

ISSUE **N0132** FEB 2026

LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

PUSHING PHOTOGRAPHY FURTHER



AWAKE

Living the Photo-Artistic Life

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

SEBASTIAN MICHAELS

To make art and survive as an artist, one must learn to let go of what others think.

It sounds simple. But it isn't.

The artist who tiptoes too carefully, who carries the weight of others' opinions, who lives in fear of ridicule or rejection will soon discover how quickly creativity wilts under the gaze of the crowd. The instinct to look over one's shoulder, to anticipate criticism or crave approval, runs deep. And those who can't get past all that rarely last, much less create work that endures.

The artists of AWAKE are trained to be different. Over time, and having the benefit of this community, they eventually learn to set aside their doubts and uncertainties. Each day, they carve out the quiet they need to work: to focus, to make, to pursue mastery. They learn the discipline of showing up and the rewards of losing oneself in the act of creation.

Which is why we now find their work everywhere — showcased here in these pages and across online galleries, shared throughout social media, sold at art fairs and in galleries and exhibitions.

For some, confidence grows with success. Publication, praise, and sales make it easier, of course. But many of our artists are still somewhere in the middle of that journey. They're still learning, still discovering their voice, still gathering their courage and only beginning to show their work to the world.

And that, I think, is where the real bravery lies. Right on that cusp.

The artists who appear here month after month have, in many ways, already crossed the threshold. They've fought through their doubts and, having perhaps garnered some praise within the group, they've begun to trust their instincts.

But others — the ones still finding their footing — face the blank canvas in Photoshop each day with trembling hands and fluttering hearts. They create in spite of their doubts, in spite of their fears. It's not easy. It takes time. And everyone goes through it.

To make art requires an act of faith. To share it is an act of real courage.

So as we celebrate the most accomplished among us, let's also honor those still awakening — those still pushing past their hesitation and doubt as they strive to make something beautiful all their own.

Every artist in AWAKE walks more or less the same road. Some have simply gone ahead a little farther, leaving lanterns lit for the rest to follow.

Look for those lanterns that shine brightest for you. Take encouragement from them. They might just help light *your* way.

~ Sebastian

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

004 DORI FLEMING
005 KRISTIN COUCH
006 CHERYL PARRIS
007 VIV BUCKLEY
008 RACHELLE R. VETTER
009 ROBZ LIPNER
010 DIANE EASTHAM
011 SANDRA DANN
012 ROSA PERRY
013 TERRI BUTLER
014 NANCIE ROWAN
015 SHERRI REED
016 MARJUT KORHONEN
017 DONNA ELLIOT
018 S. H. LAYRE
019 ASHBY PRESLEY
020 ANNA CZEKALA
021 MAXI BALZER
022 DON SCHIFFNER
023 ANN LAVIN
024 KEELEY MCCLEAVE
025 BARBARA A LANE
026 MARGARET WEIR
027 KEITH G. HAWLEY
028 DEBORAH MORRISON
029 DONNA WATERSON
030 MATTHEW BERBERICH
031 JOHN MOLINO
032 GITAMA DAY
033 CATBEAGLE CREATIONS
034 DIANA HARONIS
035 BOB DESILETS
036 PAMELA WALDER
037 KATHLEEN GREENWOOD

038 MARIUS ELS
039 CATHY LABUDAK
040 BARBARA MIERAU-KLEIN
041-045 **FEATURED ARTIST:
DIANE PINSART**
046 KAYLENE HELLIWELL
047 JILL JOHNSON
048 DAN BORGE
049 MERRILEE SOBERG
050 BEVERLY EVERSON
051 AUGUST NAUDE
052 CAT GRAY
053 PAULINE VAN DER SPUY
054 JO CRANE
055 MARK LUTNES
056 SHELLEY BENJAMIN
057 DENISE HUNTER LOGAN
058 INGRID POMEROY
059 DAN LAVERY
060 MAGGY R. THORVALDSDOTTIR PEASE
061 MARIE OTERO
062 CHRISTINA BRUNTON
063 KAREN SORRELLS
064 ILONA ABOU-ZOLOF
065 ANITA HUBBARD
066 CHRIS HARRIS
067 JANICE S. BATTERBEE
068 DEAN KELLEY
069 DAVE HATTORI
070 CLARE BARTON
071 CJ SHANK
072 DOV FUCHS
073 INGE KLEMENT
074-075 MARK HEMSTREET

076 DEE ADAMS
077 CARLA MALLENS
078 CINDY CHARLES
079 DAVID WALKER
080 HELGA BLANKE
081 KIM RICCI
082 DOREEN FAIELLO
083 TRACY COOPER
084 JOY BUCKLEY FLYNN
085 BOB RUDE
086 NINA IRVIN
087 PAULA D POWERS
088 JOHN SCHULTZ
089 MAUREEN MAXWELL
090 REBECAH THOMPSON
091 SUSAN CROSBY
092 TINA CHRISTENSEN
093 LOU ANN DONAHUE
094 LINDA LEWIS
095 NANCY BRIZENDINE
096 LUANA LAUBSCHER
097 VICKI ARDOIN
098 JEAN HUTTER
099 RENEE PHOENIX
100 SCOTT CLEMENTS
101 PENNY DE JONG
102 MARIE FARMER
103 MARY ANN ROESLER
104-111 **CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS
SPOTLIGHT**

FRONT COVER & BACKGROUND IMAGE
DIANE PINSART





Spirit Bear

Dori Fleming
(UK)



The Flight of Unspoken Secrets

Kristin Couch
(Sweden)

<http://www.kcart.se/>



Bloom of the Unseen

The Book of Wonder



Cheryl Parris
(USA)

<http://www.cherylparris.com/>

When Wonder Paused





The Market Trader

Viv Buckley
(Ireland)

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



Dreamwaves

Rachelle R. Vetter
(USA)

<http://rachellerphotography.com/>



Neck of Time



Robz Lipner
(South Africa)

<http://www.robzartworx.com/>

Mr Fern -
The Botanist

My Heart
has Wings



Diane Eastham
(Canada)

<https://diane-eastham.pixels.com/>

Dark Romance



Be mine
and I will share
the darkest secrets
of my heart
with you

903



Shattered Dreams

Sandra Dann
(Australia)

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



A Measure of the Heart

Rosa Perry
(Australia)

<https://rosa-perry.myportfolio.com/>



Baking Up
My Valentine



Kitty Courtship

Terri Butler
(USA)

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

Dark Elegance



Nancie Rowan
(USA)

Spread Love





Kindness

Sherri Reed
(USA)

@SherriReedStudios



On a Winter Day

Marjut Korhonen
(Finland)

@photoartistrymarjutkorhonen

Donna Elliot
(USA)

Journey

<http://donnaelliot.slickpic.com/>

Seeking Grace

Lady in Blue



S. H. Layre
(USA)

Lillies





Feel the Rain

Ashby Presley
(USA)

<http://www.ash3photography.com/>



Hiraeth

Anna Czekała
(France)



Maxi Balcer
(USA)

Lady Moth Marianth



Underwater Flower Goddess

Be My Valentine



Don Schiffner
(USA)

I Put a Spell on You





No MOJO

Ann Lavin
(Australia)



Love on the Rocks

Keeley McCleave
(England)



Harmony of Hearts



Barbara A Lane
(USA)

<https://barbaraalane.com/>

A Tender Caress



The Heart Sees

Margaret Weir
(Canada)





Love is in the Air

Keith G. Hawley
(Australia)

<https://keith-hawley.pixels.com/>





Victorian
Vapors



Donna Waterson
(USA)

Roses and Music

The Forgotten Hour



Matthew Berberich
(USA)

<http://matthewberberich.com/>

Words Remain





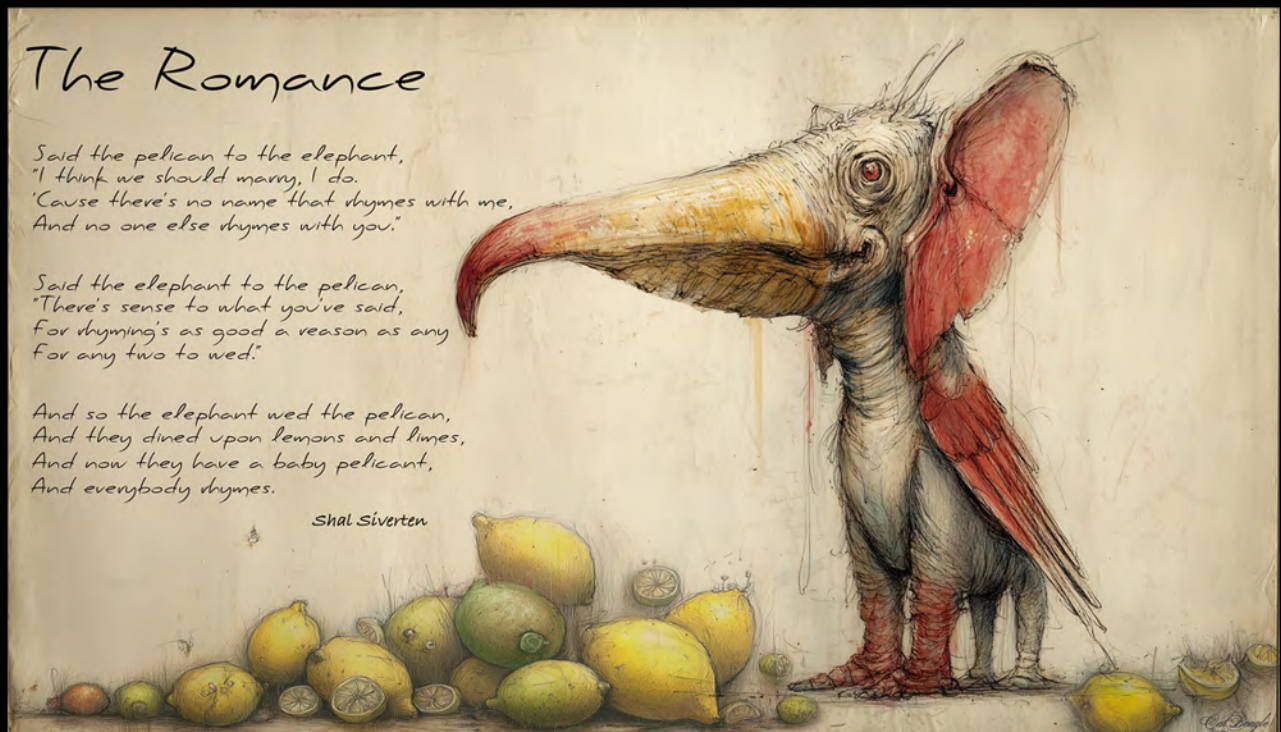
Regret

John Molino
(USA)



Gone to Ground

Gitama Day
(Australia)



CatBeagle Creations
 (Australia)

The Romance



Coming Home

The Queen of Hearts



Diana Haronis
(USA)

<http://www.dianasphotoart.com/>

I Found You





Bob Desilets
(USA)

Love Forever: Me and Little Andy



Black Tears

Pamela Walder
(UK)



<http://fineartamerica.com/profiles/kathleen-greenwood/shop>

Valentine's Lament



Kathleen Greenwood
(USA)

Be My Valentine

A Kingdom Called Love



Marius Els
(UK)

<https://mariuselsphotoartistry.com/>

Positively Fabulous!





'Til Death or Taxidermy Do Us Part

Cathy Labudak
(USA)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/clabudak/>



Heart Trees

Barbara Mierau-Klein
(USA / Germany)

<http://www.barbaramierauklein.com/>

FEATURED ARTIST

Diane
Pinsart



Letting Go

“ My creative journey began with a trip to Italy in 2012. I really didn't have much travel experience at all. When arriving home I felt as if my creative spirit had been awakened, I often refer to the feeling as If I had been broken open. ”

“ The AWAKE group has been such a postive, uplifting community to share my exploration and discovery of digital art. I feel at home here among like-minded artists. ”



Broken Open



Red is
My Color

Somewhere Out There





She Loves
Lillies



Grunge

“ One of my favorite quotes by Georgia O’Keeffe is ‘To see takes time’.
Be patient with yourself on your artistic journey and don’t hide what
you wish to express for the world to see. ”



Diane
Pinsart
(USA)

The Light Within





Handmaiden



Jill Johnson
(USA)

Joy Ride



Winslow Homer Visits His Painting #1

Dan Borge
(USA)



Winslow Homer Visits His Painting #2



Merrilee Soberg
(Canada)

Street Dancer



She Stood There Anyway

Beverly Everson
(USA)

<http://www.eversonphotography.com/>



One Day



August Naude
(South Africa)

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

Payday Entropy



Apperitif



Widow



Love is Dead



Me and the Devil

(Glamour and Decay Series)

Cat Gray
(UK)

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



Pauline van der Spuy
(South Africa)

Touch of Love



Fable

Jo Crane
(Just Josie Photography)
(UK)

<https://justjosiephotography.myportfolio.com/>



Wet Paint
and Laundry



Mark Lutnes
(USA)

Impression of a Sloop

The Weight of a Gifted Heart



Shelley Benjamin
(USA)

<https://shelleybenjamin.com/>

Love Letters





Be My Valentine

Denise Hunter Logan
(Australia)



Fallen Angel

Ingrid Pomeroy
(USA)



Victoriana

Dan Lavery
(Canada)

<http://danlaveryartist.ca/>



Parceled
Memories

Winter Wren



Maggy R.
Thorvaldsdottir Pease
(USA)

<https://maggy.myportfolio.com/>

Moonshine





The Long Road Home

Marie Otero
(Australia)

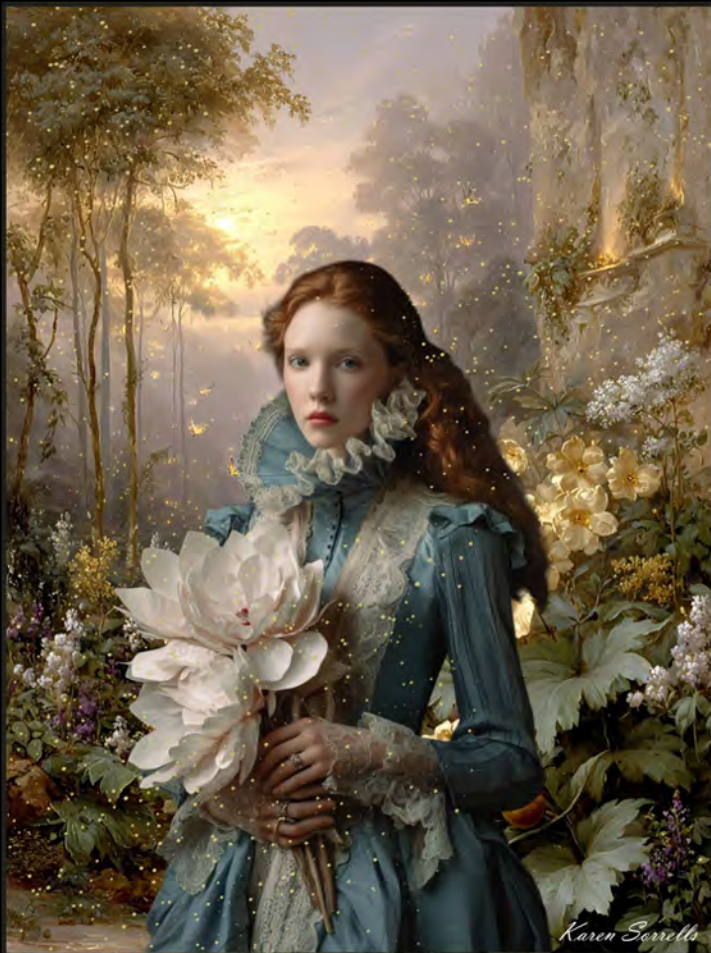
<http://www.marieotero.com/>



In the Tall Grass

Christina Brunton
(Australia)

<https://chrisbrunton.com/>



Magical Garden I & II

Karen Sorrells
(USA)



Grounded Strength

Ilona Abou-Zolof
(Australia)

<https://gigglegallery.design/>



Gentle Belonging



Year of the Horse

Anita Hubbard
(Canada)

<https://digartography.pixels.com/>



@allshapeofartistry

Chris Harris
(USA)

Love Via Airmail



Janice S. Batterbee
(Spain)

Lynx in a Baroque Scene



@janicebatterbee1695

Two Foals



A Study of Shapes

Dean Kelley
(USA)



Night Light

<http://deankelleyphotography.com/>



Fishing Fleet

Dave Hattori
(USA)

<http://www.davehattoriphoart.com/>



There Was a Butterfly

Clare Barton
(UK)



Prepare for Turbulence



CJ Shank
(USA)

Smashing Goals

In Between



Dov Fuchs
(Israel)

<https://www.dovfuchs.art/>

Time on Thin Ice





Winter Bloom

Inge Klement
(Norway / Austria)

<https://www.deviantart.com/ingeklem>

Color Guard

Mark Hemstreet
(USA)







Will You Be My Valentine?

Dee Adams
(South Africa)

@deeadamsphotography



Carla Mallens
(The Netherlands)

Music in the Air



Love is Love

Cindy Charles
(Canada)



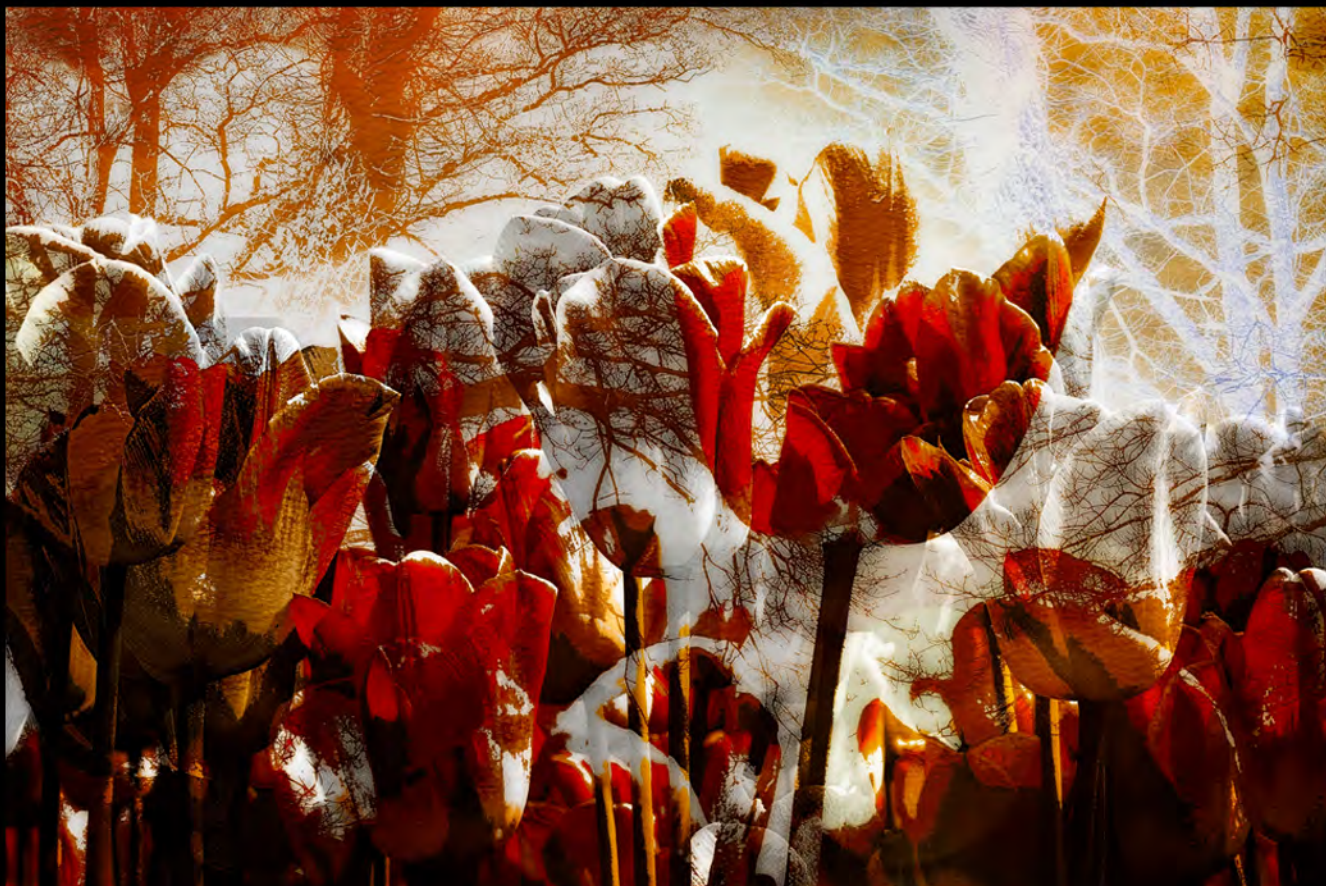
A Spray of Carnations



David Walker
(UK)

<http://vista-foto.com/>

Pergola with a Difference



Tulips in the Forest

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

Helga Blanke
(The Netherlands)

You are My
Number One





Where Memory Still Burns

Kim Ricci
(Australia)

<http://kimricci.myportfolio.com/>



Butterfly Oracle

Doreen Faiello
(USA)



Undercurrents, from
The Hair Follies



Tracy Cooper
(Portugal)

@tracycooper0825

Re-emergence



Last Glimpse of Light

Joy Buckley Flynn
(Ireland)





Old Barn at Dusk

Bob Rude
(USA)



Winter's Grip

Nina Irvin
(USA)

Snow Birds





Just Another Sunday Afternoon

Paula D Powers
(USA)

<http://www.pauladpowers.com/>



Chimera Zebra

John Schultz
(USA)



<https://artistsdownunder.com.au/artist-3/maureen-maxwell/>

The Spectral Walk



Maureen Maxwell
(Australia)

No! This Can't
Be Happening



Sleepy Pups

Rebecah Thompson
(USA)

<http://www.rebecahthompson.com/>

A Regal Disposition





All in the Family

Susan Crosby
(USA)



The Eagle Does Not Escape the Storm

Tina Christensen
(USA)



Salt of the Earth No. 1



Lou Ann Donahue
(USA)

She has Stories to Tell

The Good Samaritan



Linda Lewis
(USA)

<http://www.lindalewis.net/>

Playing Doctor





The Writer's Room

Nancy Brizendine
(USA)

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



One Flew Over

Luana Laubscher
(South Africa)

@luanalaubscher



Stupid Cupid



Vicki Ardo
(USA)

<https://vickiardofineart.com/>

Puppy Love

Love Happens



Jean Hutter
(USA)

@jeanhutter1

Groundhog Day





A Social Call

Renee Phoenix
(USA)

<http://www.reneephoenix.com/>



Dinkelsbühl

Scott Clements
(USA)

<http://clements-images.com/>



Bearing My Heart and Soul



Penny de Jong
(Australia)

Who Is the Fairest?

Melancholia
Silentium



Marie Farmer
(USA)

Path Between
Worlds





The Snowflake Queen

Mary Ann Roesler
(USA)

<https://roeslerwings.wixsite.com/fine-art-photography>

CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS

"AWAKE" : LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

Amanda Rockwell

<http://www.brushworkshop.com>

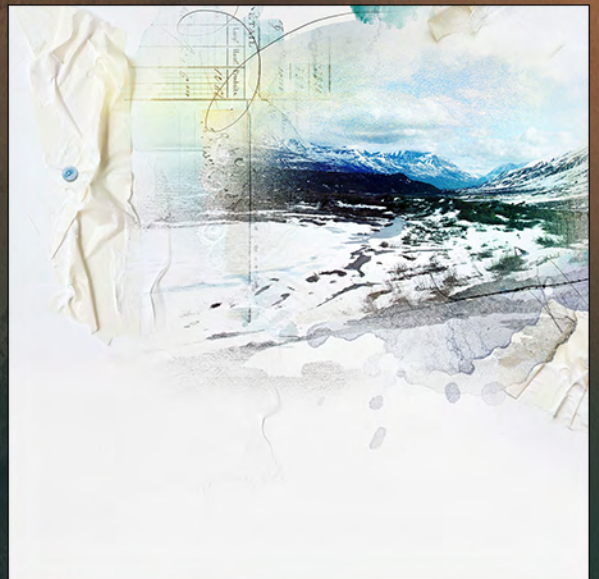
A professional designer with ScrapbookGraphics, Amanda Rockwell creates fantastic content for the AWAKE and KAIZEN groups. But I think her greatest contribution is in encouraging digital artists to get away from their screens and break out the art supplies now and then and actually have fun creating their own custom brushes.



Anna Aspnes

<http://annaaspnesdesigns.com>

Again and again in the work of my top students I was seeing one name turn up constantly when they were citing the source of the artistic content in their work: Anna Aspnes. When I visited her website I was stunned, and when I saw her work in *Somerset Digital Studio* magazine I knew that this was a talent I needed on my team.



Art House Whimsy

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/arthousewhimsy>

Tracy Pitchforth is the artist and designer behind Art House Whimsy. Digital art has been a huge part of her life for over a decade – with it bringing much friendship, inspiration and joy. She has embraced the world of AI as a creative partner. When used thoughtfully, it is powerful tool that enhances the artistic process and makes creativity more accessible for everyone.



Caroline Julia Moore

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/HiraethMacabre>

Over the past many years, I've watched as the immensely talented Caroline Julia Moore shifted from cognitive neuropsychologist to full-time self-employed artist and conceptual photographer ... all while also launching a successful content-design business. Her contributions to the group have been a delight and an inspiration.



CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS

"AWAKE" : LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

Denise Love

<http://2lilowls.com>

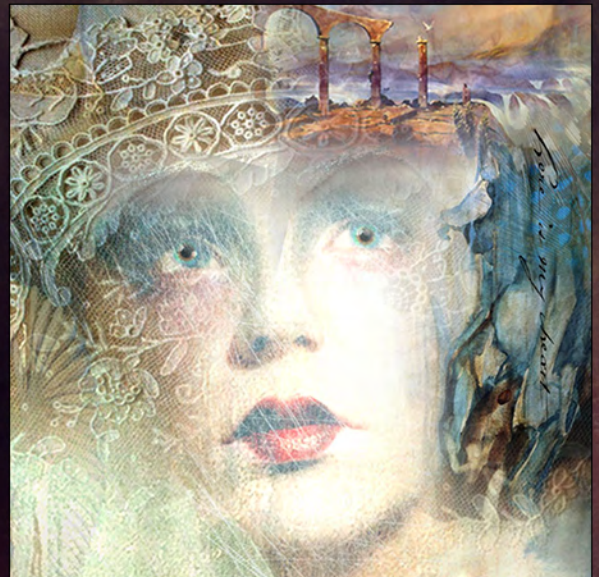
The textures and backgrounds from 2 Lil' Owls are some of the finest in the digital art industry, and indeed many of the works in this magazine feature Denise's textures – often several in one piece. Without question the photo-artistic community is so much the richer for the love and care Denise brings to her designs.



Foxeysquirrel

<http://www.foxeysquirrel.com>

Immensely popular (and stunningly prolific), Foxeysquirrel is the name by which artist Teddi Rutschman is known around the world. Her artistic design kits bring together a wide range of styles – from the enchanted and purely whimsical to classic illustration, from the exquisitely ornate to elements with touches of dreamlike old world mastery.



itKuPiLLi

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/itKuPiLLiimaginarium>

itKuPiLLi is the rather unusual name donned by Kirsi Rouvinen, the celebrated digital artist from Finland. The itKuPiLLi Imagenarium at MischiefCircus.com is a source for whimsical digital goodies, and the content Kirsi creates for our KAIZEN group is always greeted with excitement and enthusiasm.



Jai Johnson

<http://www.DailyTexture.com>

Jai Johnson is a fine artist and the acclaimed designer behind "The Daily Texture." Time and again when a work of digital artistry caught my eye, I'd find Jai's name listed in the credits as the texture designer. It took some time to get her, but I'm extremely excited to now have Jai an active member of our KAIZEN design team.



CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS

"AWAKE" : LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

Jen Maddocks

<http://jenmaddocks.com>

When some students introduced me to the work of Jen Maddocks, I was quite knocked flat. Here was a digital content creator who was as fabulous an artist as she was a designer. We are lucky to have her in our community and MORE than lucky to have her material and tutorials here in "AWAKE" and "KAIZEN."



Jill Catrinel

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/JillCatrinel>

Jill Catrinel works out of her art studio just north of Asheville, making her one of the few designers here quite close to me. Her work is fresh and inspired, and it's exciting to look ahead to everything I will be able to coordinate with her as the projects in the "KAIZEN" group evolve over the year ahead.



Julie Mead

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/JulieMeadDesigns>

It's always exciting to see creatives success stories, and Julie Mead has certainly become one! She stepped into the digital content scene not long ago it seems, but rapidly brought on a bunch of great designers (and of course created a wonderful stream of original content herself.) We're incredibly grateful to have her on our team!



Marius Els

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

Marius Els is a digital artist residing in the vibrant city of London. He brings to his craft a unique blend of creative experiences. The creation of his intricate elements is a labor of love. He aspires to provide fellow artists with access to these elements, hoping to evoke the same joy he experiences when exploring a brand-new designer collection.



CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS

"AWAKE" : LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

Miles Beyond The Moon

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/MilesBeyondTheMoon>

Mary Bailey is the artist behind Miles Beyond the Moon. She is a digital and paper crafting artist with a vintage soul. Inspired by the details of everyday life, she creates digital graphics that reflect her love for nature, books, whimsy, and adventure. Through attention to detail and an imaginative approach, her hope is to inspire her fellow digital artists to infuse their own artistic creations with a touch of magic.



Rebecca McMeen

<http://www.rebeccamcmeen.com/>

Joining our team just this year, Rebecca McMeen has proven a tremendous hit with her extraordinary material, all of it so rich and complex, whimsical and artistic. Her unique style has made for a fantastic addition to the library of content our artists are now able to employ, and the resulting creations are endlessly charming.



Tangie Baxter

<https://shoptangiebaxter.com/>

Tangie Baxter is the lead artist of her own wildly successful design company with over a decade spent as dedicated “purveyors of digital art journaling supplies.” Her material is quirky and fun, and always a delight. Bringing her onto our team was a big event for us. Everything here got a lot more exciting with her arrival!



The Colby Files

The Colby Files is the intriguing moniker of a celebrated professional photographer located in Scottsdale, Arizona, specializing in female portraits, fashion art, model portfolios and fine art nudes. He has become our resident pro model photographer, providing an amazing library of images for our artists to work with when creating their masterpieces.





Quil
LIVING



Quill and Camera

THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

Enjoy interviews with the featured artists of AWAKE at:
<https://www.quillandcamera.com/>

**And Be Sure to Follow us and See
Your Favorite Artists on Instagram!**

@photoshopartistry



Background Image Credit:
Helen Anne Lemke (Canada)

LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

PUSHING PHOTOGRAPHY FURTHER



INTERESTED IN CREATING PHOTO ART OF YOUR OWN?

GET STARTED HERE:

[HTTP://PROPHOTOSHOPARTISTRY.COM](http://prophotoshopartistry.com)

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