



Instinctive Image

featuring...

Jan Lee, APSA, EPSA
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

By
Sue Marrugi



Big Bull Frog

Jan Lee, APSA, EPSA grew up in San Antonio, Texas. Her mother and father were active, avid painters and photographers who belonged to several artists' organizations in south Texas. Her mother taught art in the San Antonio school system, and her parents saw to it that Jan received extensive training in drawing, painting, sculpting, and photography. But it was father who instilled in her a life-long love for monochromatic art, especially photography. He believed "the bones" of all art starts out as monochrome, and that we build up or out from there.

Jan's father put her first camera in her hands when she was three years old. She spent many hours with him, carrying his gear, reading his light meter, holding his reflectors, and mixing his darkroom chemicals. In all that time, she cannot remember his ever taking a color image. He taught her to "see" in monochrome—an ability that she treasures to this day.

Jan met her husband, Wally, very shortly after moving to Oklahoma City in 1978. She came to start work at Tinker AFB as an Inventory Management Specialist for the US Department of the Air Force. A co-worker learned that she was a car enthusiast, and introduced her to Wally (who also worked at Tinker AFB) at a Sports Car Club of America road rally. The rest is history. She and Wally discovered many loves and interests in common, not the least of which is photography.

Jan worked for the Air Force in many logistics and financial capacities at Tinker AFB, OK; Wright-Patterson AFB, OH; Robins AFB, GA; and back to Tinker AFB, spending 20 of those years in supervisory positions. Jan retired after 30-plus years of service in August of 2008.

In addition to photography, her other loves are Wally, their cats, travel, meeting new people, history, bridge, tennis, ice hockey, National league

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baseball, reading science fiction and mysteries, and Formula One auto racing. Jan has a BA in Psychology from the University of Texas, and a MEd in Guidance and Counseling from Texas Tech University.

Jan and Wally have fallen in love with eastern Tennessee, especially the Smoky Mountains. When stationed in Dayton, Ohio in 1996, they joined a PSA-camera club there, and went with a group of them on their annual April trip to the Smokys. It was love at first sight, and except for one year when Jan was recuperating from an early April surgery, they have gone back to the Smokys in late April ever since. When they moved back to Oklahoma City in 2000, Jan and Wally were so enthusiastic about the Smoky Mountains that a group from their camera club went with them the next year. That core group still goes every April. The photo opportunities are endless.

Jan's other two favorite places to shoot are our amazing American desert areas (Arches, Zion, Bryce, Monument Valley, Dead Horse Point, Canyon Lands, etc), and the completely different (much wetter) beauty of Nova Scotia, Canada.

Since 1978, Jan has been an active member of the Oklahoma Camera Club. Jan has served on the club board several times, and is once again a board member. She served as club president, and is the only member ever to be elected president for a third term. She has also served several times as the General Chairmen of the Oklahoma International Exhibition. For the past eight years, she and Wally have taught a "Beginning Image" workshop in their home for fellow camera club members,



Ropes and Pulley



Devon Tower and Sculpture

concentrating on basic Photoshop and Elements techniques.

Jan joined PSA in 1987. Although her primary love in photography is monochrome prints, it does not stop there. She holds at least one Star in every one of PSA's Star paths except 3D.

For six years, she and Wally co-chaired the four classes of the Pictorial Print Divisions (PPD) competitions of the annual PSA International. In November 2009, she and Wally became the Color Projected Image Division (CPID) Star Ratings Co-Directors (SRD), processing Stars, Galaxies, and Diamond applications. Jan has processed all of the CPID conversion applications submitted since the July 2010 conversion to the universal Star ratings system. In the summer of 2012, Jan and Wally took over the SRD job for Electronic Imaging Division (EID) when that position was vacated.

Starting January 2013, Jan and Wally have



African Lion Cub

served as the Co-SRDs for the Projected Image Division (PID). They are the SRDs for both the PID Color Class (PIDC), and the Monochrome Class (PIDM). Jan is the only person to have processed any of the conversion applications for people who merged their CPID and EID merit award ratings into one new PIDC rating.

Jan was a member of the team that verified and re-cataloged all of the prints in PSA's Permanent Print Collection at PSA HQ, prior to their being moved. The team processed over 5000 prints, bringing records up-to-date in preparation for the

Big Red Pickup Truck



new appraisal and move to the ArtSpace Untitled facility. She worked closely again with group that achieved the prints collection's move to the University of Central Oklahoma in Edmond OK. She continues to work with the team to catalog new prints, as they are donated to PSA and become part of the Permanent Print Collection.

In 2014, as PSA Treasurer, Jan initiated and lead the effort that resulted in the PSA Headquarters being relocated. The PSA HQ is now housed in a spacious, attractive, and modern facility—one with the “connectivity” and floor space required to run smoothly. She encourages all PSA members who visit the Oklahoma City area to visit PSA Headquarters.

Jan served three years on the PSA Nominating Committee, serving in 2012 as chairman. She earned the Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) Distinctions of PPSA in 2010, and EPSA in 2012. She was elected to the Honor of APSA in 2011 for her service to PSA.

Jan became PSA Treasurer at the close of the 2012 PSA Conference. She was appointed to the position when the previous Treasurer asked to step down. After much soul-searching, she stepped down from this position at the end of January 2015, deciding her talents were better suited to serving PSA in other ways. Jan has served as the Chairman of the Exhibition Standards Committee since the end of the 2015 PSA Conference.

TECHNIQUE

When I shoot around Oklahoma City, I can often get out early in the morning. This is especially important in the summers here. Not only for the light, but also to be able to catch the insects when they are active before it gets too hot, and find dew on the flowers and leaves. Usually, the wind isn't quite so strong in the morning.

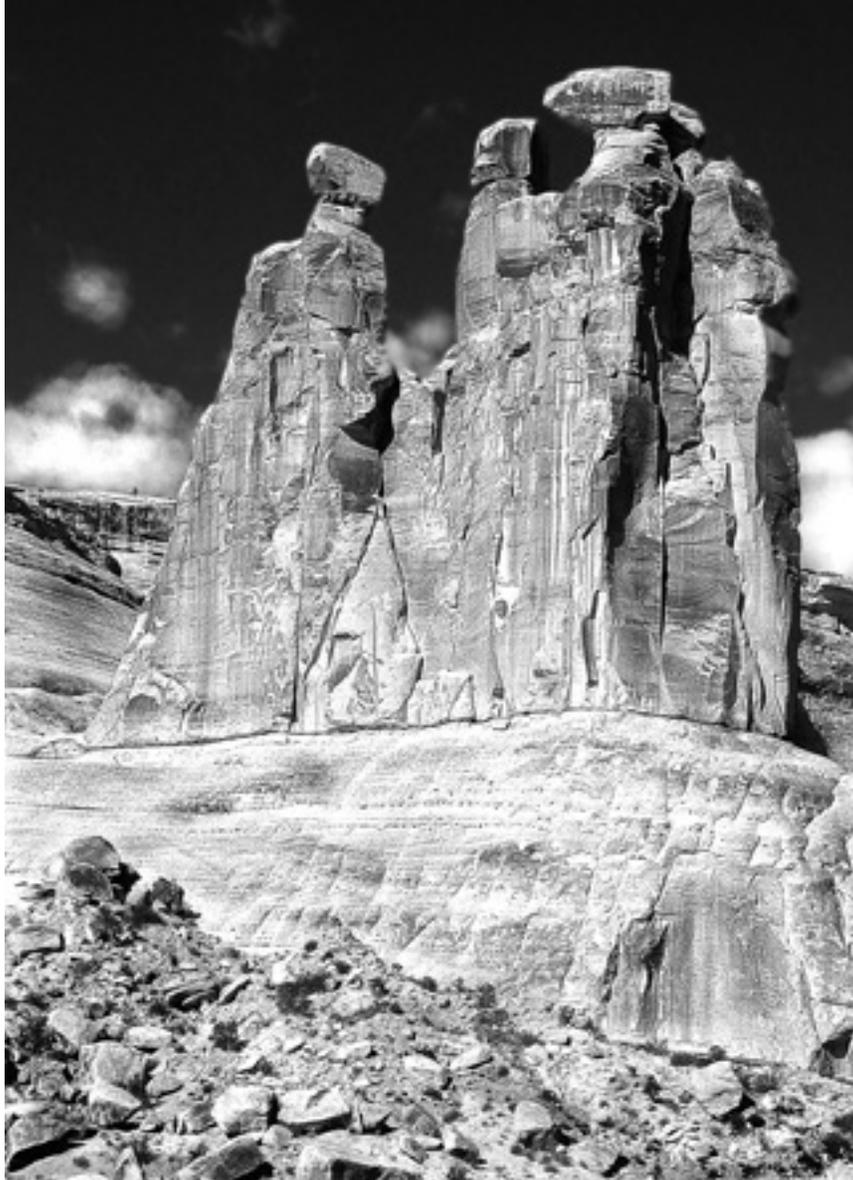
We do have awesome skies in Oklahoma, so I also often shoot in the late afternoon and early evening. Oklahoma City has endless possibilities for architectural photos, including the evening sun on the buildings, and cloud reflections in the glass.

Currently I am shooting with a Sony A77 Mark 2. My lenses are the Tamron 16-300 Zoom, and the Sony F2.8 100mm Macro. I am saving up for a good, modern dedicated electronic flash, but am "making do" now with some older, cobbled-together equipment. My camera is almost always on a tripod. Even with modern vibration reduction technology, I can get a blurry photo of a boulder on a calm day. My friends call me the "queen of blur," so my tripod is my constant companion.

I have been using Adobe Photoshop from the very beginning. I switched to the Creative Cloud with the start of that option. My favorite suite of plug-ins is Topaz. I have their entire collection, and would be lost without most of them. I also have all of Nik, and On1 Perfect Suite 10.1. All three are great. There are so many wonderful post-processing software systems available. You just have to find the one or ones that work the best for the kind of photography that you like to do.

My goal is always to shoot the best, "cleanest" image that I can in camera. I am elated when I can open up an image in my computer, and say, "Gosh. Nailed it!" And then, rename and save the file. However, we all know how often that happens, especially inasmuch as I am usually planning for a monochrome result.

The important thing to remember is to find equipment that you are comfortable with; whether it is the gear that took the initial data capture, or the computer program that helped you to bring your vision to life.



The Gossips—Arches NP



Saturday Night at the Rodeo



Our Symbol



ARTIST STATEMENT

Unless I am out specifically on a Nature shoot, or at an event I hope will provide Photojournalism opportunities, I am usually looking for monochrome images. I learned at a very early age to “see” in mono, and I am seldom completely wrong when I get the file open in my computer. Basically, I am more of an opportunist. I shoot things I see wherever I am, and think that I will enjoy working on and can make into interesting images. Sometimes I succeed—sometimes I don’t. And that is where the fun is, because my goal is to learn something from every image I work on.

I always strive for excellence, but I don’t expect perfection. I learned long ago that true excellence does not equal perfection, and never will. Whether in my own work, or when I am privileged to serve as a judge, I never reserve my highest praise for only the “perfect” results.

I hope for high technical quality, strong visual impact, an interesting and engaging story, a memorable perspective, or true beauty. I am happy when I feel I have reached any three of these. Occasionally, when I have worked really hard or gotten really lucky, I have achieved all of them. Those images are my dreams come true.

Inasmuch as my parents were both talented painters, I was lucky to be able to study drawing, painting, and sculpting from an early age. My father was also an avid photographer, who put my first camera in my hands when I was in kindergarten. Although I loved it, I was never very good at the painting. I loved the photography too, but was seldom really happy with my negative or slide. I never felt I reached higher than the craftsman level in my work. Today, the wonderful tools we have available to us to fine tune our digital captures are making it possible for me to finally become the artist that I always wanted to be. On the other hand, even that doesn’t really matter, because I am having just such a wonderful time!

Photos © Jan Lee, APSA, EPSA



Bud Ogle Cabin, Back Porch



He Came Back From Over There



This River Rocks