



# Snapshots



*'Morning Has Broken' - Allan Flagel*

## Executive Board Meetings

On December 2nd, the Forum's Executive Board met to discuss declining membership and meeting attendance. We have met twice since then to continue the conversation, consider the alternatives and set an action plan.

With my involvement in the Ontario Council of Camera Clubs, I get to see what is going on at the 35 other member clubs. A simplified summary:

- Most clubs have experienced a decline in membership this season.
- Clubs are offering hybrid meetings in various forms.
- Live meeting attendance has declined.
- Two clubs have ceased operating due to lack of volunteers to run the clubs and lack of operating funds due to low membership.

Details of our discussions and conclusions continue on page 2

### Upcoming Meetings

#### January 24

Moderator  
Allan Flagel

#### February 7

Moderator  
Steve Gilligan

*We are a group of photographers who view and practice photography as art; our chosen means of creative expression is the printed photograph. We gather every 2 weeks for dinner at a Toronto restaurant, followed by a lively discussion, providing honest evaluation and feedback on each other's photograph(s). In this supportive environment, we see and understand how our work is perceived by others. We are always happy to welcome other photographers who would like to share their work with us.*

## **Dec. 2nd Executive Board Meeting - cont'd**

### **Recruiting New Members**

We have had some concern about the decline in our membership after returning to live meetings. While COVID had an impact, most other clubs, photography or otherwise, are experiencing the same thing for a variety of reasons.

**Conclusion:** The Board has had discussions about attempting to recruit new members but, in the end, we have decided that we will not pursue an active recruitment at this time, but rather keep our eyes and ears open for possible future members. For instance, some O3C clubs have discontinued print competitions, so this might be an opportunity to keep those people involved in printing.

If you come across someone you feel would be a good fit for the Focal Forum, we encourage you to have a conversation with them, invite them to attend a meeting, bring a print and participate in the evaluation.

### **Meeting Structure - Live, Online, Hybrid**

We all agree that the Forum is all about prints and that meeting live is the right approach for us. There are too many variable to effectively evaluate images online as prints and it doesn't meet the Forum's mandate. When we look at images online, we're looking at pictures.

**Conclusion:** In general, we are comfortable with the small group that has been meeting and we should continue meeting live. Although the Seoul House's smaller room that we've been meeting in isn't as spacious as the banquet room, it's comfortable and it works. If we know how many people will attend ahead of time, we can arrange to use the larger room.

**Conclusion:** In the winter months, if the weather forecast shows nasty weather on a meeting day, we can make a call the day before or Wednesday AM to meet online. We would let the Seoul House know. Having said that, none of us could remember a time when a meeting was cancelled due to weather.

### **Seals**

We have not been awarding seals, during the low attendance meetings this season. We discussed whether or not we should continue that approach.

**Conclusion:** We agreed that we will not award seals as long as the low attendance continues. If the attendance climbs, we'll go back to seals, since it is specified in the constitution.

### **Print Evaluation**

Because of the fewer members at the meetings, we have not imposed time limits for the evaluations - we keep talking about a print until we're done. Also, the moderator and the makers have participated, so the evaluation period has become more of a comfortable conversation about the prints. It's very enjoyable.

**Conclusion:** We'll continue with this approach; however, if attendance increases, we'll revisit this.

### ***The Executive Board***

8 members attended the January 10th meeting, with 11 prints, which included an extra from Dass, Allan and Laurence. With Steve Rees moderating and taking part in the untimed 'discussion' and the makers joining in with the others, we enjoyed some very interesting comments and insight into each print.

### **Prints Shown on January 10, 2024**

Laurence Sitwell  
*Autumn Abstract*  
*It Takes Your Eye Out of the Picture*

Dass  
*A Sense of Place*  
*Venice Graphic*

Allan Flagel  
*Morning Has Broken*  
*Ghost Ship*

Steve Rees  
*Slipping Through the Cracks*

Steve Gilligan  
*Vine on Westmount*

Craig Lauder  
*Bryce Canyon Sunset*

Nick Janushewski  
*Peter*

Leif Petersen  
*Enjoy Life*



*'Slipping Through the Cracks' - Steve Rees*





*'A Sense of Place' - Dass*



Extra Print: *'Venice Graphic' - Dass*





*'Autumn Abstract' - Laurence Sitwell*



Extra Print: *'It Takes Your Eye Out of the Picture' - Laurence Sitwell*

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**REMINDERS**

- Send a digital copy of your image to Leif. Size: Horizontal = 1920 on the long edge; vertical = 1080 on the long edge; file name format: Your Name-Image Title-Meeting Date
- Send an email to Leif by 6:00 PM Monday to let him know if you will attend Wednesday's meeting.





*'Enjoy Life' - Leif Petersen (zoom in on the shirt)*



*'Peter' - Nick Janushewski*



Extra Print: *'Ghost Ship' - Allan Flagel*

## Capturing Moments and Creating Art

As a new year unfolds, we have the opportunity to embark on a fresh chapter in our shared passion for capturing the world through our lenses and creating art. I hope that you are looking forward to seeing the incredible moments and the artistic expressions we all bring to life via our prints.

The TFF has always been a haven for print making, lively discussions, creativity, learning, and camaraderie. It's not just a gathering of individuals who share an interest; it's a community that nurtures our growth as photographers and as artists. In the spirit of fostering excellence, I would like to highlight a few key principles that underscore the essence of the Forum:

### Elevating Quality through Technical and Artistic Excellence

Let's approach this year with the intention of producing prints that exemplify the highest levels of both technical skill and artistic ingenuity. Every click of the shutter presents an opportunity to push ourselves beyond our comfort zones and create images that resonate deeply with both ourselves and our peers.

### Constructive Critique for Growth

Critique is a cornerstone of improvement. We should offer constructive feedback on each other's prints. Our observations should be honest, concise, and insightful, contributing to the discussion around the image. Disagreement is welcomed and while diversity in perspective is cherished, it should be supported by a foundation of respect.

### Fellowship and Camaraderie

Beyond the realm of technical skill, our group provides a haven for genuine connections. As we share meals and engage in spirited discussions, friendships are made. It is the shared love for photography and the art of printmaking that unites us, infusing our group with an essence that truly sets it apart.

As Print Director, it would be negligent of me if I didn't repeat and remind you of the qualities needed for an image to be granted seals. A Gold Seal should be awarded to a print that demonstrates **exceptional** technical and artistic qualities, while a Silver Seal should be awarded to a print that is considered to display **good** technical and artistic qualities.

A print without either a Gold or Silver Seal is lovingly called, a "No Seal." However, this is by no means a roadblock, but rather an opportunity for growth. If your print doesn't receive a Gold Seal, you have the option to modify it and re-submit it as a "Re-Make" at a future meeting. You should bring the original print for comparison, as it will help us appreciate your artistic journey.

During our meetings, let's aim to provide remarks that foster introspection, encourage critical contemplation, and offer analytical insights that prompt thoughtful reflection. We are not here to merely admire each other's work, but to challenge ourselves to evolve artistically. Constructive critique is a catalyst for growth and, by providing thoughtful insights, we contribute to each other's artistic development.

Let's ensure that we remain true to our mission and avoid becoming a mere mutual admiration group. It's in the environment of constructive critique and thoughtful conversations that our artistry is truly refined. Together, we can continue to push the boundaries of our creativity, learn from one another, and expand our artistic horizons.

Wishing you all an inspiring and rewarding year of photography and print making.

Marie Algieri-Goldgrub  
Print Director



## **Bordered Image - A Friend of the TFF**



Last season, Dass included this photo in one of the Snapshots issues, with a short story about how his relationship with Peter Moon, the owner of Bordered Image, came about. During a conversation with Peter, Dass explained his membership with the TFF and asked Peter if he would be willing to extend his offer of wholesale pricing on matting and framing supplies, which he gives to Dass, to all of our members. Peter agreed without hesitation and will also give us a 50% discount off suggested retail for framing, which he offers to all artists and professionals.

If you need something framed or you need foam core and mat board, give Peter a call to make an appointment or drop in. If he doesn't have material you need in stock, he'll order it in and have it for you in a couple of days.

Bordered Image: 145 Royal Crest. Crt. #446, Markham, ON. 905-474-9593