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# Exploring and Expressing Points in Time through iPhoneography

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Exploring and Expressing Points In Time Through iPhoneography

By

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THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts,  
With a Major in Independent Film and Digital Imaging  
From the College of Arts and Sciences

Governors State University  
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I'm also thankful to movie makers and others who also honor photography in the moving image format.

And finally, thanks to Apple and all camera manufactures whose constant research advances technology and furthers a way to express "Points In Time."

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how iPhoneography extends a personal expression of lights, lines, patterns previously captured on film and digital devices through arts-based research that includes social media feedback.

This thesis explores the elements of photographing fleeting moments of time using new technology. This work investigates how to capture moments from daily life through recording the essence of light on surfaces and objects. Images arise from spontaneous and/or semi-spontaneous artistic moments. Visual investigations explore and question light, time, and space, and are categorized into the themes of Shapes, Shadows, and Showers.

The work has roots in some of America's most venerated photographers, who became early inspirations. They include Harry Callahan, Aaron Siskind, Joseph Jachna (a college professor of mine), and Minor White. Their points of view inspired me during my formative years as a photography student and have instilled in me the visual voice I use in my work to this day. Like many of these photographers, I looked locally and across the country for moments in time that moved me.

Photographs were captured using an Apple iPhone 5 and 6. Light and easy constant companions, they served accessible tools always in reach and served as a digital sketchbook. The iPhone allowed the capture of the immediacy of the moment using existing light. Kept on High Dynamic Range (HDR) mode, the camera amazingly caught highlight and shadow detail.

The resulting photographs contain unique configurations of abstract lines and patterns that are both complicated and balanced by light and dark. There exists in each image a juxtaposition of both cool and warm values, as well as horizontal, vertical, and curved lines.

As technology advances, photographers will have new tools with which to capture the moment. This work extends a previous artistic bent shaping the life arc that follows an artistic journey. In my research, I have utilized the now nearly ubiquitous camera phone to explore moments of daily life in a manner that I hope will encourage amateur and professional photographers alike to make the literal image abstract and thought-provoking. Instant images need not create instant interpretation; they can provoke and inspire.

## **Artist Statement**

As a trained studio photographer who controls lighting and capture, I recently decided to expand my work to leverage the clear advancements in mobile phone photography, to begin a new series of intimate abstracts.

This body of work includes a wide variety of subject matters, objects, and locations and features both interior details and exterior compositions often juxtaposing elements in new ways. Exhibit is divided into three categories: Shapes, Shadows, and Showers, with each image minimizing the conflict between foreground and background.

While new technologies will emerge, the interplay of light and focus will bring further joy as I explore them using methods yet unknown to me. This is a lifelong pursuit now set in a forward motion.

## Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how iPhoneography extends a personal expression of lights, lines, patterns -- and shapes, shadows and showers -- previously captured on film and currently with digital devices through arts-based research that included social media feedback.

Still photography is my passion.

Over time, I have expressed my visual points of view through technology of the day: initially with film cameras, then digital cameras, and now on a mobile smartphone digital camera devices: first with iPhone 5 then iPhone 6. While the media have changed, my passion has remained constant. Actually, my passion is now “exposed” more frequently and disseminated more widely through the immediacy that the Apple iPhone camera allows coupled with social media (Facebook). Instant feedback provided commentary that was encouraging and “eye-opening.”

*“Points In Time”* blends my vision, technology, time elements and easily transfers to social media. Like snapshot photography, the work captures a moment – my view of that moment – and allows me to share it – with my commentary – around the world immediately. Through Internet connectivity, and various social

media platforms such as Facebook, the shared images begin a feedback loop of comment, resulting in more eye opening possibilities for the next capture.

Viewers of “*Points In Time*” imagery can consider it my digital sketchpad.

Images are usually shot in High Dynamic Range (HDR). This feature retains highlight detail plus shadow detail – broadening the amount of values or tones in a digital image. Adding this effect broadens the color spectrum in my images so bright skies retain more color and shadows more tones. With my smartphone camera I’m able to point and shoot, compose as I aim the camera at the subject or scene. Visualizing the final image in my mind’s eye at-a-glance results in quick decision-making: vertical or horizontal; macro or micro; black and white or color. While technology allows filtering, layering, textures and more to be applied, I prefer the purity of the moment. Due to the low resolution of each capture, compared to a non-phone digital camera, when I printed an image I had it printed small, thus retaining the detail as best as possible.

Seeing light and its effects are central to “*Points In Time*.” As I awake in the morning, I often see light literally bounce off surfaces in my kitchen or living room, which is an exciting way to begin the day. Often I capture and post images on social media with a recurring title of “Morning Light.” Comments received are usually favorable, yet people often me ask about the subject since it’s so abstract. (Several of these morning light images are displayed in this thesis.) The impulse to shoot and capture in the moment is a refreshing way to start the day. Light is a necessary factor in creating a photograph, and the power of light, its strength or

shallowness, attracts me. Without light, images aren't possible. Like a moth to flame, I'm attracted to light: its properties and subtleties. The iPhone camera technology is quite impressive, not only with its optics capturing sharp images, close or far, but its ability to capture "neutralized color." Prior to shooting digitally, a film photographer usually placed a slight color tint gel/filter in front of the lens to neutralize and remove any colorcast in the scene. If one was photographing outdoors in a shaded area, usually a slight yellow filter was added to remove the blue colorcast. In the past, color temperature was measured by using a color temperature meter. This type of specialized meter would measure the Kelvin (the light color that is measured on a temperature scale) and present the proper complimentary filter. This would then be used to compensate the colorcast to neutralize the scene or subject to be photographed. Today these filters are unnecessary with advanced cellphone cameras, so the final image is automatically captured neutrally and colorfully. Taking photos in shaded areas outdoors or indoors with rooms lit by incandescent or fluorescent bulbs emerges automatically neutral in color, with the final color in each image being the best as possible.

To better illustrate this color temperature concept, is a series of images I captured while out for dinner at a local restaurant. The first capture is of my ice-filled water glass covered with small droplets of condensation that struck my interest, (fig. #1). The glass is backlight by natural daylight near a window, neutral in color and tone. While in focus, up close, I composed the facets of the water glass in the lower thirds of the image, working with "Rule of Thirds", a compositional

concept. As I reviewed the water glass, I rotated it and brought the backside to the front, capturing the larger droplets of condensation (fig. #2).



Fig. #1.



Fig. #2.

Keeping the composition similar to the prior image, I studied the neutral daylight quality and uniqueness of the image. Would a viewer see these images as I saw them, an abstraction or more as literal images? Exploring more options with the water glass I noticed if I placed the small votive candle, which was on our table

for ambiance, behind the water glass, a warm amber glow of light filled the glass (fig. #3).



Fig. #3.



Fig. #4.

The droplets of water were becoming larger as the glass gradually continued to sweat in the warm environment. Viewing the glass in placement to the votive candle from behind, I increased the warm glow bringing the water glass closer to the votive candle (fig. #4).

Keeping my point of view inside the room and towards the votive candle, I reduced the neutral daylight color from the side window. By splitting the difference, showing some of the window light from behind and positioning the votive candle behind the water glass I was able to mix both the cool blue daylight and warm amber flame color temperatures (fig. #5). The composition was adjusted so the water glass facets were positioned in the upper third area. The darker lower area adds contrast and depth to the overall image. This photo is titled “052915-2011” and was included in the final series of images exhibited within the Showers theme.



Fig. #5. 052915-2011

So why try varying changes within an image to make it “right?” There seems to be an infinite amount of ways to make it fresh and exciting for viewers on Facebook and Instagram viewers to appreciate. It’s no longer necessary to load cameras with film in limited exposures per roll; today’s digital process is endless, as are the images.

As exhibited here, you note that I'm drawn to unusual effects of light as it illuminates a subject or scene. Light passing through a glass on a table, refracting the light or casting a long shadow interests me and prompts a photo capture. The exploration begins sometimes without making any changes. Occasionally the first capture is the best and used for my final image; sometimes the last one is my best. The results have varied and the process always intuitive. When the light is high and the shadows are long, the contrast in highlight and shadow can create a pattern or emphasize the texture. Coming in close and focusing on a detail, to abstract and simplify the scene makes for unique images.

While driving, I can run across a striking roadside view in the sky or on the ground and I would stop my vehicle and take a photo outside my window. The time of day and direction I faced influenced light quality. Skies vary with cloud texture and how the light passes through them. Composing details of the urban landscape such as viewing telephone lines with birds perched on them in front of a stormy sky can be an exhilarating natural blend of calm and storm. These moments in time are brief, but the camera is always ready. Such images of my work are included here, like the photographs of rain droplets up close on my car window with the background diffused, which further abstracts and breaks down the details. This technique has been useful when looking to simplify a scene that otherwise would be too busy visually to photograph. Water reflecting on surfaces can also be used in a creative manner, as it mirrors but softens the details in a

scene that otherwise would be tack sharp and literal. My visual direction is to remove the obvious as much as possible.

In addition to capturing the picturesque and abstract, I seek contrast to highlight my work. Contrast means opposites in values or how several items can be viewed together. Light and dark values in a photograph are the most obvious, or when the subject matter is seen with opposing textures or patterns to create a balanced and pleasing composition.

My photographic series "*Points In Time*" continues the critical discourse surrounding current and emergent photographic technologies and what can be captured.

## Literature Review

*“Self-discovery through a camera? I am scared to look for fear of discovering how shallow my Self is? I will persist forever however...because the camera has its eye on the exterior world. Camera will lead my constant introspective back into the world. So camerawork will save my life.”*

- Minor White

Recalling the first time I viewed the photographs of Minor White (fig. #6), was truly a revelation of “Self.” To reflect on one’s point of view of the world in the frame of the camera begins with the basis of one’s love of life.

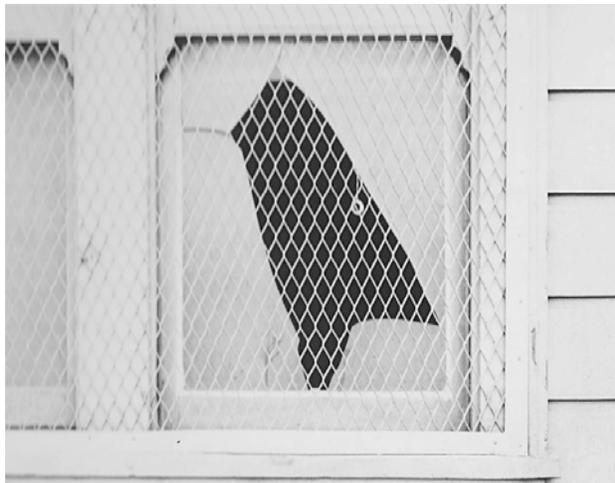


Fig. #6. *San Francisco, 1948*

My career as a visual artist began with a clear understanding of the simple forms, basic color theory, and the art and science of using light for photography. In a particular intense period of creative activity between 1974 and 1978, as a student,

I produced photographs using the camera as a tool for self-discovery. How could my images not be a mirror of myself? My visual direction during the course of those years included street scenes, details of those scenes up close, and a variety of portraits with family and friends.

My work began as a series of “a cinema of stills” and called on the viewer to be an active participant in viewing the photos captured within my point of view. Working with simple compositions, utilizing the compositional concept of “Rule of Thirds” my imagery developed into a style of the masters artists I was exposed while an undergraduate student. Becoming aware of the simplistic forms and shapes and how to develop one’s eye to simplify became my own personal direction as a young photographer.

As White (2014) mentions “..in the sparsity and simplicity of the house a sense of Zen was achieved” (p.15), my own lifestyle and work proceeded in a similar direction. Breaking down the images to their simplest form and detail became the ultimate goal as growth through my camera work.

Joseph Jachna, my professor at the University of Illinois, instructed us to create the calm and mystical photographs that contradict the world of trouble and chaos. The feel was to have a therapeutic quality to the images, calming the viewer and the photographer alike. Author Steven Klindt, who wrote the accompanying book of Jachna’s 1980 exhibit quotes him as having said, “One thing I’ve found, there

is always somebody who mentions the steadiness or calm in my work, the product of introspection” (p. 6). Jachna’s words and work included the most common and basic elements of this world – water, rocks, clouds, light – and revealed through them the secrets of his own life (fig. #7).



Fig. #7. *Water Close-up*, 1959

I could see it was a process of surprise, of discovery, which I too discovered in the images captured using my cellphone camera in “*Points In Time*”.

Also influenced by earlier photographers, Jachna was a student of at the Institute of Design in Chicago. He introduced me to Chicago-based photographer Harry Callahan and Aaron Siskind.

Harry Callahan (fig. #8) in my eyes, was a master of modernistic experimentation. My work went towards the same range of themes as his, which includes nature, buildings and people. His day-to-day explorations are how my own thesis project

moved forward on a daily basis, capturing the forms and shapes that would develop into this body of work after a period of almost three years.



Fig. #8. *Lake Michigan, 1949*

Studying Callahan's imagery I feel his work is deceptive in its economy and seemingly simplicity of approach. His images can be considered timeless, as I would like mine to be in decades to come. Subject matter that is general like nature has that possibility to be timeless if there is an omission of time-pegged fashion or contemporary objects styling visible.

Callahan began as a clerk in the accounting department of Chrysler Motors in Detroit. As one who deals with checks and balances in his livelihood, it seems a natural step to create images with perfect equilibrium. To capture an image one day as unique as it could be might not be possible the next day, due to changes in light and nature. His, as well as my life, captures this search for equilibrium in the exploration of new and exciting images. The mere process was to achieve simple precision in an artistic style.

He hoped that, “when the photographs are looked at they will touch the spirit of people” (Salvesen, 2006, p. 11). As in my work, I’ve heard questions about how and where that image was captured: “how did you I see that?,” With that simple inquiry, I’ve touched the viewer, provoking curiosity about my visions in the making of a photograph. I search for depth and shadows in my work, occasionally exposing for the shadows as was taught as a rule in classical photography. But to search for meaning in the darkest places, meanings of self, is part of the process I hope to develop in my career.

Though Callahan was self-taught, he influenced me as one who chose the medium with complete dedication and faith. His life was his art in a highly disciplined but intuitive manner. As I worked on my body of work, I too sought perfection, dedicating moments in time, sometimes seconds and sometimes minutes, to capture the best image possible.

Two artists who influenced Callahan’s life were Ansel Adams and Laszlo Moholy Nagy. Adams represents the romantic tradition in photography, capturing the beauty of nature without any darkroom trickery. Moholy stands for the formalist tradition: that photography and its processes could be manipulated like any other graphic medium. Even though my images were captured as real to their situation, I was able to add the camera’s feature of HDR (High Dynamic Range) retaining detail in the highlights and shadows, details not always obtainable in basic photography.

My project began as a challenge to myself, not only searching for solutions, but about obtaining the possibilities. Working with droplets of water on glass, a reflection in a cup of coffee, snow on a windshield, tiled walls or shadows on the base of a table; these are just a few stimuli that pointed me in a new direction. My work was exploratory, expressive as much as experimental. Through a period of growth I was able to discover, refine and simplify the complex.

From the photographers who inspired me, I feel openness, freedom and curiosity; these are prerequisites for intuition. I try to maintain these with effort, discipline and patience, and have used these same words with my students. Working with favored subjects and themes (shapes, shadows, and showers) I feel the need to explore the options even more. To be open to new ways of seeing, I enjoy the freedom without self-imposed technical issues using the cellphone camera.

To see that hard work is my only reward and not to fear the process I photograph continuously, when I see the right light, often with a good idea or strong feeling. Sometimes these photos are poor, not interesting, but they develop my seeing and help later in other photos.

Like Callahan, I feel that once you have a style - you're dead. One has to evolve and move forward and transcend. There has to be a sense of tension, that between form and tension. The term "opposites attract" I believe is true, and I use it as a visual concept - light and dark, far and near, warm and cool (in color values).

Transforming the mundane is key to my work, and with that thought I try to bring the viewer to a new level, or understanding on how I view the world around me. Looking at a my shadow on a sidewalk, is more than just a shadow (fig. #45). It's the way the varying lights above me cast shadows at different angles, as well as the view of the concrete sidewalk below my feet – filled with crack and textures. Playing with a simple concept, the image uses these complex features and simplifies the final image.

Like Callahan who created a series of abstract light studies of reflections on water/ponds, my studies are that of shadows and how their depth and darkness add mystery and intrigue. Searching mostly during the day as the sunlight affects objects and surfaces it's a time for experimentation, moving in close and using selective focus. Concentrating on how to decide where to point the camera is where the challenge begins. Rarely does a moment truly bring about a whole new way of seeing, but remaining open to that possibility became essential to my work.

Photographer Aaron Siskind was described in the following words by Gilles Mora (2014):

In the vast movement that was American modernism, Siskind was the artist who best brought together photography and the art world of his time, neither rejecting the specific virtues of the former nor paying pointless allegiance to the latter, even as he dealt with issues common to

both: the picture space and perspective within it, and the object as an expressive formal goal at the core of an individual poetics he saw as the ultimate requirements for the artistic act (p.14).

His work brought a visual mastery with his unique language receptive to other art forms. In my comparison to Siskind's work, the wet surface of a parking garage (fig. #69) can be seen as an abstract photograph of tire tracks after a rain or one of white and black paint streaks on a dark gray canvas. This image transcends its basic origin and can be viewed as one of two mediums. Is this image one of non-objective paintings or contemporary abstraction as a photograph? It's up to the viewer.

Siskind's closeness to the abstract expressionists in the 1940s reinforced his identification with the painters of that time, such as Willem De Kooning, Franz Kline, and Adolph Gottlieb. His photographs related more to the contemporary styles of painting than those of photography.

He always saw himself as part of a documentary tradition to which he had given an expressive shot at. Stated in a Guggenheim Foundation grant application in 1956, it reads as, "...fidelity to the object and my instrument, the clear-seeing lens, is unrelenting; transformation into an aesthetic object is achieved in the act of seeing, and not by manipulation" (Mora, 2014, p. 19).

In my image of a flooded forest (fig. #44), one can view three surfaces within the image: the ground below the water level, the reflection of the trees on the water surface, and a tree trunk above the water level. This three-dimensional abstraction reconfigured the photographed surface and removed it from its real environment.

Like Siskind's work (fig. #9) I rarely experiment in post-production. Whatever I do seems like natural growth, from myself and my knowledge of art. The imagery in my series is rooted in direct documentary style – capturing what is real in a unique manner, abstract and up close.



Fig. #9. *Chicago*, 1957.

I find myself making straight photographs, working on a flat field, isolating images so that the tonalities/values seem to be almost controlled – which is something that a pianter does, using objects in a symbolic way. In the future my direction will be to be pure to the process.

## **Methodology**

To answer my thesis question, I applied an arts-based research approach. This included a literature review, museum visits, posting images and considering feedback on Facebook, and ultimately, the taking of iPhoneographs that became my “*Points In Time*” series.

In reviewing the literature, I was reminded of Joseph Jachna’s 1980 book, *Light Touching Silver*, that surprisingly revealed how much he had influenced my work style. The twenty-eight page book was produced in conjunction with an exhibit of his photographs from 1959 to 1980 held at the Chicago Center for Contemporary Photography at Columbia College in Chicago. Jachna was a student who studied with instructors Aaron Siskind and Harry Callahan at the Institute of Design. After graduating from the Institute of Design in 1961 with an MS degree, he began teaching there as well. The work shown in his exhibit presents the concept of simplicity by restricting the amount of references with the image, or narrowing down.

My own desire in my work is to simplify, to transform the subject to its basic core, strip all unnecessary parts and excluded them from inside the viewfinder, in this case, the screen on the cellphone’s camera. All images captured and presented are full frame, cropping is done as the image is taken, not after.

Throughout my career as a professional photographer, I relied on film and digital cameras to fit the purpose of the shoot. I selected appropriate cameras, lights and equipment to best capture the chosen environment. Therefore, in my new work, I naturally turned to my already-constant companion, my Apple iPhone, which would benefit my research with its built-in camera tool. This portable, reliable, and adaptive camera had the ability to work in a variety of lighting conditions and times of day, which allowed me to more widely further my art techniques and explorations.

The built-in device in the iPhone is an 8-megapixel camera that captures still images as well as video. Basic features include auto focus and tap-on-focus to move the camera's focus to a specific area in the viewfinder. This feature is necessary when off-centering your subject and using limited depth of field or when shooting up-close macro images. I never use the on-camera flash, but when needed it can be a useful feature when shooting in low light or an evening scene.

The iPhone allows one to capture images in a variety of formats. You can choose to take vertical or my preference of horizontal images (like a DSLR camera), square photos (reminiscent of medium format film), or panoramic photos (for landscapes or scenes filled with horizontal points of interest). However, if one of these formats is not preferred for the final image the phone also includes a cropping feature.

Another option, one I rarely use, is the different color filter modes in which you can capture your photos. To use this filter effect simply press the three overlapping gray circles icon at the lower right corner of the camera screen. You have the option of viewing live the original image plus eight filter effects with the nine thumbnails - three across and down multi-images on the screen. Choices include: Mono (basic black and white, or “b/w”), Tonal (full b/w tonal range), Noir (contrasty b/w), Fade (similar to partially desaturated in Photoshop), None (color mode as is), Chrome (saturated color), Process (similar to the cross-processing film technique), Transfer (warm color palette), and Instant (the off color cast or tint captured when shooting a Polaroid). These color (and b/w) modes enable endless creativity. Once the image is selected from the filter mode, it can be previewed for effect and photo capture.

For this photo series I continuously used the camera feature named HDR (High Dynamic Range). Capturing an image with HDR, unlike one without this setting, extends the range of detail in the photo, retaining highlight detail as well in the subtle shadow detail. This effect is much needed when capturing images in contrasty situations, such as a bright and sunny outdoor scene. The final result has more color values retaining detail that would otherwise be over or underexposed and not visible in the final image.

The iPhone camera is an amazing tool, which utilizes basic Adobe Photoshop-like effects that are similarly simplified and easily manipulated by the touch of one’s

hand on a phone screen rather than spending time with image editing software in post-production. While I understood the editing options available to me within the camera's software, I purposefully did not apply many of these features to my images, instead keeping more to the purist approach of my film photographer predecessors such as Harry Callahan or Aaron Siskind. For example, in my body of work I retained the original proportion of every image on display since I cropped the photographed subject during capture.

## **Story/Workflow History**

While working in the commercial photography field, years before with film, my workflow was quite the opposite as to how I am working today. Even though I use light as the main ingredient to create my images, along with composition, focus and point of view, how I made photographs for many years has changed quite dramatically.

Twenty years ago I was awarded a large advertising project that enabled me to challenge myself creatively, first as a studio based photographer and second, as an artist. Using 4x5 color transparency sheet film I knew the process would be tedious and I'd have to be meticulous to focus on the details for each photo taken.

The client was Fujifilm Photo USA, Inc. and their product line included electronic imaging, photo/film processors and digital proofing devices. The client hired me to photograph these items used in the printing industry for promotional collateral materials known as sellsheets. Most of these items had hard edged, boxed shapes, encased in mundane putty gray housings and were in need of being photographed in a unique style. It was my job to make them visually exciting and I was ready for the challenge.

Being that the items were bland and boring in both texture and shape, the art director created a color palette for the system of items to liven up the graphic

design for use in the completed printed materials. The specific color selected for each item was to be used in lighting the appropriate color for each category.

Green was selected for the Output Systems, Blue for Input Systems, Red for Proofing Systems, Yellow for Film Systems, and Violet for Plate Systems. As I lit each machine in the designated color, it was important to still include some of the original neutral color of the item in the final photo. To include more dimension to each item a streak of color, one with a yellow/orange value was chosen to add warmth to each final image.

With this lighting formula – chosen product category color, streak of yellow/orange, including a touch of the original item’s color, the project began. Meticulously adjusting the lighting we worked for several hours on each machine/items on location at the Fujifilm corporate headquarter where these items were on display. Besides the use of color, part of the creative process included making adjustments for controlling the plane of focus since we were working with a 4x5 view camera. This view camera technique enabled me to increase or decrease the area of focus with each item. Besides adjusting the plane of focus with the camera’s position we were also able to control depth of field (amount of image in focus) with the aperture of the camera’s lens. Limited depth of field was primarily used for the series. While we worked in this style, we would also photograph each item as is, all in view. We’d compose the overall item in frame with white light, no color gel, sharp in focus from front to back, to be used for other advertising purposes the client needed.

The 4-page imagesetter machine named FUJI Celix 4000 (fig. #10) was photographed mainly with a green gel. This photo, completed first in the series, was to be used for the final sellsheet cover image. This artistic styled photograph became the basis as the visual direction for the whole project, which included over 20 items to be photographed in the system.

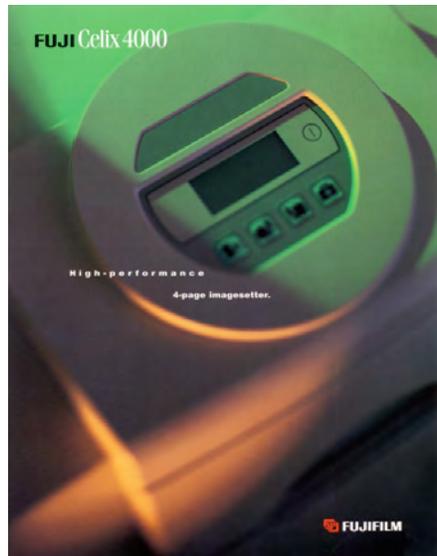


Fig. #10.

Making adjustments, by tweaking and fine-tuning the lights and focus point, enabled me to use my creative skills as an artist/photographer. Placement of the lights and controlling the highlights, shadows, yellow value and some neutral tone were studied carefully during each session. Specific features of each machine were placed in focus from sharp to soft, directing the viewer's eye for each final photo taken. Decisions were made visually as to which feature to highlight. Reviewing the surface details and features prior to each session helped create unique images in the end.

Red gel was the chosen color for the image proofing device named FUJI First Look (fig. #11). Note that extra time was taken to highlight the dotted surface texture. This feature/detail was required to be enhanced while creating the final image. Details of each item were of main concern for the client, while creating a somewhat abstract fine art image for visual effect. While we worked on this style, we continued to photograph each one literally, as a whole item, white light, no gels, for other advertising purposes.

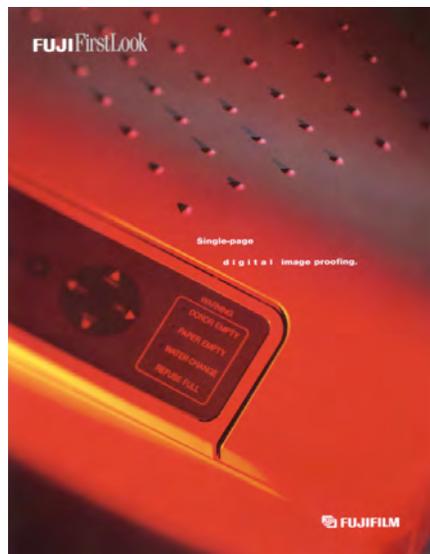


Fig. #11.



Fig. #12.

Yellow gel was chosen for this item named in the FUJI HQ Film System (fig. #12). We carefully rolled and placed the translucent piece of film in front of the camera's lens. Adjusting the plane of focus at the upper edge, reducing the focus as the image moved downward. Lighting a white wall behind the rolled film with the designated yellow gel we did not need to add a warm yellow value, but retained some neutral tone in the reflection of the film's glossy surface.

Years have passed and I recall every detail and process needed to complete each image. With the complexity of the process, from what photo equipment to use and how to use it – it still came down to seeing the light and feeling the visual composition to fit within the printed page it was intended for.

Photography has been my livelihood and as I completed this project the visual process seemed easier to do as I simplified the effect. Creating quality images for clients who were looking for images outside the literal, was the goal for future projects and a goal for my future as an artist working with light.

Shortly after this project another advertising one with similar issues came along. The client was a silver jewelry design company by the name of Esse Designer Sterling. The graphic designer had remembered seeing the Fujifilm samples and felt I had the vision and skills her client needed.

Similar to the Fujifilm series this photo project (sales catalog) had two parts to it. One part was to present sharp and crisp, full of detail images, and the other to use the artistic look with quality lighting but limited depth of field/focus to highlight certain features. The catalog had “divider” pages, which is a page used to divide the section in the catalog from other sections. Usually this page is a generalization of the items to be seen within a few pages in the catalog. Items shown might be the most photogenic or ones that are best sellers for the company for each section.

Once the designer showed me her design requirements we went into action collaborating on this project. Fabric chosen by the client for the background for each divider page was presented and placed on set.

We created loose waves in the surface of the fabric for the jewelry pieces to be placed within. In one of the first pages we selected three similar silver rings that worked well together for that section. Placing one of the rings, an ebony stone ring in front of the grouping of three, we worked the lighting to capture a pleasing highlight on the ebony stone.

Working on composition with the other two, we casually placed them on the fabric, and fine-tuned the lighting, retaining detail, yet keeping it subtle. To make this image less literal, I reduced the depth of field so the ring in the foreground was the sharpest of all three, less in focus towards the background (fig. #13).



Fig. #13.



Fig. #14.

This pleasing effect and the right composition created the artistic image the designer was looking for. The opposite page and those after were filled with similar types of jewelry, well lit, tack sharp and typical for catalog pages.

Another image on a divider page was one with two similar style bracelets (fig. #14). Carefully placing them on the fabric, we created waves to surround their shapes, making them flow on the page. Fine tuning the lighting, adjusting the links, and highlighting the clasp made this image quite successful. The process of working artistically became an enjoyable process as we continued with more divider pages.

Visualizing the effect needed for the image(s) to work on set were becoming more natural and easy to create. My artistic skills learned as a painter now turned photographer were being used effectively, making quick decisions on set, adjusting the light(s) and working on composition.

Ten years had passed and I was searching to create a series of images to fulfill my coursework for my Master of Arts degree in Photography. Controlled lighting in the studio (on products and people) has always been my style working with advertising and design clients. The type of work for my series would evolve from this direction – controlling the light on my subjects/objects and developing my inner vision as a fine artist.

While traveling with my family, our hotel room had a diffused glass door. At one moment in time my daughter rested her face and hand against it and I took the photo (fig. #15). This image became my visual direction and effect for the complete photo series.



Fig. #15. *Inspiration*, 2006.

As I viewed the inspirational image my newest series would be an exploration using light and focus to simplify items at their true essence. While directing the light on these objects I was planning to define shapes and shadows to accentuate segments from realism to abstraction.

Once back in the photo studio, I recreated the natural light effect as best as possible. By placing the lights from the back side of the set lighting up a diffused sheet of material. I dispersed the lighting from behind towards the camera, experimenting with various angles and types of lights till the right formula worked for the right effect. My photographic process now allowed for control and consistency. The next step was to place and rest varying objects behind the

surface parallel to the camera. Simple houseplants were easily accessible so I carefully placed them behind the diffusion material. The first series then slowly started to develop before my eyes, titling the series “Floral”, using a wide variety of flowers and plantings.

“*Leaves*” (fig. #16) and “*Two Leaves*” (fig. #17) are images of the same green leaf plant, making slight adjustments behind the diffusion material and rearranging its position. Each time an adjustment was made, it was like making a quick sketch and moving onto another. The process moved forward and working again with light, composition and color I was able to create a series of images that would be included in my MA exhibit titled “*Diaspora – Dispersing the Light*”.



Fig. #16. *Leaves*, 2006.



Fig. #17. *Two Leaves*, 2006.

One interesting characteristic of this process was that images would stay in focus and gradually soften and blur when positioned farther away from the diffusion material. Light makes it possible for me to create images, and yet focus enables me to limit and define the details of each item I explore. It’s this area of transition – from sharp to soft focus that piqued my interest!

As in other artistic project in the past I controlled the depth of field (range of focus) by changing the aperture of the lens. But with this process, depending on the item being photographed, even though the lens was focusing straightforward towards the diffusion material, the depth of the item would change the focus points. I explored the sharp to softness effect as it appeared naturally, and working composition within the frame to make each image work well for my series. All images were captured as seen through the digital camera's viewfinder. The only post-production enhancement in Photoshop was to clean an object's minor flaws, dust spots, and to slightly increase image contrast.

Once I felt I exhausted the floral category I moved onto another one, this time with glassware and plastic items. The second series was titled "Translucent" for obvious reasons, being the glass and plastic items let light pass them through as the lighting and positions changed. Even though the light passed through, each adjustment with the lighting and position of the object(s) created unique images. Simplifying the effect was key, coming in close, working composition and exposing for mid tones and dark shadows. "*Vessels*" includes simple household items of three plastic tumblers placed in varying positions on set behind the diffusion material (fig. #18). One shows the top of the tumbler opening face to camera, and two shown standing upright, one placed higher than the other; creating a pleasing composition. This image was an exercise on composition and negative space – the multiple circular forms add intrigue to the overall composition.

Highlights would overexpose and be nondescript so the tones were necessary to create the abstract shapes of lines and circles against the diffusion material. Careful adjustments had to be made under this controlled lighting environment to create properly exposed images as in “*Wine*” (fig. #19) of two wine glasses.

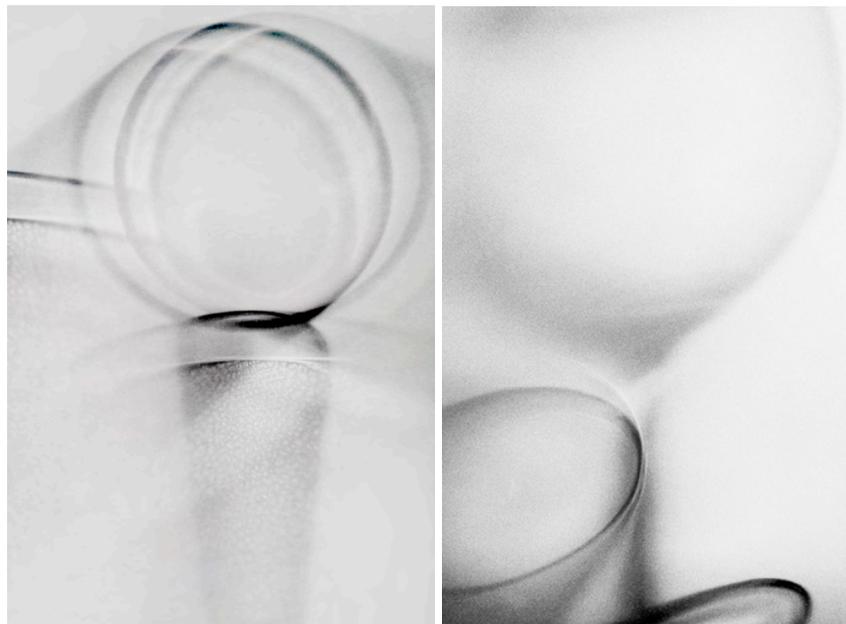


Fig. #18. *Vessels*, 2007.

Fig. #19. *Wine*, 2007.

Working in a comfortable state of mind the third and final series moved in an opposite direction to challenge myself and work with a different subject matter in the studio. I chose to work with models after testing myself on set and titled the next series “*Human Form*”. The models became a blackened silhouette once positioned behind the diffusion material. This effect brought about a different approach to lighting and the process changed accordingly. Upon searching for the right look I discovered the models who posed would create a unique effect.

“*Profile*” presents the effect of seeing the profile as well as the head and torso towards camera in the same photo (fig. #20). It seemed that parts of the body merged and shifted in shape to complete the form of a human (in silhouette), changing ever so slightly as the lighting was adjusted and their face and figure

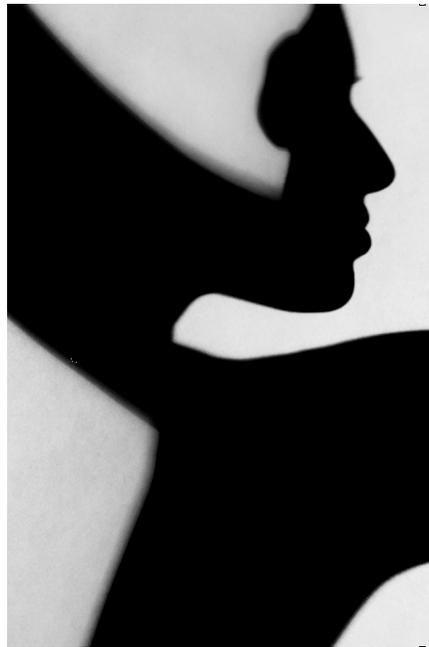


Fig. #20. *Profile*, 2008.



Fig. #21. *Figure*, 2008.

touched the diffusion material. I explored this visual concept, reconfiguring and creating a new reality, similar to Pablo Picasso’s cubistic paintings – distorting reality. Each image captured was again like creating a quick sketch, producing a variety of quality images as in “*Figure*” (fig. #21).

My skills in lighting, and composition improved as this series moved forward. I began making quick visual decisions as to which pose worked and which was not

as successful. As I continued to explore this technique and visual effect working either - in light or dark fields – I dispersed the light to simplify, search and create new imagery in both realistic and abstract ways. The possibilities are endless, enjoyable and exciting.

## Discussion

Currently my “*Points In Time*” series of photographs is a result of working for years meticulously with the controlled lighting environment of the studio and “training my eye” to see. The ongoing goal in this series is to work spontaneously with light and shapes, capturing images with a cellphone. My photographic process took place over two-and-a-half years in a variety of locations; they were spontaneous and unplanned, and there was often an element of surprise. In September 2013 I discovered that my Apple iPhone 5 became more than just a phone; I started to use it like a daily sketchbook and decided to develop these snapshot moments into a body of work. I began playing with my camera for almost a year when I upgraded to an Apple iPhone 6 in December 2014. There were several noted differences in the new technology. Some of those features were larger file sizes, sharper optics, quick focus with adjustments as to where to focus plus the simple visual effects one could add to each image after capture, but the most important reason was the ease to use.

This is when the importance of abstraction emerged in my work. I realized it’s what I’ve always done in my work, which was influenced by early film photographers. An early experiment with abstraction happened while observing my living room blinds in 2013. One sunny morning I noticed varying shadows streaming in from the east-facing windows onto the beige color blinds on the north facing window. While viewing this visual treat I could see the color of the

blue sky and the greenery outside the window between the blades of the blinds. Carefully composing the camera to position the outside colors within the negative spaces of the blinds was my most concern to simplify and strengthen the visual effect. Since the focus was set to the lines of the beige blinds, the outside greenery and sky were out of focus creating lines of blurred color patches within the negative space of the beige blinds. The diagonal black lines on the blinds were the shadows cast from the east facing blinds perpendicular to the ones in focus on the north wall. These combined elements created a momentary abstract blend of the outdoors and indoors that gave a uniquely exceptional color image (fig. #22). Within minutes the light changed and the effect disappeared. Response to this image on social media was favorable, even though viewers were baffled by what had been photographed. This was a creative discovery, and led to conversation and feedback online. Image appropriately fits into the Shadows theme, and image is titled “100413-1341”.

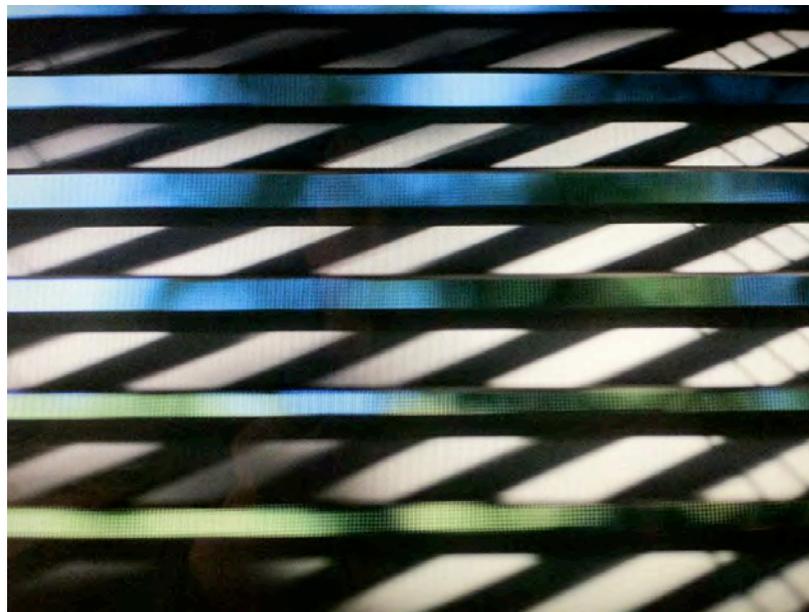


Fig. #22. *100413-1341*, 2013.

As the season's changed I discovered and explored varying colorful foliage. Early one autumn morning the rising sun cast a warm glow through the colorful leaves outside our home as I looked out through the condensation covered window (fig. #23). The tiny droplets of water softened and blurred the detail of the landscape one would see if the condensation was not present. With the affected surface, the image looked like that of an oil painting by George Seurat, a Pointillism painter or an Impressionistic landscape painting by Claude Monet. The effect of both those painters was to break down and reduce the details with either small dots of complimentary colors next to each, or soften the details with varying brush strokes.



Fig. #23. *100413-1341*, 2013.

The feeling I captured from this image as I first viewed it was painterly in general and less photographic for those reasons. The crisp blue sky frames the top of the photo, creating a striking contrast against the orange/red of the leaves. The highlight from the sun within the trees is off centered to the right for visual interest. The lower area becomes shaded from the foliage and trees, drawing my

attention to the upper third area of the photograph. Waiting and watching the light change along with slight adjustments in composition made this image worthwhile to capture. Water on glass surfaces intrigued me with how the image either breaks down from a realistic scene with the drops of water in focus juxtaposed with the detail or scene softened through the outside wet surface. Image is titled “100413-1341”.

One of the first images that began this exploratory series was an interior view. When I first noticed this scene, (fig. #24), the vertical white blinds appeared as a series of the shades in a grey scale; a variety of tones, reminiscent of my early



Fig. #24. 052013-1820, 2013.

days in the darkroom making test prints with varying exposures of an image on a single sheet of silver halide paper. Besides the test print concept it reminded me of the varying exposures from black to white in Ansel Adams’ Zone System practice where one selects a tone (1 = black to 10 = white) and then exposes for

that tone, either black, gray or white to fit within the calculated tonal quality in the final b/w print. Today's references in *The Digital Zone System: Taking Control from Capture to Print* by Robert Fisher (2012), the concept continues for those working digitally, applying Adams' original concept of Zones from 1 to 10 to now Photoshop Levels 0 (black without detail) to 255 (white without detail). As abstract as it seems, the detail of a chair interrupts the vertical value scale, placed alongside the table line. The added dappled shadows on the blinds added interest and an added texture to a somewhat smooth and clean interior image. Being the most prominent feature in this photo are the blinds, slender vertical forms, this image fit right into the Shapes theme, and is titled "052013-1820."

## System of Titling

Each photo has a unique title, based on point in time: the date and time of each capture serves as the title. It seem appropriate with the series titled "*Points In Time*" to use digits over words. Each series of digits uniquely identifies the photo as to when the image was captured digitally. In the image title the first six digit number is the date the image was captured then the military time it was stored in the cell phone camera, separated by a hyphen.

Example:      110213-0835

Key:            110213            Month, day and year captured: November 2, 2013  
                  0835            8:35AM

## **Description of Exhibit Photos**

As I created a body of work, there were categories that developed naturally, which I named Shapes, Shadows, and Showers.

Shapes presents the images that display linear and distinctive forms within the frame, working with tones and values that contrast or compliment but create a balance within. In the series I experienced a variety of shapes that included circles, triangles, rectangles, and squares. Besides these basic shapes, diagonal lines (within these shapes) became an interesting way of creating drama, visually.

Shadows easily added dynamics and contrast to each image. The area of darkness may not always enable the viewer to decipher the details and subject matter, but distorts the truth. Shapes are stretched or kept dark, to ultimately hold back detail. When I captured these images I felt a sense of calm and peacefulness in them. The sun is setting and creating long black lines and shapes to soon darken the whole setting. Even though they felt like time stood still in the viewfinder and upon capturing them, they did, they were created, but we all know nothing lasts forever!

Showers theme introduced water droplets, condensation on glass, and other forms of reflective fluid effects that break the image to abstraction. In the Shadows series, the composition in each image plays a large part on how darkness works

with the light. Strong contrast occurs in each series but in the last series the effect is most prominent. The images abstract fleeting moments from everyday life by capturing the essence of unique subject matters within the “viewfinder” of the camera. My Apple iPhone camera was a constant companion, an accessible tool always in reach and enabled me to photograph as I so chose. It allowed for me to ensure that I will capture the immediacy of the moment using existing light, in or out of doors. I make an effort to ensure my camera is set on HDR (High Dynamic Range) mode so as to capture the highlight detail and shadow detail of what will be captured properly, with a few exceptions.

Presentation of fifty-two photos total, was to show each image horizontal within a ½” border white frame, sized at 12.5” wide and 10” tall, attached under a white matt with an opening of 5” x 4”, slightly smaller than the actual print size.

Hanging in two rows together, with one above another, spaced apart at 4” and then spaced 10” apart sided to side. All three themes were grouped on separate walls in the gallery.

As a purist, keeping it simple and “clean” was how I wanted my graduate exhibit to look and be seen. The plan started with searching for white frames and matts so the image(s) stood out, not the prior. Since the frames would be hung on a white wall, finding simply designed frames made sense so the image would “pop” off the wall. The focus would be on the images, not the frames or any decorative element in framing the work. Even though I wanted the images to be seen small

and intimate as you had to move in to see the work, I felt it was important to add larger images to the exhibit to create visual impact, enabling the viewer to appreciate the detail larger than the exhibited prints. The projected images were viewed on a wall close to where the framed prints ended, as shown below.



*View of partial exhibit in GSU Visual Arts Gallery.*

Rephotographing one of the white frames, with a natural shadow for depth, I was then able to include the frame's shadow and insert each image from the exhibit as well as several outtakes not included in the exhibit, a total of seventy-one images ran on a slideshow in a continuous loop.

What follows is a portfolio of forty-eight images, (descriptions of four images were titled and mentioned prior) which all appeared framed at my MFA Graduate exhibit at the GSU Visual Arts Gallery, E1580, from April 4<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## Shapes



Fig. #25. *100315-1111*. The image is a dynamic angled composition lines of green window blinds in the interior with a red and white striped awning juxtaposed on the exterior of the building. This striking image abstracts simple everyday items to form an usual yet dynamic composition.

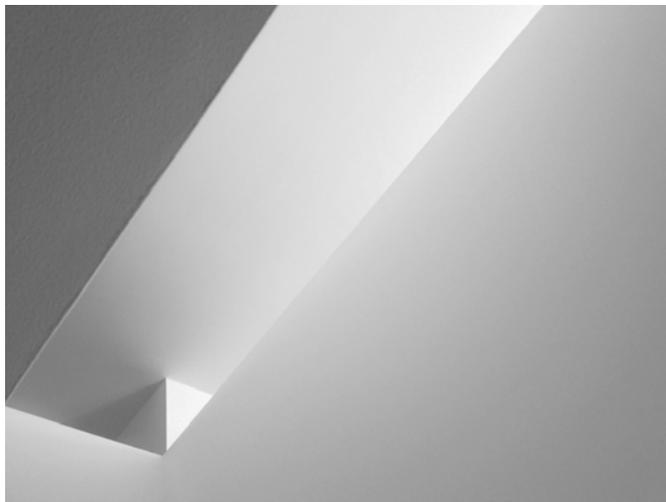


Fig. #26. *111313-0803*. Interior lines viewed upward in my contemporary designed residence. This image seems to be an optical illusion, but is just a literal

image playing with interior white walls. The dark diagonal space, on the upper left, is part of the ceiling nearest the camera. The lower left diagonal line is the top edge of the balcony wall, running from left downward and then upward right diagonally. The small two sided triangular shape resting on lower corner of the balcony wall is a corner of the wall on the upper level, which was positioned to fit within the composition.



Fig. #27. 062115-1305. Walking under the Chicago Theater marquee one Sunday afternoon I noticed the linear row of white bulbs near the short row of red bulbs. Working with a visually strong diagonally composition, the direction of the unlit white bulbs draws the viewer's eye to the minimal amount of red bulbs lit in the lower right corner, balancing the composition while adding a touch of color to the overall image.



Fig. #28. 071013-1312. Visiting the Elmhurst Art Museum the clean lines of a red chair positioned on the black stained floor next to the museum's white wall caught my eye. The diagonal line from where the wall meets the floor directs the viewers' eye to the curved lines of the red chair, positioning the camera so one leg of the chair is present. This image, as simple as it is, plays on strong composition.

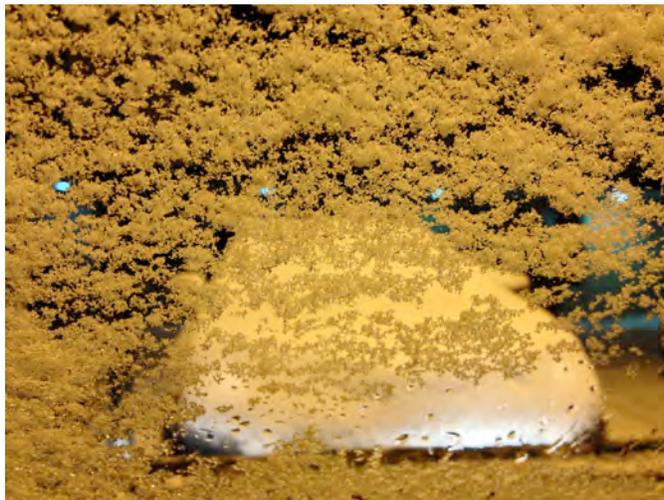


Fig. #29. 012414-1935. Snow had fallen that evening and upon arriving back in my vehicle, the lightly fallen snow had left an opening on the windshield enabling a snow covered car to be seen. The existing sodium vapor lighting in the parking

lot created the warm yellow/amber color cast exposure, camera did not correctly color balance itself so color cast was left as is. Carefully positioning four blue dots, which were lights posted on the background building, were included to add interest and added color within the image.

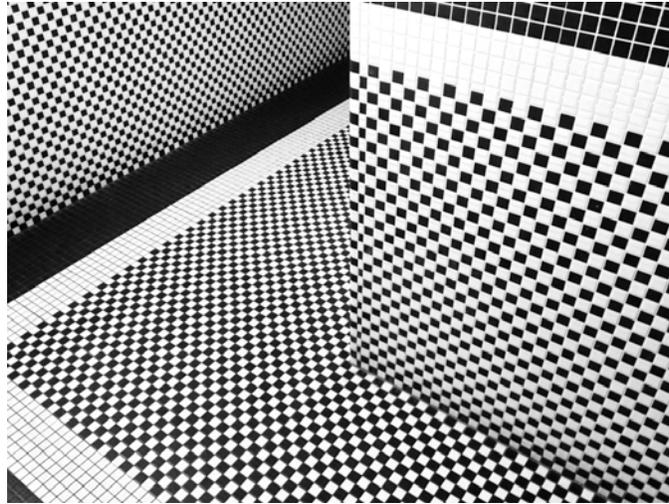


Fig. #30. *121414-1212*. Upon entering the men's room in the church where I was married, I found myself reaching for the cellphone camera to take a photo of the floor and walls which were covered in small black and white tiles laid out in a creative checkerboard pattern. Carefully positioning the camera to create a variety of diagonal lines to fit and line up together this dynamic image was created. Even though the image is pure black and white shapes, subtle tones of gray were evident in the shadowed areas mainly in the upper center as the wall receded to the background.



Fig. #31. 091414-1542. By abstracting three surfaces and shapes, giving a different view to common objects, part of a table, a chair, and the hardwood floor, bring about a new balance and solution to the old problem in composition. Simple forms here are reminiscent of the basic shapes and patterns of Matisse's paper cut-outs. Coming in close on common objects, I was able to minimize and reduce the items to basic shapes of a circle, triangle, and rectangle. Converting this image to a black and white photo emphasized the basic shapes even more.

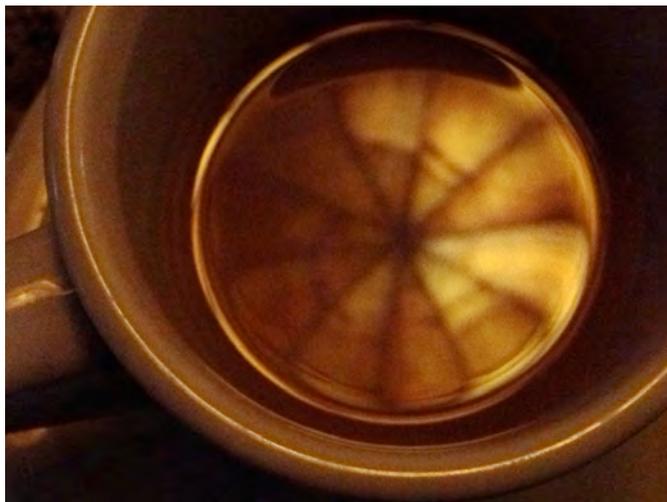


Fig. #32. *111114-1913*. While ending a meal with a cup of coffee, I noticed the round light fixture from above reflecting in the surface of the liquid. Carefully positioning the circular reflection of the fixture, it fit within the cup as well as retained a similar value as to the brown glaze of the ceramic mug making for a unique abstract image.



Fig. #33. *100315-1457*. While visiting an exhibit on architectural design, this structure on display at the Cultural Center in Chicago caught my eye. Playing with composition and the plane of focus, the window was opened inward and is viewed at the opposite direction of the window frame which was surrounded with a textural surface. Converting the image to black and white simplified the effect.

## Shadows



Fig. #34. 012914-0800. Timing and similarity of shapes make this image unique. Here the lines created by shadows from the window panes on the wall are reoccurring vertical shapes and patterns on the black leather sofa. The chiaroscuro of the light and darks play of light appeared for a fleeting moment. Success in this effort requires acute observation by an open mind and sympathy for the nature of chance.



Fig. #35. *123114-1147*. As the morning light passed through the blinds behind cream color sheer curtains, a pleasing pattern was created. The soft shadows flow and curve depending on the position of the hanging curtains. The blue sky, peeking through the horizontal blinds in the upper portion of the photo add cool color to this somewhat warm valued photo.

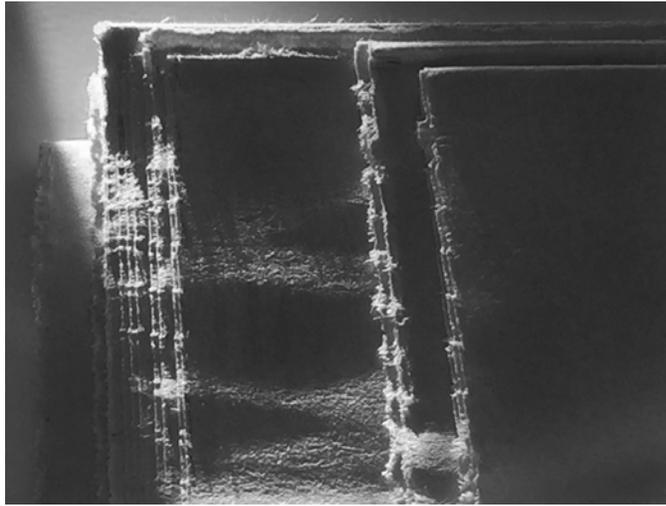


Fig. #36. *101715-0750*. While reading the newspaper while the sun was slowly rising one morning but still at a low angle, it lit the edges of the paper. The dark surface is rimmed with sunlight that highlights the rough cut edges of the paper underexposing this low key, low light photo. Focusing close-up on the surfaces adds interest to a simple setting, minimizing the detail to the visible textural edges. Converting to black and white emphasized the contrasting tones, eliminating any color to retain the abstract visual effect I was searching for.

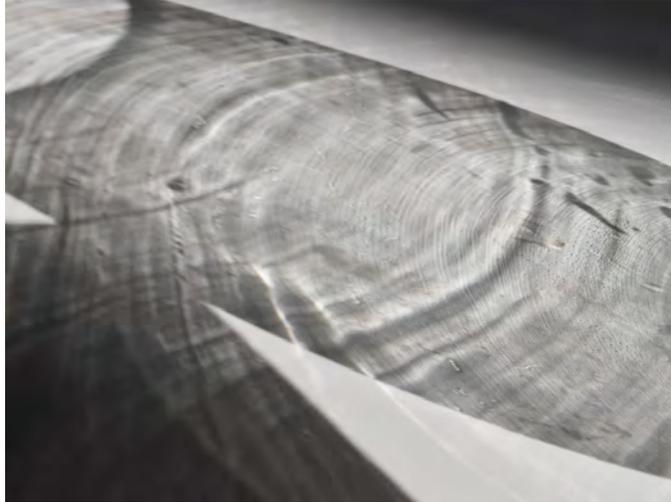


Fig. #37. 062515-1737. Enjoying the morning light, my empty water glass and coffee cup cast their shadows onto the white table. Long shadows with detail of the glassware texture makes for this timeless image. The glass surface in the mass produced glass added the necessary texture to be visible and easily accentuated. Converting to black and white was needed for simplification.

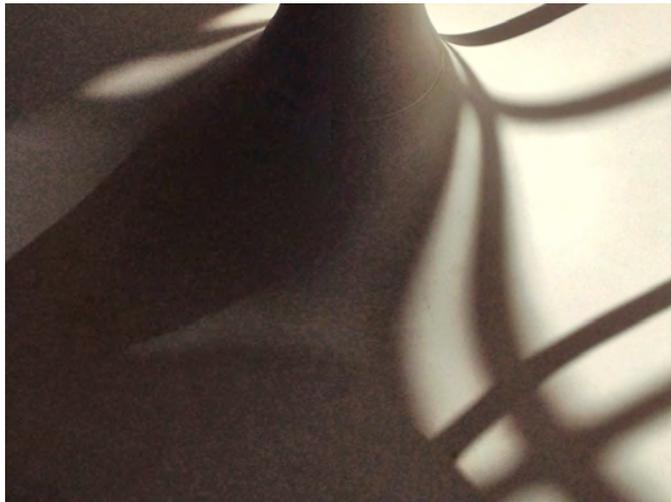


Fig. #38. 081314-0853. In this scene my eye was quickly attracted by the softening of straight line shadows from the window pane, which were then distorted by the curvature of the table base material that the shadows fell upon.

The image is composed of light and dark values, which also serves to intensify the curves of the shadows and fluidity of the lines adding to the abstraction and beauty of this image. Within minutes the shadows changed, the effect was gone.

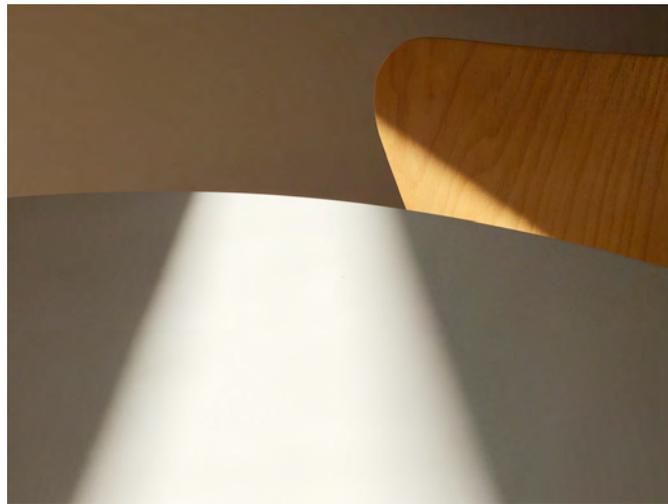


Fig. #39. 061315-0833. Timing was key in this photo as I noticed the morning light casting shadows that aligned with the positioning of a chair and table. The unique visual was when the edge of the chair highlight lines up with a highlight onto the table as the image was captured and created this moment in time.



Fig. #40. *122814-1425*. In this image taken at the MoMA in NYC, an Alexander Calder mobile is hanging over the museum staircase as guests are descending. The silhouettes of the guests strikes a strong similarity to the silhouette of the mobile, capturing a unique point in time, similar to a Henri Cartier Bresson “decisive moment” photo as I anticipated the image, framing the composition as best as possible, lining up the verticals parallel to the edge of the frame.



Fig. #41. *100413-1342*. Morning light casting shadows from the blinds hanging in a room can be a classic image, one I would capture more than once in this series. The texture of the wallpaper adds depth and interest while off centering the diagonal shadow patterns for visual direction. The pattern of the blinds seems to have been drawn onto the wall, creating an allusion of reality, so the viewer sees the shadow in their mind as how the blinds hang in real life, but transferred to the wall.



Fig. #42. 022715-1702. Walking towards my office I noticed how the late afternoon light passing through wooden window blinds onto the door which created a pattern of diagonal lines while the the semi matte surface created a vertical pattern highlighting the texture of the wood. This play of light, texture and surface quality drew my attention as I passed though the room, watching the effect diminish as the sunlight changed in minutes soon to see it disappear.



Fig. #43. 110815-1333. Enjoying an exhibit at The Phillips Collection in Washington, DC, my eyes caught the same lighting effect I worked on with a

previous photo project, where backlighting objects faced behind a diffused surface cast shadows. The tree and foliage outside the window shade created soft and ethereal shapes, while a touch of detail is seen through the shadows to the street and cars below. This composition was framed on both sides with the existing tied curtains in front of the window.



Fig. #44. 051814-1248. Driving along a road I noticed how pleasing the sunlight was reflecting onto a recently flooded forest. Though the water level was shallow, revealing the ground below, the surface was reflecting the soft shadows from the trees in the background, all out of view except for two tree trunks. The dappling of light passing through the tree leaves onto the water adds a soothing visual quality, reflecting the colors of green leaves and highlighted golden brown dirt underwater.



Fig. #45. *081415-20151*. Captured this shadowed self portrait as I stopped along an old sidewalk with varying direction of shadows from the existing street lights, and surface textures to create this unique image. Holding my camera in hand, the shadow conveys that detail plus the shape of the hair on my head and the surrounding elements. Converting to black and white emphasized the textures and shadows, removing any unwanted distracting color cast from the streetlights.



Fig. #46. *022015-0741*. Waking up to the morning light along the carpeted floor was captured as it passed the dense hotel curtains. The play of light along the

curved edges is visually pleasing, obtaining a full tonal range from detail in the highlights to deep dark tones above.



Fig. #47. 082314-0850. Watching the light move about and cast shadows from the window panes onto a white table has been an ongoing project; capturing it when the light is right. Here the table is partially lit with white and blue vertical lines, with diagonal shadowed lines on the wooden floor below. Lines and shadows fit together well as the camera is positioned for the right effect.



Fig. #48. *112115-1306*. At first this image could have been a texture of stucco on a wall or one created by thick brush strokes of paint.. But instead while walking through the snow, this detail in winter of a series of overlapping tire tracks created a pattern of shadows, lines and textures. Converging diagonals create a strong reoccurring pattern of tracks in either direction. Converting to black and white emaphasized the effect, while cropping in on the line abstracted the view.

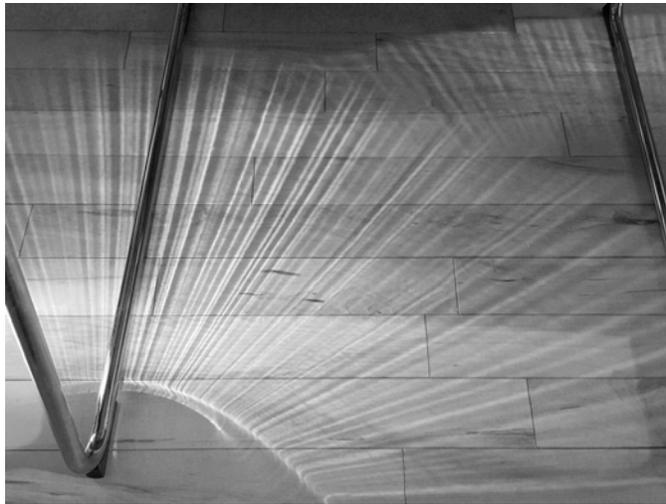


Fig. #49. *041515-0754*. This was truly a fleeting moment, taken at my residence during the early morning as the sunlight bounced off the metal legs of a chair. The time of day and the chair's position allowed for a unique refraction of the light onto a hardwood floor creating a cascading series of highlights as if drawn onto the floor below.



Fig. #50. 062715-0732. Simple line of stitching and deep shadows add the drama and depth I captured of a basic black leather ottoman in the directional room light. Keeping it simple, using the dramatic light available to a familiar object is how the series moves on. The deep tones in the upper right, move my eyes to the foreground where the lighting evenly lit the light tone threads dotting into the surface.

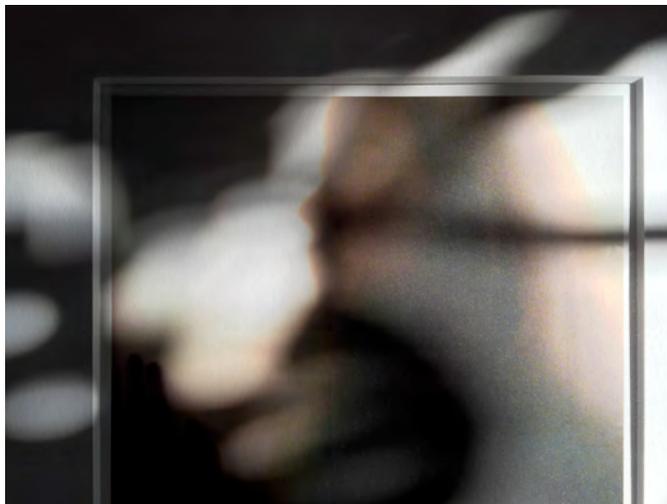


Fig. #51. 022315-0747. Watching light reflect off surfaces in the morning and onto a framed and matted out-of-focus portrait (fig. #15) produced a true abstract

image. The softness of the shadows and the soft focus image work together as an abstraction of shapes and tones, forcing the viewer to find sharpness in the overall image. This photo seems to be an abstraction of an abstract image, but note the edges of the white matte framing the print add needed detail and sharpness.



Fig. #52. *081814-2018*. Moving along a street at night, the camera happens to blur my shadow as I walked along, obtaining a recognizable image. The motion of the camera gently softened the shadow as well as the surface of the walkway detail.



Fig. #53. 031614-0919. This image was captured while sorting through glass vases on a table as the soft backlight lit the scene. Fine tuning and making minor adjustments for the lines of the vases to merge and work together with distorted lines of the shadowed windows was my visual goal in this image. Converting to black and white emphasized the visual effect reducing any realism of color.



Fig. #54. 060215-2338. An unusual point of view, looking straight down through a glass of white wine towards a magazine spread made this image possible. Side lighting from a nearby lamp cast varying shadows from the glass onto the paper. The shallow pool of liquid in the glass enabled me to be selective as to how much information and the exact shape I wanted the viewer to see through and still be able to distort the truth.

## Showers



Fig. #55. 022015-0757. While waiting to taxi in a airplane on the runway, I looked out my window and noticed through the recently washed windows a line of droplets in alignment with the shape of a airplane parked nearby. The horizontal line abstracted and highlighted the airplane's shape with the line of falling drops in line with the horizon line that divides the image, with a touch of bright colors. This reality of detail simply captured with a touch of the finger.



Fig. #56. 070715-0839. As the rain fell I watched as more and more droplets covered the kitchen window. Moving towards the droplets I noticed lines from the white deck fencing in the background, similar stripes to that of a zebra's skin. The pattern of lines within the droplets created a unique effect with these organic, amebalike shapes. The sharpness on the foreground had the background fence and greenery blur out of focus accentuating the rain droplets even more.



Fig. #57. 042914-1153. In this image I controlled the glass surface I was looking through, thus creating a manipulated image, a rarity in my photographic process. By stopping the car's wiper blades on the windshield I was able to soften the running water from the rain-shower as if to create ripples that abstracted the sky beyond. I seized this moment and create the affect during the stop at the red light, adding to its abstraction, possibly to be viewed as if it were a reflection of a puddle of water, distorting the truth.



Fig. #58. *071615-1842*. Watching the rain fall onto the windshield right after cleaning the glass with the wipers somewhat distorts the view of a single car parked in the background. The detail of the rain not wiped in the foreground draws attention, then enables the search for more information or lack of.



Fig. #59. *082514-1434*. Focusing on a window at home I seized the moment to capture a clearing sky surrounded by dark rain clouds right after a spring shower occurred. The pleasing effect is the coolness of the blue background, a line of light, warm values underneath the darker clouds, which were lit by the sun. It's a

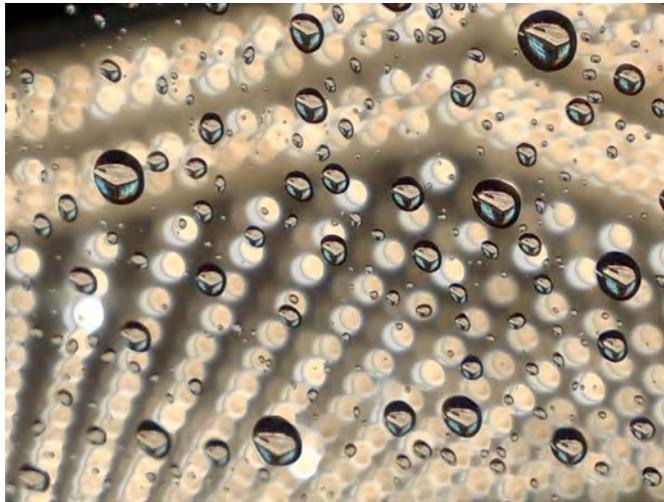
refreshing and striking composition, retaining sharp focus on the foreground and softer shapes out of focus in the background.



Fig. #60. *061815-1458*. Finishing a cool glass of water I noticed the condensation on the lower half of the glass, while was resting on a white table. These ethereal soft droplets on the glass blending with areas in and out of focus caught my eye to capture the moment. The muted tones occurred due to the soft, ambient midday light in the room, eliminating any distracting highlights on the glass.



Fig. #61. *032315-1049*. While traveling and stopping at the light during a snowstorm I noticed how the tiny wet snowflakes fell between windshield cleaning. This softening effect that occurred recreating a delicate pixelated effect in the soft light of this winter snowstorm. This visual effect resembles that like a photorealistic ink drawing, than the photograph it is, with the delicate light tone grays against the pure white background.



#62. *100513-1851*. Riding along the city theater district I noticed the Chicago Theater marquee was well lit, bulbs positioned within a variety of positions. The composition of lights in diagonals adds drama as the lower lines of lights face against the top row of lights. The peak of the two converging horizontal lines meet together at the far right, utilizing the “Rule of Thirds” composition concept. The droplets of rain, focused on in the foreground, visually play with the blurred lights in the background adding depth to the overall image, magnified and defined as the sharpest area in the photograph.



Fig. #63. *100214-1835*. While observing autumn foliage outside my car window, some green leaves still on the trees, bushes with colorful red leaves in the foreground are diffused while the droplets on the windshield are in focus. The colorful effect is that of a postcard image (without the droplets) promoting the Carribean like feel for a beachfront vacation, even though I was still in Illinois.



#64. *120114-1551*. Resting and aiming the cellphone lens close to the droplets on the car window, created the limited focus and less depth of field effect. Several

light posts in the background in focus add the necessary detail and depth once the viewer notices them low in frame.

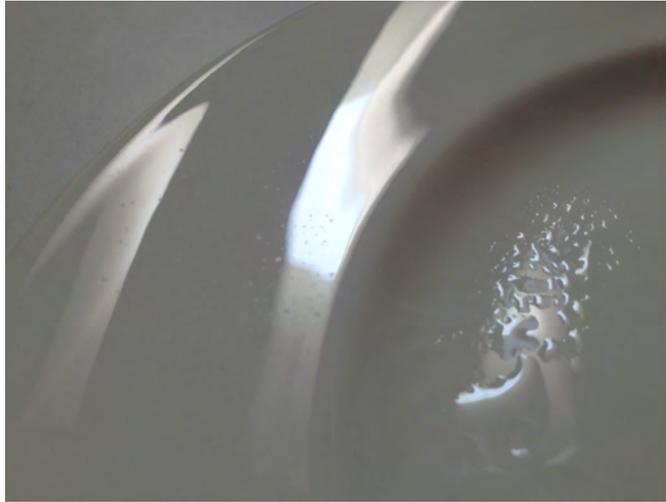


Fig. #65. *063014-1351*. White specular ceramic plate on a white table surface are the items in this image. A small pool of condensation and highlights from the skylights overhead add texture and highlights to this overall simple image. The gradations on the left plate rim contrast against the texture droplets, both occupying the same smooth surface.



Fig. #66. *102315-1800*. Sitting in traffic on a wet stormy afternoon the droplets close to camera diffuse the detail and any reflection outside the car window. This feeling of being lost in space with no point of reference with reality was achieved.



Fig. #67. *081115-1832*. Enjoying a cool beverage on a hot summer night with the silhouette of the fence behind with water droplets on the glass, made this a unique abstract image. The cool color of the overall image adds the refreshing feel of water, and the point of view to be immersed from inside and looking out.



Fig. #68. *101713-0850*. A surprise effect of opening a door after a spring rain to capture the remaining droplets on the glass, the warmth of the interior hitting cooler outdoor air diffused the already out-of-focus background. The raindrops are mainly rectilinear, which mirrors the background seen in the frame and letting the subject matter itself generate and determine the composition.



Fig. #69. *053015-0909*. The abstraction of wet tire tracks on a dark surface is where this image begins, but with the reflection of the sky midway in the image, and in shadow on the lower half, this capture breaks away easily from reality.

The abstraction of the tire tracks and pools of rainwater creates a unique pattern, haphazard in design, as cars drove back and forth

Comparing this image to paintings by Franz Kline, Abstract Expressionist painter (1910-1962), who Aaron Siskind was also inspired by, there seem to be similar brushstrokes of black paint on a white canvas, applied in various directions.



Fig. #70. Franz Kline, *Untitled*, 1957. Oil on canvas.



Fig. #71. 012615-2121. Frost on a windshield after an icestorm is the view from inside the car where this image was captured. Noticing the sharp detail of ice in contrast with the diffused background detail, the varied tones and shapes add a sense of mystery and abstraction to the final image, in juxtaposition with the textured surface.



Fig. #72. 100613-1725. Sitting in a car next to a city bus on a rainy night noticing colorful streetlights lighting the exterior while existing interior lights create spots of color. The diagonal shape of the windows add unique lines while the droplets on the car window blur the image and background detail for contrast.



Fig. #73. 052815-1849. Enjoying another cool beverage, this time seated outside near a terracotta painted wall, which is seen through the glass. To add a complimentary color, a touch of blue from the sky in the background, reflects within the glass which added a pleasing effect in the rim of the glass and ice

floating at the top of the drink. Droplets on the outside of the glass add additional detail and realism. The soothing color and abstraction bring this image to life, refreshing my vision for a short moment longer.

## **Conclusion**

Though this series of photos represent a body of work I've created for my advanced degree, it certainly is not the end of my work. The immediacy I've used with my cellphone camera to capture personal points of view in time, when the light is right, will continue. The days when setting apertures, shutter speeds, loading and processing film are no longer necessary to create images. Technology has advanced how the digital image processes within the camera and continues to change daily. I hope the simplicity of these images gives others pleasure in viewing these aesthetically exploratory discoveries that include shapes, shadows and showers.

To be able to start fresh everyday I feel I need to see myself more as an amateur in these situations - than a professional. It's the search for purity of an image, and to be able to share it with others, either in a gallery, as a printed book or online for the world to see. The thought that the work can be seen and shared with the world instantly is in itself an amazing thought, so true and part of our lifestyle these days.

This clean approach is representative of my photographic voice and supports my career-long vision. It offers my students another point of view to consider while they continue to explore their visual voice and style preferences.

At a recent meeting, April 14, 2016, of the Chicago Chapter of the American Photographic Artists (APA), five art buyers from large Chicago advertising agencies discussed current trends in photographer and videographer selections. To a person they agreed that they seek only photographers with social media experience and in particular those with Instagram followings. The panelists noted that today's photographers are using only iPhones, and that clients are interested in those "shooters" who understand the millennial market through social media. Building content marketing with visuals that support the message and encourage comment, sharing and chatting is now considered "job number one" for the agency production teams. And clients are buying "libraries" of digital images – forty to sixty images at a time.

In fact, Snapchat, the fleeting image site, is gaining large client attention so that the agencies are seeking photographers whose expertise is even faster with imagery than before. Even more reason for students to experiment and express one's personal vision using iPhoneography with their own points in time.

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## Appendix

### Exhibit Postcard Design

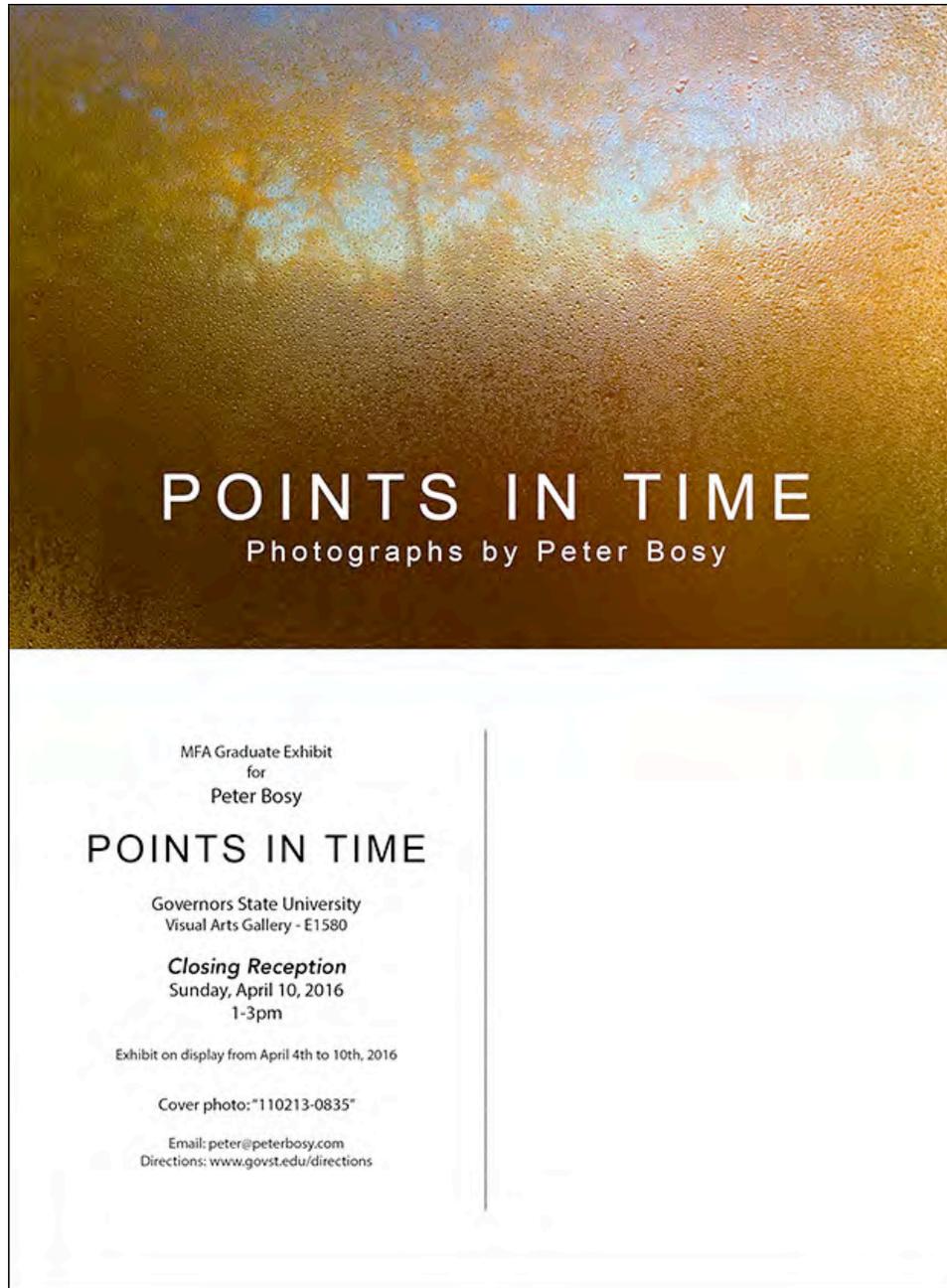


Exhibit Overview

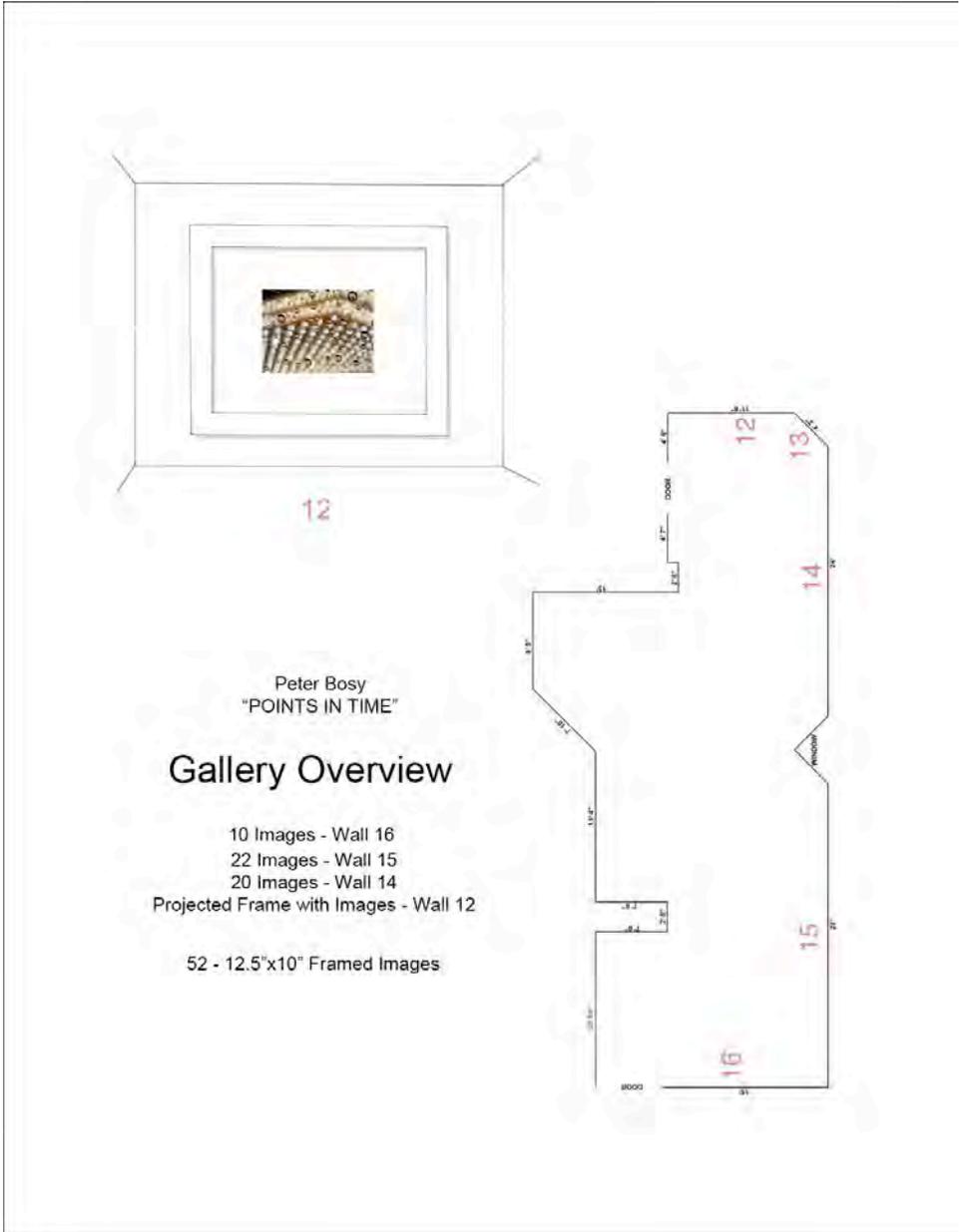


Exhibit Poster; dual exhibit with Joyce Symoniak



**Governors State University Master of Fine Arts  
Joint Show Peter Bosy and Joyce Symoniak**

April 4-25, 2016 Visual Arts Gallery  
Reception April 10, 1-3 pm

In Points in Time Bosy presents 52 iPhone images representing Shapes, Shadows, and Showers, juxtaposed with Systems Failure, Symoniak's 20 etched metal images based upon varied social issues.

Bosy and Symoniak met at GSU in 2008 while pursuing a Master of Arts and co-presented their art at that time. While their art media differ, they once again combine their work in this show to represent how GSU is more than a place to learn – it's a place that fosters teamwork, friendships and art style acceptance. The show expresses collaboration yet highlights creative difference.

Exhibit Binder Comments

**Guest Sign-In**

Name	Email	Comments
Michael + Rita Morris	rfm2778@gmail.com	
Sue Dan + Danielle Brown		
Jay Wilder	J.WILDER.03@GMAIL.COM	
Mark + Suei Hutz		
ED WGSLEY		IT'S THE EYE, NOT THE CAMERA!
Ling Yu		Peter, Elegant and Creative masterpieces! Joyce, profoundly moving!
Chandra Speranza	chandra734@yahoo.com	Great Work!
Peter + Virginia	pjvagt@gmail.com	Wonderful to see this GREAT Selection of your work Impressive and Wonderful
Rob Catania	rleat@comcast.net	Peter - Great to see a new great approach! skw!
Dana Davis		Great job I'll be continuing to put on
Abbas Ashtshahed	aashshahed@yahoo.com	wonderful Art work very unique