. A comical scene to say the least. We wisely stayed in the car. The shot of the monkey, framed in the car window, with the harbor in the distance is one of my favorite shots of the trip. This is the only wild monkey population on the continent of Europe.

We visited both Cidaz and Alicante on bright and sunny days. The bright mid-day sun made for harsh shadows, and I struggled to get more than snapshots. This was a new camera and I had taken fewer than 200 shots before this trip. Malaga offered no shore excursions that I was confident I could keep pace with, so we enjoyed an afternoon on the ship with many passengers on shore.

Our cruise ended in Barcelona, where we stayed in the old section of the city. Barcelona is a street shooters dream. Narrow, quaint side streets, and broad thoroughfares filled with people. We en-

joyed several days of exploring the city at our own pace. One day we book a tour that took us into the Pyrenees mountains, with a short visit to France and shopping in Andorra. Barcelona is a delightful city, with many photographic opportunities, great food, and friendly people. I highly recommend a stop there, especially in the old sections.

I must confess, I was more than a bit frustrated coming to terms with the physical limits of my back and balance issues that fate has dealt. It seems petty knowing the far greater hardships so many others face. However, I found one camera and one lens to be more than enough for this type of trip. Being freed from the burden of the extra gear, and deciding on which lens to use, was liberating. Unless your trip is a dedicated photo trip, why not give traveling light with just one camera and a lens or two a try?



© Dan Steen



# Focus On: Dan Steen

(Continued from page 8)



© Dan Steen

La Boqueria, Barcelona



© Dan Steen

Pyrenees Mountains

# Focus On: Dan Steen

(Continued from page 9)



© Dan Steen

Street Life, Barcelona

Dan's One Camera, One Lens:  
The Leica Q2



## About the Leica Q2:

Every great story deserves a sequel, and the acclaimed Leica Q is no exception. Introducing the new Leica Q2 – a perfect symbiosis of the essentials with innovation, pristine performance with connectivity, and resilience balanced with elegance. With its newly developed, 47.3 megapixel full frame sensor, extremely fast Summilux 28 mm f/1.7 ASPH. prime lens, fast autofocus, innovative OLED technology, and timelessly elegant design, the Leica Q2 elevates the tradition established by its predecessor, the Leica Q.

With the addition of an IP dust and spraywater sealing (rating of 52), the Leica Q2 stands out as the only camera in its class equipped with this feature. From its classic design and respected "Made in Germany" quality seal to its integrated digital zoom that covers a range of focal lengths up to 75 mm, the Leica Q2 transcends the revered story of Leica's full-frame compact story to new heights.



© Dan Steen

Street Life, Barcelona

# ON THE ROAD AGAIN! SPS TRAVELING EXHIBIT

A few photos from our March Exhibit at the East Greenbush Community Library.



The unique glass display cases provided a great venue for our photos and 3D creations.



Next Stop:  
Uncommon Grounds  
at Stuyvesant Plaza  
in Albany,  
April 3-29.



Reception at  
Uncommon Grounds:  
Thursday, April 11  
from  
4-5:30 pm.

All photos © Linda Tommasulo

# ***TO SHARE OR NOT TO SHARE: Deciding on Which Photos to Release to the World***

## **by Eric Bennett**

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Access the article in Peta Pixel [here](#).



© Eric Bennett

Shadow Ridge

At one point during his career, the late film photographer Jerry Uelsmann gave a slide presentation to a large audience of photography students, showing all the photographs he had made that year.

Of the one hundred or so photographs that he presented, he said that only ten of them would be printed and exhibited; the rest would never see the light of day. In an interview, he said, "... at the end of the year, I try to find ten images I like. And I make almost one hundred different ones a year." Another photography legend, Ansel Adams, is known for saying, "Twelve significant photographs in any one year is a good crop." Many photographers use this in their defense for not releasing as much work as others, but I don't think that is the point Adams was trying to make. While I believe there is no "right" number of photographs we should release each year, I think that if Adams were alive today, working with digital cameras and modern software (and more efficient means of travel), he would surely create more than just a dozen portfolio images per year.

The main point that both Uelsmann and Adams were making has nothing to do with quantity. They were both stressing that as artists, instead of publishing every piece we make, we must practice curation and release only the images that we deem "significant."

It makes me wonder: How many paintings did Van Gogh and Picasso paint over or throw away during their lifetimes? Perhaps some of them were even more stunning than the ones we know today. Maybe some of these destroyed pieces would

have gotten the artists more recognition or even changed the trajectory of their lives. We will never know. But, ultimately, I am glad that we cannot see every single doodle, sketch, or inadequate painting they made.

As a photographer, I'm grateful I don't have to share something if I don't want to. If I were forced to publicly display everything I make, I would quit photography, as I would have no room to experiment and play around, working on ideas in private over the course of years before I ever present them.

So how can we decide which images should be released and which do not deserve to be in our portfolio? We can base our criteria on many factors, but I strongly feel that they should always be rooted in our own personal beliefs. The criteria must be our own, coming from within, not the public's or anyone else's. Once you consider how others will perceive your work more than how it makes you feel, you are creating your art with a committee and trying to come to a group consensus. No great art was ever made this way.

# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 12)



© Eric Bennett

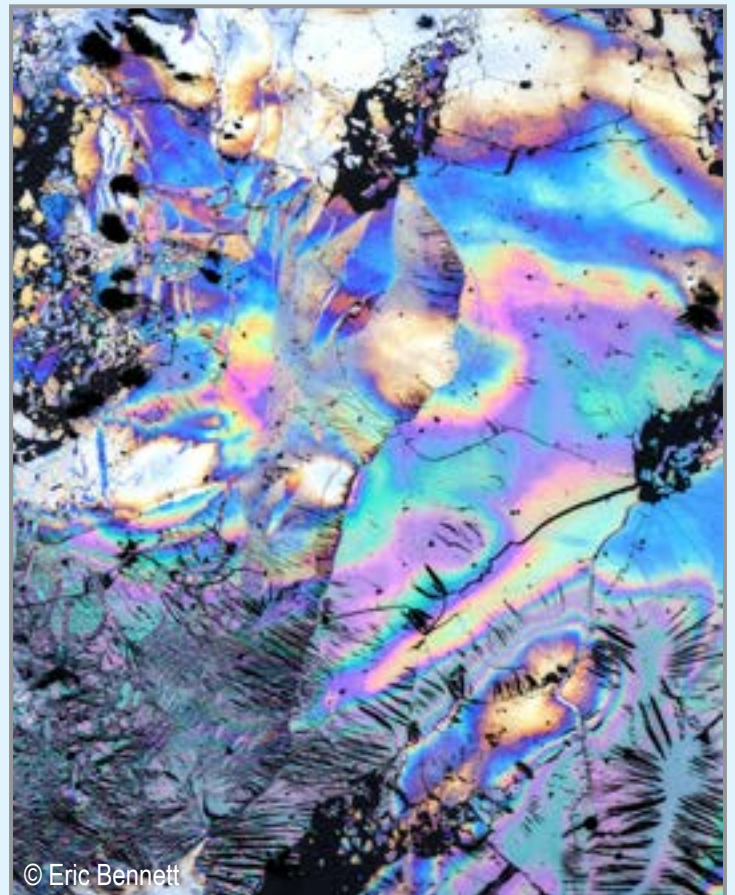
Ancient Form

Over the next couple of years, I found many other puddles with these oils, but they didn't translate into "significant photographs." I knew this subject matter had more potential. It wasn't until 2018 that I came upon a patch of oils that was large enough to work with and as remarkable as the phenomenon could be. This is the first image I released of this subject matter, three years in the making.

## First Drafts

Many of the images I have "thrown out" have been unsuccessful attempts at ideas that I have had. Sometimes while in the field, certain subject matter I encounter in the field will inspire me, but it usually takes several attempts — even over the course of years — before I feel that I have fully reached the potential of my vision. Rather than release every rendition of my idea as I make it, I wait until I feel I have succeeded in executing my vision before sharing the work with the world. Releasing inferior versions of an image will only dilute its impact once the best version eventually comes to fruition. It would be like a writer publishing every single draft of a book leading up to the release of the final edition.

One example is when I found naturally occurring oils in a desert canyon circa 2015. I was captivated by the subject matter and was excited about making a photograph of it. However, that specific patch of oils was small and messy, giving me very little to work with. At the time, I didn't have a lens that could zoom in as far as I wanted, so I was unable to make a photograph that I felt did the subject justice.



© Eric Bennett

Oils and Stuff

# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 13)

It also took me years to release my first-ever image of mud cracks, despite making many attempts at photographing them wherever I found them. I'll admit that back then, I was on a sort of treasure hunt, motivated by the incredible scenes other photographers had made of mud cracks — which isn't how I approach photography today. But it wasn't until after I made dozens of photographs of this particular subject matter that I finally felt I had something unique and satisfying to share.

Don't let the excitement of finding a certain subject cloud your judgment about the actual photograph you have made of it.

## Self Evaluation

Over the last five years, I have worked with nearly a hundred different photographers, suggesting ways that they can improve their images. When a photographer reaches out to me for feedback — whether it be for a portfolio review, in a critique group, or for only a single photograph—rather than just telling them what I think, imposing my judgment or personal taste on their art, I prefer to use The Socratic Method.

If I notice something that feels off or that I would handle differently, I will ask about it to see if it was something done intentionally or was maybe just an oversight. By merely pointing certain things out, I get the photographer to think more about their image, which usually results in their recognizing ways that they should change it all on their own. This also helps them to be able to see these things themselves going forward.

While it is very valuable to receive critique from other photographers — especially ones that you trust and feel are more

experienced than yourself — the most important thing you can learn is how to critique your work. When it comes to your artwork, your opinion is the most important. The more you can take into consideration about your photographs, the better you will be able to determine whether they have been successful or not. This inevitably takes time. With more experience and a well-trained eye, you will be able to notice more distractions or flaws in your images and consider how well you have expressed what you wanted to.



© Eric Bennett

Canyon Burial

# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 14)



© Eric Bennett

Eyes Peeled

## Technical Flaws

While it is by no means the most significant part of what makes an image great or not, it is important to consider any technical flaws that may be present. I see these flaws sort of like the grammar or punctuation of your message. Of course, whether something is off also depends on your personal vision.

There are no universal criteria for whether an image is technically sound, since not every photograph needs to be tack sharp. A great image could be completely out of focus or blurry. The main thing is determining if there are any distractions in your photograph: anything that wasn't included intentionally; things that pull the eye away

from the subject or out of the frame, possibly by being too bright or too messy; visual tangents that may confuse viewers or cause their thoughts to wander too much in another direction.

Technical flaws can happen during every stage of making a photograph, and only some of those that occur in the field can be 'fixed' or mitigated through processing. While editing your image, it's important to study it carefully to recognize any distractions that may still be present. Many distracting objects can be removed by darkening them, adjusting their color, or reducing their contrast within the surrounding landscape, and without damaging any of the pixels in the file. Other objects can be removed entirely using the clone stamp, spot healing, content-aware, or warp tools if necessary, but not without sacrificing some of the image's quality. I always try to eliminate any remaining distractions through non-destructive methods first. What Does it Mean?

Many of our photographs, if not all, represent our meaningful experiences while in nature. Something we saw spoke to us on such a level that we made the effort to set up our equipment and capture it in a photograph. Photographs have the power to bring us right back to a moment, conjuring up the feelings and thoughts that we had, allowing us to experience it all over again. This usually happens for us regardless of how we may have captured the moment, since as the creators of our photographs we have additional context not available to someone who was not present at the time.

Even if my image is technically flawless, what makes a photograph "significant" to me is that it conveys the experience I wanted to capture. To determine this, I need to view my image as objectively as possible, detaching myself from it so that I may see it as an outsider, my judgment unclouded by bias. Ask yourself, "Does it express what I wanted to say?" If not, then maybe you need to hold off and try again sometime down the road when the opportunity presents itself.

# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 15)



Fusion

## Standing the Test of Time

One of the best ways to know how you feel about a photograph is by letting it rest for some time. I have found that after sitting for a few months, images can either marinate or fester. I've thought many photographs were great while I was making them in the field, but when reviewing them on my monitor several months later I felt they didn't even deserve to be worked on. How many times have you been excited about an image that you published immediately, only to find that it no longer satisfied you a few days later?

No matter how good I may feel about an image once I have made it, I always let it sit for a while before coming back to it with fresh eyes and less emotion. Once the initial excitement of making an image wears off, we are in a much better space to determine whether we achieved what we wanted. Sometimes I'll notice ways it can be improved through minor tweaks and adjustments; other times it just needs to be thrown out entirely. Or, with time, an image I was not very excited about will grow on me. It's wise to wait a little before making a final evaluation.



Nestled

Our memory fades as time passes, and it is much easier to look at our work objectively. Certain photographs will always impact you, possibly for the rest of your life, and others may no longer evoke a response after a couple of years.



# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 16)



© Eric Bennett

Opposition

## Continual Curation

Apart from choosing what to release and what to throw out, curation should be an ongoing process throughout an artist's life. Just because an image has been added to a body of work doesn't mean it must stay there permanently. I feel that it's important to constantly re-view your portfolio and remove images that no longer meet your standards or the overall quality of your work. Being aware of this can make selecting which images to publish a bit less stressful, since you can always get rid of them later if needed.

Adding new images to a portfolio is undeniably important, but what I feel elevates the overall quality of one's entire body of work is trimming off the fat. Images that aren't as evocative, impactful, or technically sound as your better work will only bring your portfolio down to their level. If your portfolio is too vast, with too many images to wade through, this can cause visual fatigue and make the viewer rush through or skip around, not giving the best images

as much attention and energy as they deserve.

Something else I pay attention to while reviewing my body of work is if any of my images feel redundant. Even images made on opposite sides of the world can still feel like the same photograph and dilute each other's impact by being too similar. I will then get rid of whichever one is inferior.

When considering whether to cull a certain image from my portfolio, I have found that it



© Eric Bennett

## To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 17)

becomes much more straightforward if I ask myself, “Would I be happy if someone ordered a print of this image tomorrow? Would I want to hang it on my wall? Would I want to share this photo on social media today? If this were someone else’s image, would I still think it’s great?” If the answer to any of these is no, then it probably means I am not very proud of the actual image anymore, no matter what fond memories it is tied to. It may be time to let go.

It is also much easier to be objective toward your work if you are in a bad mood. When I am not very pleased with my photography, I will take advantage by going through my portfolio and removing images. At these times I find I am much more critical and less forgiving of myself and, in a way, more honest. If I regret deleting something later, I can always put it back. But to this day I have never reintroduced an image I had gotten rid of.

If you don’t miss it once it’s gone, there’s a reason for that.



© Eric Bennett

Tentacles



© Eric Bennett

Splash

the overall quality of your portfolio. Knowing you don’t have to release some preconceived quantity of work, you are free to take risks in making photographs. You can hold back the experiments that don’t quite meet your standard of perfection, and ensure your portfolio will always reflect your highest ideals. By selectively sharing your work, you give yourself space to explore new ideas and nurture a continuous learning process. Embracing this approach prevents stagnation and allows your artistic vision to grow and expand.

This is why it is so important not to get caught up in feeding the beast of social media. Some photographers may release a new image daily, others once or twice weekly. No quota is right for everyone, and you must develop your own based on your lifestyle, approach, and personal standards for your art. I don’t set any kind of quota for myself — I just let the images come naturally. I don’t expect myself to always be just as prolific. In some years I may release more work than in others, but I never relax my standards to increase quantity.

# To Share or not to Share

(Continued from page 18)

I am often asked, “What are your favorite images in your portfolio?” To which I always respond, “All of them.”

Every image in my current portfolio is there for a reason: It means something to me, and I have already deemed it “significant” after careful and honest consideration. I only release images that are special to me. Once they no longer feel special, I remove them from my portfolio, regardless of what kind of response they may have received from others. This is crucial to making a portfolio you can be proud of, one that will satisfy you for many years.

This article first appeared in *Nature Vision Magazine*. *Nature Vision Magazine* is a captivating publication that fuels your passion for nature photography. With thought-provoking articles, diverse perspectives, and stunning visuals, it explores the enchanting world of abstracts, wildlife, landscapes, and more. Delivered as a downloadable PDF, it offers flexibility and convenience for immersive exploration. Let *Nature Vision Magazine* be your guide as you embark on a journey of inspiration, growth, and creative expression in the realm of nature photography.

Check out Nature Photographer’s Network [here](#).  
Subscribe to *Nature Vision Magazine* or purchase a single issue [here](#).



## About Eric Bennett:

I have had the good fortune of traveling all over the world in pursuit of my art. While I spend most of my time exploring the deserts near my current home in Utah, photography has taken me to over 30 different countries, from the coastlines of Australia to the glaciers of the Arctic, in search of new experiences and landscapes. I like to think that the deep love I have for nature and exploration shows through my imagery.



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

In the modern world of landscape photography, I seek to set myself apart by having an unmistakable and unique style. My constant search of unseen places and perspectives has provided me with a refreshing and original portfolio of visual art. Through the combination of my creative vision with advanced post-processing techniques, I have been able to teach clients how to improve their photography skills as well.

I currently shoot with a Sony a7riii with Canon lenses (24-105 f/4L, 70-300 f/4L, 16-35 f/4L, 100 Macro f/1.8L), a Sigma 150-600 f/5.6, and an FLM CP30-L4 II Tripod with a Really Right Stuff BH-40 ballhead. Except for when I am backpacking, I carry my gear in my Shimoda Action X70 bag.

If you would like to follow my work, I can be found on various platforms of social media, including Instagram, Facebook, and 500px. I am a regular contributor to the Nature Photographer’s Network, *Outdoor Photographer*, and *ELEMENTS Photography Magazine*.

You can find more of his work on his [website](#).

# OUR "FUN" COMPETITION

## ASSIGNED TOPICS 2023-2024 SEASON\*

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

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

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

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

### PRINT ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Outside at Night**

November: **Nautical**

December: **Flowers**

January: **Reflections**

February: **Landscape in Black & White**

March: **Transportation**

April: **Heat**

### DIGITAL ASSIGNED TOPICS

October: **Balance**

November: **Music**

December: **Multiple Exposure**

January: **Decay**

February: **Wood**

March: **Stacks**

April: **Triangles**

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

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

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

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

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



© 2023 Janice Prichett

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

# PRINT AND DIGITAL COMPETITIONS 2023-2024 SEASON

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

## **PRINT COMPETITIONS:**

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

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, one in General, two in Monochrome, and one in Assigned Topic.

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

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

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

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



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



## **DIGITAL COMPETITIONS:**

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

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

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

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

Details on Digital Competition Rules can be found here:

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

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

REMEMBER THAT:

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

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



# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARDS

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

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

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

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

# PRINT COMPETITION ENTRY CARD

(Affix to upper left corner of back of print)

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

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

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

Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar Apr

Print Category (Select One):

- Assigned Topic
- General/Color
- Monochrome

### PLACE:

1st	2nd	_____
3rd	4th	_____
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.*

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## SUBMITTING YOUR ENTRIES

**For 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.

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## WHY COMPETE?

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

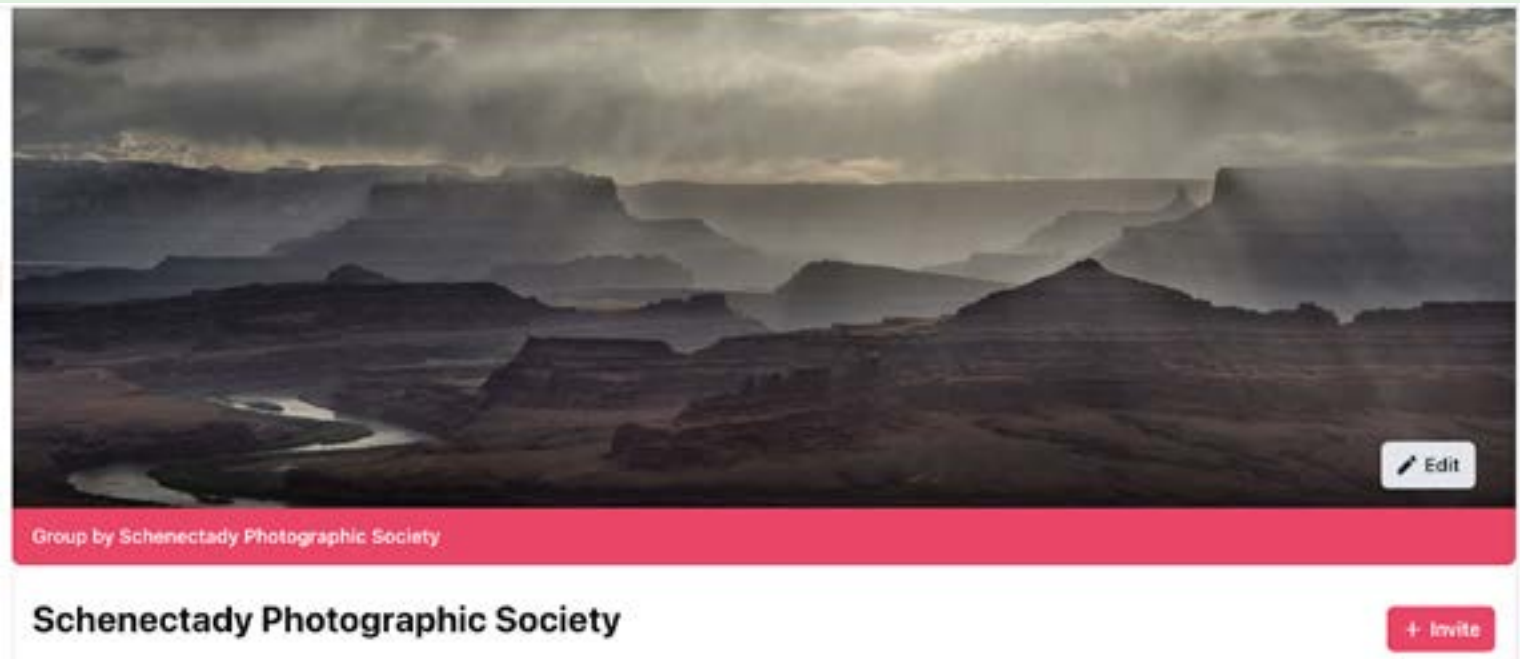
And, the best part...it gets you out and shooting.

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

We hope to see more members participating this season.

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

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



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

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



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

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

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



# PHOTO ESSAY 2024

The SPS 2024 Photo Essay Competition was held, in person at First United Methodist Church in Schenectady, on March 20.

For the first time since COVID, the Print Photo Essay category was added.



© Linda Tommasulo



© Linda Tommasulo

# PHOTO ESSAY 2024



© Neil Shapiro



© Neil Shapiro



© Linda Tommasulo



© Neil Shapiro



© Linda Tommasulo

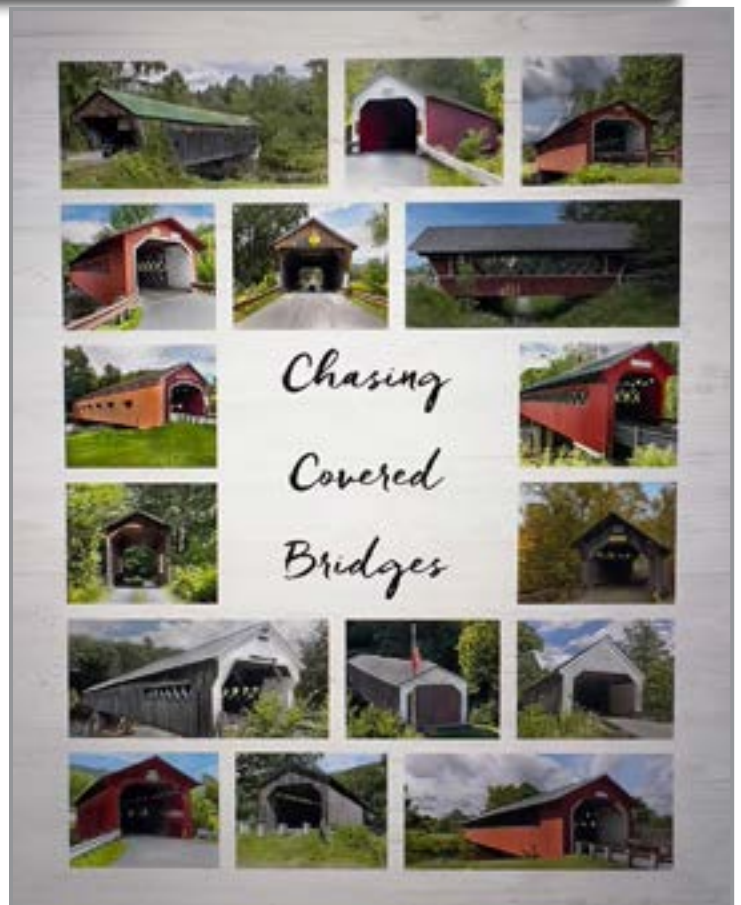
PHOTO ESSAY 2024  
~ Print ~

PHOTO  
ESSAY



© Linda Tommasulo

**First Place:**  
"Dragonflies of Clifton Park, NY"  
© Joe Cotroneo



**2nd Place:**  
"Chasing Covered Bridges"  
© Kristina Young

PHOTO ESSAY 2024  
~ Print ~



3rd Place:  
"A Visit to La Boqueria Market in Barcelona"  
© Dan Steen

**Photo Essay Judge: Cindy Schultz**

*Independent Photographer based in Albany, NY.*

Without a doubt, the best part of my job is meeting people from all walks of life and telling their stories through pictures. Originally from Minneapolis, a staff position with the Albany Times Union brought me to the East Coast by way of Michigan. Politics rule the day in this capital city, and I've witnessed history in the making while covering the statehouse. After nearly 20 years with the Capital Region's largest publication, my sense of adventure took over, and I headed for the Last Frontier. For two summers, I worked in Alaska as a photography guide leading small group tours and workshops.

Today I'm a regular contributor to The New York Times and other national and local editorial publications. I also collaborate with educational institutions, nonprofits and small businesses creating brand libraries for digital platforms and marketing materials. My work has been recognized by American Photography for the past three years in a row, and I've exhibited regionally. A participant in the prestigious Eddie Adams Workshop, I hold a journalism degree from the University of Minnesota where I graduated magna cum laude.

I do not discriminate based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion or politics.

*Select Client List: The New York Times, Washington Post,  
The Wall Street Journal  
CNN, Reuters, New York Post,  
Adirondack Explorer, The Evangelist*

*cschultzphoto.com*



PHOTO ESSAY 2024  
~ Digital ~

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**First Place:**  
"September"  
© Janice Prichett

*Sites and Sounds*  
*Kampala, Uganda*

**2nd Place:**  
"Sites and Sounds, Kampala, Uganda"  
© Connie Frisbee Houde

A link to all Photo Essay entries will be posted shortly to the SPS website.

Thanks to all who entered this year's competition and shared their stories with us.

**Why I am a street  
photographer?**

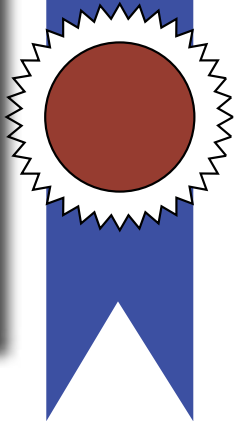
**A short photo essay by  
Rich Schreiberstein**

**3rd Place:**  
"Why I am a Street Photographer"  
© Rich Schreiberstein

# MARCH WINNING PRINTS

Topic: Transportation

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**First Place:**  
"Soft Landing"  
© Janice Prichett



**2nd Place:**  
"T680"  
© Linda Tommasulo  
Continued...

# MARCH WINNING PRINTS



3rd Place:  
"It's a Chevy"  
© Kristina Young



## Honorable Mention



"Little Boxes"  
© Connie Frisbee Houde

# MARCH WINNING PRINTS

## Honorable Mention

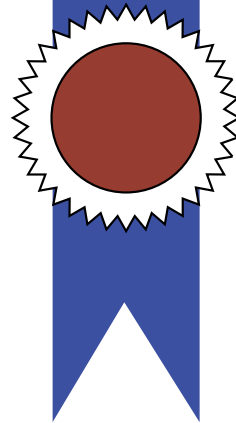
“Just Cruisin’”  
© Alan Wiggins



“A Journey Through Time”  
© Neil Shapiro



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### **Print Judge: David Fingerhut**

David Fingerhut had been taking photographs for over 50 years. He is a Saratoga Springs resident, specializing in nature photography and enjoys photographing the American Landscape. His photographs have been shown in 16 countries at exhibits sponsored by the Photographic Society of America, and has been designated a star exhibitor in both Nature and Color Photography.

David is a past president and director of the Colonial Camera Club in Massachusetts. He's won numerous awards and has judged photography competitions for 16 different camera clubs. His photographs have appeared in books, calendars, and magazines.

For two years David has had winning entries in the Boston Globe photo contest. His photo entitled “Royal Canadian Goose” won first place from over 3,000 entries and was subsequently printed in a *Time-Life* book, *The National Enquirer*, and *Popular Photography* and was placed on exhibit at the Epcot Center.

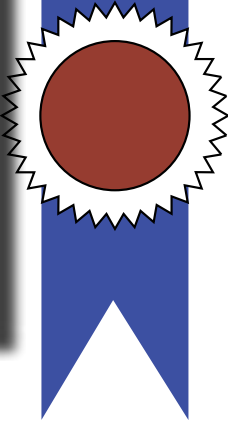
<https://davidbfingerhut.zenfolio.com/>



# MARCH WINNING PRINTS



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**First Place:**  
"Girl in Flower Dress"  
© Alan Wiggins



**2nd Place:** "Cinque Terra"  
© Greg Efner

# MARCH WINNING PRINTS



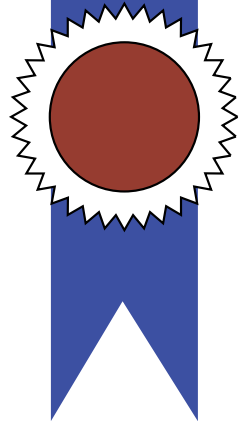
3rd Place:  
"Welcome Home"  
© Janice Prichett

## Honorable Mention



"Petals in Prayer"  
© Janice Prichett

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# MARCH WINNING PRINTS

## Honorable Mention

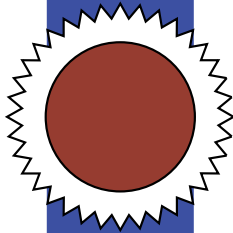


"Who Are You?"  
© Connie Frisbee Houde



"Park Puddle Reflection"  
© Linda Tommasulo

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# MARCH WINNING PRINTS

MONOCHROME



**First Place:**  
"Ghost in the Circle"  
© Alan Wiggins



**2nd Place;**  
"Breakfast Club"  
© Janie Prichett

MARCH  
WINNING PRINTS

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3rd Place:  
"Steel Wheels"  
© Neil Shapiro

Honorable  
Mention



"Old Barn"  
© Greg Efner

MARCH  
WINNING PRINTS  
Honorable Mention



"Old First Church"  
© Greg Efner



"K9 Kin"  
© Marty Bannan

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

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**First Place:**  
"Book Tower"  
© Elena Keesee

**Topic:**  
**Stacks**



**2nd Place:**  
"Zen Bubble"  
© Janice Prichett



**Digital Judge:** Thomas Robinson

Thomas Robinson is a husband, a web developer and passionate about photography. As a photographer since 2003, he has taken approximately half a million photos. In 2009 he graduated from Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. Thomas works for Crowerks – a graphic design company in Bend, Oregon and travels and makes photos in his free time.

Thomas began Zoomdak Photography in 2009 as a way to share his nature photography with the world. Zoomdak specializes in Pacific Northwest nature and landscape photos.

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

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

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3rd Place:  
"Nuts and Marbles"  
© Joe Cotroneo



"Books"  
© Kristina Young

## Honorable Mention



MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES  
Honorable Mention

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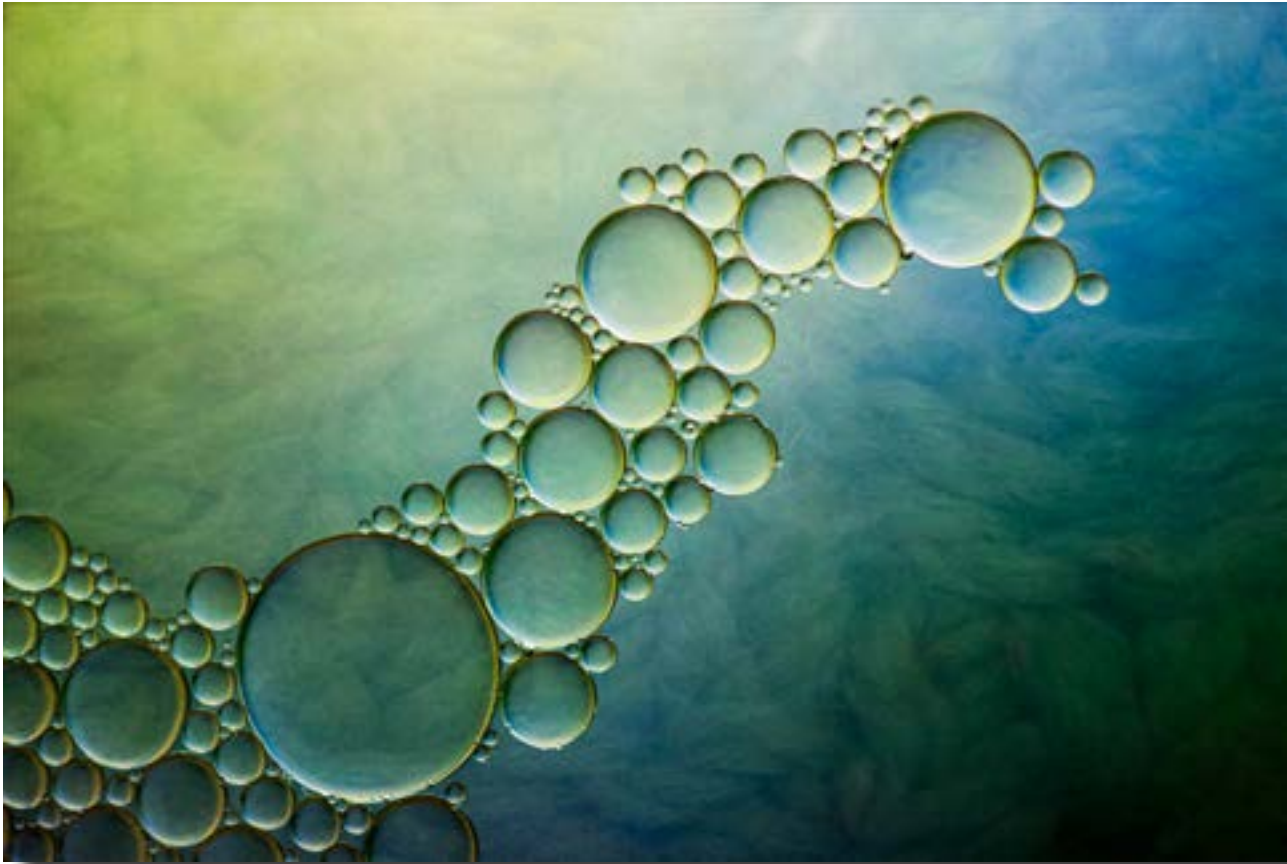


"Treman"  
© Linda Tommasulo



"Window Seats"  
© Phil Olivo

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



**First Place:**  
"Bubblesaurus -  
An Oil and Water Abstract"  
© Joe Cotroneo

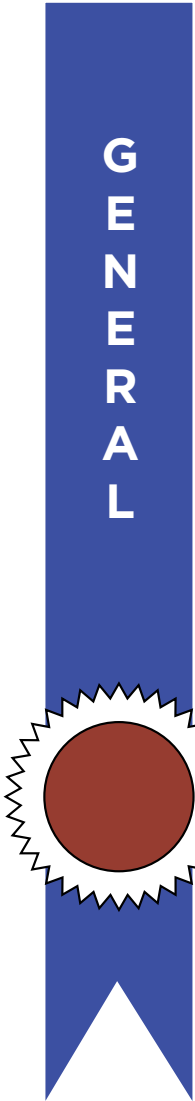


**2nd Place:**  
"Autumn Mist, Ivy Island"  
© Janice Prichett

MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



3rd Place:  
"Pretty in Pink"  
©Sean Sullivan



4th Place:  
"Everyone Loves a Good Play on Words"  
© Phil Olivo

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



5th Place:  
"Perfect Balance"  
© Dan Steen



"Barrelling"  
© Bill Lanahan

**Honorable Mention**



"Foggy Takeoff"  
© Linda Tommasulo



# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES



"One with Nature"  
© Neil Shapiro

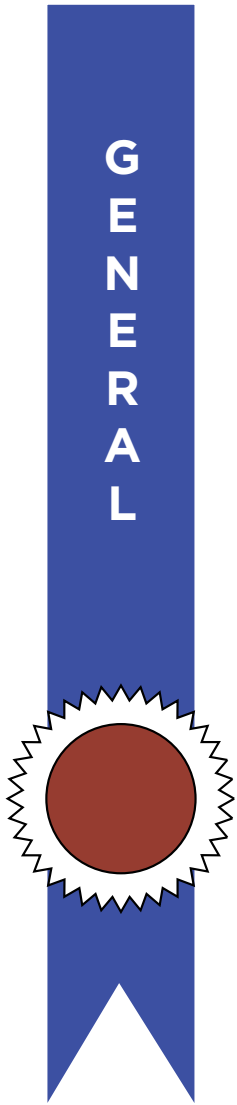
**Honorable Mention**



"Where Mama Goes We Follow"  
© Linda Tommasulo



"Crater Blue"  
© Neil Shapiro



MARCH WINNING  
DIGITAL IMAGES



**First Place:**  
"Winding Up"  
© Neil Shapiro



**2nd Place:**  
"Fog on Brown Tract Pond"  
© Linda Tommasulo

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

MONOCHROME



3rd Place:  
"UAlbany at Night"  
© Dan Steen

## Honorable Mention



"Eight Seconds of Mayhem"  
© Bill Lanahan

# MARCH WINNING DIGITAL IMAGES

## Honorable Mention

MONOCHROME



"How Dry I Am II"  
© Elena Keesee



"Multiplicity"  
© Neil Shapiro



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# PHOTO & VIDEO Hunt's EST. 1889

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Socialize with us for the latest events and specials.



@ [huntsphotovideo](#)



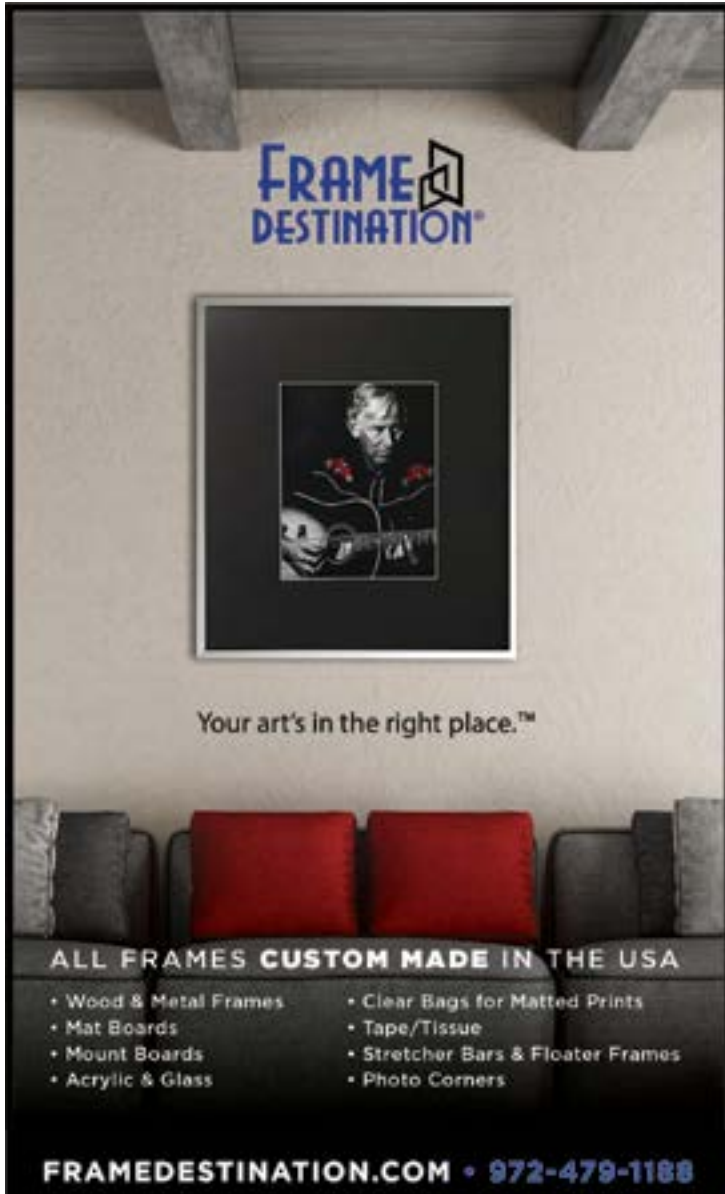
@ [huntsphoto](#)

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

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



## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS



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

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

To become a registered SPS member on our website follow these steps:

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

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

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

## NOT A MEMBER OF SPS YET? JOIN TODAY

SEASON STARTED WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2023

Membership:

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

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

These links SHOULD NOT be shared to non-members.

Members will be able to access all Zoom meetings prior to their membership becoming effective.

Click here to join:

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

# ABOUT THE SCHENECTADY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



For 90+ years, the Schenectady Photographic Society has been the meeting place of photographers of all levels—from beginners to serious amateurs to professionals—with the goal of exploring and sharing their love of photography. Members throughout the Capital Region (and beyond, thanks to Zoom!) meet on Wednesday nights to engage in various competitions (digital, photo essay and more), share their vision with like-minded photographers, enjoy guest speaker presentations and other member benefits to further their knowledge, creativity and inspiration.

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

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

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

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

## SPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2023-2024

President .....Joe Cotroneo

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

Vice President .....Linda Tommasulo

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

Treasurer .....Pat McCormick

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

Recording Secretary .....Paula Keefe

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

Newsletter Editor .....Linda Tommasulo

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

Webmaster & Annual Report Editor... Sean Sullivan

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

Membership Chair: ..... OPEN

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

Print Group ..... Alan Wiggins

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

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

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

Photo Essay ..... OPEN

Judge Coordinator .....Neil Shapiro

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

Field Trip Coordinator .....Janice Prichett

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

Communications ..... Sean Sullivan

& Linda Tommasulo

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

**LUBA RICKET CREATIVITY COORDINATOR**

Joan Heffler

**TRAVELING EXHIBIT COORDINATORS**

Bert van Grondelle, Jerry Boehm,  
Rich Schreiberstein

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

**REFRESHMENT COORDINATORS**

Judy Breslau & John Ogden

**Connect with the Schenectady Photographic Society:**

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

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

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

Instagram: @schenectadyp photographic

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

Contact Linda at [newsletter@spsphoto.org](mailto:newsletter@spsphoto.org).

# SPS 2023-2024 SEASON CALENDAR

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

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

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

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

## October, 2023

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

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

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

Assigned Topic: Outside at Night  
Judge: Frank Rapant

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

Assigned Topic: Balance  
Judge: Johanna Siegmann

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

Alan Shapiro: Street Portraiture

## November, 2023

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

Assigned Topic: Nautical  
Judge: Fred Neudoerffer

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

Assigned Topic: Music  
Judge: Wendy Nelson

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

Sarah Marino: Creative Approaches to Photographing  
Plants and Flowers

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

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

Mark Fitzgerald: Masking in Lightroom Classic

## December, 2023

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

Assigned Topic: Flowers  
Judge: Angela Breyette

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

Assigned Topic: Multiple Exposure  
Judge: Lisa Cuchara

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

Matt Payne: Creating a Website to Sell Your Prints

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

## January, 2024

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

Assigned Topic: Reflections  
Judge: Stephanie Palazeke

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

Assigned Topic: Decay  
Judge: Lev Tsimring

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

Beth Ruggerio: Getting Started in Night Photography

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

Photo Essay Inspiration - 2023 Winners Discuss Their Essays

## January, 2024 (Cont'd.)

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

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

## February, 2024

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

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

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

Assigned Topic: Wood  
Judge: Steve Simon

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

Tony Sweet: The Surreal World of Infrared Photography

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

James Maher: From Cities to Suburbs (Street Photography)

## March, 2024

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

Assigned Topic: Transportation  
Judge: David Fingerhut

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

Assigned Topic: Stacks  
Judge: Thomas Robinson

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

Judge: Cindy Schultz

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

Silvana Della Camera: Color, Contrast, Lighting &  
Composition

## April, 2024

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

Assigned Topic: Heat  
Judge: Richard Lovrich

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

Assigned Topic: Triangles  
Judge: Tom Cuchara

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

Judge: Lawrence White

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

## May, 2024

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

Peter Bosco: The American Snapshot

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

Judges: Natalie Cartz & Mark McCarty

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

Judges: Chris Murray & Shannon Calvert

## June, 2024

**Awards Banquet - Date & Location TBA**