



# focus

*a publication of the GCA Photography Committee*

**Spring  
2015**



<b>focus</b>	
Editor	<b>Jean Matthews</b>
Associate Editor	<b>Penelope Ross</b>
<b>Photography Committee</b>	
Chairman	<b>Crissy Cherry</b>
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Education program	<b>Leslie Purple</b>

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH:** Laura Simpson (page 11)

**SUBMISSIONS**

**Focus** magazine welcomes articles from GCA club members on topics of interest to GCA photographers. We publish award-winning photographs which have received Best in Show, the Photography Creativity Award, the Certificate of Excellence, and/or the GCA Novice Award from GCA Flower Shows and GCA and Non-GCA Major Flower Shows. When submitting your winning photographs please use the Focus Photo Submission Instructions found on the [Photography Committee](#) page sidebar/RESOURCES/focus, Online Magazine/Focus Photo Submission Instructions. Also, if appropriate, we would welcome a description of “how you did it.” Any questions may be directed to [photography@gcamerica.org](mailto:photography@gcamerica.org) To submit your photo include:

- Word or Pages document per Photo Submission Instructions
- Photograph - jpg approximately 2.0 MB or 2000x3000 pixels or larger

Email: [photography@gcamerica.org](mailto:photography@gcamerica.org)  
(These emails are answered by Penny Ross or Jean Matthews.)

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The object of **focus** magazine of the Garden Club of America is to enhance the knowledge and enjoyment at all levels of involvement in the art of photography and to appreciate its unique blend of technical skill, knowledge of composition and creativity. Articles written express the opinion of the writers and are for the purpose of clarity and education about the photographic process, exhibiting and judging. The Garden Club of America and **focus** magazine do not endorse any product or service. All entries in Flower Shows are limited to members of GCA. By submitting your work to **focus**, you grant permission to publish your work on the GCA website accessible to the public, and not limited to the Members Area.

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**From the Editor...**

It’s a perfect time of year to re-kindle your passion for photography. Enjoy the display of award-winning images in the focus Spring 2015 issue. Experience the colors and changes of the seasons with Libby Collins and her artistic thoughts and expressions.

Just a few clicks of the mouse could transform your skewed image into an award-winning photograph. Learn to “Straighten those Horizon Lines” with Crissy Cherry.

Sense the images of Spring in the desert as the photography study group shares their experiences from The Photography Workshop in Moab, Utah with renowned nature photographers and teachers, Coleen Miniuk-Sperry and Paul Gil.



# “ART BLOOMS, BEAUTY REIGNS”



**MARSHA DELLAGNESE**

Akron GC

**SHOW:** *Art Blooms, Beauty Reigns*

Akron Garden Club Akron Art Museum

Akron OH

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First and GCA Novice Award in Photography

**CLASS:** “Modern Art”—Plant material manipulation inspired by impressionism

**PLANT MATERIAL:** *Franklinia*

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Colors and softness - just radiant!”

**TITLE:** “Franklinia’s Fall Foliage” (Impressionistic Interpretation)

**STATEMENT OF INTENT:** Depict fall foliage in impressionistic manner

**TECHNICAL INFO:** Macro photo manipulated in photoshop using various brushes in the program and the Wacom Tablet



## “ART BLOOMS, BEAUTY REIGNS”

### **RYN CLARKE**

Shaker Lakes GC

**SHOW:** *Art Blooms, Beauty Reigns*

Akron Garden Club Akron Art Museum

Akron OH

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First, Best in Show, Creativity Award, Museum Staff Award

**CLASS:** “Windows on the World”–image made with cellphone

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Intriguing definition of space using line. Compression of space creates ambiguity.”

“The lines explode with dynamic energy”

“Point of view exhibits extraordinary vision”

**TITLE:** “Shattered Light”

**LOCATION:** Image taken in an abandoned grain silo in Buffalo NY





# “HORT COUTURE”

**COLESIE STERLING**

Piedmont Garden Club

**SHOW:** *Hort Couture*

Palm Beach Garden Club

The Society of the Four Arts

Palm Beach FL

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First, Best in Show, GCA Photography Creativity Award

**CLASS:** “Finished by Hand”–Color Creative Techniques

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Soft color palette, exquisite detail and contrast between plant material and graphic background create dynamic tension. Stunning! The hand of a master couturier.”



## “HORT COUTURE”

### **GAIL MOREY**

Woodside Atherton GC

#### **SHOW:** *Hort Couture*

The Garden Club of Palm Beach

The Society of the Four Arts

Palm Beach FL

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First and the GCA Novice Award in Photography

**CLASS:** “Reflections” – Color

An image featuring reflections of water

**JUDGES COMMENTS:** “Coloration and mood remarkable. Surreal.”



## “FOUNDERS JUBILEE”

### **SUZY TITCOMB**

Seattle GC

**SHOW:** *Founders Jubilee 2015*

Founders GC of Dallas

Camp House of Dallas Arboretum

DallasTX

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First and Best in Show

**CLASS:** “Going in Circles”—Macro

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Whimsical spiraling lines make for a dynamic image.”

**PLANT MATERIAL:** *Clematis ‘Ernest Markham’*

**STATEMENT OF INTENT:** Attempt to capture circles, spirals, diagonal lines and translucence in a lyrical manner

**LOCATION:** Taken in photographer’s home in a softbox



# “FOUNDERS JUBILEE”



**ELAINE S. LINDH**

Founders GC of Dallas

**SHOW:** *Founders Jubilee 2015*

Founders GC of Dallas Camp House of Dallas Arboretum  
Dallas TX

April 2015

**AWARDS:** First and the GCA Novice Award in Photography

**CLASS:** “Flower Frenzy”–Color

A manipulated color image of a flower that produces a non-representational effect

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Great example of non-representational art, striking linear and horizontal lines enhance composition.”

**PLANT MATERIAL:** *Eryngium leavenworthii* Leavenworth’s eryngo

**LOCATION:** Sycamore Creek Ranch, Dexter, TX



# “FOUNDERS JUBILEE”



## **SANDY DANSBY**

Monroe Garden Study League

**SHOW:** *Founders Jubilee 2015*

Founders GC of Dallas Camp House of Dallas Arboretum

Dallas TX

April 2015

**AWARDS:** Second and GCA Photography Creativity Award

**CLASS:** “Flower Frenzy”–Color  
Manipulated image of a flower

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Novel 3-D collage effect!”

**TITLE:** “Georgia O’Keeffe meets Andy Warhol”



# “SEASON OF ENCHANTMENT”



## **ELOISE CARSON**

The Portland GC

**SHOW:** *Seasons of Enchantment*  
Massachusetts Horticultural Society  
Boston MA  
March 2015

**AWARDS:** First and Best in Show

**CLASS:** “Fantasia”—A creatively manipulated photo that allows imagination to run wild

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Seamless masterful manipulation”

**PLANT MATERIAL:** *Quercus virginiana* Southern live oak

**LOCATION:** Magnolia Plantation, Charleston SC

**TECHNICAL INFO:** “I took elements of three photographs and using layers in Photoshop, created this image. I imported the resulting image into Topaz Labs, Black and White conversion, and then colorized the black and white version.”





## “SEASON OF ENCHANTMENT”

**LAURA SIMPSON**

Lake Geneva GC

**SHOW:** *Seasons of Enchantment*  
Massachusetts Horticultural Society  
Boston MA  
March 2015

**AWARDS:** Third award and GCA Certificate of Excellence in Photography

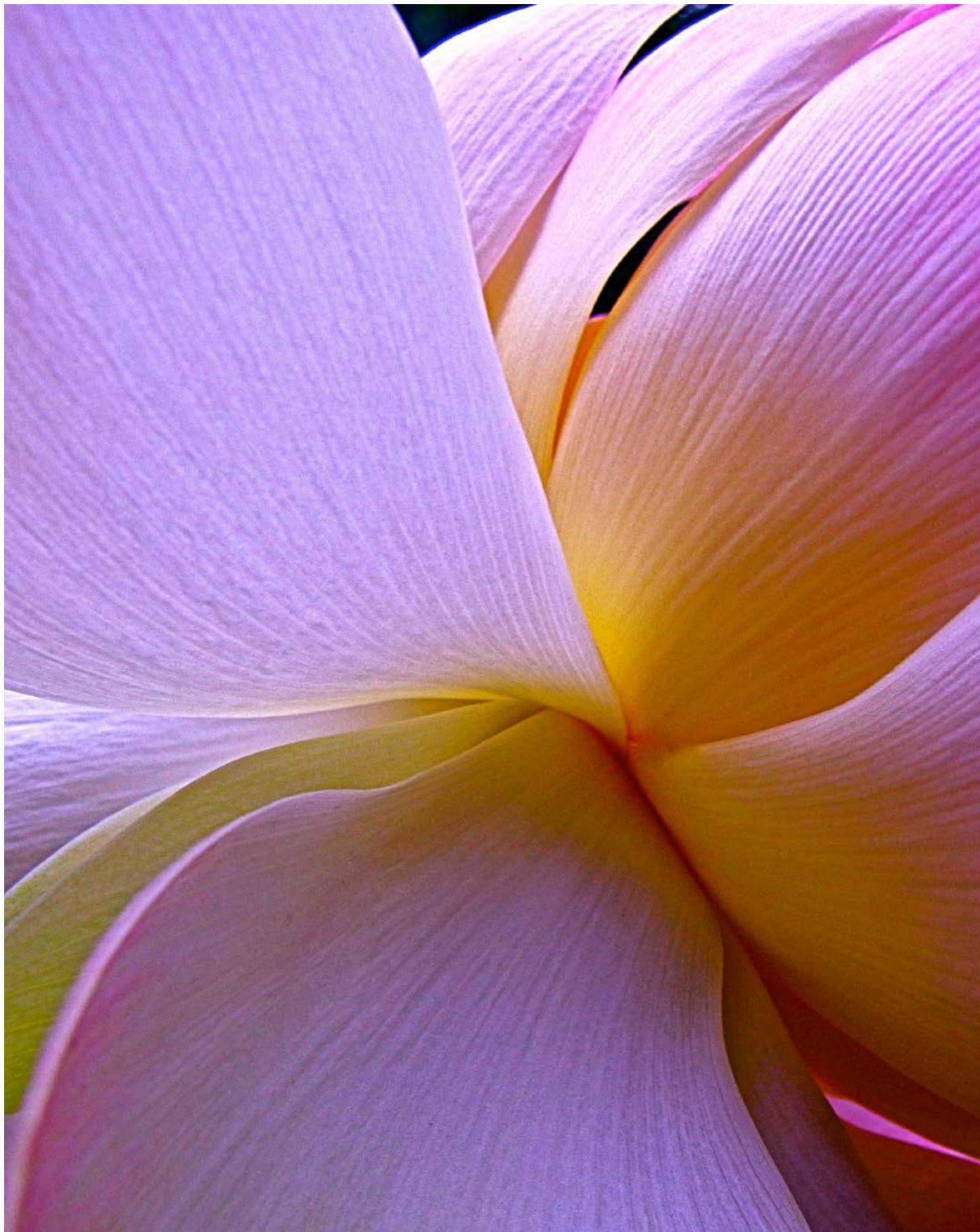
**CLASS:** “Fantasia” – A creatively manipulated photo that allows imagination to run wild.

**JUDGE’ COMMENTS:** “Manipulation has created a beautiful painting.”

**TITLE:** “Ranunculus”

**TECHNICAL INFO:** Manipulation done in Photoshop CC using the mixer brush.





## “HANAMI”

**DANNA DEARBORN**

Piscataqua GC

**SHOW:** *Hanami*

Green Fingers Garden Club

Greenwich CT

February 2015

**AWARDS:** First Place, GCA Novice Award, Certificate of Excellence

**CLASS:** “Silk”–Color

Emphasizing color and texture

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Silky layers and interplay of light and textures enable the eye to move softly through the image.”



# STRAIGHTEN THOSE HORIZON LINES

by Crissy Cherry, Lake Forest Garden Club

There is nothing that red flags a photo in the judge's eye more than the tilted horizon line. While there are certain images where this is appropriate, most landscapes suffer. Here is how to correct:

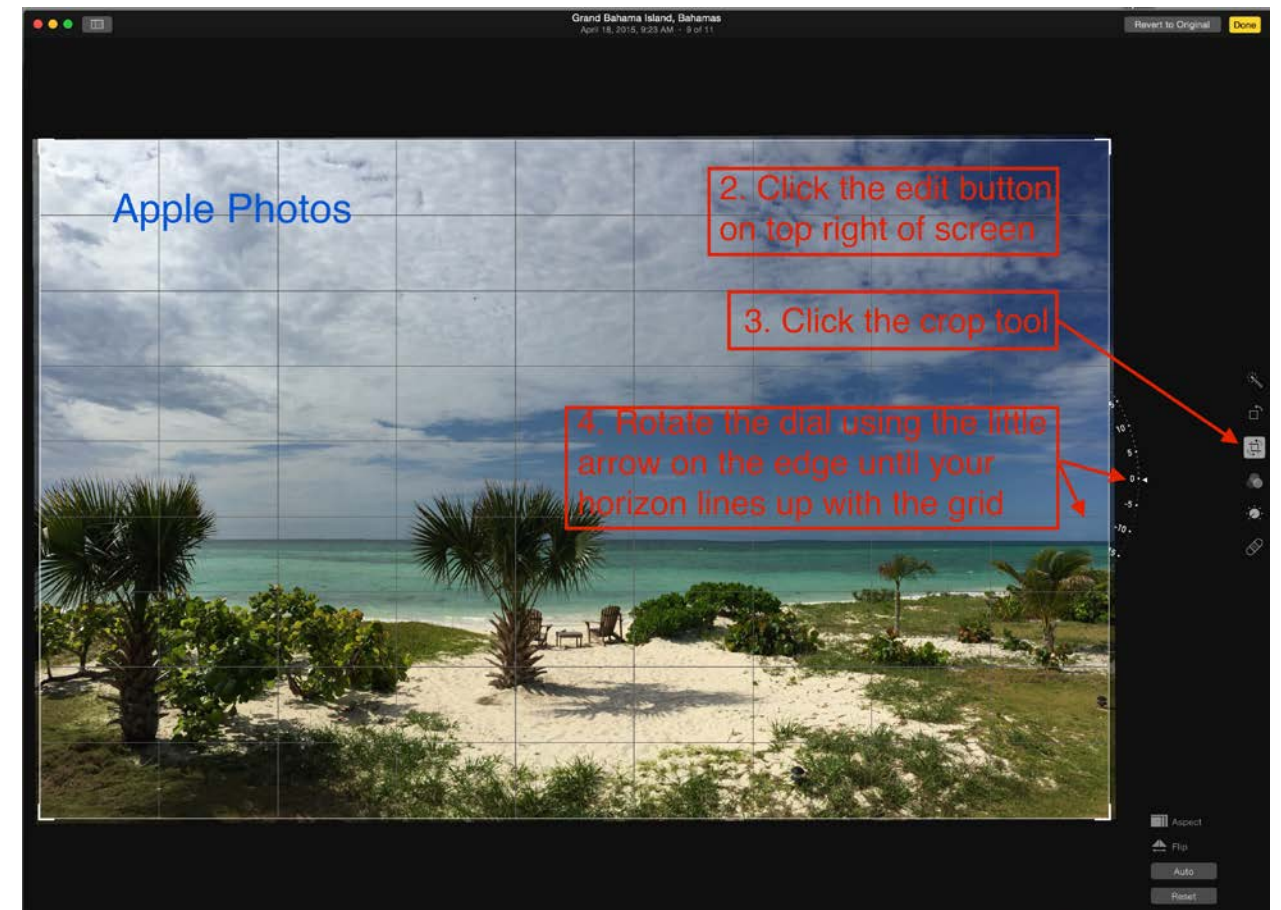
1. AFTER TAKING YOUR PHOTO CHECK YOUR COMPOSITION AND IF THE HORIZON IS TILTED (AND IT SHOULDN'T BE) RETAKE THE PHOTO. MANY CAMERAS NOW HAVE A LEVEL AVAILABLE TO USE WHEN PHOTOGRAPHING. CHECK YOUR CAMERA MANUAL IF YOU CANNOT LOCATE THE LEVEL.

2. OR, IF YOU ARE LIKE ME AND HAVE A BAD ASTIGMATISM AND CAN'T SEEM TO GET A STRAIGHT HORIZON IN THE CAMERA, ALL PHOTO EDITING PROGRAMS HAVE A STRAIGHTENING TOOL.



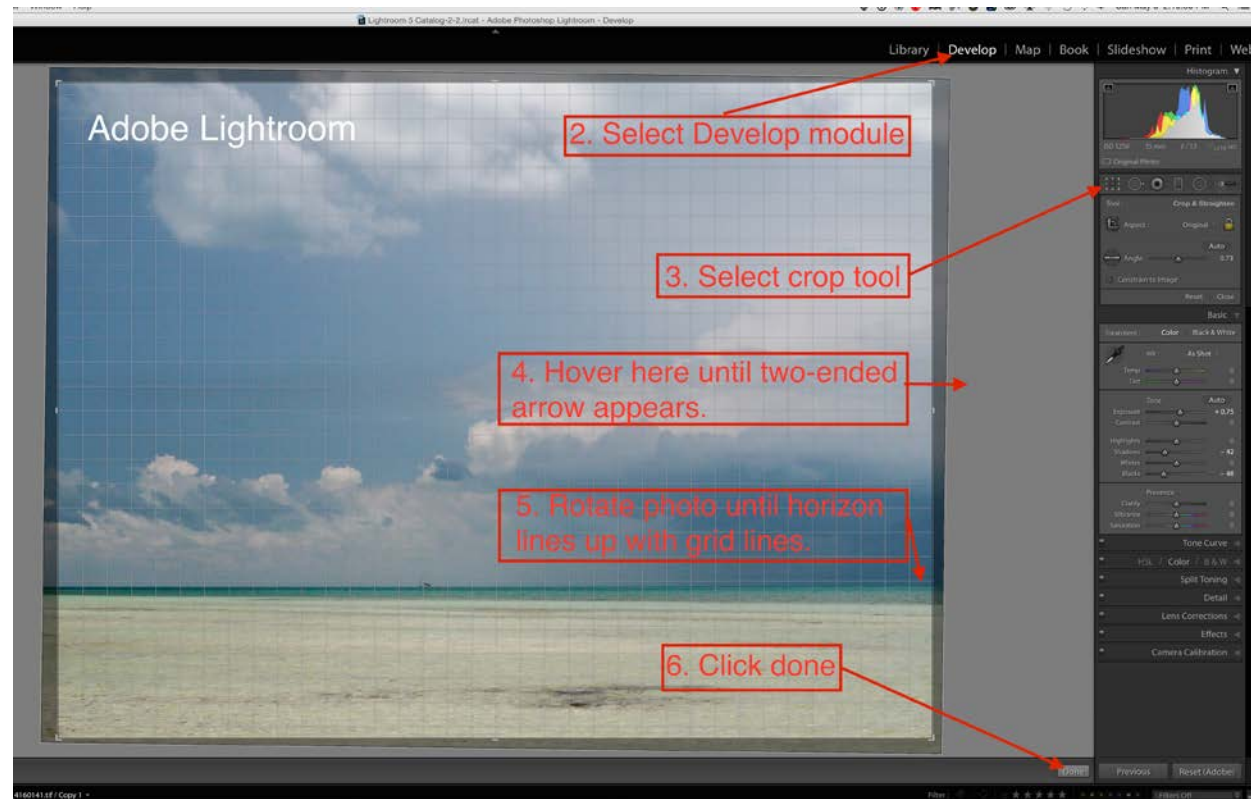
## 3. APPLE PHOTOS

1. SELECT PHOTO
2. CLICK THE EDIT BUTTON ON TOP RIGHT OF SCREEN
3. CLICK THE CROP TOOL.
4. ROTATE THE DIAL USING THE LITTLE ARROW ON THE EDGE UNTIL YOUR HORIZON LINES UP WITH THE GRID LINES.



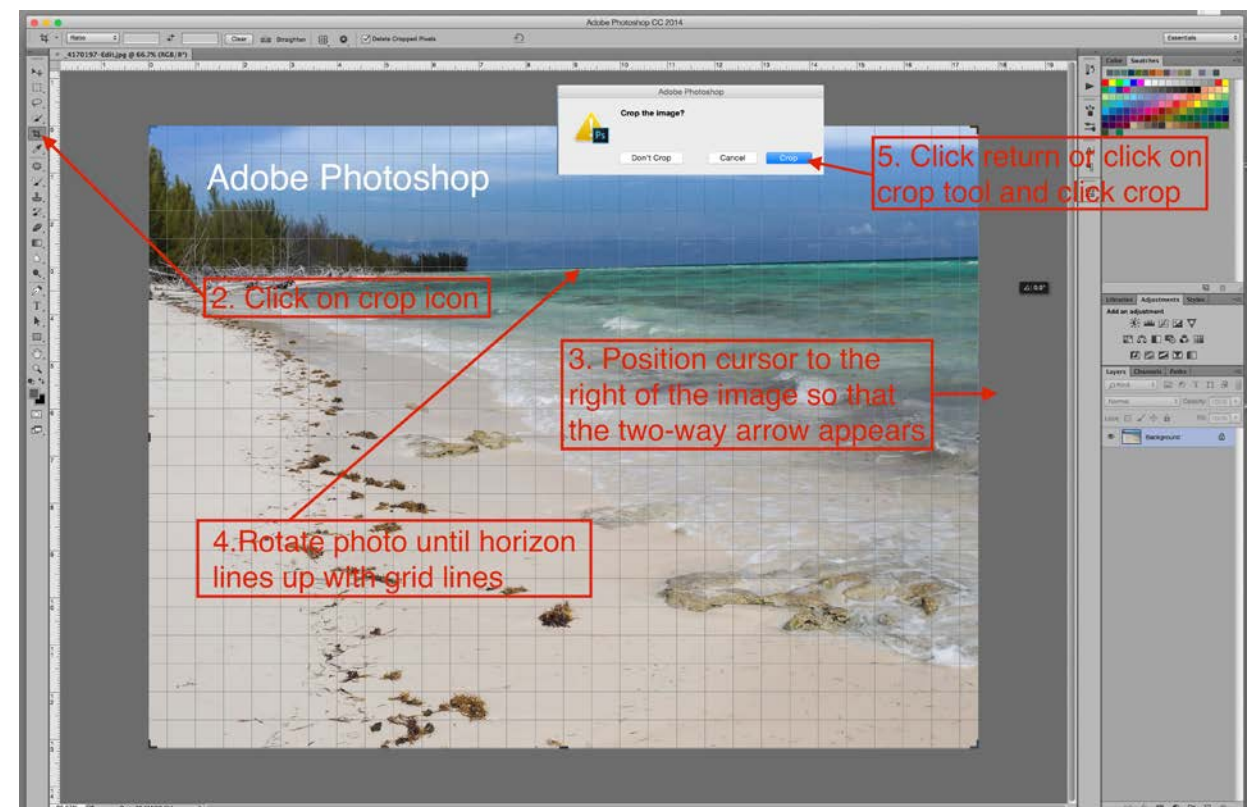
## ADOBE LIGHTROOM

1. SELECT PHOTO
2. GO TO DEVELOP MODULE
3. SELECT CROP TOOL
4. POSITION CURSOR TO THE RIGHT OF THE IMAGE SO THAT A TWO-WAY ARROW APPEARS
5. ROTATE PHOTO UNTIL HORIZON LINES UP WITH GRID LINES.
6. CLICK DONE



## ADOBE PHOTOSHOP

1. SELECT PHOTO
2. CLICK ON CROP ICON
3. POSITION CURSOR TO THE RIGHT OF THE IMAGE SO THAT A TWO-WAY ARROW APPEARS
4. ROTATE PHOTO UNTIL HORIZON LINES UP WITH GRID LINES.
5. CLICK DONE







## “GARDEN TO PALETTE”

### **GAIL ATWATER**

The GC of Honolulu

### **SHOW:** *Garden to Palette*

The GC of Dublin

Dublin, New Hampshire

September, 2014

**AWARDS:** First and Best in Show

**CLASS:** “Foliage”—A Creatively Manipulated Image



# “TREASURES OF THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY”

**EVELYN LORENTZEN-BELL**

Green Fingers GC



**SHOW:** *Treasures of the Shenandoah Valley*

GCA Zone VII Flower Show Augusta GC

Stonewall Jackson Hotel

Staunton VA

October 2014

**AWARDS:** First and GCA Photography Creativity Award

**CLASS:** “Oh Shenandoah, I long to see you”– Color  
A creative manipulation of a rolling river scene

**JUDGES’ COMMENTS:** “Powerful and dynamic rolling image”

**LOCATION:** Yellowstone National Park

**STATEMENT OF INTENT:** “The photograph was altered to reveal the previous destruction from the 1988 fire at Yellowstone National Park.”



# SEASONS AND EDGES

**“SPRING FORCES ME TO INVENT NEW COLORS. WHAT I SEE HAS NO NAME AND HAS TO BE CAREFULLY NUANCED”**

**WOLF KAHN**

In certain latitudes, we count off four seasons – blazing fall, monochrome winter, gentle spring and voluptuous summer. A Fifth Season flashes between winter and spring. Labeled by artist Anne Diggory, the Fifth Season is when, tender, translucent leaves unfurl like a child’s curled tongue. The high treetops are fringed with an acid, yellow-green I call ‘Spring Green’, a hue like no other and lasting but days. Artist Wolf Kahn says “spring forces me to invent new colors.” One glimpse of the moist new foliage backlit by the sun is all it takes. The artist in you is entranced. You must have it – on film, in pixels, on canvas. Spring after spring, you’ll pursue it obsessively in its short sweet season. You’ll yearn for a stormy green-black sky to use for a background - delicate green against an eerie, leaden sky. Failing that, sky blue will do nicely as the background, cool green on cool blue.

Late in winter, the memory of Spring Green will start in your mind like a restless new shoot. You’ll quest for your first glimpse in woods and fields, just as you listen for the first Red Wing Blackbird to sing “Drink your Tea, Drink your Tea”. Spring at last. But Hurry.

Spring and fall are full of color. But what about No-color Season? Why not shoot the muted tones of winter: the yellow beige of dried grasses or the flat grey of a Beech tree trunk. Take advantage of the spare graphic quality of plants, trees and landscapes laid bare by winter, freed from the mantle of greenery which obscures form all summer. For the photographer, winter offers clarity and design.

Winter photos are surprisingly expressive. Dried beach leaves heads-down on a branch look sad but determined, refusing to drop through the long winter. Mountain ash berries heavily loaded with snow and ice are blank white on blatant red.

There are tricks for every season. Flowering trees look redder if you shoot early in the cycle; red buds are on the same branch with pale, open blossoms. In fall, if you wait for some when tight leaves to blow off, the branches become filigree with colorful leafy accents – a graphic, non-standard fall image. In any season, look for a soaking rain to turn branches and trunks into strong black pictorial elements.

## Edges Everywhere

Birders, biologists, and botanists are fascinated by “edges”–defined as the boundary between two different habitats, where two communities commingle. These transitional zones have great richness and diversity – more varieties of plants and animals than live in a single zone. The meeting of woods and field, grassland and desert, upland and water are all edges. Such intersections make visually exciting photographs, with unexpected combinations of plants, animals and terrain.

Seasons have edges, too, with their own creative opportunities. An early dusting of snow paints the fall forest a chalky orange. Crocuses punch through a last wet snowfall with a brave chilly look.

By  
Libby Collins  
Hortulus



Wolf Kahn  
Silver Birches in Spring

# “FASCINATING RHYTHMS”

**GRETCHEN K. OWEN**

GC of Santa Barbara

**SHOW:** *Fascinating Rhythms*

GC of Santa Barbara

Music Academy of the West

May 2014

**AWARDS:** First and GCA Novice Award in Photography

**CLASS:** “On The Street Where You Live”—mono

A composition featuring Miraflores Estate

**STATEMENT OF INTENT:** “The open door of Miraflores beckons you to enter. Within, music is playing enhanced by beautiful architecture and enchanting gardens, which include the Bunya Pine.”





# PHOTOGRAPHY STUDY GROUP GOES TO MOAB, UTAH

by Crissy Cherry, GCA Photography Chairman, Lake Forest Garden Club

Seventeen enthusiastic and adventuresome GCA photographers descended upon Moab, Utah, home of Arches and Canyonlands National Parks, for 3 days of fun and intense learning. Colleen Miniuk-Sperry, assisted by Paul Gill, both renowned nature photographers and teachers, taught us in the field. The scenery was spectacular and the light superb – great conditions for improving both our ability to see and our photography skills.

We were randomly divided into A and B groups, assigned one of four cars and given a schedule that gave each group equal time at both the sites and with the teachers. We photographed in the early morning light and the golden hour in the afternoon. Midday was taken up by lunches in town, processing our photographs and sneaking a quick nap or a hike. Breakfast and dinner were either in the field or before or after our outings.



We learned how to read the light, to use polarizing filters and graduated ND filters, and to put our cameras in manual mode. Tripods were a necessity as were hiking shoes. Both instructors were great about giving us a tutorial before we started shooting and then helping us individually. Our only classroom time came the last afternoon and was a critique of two photos each that we felt needed help. This provided Colleen and Paul with an opportunity to further cement what we had learned.

Colleen emphasized **four important steps** in the creativity process:

1. Preparation, or filling your brain with ideas.
2. Incubation or visualizing your photos.
3. Illumination/inspiration, or encouraging the “Aha!” moment on location.
4. Verification or critiquing your results.

Everyone agreed that it was one of the best workshops they had participated in.





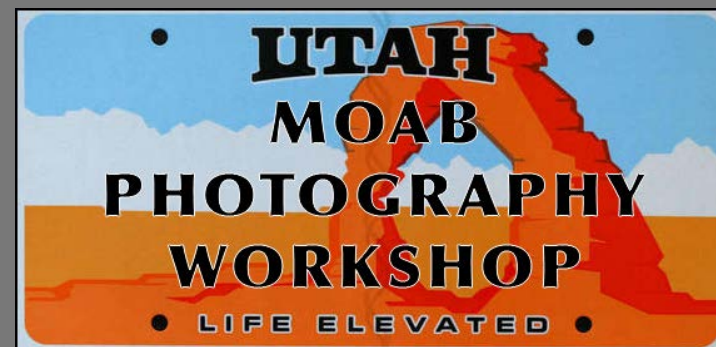
Crissy Cherry



Alice Farley



Evelyn Lorentzen-Bell



Malinda Bergen

Emilie Lapham



Helen Glaenzer







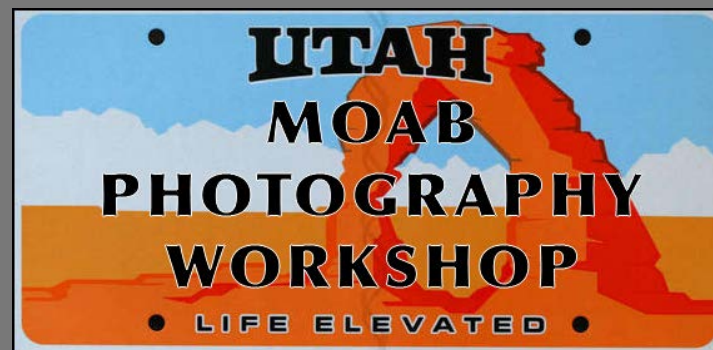
Patti Spaght



Mary Jo Beck



Martha Gangemi



Molly Jones

Ray Chilton

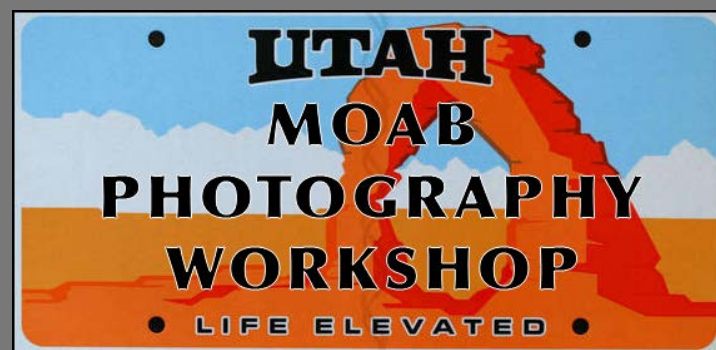
Linder Suthers







Leslie Purple



Mary Lou Righellis



Anna Forbes

Ulrike Schlafly



Karen McCormick

