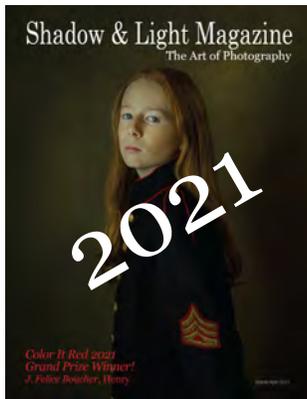


# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography



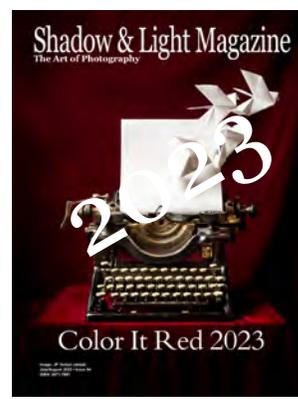
# Color It Red Returns!



Felice Boucher



Suszi McFadden



J.P. Terlizzi



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# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

## Notes...

*Special Note: The print copy of this issue is unavailable. My layout program does not agree with me and we will have to attend a therapy session. With success in mind there is a good deal of certainty you will be able to order a print copy of this issue by next Tuesday. After that date and you want to order a copy, just email me (below) and I will give you an update. Sorry!*

**Welcome to 2026, everyone!** I am so glad you are here, although I do know 2025 and the early part of this year have both been quite challenging. We can be thankful that we have photography in our lives!

Douglas Dubler is back with an insightful article on iconic fashion photographer, Neal Barr. His wondrous images included in this piece, well as the cover, illustrate the elegance and style that have been the hallmarks of his career.

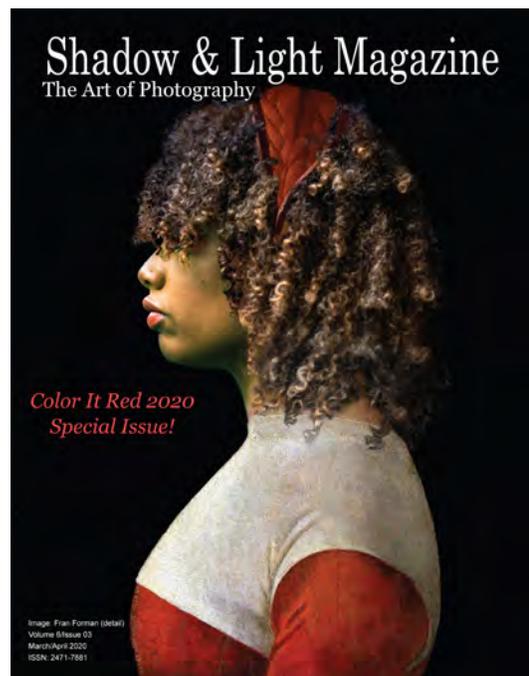
Elizabeth Sanjuan and Lou Sisneros are both new to these pages. Sanjuan's images remind us of how quiet and peaceful winter can be while spending some time in Hokkaido, Japan. The images of Sisneros serve to open our eyes to the beauty of food as fine art. She keeps a respectful relationship toward food as both a significant part of our health while also stunning us with how beautiful an artichoke can be.

Jay Lee returns to these pages with a display of urban expressionism that entices us with the brilliance of full color and the subtlety of shape and shadow. Also returning, but with a different than previously is Rhonda Spidell with an excellent spread of black-and-white images, while offering a bit of insight, "There's a clarity and honesty in this simplicity—it invites the viewer to focus on form, contrast, and emotion." Eric McCollum's regular insert is taking the issue off but we still stuck him in with an encore presentation of an earlier interview he did with Diana Bloomfield and her compelling series, Southland.

Our other intrepid feature writer, Steve Immel, muses about grand and granular which might leave one to wonder what the heck that means. There are a couple of clues in this sentence but you will need to read the article to put it together. Good luck!

Our next issue will feature winners from our very popular call-for-entry, **Color It Red**, which is already attracting quite a bit of interest and dozens upon dozens of entries! You can enter by simply clicking on the link on the earlier page. To aid you in your quest to create the best Color It Red images, we are including several cover pages of earlier winners in this issue. Remember the Grand Prize winner will receive the cover of that issue.

Another very popular feature will be returning to these pages in the March/April issue. The Single Image Showcase will be accepting up to 10 participants on a first come first served basis. Sample images are also included in this issue.



Tim

tim@cygnetpress.com

# Shadow & Light Magazine

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Lori Pond, Meredith Mullins,  
Robin Bell**

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# Shadow & Light Magazine • The Art of Photography



Shadow & Light Magazine's primary objective is to introduce new voices in photography by featuring them in a nationally-distributed fine art photography magazine.

In publishing a wide range of fine art photography, Shadow & Light Magazine will seek to publish those photographic artists who strive to formulate creative ideas and translate them into work that captures and ignites human imagination. Experience, education, and age are not determinates in recognizing quality art.

Shadow & Light Magazine will also feature established artists who reflect the magazine's goal of eliciting an emotional response from the viewer and who provide inspirational examples of imaginative and innovative work.

Not only does Shadow & Light Magazine seek to engage the reader visually but intellectually as well with informative articles, critical insight, and compelling interviews.

Shadow & Light Magazine is a bi-monthly, subscription-based PDF/print publication designed for photographers across all levels of photography offering valuable information about a range of photographic subjects including portfolios, and individual images, along with interviews and in-depth essays.

It is also designed for the photographer who desires to present their work to a large audience, including curators, collectors, gallerists, and photography peers and professionals.

Please note that all content and photographs and other materials in this publication are the sole property of their respective owners and are fully copyrighted.

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# Showcase Featured Portfolio

Neal Barr: *A Master Class in Elegance*

by Douglas Dubler



*Harper's Bazaar 1967 • Penny Ashton in Donald Brooks.*

---

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**My first introduction to Neal Barr** was through his former darkroom assistant, Gene Thomas, who had the responsibility of processing all of his B&W film and executing exquisite silver gelatin prints which would be used by magazines for reproduction. During the days of my studio in San Juan Puerto Rico, Gene and I became friends and occasionally did some scuba diving together. On his first visit to my studio, he brought a portfolio of work he had done for Neal. I was absolutely speechless. Here I was at 24 years old trying to become a professional photographer with no formal photographic education and looking at this portfolio of incredible photographs. It was like an epiphany and it inspired me to seek a higher standard to emulate. With Gene's introduction, I called Neal and he agreed to meet me in New York City at his studio.

At our first meeting, Neal patiently looked at all of my prints and offered positive feedback for improvement including suggestions about models, hair & makeup, styling, lighting, composition, etc. All of the elements necessary for a professional result. I made notes and returned to my studio in San Juan and given my limited resources attempted to follow his suggestions. A month later I returned and we had another meeting with similar results. I was ecstatic.

From these brief mentoring sessions, I felt a sense of focus and at last I could identify/visualize a tangible goal as a professional photographer. These meetings continued until some years later when I relocated to New York and opened my own studio there. Neal and I had become friends by this time and I would continue to show him my photographs and he was generous to always offer me positive encouragement. It was the most helpful experience in my professional career.

Neal Barr's photography is like a masterclass in elegance, capturing not only the clothes that grace the runways of Paris but the very essence of the city itself. As a seasoned photographer for Harper's Bazaar, Barr developed a keen eye for detail and an intuitive understanding of fashion's ephemeral nature. This editorial explores how his unique vision and artistry translated into stunning imagery that celebrated the thrilling chaos and beauty of Paris Fashion Week.

### **The Art of Storytelling Through Fashion**

Fashion photography is inherently a storytelling medium. Each image tells a narrative, bringing to life the dreams and aspirations stitched into the fabric of couture garments. Neal Barr has mastered this craft, using his camera to weave together moments of spontaneity and style that leave an indelible mark on the viewer's imagination. His work for Harper's Bazaar provides an intimate look at the vibrant personalities behind the designs, the models who bring them to life, and the eclectic entourage that gathers to witness these spectacular photo shoots.

Barr's choice of the lens is a critical beginning in creating images that resonate with both depth and vibrancy. His keen understanding of light and shadow, combined with the technical advantages of the most exacting equipment, allows him to capture the intricate details of each ensemble, from the shimmer of silk to the texture of lace.

### **The Influence of Paris**

Paris is not just a backdrop; it is a character in Barr's photographs. The city's grand architecture and rich culture serve as a perfect canvas for high fashion. His photographs convey not only the garments but also the ambiance of Paris, a city synonymous with style and sophistication.

During the high-energy days of Paris Fashion Week, Barr's camera becomes his voice, highlighting not just the clothing but the dynamic interplay of emotion among the participants. Each



*Harper's Bazaar Cover - May 1968 • Cathee Dahmen in Antonio Castillo, Hair by Alexandre of Paris.*

click emphasizes a fleeting moment of joy, anticipation, or drama, transforming routine encounters into breathtaking visuals. It's in these moments; when the models were poised for the "decisive moment" that the vibrant life of the city is reflected, and in that Barr finds his artistic identity.

### **A Study in Detail**

One of the hallmarks of Barr's work is his ability to capture details that might otherwise go unnoticed. The intricate embroidery on a gown, the sparkle of jeweled accessories, and the play of shadows across a model's face are meticulously documented through his lens. This dedication to detail

encourages viewers to look closer, to appreciate the artistry that underpins each design.

In a world that often prioritizes the bold and brash, Barr's photography is a refreshing reminder of subtlety's power. It is this careful consideration of detail that resonates with readers of Harper's Bazaar and elevates Barr's work to a level of artistry that transcends mere documentation.

### **The Evolution of Style**

Over the years, Barr's style evolved to embrace the changing landscape of fashion photography. His ability to adapt while maintaining a signature aesthetic is noteworthy. With each season, he pushed the boundaries of his creativity, experimenting with new lighting techniques and perspectives that kept his work fresh and compelling.

While the core of his approach remains rooted in fashion's rich history, he seamlessly incorporates modern elements that reflect the constantly changing trends. This blend of classic and contemporary is particularly evident in his moody, atmospheric shots that evoke a sense of nostalgia while remaining relevant to today's fashion landscape.

### **Collaborations that Define His Work**

Collaboration is at the heart of Barr's photographic journey. Working alongside talented models, stylists, makeup artists, and designers, he creates images that are as much a result of teamwork as they are of individual vision. Each Paris shoot was an opportunity for creative synergy, allowing Barr to interpret the collective vision through his unique approach. A synthesis of light, shadow, color, composition and moment.

At the forefront of many of these collaborations was his relationship with Harper's Bazaar, a publication renowned for its commitment to showcasing the intersection of fashion and art. The synergy between Barr and Harper's Bazaar has produced a body of work that not only sets trends but also influences fashion dialogue around the globe.

### **The Legacy of Neal Barr**

As we reflect on the impact of Neal Barr's work for Harper's Bazaar, it's clear that he has redefined the standards of fashion photography. His knack for capturing the fleeting moments of Paris Fashion Week serves as a benchmark for both emerging and established photographers in the field. Barr's contributions extend far beyond the glossy pages of a magazine. They serve as an inspiration for a generation of creatives who see fashion not just as clothing but as an expression of culture, art, and identity. Through his eyes, we are invited to witness the convergence of talent and artistry that characterizes his fashion photography. And as a bonus, offering a glimpse into the soul of Paris itself.

These photographs represent fashion photography elevated to an art form and although this was a period of time now relegated to memory and history, Neal's images remain serving as inspiration to those who aspire to photographic excellence. I know they did and still do for me. ○

---

*For additional breathtaking images and a more complete biography go to [www.nealbarr.com/](http://www.nealbarr.com/). An extended biography will be forthcoming in the near future. (ed. This is a beautiful site, you won't be disappointed!)*

*Harper's Bazaar 1967*  
*Alexandra Afganisjew in Tiffany.*





*Harper's Bazaar 1968 • Pat McGuire in George Halley.*



*Harper's Bazaar 1967 • Joel Grey & Lucy Angle.*



*Harper's Bazaar 1970, Paris, Pierre Cardin.*



*Harper's Bazaar 1969, Alexandra Afganisjew.*



*Harper's Bazaar 1968 • Cathee Dahman in Marc Bohan for Dior.*



*Diana Newman in Sarmi.*

# Showcase Portfolio

Elizabeth Sanjuan: *Silent Snow*



*Windswept.*

---

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*Earthen.*

**January 19, 1977—five days after my 12th birthday**—I witnessed my first snowfall—in Miami! For years thereafter, I sought out snow around the world, seeking the peace and serenity of the quiet landscape and the magical resilience of the land, that I first witnessed on that fleeting, rare, snowy, day in Miami.

None of these places were more special and unique than Hokkaido. The northernmost of the four islands of Japan, it has one of the harshest winters on the planet. Super cold Siberian winds cross the Sea of Japan, picking up moisture along the way, and dump their load unceremoniously on the rising terrain of Hokkaido. Snowfall is measured in feet, not inches. Below-zero temperatures reign. Ice and snow make driving and trekking a challenge.

I haven't been photographing for that long, really. I would say I am still on a journey of discovery as a photographer. The images I selected for my book and those I have included here are subtle in color and tonality. While the majority of landscape photography is done in black and white, I made a conscious choice to photograph in color. It was a challenge to see if I could evoke the same emotion and timelessness in color, however muted, as in the more traditional black and white. Taking my images in color was a deliberate choice. What has been reaffirming to me is that people get it. The subtle tones are as effective as bold contrasts; the words are calm, the combinations are meditative and the pages turn in a musical way. It is hard to believe that the photos evoke calm when most of the time I was photographing in the middle of a snow storm or blizzard, balancing precariously on snowshoes, or clumsily grasping for camera controls with frozen fingers. Photographing there means four to five layers of clothing, multiple batteries, crampon spikes and snowshoes. But it is all worth it. Hokkaido speaks to me on another level. I have returned four times to record the stillness and revel in the calm. The distinct spirituality of Hokkaido is palpable—as I have tried to express on the following pages.

*Elizabeth Sanjuan*



*Entwined.*



*Emergence.*



*United.*



*Serene.*



*Tilted.*



*First Snowfall.*



*Silence.*



*Rise.*



*Silken.*



*Infinity.*

# Special Showcase Portfolio

## Color It Red

The Covers!!!



# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography



Image: Susan Brandt Graham  
Volume 3/Issue 3  
March/April 2017  
ISSN 2471-7681

# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

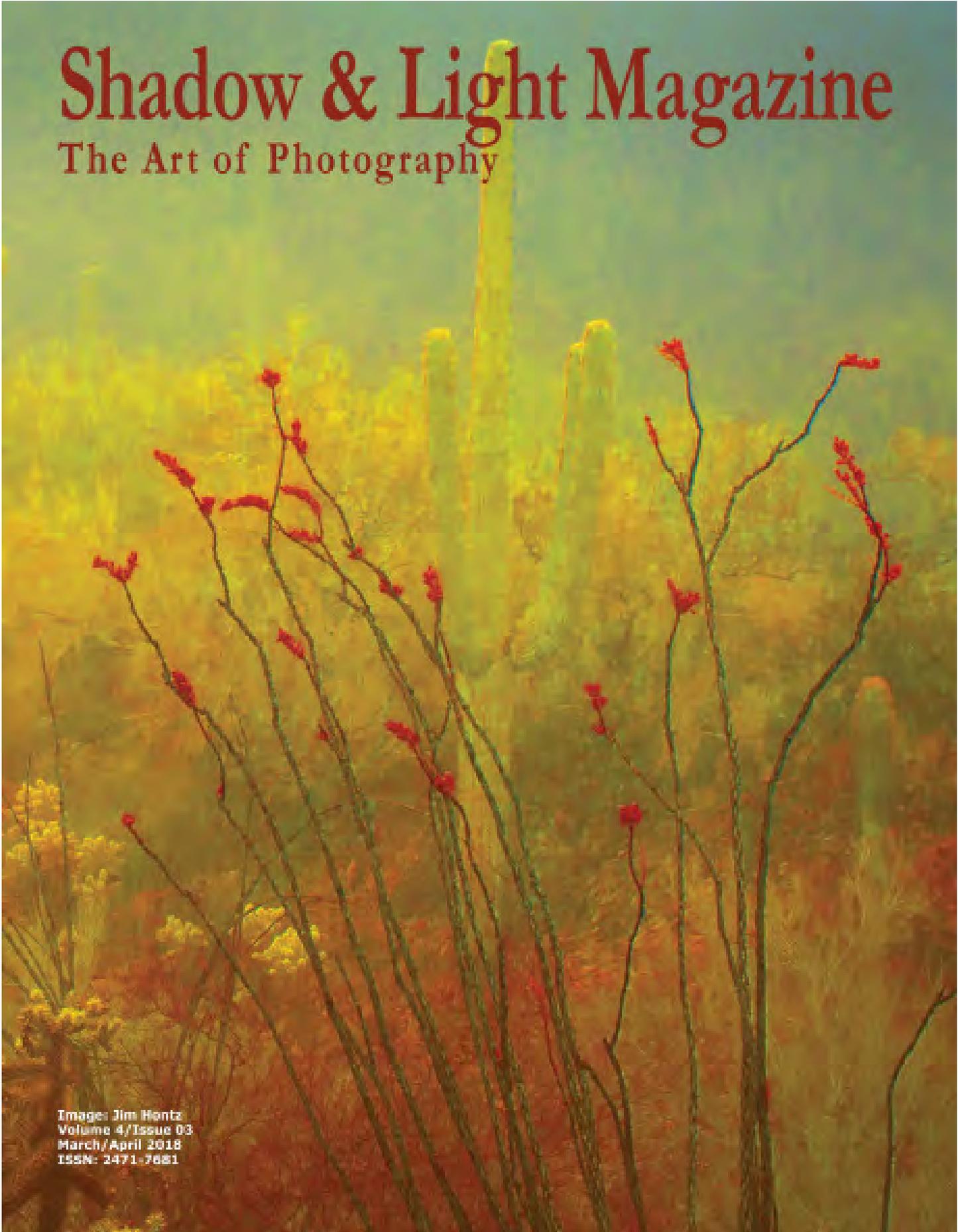


Image: Jim Hontz  
Volume 4/Issue 03  
March/April 2018  
ISSN: 2471-7681

# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

*Color It Red 2019  
Special Issue!*



Image: Terri Gold (detail)  
Volume 5/Issue 03  
March/April 2019  
ISSN: 2471-7881

# Shadow & Light Magazine

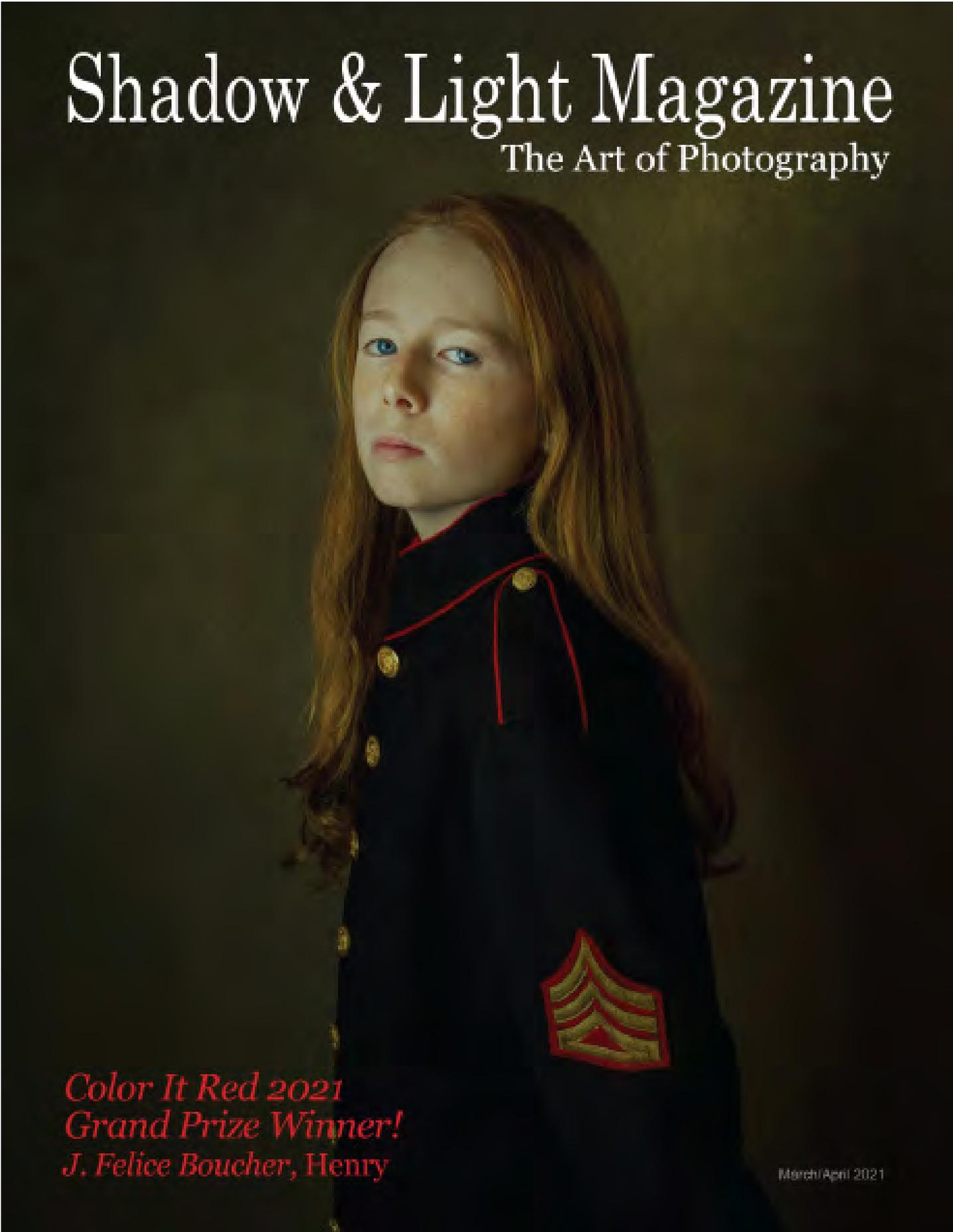
The Art of Photography

*Color It Red 2020  
Special Issue!*

Image: Fran Forman (detail)  
Volume 6/Issue 03  
March/April 2020  
ISSN: 2471-7881

# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography



*Color It Red 2021  
Grand Prize Winner!  
J. Felice Boucher, Henry*

March/April 2021

# Showcase Portfolio

Jay Lee: *38th and Vine*



*Apogee.*

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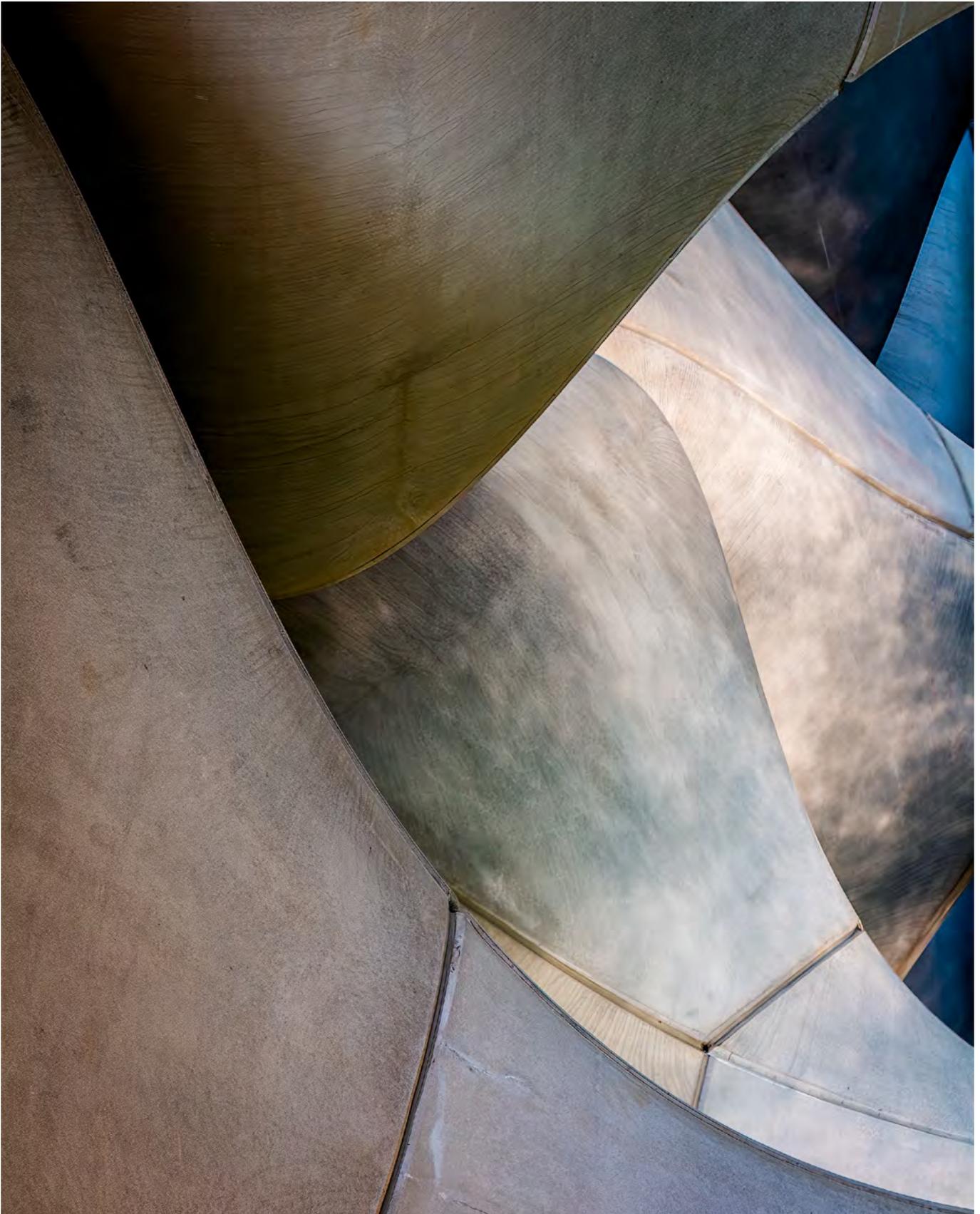
*Breath.*

**The appeal of abstract art has always been strong for me** and I find myself seeking it out, skipping past the classic and representational to find the work that lives on the periphery. I appreciate the way it expresses freedom from our ‘normal’ ways of perceiving the world, a little vacation for the brain. It is an artform that can be comforting to the eye while at the same time challenging an existing world view. So, for better or worse, I tend to see the world in terms of its structure and form, so it’s little wonder that at every corner I can look around and find a kind of virtual gallery in the nooks, crevices and reflections that surround me.

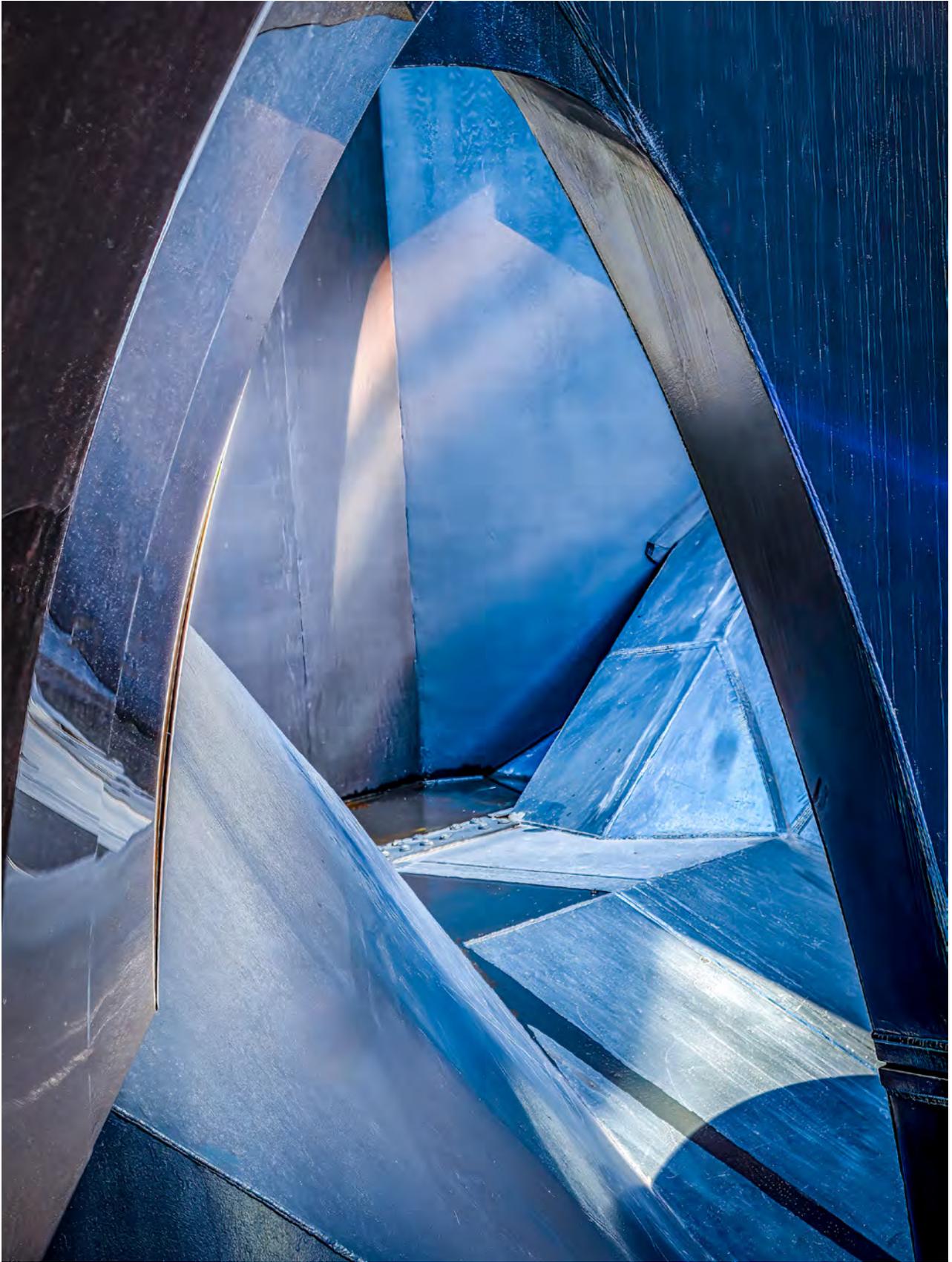
I know a window is a window when I see it on a building on a street in a city. The metropolitan environment providing a context that frames how I perceive the world and thus, how I experience it. But if I choose to remove said context and look beyond the familiar, a new world opens up that is full of color, line, texture and light. By choosing to see in a different way that is in tune with this out of context thinking, my surroundings suddenly reveal unexpected compositions at every turn. Coupled with my particular medium being photography, it was a satisfying match offering new pathways to exploration and visual growth.

Through my lens, I was able to discover intriguing organic curves shimmering in reflected sunlight or intersecting splashes of color in a never ending battle with the righteousness of unyielding grids. I felt that if I could learn how to see in a different way, I would be limited only by my imagination and desire to see beyond the constraints I had placed on my own vision. I had given myself the permission to explore the beauty that was once hidden in plain sight and to bring it out in the open. In so doing, it was my way of sharing this vision and hopefully inspiring a closer inspection by others at what was once overlooked.

*Jay Lee*



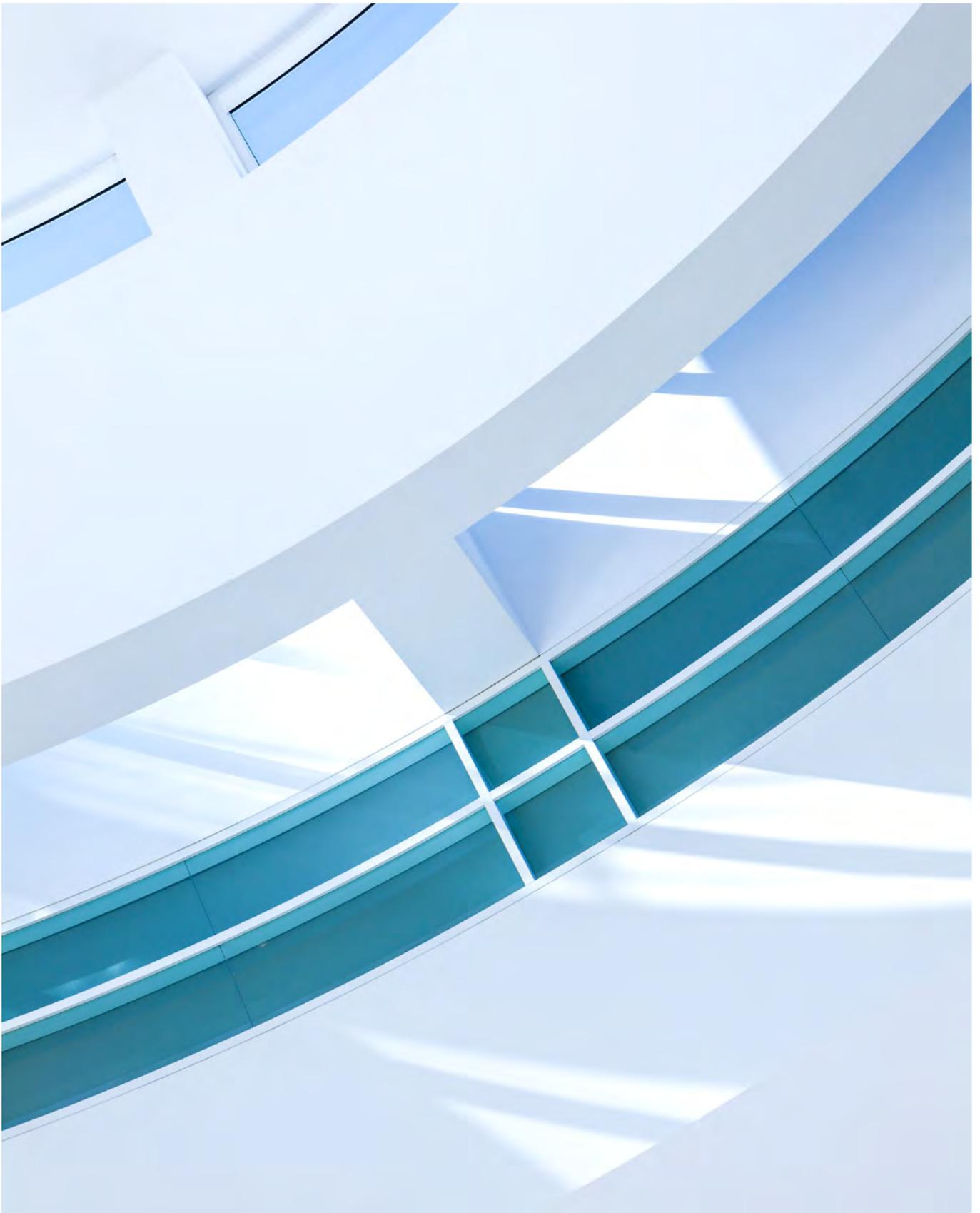
*Emergence.*



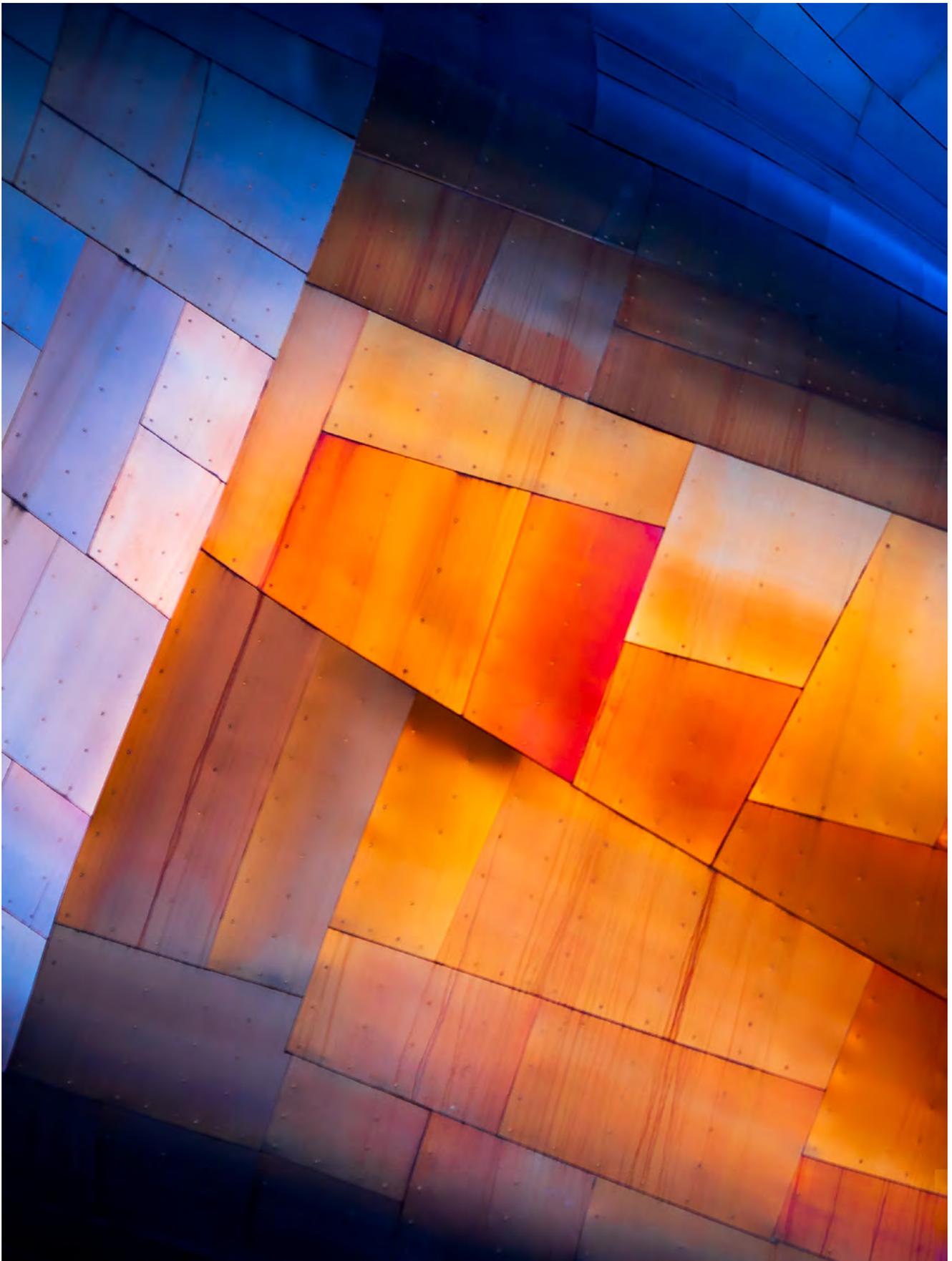
*Fortress.*



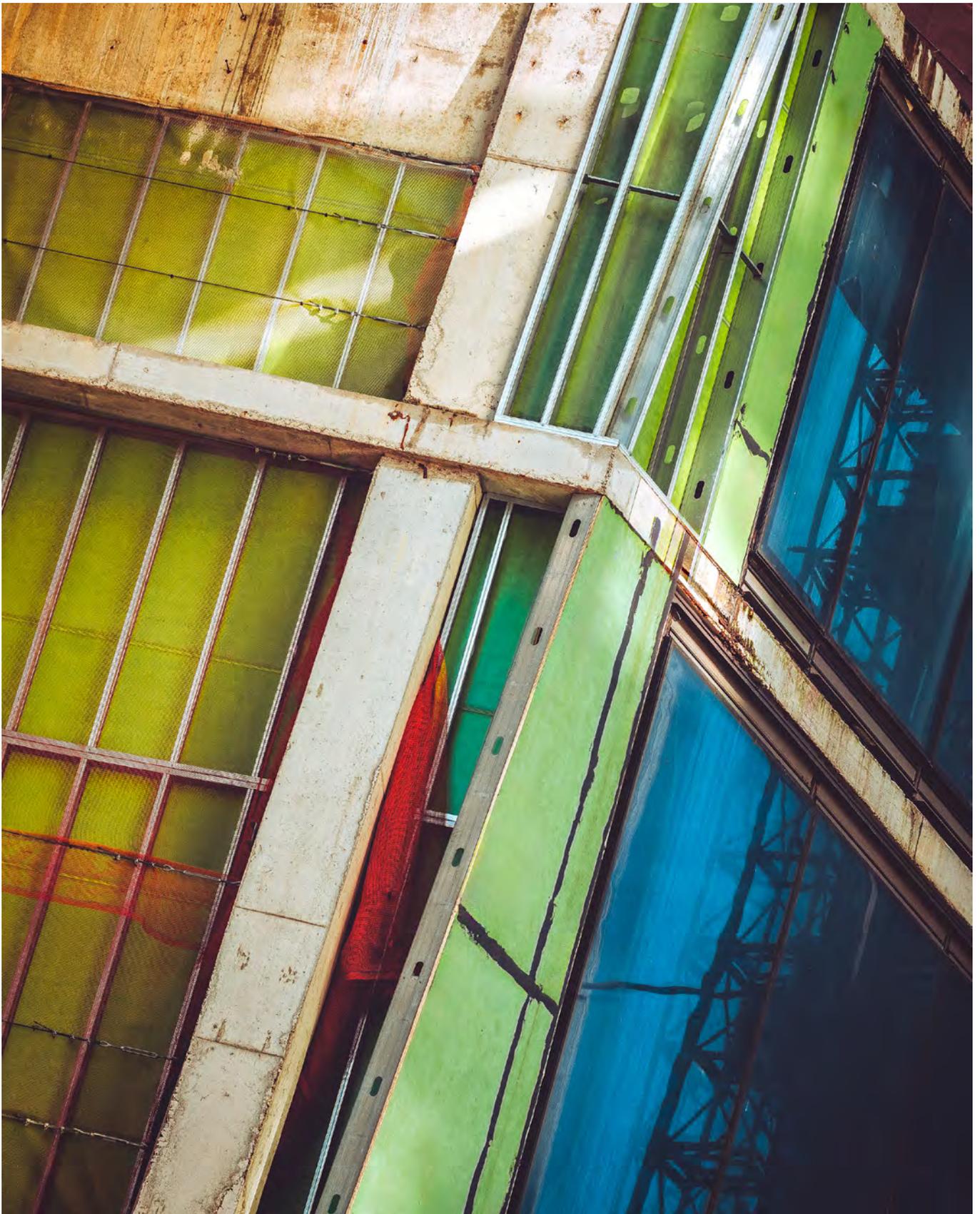
*Getty.*



*Getty 2.*



*Pop.*



*Reclamation.*



*Conduit.*



*Ripple.*

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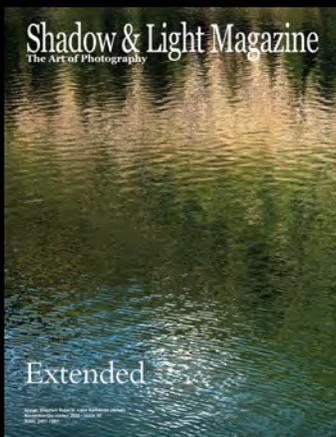
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Credit: TracyBosworth Page

*Tracy*

# Showcase Portfolio

Lou Sisneros: *Food as Fine Art*



*Peggs.*

**I'm drawn to food because of the visual potential** that often hides in plain sight. My artistic instincts work in constant companionship with an analytical mind, pulling me toward pattern, repetition, texture, and color. Just as important to my process are the conversations that surround food—relationships formed with growers, farmers, and cooks, where a conversation can open access to places and moments that are rarely seen. Photographing food becomes both an act of observation and of engagement, leaning into the human connection as much as the composition.

The photographs submitted reflect that way of seeing. The artichoke is one of my favorites for its evolution from food to flower, revealing structure and form as it opens. Tomatoes, among my earliest food subjects, continue to resonate for their saturated color and patterns. Lettuce, often questioned as a subject, reveals an unexpected beauty when given attention, reinforcing my belief that all food carries redeeming visual value. Perhaps most surprising is an image of kettle chips photographed at a street fair—an unplanned moment that has since become my most widely licensed stock image, traveling far beyond its origin.

*Lou Sisneros*

---

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*Artichoke Flower.*



*Radishes.*



*Tomato Tops.*



*Pasta.*



*Kettle Chips.*



*Poivron Reflections.*



*Garlic.*



*Strawberries and Chocolate.*



*New Mexico Christmas.*

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Our Annual Showcase of Individual Images

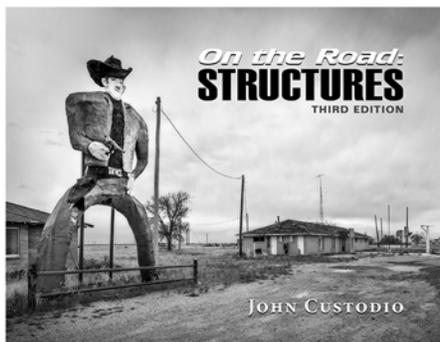
It's continues!  
The Single Image  
Showcase...

We will continue with this  
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# Another Time



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# *Pemangku*



*The Lone Clown, from the series, Le Cirque*



# *Standing Figure*



# Showcase Portfolio

Rhonda Spidell: *Focus & Form*



*Deep in Thought Atop a Sand Dune.*

## **Why I love photographing in black and white.**

I take black and white photographs because they strip away the distractions of color and leave behind the raw essentials of light, shadow, and texture. There's a clarity and honesty in this simplicity—it invites the viewer to focus on form, contrast, and emotion. I met Ansel Adams at UNM during the early 70's and have been deeply influenced by his work. I was impressed by his mastery of tonal range and his ability to transform landscapes into bold, timeless compositions. With black and white photography, I find a language that is both minimalist and powerful, capable of revealing an image's soul without ornamentation.

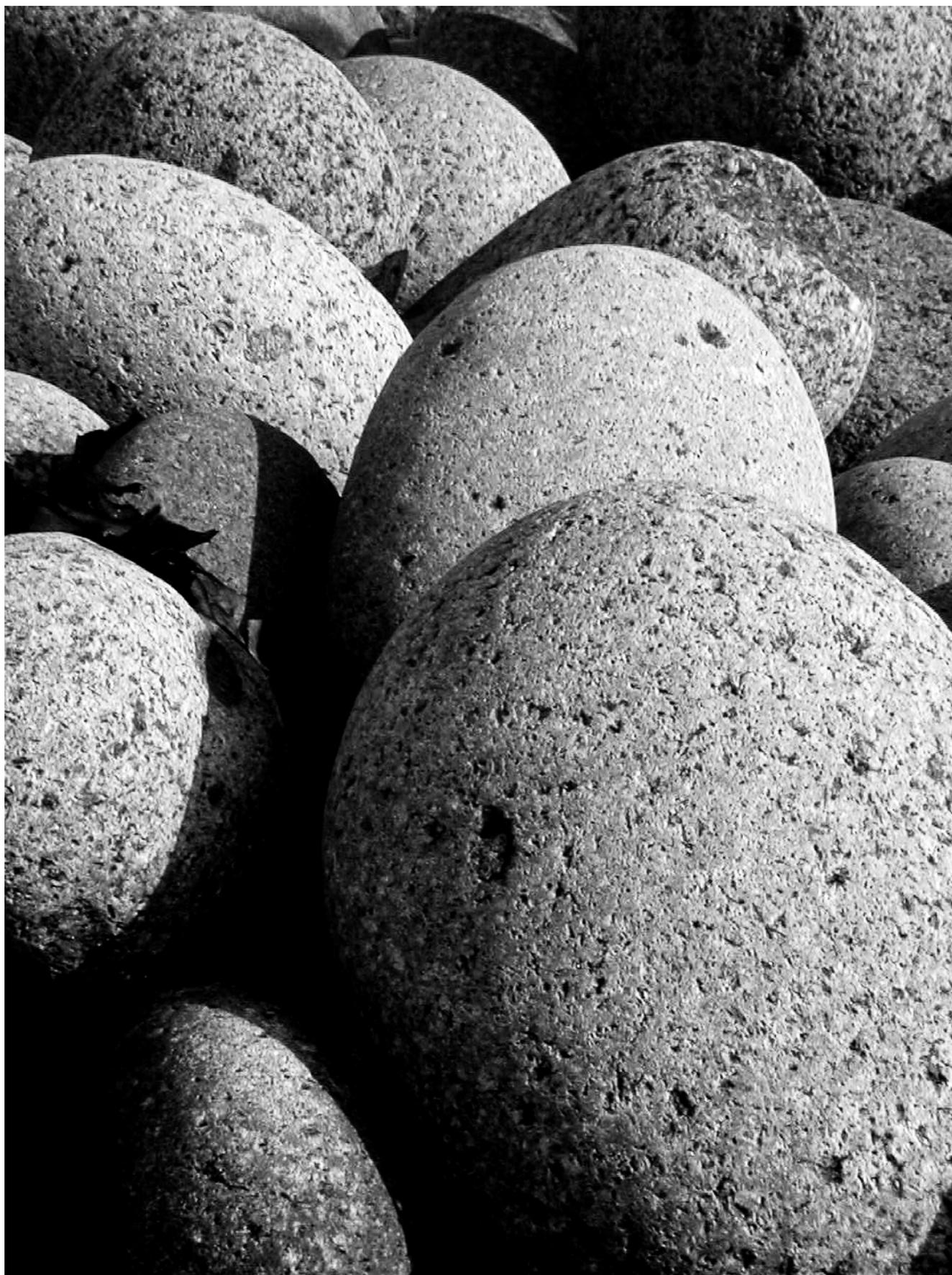
*Rhonda Spidell*

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*Egg Rocks Sculpted by the Tides.*



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*Half Dome.*



*Yosemite Falls.*



*Wind Blown Cypress.*



*By Lantern Light.*



*Awakening.*



*“The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider’s web.”*

*Pablo Picasso*



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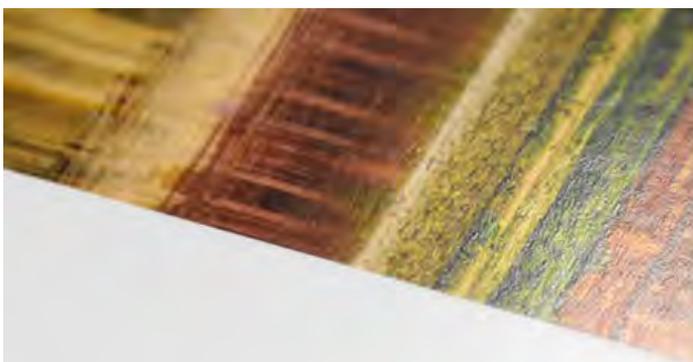
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# Showcase Portfolio

Diana Bloomfield: *Southland*

by Eric McCollum



*Boy and Car.* (from the series "Southland," Eastern NC)

**Well known for her use of alternative printing processes**—gum bichromate, platinum/palladium, and cyanotype—plus pinhole and toy cameras, Diana Bloomfield creates images that are dream-like, imaginative, and that invite the viewer into a world that echoes the present moment but is ultimately created in the eye of the artist, and the viewer. Bloomfield exhibits this work widely and is a highly regarded teacher and curator.

*Southland* is the result of another aspect of Bloomfield's vision—a project made over 30 years in classic documentary style recalling her life in rural North Carolina and, more broadly, the South. Not seen as frequently as her alternative process work, we are happy to bring *Southland* to our readers. Bloomfield and I sat down via Zoom to talk about *Southland* and the meaning the project has for her. Following are parts of that conversation. (EMc)

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*Eric: What drew you to photography?*

Diana: I've always been intrigued with photographs, not necessarily with the act of photographing itself, but with actual photographs. I find them mesmerizing. Though I may not know the people I'm staring at in these photographs, and no matter how old the photographs, I'm intrigued. If I go into someone's house, I'm gravitating not to the fine art they might have on their walls, but to their family photographs. Those photographs can tell you so much about the people in them and the lives they lived. You can often tell, too, what was of value to them in those photographs.



*Backyard Garden.* (from the series "Southland," Whitsett NC)

When I started photographing, I had been working as an administrative assistant at Princeton for a number of years. I left a position in a small department there, and—as a parting gift—I was given a small 35mm Rollei camera. It was the first serious camera that I ever owned, and I thought I should enroll in a course to learn how to use it. I was living in New Jersey at the time, but across the Delaware River, in Pennsylvania, was a school—Bucks County Community College, in Newtown, Pennsylvania—that had some fine photography instructors and a very strong photography department. So, I decided to take a basic “how-to” course. I looked to see what else they might be offering, and there was a course titled “Large Format Photography,” which sounded fascinating. I registered for that too. I was simultaneously taking a beginning class with a 35-millimeter Rollei, and this large format class—having not a clue about either.

The photography department owned 4X5 large format cameras that they would distribute to students in this class. I found the instructor fairly intimidating as she handed out the cameras the first day and basically told us to buy some film for those film holders, and just go out and photograph. That was pretty much the extent of the first day’s instruction. But even then, and in hindsight, I thought it was just the greatest approach.

I learned so much by really jumping in the deep end. I had never used a camera like this before, but the mystery of putting that dark hood over your head, peering through the ground glass, and seeing everything upside down, was like pure magic. The act of doing all that just to take a photograph really slowed down everything. I thought it was incredible. That sort of hands-off instruction worked really well for me. I learned so much about lighting and composition, and simply taking my time. And when you’re looking at a picture upside down, that orientation removes any emotional content, so you’re basically just looking at shapes and forms and light and seeing how they work together compositionally. And I loved it.

For that semester, the instructor assigned us a project—any project we wanted to undertake, really, so there were no restrictions. At the time, I lived not far from Trenton, NJ. Inner city Trenton was economically depressed at the time, more so now I expect. But there was a small neighborhood within Trenton called Chambersburg, where mostly Italian families lived. I thought it was a fascinating neighborhood. I loved the way people gathered on their front porches and stoops. For me, it seemed a little Southern, even though it was in the middle of Trenton, New Jersey. I walked around with this great big camera, asking people if I could photograph them—totally unaware of how strange that might seem—because, you know, I was in my 20s and this was my first photography class <laugh> but the people were really warm and welcoming to me.

I would stop people and ask, “Can I photograph you?” Then I would set the camera up and they would patiently wait for me to figure out what I was doing. Even after that course ended, I continued to photograph there for more than two years. I really got comfortable doing that and engaging with people. It never dawned on me that anybody would ever say no to me or tell me I was intruding, and no one ever did. I think it was the first real thing I’d ever done in my life where I thought, “I’m pretty good at this, and I actually love it.” I received a lot of positive support from my teachers, and also received some recognition for the work. So, I just kept going with it. I was ultimately awarded a New Jersey State Arts Fellowship for that particular body of work, and that was certainly a strong validation and motivation to continue.

I should also mention that my dad was a photographer in the Army Air Corps (now Air Force), though I didn’t really get into photography until after he died. But seeing so many photographs that he took around my hometown, of friends and family—and of my mother before they were married—all made with a Speed Graphic—revealed to me what a wonderful photographer he really was. I gained access to those photographs many decades after he took them, and decades after he died. My uncle held on to the 4x5 black-and-white negatives, and they are in pristine shape, and the images themselves are just so spectacular. And so many of them remind me of the way I see, too. I certainly feel like I inherited his photographic eye, if such a thing can be inherited.



*Boy and Girl.* (from the series, "Southland," Durham, NC)

*EMc: How about Southland? How did that project start?*

DB: I was married, and then I got divorced, and I really wanted to be back down South. I remarried and my husband got a professorship down here in Raleigh at North Carolina State University, and so we moved. I just kept photographing the way I knew how, and I thought, "I'll photograph what I know." It didn't seem all that much different than what I'd been doing in Trenton. And, again, I never met with any resistance when I'd ask if I could photograph someone. Over time, I moved from that large format camera to a Speed Graphic, which was a little bit lighter, and then I eventually moved to a Rolleiflex twin lens reflex.

*EMc: You've been working on Southland for 30 years. What keeps you coming back and, and is it still in process? Are you still making those images?*

DB: I am, though I probably photograph people less now, because—for various reasons—I think it's more difficult to do so. I don't know whether it's because I've gotten older, or because of 9/11, or because everyone

has a cell phone camera now—but people do seem more suspicious and less willing for a stranger to photograph them. I suspect all of the above helped to alter the photographic landscape.

What appeals to me about Southland, like the family photographs I mentioned earlier, is that it's a piece of the past, and a vanishing landscape. I grew up in a small town dominated by tobacco. The American Tobacco Company cast a wide shadow, and I was surrounded by tobacco farms and knew people who worked in tobacco — either in the fields or in the factory.



*Cane River Tubing.* (from the series "Southland," Burnsville, NC)

My mother had been telling me for years, “You really ought to go out and photograph people working in tobacco because all of that is going away.” And that was before anybody really knew it was going to disappear as quickly and as solidly as it did. Consequently, I photographed a lot of the landscape surrounding tobacco, because I knew that it might not be here 10 years from now. Even the people in the photograph standing in front of the church, that church doesn’t exist anymore. That’s what I find so appealing about photographs. They are a tangible reminder of what once was.

*EMc: Most of Southland was photographed with film and a large or medium format camera. How did that contribute to the project?*

DB: I think that it tells people you’re serious, and that you’re not just stealing a quick shot of them. You’re taking the time to compose this picture of people in their environment and with their friends or family, so you really do take time to interact. I remember photographing in Trenton, in Chambersburg, one day, and this little girl was with her family, and I thought she was just an interesting looking child, so I asked if I could photograph her. She nodded yes, and her mother didn’t speak much English, but she knew what I was asking—and she agreed. Then she promptly took the little girl inside and I thought, well, this is strange. But I continued to talk to the people around there, and as I was photographing, maybe 20 minutes later, the mother brought her little girl back outside. She had fixed her daughter’s hair into braids and put this beautiful little white lace dress on her. She had a little shawl, and white patent leather shoes and ankle socks. Her mother had just really dressed her for this photograph. For me, it was a realization that this is something that is really meaningful to this woman. I would always return and give people copies of the photographs I’d made, and she knew that would be a photograph she would keep forever. It was the first time I thought, “I need to take this more seriously.” There’s a certain level of respect and trust there, from both the photographer and the person being photographed.

*EMc: How does it feel to move back and forth between that series and the alternative process work that you’re now doing? How do they inform each other, if in fact they do?*

DB: Well, I think everything we do—including our past, of course—informs our vision. And all of this work, whether documentary or alternative processes or pinhole, is my vision—the same person taking the images, so it all seems of a piece to me. All of it is simply a continuation of photographing what I love. I honestly think that if you took some of the work that I do in gum bichromate or platinum and transform it into silver gelatin prints, they might actually mesh fairly closely with my documentary work, especially photographs of people.

A lot of the work that I did with pinhole cameras, of course, is very ethereal. And sometimes I feel it’s easy to get caught up in that type of work, at least it is for me. As someone once told me, “Well, everything is beautiful in pinhole.” That’s a bit dismissive, and I don’t think that’s actually true, but I understand the sentiment. For me, returning to this seemingly straightforward work is both comfortable and informative. I like getting out there and seeing how the landscape has changed. I also find that it grounds me in a way that offers more clarity about the other work that I do. Switching back and forth just keeps each project a little more honest, I feel. And I never want to feel boxed in by being labeled a certain type of photographer. A lot of artists—and not just photographers—who get very successful at some body of work simply continue making what is essentially the same picture over and over and over again. And while it’s perhaps a worthwhile goal to find and maintain an identifiable style, there’s also a danger in simply repeating yourself ad infinitum. At least, that’s a trap of which I am very aware and try hard to avoid.

Again, the more straightforward work helps keep me grounded in some ways and is less about images I see in my head and more about what I remember and know about the South. I always keep this Eudora Welty quote nearby: “One place understood helps us understand all places better.” And, for me — for whatever reasons — photographing the South as I know and remember it just helps me, in many ways, understand myself better, too.

*EMc: If there's one photograph in the series that is especially important to you, what is it and what would you like to say about it?*



*Working in Tobacco. (from the series "Southland," Eastern NC)*

DB: The photograph of people working in the tobacco field is not my favorite image, but it's certainly the most meaningful. When I was working in Trenton, and even when I returned to the South, the possibility that I was being intrusive never really occurred to me, until I got out here in this particular tobacco field. If you look at that photograph, you can see that the people sitting in those chairs don't really want to look at the camera.

I asked them to look at the camera and they flat out refused. Finally, one of them said to me, "Why are you photographing us out here like this?" I said, "Well, I grew up in a tobacco town, not far from here. I know people who worked in tobacco in the summer and. I feel like we're not going to see people working in tobacco very much longer, and I'd like to document this." The man said, "But this is not who we are. If you

wanna see who we are, come Sunday to our church. You can photograph us there. We'd love to have you." And he told me how to get there.

The biggest regret of my life is that I didn't go!

I was just so taken aback. Documentary photography is supposed to be the truth, yet the photographer still has control over what's in the frame, when to click the shutter, and whether or not we ask people to look into the camera or stand a certain way. But when this was said to me out in that tobacco field, the realization was so clear that this is not as honest as I felt like I was being, nor as respectful. I'm making the choice to present these people in a way that they don't want to be seen. Right after that encounter, I stopped doing a lot of that work for a while, in part, because that encounter really made me question that type of work. I also had this sense that the work was too literal — that if I could see it, then everybody could, too. And I wanted to create photographs based less on what was out there, and more about what I saw in my mind's eye.

*EMc: There seems to be a real sense of fondness in these photographs, Diana, a fondness for the people, the landscape, and this feeling of time moving slower. It was a different time and you seem very fond of that.*

DB: Oh, I am. We're in Raleigh—which is in the Research Triangle—but if you go outside these major urban areas, you can still see some of that slower time, and—though not a perfect world—there's just such a beauty to it. I was once driving on this road and saw a tobacco barn in the distance, and the light was hitting that golden tobacco—drying on a diagonal—and it was breathtakingly beautiful. I drove by but then I thought, "Oh no, I

have to go back.” I turned the car around. This is maybe 20 miles from where I grew up, but I didn’t know the people. I pulled in the driveway and they just happened to be having a big barbecue. I said, “I just passed your tobacco barn. It is so beautiful.” They sort of looked at each other <laughs> and then said, “You wanna go photograph it?”

I traipsed down the field and photographed the barn and the tobacco, and when I went back they said, “You gotta go down to see the lake.” Even though I was a total stranger to them, they just let me roam around their property and photograph as much as I wanted. They also invited me to come and have some barbecue. It was wonderful. It’s the type of thing that does happen, but you have to go out in the country for that. There’s this real connection with family and friends—and no one ever met a stranger—that really appeals to me.

Almost all of the work that I do is all about the past and about memory, and—as we know—

memory is ever-fugitive and fluid. I try to create those images, with the help of 19th century photographic printing processes, or pinhole, in a way that exploits the unreliable nature of memory. But with *Southland*, I feel like that’s a tangible reminder of what I know and remember to be true. ○



*Burley Tobacco.* (from the series “*Southland*,” Ruffin, NC)

*“What appeals to me about *Southland*, like the family photographs I mentioned earlier, is that it’s a piece of the past, and a vanishing landscape. I grew up in a small town dominated by tobacco. The American Tobacco Company cast a wide shadow, and I was surrounded by tobacco farms and knew people who worked in tobacco — either in the fields or in the factory.” DB*



*Brother and Sister.* (from the series "Southland," Durham, NC).



*Church of God and True Holiness. (from the series "Southland," Durham, NC)*



*Masked Cousins.* (from the series "Southland," Whitsett, NC)



*Haw River, No Trespassing. (from the series "Southland," Haw River, NC)*



*House Crew.* (from the series "Southland," Eastern NC)



*Kudzu Barn.* (from the series "Southland," Eastern NC)

# Telling Stories

*Grand to Granular*  
*The Great Sand Dunes*

by Steve Immel



*Alpen Glow.*

*Sand and Clouds.*



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**An hour north of Taos lies the San Luis Valley of southern Colorado**, the largest alpine valley in the world. It's 120 miles by 60 miles of prairie and high desert punctuated by the towering Sangre de Cristo mountains, volcanic cores, granite monoliths and red mesas. Above the valley Blanca Peak and its three 14,000-foot neighbors are the sentinels of Great Sand Dunes, the tallest in the United States.



*Dunes From Medano Creek.*



*Darting Shadows.*

Constantly shaped by the wind the Great Sand Dunes are ever changing. The shifting dunes are smooth and organic from afar but up close are home to infinite abstract details. They are endlessly painted by the wind. The shifting winds build the dunes' height. If wind consistently blows from one direction, the dunes will migrate, keeping their short stature as they go. But if wind blows from multiple directions, the sand will pile up on the dune, building its stature over time.

Human history at Great Sand Dunes National Park dates back 11,000 years.



*Swirls.*

The Navajo and Ute tribes once called this place home. Blanca Peak to its south is one of the four sacred peaks of the Navajo Nation.

In 1598, part of the Juan de Oñate expedition entered the San Luis Valley, the first European people to set foot here. Oñate proclaimed the entire Rio Grande watershed in Colorado as Spanish territory. But Oñate and his hordes were so brutal to the Indigenous people of the region that Spain's King Philip III, banished him back to Spain.



*Anatomy.*

Nearly a century later New Mexico Territorial Governor Don Diego de Vargas and his soldiers briefly camped in the valley. In 1694 they hunted and slaughtered a herd of 500 bison before returning to Santa Fe, documenting the historic presence of bison.

None of the Spanish explorers mention the dunes in their writings, though the massive dune field at the base of the mountains must have been a landmark in such an unfamiliar place.



*Shadows Meet Sky.*

With firsthand knowledge of the land and area tribes, Mountain Men of French extraction served as guides and interpreters in the San Luis Valley. It's believed that there were 3,000 French hunters and traders in the Rocky Mountains. And there's historical documentation of the mountain men in the San Luis Valley in the early 19th century, though details of their presence are scant. Oddly there is no reference to the sand dunes at all.

It wasn't until January 1807 that Zebulon Pike documented the Great Sand Dunes for the first time. His group waded through deep winter snow over Medano Pass and camped at the base of the Great Sand Dunes. Pike wrote: "When we encamped, I ascended one of the largest hills of sand, and with my glass could discover a large river...The sand-hills extended up and down the foot of the White [Sangre de Cristo] Mountains about 15 miles and appeared to be about 5 miles in width. Their appearance was exactly that of the sea in a storm, except as to color..." It is the first known written description of the Great Sand Dunes.

From afar the Great Sand Dunes are smoothly sculpted marble but a closer look reveals intricate patterns painted by wind, rain, snow and wildlife. It's hard to fathom that the artful discoveries in the Dunes are random creations by Mother Nature's deft hand. Some of the details suggest their author is the rain. Others are so complex that a skilled artisan must have created the art from a smooth and untouched dune. Close up the sand looks like tiny jewels of quartz, granite and sandstone.

Each visit is to see them for the first time. That the creations are forged from infinite grains of moving sand reminds us that we are incidental in nature's scope and the passage of time. ○



*Rivulets.*



*Serpentine.*



*Waves.*



*Coiled and Barbed.*

# *Endpaper...*

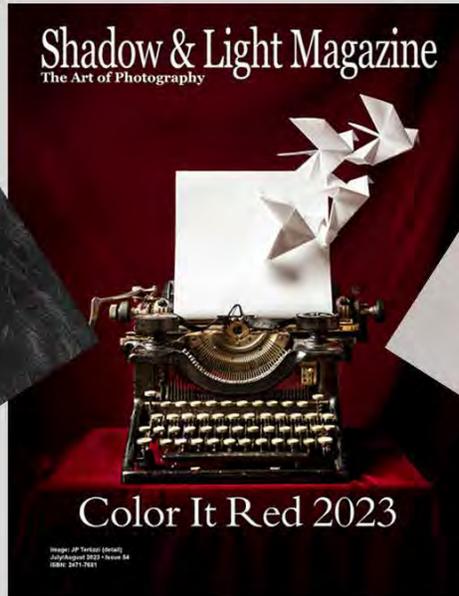


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# Shadow & Light Magazine

The Art of Photography

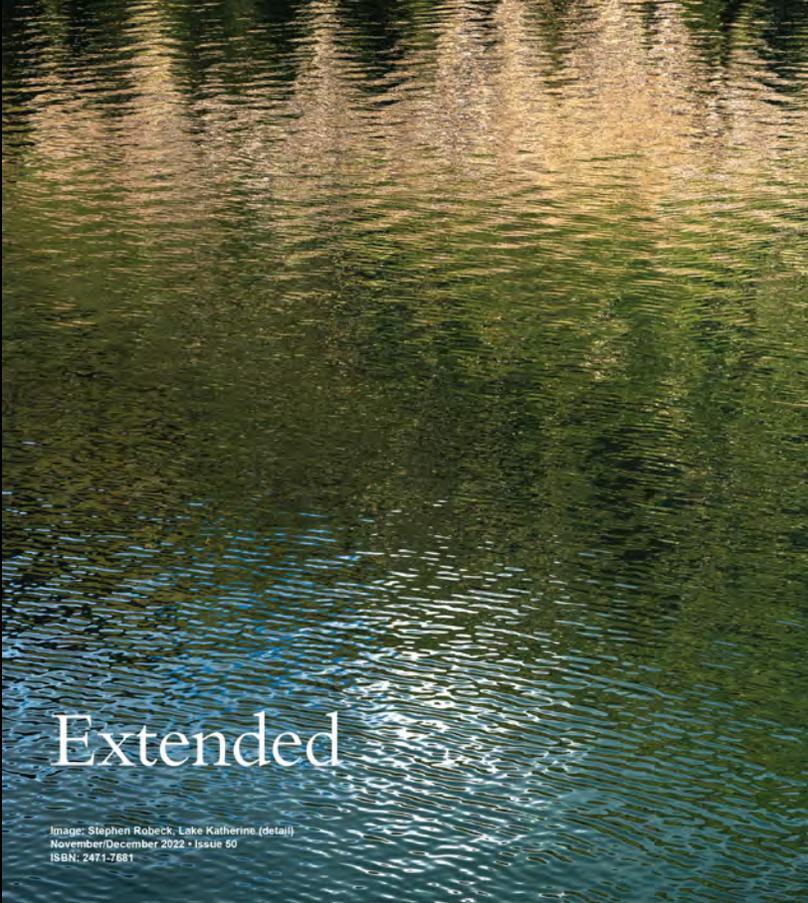


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