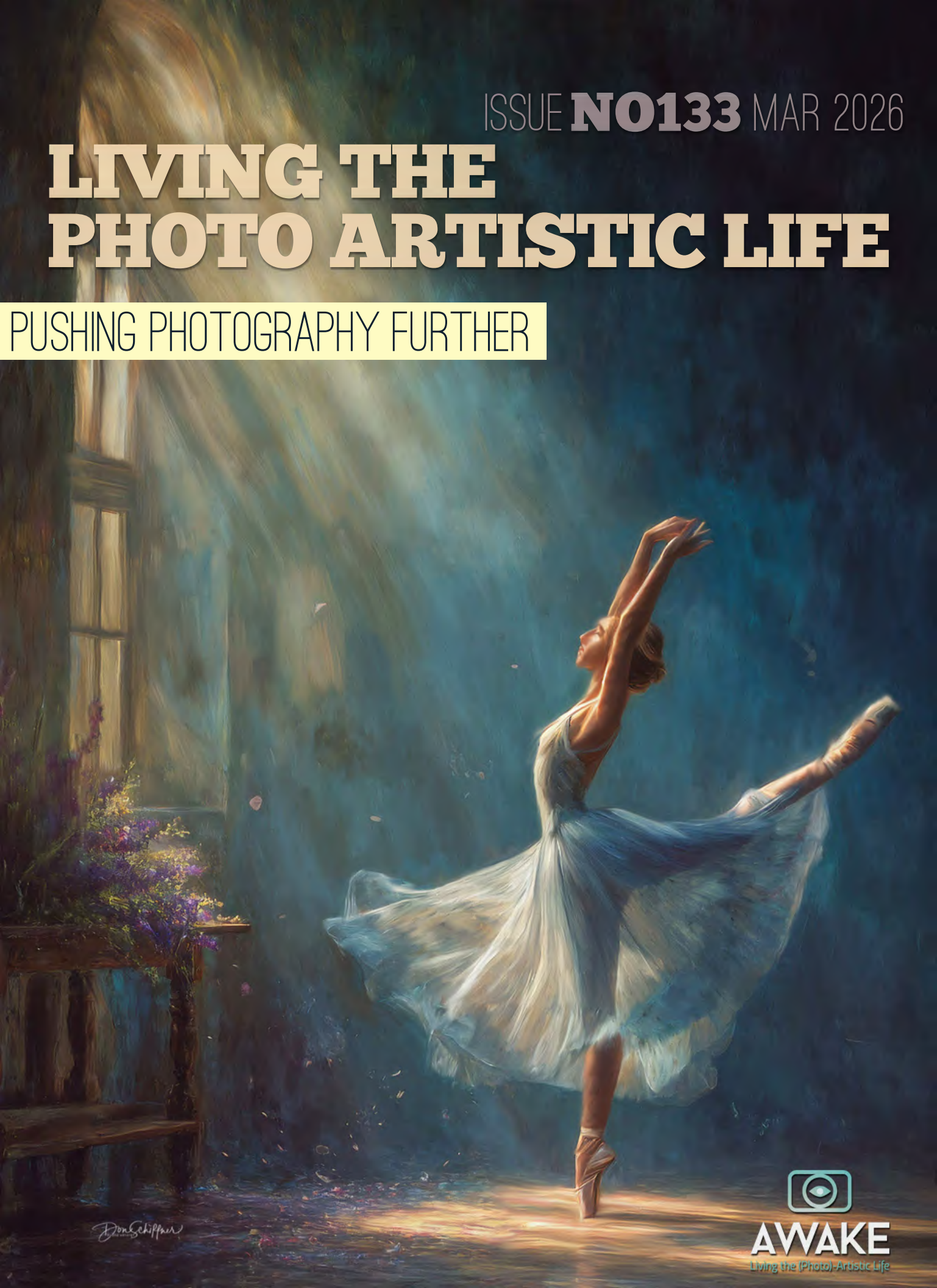


ISSUE **N0133** MAR 2026

LIVING THE PHOTO ARTISTIC LIFE

PUSHING PHOTOGRAPHY FURTHER



Don Schiffer



AWAKE
Living the (Photo-) Artistic Life

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

SEBASTIAN MICHAELS

It's funny to think just how much chance can play in where we end up and what we love.

Had I not been surrounded by artists and art books growing up; had I not fallen in love with certain comic book illustrators; had I not failed as painter and taken up photography instead; had I not discovered Photoshop; had I not found myself in a position to photograph a dance troupe, then to shoot weddings and design wedding albums, then to create artistic portraits . . .

What sparked *your* interest in photography and digital artistry?

I've thought about this a lot. So much of what we love and cherish only comes to us through some act of chance — often the influence of a specific person. Someone along the way mentions a book they love or shares a video or brings up something in a conversation . . .

It all stands out so obviously in hindsight, but at the time, who knew?

Over and over again we wander across possible futures that whisper to us. Do we listen? Do we follow and see where those whispers lead? Or do we dismiss them because we're too busy? Do we maybe let our self-doubt keep us from even trying?

Of course, when something especially resonates with us, we're more likely to pay attention, more willing to take a shot at it. Had I not already been so in love with painters and illustrators, I probably wouldn't have been so

receptive to digital photography and Photoshop when those arrived on the scene. I stumbled on each by chance. But I was already primed and ready for them.

Life is too short to chase after everything that calls out to you or pops up. There are only so many hours in the day. But when we *do* find ourselves drawn to something, and we pursue it long enough for it to *stick* . . . That's when our interests are able to deepen. Over time they might even become loves, passions, obsessions.

And if we stay with our obsessions long enough, they become our lives.

This is how great photographers and artists are made. (And how musicians and sculptors and poets are made.) It may take years, and the possible paths are endless, but it always begins the same way: one little brush with chance, one little spark, one whisper . . . and the thought, "*Why not?*"

Maybe lingering over the gorgeous artwork of this magazine is one of those moments calling out to you.

Perhaps it will awaken in you the desire to pursue an artistic life of your own, or if you're already an artist encourage you to deepen your commitment to mastering your craft.

Our AWAKE artists here have cast before you a veritable flurry of sparks.

I love to imagine all the creative lives they might ignite.

~ Sebastian

Don Schiffer

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

004 INGRID POMEROY
 005 RENEE KEEL
 006 CATHY LABUDAK
 007 REBECAH THOMPSON
 008 MERRILEE SOBERG
 009 JOY BUCKLEY FLYNN
 010 DAVE HATTORI
 011 EVELYN ELWAN
 012 KIM RICCI
 013 MAGGY R. THORVALDSDOTTR PEASE
 014 NANCIE ROWAN
 015 NINA IRVIN
 016 MARGO REASNER
 017 PAULA D POWERS
 018 MARJUT KORHONEN
 019 ANITA HUBBARD
 020 ANN LAVIN
 021 CHERYL PARRIS
 022 BEVERLY EVERSON
 023 RENEE PHOENIX
 024 MARIE OTERO
 025 MATTHEW BERBERICH
 026 MARGARET WEIR
 027 BARBARA A LANE
 028 VICKI ARDOIN
 029 TERRI BUTLER
 030 ROBZ LIPNER
 031 PENNY DE JONG
 032 ROSA PERRY
 033 TRACY COOPER
 034 CHRISTINA BRUNTON
 035 CATHERINE KING
 036 BOB RUDE
 037 ASHBY PRESLEY

038 KAREN SORRELLS
 039 KEELEY MCCLEAVE
 040 PAMELA WALDER
 041-045 **FEATURED ARTIST:
 DON SCHIFFNER**
 046 LOU ANN DONAHUE
 047 NANCY BRIZENDINE
 048 KRISTIN COUCH
 049 LARRY BUCKLEY
 050 BARBARA MIERAU-KLEIN
 051 DONNA WATERSON
 052 DEAN KELLEY
 053 KEITH G. HAWLEY
 054 CATBEAGLE CREATIONS
 055 DAN LAVERY
 056 DAN BORGE
 057 MAXI BALGER
 058 CHRIS HARRIS
 059 HELGA BLANKE
 060 DONNA ELLIOT
 061 JO WILMOT
 062-063 RACHELLE R. VETTER
 064 CJ SHANK
 065 LINDA LEWIS
 066 DOV FUCHS
 067 VIV BUCKLEY
 068 TINA CHRISTENSEN
 069 SHELLEY BENJAMIN
 070 JANICE S. BATTERBEE
 071 SANDRA DANN
 072 DIANA HARONIS
 073 ILONA ABOU-ZOLOF
 074 JOHN T JONES
 075 DIANE PINSART

076 SUSAN PULASKI
 077 S. H. LAYRE
 078 MARK LUTNES
 079 AUGUST NAUDE
 080 DORI FLEMING
 081 DIANE EASTHAM
 082 DENISE HUNTER LOGAN
 083 DEBORAH MORRISON
 084 MAUREEN MAXWELL
 085 INGE KLEMENT
 086 KATHLEEN GREENWOOD
 087 SUSAN CROSBY
 088 DIANE LEICHER GLATZER
 089 SUE JOESTEN MERRITT
 090 BOB DESILETS
 091 MARIUS ELS
 092 JEAN HUTTER
 093 SHERRI REED
 094 JOHN MOLINO
 095 WANDA ANN KINNAMAN
 096 MARIE FARMER
 097 JOHN SCHULTZ
 098 JOYCE SIMPSON
 099 SCOTT CLEMENTS
 100 PAULINE VAN DER SPY
 101 DOREEN FAIELLO
 102 GEORGE KONCZ
 103 DAVID WALKER
 104-111 **CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS
 SPOTLIGHT**

FRONT COVER & BACKGROUND IMAGE
 DON SCHIFFNER





Year of the Horse

Ingrid Pomeroy
(USA)



In Search of . . .
The First Real Spring



Renée Keel
(USA)

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

The False Spring

Eye Opener



Cathy Labudak
(USA)

Safe Space





The Magic of Trees

Rebecah Thompson
(USA)

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





Before the Clock Strikes

Joy Buckley Flynn
(Ireland)



Winter Glow

Dave Hattori
(USA)

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



Evelyn Elwan
(USA)

Portrait of Geraldine



The Quiet Witness

Kim Ricci
(Australia)

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



Treebound Tales of Unlikely Friends

Maggy R. Thorvaldsdottir Pease
(USA)



Giggles

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

Fantasy in the Sky



Nancie Rowan
(USA)

Even in Ruin
There is Hope





Moonlight Becomes You



Star Light Star Bright

Nina Irvin
(USA)



Manifesting Spring

Margo Reasner
(USA)



Moon Chasers



Paula D Powers
(USA)

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

If You Leave Me Now . . .



There is a City Far, Far Away

Marjut Korhonen
(Finland)

@photoartistrymarjutkorhonen

Resting





Cinderella Ascending

Anita Hubbard
(Canada)

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



Blue Butterfly

Ann Lavin
(Australia)



She Waited for the Rain



Cheryl Parris
(USA)

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

At the Edge of Morning



The Prodigy

Beverly Everson
(USA)

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

Remember When
We Were Small





Winter Dreams of Spring

Renee Phoenix
(USA)

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



The Circus is in Town

Marie Otero
(Australia)



Red Bellows



Matthew Berberich
(USA)

<http://matthewberberich.com/>

Strut the Carpet



Deceitfulness of Wealth

Margaret Weir
(Canada)

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

Hold Earth Gently





Celtic Whiskers

Barbara A Lane
(USA)

<https://barbaraalane.com/>



Pot O' Gold

Vicki Ardoin
(USA)

<https://vickiardoinfineart.com/>



Teacup Leprechaun



Terri Butler
(USA)

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

The Shamrock Baker

One Fine Day



Robz Lipner
(South Africa)

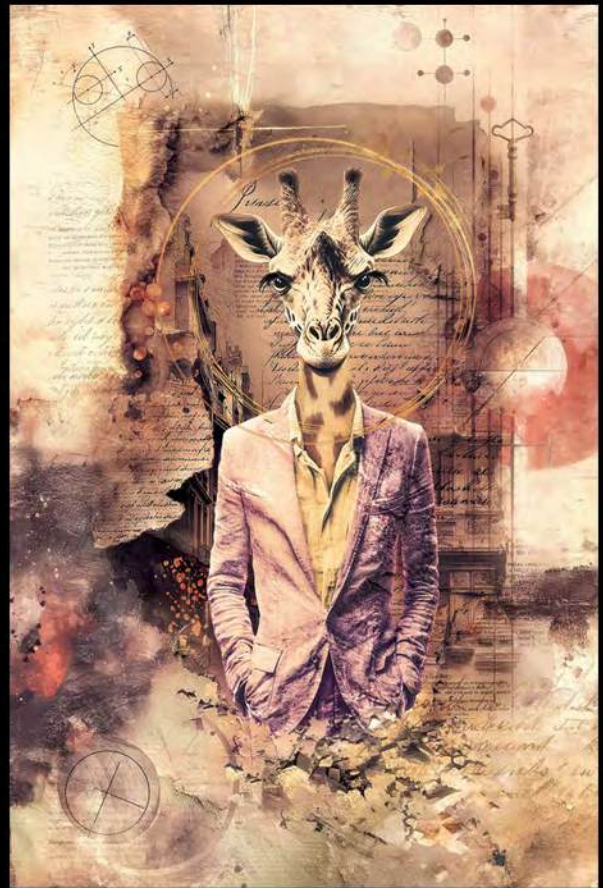
<http://www.robzartworx.com/>

Sanctuary is a Choice

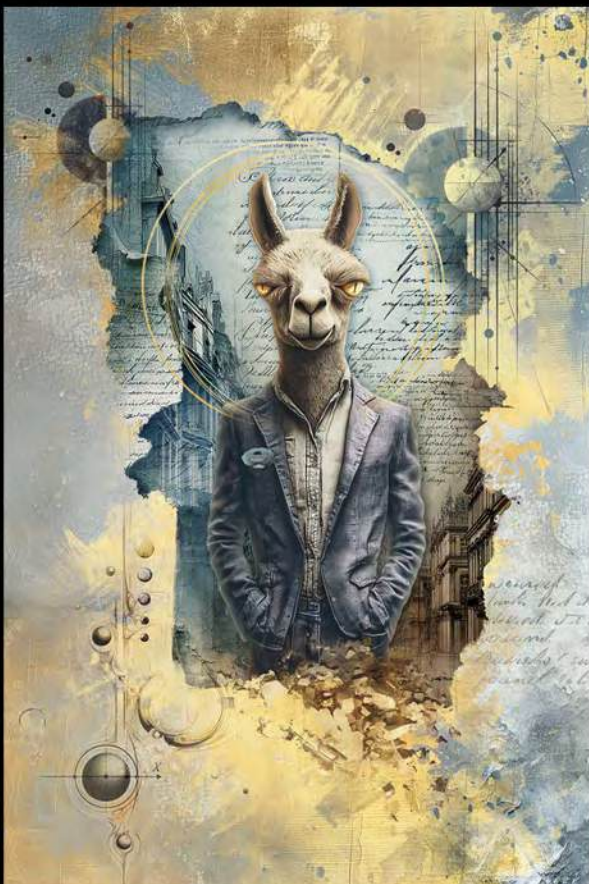




Ignatius Impala By Appointment Only



Gaspard Giraffe Fashionably Late



Llewellyn Llama Esquire



Remington The Roguish Rabbit



The Rose that Never Fades

Rosa Perry
(Australia)

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



Cafe Cubism
with a Slice
of Lemon



Tracy Cooper
(Portugal)

@tracycooper0825

Her Place

Boy and
His dog



Christina Brunton
(Australia)

<https://chrisbrunton.com/>

Lumberjack

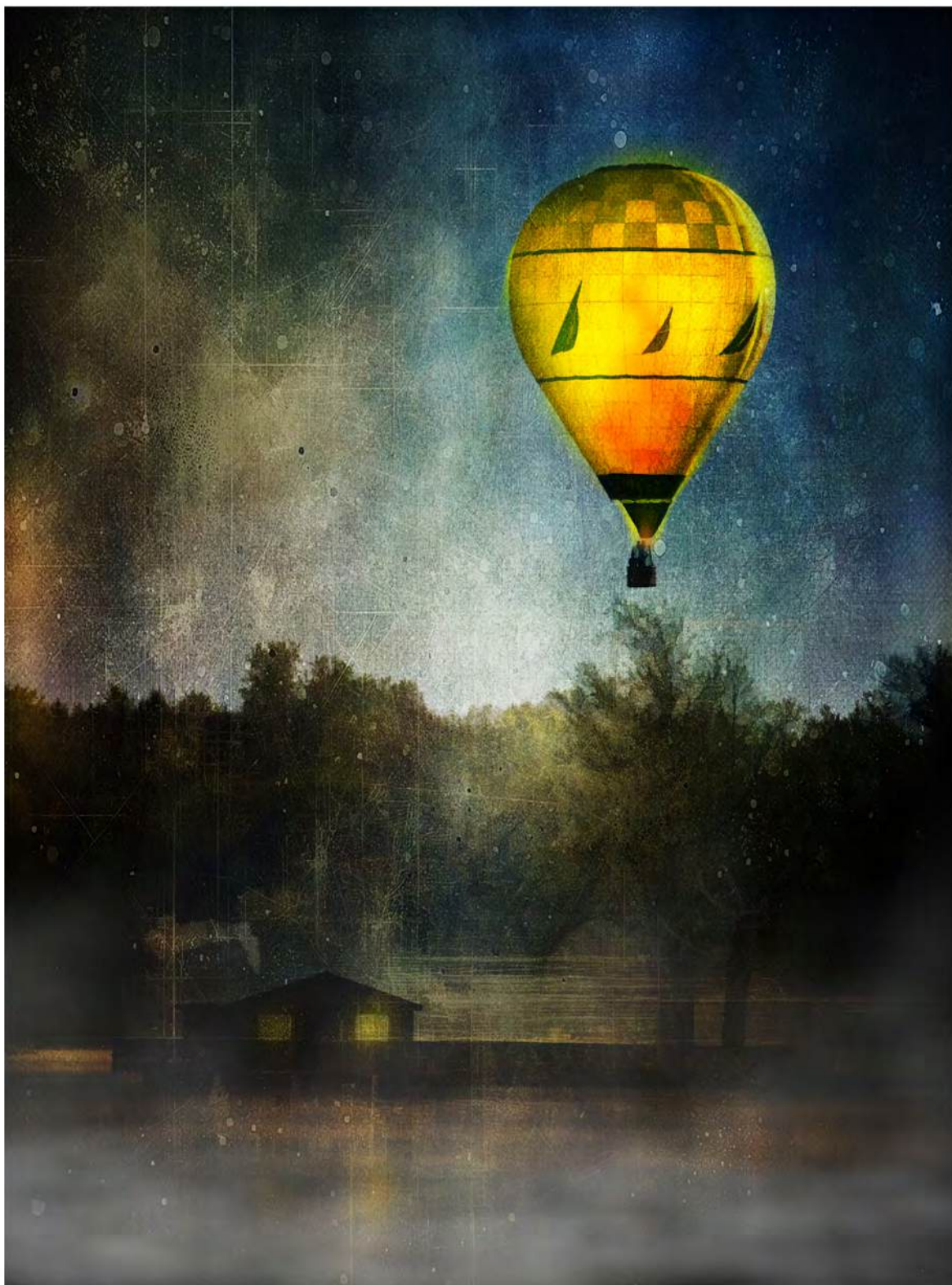




Year of the Fire Horse

Catherine King
(USA)

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



Evening Balloon Ride

Bob Rude
(USA)



Abstract Luggage
Collage



Ashby Presley
(USA)

Beach Blues &
Dragonflies

Everything's
Just Ducky



Karen Sorrells
(USA)

The Bee's Knees





Merry Olde England

Keeley McCleave
(England)



The Art of the Selfie

Pamela Walder
(UK)

FEATURED ARTIST

Don
Schiffner



Old House

“ After I retired in August of 2015, I was looking for something creative to do with my time. I stumbled upon the **Photoshop Artistry** and **AWAKE** courses and signed up. Soon I was raising my photography to heights I never thought possible. ”



Steampunk Girl



Shrimp Boats

“ As much as I loved what I was doing, there seemed to be something missing. That is until the **Mixer Brush Course** came along! This was the final piece for me! ”



Moonlight Walk



Evening on the Bayou



Swamp Cabin

“ The **AWAKE** group has always been very encouraging to me and provides a source of inspiration that keeps me reaching!”



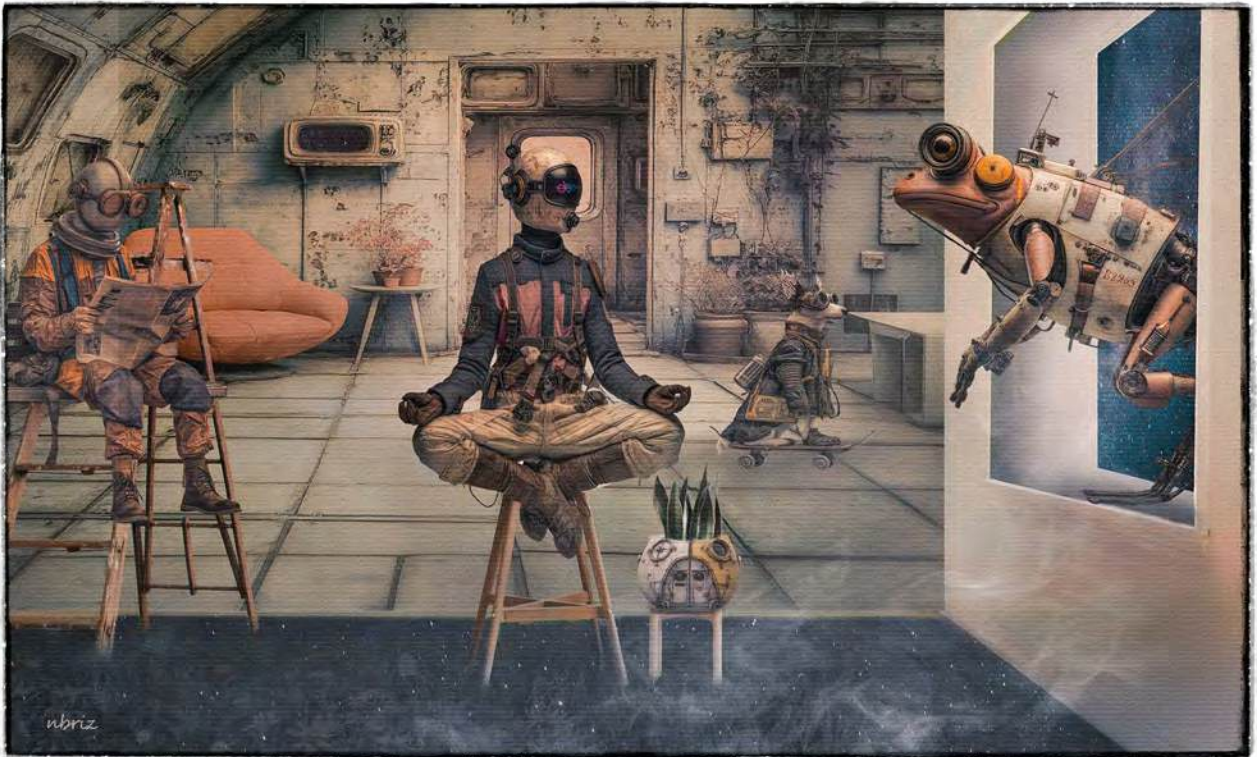
Don
Schiffner
(USA)

Walking the Dog



Another World

Lou Ann Donahue
(USA)



Nancy Brizendine
(USA)

Froggy Goes a Courting



Please Sky,
Send Glitter



Kristin Couch
(Sweden)

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

In the Space of
Selves Unwritten

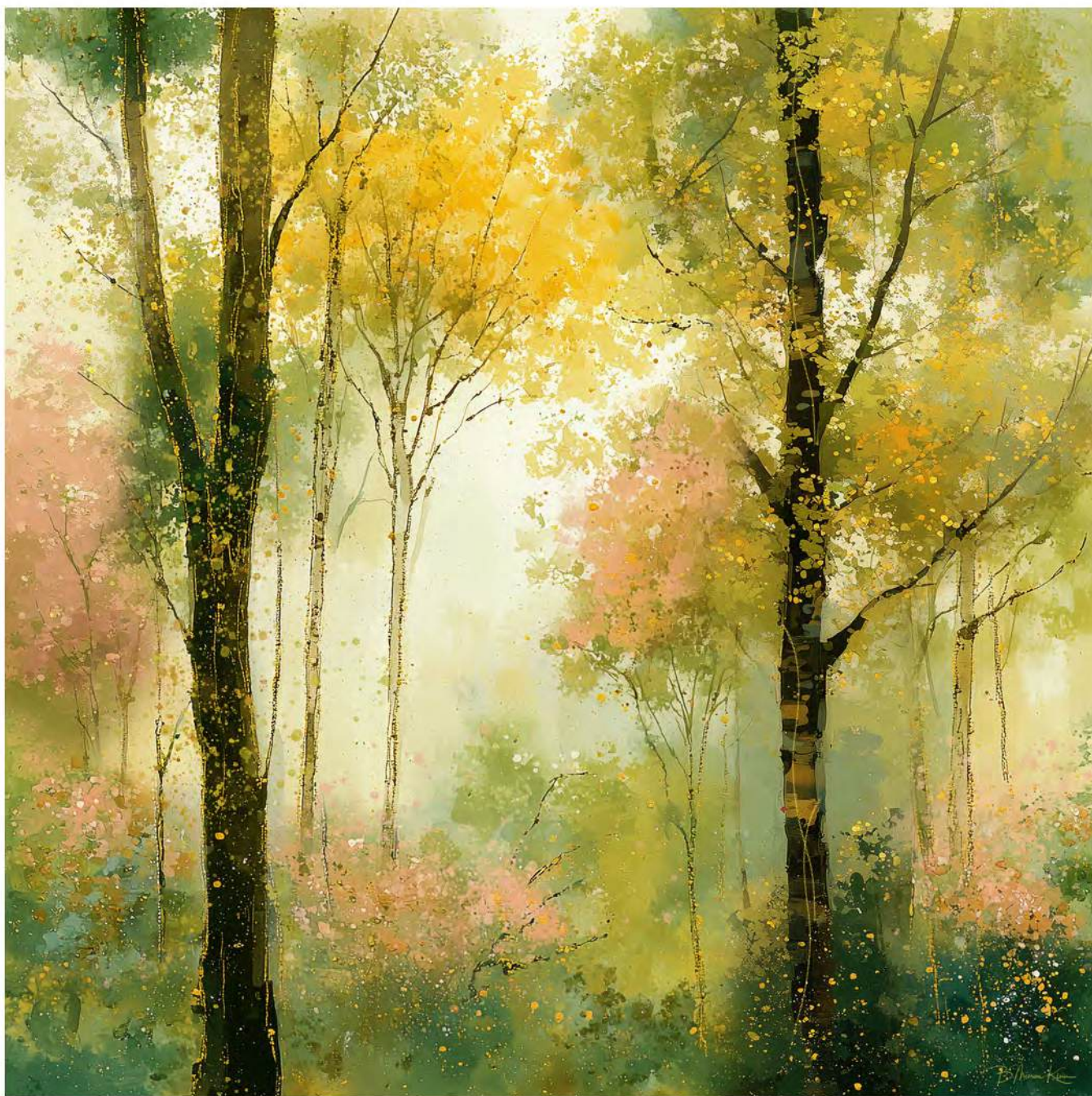




Peace Today

Larry Buckley
(USA)

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



Spring Forest

Barbara Mierau-Klein
(USA / Germany)

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



Misted Glow



Donna Waterson
(USA)

Blue Butterflies



Stairway to Elsewhere

<http://deankelleyphotography.com/>

Dean Kelley
(USA)

Where Clouds
Come to Visit





Stripes

Keith G. Hawley
(Australia)

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





Skellig Reflection



Dan Lavery
(Canada)

<http://danlaveryartist.ca/>

Mesmerized



Dust

Dan Borge
(USA)

Tango





Morwenna the Vampire

Maxi Balcer
(USA)



Luminous Portrait

Chris Harris
(USA)

@allshapeofartistry



Honoring the Ancient
History of Agatha



Helga Blanke
(The Netherlands)

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

The Beautiful Light
of the Sun



Celestial Connection I & II

Donna Elliot
(USA)

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



Where Do Dreams Come From?

Jo Wilmot
(USA)

Winter Beauty

Rachelle R. Vetter
(USA)







Until

CJ Shank
(USA)



Deconstructing History

Linda Lewis
(USA)

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



Atelier

Jarred

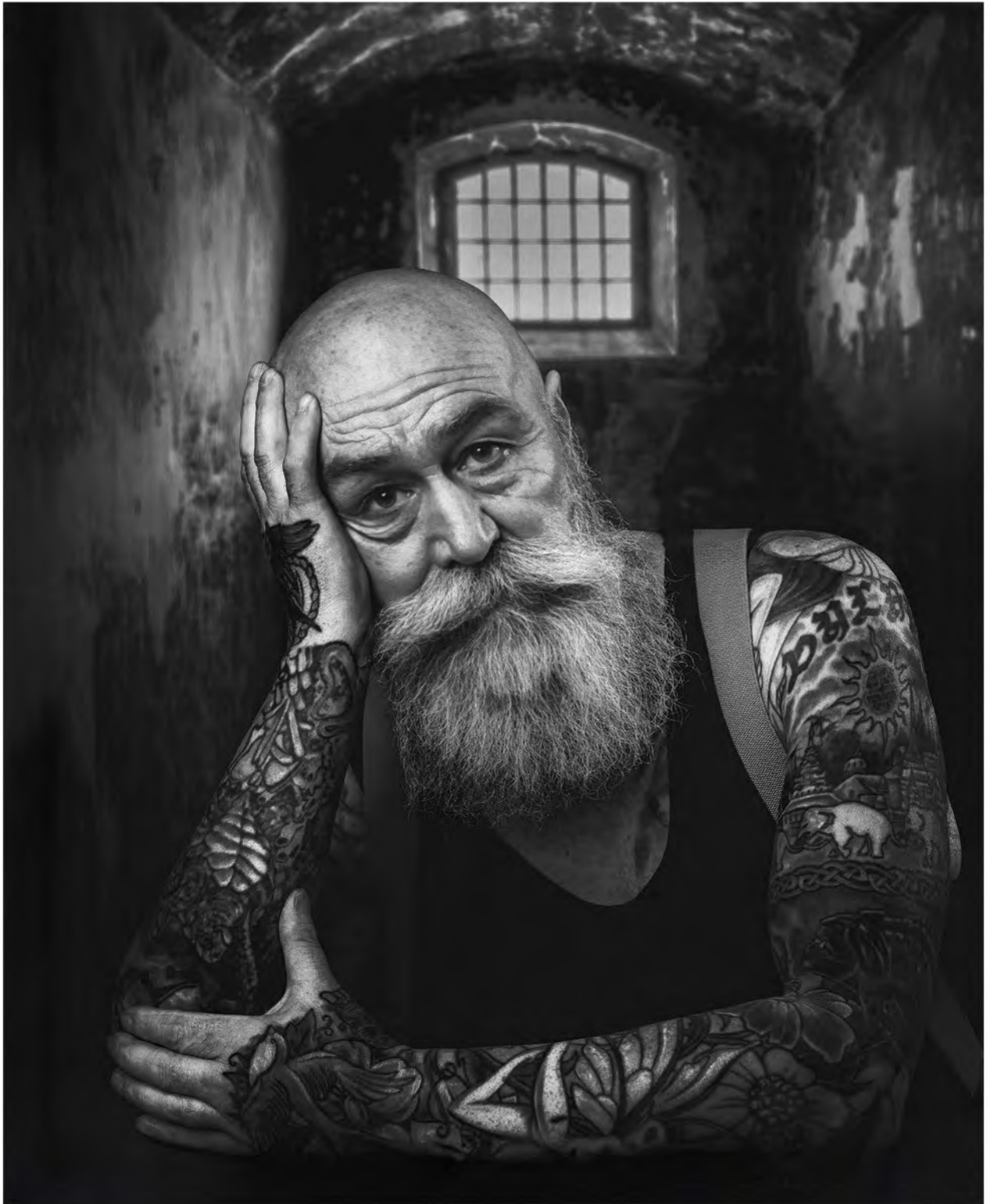


Dov Fuchs
(Israel)

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

Modern Sisyphus





The Prisoner

Viv Buckley
(Ireland)

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



Rise Above the Storm

Tina Christensen
(USA)



<https://shelleybenjamin.com/>

Homestead Reverie



Shelley Benjamin
(USA)

Pastoral

Taking the Lead



Janice S. Batterbee
(Spain)

@janicebatterbee1695

Kiara from Primadomus





The Journey

Sandra Dann
(USA)

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



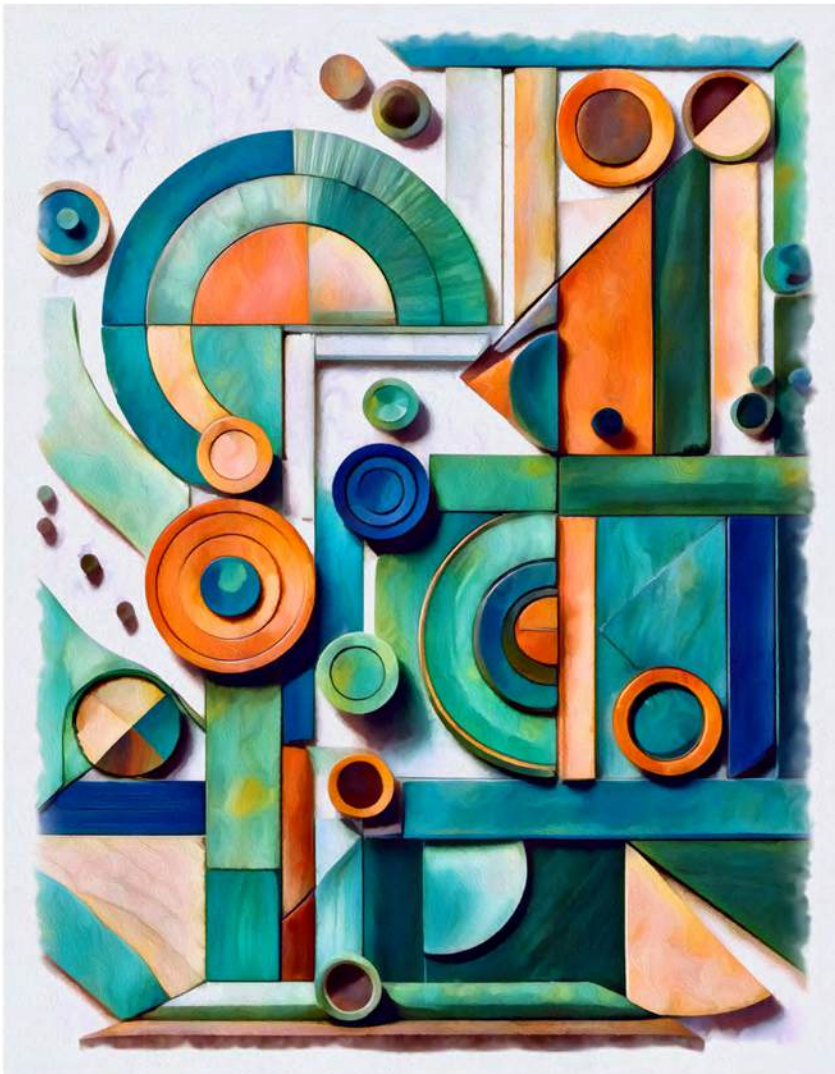
Gathering Shamrocks

Diana Haronis
(USA)

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



Festive March



Ilona Abou-Zolof
(Australia)

<https://gigglegallery.design/>

Chaos



Waiting on Spring

John T Jones
(USA)





A Child Waits

Diane Pinsart
(USA)



Light Dancer

Sue Pulaski
(USA)

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



Star Light, Star Bright



S. H. Layre
(USA)

Looking at the Past



Window

Mark Lutnes
(USA)

The Composer





The Reason

August Naude
(South Africa)

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



Women Contained

Dori Fleming
(UK)



Tryst in the Arbour



Diane Eastham
(Canada)

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

Warrior Angel



Let Your Dreams Be Your Wings

Denise Hunter Logan
(Australia)





City Sidewalks

Deborah Morrison
(USA)

<http://deborah-penland.pixels.com/>



Angelina

Maureen Maxwell
(Australia)



Winter Angel



Inge Klement
(Norway / Austria)

Green Winter
Maiden



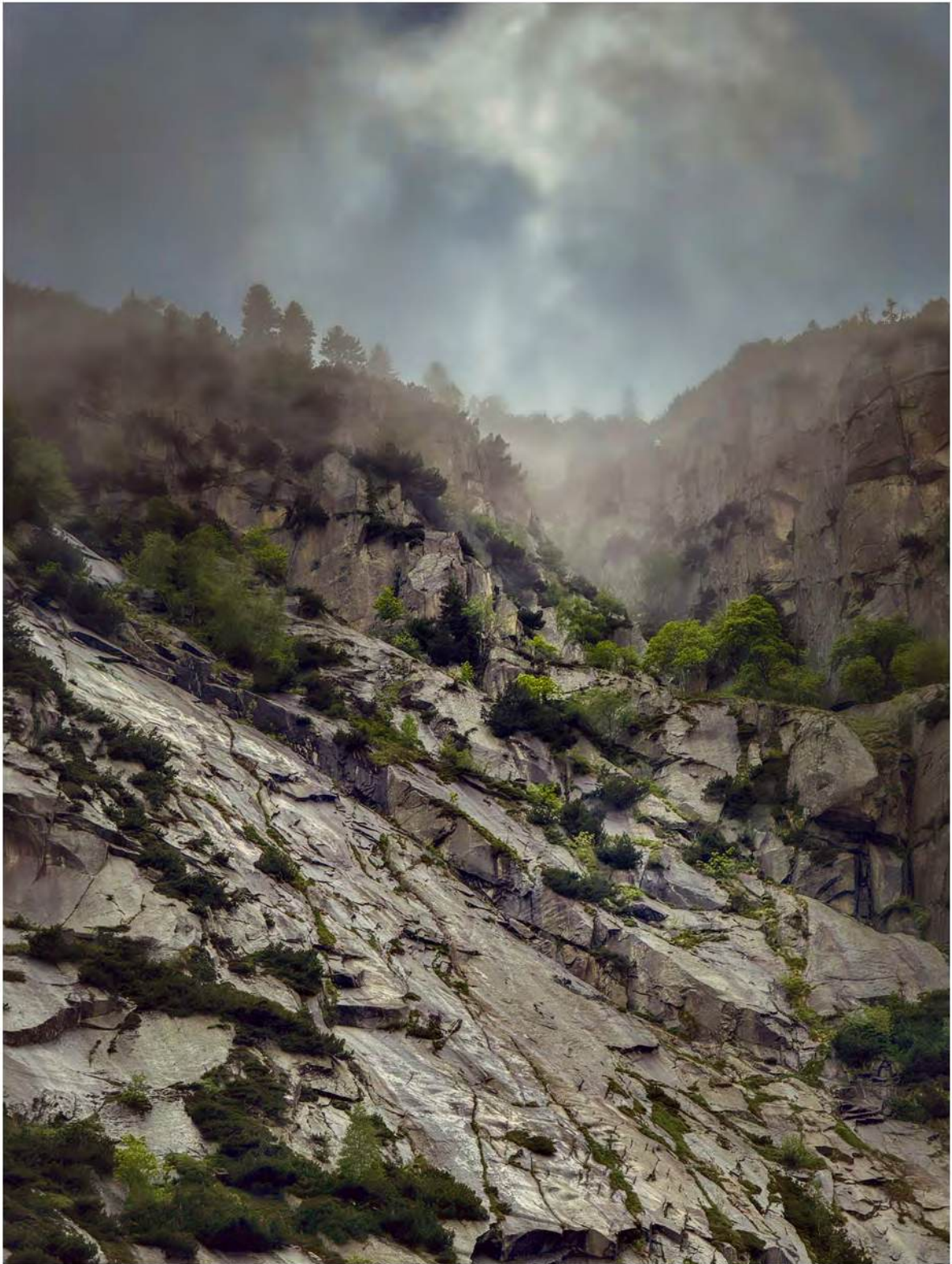
Remnants of the Past

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

Kathleen Greenwood
(USA)

Time Warp





Rocky Mountain High

Susan Crosby
(USA)





Wild Wild West

Sue Joesten Merritt
(USA)

<https://suemerrittphotography.com/>



Mars Manned Mission Control 2053

Bob Desilets
(USA)



Walking



Floating



Running



Crossing

Between Worlds (Series)

Marius Els
(UK)

<https://mariuselsphotoartistry.com/>

Self Acceptance



Jean Hutter
(USA)

@jeanhutter1

The Spin





Flanders Field

Sherri Reed
(USA)

@SherriReedStudios



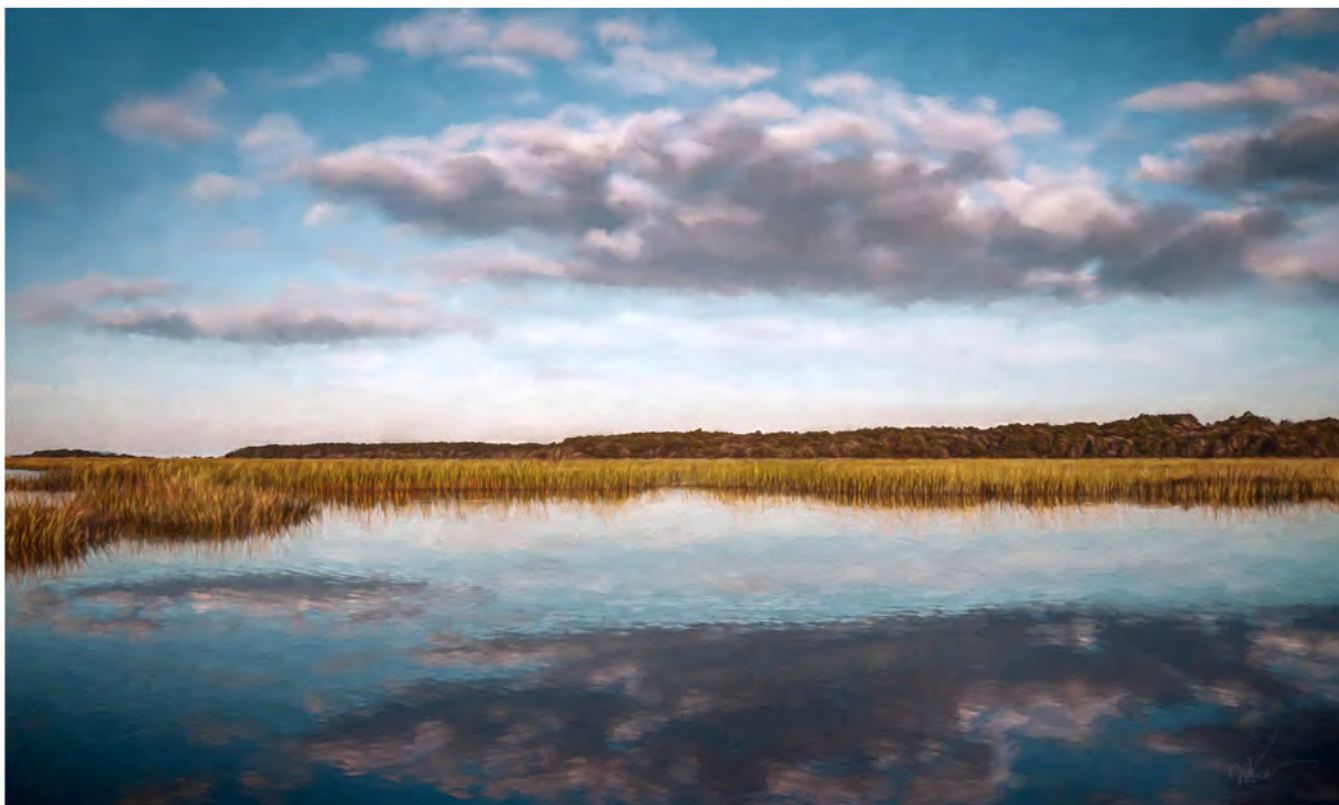
Almost Home

John Molino
(USA)



Wanda Ann Kinnaman
(USA)

Echoed Light



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

Tidal Mirrors



The Sailboat that Followed a Star

Marie Farmer
(USA)

Keeper of NGC-246,
Skull of the Cosmos





The Lost Zodiac

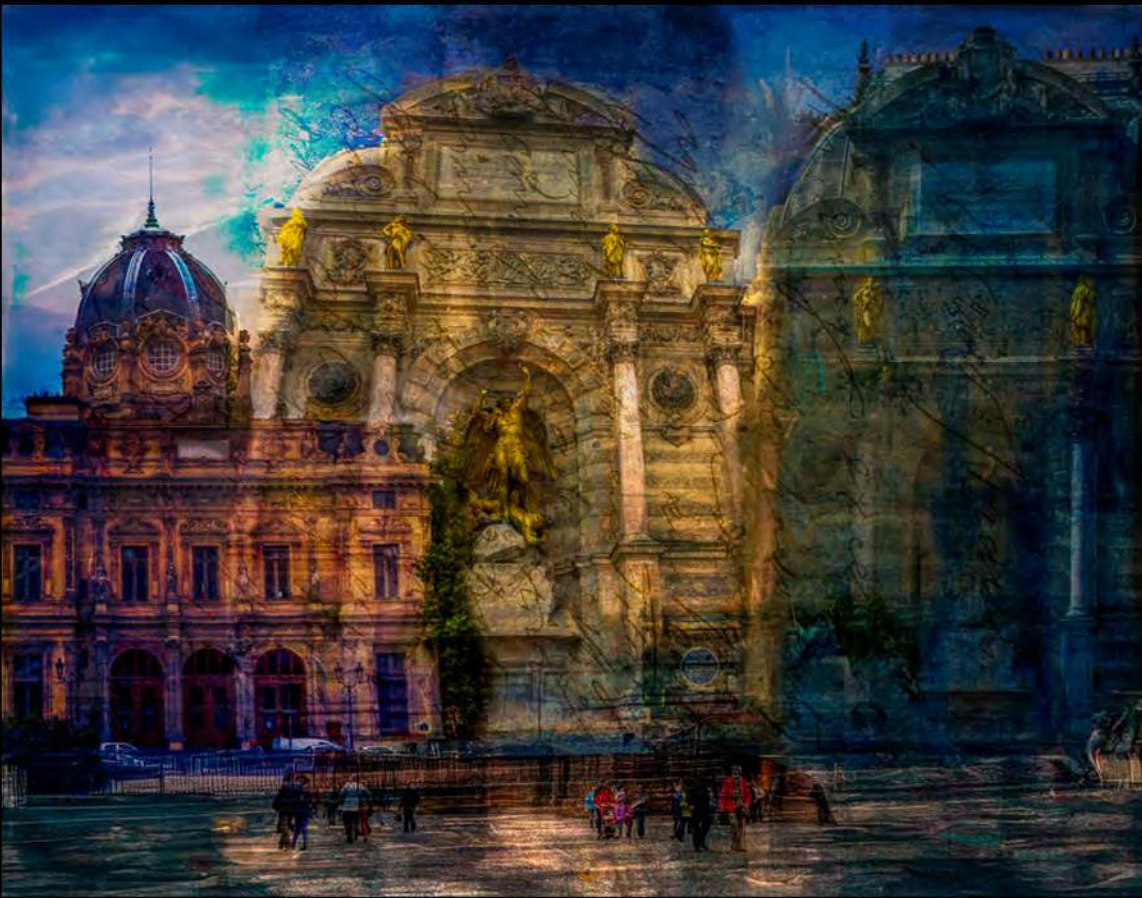
John Schultz
(USA)



The Walk from the Beach

Joyce Simpson
(UK)

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



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

Paris



Scott Clements
(USA)

Strasbourg

Smoking His
Happy Pipe



Pauline van der Spuy
(South Africa)

Critters





Selene's Moonlight Lost to the Sea

Doreen Faiello
(USA)



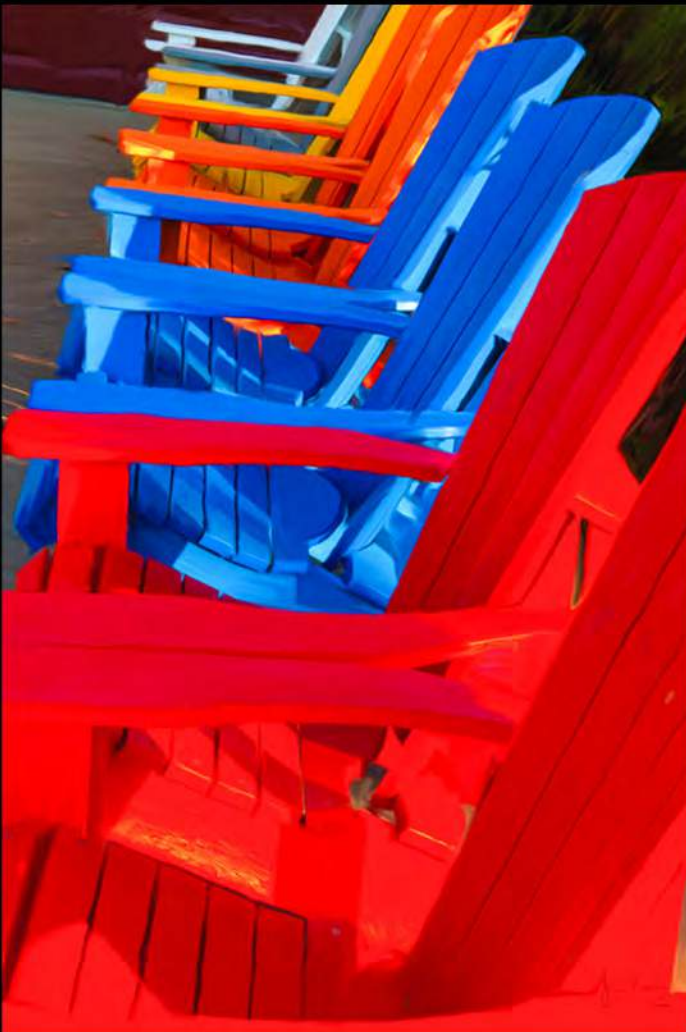
Reflection of Albrechtburg
Castle Germany

George Koncz
(Australia)

<http://georgekonczphotography.com/>



Keeping an Eye on the Mara



David Walker
(UK)

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

Muskoka on Parade

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 creativesuccess 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:
Mary Ann Roesler (USA)

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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