

Snapshots

2018-2019
issue 15
for meeting of
April 03
editor
Matthew
Robertson



Roost, by Michael Anderson

Spring officially began with the start of our meeting, and its energy infused the group as Matthew took us through a recent record twenty-eight images, as many members took the opportunity to show two new images as we made up for our missed February meeting.

For our thirteenth meeting of the season we were evaluating each print with the maker of each print remaining anonymous until the very end of the night, and each seal was decided by ballot instead of by a show of hands. The night was intricate and unconventional, but we gamely rose to the challenge.

Michael Anderson brought several books of his photography to share, to broad acclaim from those who saw them. These publications provide an excellent way of both presenting and preserving our most important work, perhaps allowing it to outlast us. This is an auspicious aim and one we all do well to remember.

Upcoming Meetings

April 3 - No Seal

Rhonda Starr

Maker and Title Announced

April 17 - Seal

Marvin Cooper

Maker and Title Announced

With Maker's Introduction

May 1 - No Seal

Michael Anderson

Maker and Title Announced

Year-End Meeting

At the Toronto Focal Forum we share a passion for the printed photograph: it's our chosen means of creative expression, so we strive for artistic and technical excellence. Our candid print reviews are times for diverse work and different ideas, creating an invigorating, ongoing conversation about our experiences in art and in life. These evenings are times of inspiration, honing our craft of clear vision and communication, enriching our photographic pursuits. This is the measure of our success.

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Lost in Thought, by Craig Lauder

Prints Shown – 20 March

Bruce Macaulay

Into the Fog [S]

Neck and Neck [S]

Marie Algieri-Goldgrub

I Wonder What They See []

Matthew Robertson

Zip [S]

Untitled #2 []

Dass

Tree Swallow [S]

Craig Lauder

Morning After [G]

Lost in Thought [S]

Marvin Cooper

What a Pleasant Fellow [S]

Death of an Orchard [G]

Rhonda Starr

Movement in Triplicate [S]

Repurposed [G]

Allan Flagel

Focus Headlight [G]

Smashed to Hell []

Darcy Rector

Glacier [S]

Don't Kiss Me I Am Your Sister []

Michael Anderson

Roost [G]

At the End of the Fjord [S]

Mort Shapiro

Portal [G]

Lawrence Sitwell

Waiting to be Refurbished []

Fountain [S]

Sue Curtis

Light and Shadow [S]

Vince Sheridan

Number 8 [S]

Guy St. Louis

Lost in Thought [S]

Nick Janushewski

After Cézanne, Tree #2 [S]

David Chun

Stoney Creek [S]

Tom Yates

Image #676 [S]

Image #042812 [S]

Life beats down and crushes the soul and art reminds you that you have one.

– Stella Adler

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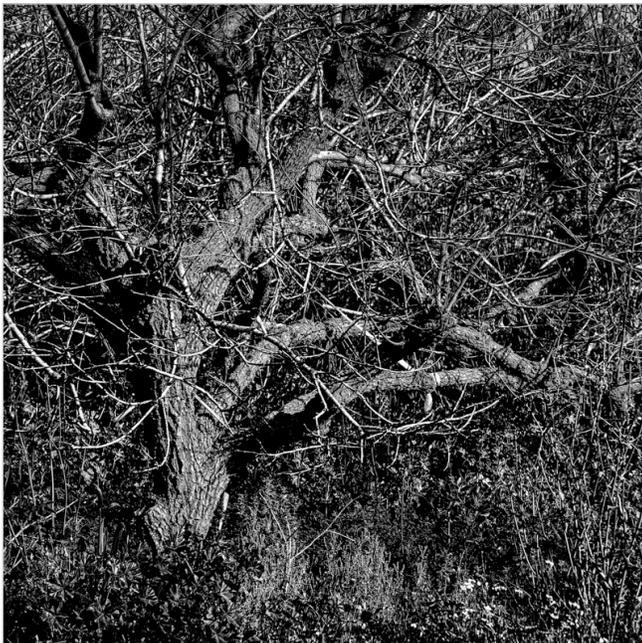


At the End of the Fjord, by Michael Anderson

Lightbox Photographs

from March 20, 2019.

A selection of images from our thirteenth meeting of the season, including marker's comments as provided.



Neck and Neck, by Bruce Macaulay

Death of an Orchard, by Marvin Cooper

As a photographer one notices the aging process everywhere, in humans and in plants.

Our intention is to affirm this life, not to bring order out of chaos, nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply to wake up to the very life we're living, which is so excellent once one gets one's mind and desires out of its way and lets it act of its own accord.

— John Cage

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After Cézanne, Tree #2 by Nick Janushewski

Rhonda's creative image from the previous meeting inspired me to do something simple yet creative. I took approximately thirty images of a tree and its background while walking in a semi-circle. And then blending the images together in photoshop. I deliberately picked the main tree with houses and yards in the background to give it an everyday dreamy feel. Tree #2 was my second attempt. Cezanne had the original idea when he painted objects from different views; it was a strange painting, but it pointed the way for Picasso.



Into the Fog, by Bruce Macaulay

Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist.

– Pablo Picasso

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What a Pleasant Fellow, by Marvin Cooper

Photography on the street is especially enjoyable
when meeting and talking to people.



The Morning After, by Craig Lauder

Lot in Thought, by Guy St Louis

Lost in Thought is a candid shot, my favourite style.



More fundamental than composition, and more important than tonalities:
at the true core of photography is *relationships*.

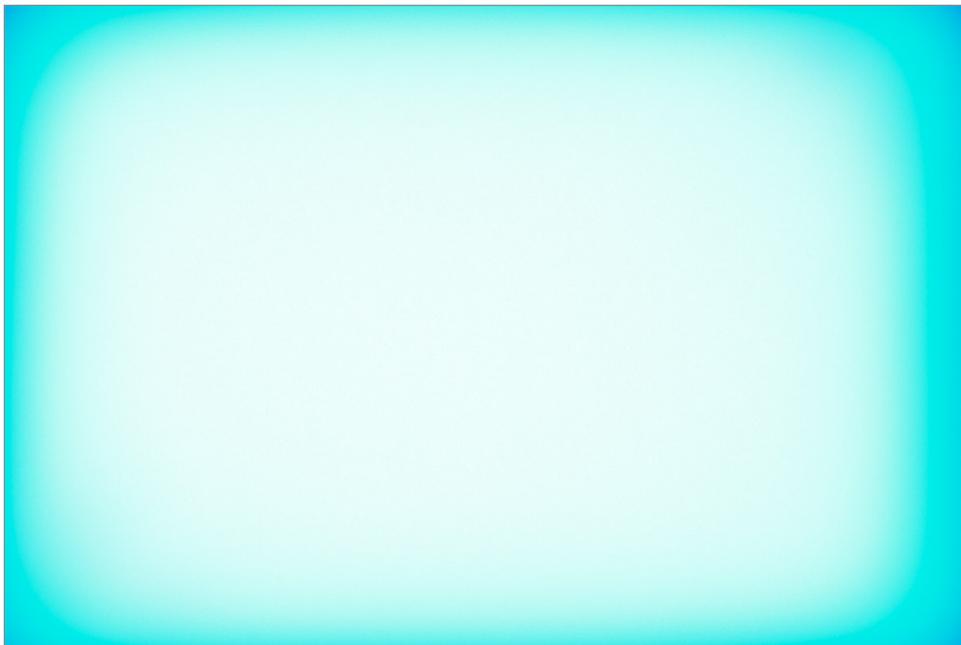
– Brooks Jensen

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Fountain, by Lawrence Sitwell

The photograph was taken when there wasn't too many spouts of water in the air, so not to be a distraction from the person. These spouts of water are always changing. The fountain is in the Detroit airport and there are many YouTube movies of the fountain.



Untitled #2, by Matthew Robertson

In his 2003 lecture on abstract art, titled 'Pictures of Nothing', Kirk Varnedoe said:

"The less there is to look at, the more important it is that we look at it closely and carefully. That's critical to what abstract art is about. Small differences make all the difference."

I try to remember this whenever I can.

Snapshots is on the web!
<http://www.focalforum.ca/snapshots.html>

The holy grail is to spend less time making the picture than it takes people to look at it.

– Banksy

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Image #676, by Tom Yates

As several members deduced, this is a reflection. I had photographed a newly planted group of trees in the Aurora Community Arboretum for records. There is a footbridge that crosses the East Branch of the Holland River (runs to Lake Simcoe) that I used to get to the site. On return, I noted the changing reflection in the slowly moving water. So I made 3 exposures. I liked this one, cropped to about 50% of the capture, adjusted contrast, saturation and sharpness, didn't tone down (mistake, I guess) the top-left highlight. It met my personal desire to bring new work to the TFF as well. September 18, 2018.



Image #042812, by Tom Yates

This is not new, captured April 8, 2012 at Albert College, in Belleville, at a reunion event. It's been in my 'printed' box for several years. I'm just about out of finished work and current circumstances for printing/mounting etc. are challenging. So I used an 'old print' (horrors!) The campus includes 'park' spaces with old trees. What you are looking at is a tree root that came above the soil level many years ago and has been repeatedly shaved by mowers over the years. I suspect that this root had not yet been 'mowed', it was early April.

'Titles', that identify a print but do not 'explain' it, allow members to view images objectively.

I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose I would always greet it in a garden.

– Ruth Stout

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| Total Gold | Total Silver | Total NS | Seal | Maker | Image Name |
|------------|--------------|----------|---------|------------|--------------------------------|
| 10 | 7 | 0 | GOLD | Allan | Focus Headlight |
| 0 | 6 | 10 | NO SEAL | Allan | Smashed to Hell |
| 4 | 12 | 1 | SILVER | Bruce | Into the Fog |
| 0 | 12 | 5 | SILVER | Bruce | Neck and Neck |
| 13 | 4 | 0 | GOLD | Craig | Morning After |
| 6 | 11 | 0 | SILVER | Craig | Lost in Thought |
| 1 | 9 | 6 | SILVER | Darcy | Glacier |
| 0 | 4 | 12 | NO SEAL | Darcy | Don't Kiss Me I am Your Sister |
| 2 | 11 | 4 | SILVER | Dass | Tree Swallow |
| 2 | 11 | 3 | SILVER | David Chun | Stoney Creek |
| 6 | 10 | 1 | SILVER | Guy | Lost in Thought |
| 0 | 6 | 11 | NO SEAL | Lawrence | Waiting to be Refurbished |
| 2 | 12 | 2 | SILVER | Lawrence | Fountain |
| 2 | 3 | 12 | NO SEAL | Marie | I Wonder What They See |
| 3 | 14 | 0 | SILVER | Marvin | What a Pleasant Fellow |
| 10 | 4 | 3 | GOLD | Marvin | Death of an Orchard |
| 4 | 5 | 9 | NO SEAL | Matthew | Untitled #2 |
| 7 | 9 | 1 | SILVER | Matthew | Zip |
| 16 | 0 | 0 | GOLD | Michael | Roost |
| 6 | 9 | 2 | SILVER | Michael | At the End of the Fjord |
| 14 | 3 | 0 | GOLD | Mort | Portal |
| 3 | 10 | 3 | SILVER | Nick | After Cézanne, Tree #2 |
| 3 | 10 | 4 | SILVER | Rhonda | Movement in Triplicate |
| 12 | 5 | 0 | GOLD | Rhonda | Repurposed |
| 3 | 11 | 3 | SILVER | Sue | Light and Shadow |
| 1 | 12 | 4 | SILVER | Tom | Image #676 |
| 0 | 12 | 5 | SILVER | Tom | Image #042812 |
| 2 | 14 | 1 | SILVER | Vince | Number 8 |

Voting for seals is a complex and social exercise, done by imperfect people – present company excepted – with inconsistent results. Our votes are subjective judgements made according to our own criteria, so there's no clear capital-m *Meaning* behind any particular result; most importantly, seals still can't be redeemed for cash or prizes.

So sometimes it's interesting to change the process and see what changes in the results.

This year we've been exploring how what we know about a photograph influences our view of it, and it seems that the more we know about a photo the more highly we're likely to rate it. At our last meeting we voted by ballot and kept the maker completely anonymous, leaving us with only the image and its title to guide us, and indeed there's a few more 'silver' and 'no seal' results than we would usually expect.

Interesting? Yes. Meaningful? I don't know, but I'd love to have conversations and Snapshots articles to find out.

The vote summary is reproduced above, but please note that the totals don't always add up to the same number as some images had fewer members voting at the time. Thanks for indulging this little experiment.

Design not for what we expect to see, but for what we actually believe we're seeing.

– Jonathan Hoefler

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For April 3: Experimental and Creative

by Rhonda Starr

Many of the forum members have a diverse range of images and abilities. On special evenings, new pieces are frequently presented and members are impressed to see images that they did not expect.

During our last meeting, there were many new and exciting images presented that helped to stimulate conversation and present us with a new focus. As photographers venture to create imaginative pieces, take risks with their work and present new ideas, it is critical that our comments are positive and sensitive to those willing to open their souls and share what is personal with others. With this in mind, I am setting an expectation for the next meeting, that we approach all images first with a positive comment (whether you like the image or not) and secondly with a comment to improve the image (should one be needed). Under no circumstances as moderator will I tolerate any disrespect to another member's work, and going forward, I hope to help put forth an outline for commenting etiquette.

I encourage each member to bring something experimental, creative, out of their comfort zone, or uniquely different from their normal images.

The simple truth is we are simply an expression of the energy of the sun.
We are the glorious manifestation of the power of the universe.
We are the fingertips of the force that drives the stars, so do your job and FEEL.

– Tanya Tagaq