Focal Point

Baltimore Camera Club

The Oldest Continually-Operating Photographic Society in the USA (Incorporated in 1884)

October - December 2024 (Issue 40, No 4) www.baltimorecameraclub.org

Aurora at Deep Creek Lake - Christopher Frisone

Baltimore Camera Club

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Member and Visitor Welcome: Tina Whitehead
Mentors: Kenny Epps, Walter Levy
Photographic Society of America Club Representative for BCC: Diane Bovenkamp
Focal Point co-Editors: Lynn Roberts & Kent Sutorius

Program meetings are held weekly on Thursday nights via Zoom or in-person. All visitors are welcome (meeting starts at ~7:30—8 p.m.). See calendar (www.baltimorecameraclub.org/meetings.html) for details.

For more information, email the club President, Diane Bovenkamp (d_bovenkamp@yahoo.com) & visit our website www.baltimorecameraclub.org.

BCC is a Charter Member Club of the Photographic Society of America www.psa-photo.org and a Member of the Maryland Photography Alliance www.mdphotoalliance.org.

There is a Baltimore Camera Club YouTube page for accessing recorded videos of some Zoom presentations: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRe9N0w6Rog1iv51I0x0M9A

Please send feedback, ideas or article proposals for future Focal Point issues to luckylanefarm@gmail.com and kasutorius@gmail.com

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Remember: you can click on most images in Focal Point to see a full-size version

This Issue's Contents

Thanks to Diane Bovenkamp, Lynn Roberts, Steve Sattler, Kent Sutorius, Phyllis Berger, Christophe Casamassima, Walter Levy, Tina Whitehead, Scott Houston, Jim Eichelman, Jennifer Smutek, Patricia Simmons, Roger Miller, Ola Horn, Karen Dillon, Kenny Epps, and Mike Washington for their contributions to this issue. Photos that appear in this newsletter are copyright of their respective owners. The opinions expressed in articles are held by the respective authors and do not represent the opinions of the Baltimore Camera Club, its Board, Focal Point Editors, or general membership.

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President's Corner

I hope that you are all able to spend quality time holding the ones that you love near and dear to you this holiday season. Every day is a gift. This issue of Focal Point has three Tributes honoring fallen BCC members who all made their mark on the club. Writing those articles was difficult and has made me realize that life is a gift that we should seize every day. I hope that you will read the tributes to reminisce, if you knew them, or to learn more about Bob Hansen, George Spicer and Sam Yaffe. Please, if you have any photos or further stories about them, send to me, Lynn or Kent, so we can forward them to their families.

In keeping with this season of cheer, generosity and good will toward others, I'd like to emphasize that this is a fully volunteer-run nonprofit organization. Kudos to the current and past Board of Directors, as well as to the people who keep the digital and print competitions going smoothly, the people who set up the chairs and tables, the A/V and zoom webinars, and who put out the badges. The list of current Officers and Committees can be found on our website: https://www.baltimorecameraclub.org/d/bb4306f2-190f-4fb5-8860-fff8766f23bd. Thank You.

New Years is just around the corner. If you have been thinking about making a New Year's Resolution, including what you can do to support our most amazing club—which is the oldest continually operating camera club in the US—then let me count the ways.

The 12 Ways of Volunteer-mas at Baltimore Camera Club:

1. Help put away your own chair at the end of the night.

2. Help distribute and collect the name badges at the beginning and end of the meeting—contact our Welcome Committee leader, Tina Whitehead

3. Come in early to assist with setting up the computer, A/V, chairs, tables, etc.—Contact At Large Board A/V expert, Guy Alston

4. We need someone or several people on a rotating basis to sell the 50/50 raffle tickets at each meeting. You'd be surprised at how much this can help the balance sheet of the club. Every drop in the bucket helps.—Just ask our Board Treasurer, Jim Eichelman

5. Contact the VP Programs, Christophe Casamassima, with ideas for program presenters (which may be yourself—you probably have a special knowledge that others would love to learn)

6. Contact the VP Competitions, Tom Gisriel, with ideas for judges and ideas for future themes

7. Come to a Board meeting and participate in discussions (all are welcome every second Tuesday of the month at 6-7 pm at the club—or virtually if it's a hybrid or virtual only meeting night)

8. Consider helping to pass the prints during competition night or learning how to run the Visual Pursuits competition program—contact Tom Gisriel

9. Consider leading a club field shoot trip to a local spot. We need to get out and get shooting more often together. Contact our Secretary, Mel Holden.

10. Consider mentoring or being mentored—contact our At Large Board member Kenny Epps for more information.

11. Consider submitting a photo or an article on a topic near and dear to you, to the club's most awesome newsletter, Focal Point—contact Co-Editors, Lynn Roberts (At Large Board member) and Kent Sutorius (Web Chair Board member).

12. Consider volunteering to be a member of the Board; elections will be held in June 2025. For example, a position of member at large may be open next year. Terms go from August 1 to July 31.

Volunteering is also a great way to better get to know your fellow members!

Lastly, don't miss the article in this issue of Focal Point on Volunteering at the club level by esteemed President of the Maryland Photography Alliance, Steve Sattler, whom I consider the ultimate volunteer!

Hope you decide to jump in. You'll be happy that you did.

Have a happy holiday season and see you in the New Year. (Some former Christmas pics from me).

Cheers, Diane

Editors' Corner

Competitions - What's In It for You?

One of the regular features of the Focal Point magazine is a summary of the results of digital and print competitions held during the prior quarter. Another is the "Honors and Accolades" section, describing recognition recently awarded to BCC members. We encourage you to review these sections in each issue. See an image you like? Take a moment to complement the maker next time you see them. It will make their day, I promise!

Why do fully half of our meetings consist of competitions? And why *do* members compete? You might think it's sparked by a desire to simply "accrue points", thereby progressing from "Associate" to "Unlimited" level. But participating in competitions (not necessarily placing in them!) involves far more than this, and is ultimately infinitely more rewarding than just racking up points. A major motivating factor should always be "a desire to learn and to grow as a photographer". (I distinguish between "learning" and "growing": to me, "learning" largely involves improving one's skills, while "growing" involves improving your ability to "see", most importantly including embracing new genres - which is precisely why we hold "themed" competitions).

If you watched the MPA Awards Ceremony webinar held on Sunday, Nov. 17, you might have noted the brief introduction on the topic of participating in competitions provided by four "Maryland Masters": Les Picker, Edwin Remsberg, Connie Imboden, and Tony Sweet. (You may know of them either through their recent BCC presentations or as their having served as judges at BCC meetings, or via the webinars presented through the Maryland Photography Alliance). If you missed the MPA Awards Ceremony, fear not - these four introductions were recorded, to be released at a future date. What's important to note is that their comments alone were every bit as inspiring as the stunning images that placed this year. Don't miss the opportunity to watch these brief introductions!

For now, several important points were made.

- You win simply by becoming an active participant (not just by entering a competition and walking away until the results are announced) - regardless of whether your images place!
- Entering competitions motivates you to become a better photographer.
- Listen carefully to the feedback - ideally this will relate to your own images. But even listening to judges' comments on images created by others, whether or not they place, is a great learning experience.
- Competitions are a great source of inspiration. They help you become a better photographer than you used to be. They motivate you to refine your skills and techniques.
- Participating in competitions is all about pushing yourself, growing as an artist, and getting your work out.
- If one judge doesn't like your work, it doesn't mean that others won't.

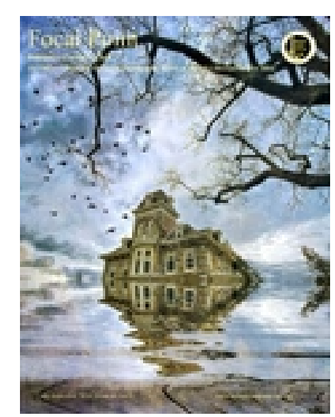
- Competitions offer introductions to different perspectives and styles.
- Competitions provide a "reality check". How does your work stack up relative to that of others? Where do you need to refine your skills?
- But most of all - healthy competition is **fun**!

Don't forget: if you're new to the club and nervous about entering a competition, you can always enter an image in one of our "critique nights". Many such images have placed in the next competition!

Revisit Focal Point's Issues from 2024 and Look at Competition Images!

January - March 2024

April - June 2024



July-September 2024

In Memory of Sam Yaffe

Tribute to Sam Yaffe: His Humor, Sassiness, and Artistic Vision Silenced Forever

By Diane Bovenkamp (individual tributes by members indicated in the article)

It was a shock for the club to discover that Sam Yaffe had died in a car crash on November 1, 2024.

I couldn't believe it. I loved Sam's sassiness and artistic vision, and now it was silenced. My family was personally devastated, too, since only last year did my son and I have a wonderful dinner with him, where his supportive and playful nature came out (see photo below). Sam had a way of putting people at ease, and giving constructive feedback and critiques to club members that elevated the person and situation.

Here are only a few of the immediate reactions that I received upon informing the club.

From Phyllis Berger:

I am in shock. Sam was a good friend and a former student of mine at Hopkins. We had so many wonderful times together. He organized photo shoots for his fellow students and me at his home with its lovely gardens with many lazy afternoons of great conversation and fun in a gorgeous atmosphere. Over many afternoons, we discussed art, politics, travel, sorrow and loss, and life goals. Always ending with his favorite eclairs.

He was such a great sport, wearing a bowler hat for me and letting me photograph him as a leprechaun.

And I loved his artistic sensibility, finding beauty in death with his love of Wabi Sabi. His images reinforce the notion that all life's chapters are precious. The discussions that arose from seeing his work brought my students together. It helped us form a strong bond to each other as we contemplated the fleeting passage of time and of life's cycles, and helped us to see within our aging group that we were also indeed beautiful.

Not many students come along that have this profound effect on a class. I will remember Sam with the greatest of affection and respect.

From Scott Houston:

This is very sad news. I remember when he joined our zoom meetings during the pandemic. He has been a great addition to the club.

From Jim Eichelman:

Wow, so sad to hear. Sam always had a unique point of view and quite the dry sense of humor. He will be missed.

Fom Kent Sutorius:

There were many more people who voiced in person at meetings throughout November and December that this was a tragic loss of a great man and contributor to the club. We gave him a minute of silence at a club meeting in early November where approximately a third of the club attended.

From Sandy Nichols:

I remember Sam Yaffee as a super talented and gracious member of the club. During my tenure as program chair, he was ever present, either in person or via Zoom, often offering me his thoughtful and supportive comments about specific programs. During member critique nights, he generously offered his suggestions with kindness and insight. What also stands out was his delightful sense of humor, adding some much-appreciated levity to club meetings. Although I didn't know him personally outside the club, I find myself very sad and deeply missing his presence.

In the March-May 2023 Focal Point, thankfully Kent Sutorius interviewed Sam for the "Member Focus" article highlighting how he became interested in photography. (See screen shot of his 'mug shots' below) Please visit that issue to see the full interview.

A link to the official obituary is provided below. Please feel free to reach out to Mickie Yaffe (michaelineyaffe@comcast.net) if you have any photos or memories to share.

https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/thebaltimorebanner/name/samuel-yaffe-obituary?id=56707291

Donations can be made in Sam's memory to Animal Rescue, Inc. (https://animalrescueinc.networkforgood.com/) or The Manor Conservancy (https://www.themanorconservancy.org/)

In Memory of Bob Hansen

Tribute to Longtime Member Bob Hansen: He Served The Club In Many Ways

By Diane Bovenkamp (and photos provided by Scott Houston, Roger Miller and Ola Horn)

This month is the one year anniversary of the

Bob Hansen—Panoramas (March 8, 2018)
Photos By Roger Miller and Ola Horn

Editor's Note: In his presentation, Bob answered many questions to enable us to make panoramas if we were not already doing so. Some club members were inspired to start taking panoramas, immediately after the session.

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death of Bob Hansen. Many of you may not have known Bob, as COVID forced us to go virtual for so long, and then he was not able to attend in person. I want to tell you a bit about Bob so that you may know about all that he did for the club to make it better.

First off, Bob was a genuine soul, always willing to teach you what he knew about photography. For example, this article I wrote in a 2018 Focal Point shows some 'decisive moments' from his wonderful presentation on taking panoramas.

He also served the club as a volunteer for many years. He helped us to maintain our club insurance for many years, since he came from that background before retirement. He attended most Board meetings and gave sage advice. Most notably, he founded the Welcome and Badge Committee with Scott Houston, and is responsible for creating the system of badges and the welcome packet available on our website that we use to this day.

He also attended every meeting and many photo field shoots, with enthusiastic engagement with club members, as can be witnessed in this 2016 macro night photo provided by Scott Houston (upper left).

Finally, I thought that you might like to know a bit more about his past from a portion of his official obituary published by the Baltimore Sun on December 17, 2023.

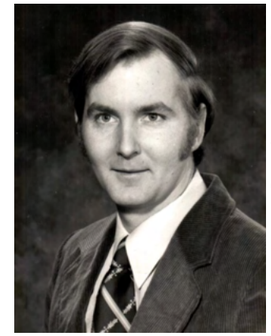
"Robert (Bob) Francis Hansen, 87, of Ellicott City, MD, passed away peacefully on December 13, 2023. He was born on February 7, 1936. Bob served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean war and was proud of his service. Bob was passionate about woodworking and photography, and he was a voracious reader."

We have lost a fierce champion of the Baltimore Camera Club and I miss him terribly. Hope that if you are new to the club you learned a bit more about him from this summary.

In Memory of George Spicer

George Spicer Tribute: Passed Away on December 7, 2024

By Diane Bovenkamp (photos by George Spicer, Bob Hansen, Karen Dillon)



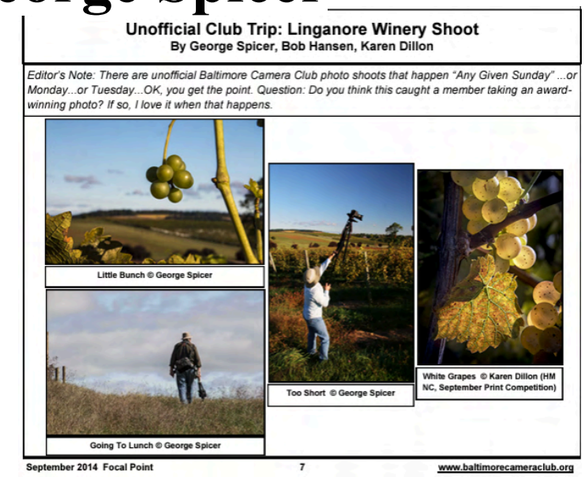
George Spicer was an active member of the club and he will be greatly missed.

George contributed technical articles to the Focal Point when I was the Editor:

From the September 2014 Focal Point (The e-Zone Section)

From George Spicer: *CS6 Upgrades. I recently had to replace my hard drive. I had all of my data backed up but did not have the drive mirrored. So, the operating system and all of my programs had to be reinstalled, including Photoshop CS6. I really didn't want to upgrade to Photoshop's CC and pay $10 a month forever or until Adobe raises its fees, which it will. The downside? The raw converter (version 7) in CS6 doesn't work with my Canon 70D. Of course, Adobe doesn't allow upgrades to "older" versions. The upgrade option in Photoshop is grayed out. The only choice is to upgrade to the newest version. Well, that isn't quite correct. I upgraded through Adobe Bridge and now have the raw converter version 8.6. YAY*

He also contributed photos from the photo field shoots (official and unofficial) that were more frequent pre-COVID lockdown:



Unofficial Club Trip: Linganore Winery Shoot
By George Spicer, Bob Hansen, Karen Dillon

Editor's Note: There are unofficial Baltimore Camera Club photo shoots that happen "Any Given Sunday" ...or Monday...or Tuesday...OK, you get the point. Question: Do you think this caught a member taking an award-winning photo? If so, I love it when that happens.

Little Bunch © George Spicer

Too Short © George Spicer

White Grapes © Karen Dillon (HM NC, September Print Competition)

Going To Lunch © George Spicer

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He also had a great sense of humor, as can be seen from this brief article he submitted to me for the December 2014-Feb 2015 Focal Point:

Mother's Day vs. Christmas
By George Spicer

George Spicer, Calvert Cliffs © Karen Dillon

This past Mothers' Day (2014), there was a crafts show/sale in Ellicott City. My Son-in-law brought his camera, printer, backstop, and other stuff. He was taking portraits of mothers and children, selling 5"x7" pictures with mats for $20. The framing shop was mounting the pictures at no charge. His sales totaled $80.

Before Christmas, he set up to take pictures of people's dogs with Santa. His sales totaled $400.

Something seems wrong.

His official obituary can be found at: https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/catonsville-md/george-spicer-12122561

How I Got the Shot
by
Jennifer Smutek

One of my favorite things about photography is how you can study the craft for a lifetime, and still learn something new every day. Like most of us, over the years I've worked to overcome photographic obstacles by adding light, using a tripod, merging images with focus stacking, and/or utilizing creative editing techniques, etc. I think most of us do this, to more accurately capture a scene or subject the way our eyes experience it. However, I also find a great deal of delight in capturing a scene or subject in such a way that it might make the viewer pause for a second or two, while they try and figure out exactly what the heck it is that they are looking at. I often ask myself, 'what if instead of manipulating things to capture a true-to-life representation of my subject, I leaned into the condition's 'shortcomings' to manipulate the scene into something altogether different?'

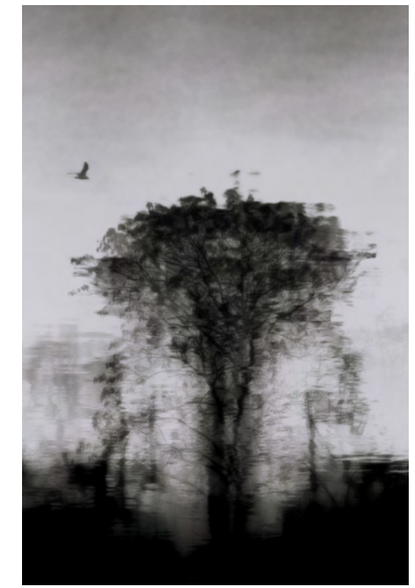
One way that like to have fun is in experimenting with in-camera double exposures. Admittedly, back in the days of film, one had to give into the process a little more - but even with today's digital camera technology, it can still be a frustratingly delightful process.

So I say it's okay to throw all the rules to the wind sometimes. For me, this often means switching things up between exposures. There are a multitude of ways one can choose to expose a frame, but what if you chose two opposite ends of the exposure triangle spectrum to capture one final frame… all in camera? By alternating between shallow/and long DOF, fast/slow shutter, and still/intentional camera movement, one can capture some unique images that make sense, but also that don't make sense at the same time.

These night images were taken during one of Kenny Epps' field shoots at the Miracle on 34th Street light display in Hamden.

Rather than pulling out my tripod, I leaned into camera movement- playing with both slow and fast shutter speeds. For the Santa photo, I actually took a double exposure, from two completely separate houses, while moving across the exposure triangle combinations to achieve opposite ends of the spectrum in one frame. With night work, I find this gives a playful, and somewhat chaotic, vibe to the images.

As I moved this process into my nature work, I applied a lot of the same concepts, but also adding in the element of reflection. With nature, I find this creates the more haunting and ethereal vibe that I'm drawn to in my work.



This first image on the left (above) was actually eliminated from three separate print competitions, mostly because the judges were unable able to make sense of the reflections in the scene. They were unable to do so because the reflection that you see is not that of the main subject trees. The two horizontal images were captured using a similar technique. With the final image on the right, I actually captured the same subject twice, rather than merging two subjects into one image. As luck would have it, patience paid off with the seagull!

At the end of the day, I think a lot of times we take photography a little too seriously and aim to be a little too precise. Personally, I prefer a little 'haphazard precision'. So I say throw out the rules and lean into all the things you "shouldn't" do.

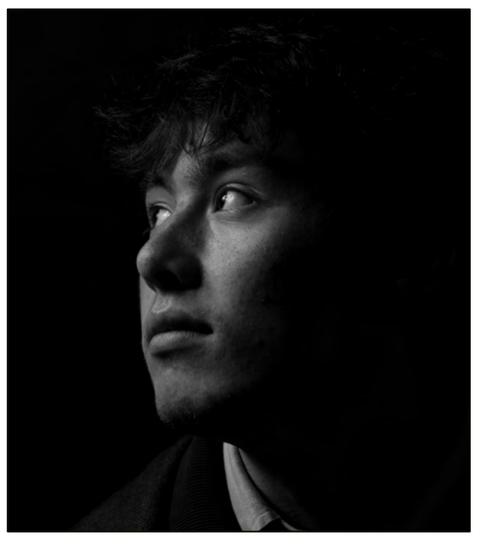
Member Spotlight
Patricia Simmons

1.How long have you been involved in photography?

I have had some experience in photography in high school. I really started to dive into it three years ago when my uncle passed away and I received his camera equipment. I decided at that point to really become involved and entered the Photography and Digital Imaging program at CCBC. I have been hooked ever since.

2. Types of photography that interest you.

This question is somewhat difficult for me as I seem to be all over the board. I love night photography and portrait; however, I am still working on studio lighting. I love action as well as low light photography. See, can't pin down one yet? I currently have started a portrait business and have done some work with The Baltimore Autism Society as well as family portraits and college graduate photos.



3. Type of camera I use.

I have been shooting on my Canon 5d mark 4 but recently purchased a Canon R5 Mark 2

4. One thing you hope to get out of joining BCC.

I am just beginning to become more involved in BCC as I finished school. I am finding that I learn a great deal from the competitions and critiques. I enjoy seeing other people's artwork and discussing techniques. I have never really photographed birds but am developing an interest in it based on other people's incredible shots.

5. Any other interests?

Through a darkroom class at CCBC I have also truly enjoyed film photography. I was able to set up a great darkroom in my home. I shot with a Canon AE-1 and A-1 as well as with my Bronica.

MPA Corner
by Steven Sattler

‘Tis the Season of Giving

The holiday season reminds us of the importance of generosity. It encourages us to share what we have with others. It is a time when charitable acts, whether through donations or volunteering, can make a significant impact. Ultimately, giving at any time of the year reminds all of us of the value of contributing and connection.

This year more than others got me thinking why more people don’t volunteer to help their photography club. I’ve been in a photography leadership role with clubs and the Alliance for over fifteen years, and the biggest challenge has been getting volunteers. On the one hand I understand it. We all lead busy lives, and why devote precious time when others can do it. And on the other hand, there are a variety of ways in which one can contribute, such as:

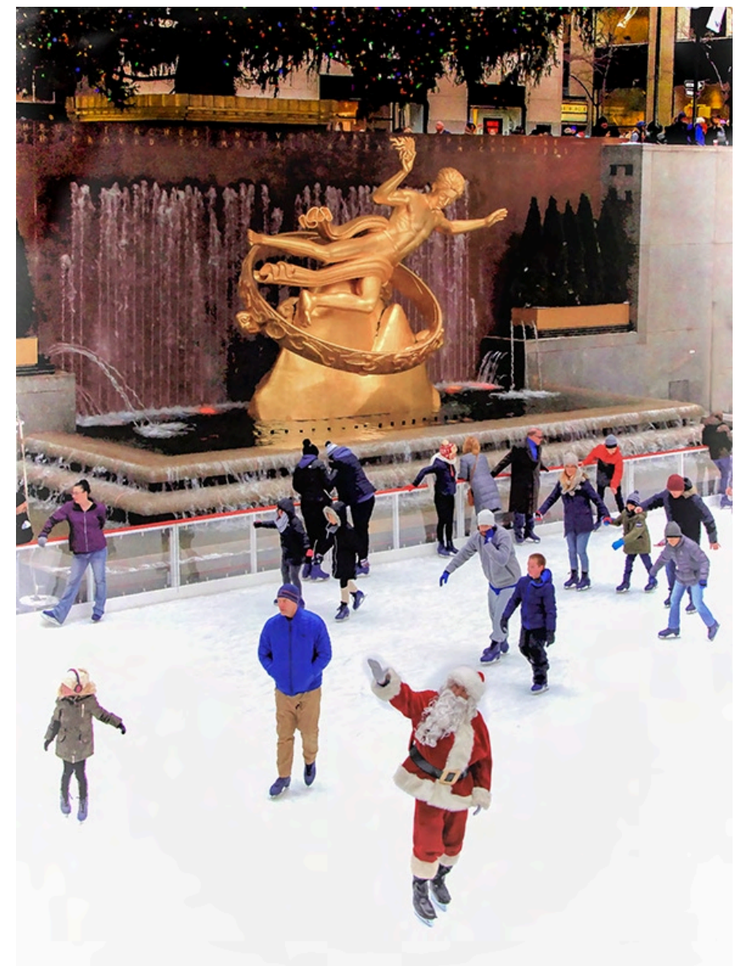
- Participate in meetings, discussions, and share your knowledge
- Showcase your work so others can learn from it
- Help organize one or more events
- Help with website, newsletter or social media communications
- Be on a committee to welcome new members
- Fund raise for the club or a worthwhile charity
- Teach specific photography skills
- Help obtain partnerships with local businesses
- Attend public events to represent the club
- Volunteer to serve on a committee or on the Board
- Mentor less experienced members
- Provide feedback to the club when requested
- Connect with other photography enthusiasts and get them to join our club

Some of the above will take such little time and can go a long way to help the club grow. Volunteering is actually another way to enhance your own skills.

So why am I writing this when this column should be on MPA? The reason is simple. MPA has the same challenges that many of our clubs have, and we are also in dire need of volunteers. It pains me to have to say that I was President of the Creative Photography Society for over ten years, and during the past several months we have shut the door and turned off the lights. Lack of volunteers and the same people running it for a decade was the reason.

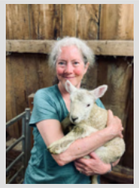
So during this season of giving, consider volunteering with the Baltimore Camera Club. It is a rewarding way to make a meaningful impact, and to help strengthen the foundation of an organization that has operated for 140 years. By offering your time and energy, you will help foster a positive and thriving environment and enhance our passion for photography.

‘Tis the Season



Rock Center on Ice - Steve Sattler

Focal Point October - December 2024



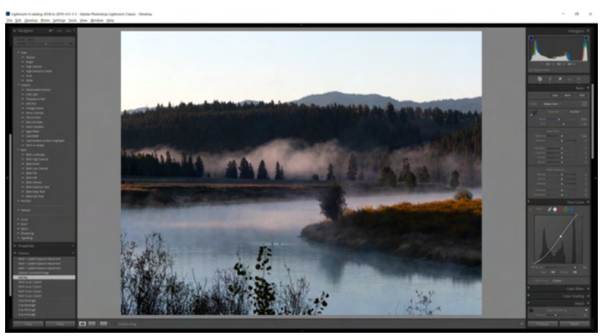
Lightroom Post Processing Tips
by Lynn Roberts

Avoiding and Removing Halos in Lightroom and Photoshop

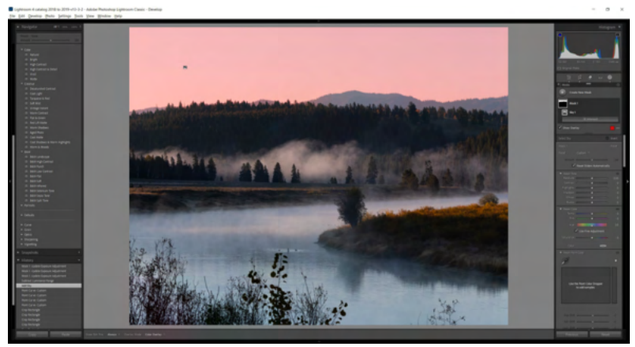
Halos. At some point every photographer will encounter them. Sometimes they appear during post-processing; other times they'll be generated during monochrome conversions. Judges will notice them if you don't, and will ding you if they're present. So, just as you learn to check all over the image for distractions, and to look out for light areas of the background that distract the viewer from the subject, you need to train yourself to watch for halos.

Better yet would be to avoid generating them in the first place. You'll often see then at the edges of skies if you've reduced the exposure too much.

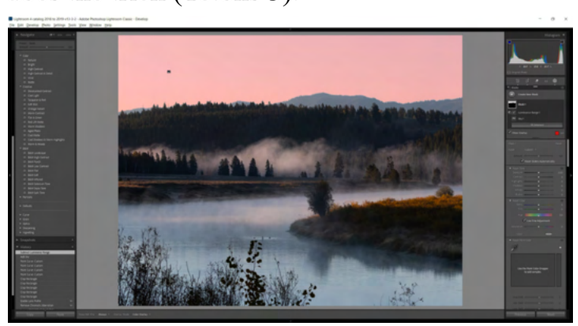
Let's explore a simple (though perhaps somewhat imperfect) approach for removing halos, starting with an early-morning image I took this fall of the Snake River. The morning light on the mist rising off the river is lovely, but the sky is totally blah. Here you see it after I've performed a few preliminaries. (Tetons 1)



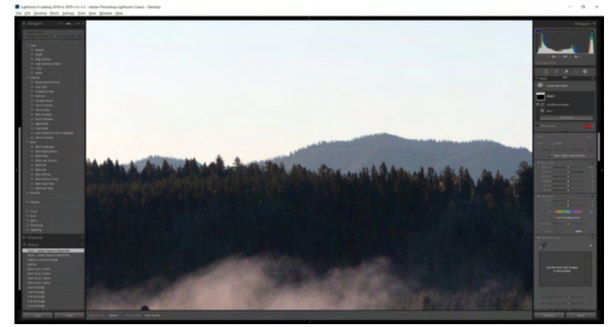
I can do some selective masking (click on the masking circle on the right, then "select sky"). Its initial attempt isn't perfect; it has included some of the lighter mountains in the background. (Tetons 2).



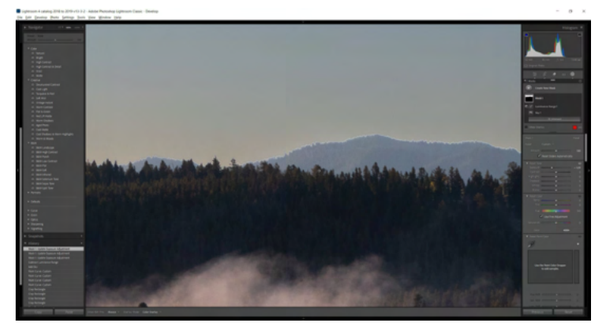
An easy fix is to modify this mask using the "subtract" option, followed by "luminance range", drawing a square within the region you want excluded from the initial sky mask. This does the trick (Tetons 3).



Now let's zoom in. I'll turn off the "show overlay", so that we can get a better idea of how things appear. (Tetons 4).



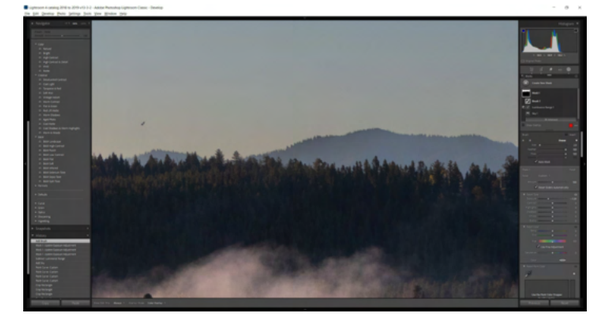
I can darken the sky, but as soon as I start to darken it very much, halos appear (Tetons 5).



And the more I darken the sky (this is far darker than I'd prefer!), the worse things get.

Note that adding a lot of clarity to the sky also adds halos; avoid overusing Clarity if this becomes an issue in your image. (The "Clarity" slider increases constrast in the mid-tones, which is why it also creates halos; it does so over a wider range of pixels than does the "Texture" slider).

So - can I fix things? You can - by adding a brush to your mask. Make it BIG - and increase the feather, flow, and density all to 100%. Now gently paint over the boundary between the sky and the mountains, letting the inner circle of the brush cross over into the foreground. Once you've done so, the halos disappear. (Tetons 6)



Make sure you use a LARGE brush. If you use a small brush, you'll create a hard edge. Using a large brush with a lot of feathering spreads the change over a wider area. Yes, you *will* darken a portion of the foreground - but no one will notice this the way they'd notice a halo around the border between the sky and the foreground!

For more on this approach (including a 10-minute video by Matt Kloskowsky), click here.

Using Lightroom Classic to make HDR Images
by Phyllis Berger

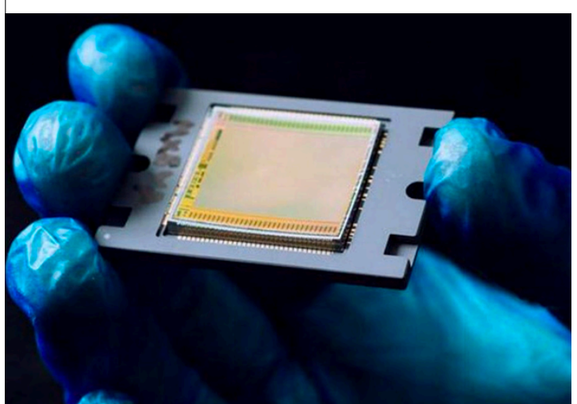
Watch this video (5 minutes 7 seconds) to learn how to create an HDR image using Lightroom Classic

Photography & Technology by Kent Sutorius
Curved Sensors & Liquid Lenses

In the last edition's article, "Sensor Technology - What Your Camera Has and the Future", I mentioned the global sensor shutter introduced in the Sony α9-III. It produces higher speed photography with less distortion. Also mentioned were sensors like Canon's R1 and R5 that have "eye control" where the sensor has your retina focus on the object. The sensor also produces real-time object recognition.

Curved Sensor

There is another sensor being worked on that mimics the curvature of the human eye and is therefore named the 'Curved' sensor. Sony patented a curved sensor in 2017, and Nikon and Canon have followed with their patents on a curved sensor.



Sony Curved Sensor - (image credit Curve One) https://cdn.mos.cms.futurecdn.net/4mBge4Tcrpn53R8KJWvbzH-650-80.jpg.webp

We are all familiar with the phrase, "Can't put a square peg in a round hole". Light from a round lens hitting a flat sensor is going to produce issues. The light will not evenly distribute across the flat sensor, reducing overall sharpness. Moreover, uneven light will produce various forms of lens abberation. To minimize these issues, lens manufacturers have to add optical elements (more glass) to the lens. This creates heavier lenses and causes light to travel longer. Light is lost the longer it travels.

With curved sensors, the issues noted above are eliminated. The sensor also allows for great low light situations. Furthermore, lenses whose field curvature corresponds to the curved sensor would be more compact and lighter.

We probably won't see these sensors for a while. The main issue is that the lens field curvature has to correspond with the curved sensor. This means that only prime lenses would be available. It also means that 3rd party interchangeable lenses would probably not be available (due to R&D production costs) to match a Sony, Nikon or Canon curved sensor.

Liquid Lenses

Lenses are also evolving and are more likely to reach the market before the curved sensor.

Traditional lenses use glass at a set curvature radius. Liquid lenses use an optical grade liquid of oil and water, which is put in an insulated metal chamber (see figure on next page). The image on the left is when the lens is in OFF position. When charged with an electronic signal, ON position, (right image), the oil beads up providing a certain focal length.

The intensity of the charge will dictate the varying degrees of focal lengths that can be produced.

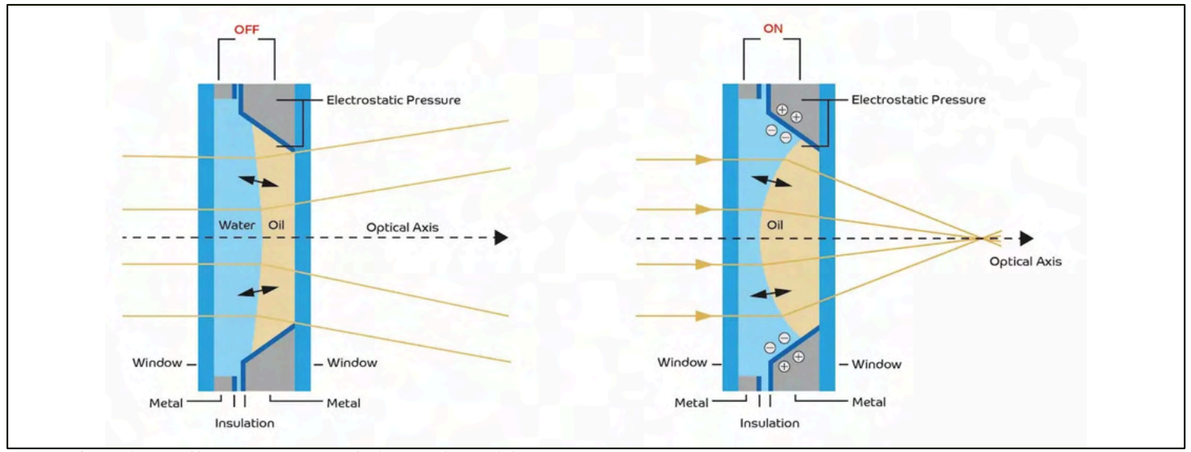


Image from https://opticsmag.com/what-is-liquid-lens-technology/

This means a liquid lens:

- can provide many focal lengths (including macro and zoom) in one lens!
- can provide a variety of focal lengths and focusing in milliseconds.
- is smaller, lighter and more compact.
- offers great image stabilization.
- will last over millions of cycles, as there are no mechanical parts.

Liquid lenses are currently used for industrial purposes.

The medical field uses them in 3D microscopes, and they are also used in laparoscopic cameras.

Barcode scanners use liquid lenses to quickly focus on barcodes from a variety of distances.

They are also used with lasers to help direct the beam.

Image credit: https://www.vision-systems.com/cameras-accessories/article/14183248/machine-vision-liquid-lenses-increase-vision-system-speed-and-flexibility

Focal Point October - December 2024

Notes from the Field

By Lynn Roberts and Mike Washington

BCC Outing to Green Mount Cemetery

On Nov. 2, 2024, BCC member Kenny Epps led a photo shoot to a perennial favorite spot: Green Mount Cemetery. This year the shoot was accompanied by two challenges: (1) participants were limited to a single lens and a single focal range - if you were using a zoom lens, pick one focal range and stick to that! (2) Anyone who participated in this (or any other BCC photo shoot, whether of Green Mount Cemetery or some other location) was encouraged to submit two images to Kenny, who would convey them to the pastor of the church where we meet. The winning images (as selected by the pastor) will be displayed (after printing) for display in the church. A great way to build community!

BCC members who participated in the Greenmount trip included Lynn Roberts; Diane Brunetti; Maire Doyle; Deborah Davis; Daniel Appelby; Ola Horn; Mimi Godfrey; Tina Whitehead; Guy Alston; Ronald (whose last name we didn't catch); and Kenny Epps.

After the photo shoot ended, many of us wandered over to the Guilford Hall Brewery for lunch, a beer, and lively conversation.

Suggestions for Photo Outings - January through March

Don't let winter weather dissuade you from getting out and shooting! Here are some suggestions for locations of possible interest. As always, if you spot something that calls to you and would like to go with others, let me (Lynn Roberts: LuckyLaneFarm@gmail.com) know and I'll see what I can arrange. Also be sure to check out the workshops being offered this winter through the Maryland Photography Alliance (article to follow this one).

Sailing Through the Winter Solstice - Frederick, MD

Every year, from November through March, Carroll Creek Park in downtown Frederick, MD hosts an event in which whimsically lighted sailboats are on display. So - if the rain forced you to miss the holiday lights at "Miracle on 34th Street" this year, here's an alternative! (It's also a great place to photograph reflections for an upcoming themed competition). Combine your visit with exploring Frederick, a charming town, or with dinner there (I highly recommend Cacique, which specializes in Mexican and Spanish cuisine).

Information on "Sailing through the Solstice" is available here.

Maryland Zoo in Baltimore

Mike Washington reports "My favorite time to visit the **Maryland Zoo** is winter, when the crowds are nil and the few animals on display are active and less lethargic. Big Cats, Giraffe, Elephant, Rhino and others." The Maryland Zoo is open in winter from Fridays through Mondays from 10 AM - 4 PM. More information is available here.

Rawlings Conservatory in Baltimore

Combine an outing to the Maryland Zoo with one to the Rawlings Conservatory. Conveniently close to the Zoo, Rawlings Conservatory has much to offer, both inside and outdoors, any time of year. It's a great place to practice your macro technique; note that tripods and monopods are not permitted on weekends. Best of all, admission is free! The Conservatory is open Wednesdays through Sundays; more information is available here.

Snow Geese at the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area, Lancaster County, PA

One of the most stunning wildlife photography opportunities around falls every year between January and mid-March, when hundreds of thousands of migratory snow geese collect in the Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area. Here you'll find them massed in high numbers, taking to the air by the thousands whenever a bald eagle flies over. You'll also spot tundra swans and Canada geese. Details on where to go are available here. Dawn may be the best time of day to watch them, though I had good luck the time I went at midday. The Willow Point viewing area mentioned in the link may be a good place to view them, and has a picnic area (with porta-potty), but when I was there, it was insanely crowded, and the porta-potty was beyond disgusting, so be mindful of that possibility when you go.

Upcoming Courses and Workshops

Compiled by Lynn Roberts

Courses taught by BCC Members

INTRODUCTION TO PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY: BCC member Vickie Gray is offering a one-day course on portrait photography on Saturday, Feb. 8, 2025, from 11 AM – 1 PM, at Meadow Mill, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 111, Baltimore. Cost is $99.00. Vickie's description follows:

Want to create vibrant, authentic portraits of friends, families and maybe even clients? Join Baltimore portrait photographer Vickie Gray at her gorgeous Woodberry studio to learn about portrait posing, directing, light and retouching. Vickie will explore the aesthetics of what makes a good portrait, and offer tips and techniques for becoming comfortable giving direction to your subject. She'll then review her retouching protocol, along with offering insight on the latest retouching software and applications. We'll be using a model along with volunteers of the group! Note that this is a presentation-style workshop, attendees will not have the opportunity to use their own cameras.

Vickie Gray is a headshot and portrait photographer based in Baltimore, Maryland. She has been named one of Expertise.com's "Top Baltimore Portrait Photographers" since 2019. Vickie produces headshots for professionals, actors, models and creatives, and offers instruction on portraiture as well as on the business of photography to camera clubs and private individuals throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Visit her website at www.vickiegrayimages.com.

To register visit: https://square.link/u/l74NSBkJ

FUNDAMENTALS OF DIGITAL PRINTING: BCC member **Lewis Katz** will be teaching an online course for the Smithsonian Associates program entitled the Fundamentals of Digital Printing this spring. The dates are April 21, April 28, May 5 and May 12 from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Topics will include monitor calibration, PPI versus DPI, ICC profiles and how they are installed, soft proofing, aspect ratios and paper types and brands. Everything that you need to know before you hit the Print button! As the Smithsonian is only current until March at this point the registration page is not available yet. Prices depend on your level of membership with the Smithsonian but range from $125.00 to $150.00. Lewis will keep members apprised as to when registration is open. Until then, you can find information on the Smithsonian Associates photography offerings at: https://smithsonianassociates.org/ticketing/programs/photography

Upcoming MPA Photo Workshops

The Maryland Photography Alliance is offering six new workshops to be held in 2025 through their "Adventures in Light" program. These are:

Winter at the Beach – Ocean City and Assateague Island. Feb. 15-16, 2025. Cost is $350 for MPA members. 8 participants (max); Robert Sullivan, instructor.

New Jersey Pine Barrens. June 7-8, 2025. Cost is $400 for MPA members; Liz Guertin, instructor.

South Africa Safari – July 5-12, 2025. Cost is $6,855 for MPA members; 12 participants. Buddy Eleazer, Geff Bourke, and Denise Silva, instructors (Road Runner Photo Tours).

Africa – Botswana Safari – July 12-19, 2025. Cost is $6,895 for MPA members; 16 participants. Geff Bourke and Denise Silva, instructors (Road Runner Photo Tours).

Thailand – Bangkok and Chiang Mai - November 1-9, 2025. Cost is $6,395 for MPA members; 6 participants. Denise Silva, Geff Bourke, and Patt Wattanasupt, instructors (Road Runner Photo Tours).

Panama Unveiled – A Photographic Journey – Dec. 3-11, 2025. Instructor: Essdras Suarez (EMSPhoto Advantures).

Information on these workshops (including how to register) is available at: https://www.mdphotoalliance.org/workshops

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Programs at BCC October-December

- **Leo Lubow**: "Lessons I've Learned from the Masters"
- **Connie Imboden**: 50-Year Retrospective
- **Corey Frey**: A Contribution to Wonder: Making Images In the Twenty-First Century
- **Patrick Joust**: How to be an Introverted Photographer
- **3 critique nights** - format totally revamped by Christophe Casamassima
- **Holiday Party**

Honors & Accolades

By Lynn Roberts

BCC at the 2024 MPA Photo Contest

BCC members did well in the 8th Annual MPA Photography Contest! There were 1239 images entered in four different categories, so the competition was fierce. BCC scored a total of 8 placements, second only to the Frederick Camera Clique.

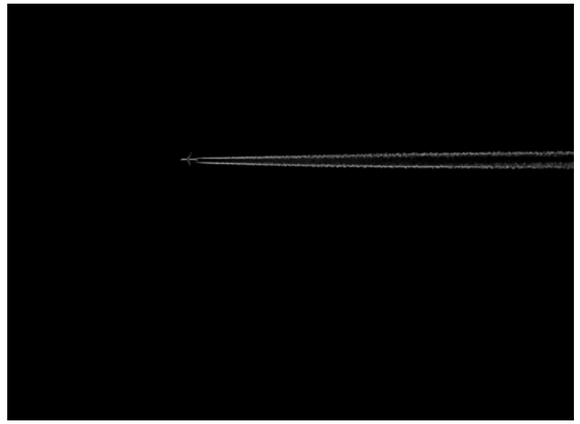
Winners (and categories) were as follows:

Birds (312 images submitted); 14 HM plus 1st-3rd place

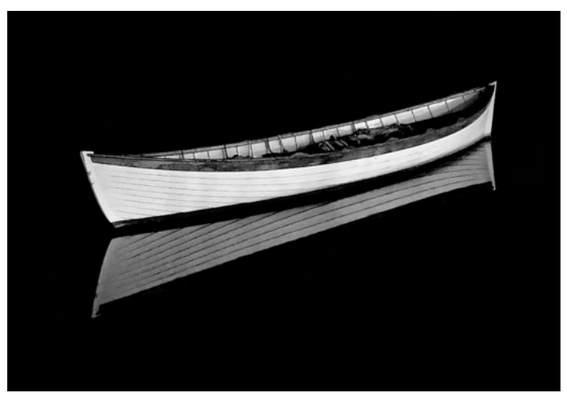
HM: Christopher Frisone "Breakfast"

1st: Joan Saba "White Peacock"

Minimalism (268 images submitted); 11 HM plus 1st-3rd place



HM: Christopher Frisone "Direct Flight"



HM: Tom Gisriel "A White Boat in Dark Waters"

HM: Michael Mininsohn "White Out"

Shadows or Silhouettes (324 images submitted); 14 HM plus 1st-3rd place

HM: Ken Holden "Class Field Trip"

HM: Sandy Nichols "Jogging at Sunset"

3rd: Ken Holden "Crossing the Line"

All images that placed will go on public display once printed, matted and framed.

In other news, **Jon Meyer's** "Just Another Pretty Landscape," which was the keystone

image for his portfolio in LensWork (No. 163, June 2023, pp. 38-51), has been hanging in the FotoNostrum Gallery, Calle Diputació, 08015 Barcelona, Spain, from December 12-22, 2024.

In addition, his images "Stream and Leaf" and "Putting In at Very High Water--The Central Walkway Underwater" were Single Image Contest Winners in Flowers/Plants/ Fruits and Seascape/Water Categories, respectively, of Black & White Magazine, Issue 170, February 2025, pp. 130 and 137. The second of these, "Stream and Leaf", was photographed at Jon's property in Baltimore County, and was shown at BCC many years ago.

Digital Competition - October 10, 2024 - "Action"

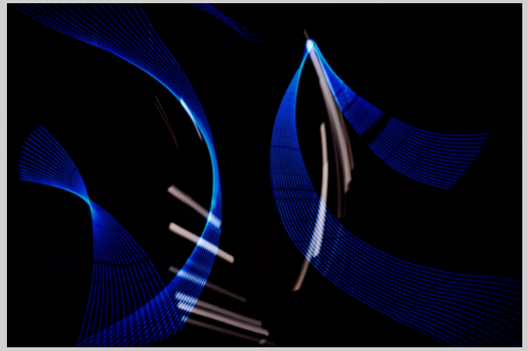
1st Place - Associate - Ground Hornbill at Work Tom Blanpied

2nd Place - Associate - Liftoff - Michael Mininsohn

3rd Place - Associate - Blind GoalBall: Defense - Douglas Miller

4th Place - Associate - Osprey Feeding Time -Dundee Creek Maire Doyle

5th Place - Associate - It was a Good RIDE - Patricia Simmons



Honorable Mention - Associate - At the Speed of Light Jennifer Smutek

1st Place - Unlimited - Breakfast Christopher Frisone

2nd Place - Unlimited - Splash - Tina Whitehead

3rd Place - Unlimited - DEFYING GRAVITY / BALANCE AND CONCENTRATION - Paul Biederman

4th Place - Unlimited - The Battle - Vella Kendall

5th Place - Unlimited - Clash of the Titans - Kenny Epps

Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Attacking the Wave - Joan Saba

Monochrome Print Competition - October 24, 2024

1st Place - Associate - Forest Glimpse
Christopher Frisone

3rd Place - Associate - Still Here
Tina Whitehead

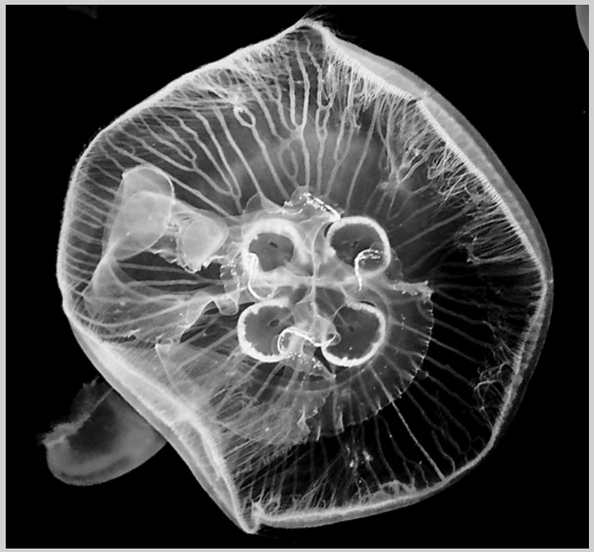
5th Place - Associate - Sadly Never Used Guitar -Patricia Simmons

2nd Place - Associate - Offering
Tina Whitehead

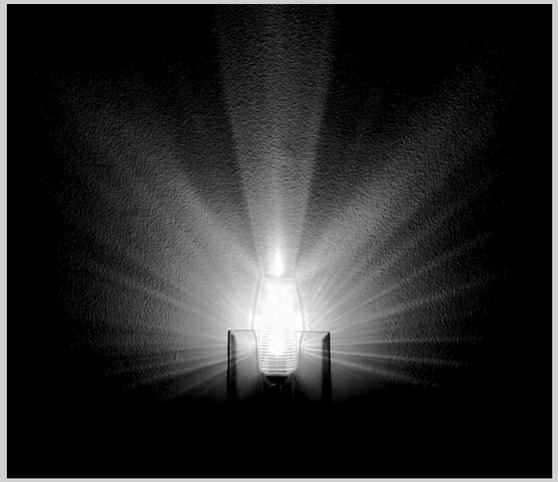
4th Place - Associate - Break Time
Tina Whitehead

Honorable Mention - Associate - Progenitor of the Rice Cake King - Michael Washington

1st Place - Unlimited - Sailing - Jim Voeglein



3rd Place - Unlimited - Moon Jelly - Thomas Gisriel



2nd Place - Unlimited - Night Light - Thomas Gisriel

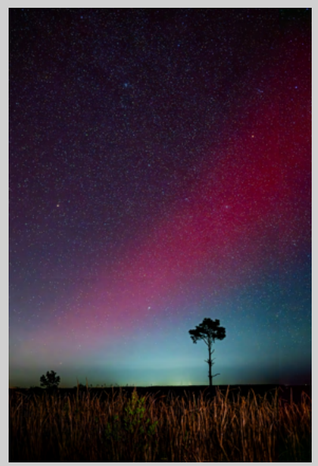
Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Clay Pots - Jim Voeglein

Color Print Competition - October 24, 2024

1st Place - Associate - Angles with a View - Jim Eichelman

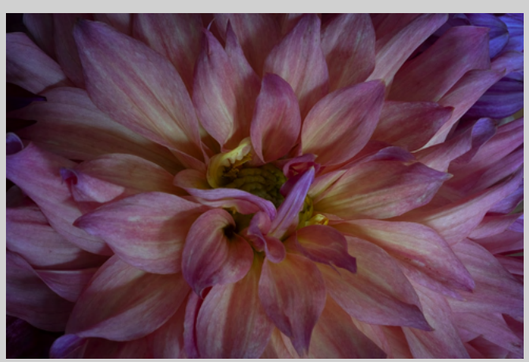
2nd Place - Associate - Morning Reflections
Christopher Frisone

3rd Place - Associate - Color Blind in a Field of Flowers
Michael Washington

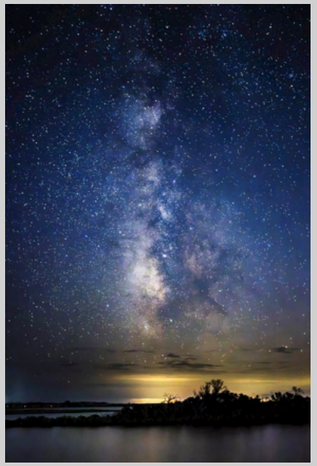


4th Place - Associate - Planet Telex - Jennifer Smutek

5th Place - Associate - Spanish Horse Show - Walter Levy



Honorable Mention - Associate - Dalhia #23 - Walter Levy



1st Place - Unlimited - The Milky Way at Assateague
Jim Voeglein

3rd Place - Unlimited - The Great Hat Eclipse of 2024
Guy Alston

5th Place - Unlimited - Arabesque - Tina Whitehead

2nd Place - Unlimited - Abstract #7 - Lewis Katz

4th Place - Unlimited - Second Sentinel
Lewis Katz

Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Big Sur - Jim Voeglein

Digital Competition - November 7, 2024

1st Place - Associate - Thor and Dexter Christophe Casamassima

2nd Place - Associate - Shaman's Flight - Chris Scroggins

1st Place - Unlimited - Work Worn - Lynn Roberts

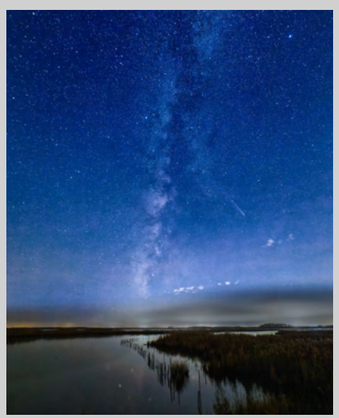
2nd Place - Unlimited - Work in the Morning Mist - Alan Wilder

3rd Place - Associate - White Out - Michael Mininsohn

4th Place - Associate - Independence Day
Christophe Casamassima

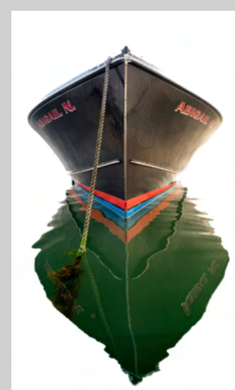
3rd Place - Unlimited - Giant Otter - Vella Kendall

4th Place - Unlimited - Oh My - Steven Sattler



5th Place - Associate - Out There - Michael Mininsohn

Honorable Mention - Associate - Peeking
Keith Hairston



5th Place - Unlimited - Abigail N. - Alan Wilder

Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Great American Novelist Wannabe
Lynn Roberts

Monochrome Print Competition - November 21, 2024

1st Place - Associate - Humble Beginnings - Christopher Frisone

2nd Place - Associate - Lonely
Christopher Frisone

3rd Place - Associate - Out to Dry - Jennifer Smutek

4th Place - Associate - Checking the Olympics Score
Lynn Roberts

5th Place - Associate - Keeping an Eye on the Kids
Michael Washington

Honorable Mention - Associate - Office Hours are Over
Lynn Roberts

1st Place - Unlimited - An Iconic Look - Kenny Epps

2nd Place - Unlimited - I too Wear the Veil - Tina Whitehead

3rd Place - Unlimited - Ana Kenny Epps

4th Place - Unlimited - Meditation - Tina Whitehead

5th Place - Unlimited - Vintage Wheels - Tina Whitehead

Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Lost in Thought - Joan Saba

Color Print Competition - November 21, 2024

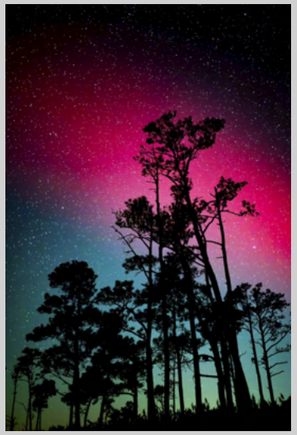
1st Place - Associate - Nettle - Tom Gisriel

3rd Place - Associate - Twin Falls
Christopher Frisone

5th Place - Associate - Pemaquid Point Lighthouse George Saba

2nd Place - Associate - Oregon Night
Christopher Frisone

4th Place - Associate - Early Morning Fly Fishing
Lynn Roberts



Honorable Mention - Associate - Ice Dream Jennifer Smutek

1st Place - Unlimited - The Grey Hornet & Kiddo - Guy Alston

3rd Place - Unlimited - Tryst - Tina Whitehead

5th Place - Unlimited - Withuring Tulip Tina Whitehead

2nd Place - Unlimited - Shadow Dancing - Kenny Epps

4th Place - Unlimited - A Force of Nature - Joan Saba

Honorable Mention - Unlimited -Snoqualmie Falls 1
Jim Voeglein

Digital Competition - December 5, 2024

1st Place - Associate - Me, Myself and I - Tina Whitehead

2nd Place - Associate - UUBC baskelball players enter the court
Patricia Simmons

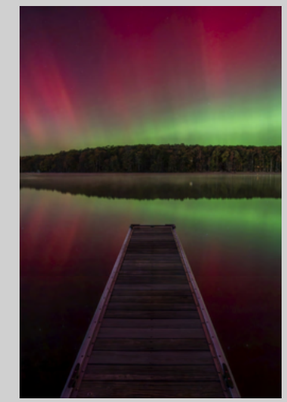
1st Place - Unlimited -
Middle Earth - James Voeglein

2nd Place - Unlimited - Crab Scraper - Alan Wilder

3rd Place - Associate - Almost Frozen - Jennifer Smutek

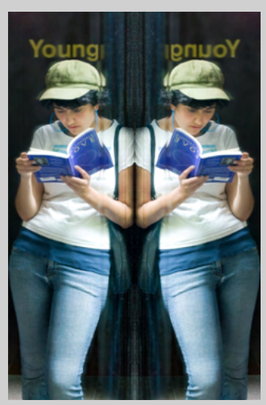
4th Place - Associate - Bellevue - Michael Mininsohn

3rd Place - Unlimited - Capybara Family - Vella Kendall



4th Place - Unlimited - Aurora at Deep Creek Lake
Christopher Frisone

5th Place - Associate - On a Roll - Michael Mininsohn



Honorable Mention - Associate - Young Love
Ken Holden

5th Place - Unlimited - Camucha - Walter Levy

Honorable Mention - Unlimited - Bison Tete a Tete - Lynn Roberts

Competition Point Totals Compiled by Walter Levy

Baltimore Camera Club standings as of competition date 12/05/2024

Associate Digital		Associate Monochrome		Associate Color		Unlimited Digital		Unlimited Monochrome		Unlimited Color		MOE Points	
Sam Yaffe	95	Michael Washington	85	Walter Levy	84	Sukumar Balachandran	763	Arthur Ransome	1060	Joan Saba	682	Christopher Frisone	28
Chris Scroggins	78	Thomas Gisriel	77	Errol Bennett	80	Joan Saba	498	Joan Saba	397	Gary Faulkner	503	Tina Whitehead	27
Tina Whitehead	72	Walter Levy	76	Lynn Roberts	76	David Paul	366	Sukumar Balachandran	381	Roger Miller	371	James Voeglein	24
Keith Hairston	61	Lynn Roberts	76	Scott Houston	74	Arthur Ransome	359	Gary Faulkner	378	Lewis Katz	357	Thomas Gisriel	14
Errol Bennett	58	Keith Hairston	51	Thomas Anderson	72	Steven Sattler	339	Kay Muldoon-Ibrahim	330	Kay Muldoon-Ibrahim	354	Walter Levy	12
Camellia Ibrahim	58	Jennifer Smutek	49	Jennifer Smutek	68	Alan Wilder	289	Roger Miller	282	Kaye Flamm	317	Jennifer Smutek	12
Jennifer Smutek	47	Charles Levie	46	Michael Washington	66	Charles Levie	231	Jon Meyer	246	Sukumar Balachandran	223	Guy Alston	11
Guy Alston	46	Guy Alston	44	George Saba	59	Kay Muldoon-Ibrahim	214	Kaye Flamm	211	Jon Meyer	198	Lynn Roberts	11
Kent Sutorius	45	Christopher Frisone	41	Kenny Epps	57	Walter Levy	213	Richard Eskin	188	James Voeglein	197	Kenny Epps	10
Nelson Smith	43	Camellia Ibrahim	40	Thomas Gisriel	57	Kaye Flamm	212	James Voeglein	174	Paul Biederman	167	Michael Mininsohn	9
Roger Johns	34	Errol Bennett	39	Charles Levie	57	Roger Miller	205	Jim Eichelman	157	Harry Bosk	165	Alan Wilder	8
Douglas Miller	34	Scott Houston	36	Keith Hairston	54	Richard Eskin	204	Paul Biederman	152	Richard Eskin	155	Keith Hairston	7
Diane Brunetti	30	Kenny Epps	34	Arthur Ransome	48	Vella Kendall	176	Richard Caplan	141	Guy Alston	136	Tom Blanpied	6
James Horn	28	Thomas Anderson	31	Phyllis Berger	47	Harry Bosk	173	Steven Dembo	141	Vella Kendall	132	Vella Kendall	6
Michael Mininsohn	28	Michael Navarre	29	Kent Sutorius	46	Christopher Frisone	171	Linda Lund	136	Steven Dembo	123	Christophe Casamassima	5
Jerry Taylor	25	David Paul	28	Michael Navarre	44	James Voeglein	157	Lewis Katz	135	Tina Whitehead	123	Arthur Ransome	5
Thomas Anderson	23	Kent Sutorius	24	Marilyn LeMay Patterson	27	Lewis Katz	154	Ran Zeimer	134	Linda Lund	107	Patricia Simmons	5
Christophe Casamassima	23	Nelson Smith	21	Camellia Ibrahim	26	Kenny Epps	149	Tina Whitehead	123	Jim Eichelman	105	Jim Eichelman	4
Laura Kelehan	21	Diane Brunetti	15	Christopher Frisone	22	Anthony Mordente	143	Sandy Nichols	120	Ran Zeimer	103	Lewis Katz	4
Marcus Dagold	19	Jerry Taylor	14	Vu Nguyen	21	Gary Faulkner	130	Vella Kendall	117			Joan Saba	4
Tom Blanpied	18	George Saba	13	Eve Bond	20	Scott Houston	130	Harry Bosk	111			Michael Washington	4
Marilyn Gould	18	Diane Bovenkamp	8	David Paul	18	Michael Navarre	128	Phyllis Berger	108			Linda Lund	3
Mel Holden	18	Roger Johns	8	Sandy Nichols	17	Jim Eichelman	126					David Paul	3
Alexandria Montanio	18	Vu Nguyen	8	Jerry Taylor	13	Thomas Gisriel	126					Chris Scroggins	3
Vu Nguyen	14	Marilyn LeMay Patterson	5	Nelson Smith	9	Lynn Roberts	125					Paul Biederman	2
Brian Berbary	13	Eve Bond	4	Marcus Dagold	8	Paul Biederman	122					Douglas Miller	2
Dan Gutwein	13	Christophe Casamassima	3	Roger Johns	8	Diane Bovenkamp	121					Maire Doyle	1
Rosalind Perry	13	Patricia Simmons	2	Carl Lancaster	8	Ran Zeimer	118					Ken Holden	1
Wendy Miller	11	Peter Hauser	1	Rosalind Perry	7	Sandy Nichols	112					Aleksandra Horn	1
Patricia Simmons	10			Christophe Casamassima	6	Vickie Gray	109					George Saba	1
Deborah Davis	9			Douglas Miller	6	Phyllis Berger	104					Steven Sattler	1
Stephanie Alston-Fisher	5			Mel Holden	5	Michael Washington	102						
Leo Charpentier	5			Laura Kelehan	2	George Saba	101						
Larry Leasner	5					Linda Lund	100						
Maire Doyle	3					Steven Dembo	64						
Aleksandra Horn	3					Jon Meyer	29						
Nick & Cynthia Islin	3												
Lisa Sartorius	2												
Cyril Cook	1												
Sandra Michaels	1												

Focal Point October - December 2024

Thursday, January 2 Program - Zoom Only Member Critique Night: One image per member. Upload image to Visual Pursuits/ “Member Programs – Critiques”

Thursday, January 9 Print Competition In-Person Only

Thursday, January 16 Program

Thursday, January 23 Digital Competition - Zoom Only - Judge: Emund Parazynski

Thursday, January 30 Program

Thursday, February 6 Print Competition In-Person Only

Thursday, February 13 Program - The Life of A. Aubrey Bodine Told by His Daughter - Jennifer will present a vast retrospective of her father's work and life.

Thursday, February 20 Digital Competition - Hybrid Theme: Architecture

Thursday, February 27 Program

Thursday, March 6 Print Competition In-Person Only

Thursday, March 13 Program

Thursday, March 20 Digital Competition - Hybrid

Thursday, March 27 Program

Focal Point October - December 2024

Focal Point

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The Oldest Continually-Operating Photographic Society in the USA (Incorporated in 1884)

Parting Shot

Middle Earth - Jim Voeglein
BCC Field Trip to Watkins Glen

Baltimore Camera Club is a Charter Member Club of the Photographic Society of America

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