

NEWSLETTER

THE GALLERY'S EARLY SPRING SHOW
MARCH 7 TO MAY 6, 2018

OPENING RECEPTION & SECOND SATURDAY ART WALK
MARCH 10, 5:00 - 8:00
Musical Interludes by Anya Irvin

MARCH 2018

SHOWIN' ON THE RIVER!
ANNUAL JURIED
PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW

"Showin' On The River!"

Annual Juried Fine Art Photography Show

In this issue:

Robert Alwitt, David Aughenbaugh, Suzanne Bean, Leslie Curchack, Cathleen Francisco, Rick Gustafson, Bill Hewitt, Allison Levenson, Merrill Mack, Lozja Mattas, Sherri Oster, Roxanne Bouche' Overton, Paul Porter, Mike Shea, Ruth Smilan

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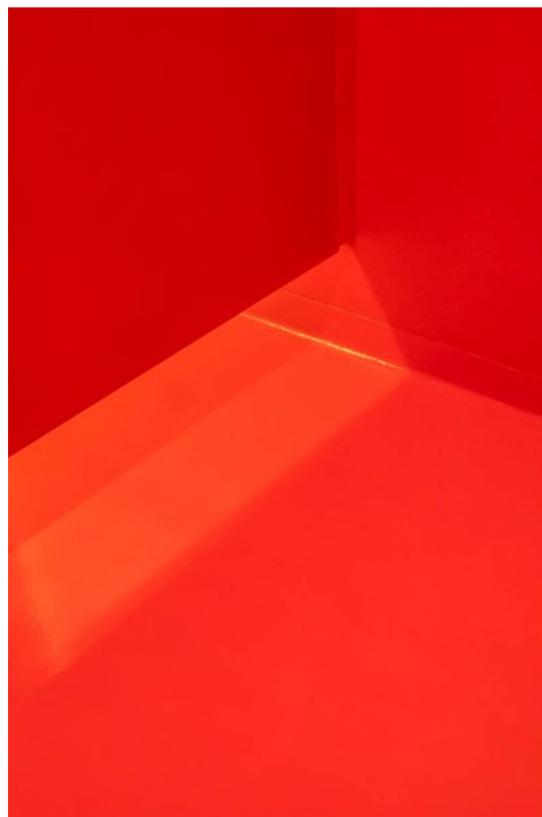
www.riverfrontartgallery.com

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Riverfront Art Gallery is delighted to present our annual juried fine art photography show. The 2018 juried show highlights 47 images by 25 local photographic artists. The scope of the show is broad, representing a number of techniques: regular photography, of course, black & white, infrared, close-up, motion, photomontage, digitally-altered, and works made strikingly abstract by the choices the photographer has made in composition or camera settings.

An example of creative composition is **Merrill Mack's** arresting image, *Surprise On The Fifth Floor* (below). You might appreciate it as a study in shades of red with the light from a window or door angling in to change the tone and, in fact, the light also alters our perception of the geometry of the space. This is an excellent example of how the photographer's eye is an essential component in creativity. Merrill often sees things a bit differently than most people, sharing with us her unusual take on a perfectly ordinary site and turning it into an artistic expression.

A second example of her skill in seeing a potential image in an ordinary site is her *Ladder* (top page 2).



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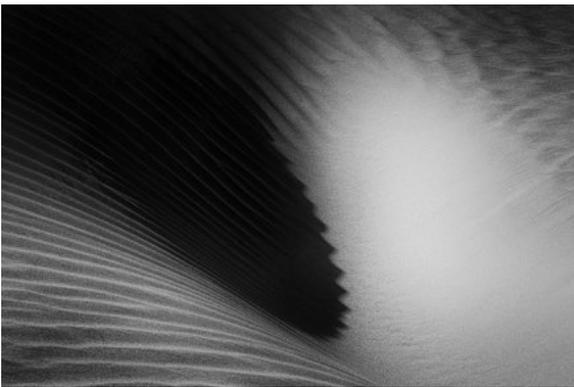


Left *Ladder* by
Merrill Mack

In similar fashion, other artists on this page have recognized the image potential of diverse settings.

Mike Shea has zeroed in on a small bit of Mother Nature's artistry in *Weston Beach Series #1*, (below) visually isolating a bit of rock

formation and thus, by creative seeing, presenting us with an effective natural abstract composition "but in color, not Weston's B&W."



Commenting on his *Dichotomous* (above), **Paul Porter** says, "As I wandered through gentle morning winds in the Mesquite Sand Dunes in Death Valley, I noticed lovely little stories emerging from the sands. One story called out

the clearest, a natural manifestation of yin and yang, or yinyang, which, in Chinese philosophy, is the coherent fabric of nature and mind, exhibited in all existence as the process of harmonization ensuring a constant dynamic balance of all things." Paul admits that's a lot to read into a photograph, then asks, "What does this evoke for you?" Superb seeing and creative imagination!

Bob Alwitt's anthropomorphic close-up, *Old Friends* (below), is an imaginative take on a pair of decaying leaves, "like a couple of old codgers



in conversation", their physical juxtaposition suggesting close ties. Here we clearly see the value of interpretive imagination in photographic arts.

Painters have always been able to present the world as they wished. Now that photographers can digitally develop their own work, they too can present the world as they wish. Here are several examples of creative processing.

David Aughenbaugh tells us, "*Blue Deep* (below) is a digital photo manipulation based on a photo of sea foam on the Sonoma Coast." Printed on metal, the image has marvelous light contrast and a sense of texture even though foam itself is basically textureless.



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Special Effects is an Oscar category, as well it should be. This juried photography show has some pretty stunning special effects of its own. Consider **Cathleen Francisco's** digitally-altered *Thistle* (below), with a central, glowing, textured



aura of light in an otherwise rich black background. The darkness and the light, as well as the white outlining, play a part in making the rust and violet of the thistle assert its dominance in this unique eye-catching image.



Not all of today's special effects are possible in camera. But the digital alteration of images also requires good knowledge of some very complicated image development software and a sense of what effect you are after. **Bill Hewitt** took *Sailing Off Hastings* (below) as a straight shot. Wanting the distant sailboats to take precedence over the nearer water action, Bill chose to blur the water and sky, as he says, "by basically pulling down the clarity." Minor alteration, major change.



Rick Gustafson has mastered the creation of semi abstract images by camera motion, easy to see in *Colorful Arena* (below). "This image demonstrates the horizontal movement of a hand-held camera, especially noticeable in the foreground." For his other work, *Lost Enchantment* (top right), the camera remained on the tripod. *Lost Enchantment* is a single shot, a 6-second exposure with the camera kept still long enough to register the foreground reasonably sharp, then, before the shutter could snap shut, Rick moved the camera quickly upward to get the less distinct effect in the more distant background.



A master at creative image composition, **Roxanne Bouché Overton** has done a series on sailboats in San Francisco Bay. The images are photomontage works in which Roxanne lays separately-photographed textures over her subjects to create an atmospheric background. She has also used camera motion during a long exposure to soften the subject and ensure its seamless blending into the impressionistic whole. Her images are colorful, some intensely so, yet remain dreamlike. She says, "I keep

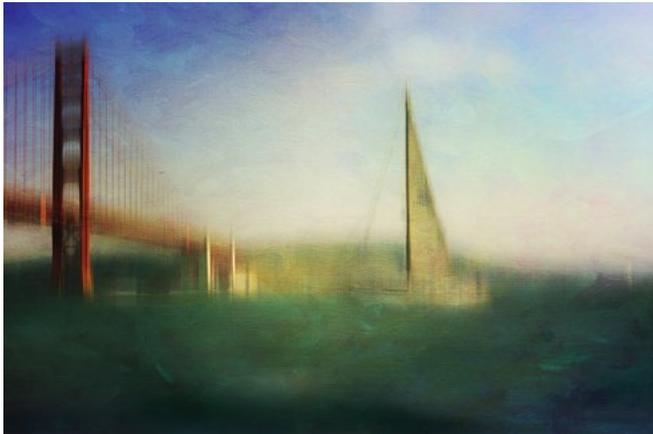
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things simple in composition, which is what catches my eye first. I hunt lines, shapes, and shadows and always chase the light." Roxanne's images shown here are *A World Apart* (left) and *Heading Out* (below).

pocked and cracked condition of the abandoned building establishes the context of time passing. While the landscape it sits amid remains the same, each window suggests a different time slot. The passing of time day by day is also evident in the sunrise at left and the moon visible at right. A perhaps-dew-bejeweled, deteriorating spider web clings to whatever existence it has left, as the symbolic shadow twirls in the center. Conscious of color balance, Lozja has pulled the fiery colors into the lower corner, perhaps symbolizing the edge of the fabric of time?

Also simply brilliant in her ability to conceptualize something from nothing, **Suzanne Bean** skillfully juxtaposes disparate bits and pieces, almost always intensely colored and with effective contrast. She shoots industrial sites and other bits of architectural geometry, peeling paint, rusty things, alleyways, wherever there are patterns, shapes, and a play of light. The end results are impressive images like *Escher Town* (right) and *Blue Dream* (below).



Now we come to two photographic artists who are phenomenal at creating alternate realities. Look closely at **Lozja Mattas's** *The Dance Of Time* (left). It is a complex photomontage of multiple images, textures, and effects. The

We began with straight photography, so let's return to that skill,



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done with no alterations or adornments—just the photographer's sense of place. These images, in particular, give us that sense of place, even if we don't know where that place is specifically. With **Ruth Smilan's** *Gentleman's Farm* (center below), we have no trouble identifying the setting. She has composed the image so that we are invited in by the open gate. The meandering fence visually leads us back to the house and barn.

Sherri Oster's *Tunnel View* (center right) gets high marks for being delightfully unusual. There is no doubt about what Sherri wants us to see. With the corrugated metal serving as framing, the image offers three distinct visual levels to explore, retaining depth and focus all the way back to the hills.

Windows and doors make good subjects, especially when they convey a strong sense of place as the bottom images do. Taking us to a picturesque tourist local, **Bill Hewitt** shows us *Blue Door, Cuba* (below), while **Allison Levenson** gives us *San Miguel 2*

(bottom center), and **Merrill Mack** shows us another San Miguel Allende nook with *Window on Aldama Street* (bottom right).

Leslie Curchack's *Aspen in Autumn* (right) puts us immediately in the higher elevations of mountain ranges, like the Sierra Nevada and even draws us within the tree itself.

This is a lovely show. Please do come!

