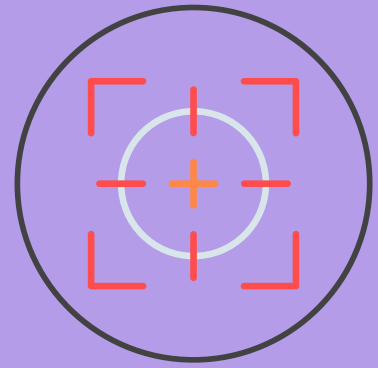


THE VIEWFINDER



Newsletter Volume 27, August 2026

A note from the Editor - by Christiane Menelas

Hello my friends,

It's pretty hot outside and I'm excited to say that Jackies and I get to escape to Rocky Mountain National Park for a Milky Way workshop this week.

Although as of now, there is some rain in the forecast, I am looking forward to cooler temperatures, and who knows - we might get lucky and get to shoot some lightning at this amazing location. In the meantime, I'm praying for a few clear nights, as we are also trying to shoot the Perseids Meteor shower! Wish us luck, and we will of course report back from our adventure.

I also want to mention that I now have freelance writers on staff, who contribute frequently, if not monthly! I almost feel like a real newspaper editor. Please be inspired by their contributions, because you too can be a freelance writer!! It's just so much more fun to have different perspectives to share with everyone. It doesn't have to be a trip report. It can be a good quote, a great spot around town, an observation, or whatever inspires you! Thank you Sharlana, Suki, Robby, Sandy, Barbara, and Victor for being frequent contributors - I appreciate it!!

Happy clicking

Christiane



Barbara, Sandy, and myself had the chance to go to a Mexican Rodeo, called a Charreada. It was a fun outing, and if you ever get a chance, I highly recommend it! This one was held at the Diaz Ranch in New Braunfels, and was very well attended. Here are a few of our favorite shots from that event.

Chris





By Sandy Gilbert

"A Beautiful Relationship"



Colorful Escaramuza Charra



Stopping on a Dime



Showing off Roping Skills



By Barbara Beversdorf





Monthly Photography Memo to Self:

by Robby Grosman

Following the monthly meeting: Remember to take assignment photo, color and black n' white pictures too. So, there's a month to complete it all. Hmmm. So, what's all the other stuff I must do? Do all that stuff and remember the GNBPC assignment. Walk the dog(s), feed the pets and call all my people. Heaven forbid that I leave anyone out. Ok it's Wednesday and I want to chat with my people at Panera. I just noticed her inspecting that terrific looking lens and he's got an ipad while talking with so and so. I wonder what I'm missing and I don't want to miss anything. It's a tornado of chatter dealing with anything and literally everything. Today key club members are determining which restaurant works better for socializing during the week of our monthly meeting. The social component is an integral part of the club's growth and cohesion. So, the intention is to include all members while considering how everyone can make the plan fit. Another key member talks about how to simplify the use of technology for all of us. After all, the process doesn't end with the push of a button.

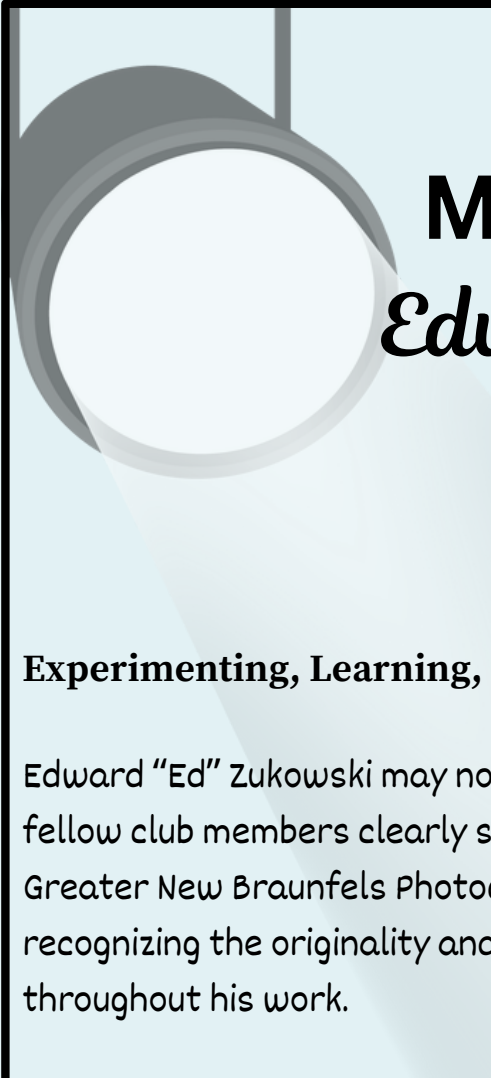
Time seems to pass smoothly from week to week for some and not so easily for others. There are also those "trips" to take and to plan. That could be to Bandera, Santa Fe or Africa. And, there are those Panera visits in between. Holy cow, then all of a sudden it's Wednesday before our next submission is due. We know this fact because it's overheard at the table. Then it's the panic for some (sometimes me) but we get through it.

Taking those pictures are only the beginning of further toil. Using editing programs (and there are several) still leaves a lot to do. Then it's time to email it, in proper form, to those who make sure it can be emailed to the members for voting.

We are lucky to have each other. Have fun with your toys.

Robby





Member Spotlight

Edward “Ed” Zukowski

By Victor Watson

Experimenting, Learning, and Thinking Outside the Box

Edward “Ed” Zukowski may not describe himself as especially creative, but his fellow club members clearly see things differently. In 2025, Ed received the Greater New Braunfels Photography Club’s Nine Dots Award for Creativity, recognizing the originality and willingness to experiment that are evident throughout his work.

“I was surprised and grateful for being recognized for thinking outside the box,” Ed said. Thinking outside the box has become a recognizable part of Ed’s photography. His work ranges from traditional subjects and documentary images to light painting, abstract editing, long exposures, and other experimental techniques. Although he does not believe he has developed a particular photographic style, his willingness to explore new ideas has become a defining characteristic of his work. For Ed, photography often begins with an idea or experiment rather than a carefully developed plan. “Sometimes I can kind of see what I want, and then I try to make it happen,” he explained. “Sometimes it works; most of the time it doesn’t.” That process of experimenting, learning, and occasionally relying on chance is an important part of what keeps photography interesting for him.

An Early Start in Photography

Ed grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where his interest in photography began at an early age. His older brother took photographs while in school, and Ed believes some of that interest rubbed off on him. While attending high school, Ed photographed yearbook activities, sporting events, proms, and other school functions. He also learned traditional darkroom techniques and experienced the entire photographic process, from taking the picture to developing the film and producing the final print. During his junior year, Ed began working at a portrait studio in downtown Milwaukee. His earnings helped pay the tuition for his final two years at an all-boys Catholic high school and later supported a year of computer-programming school. Some of his earliest cameras included an Exakta 35mm, a Graflex press camera, and a twin-lens reflex Rolleiflex.

Ed remembers film photography as a slower and more deliberate process. "When I shot film, I liked the mystery of it," he said. "Did I get it, or did I miss it? You had to take your time." Digital photography provides immediate feedback and allows photographers to make many more exposures, but Ed admits that convenience can sometimes make it easier to become less deliberate. He is now working to renew his motivation, use his camera more often, and spend more time actively making photographs.

Photography in the Air Force

Ed joined the United States Air Force in 1970. His first assignment was at Bergstrom Air Force Base, where he worked as a still-photo specialist in a reconnaissance squadron. The squadron operated RF-4C Phantom II aircraft equipped with several types of aerial cameras. Some could photograph from horizon to horizon, while others produced negatives measuring approximately 10 by 10 inches. Ed's responsibilities included developing the reconnaissance film and printing selected images.

After approximately a year in the photographic specialty, he retrained in computer operations. His Air Force career eventually brought him to Randolph Air Force Base and later to Kelly Air Force Base, where he retired after 22½ years of service. Ed later completed another 20-year career with the Federal Public Defender's Office. Today, he helps his granddaughter, Brandee, with her business, Fluffbutts. He is also a member of the Military Affairs Committee of the Schertz-Cibolo-Selma Area Chamber of Commerce.

Creating “Wizard Cat,” “Ghost Domes,” and “Sphere Dots”

Several of Ed's most successful images demonstrate his interest in experimentation and his willingness to explore unfamiliar techniques. “Wizard Cat” began after Ed watched videos explaining how to create a twirl effect in Photoshop. He started with a single photograph of a flower, but the initial result appeared visually unbalanced. To correct that, he duplicated the image, reversed it, and positioned the two versions side by side. Applying the twirl effect to the combined image created greater symmetry and balance. The completed photograph won the club's Abstract Editing assignment and was later selected to represent the Greater New Braunfels Photography Club in a Photographic Society of America Interclub competition.

Another image selected for PSA competition was Ed's monochrome photograph, “Sphere Dots.” The photograph uses a glass sphere and a repeating pattern of black-and-white dots to create a strong optical effect. The sphere refracts and reshapes the pattern, producing an image that reflects Ed's interest in visual experimentation while still relying on an in-camera photographic technique. “Sphere Dots” received an Honorable Mention in Round Two, Group C of the 2025–2026 PSA PID Monochrome Interclub Competition.

His light-painting image “Ghost Domes” grew from a different kind of experiment. After watching videos demonstrating how photographers created domes of light, Ed decided to build his own light-painting tool using a spare bicycle wheel and small LED lights. After dark, Ed and his wife, Brenda, took the equipment to an empty field, set up the camera, and began experimenting. “I think it just evolved,” Ed said of the final image.

Small rechargeable LED lights have since become one of the pieces of equipment that most significantly changed the way he approaches photography.

Ed currently uses a Canon R6 Mark III with a 24–105mm zoom lens. He enjoys working with a variety of techniques, including focus bracketing, long exposures, light painting, monochrome conversion, and abstract editing.

He tries to make the photograph as strong as possible in the camera and then uses Photoshop to make necessary adjustments. He also draws a distinction between photography and digital art, believing that extensive digital creation moves an image into a different artistic category.

Club Membership and Service

Ed was previously a member of the Schertz Photography Club. When that organization was no longer active, he joined the New Braunfels Photographic Society, now known as the Greater New Braunfels Photography Club. He credits club membership with providing mentorship, new ideas, and opportunities to broaden his photographic horizons. In return, Ed has contributed his time and experience through several leadership, organizational, and volunteer roles.

When asked what encouraged him to accept a leadership position, his response reflected his familiar sense of humor:

“I think I was tricked into it. Don’t say yes too quickly.”

In 2025, Ed chaired the club's FOTOSEPTIEMBRE exhibition. Much of the work took place behind the scenes and involved coordinating details, communicating with participating photographers, and helping bring the completed exhibition together. For Ed, the most rewarding moment was seeing all the photographs displayed.

"Seeing your image printed is seeing it finished," he said. As this profile is being prepared, Ed is once again leading the club's FOTOSEPTIEMBRE efforts by coordinating its 2026 exhibition. His willingness to take on the responsibility for a second consecutive year reflects his commitment to providing club members with opportunities to exhibit their work publicly.

Ed also volunteered his time and assistance during the 2026 Texas Youth Photography Showcase, joining the many individuals who helped make the statewide program and exhibition possible. Whether coordinating an exhibition, supporting young photographers, or contributing to club activities, Ed continues to serve the photographic community both behind the camera and behind the scenes.

Competition, Critique, and Continued Growth

Ed believes monthly assignments and PSA competitions encourage photographers to explore subjects and techniques they might not otherwise attempt. He also values critiques because they can help photographers recognize ways to improve. That does not mean he accepts every suggestion automatically.

"It depends on the image," he explained. "Some, I'm happy with the way they are. With others, it's, 'Yup, you're right.'"

Although Ed enters club competitions, he does not photograph primarily to satisfy judges. He makes photographs for himself first and selects competition images afterward.

His advice to new members who may feel intimidated by competitions or more experienced photographers is direct:

“Compete—you may be surprised. Don’t be afraid to ask. Most members don’t bite.”

Ed says every photograph he makes has meaning, regardless of whether it receives an award. When asked which image best represents him as a photographer, he answered that he does not believe he has taken it yet.

That response suggests that his most representative photograph may still be waiting to be discovered through another idea, another experiment, or another unexpected opportunity. And when people view his photographs many years from now, what does he hope they will think?

“Ed did that.”

On A Personal Note

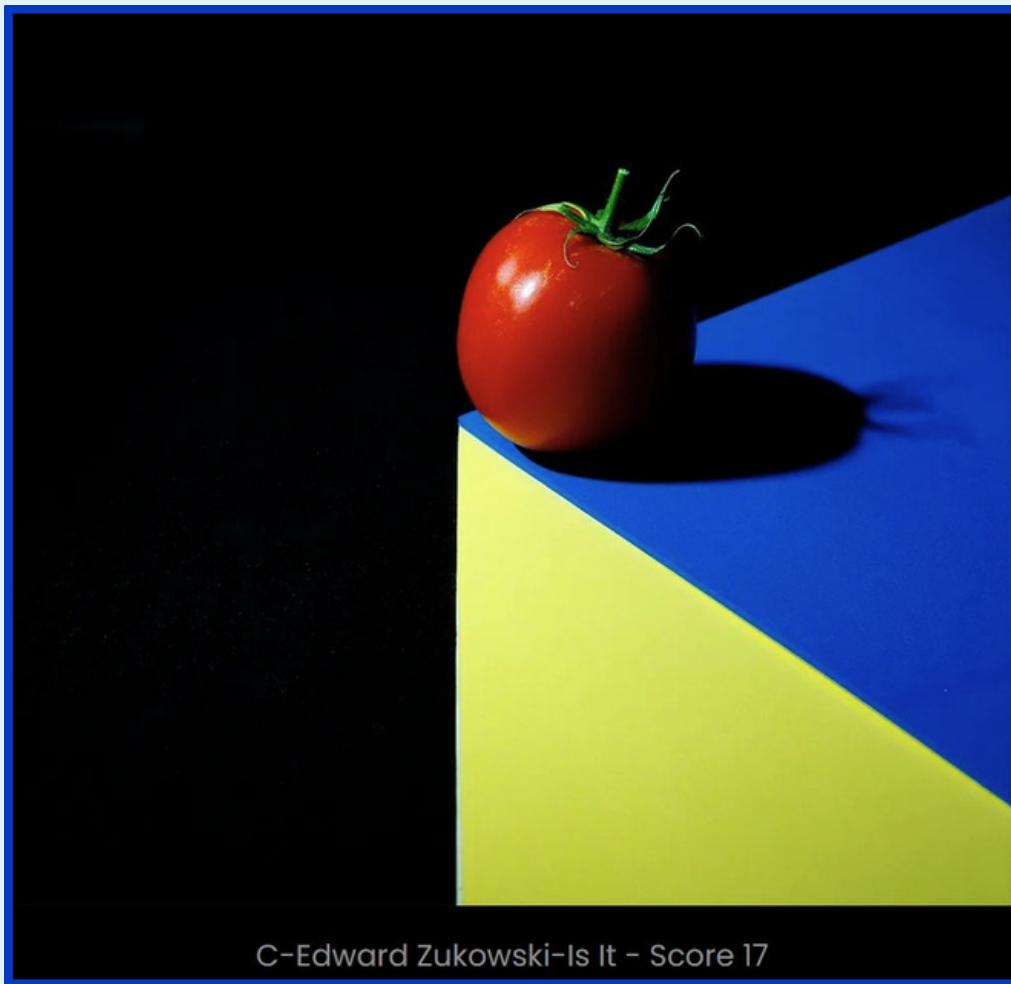
I am proud to call Ed both a friend and a fellow photographer. His creativity, humor, and willingness to experiment continually surprise me, challenge my thinking, and keep me on my toes. Photography is more enjoyable when shared with people who encourage us to see things differently, and Ed has certainly done that for me.





The early years

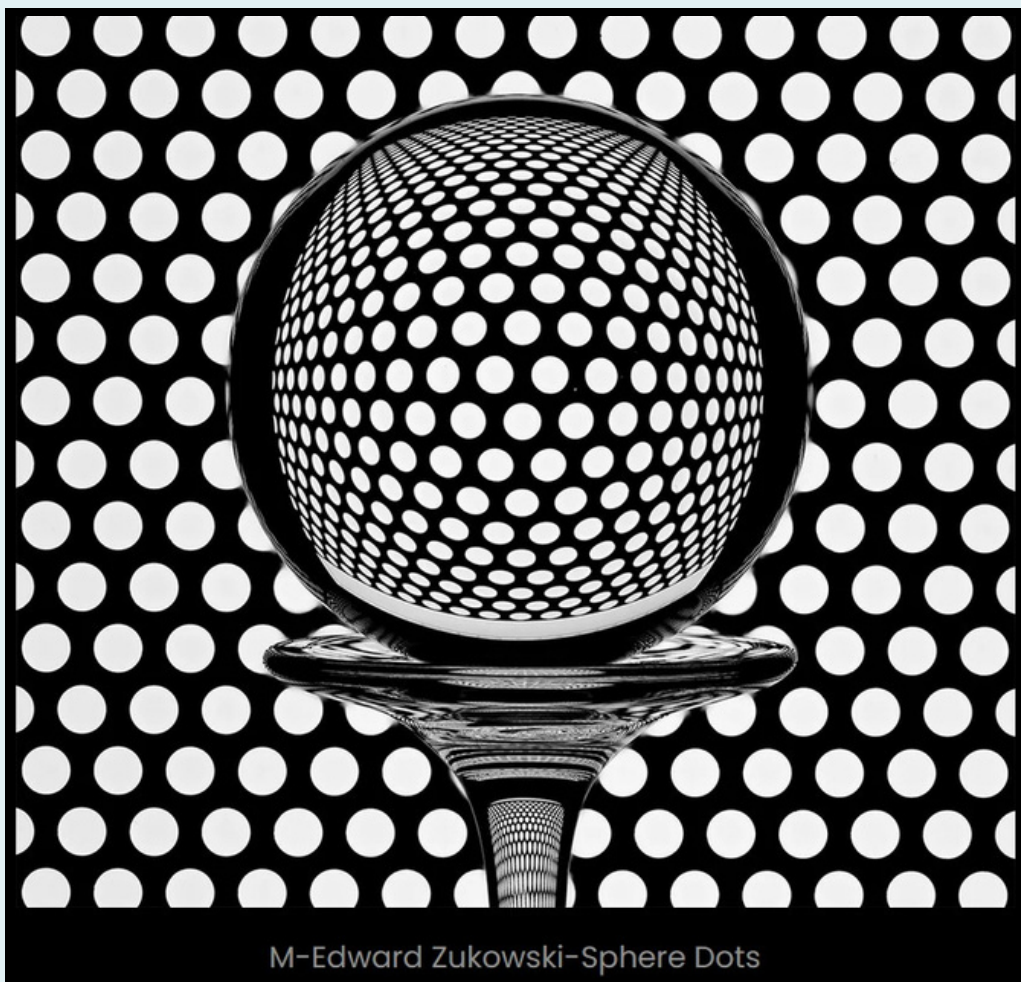
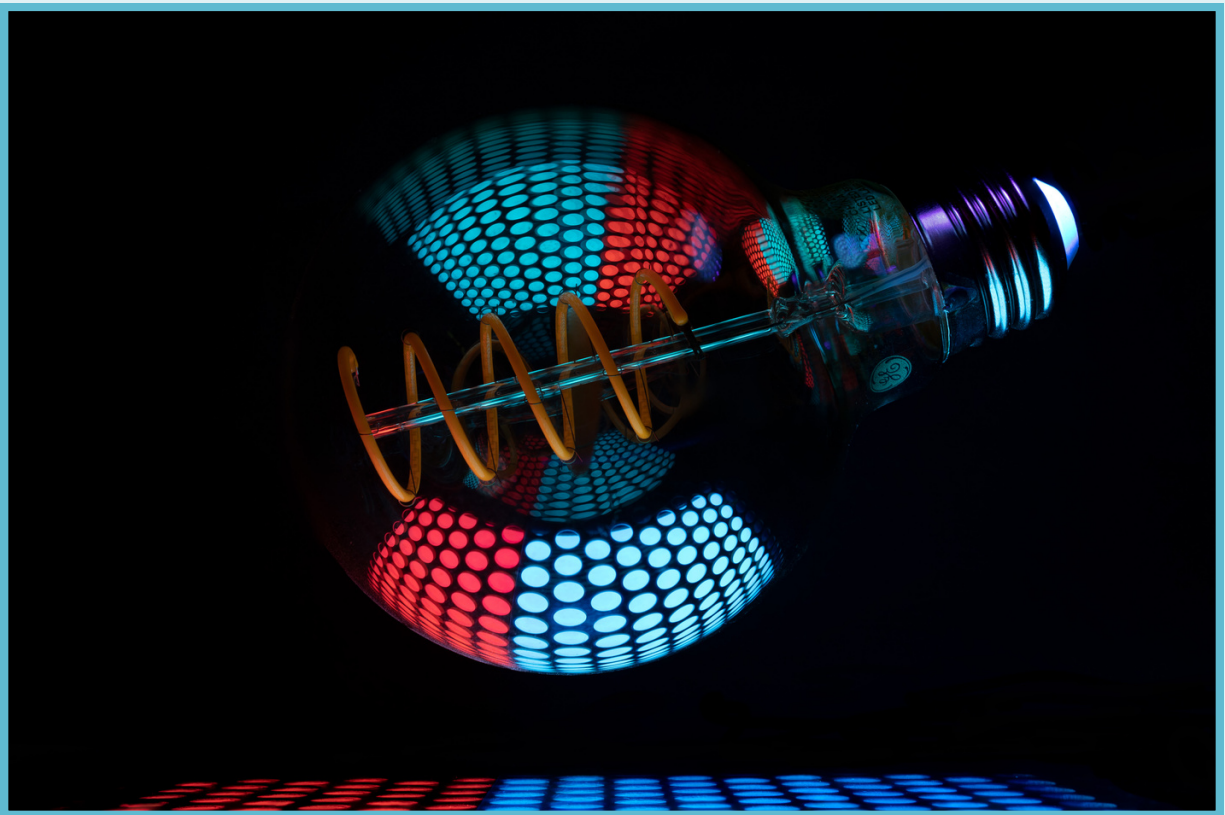




C-Edward Zukowski-Is It - Score 17



Wizard Cat by Edward Zukowski

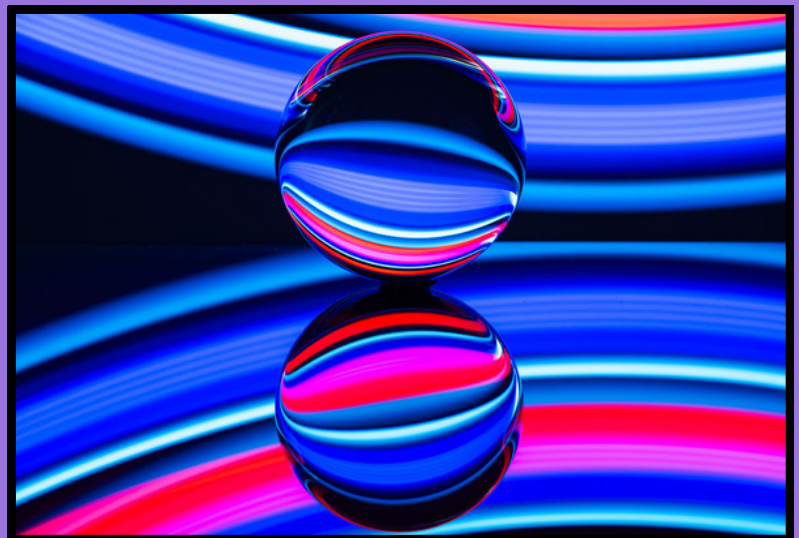
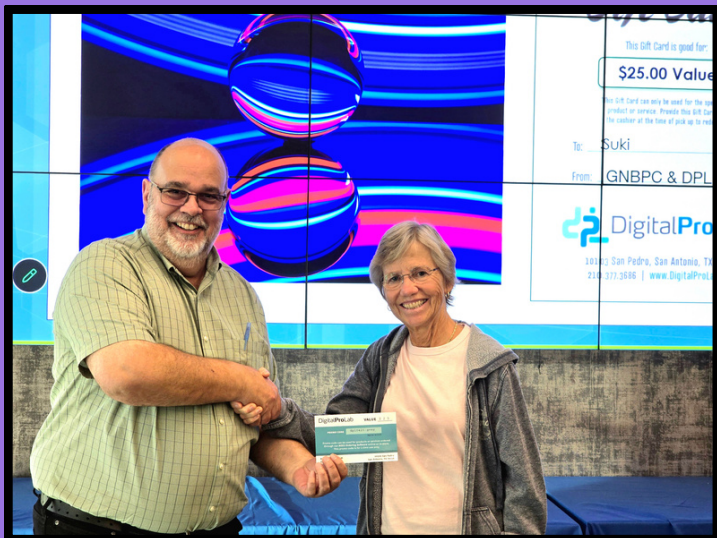


M-Edward Zukowski-Sphere Dots



RECOGNITIONS

The winning image in our monthly competition for the category “Glass” goes to Suzanne Daunt, for her image titled “Spherical Refraction”



Congratulations!

Our second place winner this month is
Sharlana Dillard with her image titled
“Refracted Reality”



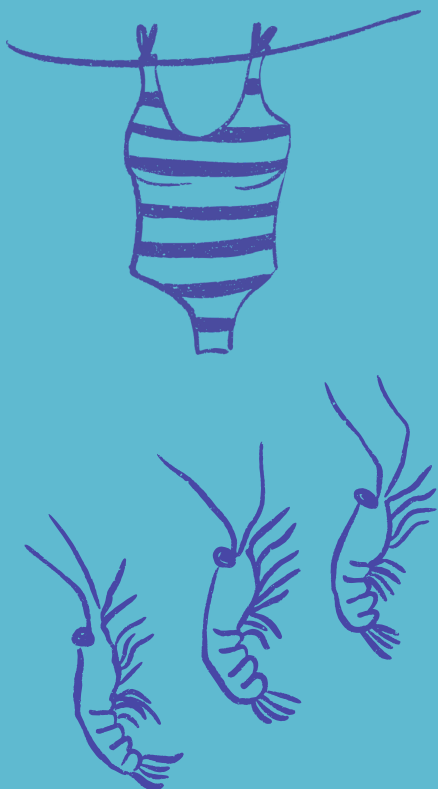
Congratulations!



PUGLIA, ITALY



By Sharlana Dillard



VIESTE

Photographer Matt Munro



On Italy's Adriatic coast, Vieste is an old medieval town perched on the cliffs of the Gargano Promontory. It was this dramatic relationship with the sea that I was hoping to capture, and I managed to find this viewpoint that I thought gave the perfect perspective. I'd set up here at both sunrise and sunset, but these times introduced deep shadows and too many colours. Given the town's bleached white appearance, I thought stripping back the colour palette to just blues and greens was key to making it stand out. So I returned during the middle of the day when the sun was straight overhead – at this time the water was also at its most blue. I was fortunate that when I was shooting a young boy rowed into the scene on his way back from some fishing; he provided some scale and additional interest.

Camera set up

Canon EOS 5D Mark II;
focal length 25mm; ISO
speed 100; F stop f/9;
exposure time 1/400 sec;
exposure bias 0 Step

Travel details

From May to September there are four daily buses to Vieste to and from Bari airport. Throughout the year there are regular buses between Vieste and Foggia, from where you can connect to Bari.

Photo tip

When wanting to capture the brilliant blues of water, it's advisable to shoot between 11am and 3pm when the sun is straight overhead.

Eve Arnold

Exploring the Icons Behind the Lens



"If a photographer cares about the people before the lens and is compassionate, much is given. It is the photographer, not the camera, that is the instrument."

- Eve Arnold

Eve Arnold was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1912 to Russian immigrant parents. She began photographing in 1946 while working at a photo-finishing plant in New York City. She then studied photography in 1948 with Alexei Brodovitch at the New School for Social Research in New York.

Arnold first became associated with Magnum Photos in 1951 and became a full member in 1957. She was based in the US during the 1950s, but moved to England in 1962 to put her son through school. She lived in the UK from that time forward, except for a six-year interval when she worked in the US and China.

In 1980, she held her first major solo exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum, showcasing the images she captured during her time in China. In the same year, she received the National Book Award for In China and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Society of Magazine Photographers.

In later years, she received many other honors and awards. In 1995, she was made a fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and elected Master Photographer, the world's most prestigious photographic honor, by New York's International Center of Photography. In 1996, she received the Kraszna-Krausz Book Award for In Retrospect, and the following year she was granted honorary degrees by the University of St Andrews, Staffordshire University, and the American International University in London. She was also appointed to the advisory committee of the National Museum of Photography, Film & Television in Bradford, UK. She had 12 books published.

Eve Arnold died in London on January 4, 2012.



Eve Arnold didn't know it at the time, but what she photographed on the set of 1961's *The Misfits* was to be the last movie completed by Marilyn Monroe and her co-star Clark Gable. The film, an elegiac tale of divorce and aging cowboys, is tainted with sadness as Monroe's swansong. She died of an overdose just a year after the film's release.



In her photographs, Arnold captures Monroe and Miller sitting on the back of a truck, her staring pensively at the ground. In another, Miller is showing her some dance moves for a scene. The photographer captures Gable – who died 12 days after production wrapped – with his wife, dressed formally and standing under an orange tree. Arnold followed the production from Reno to Dayton, from the Nevada desert to LA. Sometimes she was a fly on the wall, revealing an unseen side of these cultural icons. Other times she asked them to pose for her camera in-between takes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Aug 27 - Wine Cheese Cameras 4 PM at Gourmage

Sept 4 - Art Haus

Sept 19 - NB Meet the Trucks 9 am

December 7 - Christmas Party



We need ideas for the Assignment themes for 2027

- Please send ideas to the club email address*
- Decisions will be finalized by early October*
- We want to stretch our skills with challenging assignments*

2026-2027 PSA Interclub News

TIME LINE:

Sept 29 - All clubs **MUST** be registered but would prefer ASAP.

Sept 29 All groups finalized based on top clubs moving up, dropped and new clubs. Color Competition Groups have been tentatively done but will be finalized by Sept 29.

October 1 – Nov 15: Round 1 uploading window.



PSA DID You Know?

Portfolio Distinctions – Next Session Opens September 1, 2026

The next Portfolio Distinctions session opens September 1, 2026.

To help you prepare, a new tutorial video is now available on the PSA YouTube Channel.

You can subscribe to the PSA YouTube channel at this link: [You Tube Channel Link](#)

In the Education playlist, you'll find the new tutorial: Portfolios – Q.E.D. (Quite Easily Done)

You can review all requirements for a successful portfolio at: [Portfolios Webpage](#)

PSA YouTube Channel

Portfolio Distinctions Requirements



Texas Youth Photography Showcase 2027

Entries Open: November 1, 2026

Entry Deadline: January 15, 2027

Exhibition Opens: March 9, 2027

Awards Ceremony: April 10, 2027, at 9:00 AM

Location: New Braunfels Civic and Convention Center

For 2027, we are adding a new category: COMM – Community Photographs that show the people, places, traditions, activities, public art, architecture, events, or other visual elements that help represent and define the student's community.

We added COMM – Community / “My Community Through My Eyes” to better align TXYPS with the City of New Braunfels Arts & Culture Master Plan. Thereby also showing that the GNBPC supports the master plan as well.

*Victor is looking for somebody to take over the Youth Photography Tournament
- see Victor for details*



NEWS UPDATE ABOUT OUR club social



A quick update about our social gatherings:

We used to go to a mexican restaurant (La Cosecha) after our monthly club meeting. It was a fun place, with good food and drinks, but it was a little on the pricey side. Going after the club meetings also made for eating pretty late.

After considering these things we have decided to bring back wine & cheese, which we used to hold at the "Gourmage" in New Braunfels.

We are currently staking out different places that would be a good fit for our social. We explored "The Reddy Room" in Cibolo, and also "Favorite Neighbor" in New Braunfels. We are still trying to check a few more places off the list. If you have any suggestions, let us know, and better yet - come join us as we look around!

Next one is at Gourmage, August 27th, at 4pm. See you there!

