

APJA NEWS

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Photographic Artist Feature Suzanne Saroff

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President's Message

Springing into Spring: new ways of conducting operations of the APJA are settling into a steady manner making great use of Zoom – as are several photography clubs.

Following is the reviewed SYLLABUS for the remainder of this year, please check your year planners/calendars and pencil in these meetings and seminars for your participation where appropriate.

The second edition of the Dictionary of Definitions will be published and placed on the Website by the end of September at the latest. This is seen as one of the urgent and more easily updated reference services for clubs and judges alike. It is brought forward so that clubs have a guide for competition subjects while they are currently going through their syllabus options for 2021.

The Strategic Plan is important as a path going forward for the APJA and in the last newsletter members were asked to offer any suggestions as at least noted in part here:

MEMBER FEEDBACK for the strategic plan continuing to be sought under the following broad topics:

1. Any ideas about where you feel the association can improve
2. Where you think operations fall short
3. Identification of specific issues that concern you

Email your thoughts to apjasecretary@gmail.com

Your views are sought so that the Strategic Plan can proceed as a blueprint that is relevant, usable and timely for the APJA.

The Level 1 Seminar is on track for October (see the Syllabus following) your promotion of it to clubs where you are judging would be appreciated.

Paul Robinson

Paul Robinson President

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Syllabus

All meetings by ZOOM

SEPTEMBER

Sunday 27th Sept 1.00pm Committee Meeting

OCTOBER

Friday 2nd Oct 7.30pm Level 1 Seminar

Friday 9th Oct 7.30pm Level 1 Seminar

Friday 16th Oct 7.30pm Level 1 Seminar

Sunday 18th Oct 1.00 pm Committee (TBC)

NOVEMBER

Friday 6th Nov 7.30pm Level 3 Seminar

Friday 13th Nov 7.30pm Level 3 Seminar

Friday 20th Nov 7.30pm Level 3 Seminar

Sunday 15th 1.00pm to 2.15pm Committee meeting
2.30pm to 4.00pm General Meeting

Sunday 22nd Possibly the VAPS AGM

Sunday 29th 1.00pm to 2.15pm Committee Meeting
2.30pm to 4.00pm EOY General Meeting

Photographic Artist Review

Still Life Photographers

Marian Drew (Australia) – Issue 13 November 2016

Robert Beulteman (USA) – Issue 14 December 2016

Martin Klimas (Germany) – Issue 15 February 2017

Anatoly Che (Russia) – Issue 44 July 2020

Donne Crous (UK) – Issue 45 August 2020

Continuing with our series on still life photography Suzanne Saroff works in the USA. Three ‘magazine’ articles are abridged in the following to provide insight into her imagery.

Saroff was born Missoula, Montana and now lives in New York, where she has worked with a long list of clients like Calvin Klein, Glossier, and Prada. A master of illusion she creates fractured and skewed images in her compositions which play with concepts of light and shadow resulting in distorted still lifes that appear almost like digital glitches. Suzanne says, “With tools and techniques such as refraction, directional light, and bold colours, my photographs give everyday items alternate visual avenues of expression,” she adds, “Taking shape via shadows or fragmentations, my subjects often become more than the singular and expected version of themselves.”

Further saying “I always have some idea of what I want to shoot—in terms of colour, light, subject and composition—but some of my favourite photos come from something raw and in the moment. These photos can take 20 minutes or the entire day—with the distortions I work at and the moving of all of the pieces around until everything feels just right. When I get the photo I know right away.” (Colossal 2 Feb 2020)

Suzanne Saroff doesn’t mind if her audience has a distorted view of the subjects she captures. Indicating there is a beauty in being able to grab her subjects from

a grocery store she counts a single orange as the inspiration behind one of her series. The fruit was sitting behind a glass of water in her New York City kitchen and as she walked by, she noticed how it seemed to dance through the glass. Her first reaction was to try and capture the scene with her phone, but the optical illusion didn't translate. That's when she decided she needed to explore the phenomenon formally, which led to her series *Perspective* which is all about seeing things in unexpected ways.

"I am a visual person and have a strong attention to odd details in everyday life," she says. And so, inspired by the dancing orange, she filled glasses with water at different heights to get different effects on the objects she placed behind them. The way the glass magnifies and abstracts the objects offers a new perspective on the familiar. Her subjects, from pieces of papaya to a glistening fresh fish are all "items that people interact with in a casual manner," Suzanne says. "Food and flowers are such visceral things that we all need and know. There is a beauty to their rawness and imperfection. There is also a beauty to being able to grab my subjects from the grocery store when an idea emerges, or be inspired by something while shopping. These objects she finds at the store, attracted by their vibrant colours or interesting shapes, she brings into the studio.

For personal projects like *Perspective*, Suzanne works alone doing all the conceptualising, styling and shooting herself. It's an organic way of working. "These series become quite meditative," she says. "This allows for concepts to develop as I shoot, and it allows shooting to happen whenever there is a spark or an urge to do so." These urges can come from just about anywhere – "that orange in the kitchen, someone's outfit on the subway, a piece of trash in the street, an old film." At times the spark of inspiration will be so strong that it triggers an immediate action; at other times her ideas lie dormant for a while, until something like some unexpected free time gives her space to pursue them.

She juggles her job as a photo art director at an agency with her personal projects, but that takes discipline and dedication. "I have learned that my own self-initiated work is necessary," she says. "As a creative person, it is so important to have an outlet and expression that is my own. Sometimes it's hard after a busy or stressful day to make time for it, but I have found that once I get into a rhythm, it becomes necessary and I crave it. When I am shooting something that draws me in, nothing else matters."

(*WEPRESENT* Magazine Words by Alix-Rose Cowie)

Interview with Metal Magazine

Can you tell us a little more about your unique eye and how you developed it?

“I have always been interested in the little details. I am a really slow walker because I am looking around at everything. During the hikes I did as a kid, I would always fall behind, lost in thought as little things along the way grabbed my attention and inspired me. As an adult, I’ve tried to pinpoint the exact source of my inspiration, make it tangible and take that into my studio. It’s inspiring for me to take something mundane, or ugly even, and give it a new life. I also love working with flowers, they are beautifully complex but simultaneously simple. I love highlighting both of these qualities and using them in my work as expressions. I love how flowers can mirror people since they have many different personalities.”

Glass as a material is a vital part of your work, and its properties help you achieve an amazing result – either in the Perspective series distorting

the object’s form or in the Shadows series. When did you start experimenting with it, and what have you learnt about it after all these pictures?

“I was at a small restaurant in San Francisco a few winters ago. It was late afternoon and the sun was pouring through the window. The light was hitting the flower vase on the table, and the wine and water glasses. The shadows were sparkling and the moment felt magic. The warmth and familiarity of that feeling are what originally inspired the *Shadows* series. *Perspective* was an evolution of this time in the studio, it started out as an exploration of that playful feeling, which then turned into an entire series. I love how simple glass is, yet with the right light and composition, can create an entirely new feeling. Through my work with glass, I have learned that you can create something meaningful and complex with the simplest of things.”

Are you working or trying to discover new materials to work with?

“My work is always evolving, and new materials are part of that.”

Your photographs often look surrealistic. Is this only due to the natural effect of the water, or do you use Photoshop as well?

“All of the distortions and surrealistic qualities are natural effects of the water and glass, which are emphasised by the light. I only use a little Photoshop at the end to edit things like the levels and colour contrast.”

When looking at your own work, but also the work of other photographers, what do you find captivating in an image?

“For me, it is about emotion. Across all photo and art genres, it’s about if there is that thing that pulls me in and makes me feel something”.

With its soft velvet background or smooth rose petals, the viewer seems to almost be able to reach into your work and grab the object. Is this tactility something you aim to create, or is it more subconscious?

“Texture and tactility are an important part of my photos – it is a way to add layers of depth, giving objects life, while adding feeling. My *Velvet* series was one of my early series that used texture as part of the concept. That series was all about using tactility to create an emotion, which was a darker one: I was contrasting the concept of death with a lush, beautiful feeling that came from velvet. In my *Flower* series, tactility was also front and centre. That series was also about contrast – a dying flower with a glistening paint drip clinging on, which is inherently tactile. Emphasising the materiality was an aesthetic choice to accentuate the concept. Texture and tactility continue to be important parts of my *Shadows* and *Perspective* series, along with new projects that I am working on”.





National Photographic Competition

6th Pakenham National Photographic Exhibition 2020

EXHIBITION CALENDAR

Entries Close..... 2nd Oct 2020

Judging 11th to 17th Oct

Reports Emailed... 28th Oct 2020

Online Exhibition 31st Oct 2020

Members are encouraged to enter this exhibition.

APJA Committee Activities

Mentor Program

After discussion at the August committee meeting it has been decided to introduce a mentor program for new judges or judges who may wish to gain support from an experienced judge.

The mentor program will be administered by the accreditation panel and a mentor will be assigned to the new judge or mentee.

Would any current Level 2 Judge or above that would like to be a mentor to other judges please email Gary Smith, Training Director, wordpicts@gmail.com indicating your willingness to be included on the list of mentors.

Any judge who would wishes to be mentored may also contact Gary Smith at the above email address.

Accreditation Panel

After discussion at the August committee meeting it has been decided to introduce a new accreditation panel. This panel will comprise, at any one time, 3 x Level 4 judges plus a selection of level 3 judges as back up.

The role of the panel, is:

1. To administer the Mentor program and assign mentors to new members.
2. To adjudicate on port folio's submitted by new members.

3. To Oversee and run the tri-annual training exercises
4. To adjudicate on judges promotion, including reviewing a judges performance for level 4 and above
5. To assess judges presentation for the judging level research assignments for judging levels 3 and above.

Any Level 3 or 4 judge that wishes to be part of the Accreditation Panel please submit their names to either Gary Smith, Training Director, wordpicts@gmail.com or Paul Robinson, perfectpics.pr@gmail.com, or Paul Lucas, apjasecretary@gmail.com by the 31st October 2020.

APJA YouTube Channel

The APJA now has a YouTube Channel which contains the recent Image Evaluation and Level 5 courses.

These are detailed reminders and useful references for ongoing learning.

All future events run via Zoom will be uploaded to this channel as will any future videos.



The website can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNj8tNFWxKKEqI2-Zx-xsDA/featured>