



# Distinctive Image

featuring...

**Joachim W. Dettmer, FPSA, MPSA**

Germany

By  
**Sharon Prislipsky**

For over thirty years **Joachim Dettmer, FPSA, MPSA**, this month's Distinctive Artist, has traveled the world in search beauty. While his body of work speaks for itself, his approach to photography is worthy of study, and perhaps emulation. His words and images encourage us to use photography to search for the really significant things in a more and more chaotic world.

Joachim recalls his first encounter with a camera in 1964. While serving as a member of the armed forces he had a friend who purchased a Leica M3. Joachim very much admired this camera and the seeds of his future passion were apparently planted at that time. However, a number of years passed before he began his journey in earnest. In the mid 1970s he encountered some of fine art photographer Ralph Gibson's graphic images. The simple subjects these images presented in a dramatic way sparked an enthusiasm for photography in Joachim that continues to this day.

In 1980, Joachim met his future mentor and friend, Hans A. Comotio, HonEFIAP. He became a member of the AFK Study Group near Cologne, Germany. This friendship with Mr. Comotio lasted for decades. Joachim's membership in PSA, which began in 1981, brought new opportunities to form friendships with like-minded photographers. Joachim says that this became his "playground." His work focuses primarily on fine art photography, photojournalism, and human interest subjects.

When he became a member of PSA, Joachim began as a slide-maker. He developed a personal style which has not changed since his early years in PSA. This can be seen by comparing his *PSA Journal* cover images from the mid 1980s. He likes "real movement" in photography. For more detail about his approach to motion, see his essay, *How to Catch Motion*, which was published in the *Journal* in September, 2007.

Honors and recognitions Joachim has



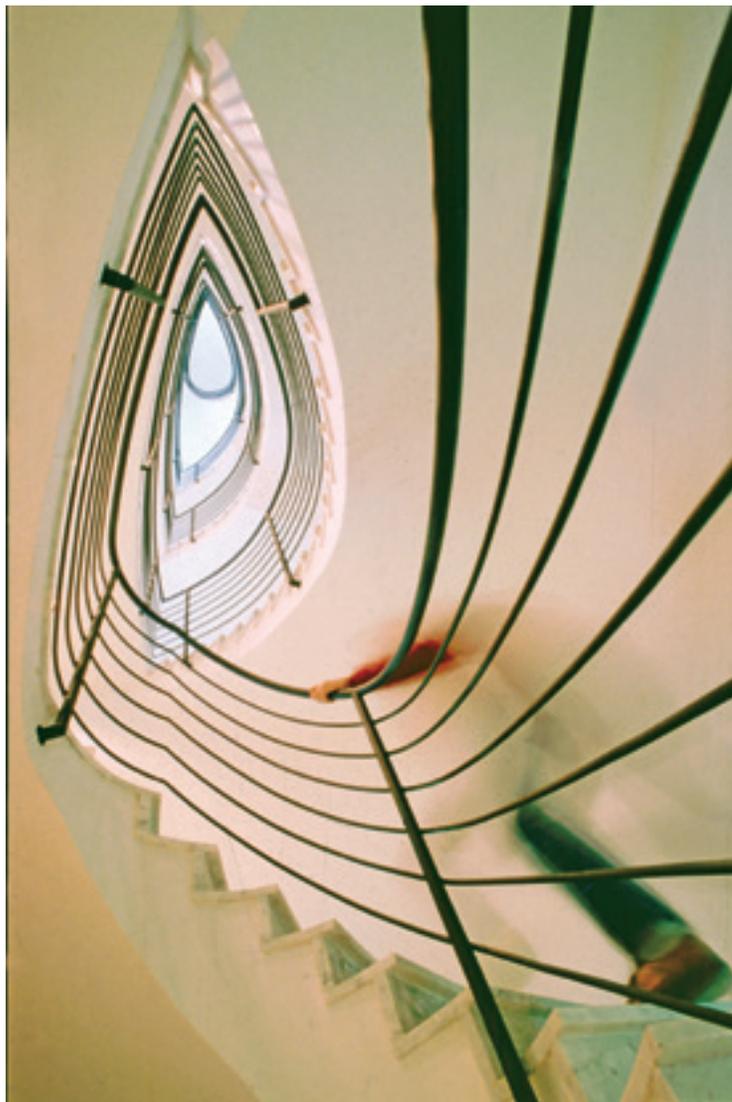
*Looping*

received include PID Galaxy 5, PJD 5 stars, PTD 4 stars, and an Editorial Silver Star. In addition, he has attained MFIAP, ASIIPC, DGPh, and twenty more international honors. In 2006 he was the recipient of the PSA International Understanding Through Photography Award.

Joachim's *PSA Journal* publications include *Planning Pictures* (February, 1986), *To Be or Not to Be Digital...* (March, 2004), *Learning by Losing* (June, 2005), and *Viewed Subjectively* (November, 2011). His written work and photographs also appear regularly in international publications and the daily press. His images have been published in numerous books and calendars, and frequently used in commercial advertising. Although his participation in PSA keeps him busy, Joachim is also a member of the German Federation for Photography.

The type of cameras Joachim prefers are APS-C cameras, which he uses primarily with universal zoom lenses. He likes equipment that is "hardy" and at times gladly makes use of a compact camera. For him, Photoshop® is his darkroom.

In Joachim's work it is possible to see hope and beauty. He travels the world and shows the rest of us the details of daily life we are likely to overlook. He presents his images in a way that emphasizes shapes, colors and forms. Joachim's website, [www.joachim-w-dettmer.de](http://www.joachim-w-dettmer.de), showcases his philosophy and a broad sample of his images.



Upstairs

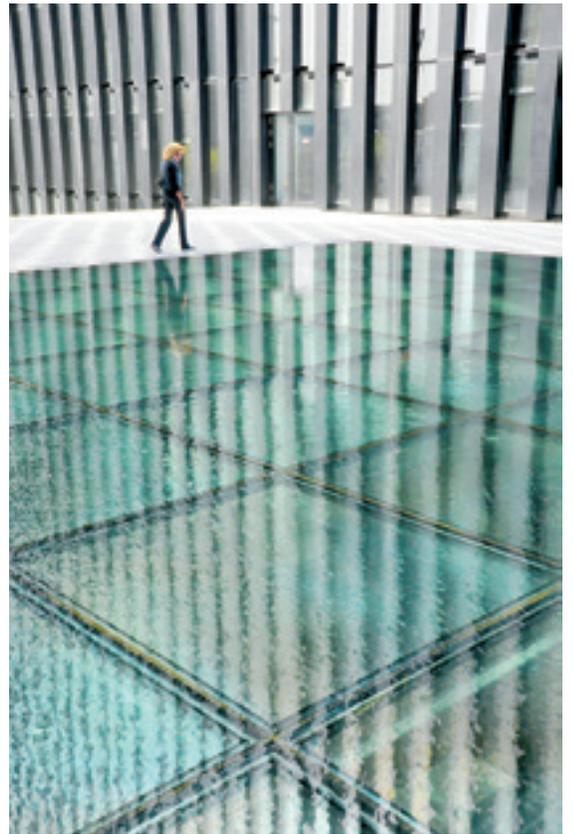


Icy



Grace

**Taking photographs for me is an urgent necessity—making my dreams, imaginations and emotions recognizable, for me and for others.**



Mikado



Wintermosiak

## Artist's Statement



For artistic photography I like themes you usually can't find in ordinary waysides. To express it another way, motifs found just around the corner normally do not offer room for my own interpretations. So I am not looking for the usual things, whose meanings and associations are commonplace. Instead, I will gladly take a stroll through nature, letting some air into my lungs and into my spirit. And if I last out the walk for one or two hours I will notice, hopefully, a gentle crackle inside the "gray cells," a brain wave, so to speak. The oxygen works... and I let my daydreams and imagination run their course. It is not necessary to have my camera with me continually, but always a notepad.

For me it's clear that creativity needs oxygen. But at first, it has hardly anything to do with a camera and a computer. Creativity demands a human brain plus imagination. Thus the very first step to most of my pictures was an idea. Later a camera came into play and at the end, perhaps a little bit... the computer. Taking photographs for me is an urgent necessity—making my dreams, imaginations and emotions recognizable, for me and for others.

I am really not a messenger or even an ambassador. That's why all my artistic pictures just have titles, but unlike photojournalism, no messages to the viewers. To create a work of art one need not have any purpose. It is purely and simply an end in itself. So I gladly accept from a hundred viewers a hundred different interpretations for each of my pictures. To my mind, an artist can't achieve more than this.



*Panflöte spielen*