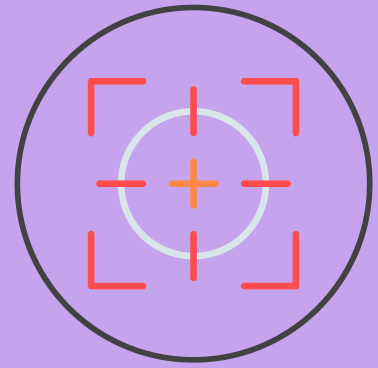


# THE VIEWFINDER



Newsletter Volume 23, April 2026

A note from the Editor - by Christiane Menelas

*Hello my friends,*

Spring has sprung! As soon as we crossed from New Mexico into Texas, on our way back home, we were greeted by roads lined with bluebonnets! So wonderful to see! We returned from an amazing road trip, that I will share with you in this issue of the Viewfinder. If you went out and took some beautiful pictures of springflowers, please send them to me, so I can share them here for everyone! If anybody is interested in going out to shoot sunflower fields, let us know now, so we can plan a trip. They typically start blooming late May-June in Texas, and are especially pretty to photograph during sunrise or sunset. If you're looking for places with wildflowers try Arnosky Family Farm & Market, 13977 Farm to Market Rd 2325, in Blanco Texas. Or Wildseed Farms, 100 Legacy Dr in Fredericksburg. ***Reach out if you want to start a carpool - it's always more fun to go with a group!***

Happy clicking

*Christiane*



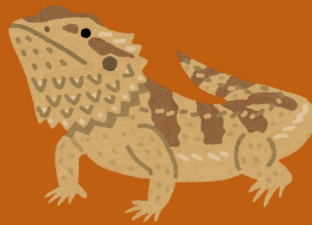
# ***Road trip to Utha***

## **Part 1 of 2**

There is no way I can do this three week trip justice in one newsletter, and I also don't want to bore you to death with excessive details. I know most of you have probably been to some of these locations already, so I will try to only hit the highlights and keep it short and sweet. That being said, I will have to split the whole thing into two parts so the newsletter doesn't turn into a book.

### **So here is part one: Arizona**

We set out on a Sunday and powered through to Lordsburg, NM, because we all know that getting out of West Texas is the longest and most boring part of this drive! After a good nights sleep we headed to our tour of a privately owned ghost town named Shakespeare, and it was well worth the stop. Very well preserved, and a very informative tour.

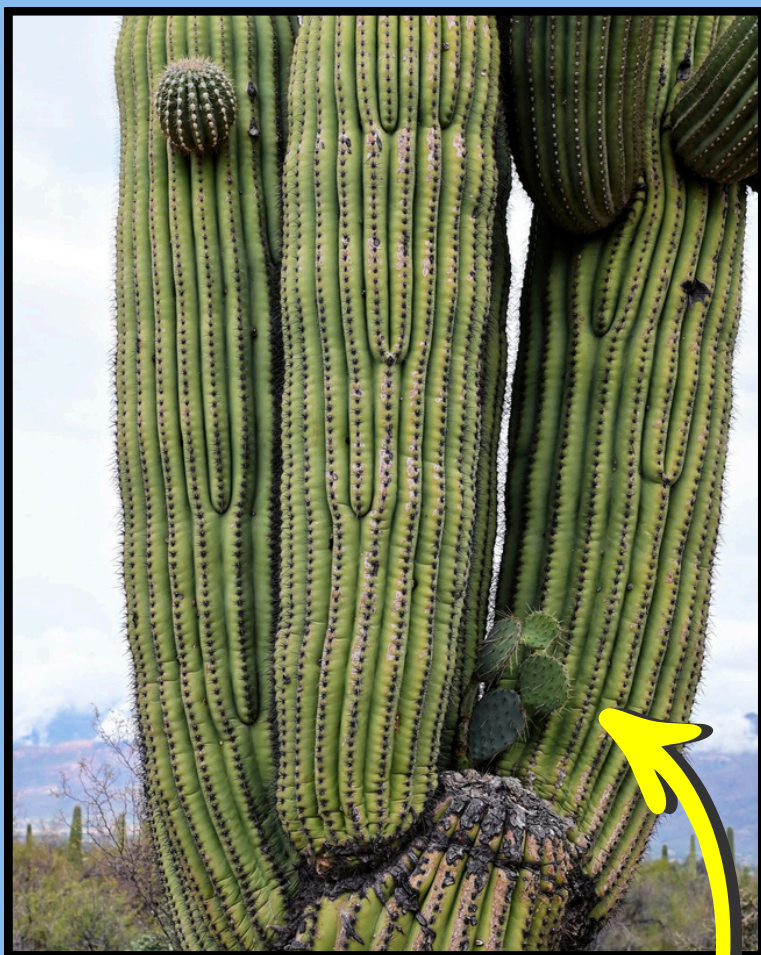


Our next stop was Tucson Arizona, and we spend three nights here. This gave us a chance to see both Saguaro National Park East which is very green and lush, and also visit Saguaro National Park West which is more desert-y. Both are absolutely beautiful and breathtaking in their own ways!!





Saguaro NP East



This prickly pear growing on a saguaro -  
what an opportunist!



A true giant!!





Sunrise on the way to Saguaro NP West was amazing!!



The one thing I was really hoping to catch, was an owl nesting in one of these majestic cacti. But we did not see a single one. Lots of cactus wren, and woodpeckers, but not a single owl.



Helping me look for owls 🦉👀



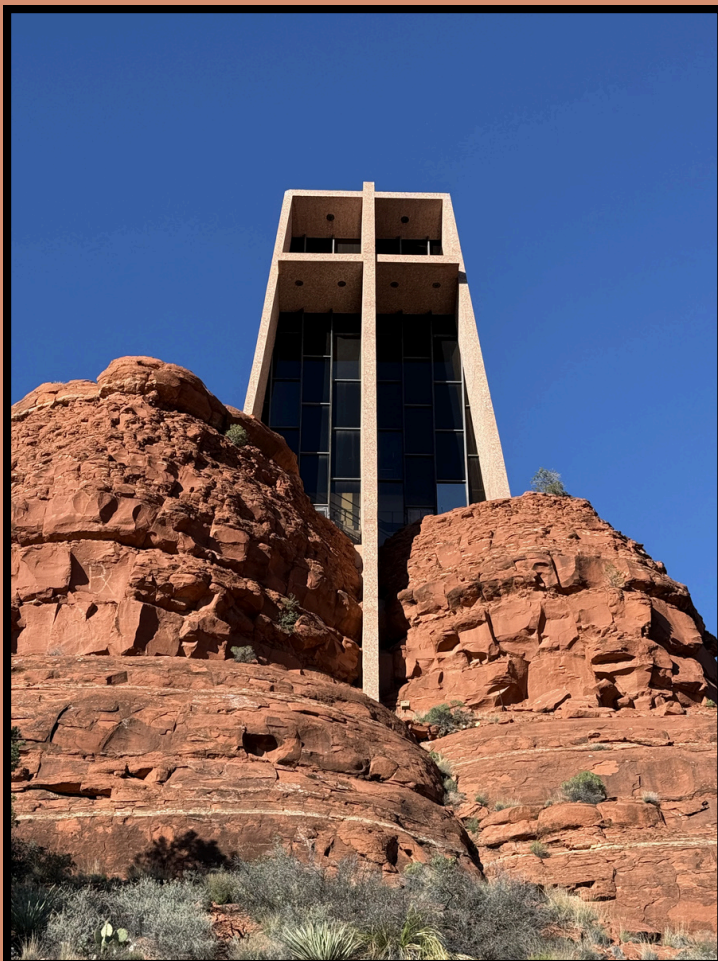
### **We also did a little detour to the Ironwood Forest National Monment.**

Ironwood trees are long-lived, and slow-growing. These trees can live for over 1,000 years, and are known for having the densest wood in the world, which sinks in water. These trees are impossible to cut down with regular tools.

While it was a beautiful drive, and every bit as scenic as the National Park, there are some things to be aware of, before heading there:

The monument is a known travel corridor for smuggling and undocumented immigration. Roads are unpaved and can be hazardous. The highest speed is probably 15-20mph, and after heavy rainfall high clearance vehicles may be needed. There is no cell service, no water, no bathrooms. Multiple people are wilderness camping back here too (and yes, some of them look a little shady). And lastly you have to watch for venomous snakes, scorpions, and Africanized killer bees.

Due to the slow speeds, it turned into a v e r y lengthy detour and we are not absolutely sure we even saw the ironwood trees. We saw trees, but nothing I would call a forest - so in my opinion, not worth it, unless you want to see more saguaros with beautiful mountains in the back.



Our next stop took us to Sedona for just one night, and although we got to see the beautiful Chapel of the Holy Cross, aka Chapel in the Rocks, we really did not have enough time to do much hiking or sightseeing. Traffic through town reminded me of Houston traffic - it was overrun with tourists. Of course it didn't help that we were there during Spring Break. But the surrounding red mountains are truly breathtaking, and I may have to return during the "off" season.



Our next stop was the Cameron Trading Post in Arizona, where we stayed for two nights. From here it was about an hour drive to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon. I know most everyone has been to the Grand Canyon, but this was my very first time, and it was mindblowingly beautiful! It exceeded my expectations for sure! We were able to be there for most of the afternoon, and sunset on the first day. Then we returned for sunrise on the second day! The crowds at Mather's Point (most popular viewing spot for sunrise/sunset) were again plentiful, but the thing about the Grand Canyon is there is plenty of space to spread out and see the same thing, just from a slightly different viewpoint. I also got really lucky to see the Condors flying when we first got to the Desert View Watchtower, located at the eastern end of the Grand Canyon's South Rim.



# 67 is what it says on his tags. These guys can have a wingspan of 10 feet. Incredible to watch!



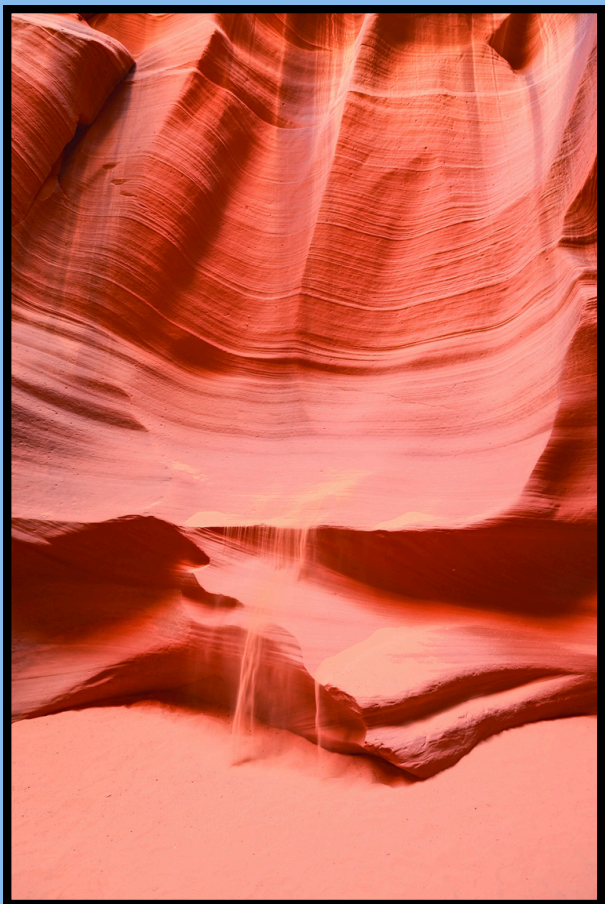




Our final stop in Arizona before heading into Utah was Page, AZ. Here we stopped at the Shell gas station for a pitstop in the “secret cave” - now not so secret anymore thanks to social media. It is however a stop I would highly recommend, if you’re going out that way! A short walk away from the gas station, and totally worth it  
WOW!!!

And then of course we had to do Antelope Canyon! Also absolutely incredible! I chose to do the Canyon X tour (named after the X formation in one of the canyon openings). It was a photography tour, so tripods were allowed, and there was no time pressure! Total time of the tour was 3 hrs., and included the upper and lower canyon.





Part 2 in next months issue.



# RECOGNITIONS



The winning image in our monthly competition for the category "Minimalism" goes to Christiane Menelas (me), for the image titled "Grace in Motion".



*Congratulations*



Also a BIG congratulations to Ed  
Zukowski for receiving an  
Honorable Mention Award  
at the PSA interclub competition!



*Congratulations!*





A big thank you to Mia Hendricks  
for giving a wonderful presentation on  
how to put on a solo show, during our last  
monthly meeting!

Mia is very active in the art world and frequently displays her work at  
exhibits throughout Texas. She is also currently working on her own  
show/exhibit - stay tuned for more details later this year. Please enjoy  
some of her work on the next few pages. Congratulations Mia, and thank  
you for sharing your success with us!



Thin Line Fest is a documentary film, music, and photo festival in  
downtown Denton, TX

Next Years Festival - March 17-21, 2027

<https://thinline.us/about>

My work was featured in the GDAC Gallery. This was one of 5 Galleries  
during the festival.

Visitors were able to explore powerful visual work from this year's photo  
selections while connecting with photographers and fellow festivalgoers.

The GDAC gallery featured the work of Official Selections from the  
Hear/Here, Site/Unseen, and Time/Space categories.





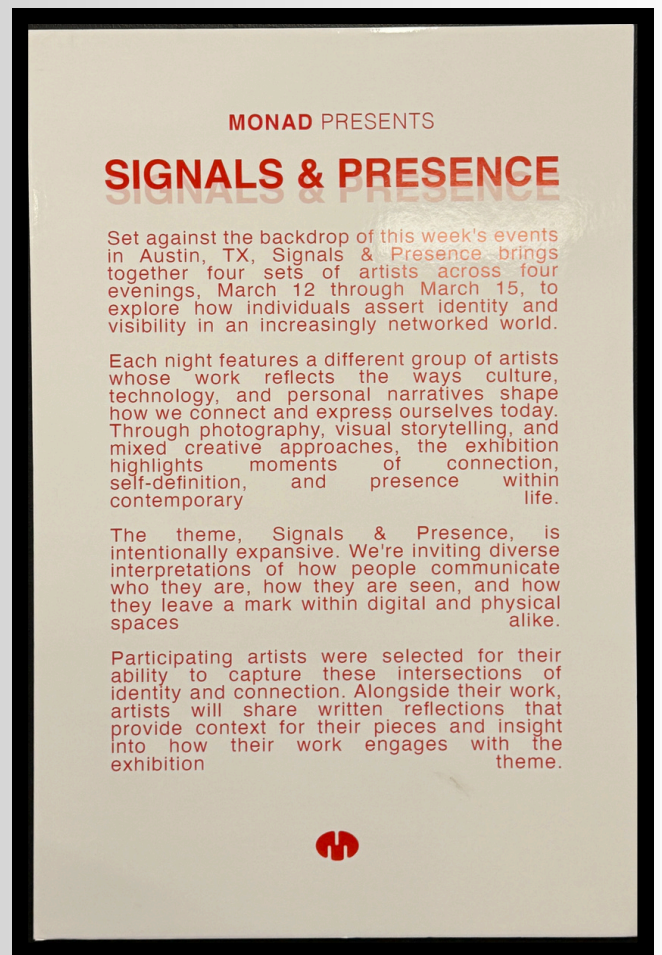
Signals & Presence was a Photo Exhibition put on by Monad NYC during SXSW 2026.

Signals & Presence reflects on identity and connection in an increasingly networked world. Culture and technology, intersect within this exhibition, leaving traces of presence in unexpected places.

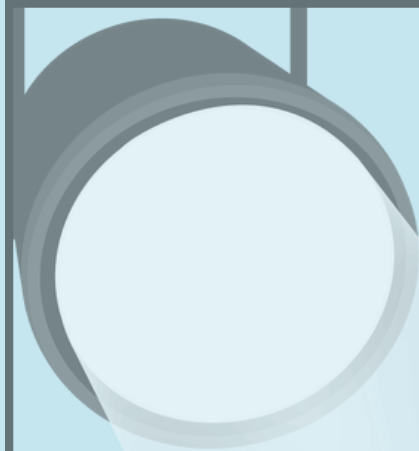
The theme remains intentionally open, inviting artists to interpret what it means to exist, express, and be perceived in contemporary life.

3/12 — 3/15

Each night introduced a new set of artists. New signals. New perspectives.







# Member Spotlight

## *Sandy Gilbert*

*By Thomas (Tom) Soutter*

### **What inspired you to pick up that first camera?**

I didn't have any great "Aha!" moment – after years of taking snapshots with various cameras, I simply wanted to take better pictures of my grandkids. I decided to enroll in a photography course at my local community college and was told that I couldn't do the work with my little point & shoot. So I bought my first DSLR – A Nikon D90. After that class, I was hooked!

### **What gear do you typically use now, and why?**

For the past year, I've used a Sony a7Cii, which is a compact version of the a7iv, but with an upgraded focusing system. It's lightweight and easy to travel with. My main lenses are a Sony 24-105mm f/4 for anything from landscapes to street photography; a Tamron 150-500mm for wildlife; and a Sigma 16-28mm f2.8 for night shots.

### **How would you describe your photographic style?**

I don't think of myself as having a particular "style." In a sense, it is documentary (the landscapes and wildlife) because I basically photograph what I find – not what I have created in my mind. My continuous goal is to become more creative.

### **What story do you aim to tell through your photos?**

My goal is for the viewer to find some emotional connection with my photos, but that is a goal that is hard to achieve.



### **How do you decide when a photo is “finished.”?**

I try not to agonize too much over the finished image – otherwise, I'd never get through editing. I'll flag the edited images that I like in Lightroom, then go through them again when I've done the basics on that batch. If there's something that I think has potential, I'll take a closer look at it and maybe make more changes.

### **What has been your biggest challenge as a photographer?**

For one, I often get in too big of a hurry. I need to remember to slow down, take my time, check my settings and composition, and use a tripod. Secondly, I have a hard time thinking outside the box to get a unique image.

### **Who or what has influenced your work the most?**

All the wonderful, talented photographers in our club! Everyone is so generous with their knowledge and I have learned so much from them.

### **What advice would you give to emerging photographers?**

Learn your camera settings inside and out so that when you are shooting, you don't have to think about where things are. And get out and shoot as often as you can.

### **What projects or goals are you currently working toward?**

I want to do a series of reflections on aging. I haven't made much progress!

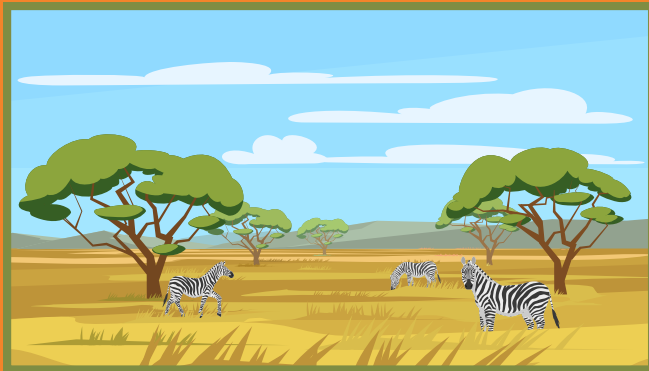
### **If you could capture one moment in time, what would it be?**

There is no way I could capture just one – everyday is filled with magical moments!













# THE MAASAI

Photographer Jonathan Gregson

I'd heard about a Maasai chief who'd dug a huge well in the middle of nowhere after seeing elephants burrowing for water in the area. It was more like a mine it was so big, some 30m deep, and herders were taking turns leading all their cattle down into it to drink and paying the chief's son for the privilege. When I arrived it was midday, baking hot and there was this white dust everywhere – not the ideal conditions for photography. I thought I'd struck out, but on the way up from the bottom of the well I encountered this handsome Maasai boy walking his head down. And for me this image of him just summed it all up: the dustiness in the air, the bright red traditional *shuka* robe contrasting against the white chalky earth, and his cattle (his family's livelihood) in tow.

## Camera set up

Canon EOS-1D X; focal length 63mm; ISO speed 160; F stop f/2.8; exposure time 1/1250 sec; exposure bias -0.3 step

## Travel details

Kilimanjaro International Airport, between Arusha and Moshi, handles both domestic and international flights, and is the best option for itineraries in northern Tanzania's famed safari circuit.

## Photo tip

When you can't control the light, it's about making the most out of what may be a bad situation. Here, I shot in a way to take advantage of the white earth bouncing the light around, which reduced contrasts. Then in post production I worked to ensure I kept the highlight details.





## Exploring the Icons Behind the Lens

Dorothea Lange was a photographer whose portraits of displaced farmers during the Great Depression greatly influenced later documentary photography.



(1895-1965)

### Who Was Dorothea Lange?

During the Great Depression, Dorothea Lange photographed the unemployed men who wandered the streets. Her photographs of migrant workers were often presented with captions featuring the words of the workers themselves. Lange's first exhibition, held in 1934, established her reputation as a skilled documentary photographer. In 1940, she received the Guggenheim Fellowship.



## Early Years

One of the preeminent and pioneering documentary photographers of the 20th century, Lange was born Dorothea Nutzhorn on May 26, 1895, in Hoboken, New Jersey. Her father, Heinrich Nutzhorn, was a lawyer, and her mother, Johanna, stayed at home to raise Dorothea and her brother, Martin.

When she was 7, Lange contracted polio, which left her right leg and foot noticeably weakened. Later, however, she'd feel almost appreciative of the effects the illness had on her life. "[It] was the most important thing that happened to me, and formed me, guided me, instructed me, helped me and humiliated me," she said.

Just before Lange reached her teen years, her parents divorced. Lange grew to blame the separation on her father and eventually dropped his surname and took her mother's maiden name, Lange, as her own.

Art and literature were big parts of Lange's upbringing. Her parents were both strong advocates for her education, and exposure to creative works filled her childhood.

Following high school, she attended the New York Training School for Teachers in 1913. Lange, who'd never shown much interest in academics, decided to pursue photography as a profession after a stint working in an NYC photo studio. She went on to study the art form at Columbia University, and then, over the next several years, cut her teeth as an apprentice, working for several different photographers, including Arnold Genthe, a leading portrait photographer. In 1917, she also studied with Clarence Hudson White at his prestigious school of photography.

By 1918, Lange was living in San Francisco and soon running a successful portrait studio. With her husband, muralist Maynard Dixon, she had two sons and settled into the comfortable middle-class life she'd known as a child.

## Change of Focus

Lange's first real taste of documentary photography came in the 1920s when she traveled around the Southwest with Dixon, mostly photographing Native Americans. With the onslaught of the Great Depression in the 1930s, she trained her camera on what she started to see in her own San Francisco neighborhoods: labor strikes and breadlines.

In the early 1930s, Lange, mired in an unhappy marriage, met Paul Taylor, a university professor and labor economist. Their attraction was immediate, and by 1935, both had left their respective spouses to be with each other.

Over the next five years, the couple traveled extensively together, documenting the rural hardship they encountered for the Farm Security Administration, established by the U.S. Agriculture Department. Taylor wrote reports, and Lange photographed the people they met. This body of work included Lange's most well-known portrait, "Migrant Mother," an iconic image from this period that gently and beautifully captured the hardship and pain of what so many Americans were experiencing. The work now hangs in the Library of Congress.

As Taylor would later note, Lange's access to the inner lives of these struggling Americans was the result of patience and careful consideration of the people she photographed. "Her method of work," Taylor later said, "was often to just saunter up to the people and look around, and then when she saw something that she wanted to photograph, to quietly take her camera, look at it, and if she saw that they objected, why, she would close it up and not take a photograph, or perhaps she would wait until... they were used to her."

In 1940, Lange became the first woman awarded a Guggenheim fellowship.



## Final Years and Death

Following America's entrance into World War II, Lange was hired by the Office of War Information (OWI) to photograph the internment of Japanese Americans. In 1945, she was employed again by the OWI, this time to document the San Francisco conference that created the United Nations.

While she battled increasing health problems over the last two decades of her life, Lange stayed active. She co-founded Aperture, a small publishing house that produces a periodical and high-end photography books. She took on assignments for Life magazine, traveling through Utah, Ireland and Death Valley. She also accompanied her husband on his work-related assignments in Pakistan, Korea and Vietnam, among other places, documenting what she saw along the way. Lange passed away from esophageal cancer in October 1965.

### CITATION INFORMATION

**Article Title:** Dorothea Lange Biography

**Author:** Biography.com Editors

**Website Name:** The Biography.com website

**Url:** <https://www.biography.com/artists/dorothea-lange>

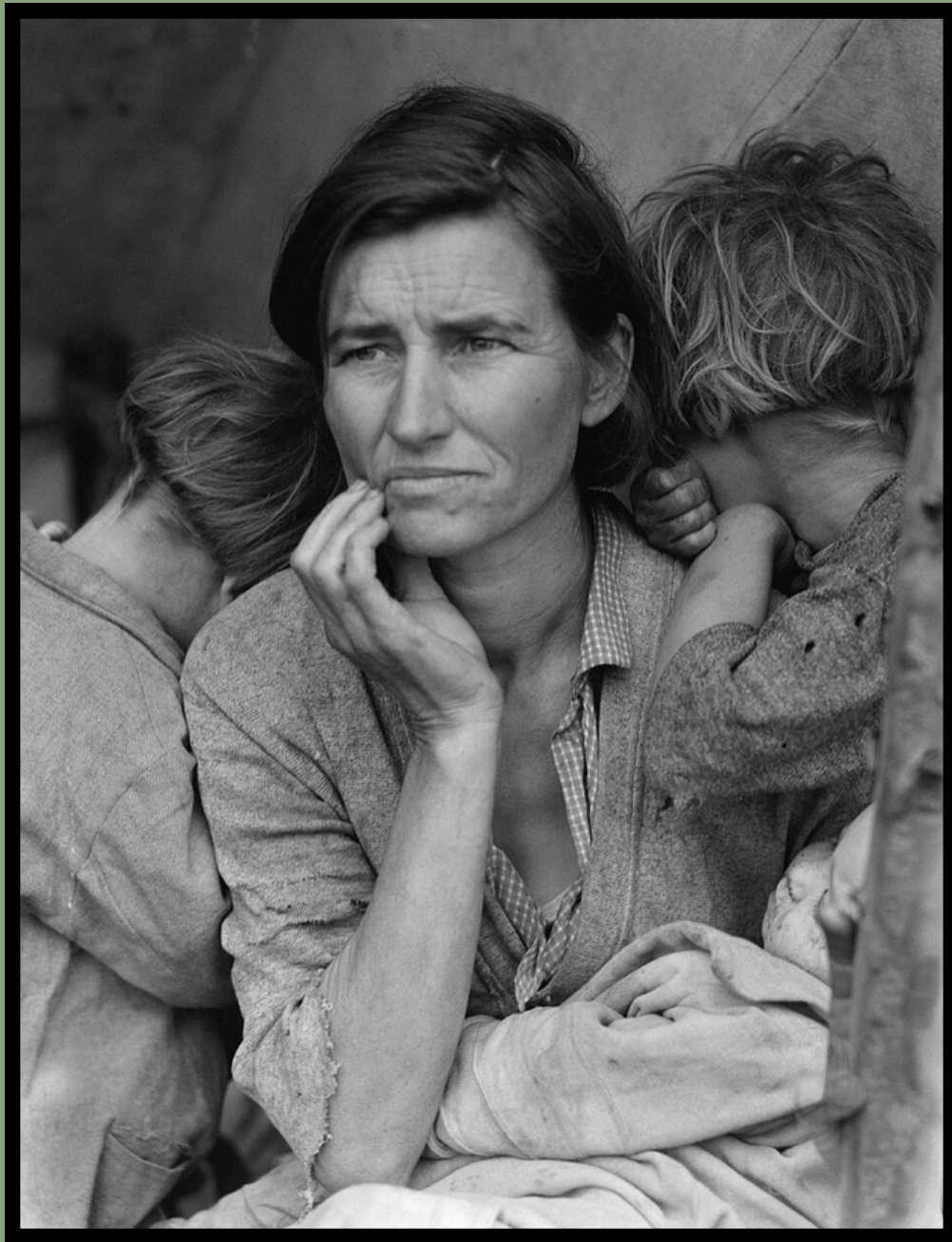
**Access Date:**

**Publisher:** A&E; Television Networks

**Last Updated:** June 16, 2020

**Original Published Date:** April 2, 2014





## Migrant Mother

Her "Migrant Mother" (pictured) is one of the most recognizable photographs ever taken. Taken in Nipomo, California at the height of the Great Depression.





## “Japanese Children with Tags, Hayward, California,” 1942

Through Dorothea’s documentation, we know the names of these little girls and the names of their families (information viewable through the digital archive at [dorothealange.museumca.org](http://dorothealange.museumca.org).) Her field notes tell a story about a lady there distributing sandwiches to the children while they were waiting at the relocation center.



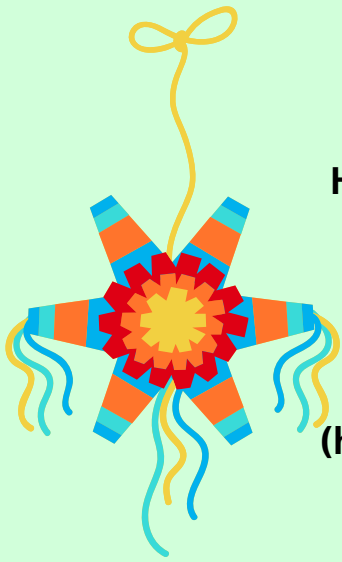
## “Ex-Slave with a Long Memory,” 1938

Dorothea followed a need to document what she saw as the most distinguishing feature of the Deep South, which was the Jim Crow racial caste system. She was told to focus primarily on photographing white people, but did not follow directions. She wanted to document what was distinctive about that society, and the role that race played in sustaining economic injustice.



# Upcoming events:

- 4/15        Special service to honor unaccompanied veterans – MilTRAC
- 4/17-4/19    Port Aransas Sandfest
- 4/17-4/19    34th Annual New Braunfels Area Car Club Swap Meet at Comal County Fairgrounds - The New Braunfels Life
- 4/18        New Braunfels Historic Homes Tour
- 4/18        Cars & Coffee at Tint World New Braunfels - The New Braunfels Life
- 4/19        Fiesta Fly-In
- 4/25        Caffeine and Chrome at Gateway Classic Cars of San Antonio/Austin - The New Braunfels Life
- 4/25        Doggie Dip Day at Landa Park Aquatic Complex - The New Braunfels Life
- 4/28        Photowalk to the Snakefarm, meet there at 10am!!
- 5/3        Saengerfest
- 5/2-5/3     The 2026 Great Texas Airshow
- 5/9        SASCA #04-2026 (Spokes #4)



Here is another event some folks might enjoy.

April 19th

11:00 am - 5:30 pm

**A DAY IN OLD MEXICO**

(<https://fiestasanantonio.org/our-events/a-day-in-old-mexico/>)

6126 Padre Dr, San Antonio TX 78245



Here is a good explanation of the difference between our traditional rodeo and the Mexican Rodeo:

- **The Participants:** Male participants are called charros, while female participants who perform side-saddle routines are known as escaramuzas.
- **The Venue:** A charreada takes place in a specialized arena called a lienzo charro.
- **Events:** It includes nine, often, male-dominated, events such as bull riding, team roping, and horse reining, along with the escaramuza drill team.
- **Cultural Significance:** Charreada is a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, emphasizing tradition, colorful costumes, and music, often featuring Mariachi.





**And one more!**  
**So much to see and do - no excuses for**  
**not getting out and taking some**  
**amazing pictures!!**



**And no excuses for not sending in a few**  
**of those shots to the Viewfinder, and**  
**sharing them with the rest of us**



DigitalProLab

# CASH FOR CAMERAS



**APR. 16-18**

**KEH is coming back to Digital Pro Lab!**  
Turn your gear into cash or lab credit!

**THURS. & FRI.**  
9AM - 5PM

**SATURDAY**  
10AM - 3PM

**KEH**

KEH is the original reseller of professional, collectible, & everyday gear.



Top dollar for your gear  
quick cash quote!

Only clean, working cameras

Trade instead & earn +10% more in  
Digital Pro Lab credit

**What You Need To Bring:**  
Camera with a charged battery, charger, and photo ID (required for payment).



**Items KEH not currently purchasing:**

- Darkroom equipment
- Digital point-and-shoot cameras under 6-megapixels
- Cameras in these formats: APS, 110, 126, and Disc Film
- Video cameras that use film or tape formats
- Studio lighting that requires a powerpack or hot lights

Walk-in basis only  
No appointment needed

And last but not least, our sponsor Digital Pro Lab is hosting cash for cameras! Mark your calendars if you have old equipment sitting around your closet, collecting dust!

Add Thank you to everyone who send in suggestions and recommendations - I really appreciate the input from our club members!!





Several club members are going to the 87<sup>th</sup> annual photo festival, sponsored by PSA. It will be held in Las Vegas this year. Many speakers, field trips, and seminars are being offered. Registration is now open, and tours and workshops are filling up fast. Check out their website for more information!



*Please join us for our social after the monthly club meeting.  
We meet at La Cosecha Mexican Table in New Braunfels.  
The address is: 505 Business 1H 35 N, New Braunfels, TX 78130*

