

*Cameras*derie

The Newsletter of the NIH Camera Club, Bethesda, MD Vol. 61 (9); May 2022





The NIH
CAMERA
CLUB

May 2022
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Monthly meeting dates and topics from website can be found here:

<https://www.nihcameraclub.com/events/>

For comments or questions contact club president Margaret Sprott at margaret.sprott@gmail.com

NIH Camera Club Monthly Meeting will be held on **June 14, 2022**



Come early to socialize. The room opens at 6:30.



Agenda for Meeting:

- Elections of Treasurer and Secretary for 2 year term
- Annual Award Ceremony
- Lasko Award
- Picture of the Year (see below for details)

Our last meeting of the club year is on Tuesday, June 14, 2022. In addition to our annual awards ceremony and regular club business, we will also hold competitions for the Color and Monochrome Images of the Year.

What to Know:

If you would like to enter your images for the Color and Monochrome Images of the Year competitions, here's what you need to know:

1. You may enter up to two images in the Color Competition and up to two images in the Monochrome Competition.
2. The image(s) you enter must be ones that you submitted to one of our club competitions or critiques during this club year (2021-2022).
3. The image(s) do not have to have won an award.
4. There are no novice or advanced classes.
5. Judging is done by your fellow club members using a numerical rating system.
6. No points are awarded to the winners of this competition.

Submitting your Images:

Submit your entries at the NIH Camera Club website. Choose either the Color or Monochrome competition as appropriate for the competition date of June 14, 2022.

The deadline to submit your images is Sunday, June 5, 2022, before 11:59 p.m.

Voting:

Everyone in the club will receive a link to vote in the competition. Voting ends on Sunday, June 12, 2022.

Summary of Dates:

Sunday, June 5 before midnight - Deadline to submit images

Sunday, June 12 before midnight - Deadline for voting

Tuesday, June 14, 7:00 p.m. - Meeting / Awards / Competition Night



President's Chat

May 2022

By Margaret Sprott



I just left a very productive NIHCC Board Meeting where we discussed our plans for the coming year. The main topic was how to have our meetings and after considering the results of the recent survey and continuing concern about Covid, we decided to have Zoom meetings through the end of the year but will look into having hybrid meetings at times. The 5 Star Premier Residence is quite willing to have us back so **Quentin Fisher, Dale Lewis and Sammy Katta** will meet with Residence personnel regarding equipment for hybrid meetings.

The NIHCC members extend their sincere sympathy to **Dale Lewis**, one of our digital czars, for the loss of his sister, Bernadette Lewis Liddie, who passed away May 20, 2022. She had four daughters, one son, many grand-children and two great-grandkids.

In order to help our members decide which images to enter into the Mid-Atlantic Photo Visions competitions, we will have a special advice meeting on August 9 so that members will be able to select their best images and/or shoot other ones to enter.

We also discussed ways we can begin to have print competitions and to learn more about printing. The educational sessions in October and November will be devoted to learning more about printing. Watch for announcements about these sessions.

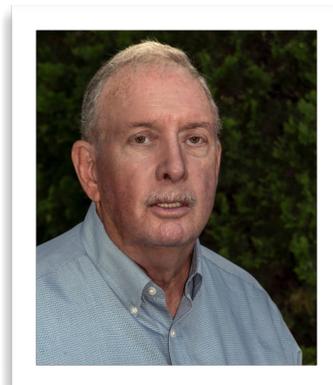
The end of year “party” will be full of announcements about awards, the election of a Secretary and Treasurer for 2-year terms, voting for the images of the year, and enjoying the images that members share with us. On May 22 **Ann McDermott** sent a message to all of you about how to send your images for the image of the year competition. The deadline is June 5 and I hope we see many entries.

Susanne Dater plans to find out more about the polo event later in the summer in the hope that a field trip can be planned. The peonies are almost over but sunflowers will be coming in July and you may have to go to them alone unless you want to organize a field trip to photograph them. Anyone who knows of photo ops is welcome to spread the word to the club, with or without planning a field trip. I keep hoping that **Brenda Benson and Maureen Gardner** will someday have lighter workloads so they can continue to organize field trips for us.

I hope all of you are enjoying the occasional sunny, warm days and that we won't have many more rainy, stormy, sweltering days but I guess that's hoping too much. No matter the weather, keep shooting and keep enjoying photography.



PSA Rep Rap May 2022 By Dick Sprott



A couple of nights ago I had the pleasure of participating in a PSA webinar “Artistic Expression Through Smartphone Photography” presented by Michael Koren. Some of you may know Michael as he is a member of the Silver Spring Camera Club and a well-known photography expert and educator in our area. That webinar, which I found very interesting, reminded me that I haven’t made much use of PSA webinars of late. These webinars are free to all *individual* paid up PSA members, so if you fit that description let this serve as a reminder that the webinars are available (Clubs Councils and Chapters are not eligible to view webinars). If you are not a PSA member, here is yet another reason to join.

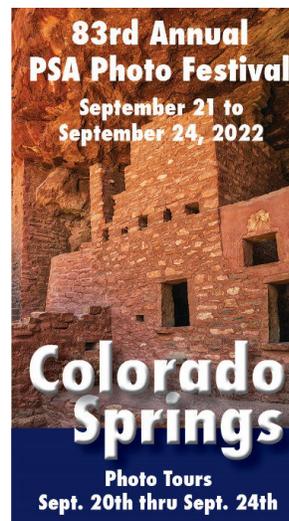
Currently there are more than forty webinars available on the PSA website. To view a webinar a member must request permission to view the webinar or webinars (up to 3 at a time) through the PSA website. Once permission is granted, you can then view the webinar. As of this writing (May 22), access to webinar requests is not working on the new site. That should be fixed by the time you read this column. Please let me know if you encounter any problems so I can help.

The forty two available webinars are divided into five groups: Software (5), Travel (6), Techniques (12), Street and Urban (6), and Miscellaneous (13). Michael Koren’s webinar should be added to the site soon.

Members of PSA receive notices of upcoming webinars from Shiv Verma, FPSA and need to register in response to his email to be able to join the webinar. Shiv sends notices well in advance so that members can plan to attend if they wish. This function works very well.

The full list of webinars can be found now at: <https://psa-photo.org/page/webinars>.

As is apparent from this column, the new PSA website still has glitches. If you encounter one (or more!), please let me know and use the reporting mechanism on the site as well. This site is not only a way for members to communicate, but a way to present PSA to the world. Your comments are important.





Mid-Atlantic Photo Visions

May 2022

By Ann McDermott



Come join the fun in planning one of the best photo events in the Mid-Atlantic region, Mid-Atlantic Photo Visions.

We are excitedly planning events for this year and need your help! As you may know, MAPV is an all-volunteer group serving 9 camera clubs in the Mid-Atlantic region and we are grateful for our volunteers who make it all happen. Please take a look at the volunteer openings <https://midatlanticphotovisions.org/volunteer-opportunities/> and let us know if you can give us a little of your time and talent for our 20th year. More Information: <https://midatlanticphotovisions.org>



Maryland
Photography Alliance™

Subject: A Night Out at the Baltimore Museum of Industry

Are you ready for a fun-filled night on the waterfront? Tickets for this casual, in-person fundraiser include all you can eat, drink & play in the ample spaces of the Baltimore Museum of Industry's galleries & waterfront pavilion. While you dine with friends, play a round of mini-golf for prizes, or try your luck winning the Wagon of Cheer, you'll be providing critical support for the BMI's educational programs. "A Night Out at the Baltimore Museum of Industry" is going to take place on Thursday, June 16 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please go to www.thebmi.org/programs-events/night-out/

The Maryland Photography Alliance (MPA) is a proud supporter of BMI.



Maryland
Photography Alliance™

Subject: MPA – “NEW DATES” - Two Great Night Photography Workshops

The Maryland Photography Alliance (MPA) is please to sponsor these events!

Southern Dorchester County, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, is a wonderful location for photography. We'll explore two fishing villages on Hoopers Island, a narrow stretch of land between the Chesapeake Bay and the Honga River, which dates back to the 1600's. We'll also explore the once-thriving towns of Crapo, Wingate, Bishops Head, Toddville and Crocheron, which have fallen on hard times and are sparsely inhabited, but which still maintain a connection to the seafood industry.

We'll be working around fishing villages, old churches and cemeteries, abandoned boats, and more, which are charming by day, and even more compelling at night. Learning how to deal with low-light and night-time scenes can open up an entirely new world of subject matter for the photographer. We'll begin at sunset and shoot the moonrise as well.

We're here to teach you the techniques of night photography, including tips on using a tripod, using a remote, white balance, focusing in the dark, getting a good exposure, using the histogram, long exposures, light painting, and shooting the moon and the stars (if it's not too cloudy).

A working knowledge of how to work your camera in manual mode will be very useful for this workshop. If the skies are clear, there will be some instruction in Milky Way photography as well.

Dates:

Hoopers Island Workshop – Saturday, June 18, 2022 – 8:00 PM – 11:00 PM

Crapo-Crocheron Workshop – Saturday, June 25, 2022 – 8:00 PM – 11:00 PM

The workshops will be led by Robert Sullivan (Working Image Photography) and Kim Kelly (Kim Kelly Images).

For more information and to register go to

Hoopers Island Workshop - <https://www.workingimagephotography.com/next-workshop/june18/hoopersisland>

Crapo-Crocheron Workshop - <https://www.workingimagephotography.com/next-workshop/june25/crapotocrocheron>

Have Questions?

Contact Robert Sullivan at: workingimage@fastmail.com

Contact Kim Kelly at: kimkellyimages@gmail.com



COMPETITION TOPICS AND DEFINITIONS 2022-23



For comments or questions contact
Margaret Sprott at margaret.sprott@gmail.com

Competition Rules for our Club have been updated and can be found here:
<https://www.nihcameraclub.com/competition-rules/>

2022

August- Critique -Because the critique for September had been intended to help members prepare for Mid-Atlantic Photo Visions which is too close to the September meeting, the critique was moved to August.

September-Open Any subject matter qualifies

October - Street Photography- Storytelling photographs of people or of events in people's public lives. Events can be of daily life activities, fairs, festivals, parades, or major events, so long as the subject(s) is(are) in public. Emphasis should be given to storytelling or documentation of the subjects or events. In the interest of credibility, photographs which misrepresent the truth, such as manipulation to alter the subject matter, or situations which are set up for the purposes of photography, are unacceptable.

November - Reflections - Any image or scene produced by or as if by a mirror. The reflected content can fill or merely be a part of the image as long as the reflection is the main subject or strongly supports the subject. Images such as trees or mountains reflected on a lake or buildings or sky reflected off a building are examples. Images in which a reflection is included as an important element.

December - Holiday Party

2023

January- Food- This comprises food/drink and items related to food/drink. The images may focus on the final prepared food/ beverage and/or its presentation or preparation. The images may include food/drink items in/from markets, butcher shops, bakeries, wineries, and the like. The images may feature food/beverage preparation/serving items, food preparation (close-up or more global), or dining set-ups.)

February-Patterns in Nature - Pattern in nature are visible regularities of form found in the natural world. These patterns recur in different contexts. Natural patterns include symmetries, spirals, meanders, waves, foams, tessellations, cracks and stripes.

March - Critique -

April - Macro - Images that result from the use of close-up lenses, macro lenses, etc., where the magnification of the subject exceeds that obtained with a standard lens at its closest focusing distance. Close-up images of any object(s), created with or without a macro lens.

May -Night Photography - Night photography comprises photos taken between sunset and sunrise where the light of the sun is not visible. Night photos may be of the night sky, moon or other astrological phenomena, or other outdoor scenes that may not include the night sky in the photo but where it is obvious to the viewer that it is nighttime. Photos taken inside, but clearly showing evidence of nighttime (i.e. night sky seen through window) are also permissible. Some artificial light is acceptable but should not be a significant part of the overall composition. Images of anything obviously taken after dark.

June - End of Year Party-TBA



Competition Winners May 2022

Wide Angle

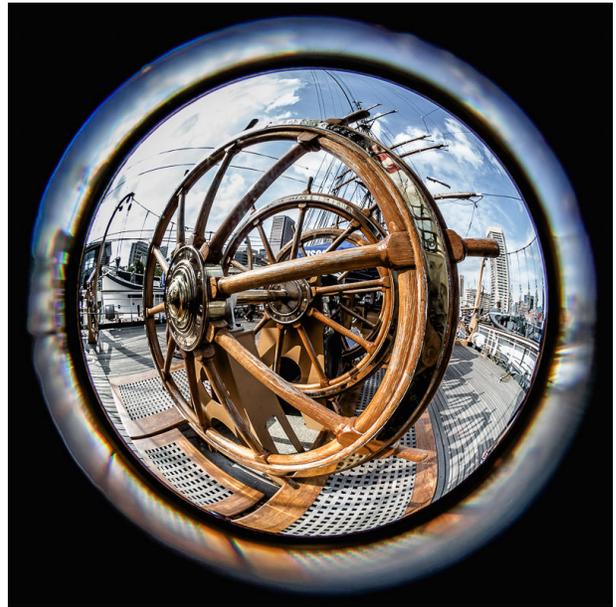


| | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Advanced Color | | |
| Doug Wolters | Ship's Wheel | 1 |
| Gosia Klosek | White Sand Wave | 2 |
| John Norvell | Desert Mud Flats | 3 |
| Nancy Axelrod | Stars and Lavender | H |
| Gosia Klosek | Monuments at Twilight | H |
| Diane Poole | It Was All Yellow | H |
| David Terao | Colorful Rooms | H |
| Novice Color | | |
| Goutam Sen | Arches over Rock | 1 |
| Robin Downing | Sierra Broudscape | 2 |
| Advanced Monochrome | | |
| Stan Collyer | Mosque Fisheye | 1 |
| Stan Collyer | Grain Elevator | 2 |
| Peter Dunner | Ellis Island Hospital | 3 |
| John Norvell | Western Tracks | H |
| Kay Norvell | Ghost Town Cemetery | H |
| Doug Wolters | Not a Bank | H |
| Novice Monochrome | | |
| Goutam Sen | Twister | 1 |
| Goutam Sen | Arch | 2 |

Advanced Color

First Place: “Ship’s Wheel” By Doug Wolters

This was taken in Baltimore at the Inner Harbor. I shot it with a Lensbaby fisheye 5.8mm lens. I love the way this lens includes the barrel and some light around it, resulting in the black circle around the wheel and the very out of focus area beyond it. Shot with a Canon 5D Mark III, 1/80 sec, ISO 400.



Second Place: “White Sand Wave” By Gosia Klosek

This image captures the dynamic shapes of sand dunes at White Sands NP. To focus on the shadows and their shapes, I desaturated the blues of the sky. Nikon ISO 250 f/10 1/640 sec 48 mm



Third Place: “Desert Mud Flats” By John Norvell



HM: “Stars and Lavender”

By Nancy Axelrod

This image was made this past July in the Valensole Plain in Provence, France. The area was so isolated that the stars, including the Milky Way, were prominent and the only light pollution was the two red dots and the bright band near the horizon, which the judge suggested I should eliminate. The spectacular lavender plants, which were only in bloom for a couple of weeks, were illuminated by painting with a flashlight. Sony a6400 camera (APS-C) with a Sony 10-18mm lens at 11mm (16mm equivalent), 13”, f/4.0, ISO 4000. This was straight out of the camera (no post-processing), but I may play with it to bring out the Milky Way and to make the changes suggested by the judge.



HM: “Monuments at Twilight”

By Gosia Klosek

The vertical lines of the columns at the Lincoln Memorial, with the lit fountain jets and the pillars of the Second World War Memorial, span this wide view of a section of the National Mall. This pattern caught my attention. The illuminated Lincoln statue is in the center of this image. The setting sun adds red to the blue sky reflected in the WWII fountain pool.

Nikon ISO 320 f/9.0 1.6 sec 36mm



HM: “It Was All Yellow”

By Diane Poole

This image was taken in Boyerstown PA a few years ago. I could not get over the beauty of the yellow and the perfect way it was lighted! It was calling my name. Shot on my Iphone. I pumped up the yellow just a bit in Photoshop



HM: “Colorful Rooms”

By David Terao

This image was taken at the abandoned Cresson sanatorium and prison in Lilly, PA. It's a huge complex (20 buildings on 500 acres) where photographers are allowed to roam freely. But, you must be careful not to lock yourself in a room because no one will be able to find you. It's easy to get lost there, too! Note the black outline in the yellow room where a rake and shovel would hang. The outline is so the guards would know if there are any missing tools in the tool room. Every tool had a place and an outline. This image was taken with a 17mm tilt-shift lens.

Novice Color



First Place: “Arches over Rock”

By Goutam Sen

I was planning to capture the complete Milky way arch for a long time. Got the opportunity to shoot the Milky way arch at the Arches National Park, Utah. I chose the beautiful Balanced Rock as the foreground- instead of many arches present in the park. It's a panorama of nine pictures stitched together in Lightroom. I used f/2.2, 13 second exposure, ISO 3200



**Second Place: “Sierra Browserscape”
By Robin Downing**

Sometimes you see beautiful scenes while driving with friends or cousins and you don't have time to compose a picture, study the best angles, try different aperture settings, etc. You literally jump out of the car on the side of a highway and snap because that is all your friends have patience for. They believe they are magnanimous by just pulling over for you. This is one of those shots in the California Sierra Nevada mountains. -- Canon EOS 6D Mark II, 16 - 35mm lens, ISO 100, f/8.0, 1/320 sec.

Advanced Monochrome



**First Place: “ Mosque Fisheye”
By Stan Collyer**

The Diyanet Center of America is a community center and mosque in Lanham, MD, that occasionally welcomes photographers. It's a non-profit organization funded by the Turkish government, serving the Muslim community in the DC area. I few years ago I was fortunate to be part of a group given access to photograph the interior, as well as exterior, of the mosque. This image was shot using a tripod, looking upward at a 45 degree angle with a fisheye lens. After cropping (using a radial filter in Lightroom), I converted to B&W and made a few tonal adjustments. I used a Canon 8-15mm lens set to 8mm, at f/ 8.0, 1/13 sec, ISO 400.

**Second Place: “ Grain Elevator”
By Stan Collyer**

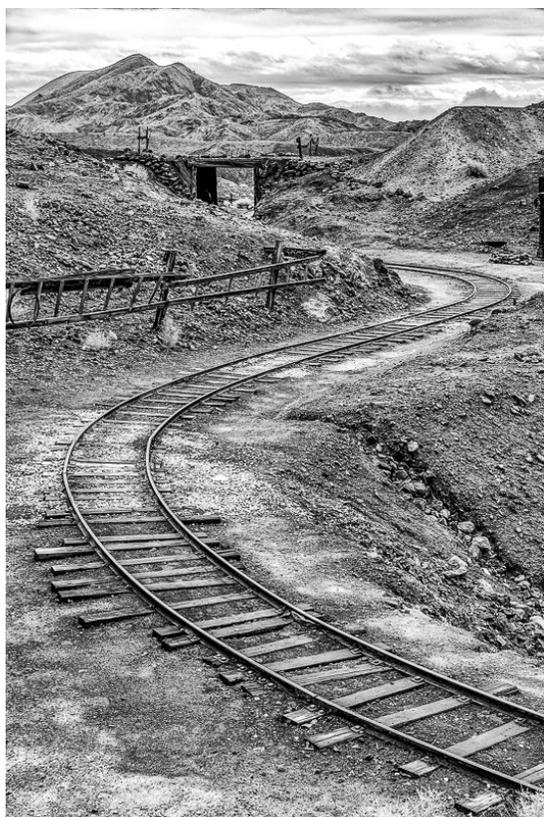
There are lots of opportunities to photograph interesting and unusual subjects in the Palouse region of southwestern Washington state. In addition to spectacular undulating farmscapes, there are plenty of old barns, houses and other structures standing ready for their closeups. This grain elevator, apparently not in use for decades, had a railroad track that took on a curved appearance when photographed with my trusty fisheye lens. Shot at 14mm, f/ 14, 1/40 sec, ISO 400. Minimal processing except for converting to B&W, and adding a vignette





Third Place: “Ellis Island Hospital”
By Peter Dunner

During the great period of immigration, Ellis Island was a processing station for new arrivals. there was a hospital where those who could be treated, were, and then released to the mainland. It was in use until 1954 and since then it fell into disrepair. It can be toured as part of the Ellis Island visit and makes for great photo ops



HM: “Western Tracks”
By John Norvell



HM: “Ghost Town Cemetery”
By Kay Norvell



**HM: “Not a Bank”
By Doug Wolters**

This image was taken during a break between the rehearsal and performance at a college in Northern Virginia – I forget its name! The building looks somewhat like a small bank, hence the title of the photo. Taken with a Canon 5D Mark III, Canon 8-15mm f/4L fisheye lens, 1/60 sec at f / 5.6, ISO 320.

Novice Monochrome



**HM: “Twister”
By Goutam Sen**

**HM: “Arch”
By Goutam Sen**

I have captured the different arches at the Arches National Park, Utah- and they all are very unique in their own way. Recently, I am experimenting with InfraRed filters and thought about how the arch will look – when no visible lights from the arch will hit the camera’s sensor. I converted the picture to B&W, and used NIK Silver Effect Pro to bring out the detailed texture of the rocks. I used f/8, 6 second exposure, ISO 200 in midday sun..



In Memoriam Susan Bick

By Saul Pleeter

I was very sad to hear of the passing of Susan Bick. Susan was the Lifestyle Director at the 5 Star Residence where we have our in-person meetings.

I worked with Susan for many years. My association started even before I was president of NIHCC, about 8 years ago, and continued thereafter. She would always greet me with a hug and we would talk about the things friends talk about. Our relationship started with a request - would the club provide a photographer to take portraits of the residents for the holiday season? Beth Koller and I volunteered. We took about 50 portraits that day - I think the youngest person we photographed was 89 and the oldest over 100. I remember taking a photo of a 96 year-old woman and showing it to her. She looked at it and said, "it's a nice photo, but why are there so many wrinkles?" Susan was very pleased with the results and the portraits were hung in the piano room for some time.

Over the next years we collaborated on many projects. The club started a summer program and Susan happily supplied the rooms for our meetings. One year we did a "A Day in the Life" project where the club bought about 40 disposable cameras and distributed them to any resident who wanted one. We showed them how to use the cameras and provided a little slide show to illustrate what we wanted. After collecting and processing, we put together a slide show of the photos they took with music. The photos were not memorable, but the show was a big hit. The residents loved seeing their photos and were singing to the music.

We worked with Susan on a number of projects over the years - the travelogues, portrait sessions, a project called 'hands of aging' - photographs of the residents' hands holding objects or photos from their youth, a project to assist residents with memory issues. Some of the projects were Susan's ideas, some were ours. It really didn't matter - Susan was always willing to help us. I can't recall a single instance where she said no to any request we had.

Susan and I had talked about other projects - green screen magazine covers, another 'Day in the Life' project - this time a video- but then Covid hit and everything stopped. I visited the 5 Star about 3 months ago, went to Susan's office to say hello and discovered that she had retired. Unfortunately, the retirement was for health reasons.

Susan was a good friend of NIHCC and she will be missed.





Final Results have been announced for the PSA Projected Image Division (PID) Interclub Competition By Quentin Fisher

And the winners...

The final results of the PSA Interclub Digital Projection competition have been announced!

Congratulations to the NIHCC, as we finished the year in second place of 24 clubs! As you may recall, this competition between clubs is an annual event, which proceeds over three rounds (November, February, and April). For each round, clubs submit their 6 best photos (we voted for those entrants) which are then scored by a non-participating club. On this third round NIHCC placed first with 64 points (the maximum is 90; 15 per photo), and second in overall final standing. We did quite well next to the first place Nashoba Valley Club, but they excelled in Round 2 for a higher overall score.

Thanks to the 21 club members who participated this year.

- Gorilla - David Terao 13 points (Merit)
- Letting go - Diane Poole 11 points (HM)
- Playing the trumpet - Brandon Kim 9 points
- Lily-1 - Dale Lewis 9 points
- Leafscape - Douglas Wolters 9 points
- Oculus and reflection - Peter Dunner 10 points

It's not over!

In each round, the judges award "Merit" and "Honorable Mention" to 20% of the entries. NIHCC has five award winners this year – David Terao (thrice - "Jumping Spider in a Dalia"-HM), "Gorilla"-Merit and "Ballet Reflections"-Merit), Diane Poole ("Letting Go"-HM) and Coriolana Simon ("Still Life without Sound"-Merit). At the end of the year, the Merit and HM photos are resubmitted to yet another panel for selection of the "Best of the Best." - Those results will be announced when they are presented from the PSA.

**See some really good photography.*

You can view all the various clubs' winning images on the PSA website.

There are a lot of really good, interesting photos there!!

<https://resources.psa-photo.org/index.php?2021-22-season>

Note, you may need to create a login. Since NIHCC is a member of the PSA, there should be no problem getting to the website.

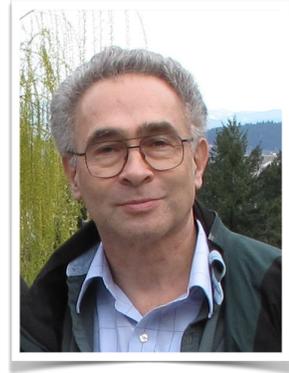
| GROUP D | Location | Rd 1 | Rd 2 | Rd 3 | Total | Standings |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|-------|-----------|
| Nashoba Valley Photo Club | MA | 61 | 71 | 59 | 191 | 1 |
| NIH Camera Club | MD | 61 | 63 | 61 | 185 | 2 |
| Monmouth Camera Club | NJ | 61 | 59 | 64 | 184 | 3 |
| Houston Camera Club | TX | 63 | 59 | 60 | 182 | 4 |
| Norths Photographic Society | Australia | 56 | 65 | 60 | 181 | 5 |

Final Standings



Famous Photographers

By Stephen Levitas



#72 May 2022

Cameraderie

Frederick Sommer
(1905-99)



Portrait by Edward Weston
(#1, Oct. 2012), 1944.

Frederick Sommer is the fifth of five founders of the Center for Creative Photography (CCP) at the University of Arizona that I am currently working through. Before him, I have already discussed Ansel Adams (#12, March 2014), Wynn Bullock (#66, Nov. 2021), Aaron Siskind (#70, March 2022), and Harry Callahan (#71, April 2022).

Sommer is most widely known as a photographer, but also maintained lifelong interests in drawing, painting, collage, poetry, and prose. He is known for his highly original approach to his photography. Subjects include animal parts, macabre still lifes, and landscapes keeping below the horizon line.

I discussed the CCP at length two months ago in the Aaron Siskind article. The website of the CCP is here: <https://ccp.arizona.edu/>

The CCP has an excellent biography of Sommer and summary of his artistic accomplishment in many domains, including photography: <https://ccp.arizona.edu/artists/frederick-sommer> Please look at this website to see many of Sommer's very innovative and original photographic ventures that I don't have space here to even sample.

From the CCP site:

...he began crafting a body of work unparalleled in the history of the medium for its diverse and experimental qualities. He found the Arizona landscape imbued with a surreal quality that resonated with his unique aesthetic sensibilities: a formal elegance and a cool exactitude coupled with a penchant for emotionally charged—and sometimes even shocking or macabre—subject matter. Sommer's work also possesses a technical mastery that has contributed to his status as a legendary photographer.

The Wikipedia article on Sommer is here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Sommer

From the Wikipedia article, here is a totally unique artistic story, even though it is not about photography:

Drawings in the Manner of Musical Scores

In 1934, Frederick Sommer visited Los Angeles. Walking through the art museum one day, he noticed a display of musical scores. He saw them not as music, but as graphics, and found in them an elegance and grace that led him to a careful study of scores and notation.

He found that the best music was visually more effective and attractive. He assumed that there was a correlation between music as we hear it and its notation; and he wondered if drawings that used notational motifs and elements could be played. He made his first “drawings in the manner of musical scores” that year. (After reviewing this text, Fred asked that the author refer to his scores “only” in this way. When the author suggested that it was perhaps too long to be repeated throughout the text, he laughed and said, “Well, use it at least once.”)

Although people knew of his scores, and occasionally brought musicians to his house to play them, no one ever stayed with it for long. In 1967, both Walton Mendelson and Stephen Aldrich attended Prescott College, Prescott, Arizona, where Sommer was on the faculty. They barely knew of his reputation as a photographer, and nothing of the scores. Towards the end of September he invited them to his house for dinner, but they were to come early, and Mendelson was to bring my [his] flute. “Can you play that?” he asked, as they looked at one of the scores, framed, and sitting atop his piano. With no guidance from him, they tried. Nervous and unsure of what they were getting into, they stopped midway through. Mendelson asked Aldrich where he was in the score: he pointed to where Mendelson had stopped. They knew then, mysterious though the scores were, they could be played. On May 9, 1968, the first public performance of the music of Frederick Sommer was given at Prescott College.

Sommer had no musical training. He didn't know one note from another on his piano, nor could he read music. His record collection was surprisingly broad for that time, and his familiarity with it was thorough. What surprised Mendelson and Aldrich when they first met him were his visual skills: he could identify many specific pieces and almost any major composer by looking at the shapes of the notation on a page of printed music.

Of Sommer's known works, his drawings, glue-color on paper, photographs, and writings, it is only these scores that have been a part of his creative life throughout the entirety of his artistic career. He was still drawing elegant scores in 1997. And like his skip reading, they are the closest insight to his creative process, thinking and aesthetic.

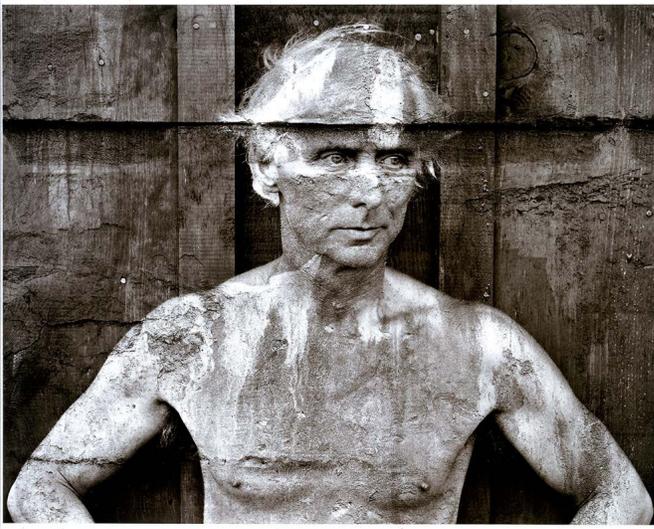
The official Sommer website is here, and has extensive samples of his images: <http://www.fredericksommer.org/>

See and browse the following website for many of Sommer's images:

WikiArt (Visual Arts Encyclopedia): <https://www.wikiart.org/en/frederick-sommer>

The National Gallery of Art has an extensive website on Sommer, including articles on his history and various accomplishments: <https://www.nga.gov/collection/photographs/frederick-sommer.html>

Here are some of Sommer's best-known images:



Portrait of [artist] Max Ernst, 1946.

The following commentary is from the Victoria and Albert Museum website documenting an exhibition of Sommer's work: <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/f/frederick-sommer-exhibition/>

In his portrait of [artist Max] Ernst, Sommer uses double exposure, combining a photograph of the artist with one of water stains on cement. In doing so, he evokes the Surrealist technique of 'frottage' (rubbing) [which Ernst invented and used in some of his own work] and transforms an otherwise straightforward portrait into an uncanny homage.

The following commentary is from the official Sommer Foundation website: <http://www.fredericksommer.org/>

Sommer was disappointed with the negative he had taken of the surrealist painter and discarded it in to the corner of his darkroom counter. Later, when cleaning out the corner he picked up the negative with another rejected negative, of water seepage stains on a cement wall and realized he had something special. Exposing the negatives separately (one after the other) onto the same sheet of photographic paper, Sommer created this unique portrait of Max Ernst.

According to the National Gallery of Art website on Sommer: <https://www.nga.gov/collection/photographs/frederick-sommer.html> , Ernst saw this as the definitive portrait of himself.



Chicken (membrane pulled over head of chicken), 1939.

This is the shocking subject matter mentioned earlier, but it is quite a famous image. Needless to say, there is symbolic meaning in showing a decapitated chicken, and one blinded by its own skin.

The following commentary is from the official Sommer Foundation website: <http://www.fredericksommer.org/>

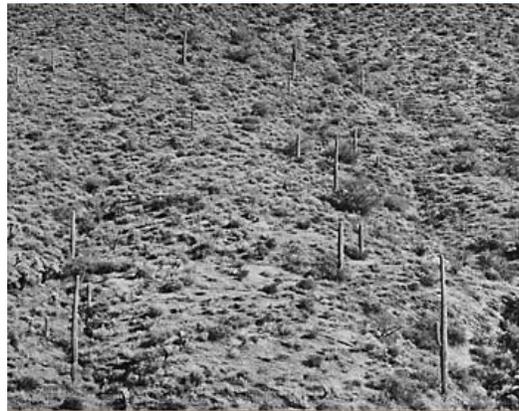
The still life material that had Sommer's attention from 1938 to 1941 was gathered from the butcher's refuse box at the Piggly Wiggly grocery store on the corner of Montezuma and Gurley Streets in Prescott, Arizona. At this time chickens were delivered by the farmers on Thursdays whole and plucked. When you purchased a chicken, the butcher would weigh it, cut off the head, open it up, take out the innards and then finish the job to fit your cooking needs. The contents in the refuse box consisted only of heads, ovipositors, intestines, anuses and testicles of the chickens butchered that day.



Ondine, 1950.

And here is the macabre. The title refers to a mythological water nymph story that has been made into plays, films, ballets, and other art forms throughout the centuries. See this Wikipedia entry for “Undine,” the original form of “Ondine:” [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Undine_\(novella\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Undine_(novella)). “Undine” is a contributing story to Hans Christian Andersen’s *The Little Mermaid* story. As far as this image is concerned, perhaps the “eating” of a doll’s leg by a coarsely-surfaced arm represents a mermaid and a knight in chain mail.

[Four] Arizona [Landscapes], 1943.



These are samples of the horizonless landscapes that Sommers shot in Arizona. There is great detail, as he used an 8x10 view camera. I see a kind of similarity between these images and Alfred Stieglitz’s (#2, Jan. 2013) “Equivalents” cloud photographs; here are a link to the Stieglitz Equivalents: <https://archive.artic.edu/stieglitz/equivalents/>, and a couple of samples:



The National Gallery of Art article on Sommer also credits Edward Weston with influencing Sommer's landscape photography: <https://www.nga.gov/collection/photographs/frederick-sommer.html>



Livia, 1948.



I will end on this famous little girl portrait by Sommer. But I do not find it entirely charming. The perspective is straight on, but it appears that Livia looked up at Sommer, giving her a curious, perhaps frightened, or even ominous, look in her eyes. Do I misread this?

The following commentary is from the official Sommer Foundation website: <http://www.fredericksommer.org/>

Livia is Frederick Sommer's portrait of a young girl living in Prescott in 1948, who came to his attention through a friend, Crest Baumgartner. Lydia (her actual name) was placed on a platform, so she was eyelevel with the camera, and the found background [another one of Sommer's interests] was propped up behind her. Sommer, who was six-feet tall, recalled her looking up at him while trying to remain still for the exposure.

Also, I found two version, obviously from the same portrait session, differing only in the hand gestures. Both gestures, in a mature woman, might be gestures calling attention to the abdomen, perhaps suggesting fertility or pregnancy. Again, macabre?

Let me go a little further in my flight of analysis. Sommer renamed the real child Lydia with the photographic name Livia. Livia Drusilla (58 BCE - 29 CE) was the third wife of emperor Augustus of Rome, mother of emperor Tiberius, and grandmother of emperor Claudius. Anna Livia Plurabelle is a character in James Joyce's novel *Finnegans Wake*, who symbolizes the eternal and universal female. Certainly Sommer, as a man of letters, would be aware of these two namesakes of his subject. Did that influence how he composed this portrait? I can't say for sure, but Sommer's photographic compositions were very deliberate, often linking together apparently disparate elements, and the name references may be present in this image.

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Our Webmaster Jim Turner is working very hard to make our website awesome. If you haven't registered yet, please do! If you have any questions about the way things work, please feel free to e-mail Jim, and he will be able to help you with the easy process.

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Silver Spring Camera Club

You might be interested to see what our sister club, the Silver Spring Camera Club, is up to! Here is a link to their site. They also publish a newsletter, Cable Release, and it is available here.

<http://www.sscphotography.org/>



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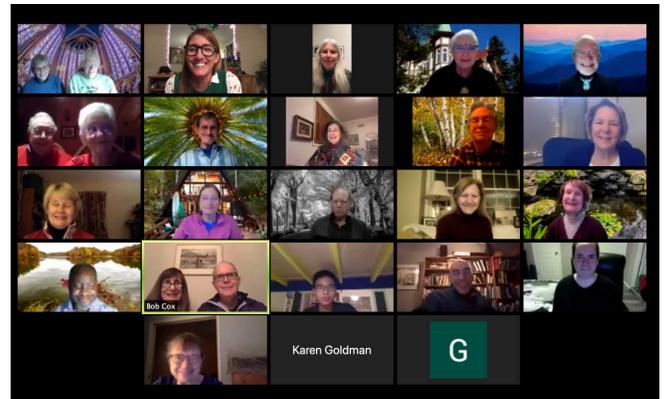
Editor: Diane Poole

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Meeting Location



A ZOOM link will be sent a few days ahead of the meeting. You do not need a video cam to participate.



Competition Night: Second Tuesday of the month



**This newsletter is published monthly
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You do not have to work at NIH to join the club.



For comments or questions contact
club president Margaret Sprott at
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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION and RENEWAL FORM

National Institutes of Health Camera Club
(NIHCC)

Membership in the NIH Camera Club historically consisted of current and former NIH employees and their families. The club is now open to anyone who has an interest in photography. The Treasurer collects Camera Club dues by September.

DATE: _____

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ANNUAL DUES (please check the appropriate line):

\$__ Singlemembership: **\$50**

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SEND TO: Stan Collyer, Treasurer
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Rockville, MD 20850
Email: sccollier@aol.com

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WAIVER

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Print Name

Signature

Date