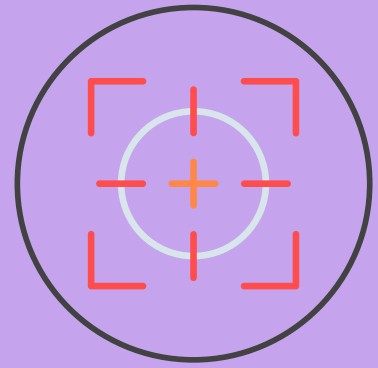


THE VIEWFINDER



Newsletter Volume 24, May 2026

A note from the Editor - by Christiane Menelas

Hello my friends,

So happy to report, that a lot of you have been out on little adventures, and are sending in pics to share with everyone!! Please keep these coming - it's always nice to see what inspires our fellow photographers!

We had Cave tours, Snakefarm, San Marcos Art Center, a birding adventure, and Circle Arts Theatre. Everyone has been busy shooting, and I love to share it with all of you!



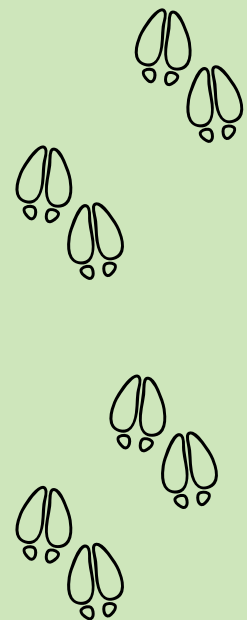
The "Birders" tweet tweet

Happy clicking
Christiane



Club Outing
**A Visit To The
Snakefarm**

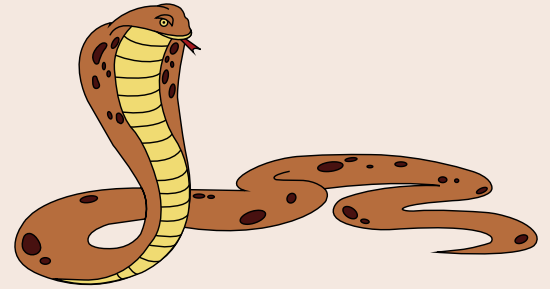


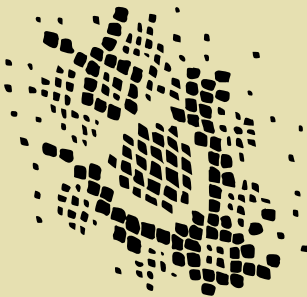
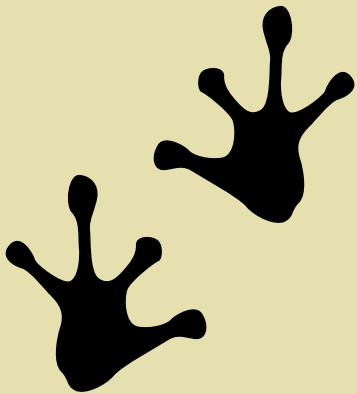


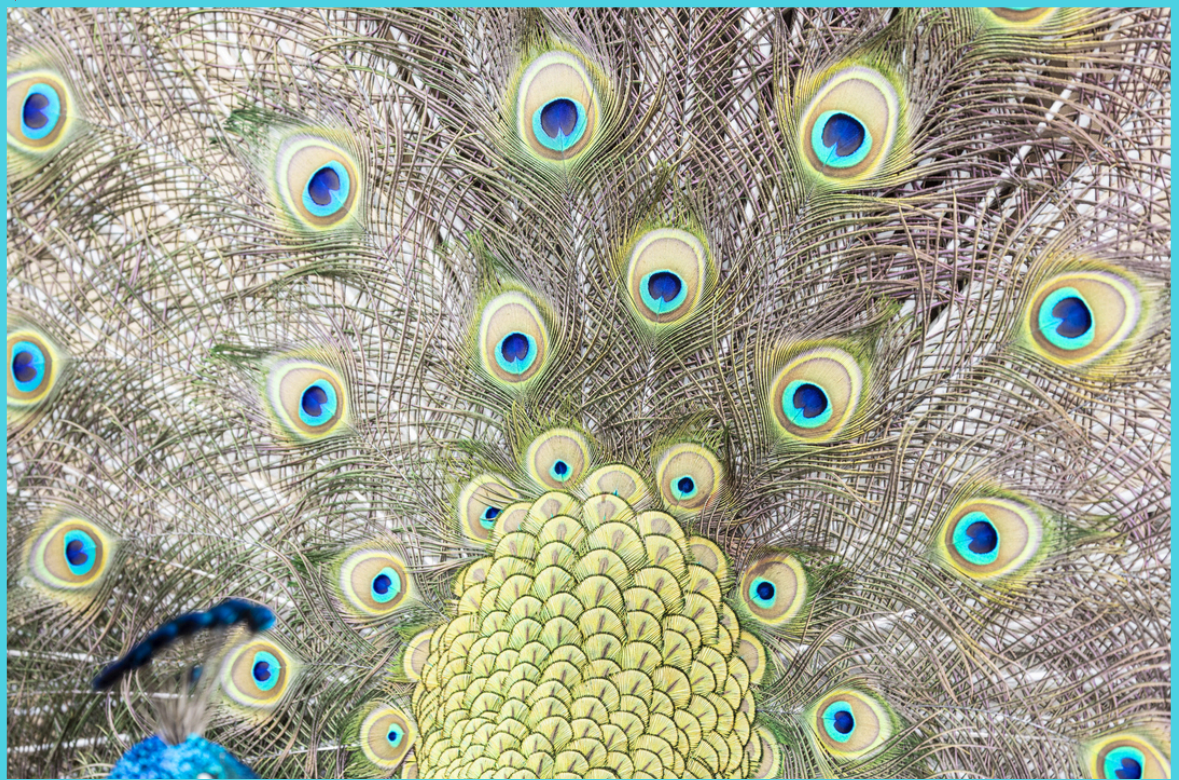
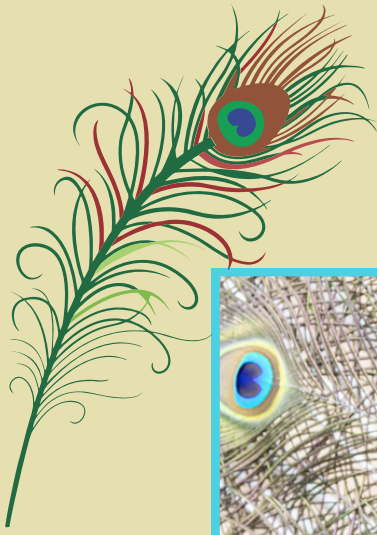
First set by Barbara Beversdorf



Second set by Christiane Menelas







Jackies and Suki explored the Natural Bridge Caverns in San Antonio over the weekend

(<https://naturalbridgecaverns.com>). Jackies' goal was to get a reflection photo, Suki's goal was to stay dry. Since the area has seen considerable rain in the past few weeks, the cave proved to be a bit more damp than usual. With a humidity level at 99% year-round, care must be taken to acclimate your camera. This is done by following these procedures:

Cave Photography Best Practices

1 Acclimatization: Before entering the cave, place your camera in a sealed Ziploc bag or its camera bag. Let it sit inside the cave for 20–30 minutes to reach ambient temperature before taking it out to avoid a "foggy fit".

2 No Lens Changes: Never change lenses inside the cave. This introduces 99% humidity directly to the sensor, where it can get trapped and lead to internal corrosion or mold.

3 Use Absorbent Cloths: Keep multiple microfiber lens cloths

(<https://fstoppers.com/originals/5-ways-protect-your-camera-high-humidity-conditions-461869>) handy. If you use your shirt, you'll likely just smear the moisture and create "cataract simulations" in your shots.

4 Immediate Drying: Once you leave, do not just leave the camera in your bag. Take it out, remove the battery and SD card, and leave all doors open in a dry environment (like a room with a dehumidifier) to let trapped moisture escape.

5 Seal the Hot Shoe: Use a dedicated hot shoe cover

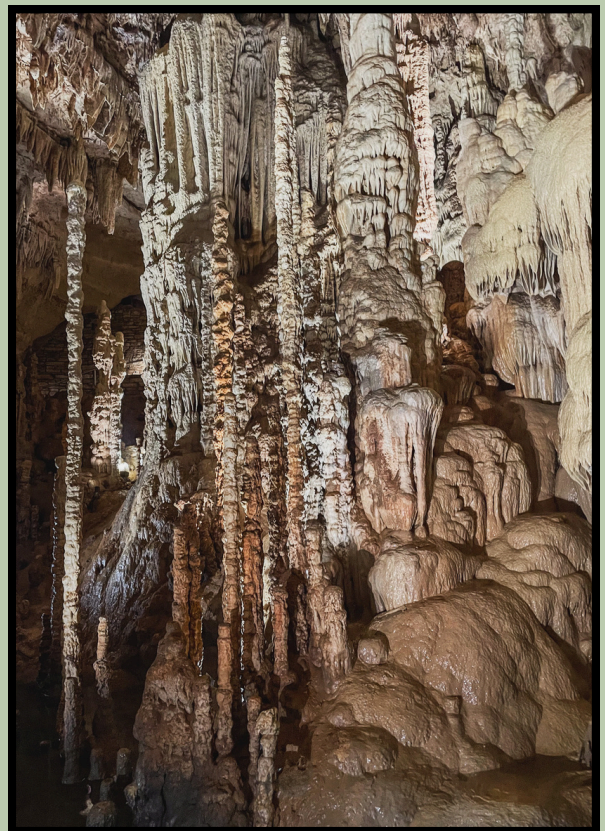
(https://www.reddit.com/r/SonyAlpha/comments/1gepkbt/advice_for_shooting_in_moist_environments/) or even a piece of gaffers tape to keep that specific contact area dry.

Since Suki now has functioning camera(s) and didn't want to risk any humidity catastrophies, she opted for using her iPhone (I think Mia might be on to something!). Jackies, the die-hard, thrill-seeker that she is, brought her Sony camera and tripod. See Jackies for amazing pictures!

For those of you who have not explored the caves, be prepared to walk on steep, damp, confining corridors, which give way to beautiful "rooms" with various stalactite and stalagmite formations. A tid-bit we picked up during the tour was stalactite (as in holding tight) are the formations extending from the ceiling downward and stalagmite (as in they might someday reach the ceiling) are the formations that extend from the ground upward.

If you have visitors from out of town and need something to do, this venue is an option. Also, right next door from the caves is the Wildlife Ranch African Safari, another tourist attraction worth considering.

Suki



Frank went to the Circle Arts Theatre

to shoot the play "between the lines"



San Marcos Art Center – Check it out!

Why? Because our Club member, Mia Hendricks, has her artwork on display until the end of the month.

The San Marcos Art Center is a new venture of the San Marcos Art League, located in the historic square of San Marcos. With the intended purpose “to encourage, foster, promote, and nurture the arts” in the community, it features all types of media including clay, stained glass, jewelry, paintings and photography. During the month of May, the Center is showcasing its Third Annual Award Show.

I had the pleasure of attending the open reception on May 8th where Mia was awarded an Honorable Mention for her photograph, “Be the Change.” You might remember this image as it was included in her presentation last month. What I didn’t realize is that the photo was taken in the pouring rain. Originally, the plan was to photograph a portrait in front of the abandoned church. Reluctantly, the client came and stood in the rain, which was the image in her Club presentation. Notably, the image on display at The Center was shot minus the client. Needless to say, it was a very wet photo shoot! Fortunately, most iPhones can withstand water. What I appreciated about the photo was the wet ground which created interesting reflections of the church. Also, printing on metal always seems to make the image pop, even in black and white. Great work Mia!!!

The Art Center is located at 117 N. Guadalupe Street, San Marcos, and the show will be on display until May 29. You’ve got time – so check it out!



By Suzanne (Suki) Daunt

Road trip to Utah

Part 2 of 2

St. George, UT was our home base for the remainder of our trip.

While here I fell in love with a park called Snow Canyon State Park in Ivins, UT. Popular trails include the Lava Flow trail, Petrified Dunes, Jenny's Canyon (which is a slot canyon), and White Rocks. This area of Utah is known for the desert tortoises, and gila monsters. Although I went back almost daily, and at different times, I never got to see a gila monster in the wild, but the desert tortoises made up for it, and didn't mind posing at all!



White Rocks



Jenny's Canyon



Above: Red Sand Dunes



Left: For scale, check out the people climbing around the rocks





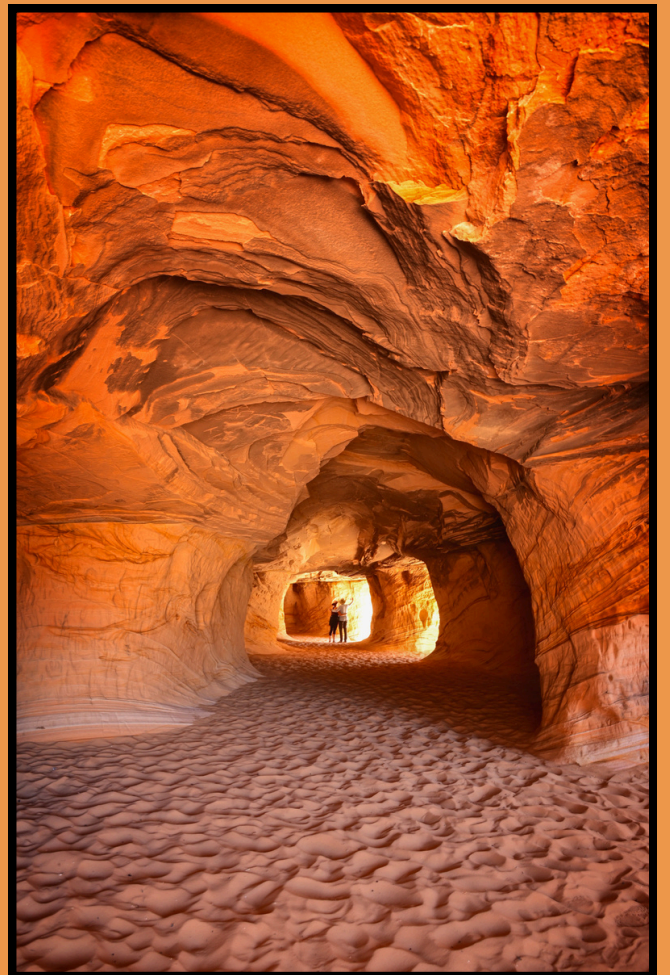
Of course we also visited Zion several times – this is probably one of my favorite parks, and I had a very particular shot in mind. I wanted to shoot cartrails from the overlook trail (not pictured here), and that required me hiking down in the dark. So naturally I had to hike it at least once in the daytime, to familiarize myself with the trail. Although it is one of the shorter hikes (short but steep), there are a few places where one could fall off the deep end, if not careful. The view from up there is simply magnificent, and it's a very popular spot for sunset. As a matter of fact, there was a wedding in progress when I got to my spot.

Another great spot not too far from Zion is the Sand Caves in Kanab. These are man-made sandstone caves carved out for sand mining in the 1930's-40's, now a popular tourist spot, and a really fun spot for photography!

One day we splurged and visited the Zion Canyon Hot Springs – what a great way to spend a lazy day, soaking in over 50 possible bodies of water. Mineral pools, cold plunge pools, large family pool, sauna, and steam rooms, all while surrounded by breathtaking mountains – it was fabulous, I highly recommend it!



Overlook Trail



One other thing that was kind of a BIG deal, was a solo side trip to the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah to shoot the Milky Way. I had reached out to the local photoclub via Facebook in advance of my trip. At the time I didn't really know how far the Salt Flats would be from where we were staying. Why you ask? Because I'm from Texas, and nothing is bigger than Texas, right??? Hahaha - it was a 5 1/2 hour drive from St. George to the Salt Flats. But I was excited and I assure you, I would have driven twice as far, because how cool is that? There was the prospect of seeing wild horses along the way, but the only ones I saw were three horses grazing, and not at all interested in any type of action shots. I do have to say that driving through the "Great Basin" was spectacular, and the scenery in general did not dissapoint! The Salt Flats were amazing, and I wish I would have planned on spending more than just one day/night here, but it's just a great excuse to go back. Also the weather said "absolutely not" to astrophotography. It was cloudy and overcast but it sure made for a spectacular sunset, and the folks from the photo club came prepared with models and props, so it wasn't a lost cause...







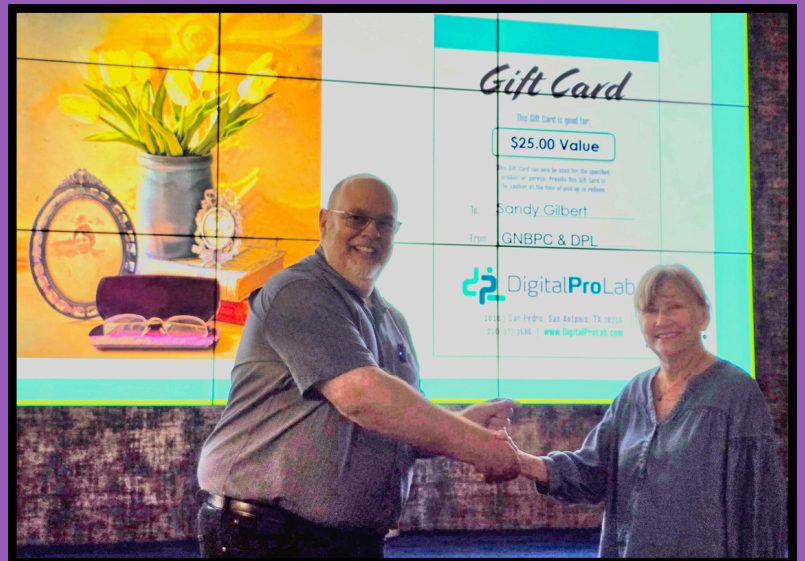
This concludes my Arizona/Utah trip. I hope you enjoyed reading about it, and I hope it inspires you to send me your own trip adventures! I'm already planning my next Utah trip, because there is so much more to see! If you have any "must see's" please let me know, so I can add them to my list.

Chris

RECOGNITIONS

 Confetti Background. Congratulations Design

The winning image in our monthly competition for the category "Still Life" goes to Sandi Gilbert, for the image titled "Fragments of Spring and Time".



Congratulations

Craig, James, and Frank got
recognized for helping with
judging during the PSA Interclub
Competition.
Thank you gentlemen!!



Thank,
You

Congratulations to Horst
Schoninger for receiving an
Honorable Mention Award
at the PSA interclub competition!

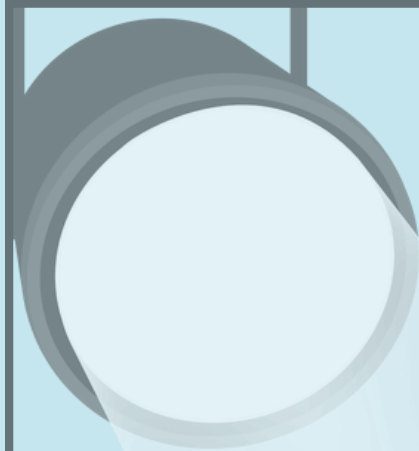


Congratulations!

Congratulations to Christiane
Menelas for receiving an
Honorable Mention Award
at the PSA interclub competition!



Congratulations!



Member Spotlight

Barbara Beversdorf

By Sandi Gilbert

1. What inspired you to start photography as a hobby?

Growing up, my mother always had a camera to capture family gatherings. After I got married, Daniel did most of the photos of family trips and gatherings. Around the time my kids got into high school (mid to late 90's) and digital cameras became popular, a spark was lit and has evolved since then. From graduations, weddings, grandkids, to travel..... I believe you just see the world differently through the lens.

2. What camera, lens, etc. do you use?

Currently, I have transitioned to the Canon R5. Since I like to shoot birds and wildlife, I opted to purchase the RF 200-800 and the RF 20-70 2.8 . A friend gifted me with a D5MIV and a couple of lenses. So, I also got the EOS to R converter and can use those lenses on the R5.

3. Other than shooting birds and wildlife, do you have a favorite type of photography (e.g., portraits, street)?

Other than my kids and grand-kids, I do love landscape, wildflowers, and travel. I'm trying to expand my horizons though.....

4. What do you hope to express or capture through your photos?

I always hope to capture the personality of people and wildlife and the beauty of landscape and wildflowers. When life gets too heavy, I like to take my camera out and capture all that mother nature has gifted us with. I call it "Medicine for the Soul"! It just seems to lift me up and my hope is that whatever I capture does the same for at least one other person.

5. Are there any photographers or artists who influence your work?

As far as famous photographers go.....I would have to go with Ansel Adams and Georgia O'Keefe. When we took a trip to New Mexico and Arizona, it was surreal photographing and walking the same places they had been. That being said.....I learn something new and am inspired by fellow member of GNBPC almost daily. .

6. Are there any new skills or styles you want to try?

Goodness, so many things and so little time. Instead of just going out to shoot, I am trying to practice more purposeful shooting.. I do want to get more confident with street photography as well.

7. What's your most memorable photo session or experience?

It is really hard to pick just one. Probably my most memorable photo session was when we went to Havana Cuba in March of 2019. Regulations were eased and cruise ships were allowed to go to Cuba from 2016 to 2019. The last ship departed in June of 2019 so we barely made it before that window closed. It was such an eye opening and humbling experience.

8. Have you ever had any surprising or funny moments while shooting?

On one of our hiking trips, I had my D5500 and Sigma 150-600 lens. Granted the 5500 was not all that expensive, but the lens was more than I wanted to spend to replace. We were walking along and I had said camera pointed up in the trees. Next thing I know, I was going DOWN. My brain told me to protect the equipment, so I landed holding the camera up. When Daniel and our friends got to me, they asked if I was OK. My answer was that my camera survived, so I was fine except a few scrapes and bruises.

9. If you could take a photo anywhere in the world, where would it be?

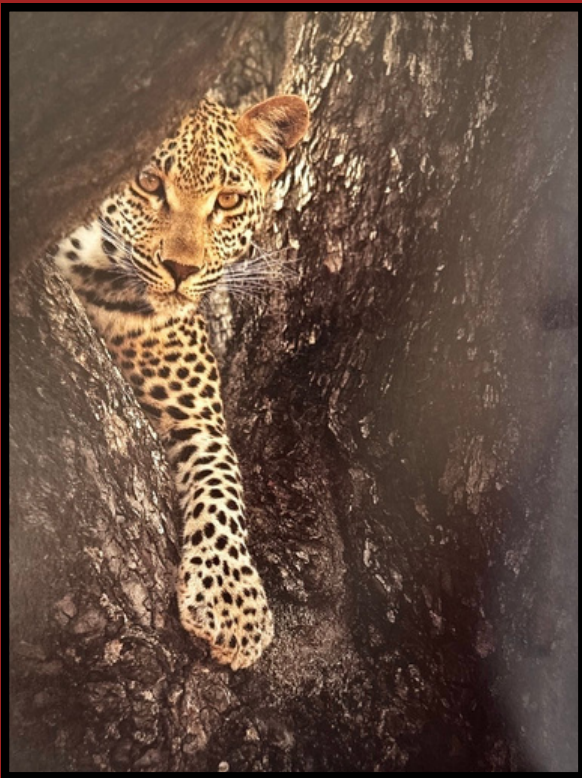
If I could take a photo anywhere in the world.....I would love to go to Iceland and photograph the Aurora Borealis. There are so many things in the US that I still want to see and photograph..... Utah, Hawaii, and Niagra Falls (both sides). But,yea...if I had to pick one place.....It would have to be Iceland.



Barbara







By Sharlana Dillard

LEOPARD

Photographer Jonathan Gregson

I'd been on safari so many times, and I had seen four of the Big Five. Never seen a leopard. This was my first ever encounter. Our guide was incredibly eagle-eyed and from a long way away he caught a glimpse of this juvenile leopard's paw hanging down from the fork in a large tree. As we moved towards it I was thinking, 'Really?' But as we got closer I could excitedly tell it was indeed a leopard's paw.

We could only get to one side of the tree, as the other side – where the leopard was resting – was set in dense bush. So our guide positioned the vehicle as best he could, and we waited. Patience paid off, after about 20 minutes it woke up and had a look over to our side of the tree, which is when I managed to get this shot. The tree worked to frame it perfectly.

Camera set up

Canon EOS-1D X; focal length 210mm; ISO speed 1250; F stop f/7.1; exposure time 1/160 sec; exposure bias 0 step

Travel details

Sabi Sands Game Reserve flanks South Africa's Kruger National Park, and is indeed part of the Greater Kruger. Some of the reserve's lodges have private airstrips, while others use the park's Skukuza Airport, which has flights to/from Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Photo tip

While you can use isolated elements of colour to punctuate what would have otherwise been dull images, sometimes the key to a great photograph is framing out any vibrant colours.



Annie Leibovitz

Exploring the Icons Behind the Lens



Born Anna-Lou Leibovitz
October 2, 1949 (age 76)
Waterbury, Connecticut, U.S.
Education San Francisco Art
Institute
Occupations
Photographer visual artist
Partner(s) Susan Sontag
(1989–2004; Sontag's death)
Children 3

Facts for this article copied from
Wikipedia, and invaluable.com
respectively

Annie Leibovitz is an American portrait photographer best known for her portraits, particularly of celebrities, which often feature subjects in intimate settings and poses. Leibovitz's Polaroid photo of John Lennon and Yoko Ono, taken five hours before Lennon's murder, is considered one of Rolling Stone magazine's most famous cover photographs.[1] The Library of Congress declared her a Living Legend, and she is the first woman to have a feature exhibition at Washington's National Portrait Gallery.[2]

Leibovitz was a student in the 1970s when her photos were published for the first time: pictures of Vietnam War protesters in Israel, taken on assignment for Rolling Stone, one of which landed on the cover. Since then, she has captured film stars, politicians, athletes, royalty and artists for features and cover stories in other major publications, including Vanity Fair, Vogue and Time.

Early life and education

Born in Waterbury, Connecticut, on October 2, 1949,[3] Anna-Lou Leibovitz is the third of six children of Marilyn Edith (née Heit) and Samuel Leibovitz. [4] She is a third-generation American. Her father was a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force of Romanian-Jewish heritage[4] and her mother was a modern dance instructor of Estonian-Jewish heritage. Her love for photography began at a young age when her father gave her a camera. The family moved frequently with her father's duty assignments, and she took her first pictures when he was stationed in the Philippines during the Vietnam War.[5][6] After her family's return from the Philippines, she attended the San Francisco Art Institute, where she studied painting and photography. Leibovitz's passion for art was born out of her mother's engagement with dance, music, and painting.[6] While attending Northwood High School in Silver Spring, Maryland,[7] she became interested in various artistic endeavors and began to write and play music.

Leibovitz attended the San Francisco Art Institute,[7] where she studied painting with the intention of becoming an art teacher.[6] At school, she had her first photography workshop and changed her major to photography. She was inspired by the work of Robert Frank and Henri Cartier-Bresson.[8] For several years, she continued to develop her photography skills while holding various jobs, including a stint on a kibbutz in Amir, Israel, for several months in 1969.[9] Leibovitz attended the San Francisco Art Institute from 1967 until 1971. By the time Leibovitz received her bachelor of fine arts degree in 1971, her photographs of Israel and a picture of the poet Allen Ginsberg at a San Francisco peace march had already landed her a job at the music magazine Rolling Stone.

"I no longer believe that there is such a thing as objectivity. Everyone has a point of view. Some people call it style, but what we're really talking about is the guts of a photograph. When you trust your point of view, that's when you start taking pictures."

Annie Leibovitz



John Lennon

Leibovitz's portrait of John Lennon and Yoko Ono a few hours before Lennon's murder.

On December 8, 1980, Leibovitz had a photo shoot with John Lennon for Rolling Stone, and she promised him he would make the cover. She had initially tried to get a picture with just Lennon alone, as Rolling Stone wanted, but Lennon insisted that both he and Yoko Ono be on the cover. Leibovitz then tried to re-create something like the kissing scene from the couple's Double Fantasy album cover, a picture Leibovitz loved. She had Lennon remove his clothes and curl up next to Ono on the floor. Leibovitz recalls:

What is interesting is she said she'd take her top off and I said, "Leave everything on"—not really preconceiving the picture at all. Then he curled up next to her and it was very, very strong. You couldn't help but feel that he was cold and he looked like he was clinging on to her. I think it was amazing to look at the first Polaroid and they were both very excited. John said, "You've captured our relationship exactly. Promise me it'll be on the cover." I looked him in the eye and we shook on it.[15]



Leibovitz was the last person to professionally photograph Lennon—he was shot and killed five hours later. About a month later, Rolling Stone gave grieving music fans his "last image".



Demi Moore (1991)

For the cover of Vanity Fair in August 1991, Leibovitz had been asked to conceal the young Demi Moore's seven-month-pregnant figure and shoot a tightly cropped portrait of her face. Instead, Leibovitz produced one of the most discussed magazine covers in history when she asked Moore to disrobe for an altogether more personal portrait.

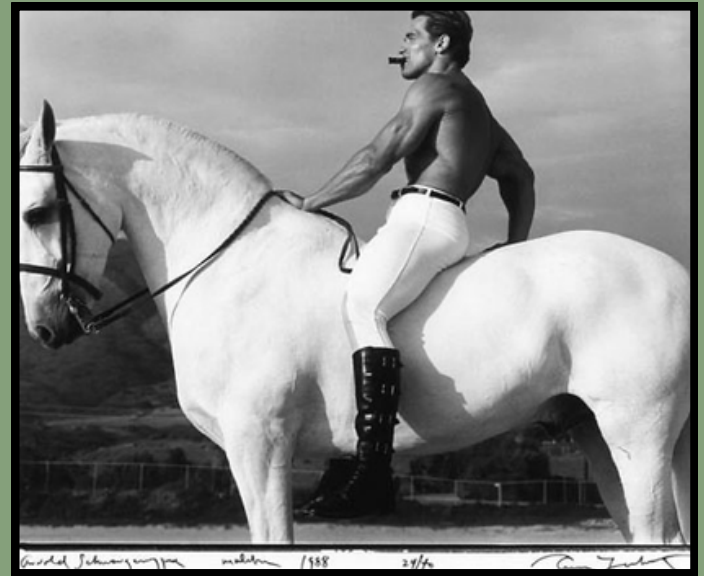
Whoopi Goldberg (1984)

Mentioned in the same breath as Richard Pryor and Lenny Bruce for her raw, racially charged routines, Whoopi Goldberg was an up-and-coming comedian in 1984 who had joked about using Chlorox in an attempt to bleach her skin in her routine.



So, when Leibovitz suggested using a bath full of milk for the portrait to make a deliberate and powerful comment on race, the scene was set for a serious image destined to make a political impact. A lightness was accidentally added though when Goldberg slipped getting into the bath. "And I went, oh, my goodness, this is graphically amazing and interesting," said Leibovitz.

Arnold Schwarzenegger (1988)
Snapped for the cover of Vanity Fair in 1990,
the image of the confident cigar smoking
Arnie atop his own horse remained an
outtake from the shoot until it resurfaced in
the March 2003 issue of the magazine.
The future governor of California was at the
height of his Terminator fame and
comfortable in the presence of Leibovitz's
camera, having already been shot by the
photographer at the Mr Olympia contest in
South Africa, 1975.



Leibovitz again broke new ground when she became the first American to
produce an official portrait of The Queen to celebrate Her Majesty's State
Visit to the United States in 2007. Influenced by the atmospheric royal
portraits of Cecil Beaton, Leibovitz took a series of photographs, including
one of The Queen in the White Drawing Room at Buckingham Palace, which
combines modern techniques with a sense of tradition.

"I felt honored," said Leibovitz. "I also felt that because I was an American I
had an advantage over every other photographer or painter who had made
a portrait of her. It was OK for me to be reverent".

Upcoming events:

Fototseptiembre 2026

Theme is "My Favorite Photo"

Install Monday August 31, starting at 8 am

Artist Reception Sunday September 20, 1 pm to 4 pm

Take Down is Monday October 5, starting at 8 am



June 15 - Lighting Workshop at the Westside Library 6 pm to 8 pm

This is the lighting workshop that I was going to host at my house, but there was so much interest, that we decided to move it to a bigger location to accomodate everyone!!

Can't wait to see y'all there:

*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 IH 35 N, New
Braunfels, TX 78130*

