



Distinctive Image

featuring...

Edgar Lower, FPSA, MPSA

Davenport, Iowa

The *PSA Journal* continues its *Distinctive Image* series, this time featuring Photographic Society of America (PSA) artist **Edgar Lower, FPSA, MPSA**, who in this issue shares his **Mountain Scenery** photography. Ed, who resides in Davenport, Iowa, has been a member of PSA since 1979.

A prolific exhibitor, Ed has a Galaxy 7 in the Color Projected Image Division (CPID); 2 Galaxies in the Nature Division; 3 Galaxies in the Photo Travel Division, a Diamond 6 Star in 3D (formerly the Stereo Division), 3 Stars in the Electronic Imaging Division (EID), and 3 Stars in Small Color Prints, all of which amount to a grand total of 1,512 acceptances and provided eligibility for Ed to be among the first group to earn a Master Distinction (MPSA) in July 2011. In addition to his acceptances, Ed has

received 48 Medals and 161 Honorable Mentions in PSA-recognized international exhibitions and 13 Medals for Best of Show at the Central Illinois Camera Club (CICCA) Salons. Two of his photographs have been displayed at the Figgi Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa. Ed has been a frequent judge in PSA-recognized international exhibitions for the Color Projected Image, Pictorial Prints, Nature and 3D (formerly Stereo) Divisions.

From 1995 to 2008 Ed, along with his wife **Connie APSA, MPSA**, evaluated and made recommendations on how to improve images for 48 PSA members. He arranged for judges to evaluate 20 PSA camera club photography contests from 2006 to 2010. For five years, Ed served on the *PSA Service Award Committee*, acting as Chairman of the Committee from 2009



Fall colors, Maroon Bells



Snow at Yosemite Valley

to 2010. Mr. Lower was elected an Associate of the Society (APSA) in 1998 and a Fellow (FPSA) in 2008.

In addition to his work for PSA, Ed Lower has been very active in the Central Illinois Camera Club Association (CICCA) and the North Central Camera Club Council (N4C). Service to CICCA included: serving on the Executive Committee and Chairman of the Salon Practices Committee; Vice President from 1996 to 1998 and President from 1998 to 2000. For his outstanding services to CICCA, Ed was named an Associate (ACICCA) and then a Fellow (FCICCA).

For N4C, Ed was the Stereo Contest Chair, Chairman of the Service Award Committee and member of the Founder's Award Committee. This PSAer was 2nd Vice President in 2004, 1st Vice President in 2005 and President of N4C in 2006. He received a Service Award Plaque in 1997 and the Founders Award in 2004. He also planned and arranged the programs for the N4C Spring Meeting in 2005. In addition, Ed is a member of the Quad Cities Photography Club and the Color Shooters Camera Club, for whom he serves as the Representative to N4C. He is

also a member of the National Stereoscopic Association (NSA).

On a personal level, Ed is a retired General Engineer, who received his BS in Mechanical Engineering in 1949 from the University of Illinois, and a MS degree in Industrial and Management Engineering in 1970 from the University of Iowa. Ed tells us, "Since my marriage in 1958, to my wife, Connie, we try to travel some each year. The objective of the travel, other than visiting relatives, is to sight see and to take photographs. We have been in all 50 states, all of the Canadian Provinces and the Yukon Territory, and twice to parts of Mexico. From 1984 to the middle of 2010 most of our travel was by motor home. We would pull a car behind the motor home in order to have transportation to see the local area. Living in the middle of the country we can travel north, south, east and west and can go a long way before encountering an ocean. Some trips have been to attend PSA Conferences and National Stereoscopic Association (NSA) Conferences. When we judge photography contests we see a lot of familiar scenes."

*Photos © Edgar Lower,
FPSA, MPSA*



Fall road to mountains

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Edgar Lower, FPSA, MPSA



Even though I like most all facets of photography, scenery seems to give me the greatest thrill. Driving in the mountains when I round a bend my excitement grows as the beautiful view changes constantly. I find it fun to make the mountains look small or enormous as I adjust my camera to take the various photographs that help me remember the enjoyable beauty. The spring and early summer nature awakening is awesome as I view the mountain slopes covered with new colorful wild flowers. When I lay on the ground to position myself to take a close-up picture, I am overwhelmed with how nature grows a tiny wild flower with such intricate detail and color.

I want my pictures to show what interested me in the first place and why I took that picture. I hope that when others view my pictures, they experience as much awe as I received when I was taking the picture. I also like to include vivid colors, so that is why I especially enjoy including fall foliage in my images. I feel that lighting, especially side lighting is very important to bring out detail in the subjects being photographed.

When I am out taking pictures, I delight when rapidly changing lighting conditions result in each picture taken being quite different. After I get to a photographic location I love to stay and try taking pictures at various angles of the beautiful scenery before me. A few years ago after packing a lunch and driving 80 miles one way, I got to breathtaking mountain scenery in Washington State with a lake and a snow capped mountain where I was thrilled to take many different pictures all day long. I was really excited when at one time I saw an unexpected sight of a yellow canoe with people in it in front of me on Maroon Lake in Colorado with the Maroon Bells Mountain beyond.



Mt. Hood reflection and boat



Fence, mountains and colored trees



Snake River by the Tetons

Technique

I enjoy taking photographs of mountain scenery especially in the Western United States. In the days when I were taking pictures on slide film I would set the camera to close down 1/3 f stop when I was over 4000 feet elevation. The reason for this is because at high mountain elevations the atmosphere is less dense and there is more ultra violet light that may have resulted in an over exposed image. With the advent of the new digital cameras this may not be necessary and now, I review my image on the LCD monitor of the camera to determine if I need to make adjustments.

Since I am a stereo photographer, I try where possible to include close objects in my regular camera images to portray a three dimensional effect even in a two dimensional picture. I especially like to include colored fall foliage in the mountain scenery pictures. Where possible if I can find a lake in front of a mountain I include something on the lakeshore, the reflection of the mountain peak upside down and then the snow-covered mountain peak beyond. If I do not find a lake then I try to include the colorful fall foliage in the foreground with the mountain peak in the background.

Because film and digital camera images have low dynamic range I may need to modify the image on the computer to open up the shadow areas using the shadow and highlights filter in Photoshop®. This helps to bring out detail in dark green pine trees and in other shadow areas of the image. Two other ways I compensate for the low dynamic range are to use split neutral density filters on my camera or I take three or more pictures of the same scene at different exposures and then use a High Dynamic Range (HDR) program on the computer to blend the images together to overcome the low dynamic range. If I use the HDR approach I always have my camera on a tripod. In addition, I use a polarizing filter on the camera lens to reduce reflections and to allow for greater color saturation in the final image.