

inFocus

Newsletter of the Westchester Photographic Society

July/August 2023



INSIDE:
Coming Up
AI
Competition Corner
"In My Backyard"
Competition 6B & EOY



Summer of AI*

It seems like everyone is talking about Artificial Intelligence (AI) these days. Every other news article seems to be about AI, generative AI in particular. I'm sure you heard of the lawyer who submitted a brief written by ChatGPT which created fictitious case citations. He got into a lot of trouble with the judge.

In the photography world AI assisted editing tools have been around for a while for mundane things like noise reduction, content aware object removal/fill, etc. There's AI software that can analyze your past photo edits and "learn" your style and apply it in batch to your new photos, and of course, there's all the image generation software like OpenAI's DALL-E, Midjourney or Stable Diffusion that can create photographs out of whole cloth. Photographers are protesting this latest capability, banning AI generated images, saying they aren't true photographs, etc. Just this past week Frames magazine took an editorial stand and declared AI generated images as unwanted in their magazine and on their platform and will be asking for submissions to be accompanied by raw files to confirm that a photographer used a camera to take the original image. It remains to be seen how successful such an approach will be. I'm sure we're already at a point where you can prompt a GPT to create a raw file with Exif metadata for a specific model camera.

Back in the March issue of inFocus I wrote about my experimentation with DALL-E to create photos in the style of our guest speaker Cole Thompson. Today I decided to try something else. As this is our Summer (July/August) issue of inFocus, I thought I'd ask ChatGPT to write a summer-themed column and DALL-E to create a photograph for it. Look later in this issue for that unedited column and photograph (see page 5). I think it did admirably (I might be out of a job!) and I join in its hope that you go out this summer and take some great photographs and share your "breathtaking images" with us.

Here's one of my photos from Cape Cod:



Till next time, may you always see beauty in your viewfinder.

Fuat Baran, *President*

COVER PHOTO

REDDISH EGRET

By Jun Shihoten

I met this bird at the edge of a rocky shore in Galveston, Texas. You should see his (her) head "reddish brown feather curled up!" I thought about what fancy hair (feathers) do! Actually, the Reddish Egret is a permanent resident of Texas.



inFocus

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Dick Budnik, Web Edition

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newsletter: infocus@wpsphoto.org

www.wpsphoto.org

Westchester Photographic Society

Meets 12 months a year, on Friday evenings at 7:30 pm (excepting school holidays). **Meetings are virtual now until further notice. Start time is 7:30 pm.**



Member of

ARTSW
ARTSWESTCHESTER



FRIDAY EVENING PROGRAMS

July

- 7 Caleb Hoover, "Urban Wildlife"
- 14 Members Critique
- 21 Members Showcases
- 28 Kenny Salstrom

August

- 4 Members Process Stock Photo
- 11 YouTube Videos
- 18 How I Did It
- 25 Matthew Christopher, "Abandon America"

September

- 1 No Meeting: Labor Day
- 8 Chris McGinnis, "The Little Things"
- 15 Lori Lankford, "Intentional Camera Movement"
- 22 Competition 1A
- 29 Dennis Thornton

October

- 6 Competition 1B (Theme: TBD)
- 13 TBD
- 20 Members Critiques
- 27 Competition 2A

November

- 3 Arik Gorban, "Street Photography"
- 10 Competition 2B
- 17 George Preoteasa, "Night Sky Time-Lapse Photography"
- 24 No Meeting: Thanksgiving

December

- 1 Competition 3A
- 8 TBD
- 15 Members Showcases
- 22 No Meeting: Christmas
- 29 No Meeting: New Years

Check the WPS website (wpsphoto.org) for recent changes.

Contact Information

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome and should be addressed as follows: If concerning the WPS Newsletter, In Focus, address comments to the editor at infocus@wpsphoto.org. If concerning our website, address comments to our webmaster, Dick Budnik, at webmaster@wpsphoto.org. All other comments should be addressed to our President.

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COMING UP



Caleb Hoover on July 7

Urban Wildlife

Wildlife photographer Caleb Hoover discusses the ins and outs of doing bird and wildlife photography in a highly developed urban environment. He will share some tips for finding great subjects close to home. Also, how to still capture stunning wildlife images despite the limiting circumstances an urban environment tends to offer.

Bio

I'm a 17-year-old birder and wildlife photographer based out of Tennessee. I started birding and documenting the birds I saw when I was 8 years old and ever since then I've gotten more and more invested. When I was around 13 or 14, I began to take the photography aspect a bit more seriously. Since then, I've been enjoying the rich process of learning and building on the art of bird photography.



Matthew Christopher on August 25

Abandoned America

Join Abandoned America author and photographer Matthew Christopher for a journey through some of America's most haunting ruins. From abandoned malls and amusement parks to churches, factories, and homes, we'll explore the fascinating stories of how these places were left behind and separate fact from fiction when it comes to their past.

Bio

Matthew Christopher has had an interest in abandoned sites since he was a child, but started documenting them a decade ago while researching the decline of the state hospital system. His two books, "Abandoned America: Dismantling the Dream" and "Abandoned America: The Age of Consequences" and his website, also titled Abandoned America, have chronicled the stories of modern ruins across the United States and gained international attention. Recently his scope has expanded to documenting abandoned locations across the globe. Matthew has an MFA in Fine Art Photography from Rochester Institute of Technology, has taught photography at a college level and now teaches photography workshops. He has had gallery shows across the US, lectured on abandoned spaces and mental health history, and his work has been in dozens of publications and media outlets including the New York Times, ABC and NBC News, PDN, The Atlantic, Photographer's Forum, The Huffington Post, BuzzFeed, the Daily Mail, NY Daily News, and many more.

Coming Up

Kenny Salstrom on July 28

AREA MUSEUMS/GALLERIES

Metropolitan Museum
(www.metmuseum.org)
Berenice Abbott's
New York Album, 1929
Through Sept 4

Museum of Modern Art
(www.moma.org)
Archives

International Center for Photography
(www.icp.org)
New Photography 2023
Ongoing

Fotografiska, NY
<https://www.blind-magazine.com/events/hip-hop-conscious-unconscious-at-fotografiska-new-york/>
Many Exhibits

New York Photography Diary
<https://ny-photography-diary.com/exhibitions/current-exhibitions/>
Many Exhibits

WPS GROUP EXHIBITS

**Cancer Treatment and Wellness Center
Northern Westchester Hospital**
What Can Grow—What Can Fly
April 4-September 26

WPS FIELD TRIPS

<https://www.wpsphoto.org/members-field-trips>

**More Photo Opportunities
in the Field Trip area.**
Stay tuned for more
information on these
upcoming trips!

[Wave Hill, Bronx](#)

[NYBG, Bronx](#)

[Rockefeller State Preserve
Pleasantville](#)

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS

Please log on to websites
to see the entire schedules.
Many events are available online.
Also see last page.

Hunts

<https://edu.huntsphoto.com>

B&H

<http://www.bhphotovideo.com/find/EventSpace.jsp>

Adorama

<http://www.adorama.com/alc/events>

SPECIAL INCENTIVES

A MEMBERS-ONLY DEAL!

Susan Magnano has offered special
pricing on many of her workshops.

If you are a WPS member,
click [HERE](#).

WPS EXHIBITS

The NWH Cancer Center is pleased to offer an exhibition by the
Westchester Photographic Society titled:

What Can Grow – What Can Fly

April 4 – September 26, 2023



What Can Grow - refers to an image that shows a plant, flower, tree, fruit, vegetables or landscapes.

What Can Fly - can refer to a photographer's image of a bird or insect in flight, nesting or on the ground.

Northern Westchester Hospital Cancer Center, 400 Main St, Mt Kisco, NY 10549
Telephone (914) 666-1200

Please call-in advance for admittance and exhibit hours.

FALL 2023 EXHIBITS

Northern Westchester Hospital

Theme: What a Wonderful World! Oh Yeah!

Drop off: TBD (runs for 6 months)

Greenburgh Public Library

Theme: I Came, I Saw, I Took the Picture

Drop off: Oct. 18 at 9:30am

Pick-up: Nov. 30 at 10am

Ossining Public Library

Theme: Do You See What I See? A Photographer's Perspective

Drop off: Nov. 2 at 10am

Pick-up: Nov. 29 at 1pm

For more information contact
Arnold Breisblatt at abreis@aol.com.



HAPPY SUMMER!

Prompt: Please write a summer themed one page newsletter column from a photography club's president

****Capturing the Magic of Summer: A Message from the Photography Club President****

Dear Photography Enthusiasts,

As the sun shines brightly and the temperatures soar, it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our summer edition of the Photography Club newsletter. With the arrival of this vibrant season, we are presented with endless opportunities to explore and capture the beauty that surrounds us. So grab your cameras, charge your batteries, and let's embark on a visual journey through the magic of summer!

Summer is a time when nature unfolds its wonders in full bloom. From colorful flowers to lush green landscapes, there is an abundance of subjects waiting to be photographed. Let your lenses capture the delicate petals of a rose, the gentle sway of a tree in the summer breeze, or the awe-inspiring beauty of a sunset that paints the sky with breathtaking hues. Share your vibrant nature shots with us, and let's celebrate the season's magnificent splendor together.

While nature offers endless inspiration, let's not forget the joy and warmth that summer brings to our communities. It's the season of festivals, fairs, and outdoor events. Be it a bustling street market, a lively concert in the park, or the laughter of children playing by the shore, these moments are fleeting yet precious. Seize the opportunity to document the spirit of summer, the happiness that permeates the air, and the bonds that are forged during this cherished time of year.

Summer also beckons us to explore new places and embark on exciting adventures. Whether you're jetting off to a tropical paradise or simply taking a day trip to a nearby town, remember to have your camera by your side. Photograph the vast landscapes, the bustling streets, and the authentic faces you encounter along the way. Every journey tells a story, and it's our duty as photographers to capture and share those stories with the world.

As a photography club, let's use this season as a catalyst for growth and creative expression. Organize outings to picturesque locations, where we can share our knowledge, inspire one another, and learn new techniques. Experiment with different genres and push the boundaries of our artistic vision. Encourage one another to step out of our comfort zones and embark on photography projects that capture the essence of summer.

Lastly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the members who have contributed their exceptional photographs to our club's growing portfolio. Your talent and passion continue to inspire us all. Remember, our shared love for photography unites us, and through our lenses, we have the power to preserve the memories and beauty of summer for generations to come.

So, my fellow photographers, let's embrace the warmth, the vibrancy, and the captivating moments that summer has to offer. I eagerly look forward to seeing your stunning captures and hearing your stories of summer adventures. Until then, keep clicking, keep creating, and keep celebrating the magic of photography!

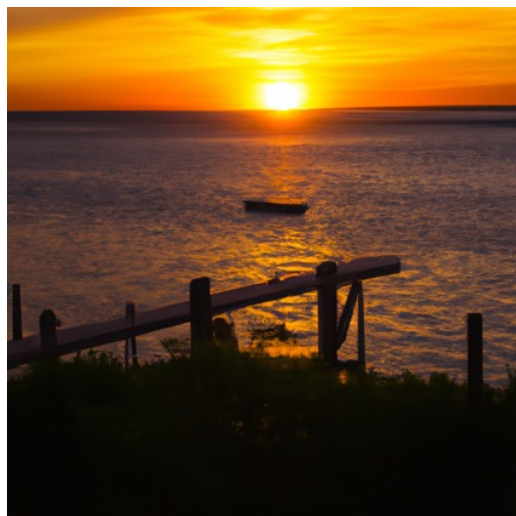
Wishing you a summer filled with unforgettable moments and breathtaking images.

Warm regards,

[Your Name]

President, Photography Club

Photo prompt: A photorealistic summer sunset beach photograph set on the bay in Cape Cod



The Competition Corner

By Dennis Thornton



Use of Artwork as the Primary Element

For decades, the debate of the acceptable use of other people's artwork, in WPS competition images, has been on going and fraught with varying degrees of confusion. This year was no exception. For the purpose of fostering a better understanding of our rules on this matter (Referenced in section 7.1 and accompanying Addendum) the following examples are reviewed.

The first example is an image of a Dale Chihuly glass boat. (Image 1) Our rules state that when using a work of art as the primary subject, the photographer needs to "transform" the final image, either during capture or in post processing. It is not sufficient to submit in competition a nicely composed/exposed and pleasantly processed image. Unless the maker has transformed the capture, it is still a "record shot" of someone else's artwork and is therefore subject to being challenged and possibly disqualified.

The Chihuly boat, submitted in a color digital competition, in that it's considered to be a straight-on "record shot," of what the artist and installers envisioned. The glass boat, as photographed, is in the water with the expected reflection. The nighttime rendition of this glasswork (Image 2), which was not submitted, further illustrates how the artist and installers saw the boat and reflection as the intended presentation.

Take-home message: No matter how nicely done, Image 1 is just a recording what the artist intended the viewer to see. It is not a unique interpretation of the subject as is required, when photographing a work of art. So, you need to pause before taking a picture of an identified work of art. Anything that is displayed in a park, statue garden, or in an exhibit and/or is attributed to a specific person should ring an alarm bell. If you go ahead and take a picture, understand that anything that comes close to a straight-on record shot is very likely to fall short of demonstrating significant creative intent and uniqueness. It may well be challenged.



Image 1



Image 2

The second example of the horse (Image 3) is, for me at least, a bit more in the gray area. It was submitted in an Open Mind competition and challenged. The three-person review panel deemed that it was a “record shot” of someone else’s artwork, regardless of its creative PoV. We all take record shots of lots of things and that is perfectly fine, so long as it is not a “work of art”. One question here is; Is this really a work of art? Or, is it a piece of work meaning that it is the product of an artisan’s skillful efforts? The panel was of the opinion that the maker of this wooden horse would likely like to view him/herself an “artist” and by extension it would make their creation a work of art. Such a piece of work makes the point that it’s easy to go down the rabbit hole of shades of gray, trying to define what is really art.

Take-home message: Art is a concept that continues to defy a definitive definition. When approaching any object, particularly statues, that may not be “fine art” but are reflective of an artistic endeavor, think about ways to transform the capture into something that is uniquely yours. Even though it may not be what many would consider a true “work of art,” other members may perceive it as such.

The third example (Image 4) was submitted and challenged on the basis that the design looked like graffiti, which is considered an art form and that this was a picture (record shot) of someone else’s artwork. When informed, the photographer was able to provide not only a very credible explanation of the abstract pattern of paint but also provided other images of other paint patterns created in the same manner. These paint patterns were haphazardly created as a byproduct during a manufacturing process. There was no intent to create a specific pattern. The only artistic intent was the photographer seeing this randomly created pattern and seizing the opportunity to frame and capture an image of it. This is not anyone else’s artwork, and therefore the submission is wholly acceptable for our competitions.

Take-home message: Don’t expect others to know how you captured your image. If the image is of an abstract pattern, particularly of paint, the suggestion is to be prudent and keep track of your digital files. Retaining the original capture and being able to provide a reasonable explanation of how the capture was made helped to resolve this challenge favorably.

As stated in the WPS rules (Section 7.1), when photographing a work of art, the onus is on the individual photographer to take/process/present an image that is uniquely different/transformed from how the original maker intended. Examples on unique captures as well as the “concept of the 99 others” which further explore these questions are provided in the Addendum sections 7.0 and 7.1. Photographers are given license to explore and if you are able to demonstrate “artistic intent” then an image may very well be considered acceptable. Always remember that art is subjective, the interpretation of these Guidelines and Rules will be subject to a degree of interpretation, by your fellow members. It’s an imperfect world and that is why these examples are discussed as an attempt to build a more understood consensus.

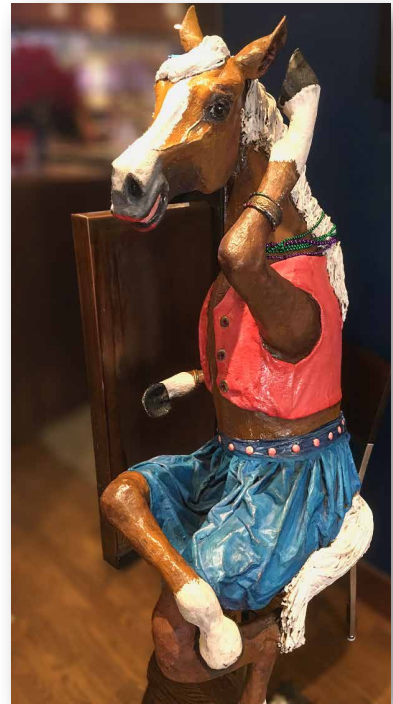


Image 3

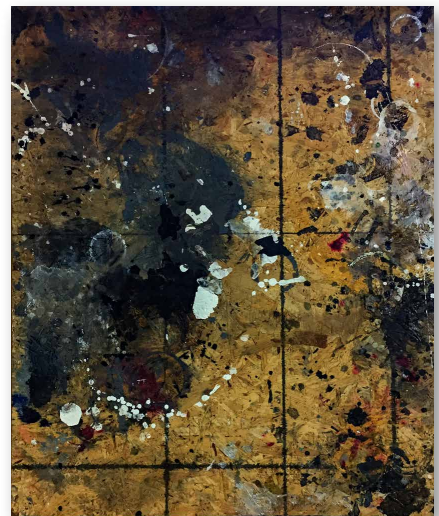


Image 4



In My Backyard

by **Barbara Kapetanakes**

My father introduced me to photography as a very young child when he developed film in the bathroom. I liked to watch the pictures coming up and learned how to shoot on his old, heavy, totally manual cameras when I was a child. I took art and photography in high school and did very well, but veered off into a career in psychology and my skills got rusty until joining some photography clubs over the past decade and getting my “sea legs” back.

When I’m not working as a psychologist in Sleepy Hollow, NY, two of my main hobbies are photography and horseback riding. I enjoy taking pictures of nature, even if that wildlife is in the Bronx Zoo, on vacations, and doing street photography in major cities. The photo for this article is me in my “happy place,” with Tiny, one of my favorite horses at the barn where I ride.

Sleepy Hollow, New York



Dozens of bridges span the Pocantico River in the Rockefeller Preserve and add an old-world charm with their beautiful stonework.

I live in Sleepy Hollow, NY, a small town about 25 miles north of midtown Manhattan. As the name suggests, there is literary history here in that Washington Irving lived in the area and wrote the famous legend about the town. Actual locations and names in his book come from locations in the town and names on headstones in the cemetery (the VanTassels and Cranes are old Rivertown families). Irving is buried in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery along with some other famous locals such as the Helmsleys and Rockefellers.

A picturesque community on the Hudson River, there are many interesting places to shoot here, but I want to focus on two particular areas that sit adjacent

to each other: the Rockefeller State Park Preserve and the cemetery. The Rockefeller is a fairly large (for suburban standards) state park that offers trails through green pastures and wooded areas. If you have ever been to Acadia National Park, it looks very similar, and no wonder—both were Rockefeller-designed! It was once all private property, but over time the family started opening it up to joggers, equestrians, and dog walkers, deeding parts to the state each year. Upon David Rockefeller’s death a few years ago, he left a directive on how it was to be maintained. Until his death he could often be seen in his horse and buggy on the property, “Riding around like he owns the place” as someone I know likes to muse. Many of the family members still live on



A lantern tour of the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery in October, when spooky activities abound.

A creative interpretation of joggers enjoying the cool fall weather and bright colors.



private land around the park, but the majority of the grounds are open to the public, and completely free unless you park in the main lot and therefore have to pay a parking fee. Lucky for me, I walk in through a small local playground around the corner and can be in the woods within minutes.

The Rockefeller offers photographers stone bridges, birds, deer, the occasional coyote or fox, beautiful colors in fall, and a lake full of turtles. At certain times in spring baby animals are present, as the family has some farming interests and often breeds goats, sheep, cattle, and pigs. There is a farm-to-table restaurant on the property, utilizing this grass roots farming. The livestock are often moved from meadow to meadow to graze and fertilize the soil, complete

with trained dogs protecting the animals from coyotes and other predators (we do get the occasional bear, but not often). At times I will walk in for my typical hour loop with my dog and see that cows or sheep have been relocated so that they greet us as we walk past a particular meadow we pass regularly. If it's early and quiet enough I have had the pleasure of seeing small songbirds, hawks, eagles, egrets, deer, and coyotes. Having grown up in the New York City borough of Brooklyn, I still can't believe I live a mere thousand feet from this bucolic getaway, even though I've been here a quarter century!

Most of the park is relatively flat, since it was built for carriages, with small rolling hills that are easy to navigate. However, Eagle Hill is worth the climb, especially in the colder months when the trees are bare, as one can see out to the river, the Mario Cuomo Bridge, and across the entire property. Another favorite area of the park for many people is Rockwood Hall, the former site of one of the Rockefeller residences. The foundation is all that is left, but the open space and walking trails going through the old estate have panoramic views of the Hudson, and many people walk their dogs or jog on this part of the estate. It abuts a senior housing complex and hospital, and many people from the complex walk, sit and enjoy the view, watch the



Deer in this suburban park are not timid around people and will often pose for closeups if you approach carefully and quietly.

sunset over the river, or otherwise relish the gifts the Rockefeller family has given us.

Adjacent to the park is also a long winding path that follows the Old Croton Aqueduct as well as the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Both also great locations for walking or other outdoor exercise (the OCA allows bicycles, the Rockefeller does not). The cemetery in particular is a gem, with massive mausoleums as well as headstones that go back hundreds of years—some so weathered they are no longer legible. While it is still an active cemetery with new areas for graves and even an above ground burial wall, the draw for photographers is the ancient headstones and beautiful sculptures. While I tend to take my walks in the

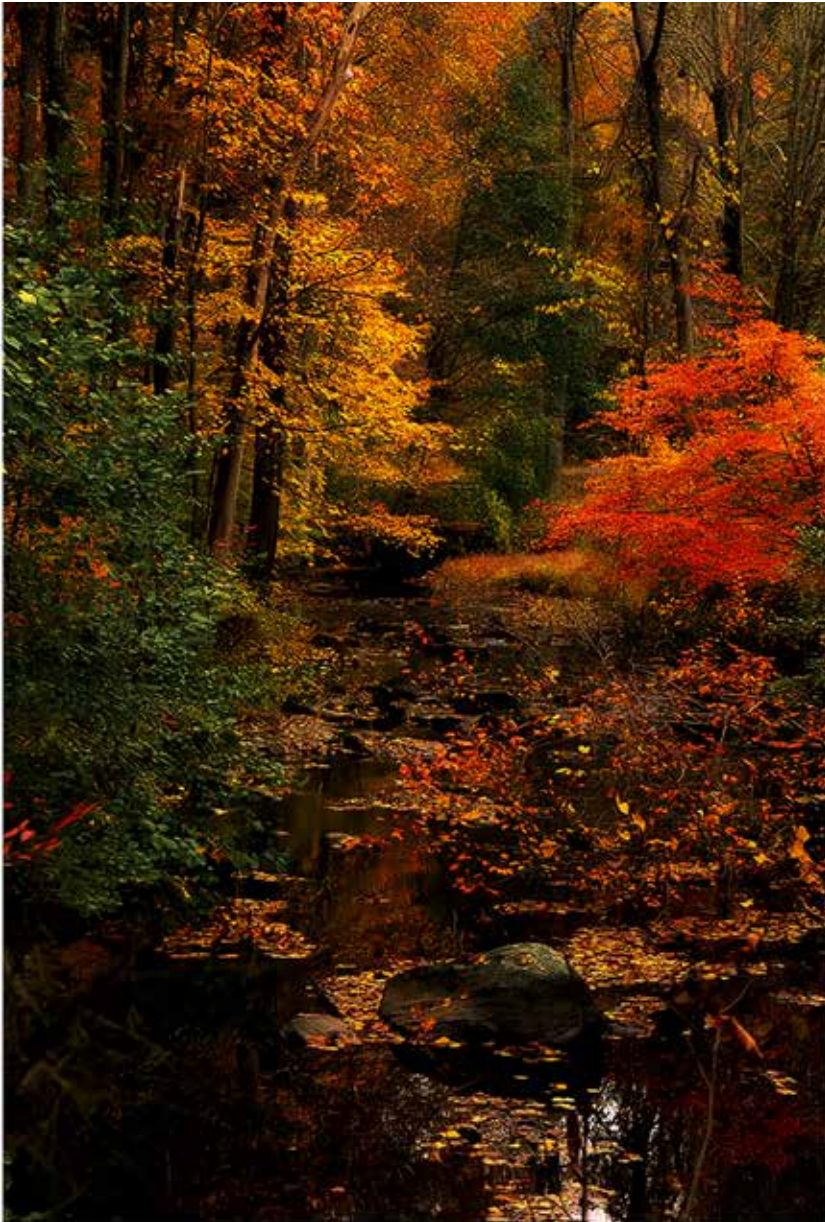
Rockefeller or on the Aqueduct, sometimes in the winter if we have a lot of snow and ice and the trails become difficult, I walk in the cemetery, since they have to plow and clean the roads. I meander amongst old graves and beautiful sculptures, wondering about the lives these people led and the stories they could tell. Again, wildlife is ever present, with birds, deer, squirrels, and chipmunks waiting for a photographer to come in for a closeup.

What's nice about Westchester County, where Sleepy Hollow sits, is that it is close to New York

In the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, beautiful statues adorn many plots.



Tiny woodland creatures are plentiful and adorable to capture.



Changing leaves create a gorgeous color palette around the Pocantico River, a tributary of the Hudson.

City, and also part of the Hudson Valley, so those visiting this part of New York State can take a day trip to the area from either further north along the river, or if visiting the city. Commuter trains go back and forth from the city and many stations have taxi stands (though many people simply “Uber” these days!). This part of the county is less than an hour ride from Grand Central Terminal. If looking for a gem outside of the usual tourist attractions, the park and cemetery are worth a stop with a camera. In addition, we do Halloween like nobody’s business here, cashing in on the connection to the Headless Horseman and other spooky stories written by Irving. If visiting in October you’ll be treated to beautiful fall colors, street fairs, Halloween events, and maybe even see the Headless Horseman. I got lucky one year and saw him in the cemetery! He requested that I hand him my beagle, Giuseppe, to sit on the saddle with him for a picture. How many dogs can say they got their picture taken with the Headless Horseman? No surprise, the high school’s teams are known as the Horsemen, and he often gallops across the football field for the homecoming game. What a place! Meet you at the Horseman Bridge—be sure to bring a pumpkin!



On Memorial Day, 2020, flags and cannonballs adorn a section of the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery where veterans from as far back as the Civil War are buried



In spring baby livestock are born and live on the Rockefeller Preserve. They are marked almost immediately after birth.



“Play with me!” says one newborn goat to his companion.

DIGITAL B&W



Dennis Thornton, First
Tent Tops



Lois Barker, Second
Gyrfalcon



Barbara Kapetanakes, Third
Wolf Posing



Arnold Breisblatt, HM
Hanging Leaves in Pottery

THEME: STILL LIFE



Barbara Kapetanakes, First
Shoes and Spool

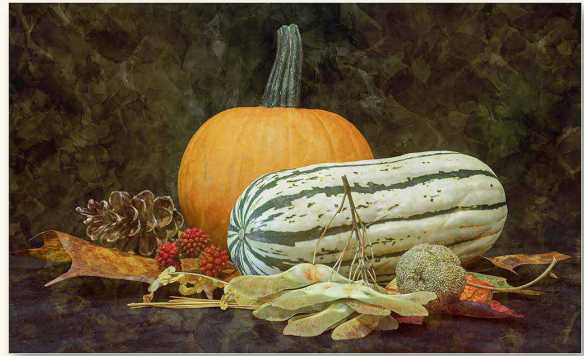


Barbara Kapetanakes, Second
Pitcher and Bowl

THEME: STILL LIFE



Anastasia Tompkins, Third
Rosie's Toe Shoes



Carolyn Colella, HM
Fall Still Life



Arnold Breisblatt, HM
Still Life with Garlic

EOY: DIGITAL B&W



Linda Austrian, First
Pyramid of Smiles



Jackie Ross, Second
Church Iceland

EOY: DIGITAL B&W



Anastasia Tompkins, Third
Feather Story

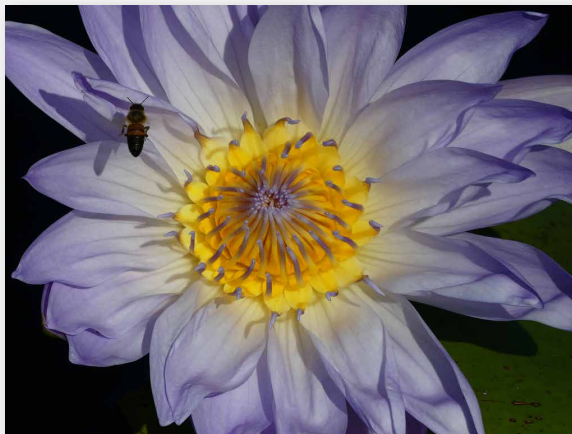


Dennis Thornton, HM
Working Hands

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR B

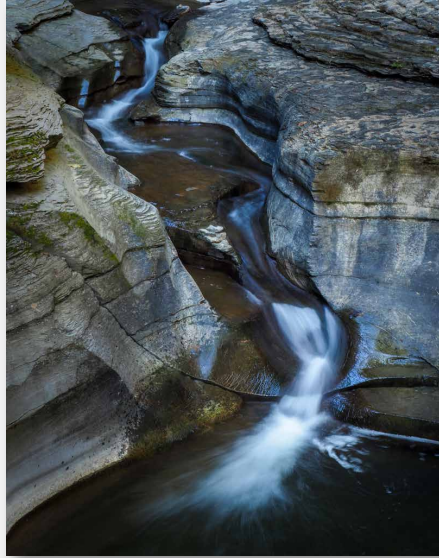


Barbara Pollack, First
Pink Tulip

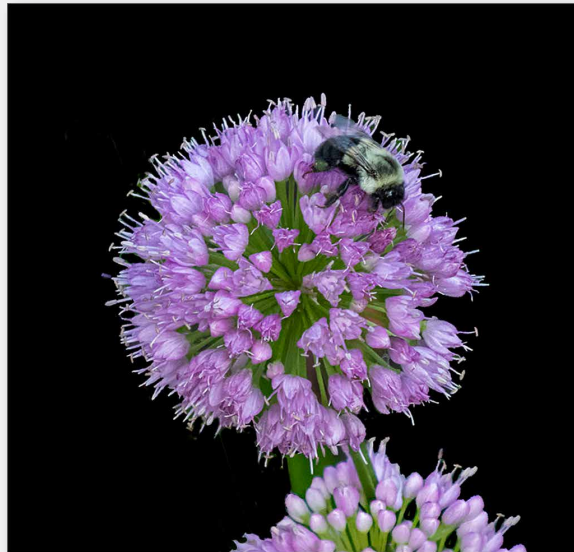


Serge Migdal, Second
Buzz

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR B

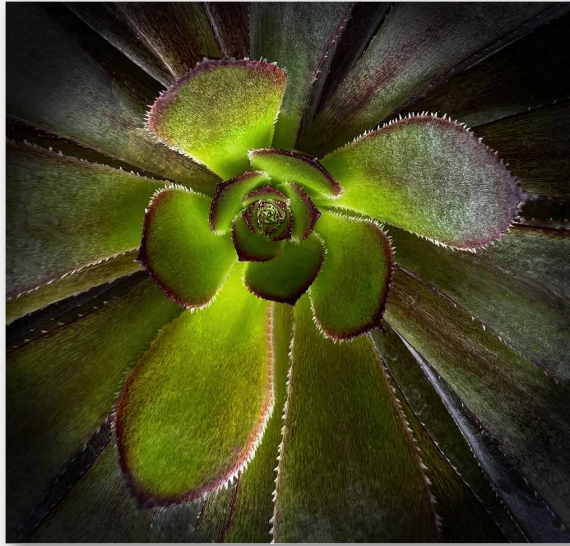


Carl Zucker, Third
Watkins Glen



Barbara Pollack, HM
Allium & Bee

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR A



Arnold Breisblatt, First
Glowing Cactus

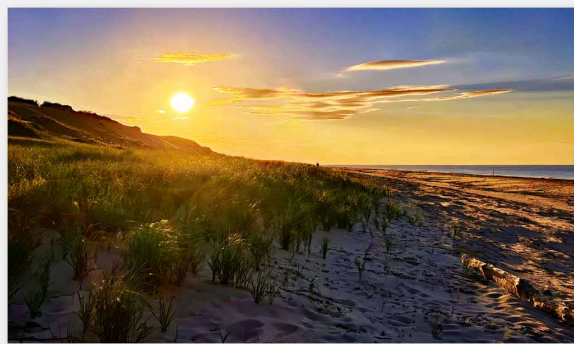


Jackie Ross, Second
I've Got This

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR A



Jackie Ross, Third
Little Tern

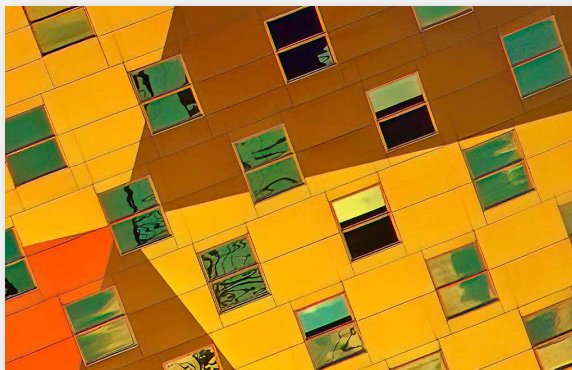


Arnold Breisblatt, HM
Sunset at Truro Beach

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR SALON



Richard Micklish, First
The Three



Richard Micklish, Second
42-8th

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR SALON

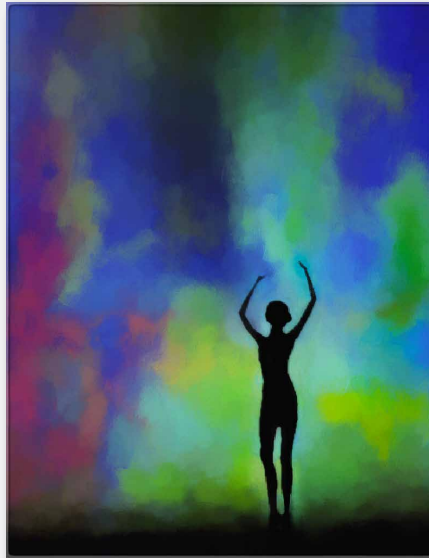


Barbara Kapetanakes, Third
Puffin

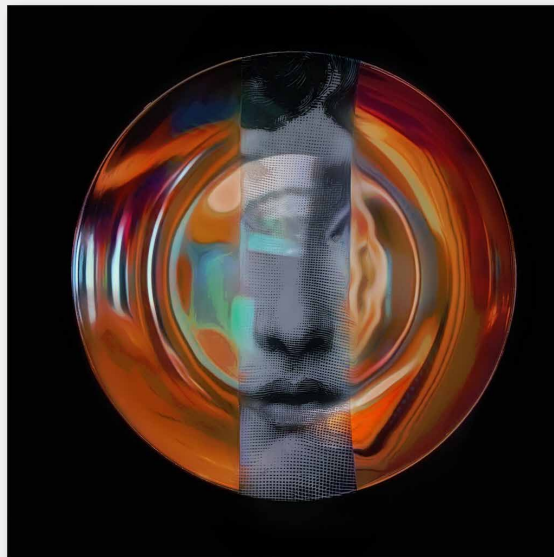


Dennis Thornton, HM
Old Mong Woman

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR OPEN MIND

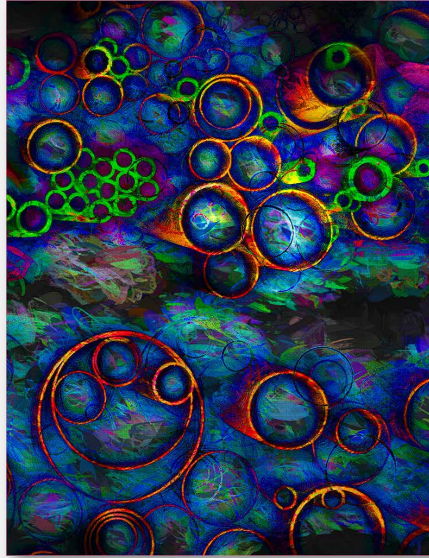


Anastasia Tompkins, First
Apex Dancer

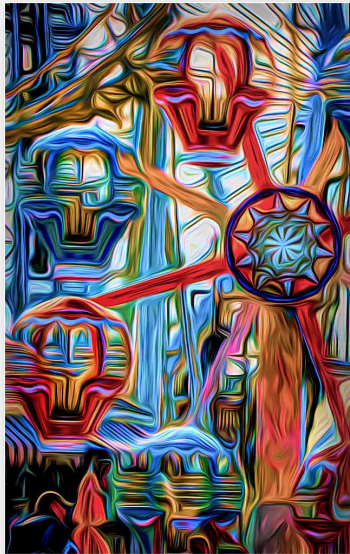


Anastasia Tompkins, Second
Plate Face

EOY: DIGITAL COLOR OPEN MIND



Dennis Thornton Third
Circles in Blue



Barbara Kapetanakes, HM
Wildwood Boardwalk

inFocus

The Newsletter of the
Westchester Photographic Society

Ron Carran, editor

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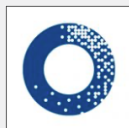
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