In this issue - items underlined are links

March hybrid meeting in-person and on-line, Covid Issue 35
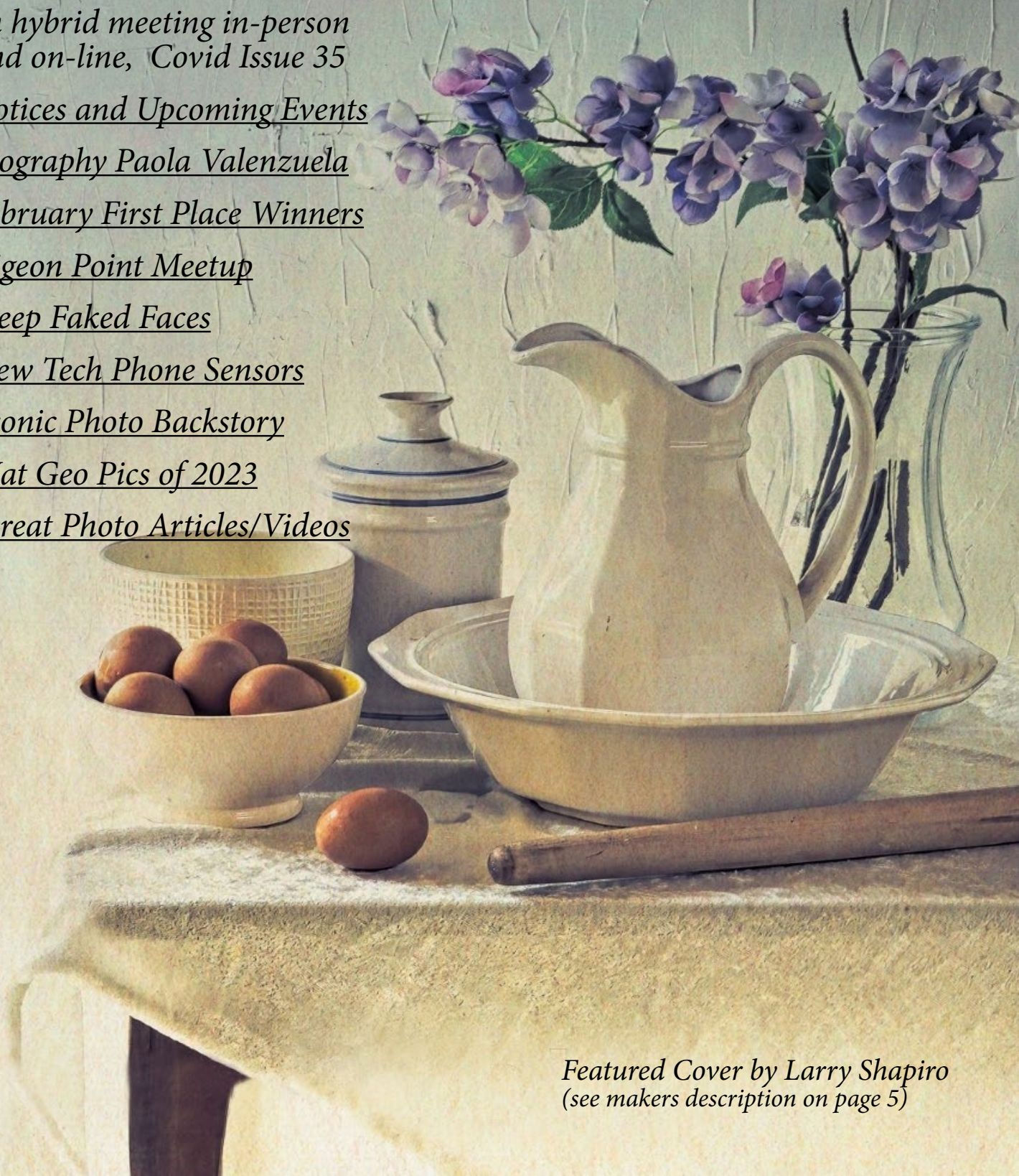
*Featured Cover by Larry Shapiro
(see makers description on page 5)*

Notices and Coming Events

Mon. February 27th, Program- *Learn about the club website. Tons of resources and info* 7:30 p.m. Zoom

Next Competition - March 13th Hybrid Meeting

***Submission Rules** – Members may enter a total of three images into a monthly competition with a maximum of two images in any one category and a maximum of three printed images and a maximum of two projected images. Check our website with updated definitions for all print categories.*

Our meeting judge for March will be Melanie Lewert. She says, "I learned that I had a great eye for black and white. Until I moved onto a digital camera, years later, all of my work was in black and white— I enjoy the use of contrast and shadows to tell my story."

Categories for March - Besides the monthly categories of monochrome and color pictorial, the two challenge categories will be Creative and PhotoJournalism - see details below.

Creative - Creative photography is producing an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from competition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept. Creative images may include modifications in the darkroom, on the computer, or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view, imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a collection of photographs. Subject content is unrestricted. Images are judged both for their technical and pictorial merit. The image should have . . . MORE

PhotoJournalism -PhotoJournalism entries are images with informative content and emotional impact, reflecting the human presence in our world. The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality. Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.

Techniques that add, relocate, replace, remove or change any element in the original scene, except by cropping, are not permitted. All images must look natural. The only allowable modifications are removal of dust, scratches or digital noise and restoration of the appearance of the existing . . . MORE

Photo Exhibit at the Los Gatos JCC

All are invited to see the LGSCC exhibit open March 1 — March 30 at the JCC 14855 Oka Road in Los Gatos second Floor 9am – 9pm

Reception March 4, 3:30 – 6:30 PM Meet the Photographers

Special Interest Group Links below

Special Interest Group - Seeing in Sixes
The activities of the special interest group are to take place outside of and in addition to the club's other activities.
As photography is much more than single, mutually exclusive photos, this is a desire by club members to form a group where photography is used to communicate a story or theme in a well defined series of photos constituting a project. This approach has been well defined by Brooks Jensen[1], a photographer and publisher, in a series called "Seeing in Sixes". His definition is used here as the basis for this special interest group.

Special Interest Group in Monochrome Photography
In summary: The Monochrome Photography group will pick a different type of photo assignment each month related to the monochrome theme. We'll try to have fun with it!
This group is not a competition – there's no judging. It meets once a month, the 2nd Monday in the evening. A new photo assignment is given each month. Groups are small so everyone can talk about what they created for the assignment

Special Interest Group with Rotating Assignments
The Rotation group will pick a different type of photo assignment each month. Assignments will not be restricted to the competition categories – so it could be flowers, or something red, we'll try to have fun with it! Groups are not a competition. They will meet once a month, the 2nd Wednesday in the evening. A new photo assignment is given each month.

Special Interest Group in Photoshop
The Photoshop group will cover basic image editing and identify common techniques that members wish to learn. Format is 30 minutes of techniques and 15 minutes of questions. This group will meet once a month, usually on the 3rd Wednesday 7:30 in the evening via Zoom. Link will be sent the week prior.

Special Interest Group - Novice Only
The Novice Only group is open to any LGSCC member who considers themselves a novice or beginner. The group covers topics such as composition and exposure. Assignments are given and reviewed at the next meeting monthly on the 2nd Monday at 7: 30

Special Interest Group - Bird Photography
We will create meetings via zoom to discuss where we have seen good things to photograph and make plans to have informal outings to go to these suggested places and photograph together. One aspect of going with others is to learn from each other as we all have different talents.

I was born and raised in Los Angeles surrounded by a large extended Mexican/Guatemalan family. I have fond childhood memories of our gatherings which involved great food, dancing, and my father capturing moments with his Nikon film camera. I relocated to Arizona after receiving a full scholarship from a Bilingual Nursing Fellowship Program created to increase the number of Spanish speaking healthcare workers in the state.

" love to get ready the night before a photo outing as much as I love dark chocolate "

When I completed my undergraduate studies at Arizona State University I spent my free time hiking and playing with my first DSLR, a Nikon D40. I was very content using it as a point-and-shoot camera for decades. When the pandemic hit, I found a new level of anxiety going to work as a registered nurse in Labor and Delivery, so I turned to my Nikon D750 for comfort. I was determined to shoot in manual mode so l started by reading my camera's manual, I created projects for myself and dove head first into the rabbit hole of the web for help. Joining my local camera club was finally checked off my to-do list in 2020. I was overjoyed when the Novice Only group was created. I am eternally grateful for Larry's time and dedication to our group.

I can't seem to find where I fit in the vast genres of photography because I love them all, but I do find myself drawn to macro, landscape, and nature photography. My first "real assignment" was to take an environmental portrait of my husband for Forbes magazine! I was tickled to see my image on the web!

I love the feeling of getting ready the night before a photography outing, probably as much as I love dark chocolate. I look forward to meeting and learning everything I can from our talented club members.

My first "real assignment" was to take an environmental portrait of my husband for Forbes magazine!

February Competition Winners Tell Us How They Did It

Western Greeb Males Competing in Mating Ritual, Kelly Zhang, Nature Projected, See Three Image Sequence on ▶ the Club Website

There were a dozen Western Grebes in Calera Park, San Jose before the rainstorm hit the Bay Area in December, 2022. I was looking for their courting behavior and spotted this pair. I thought this was a male and female courting, yet thanks to fellow club member Jeffrey Pawlen's correction, I realized that it was a couple of male grebes challenging each other to compete and gain the attention of the females. They raised their heads up and down repetitively before they set off "Rushing", which lasted three to five seconds. I use a Sony A1 with 600mm lens.

◀ Autumn Memory, Irina Nekrasova, Color Prints

I enjoy showcasing natural materials, like leaves, flowers, rocks, seeds and pods in the still life style of photography. With some proper lighting I can focus one's attention to the subject of interest. I use my LED flashlight and LED panel to light all my objects individually. In Photoshop layers, I can choose the light quality for each subject.

This image was printed on the metallic paper in order to showcase a golden glow in the buckeye pod and the dry flower.

Canon 60D, F 16, ISO 100, 57 mm, 11 sec

Re-leaf, A Tactile Photo to Touch, Eric Gray, Monochrome Prints ▶

This image was inspired by a High School classmate who taught at a school for the blind and became blind herself. She wrote a book about her life called *More than Meets the Eye*. I spoke with her a couple years ago about my photography and I wanted to find a way to share images with her. I came up with the concept of embossing objects in my images from behind the print. As you might imagine not all objects can work. I have found that leaves with strong veins are great subjects that meet my criteria of adding dimension.

This is a time intensive process with every vein no matter how small pressed out with one of my embossing tools. Monochrome increases the drama and lets the viewer focus on the tactile elements of the image.

Nikon 750, f/18, Nikkor 28-120 zoom at 58mm, 100th sec. ISO 250, white balance auto.

Day Break, Larry Shapiro, Color Projected ▶

The key to this composition was getting the right table that would fit into my a studio. I found a small end table at an estate sale that was the right size but was not high enough. I solved that by placing the table on a storage box which cannot be seen in the image. Using the corner of the table with a white cloth gave the illusion of depth. Once the table was in place, I started adding objects, brown eggs , pitcher and bowls and finally some artificial flowers to add a bit of color. The backdrop was a plywood panel that I texturized with wall joint compound, then sanded and painted white. The lighting was very simple, just daylight from an open door. The camera was on a tripod.

The exposure was 0.6 seconds at f/16 on a Nikon D850 with the 24-120 zoom lens set at 86mm. The image required little Photoshop manipulation just basic curve corrections and sharpening. A texture and color grading were added to create the look of a sunlit kitchen.

◀ **Who's Got Whom, Eric Gray, Monochrome Projected**

This image is of my adventurous daughter Katie, who used to roam our yard to catch and play with blue-belly lizards. I took this image 19 years ago when she directed me to photograph a lizard on her nose. Luckily the lizard complied motionless which led to a broad smile from Katie.

Sony F828, f/4, 125 sec. ISO-64, Zeiss 28-200 at 51mm

Guan Woman Sewing Mola, Jerry Held, Travel Print ▶

On a recent trip to the Caribbean, we stopped for a day at a tiny island in the Panamanian San Blas Island chain (about 365 small islands). The native women sew multiple layers of colorful cloth together with patterns cut out to reveal the different colors. I took a number of photos but liked this one because it showed this old lady's concentration on her work, her lap full of threads and her finished product behind.

Nikon Z9 w/Nikkor 24-200MM at 80mm, 1/125sec, f/6.3 ISO 320

Rufous-naped lark (Mirafra africana) in early morning light. Near the Sand River, Kenya. David Kirsch, Nature Print ▶

This image was taken in the Masaai Mara along the Sand River on the Kenya side of the Kenya-Tanzania border during our African safari in Sept, 2022. As is customary on safari, we were up early and the morning light was sumptuous. Driving along I saw this bird and asked the driver to stop so I could shoot it. He said it was a cuckoo, but in checking this identification for this submission it was clear this was NOT a cuckoo! Some sleuthing led me to the correct identification as a rufous-naped lark.

Shot with Sony a9, Sony FE 200-600, F5.6-6.3 G OSS lens and Sony 1.4X teleconverter. 1/400 sec., f/9.0, ISO 1600, 840mm.

Printed on an Epson P900 using HP Advanced, Glossy Photo Paper.

◀ **Crowds Gather to Watch the Ganga Aarti Ceremony That Takes Place Nightly at the Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi, India, Mila Bird, Travel Projected**

During a trip to northern India in 2016, I had multiple opportunities to photograph various parts of Varanasi during the day as well as at night. One of my favorite activities was photographing along the ghats at the Ganges River. The nightly ritual at this ghat on the river attracts domestic and foreign tourists year-round. Of all the shots I took at the ceremony from land and water, I think this one best represents what it's like to be there. I shot this image with my compact Sony RX100M2 while sitting in a boat floating on the river. The original RAW image was noisy due to the low light, high ISO, and 1" camera sensor. I processed the RAW file through DxO PureRAW 2 using the DeepPRIME option to get rid of as much noise as possible. From there, I went into Lightroom and made adjustments as follows: increased exposure; set white and black points; reduced highlights; increased shadows; added a bit of contrast, texture, clarity, vibrance, saturation, and sharpening; and added a slight vignette.

Camera settings: 28mm, 1/80 sec, f/1.8, ISO 3200, 0 EV

To facilitate spontaneous photo activities among our members, the Field Trips staff has created an LGSCC group on Meetup.com. The group is private, meaning only club members can be members of this Meetup group. To use Meetup you must download the app to your phone and then create an account, and then ask to be a member of the LGSCC group. This can also be done on a PC using a browser. There is no cost you. Once a member of LGSCC you will receive notices of new postings. See all images from the last meetup at Pigeon Point here - https://www.losgatos-saratogacameraclub.8552-
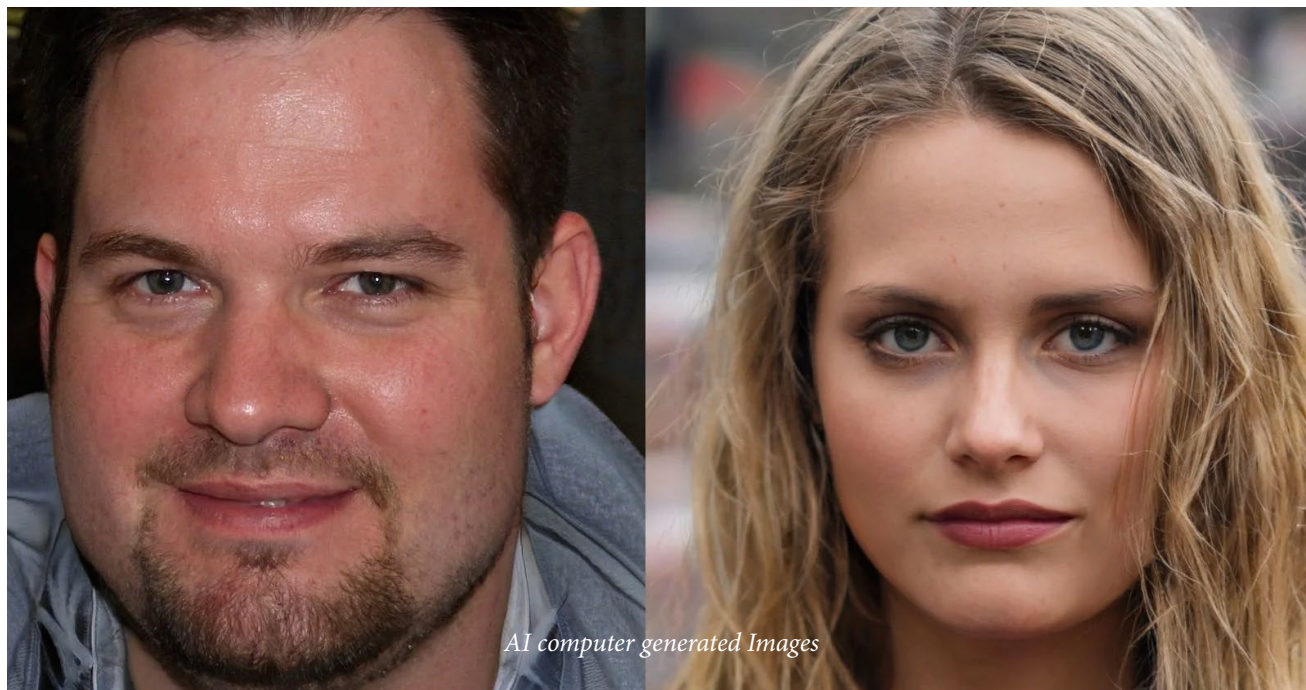

Club members dressed for cool weather to shoot images at Pigeon Point

© Irina Nekrasova

© Jeff Balfus

© Airdrie Kincaid

AI Deepfaked Faces

Petapixel.com by Pesala Bandara

AI computer generated Images

Research reveals that artificial intelligence (AI) generated deepfake faces look more real than genuine photos. According to the study, people cannot reliably distinguish photos of real faces and images that have been AI-generated.

As AI deepfake technology, like "generative adversarial networks" (GAN), become more widely available, fake "photos" could erode social trust and change the way people communicate online. The findings were published in the paper "On the Realness of People Who Do Not Exist: The Social Processing of Artificial Faces" in iScience.

In an article for Reaction, Manos Tsakiris, who is one of the authors behind the study, says it remains unclear why humans find deepfake faces more real-looking that actual photos. However, this fact does highlight the major advancements in the AI deepfake technology used to create these images. Curiously, the research found that the faces that people rated as less attractive were also regarded as more real. Tsakiris suggests that these GAN-generated faces could look more real to people "because they are more similar to mental templates that people have built from everyday life."

Potential Consequences

However, this shift to a cultural landscape where it becomes impossible to distinguish between real faces and AI-generated faces could have repercussions on "social trust." Social trust describes how people extend trust to a group of unfamiliar people. "In general, we tend to operate on a default assumption that other people are basically truthful and trustworthy," Tsakiris writes in Reaction.

"The growth in fake profiles and other artificial online content raises the question of how much their presence and our knowledge about them can alter this 'truth default' state, eventually eroding social trust." The potential ubiquity of realistic yet fake online content could require people to start thinking and responding differently.

Tsakiris explains: "If we are regularly questioning the truthfulness of what we experience online, it might require us to re-deploy our mental effort from the processing of the messages themselves to the processing of the messenger's identity."

He says that people need to be more critical when they encounter a digital face — employing reverse image searches to check the authenticity of a photo and questioning social media profiles with little personal information.

Tsakiris says that the next online frontier could be improved algorithms for detecting fake digital faces so that people can identify what is real and what is fake on the internet.

Phone Sensor Improvements

Petapixel.com by Jaron Schneider

Semiconductor company Spectricity has developed a proprietary spectral imaging technology that is capable of greatly improving smartphone cameras by making them smarter and able to capture colors more consistently no matter the lighting condition. The S1 multispectral image sensor, as Spectricity calls it, can see more light than current three-color RGB sensors. It is the world's first truly miniaturized, mass-manufacturable mobile spectral image sensor and camera module. The S1 is so much more powerful than current conventional sensors that not only can it see more visible light, it can also look toward the near-infrared spectrum. The result is that it is able to reproduce more consistent colors in photos that look more natural and have better white balance than current sensors can.

"A standard camera integrated into a smartphone has an RGB sensor that sees red, green, and blue," Spectricity's CEO Vincent Mouret tells Digital Trends.

"We add filters to create up to 16 different images with different colors, different wavelengths of light, light coming from different sources, and the reflected light coming from the object of the scene. You can identify many different properties thanks to these different images compared to a standard RGB."

This technology would solve a current problem: smartphone photos see the world very inconsistently. A photo taken with an Apple device will look very different from one taken with a Vivo or Samsung device, as each is "seeing" color differently. Some
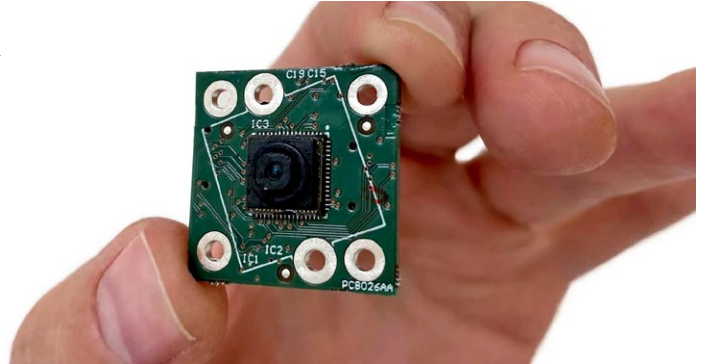
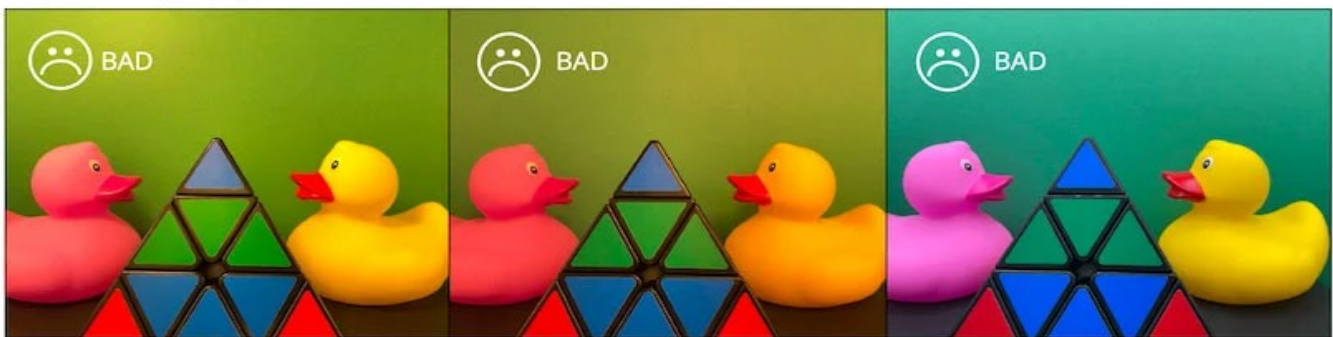*Reproducing more consistent colors in photos that look more natural*

might argue that one looks more "real" than another, but there is a level of uncertainty there. By integrating a multispectral camera system like the S1, color accuracy can be fine-tuned and made to look more natural.

"Smartphone cameras are essentially color blind. Their automatic white balancing algorithms (AWB) often fail to resolve the correct white point, resulting in poor color fidelity," the company says.
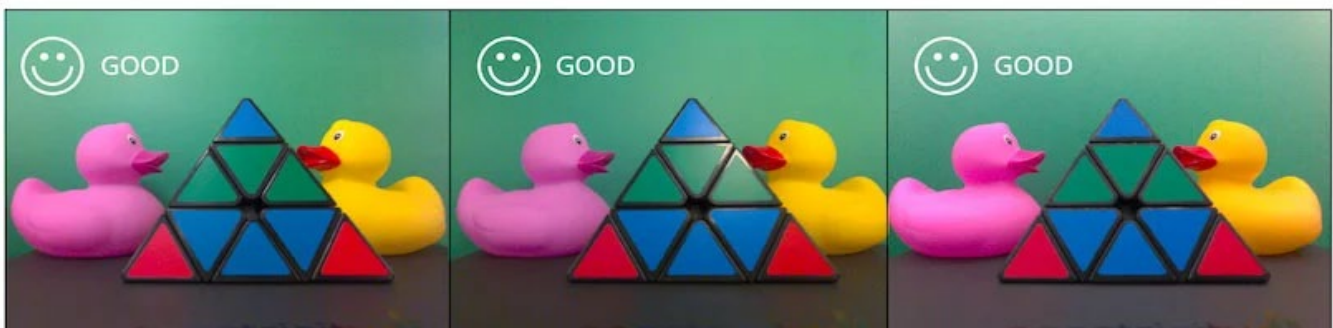
"This is especially problematic in the presence of multiple illuminants or challenging scenes. Spectricity's spectral imaging AWB detects illuminants more accurately in each area of the scene through their spectral signature. This result in true colors: improved color photography [and] accurate unbiased skin tones." . . .

See the entire article here - https://petapixel.com/2023/02/01/this-tiny-sensor-is-about-to-make-smartphone-photography-way-better/

Popular flagship phone

Spectricity solution

From https://willowbrookartgallery.com/ -

September 15, 1954, saw a very celebrated – albeit very calculated – wardrobe malfunction, for that was the day Marilyn Monroe posed over a New York City subway grate for a memorable scene in the movie "The Seven Year Itch." With fans looking on, gusts of made-for-the-movies "wind" from the trains below repeatedly blew Marilyn's white dress up to un-ladylike heights. Publicity photos from that pre-dawn shoot are famous worldwide, but crowd noise forced the scene with Tom Ewell to be re-shot weeks later on a Hollywood soundstage: Dialogue below-

Marilyn: "Feel the breeze from the subway! Isn't it delicious?"
Tom: "Sort of cools the ankles, doesn't it?"

Caption from CNN - Photographer Matty Zimmerman/AP
Five decades after her death, Marilyn Monroe remains one of Hollywood's most adored sex symbols. Her sultry legacy is often traced back to the 1954 image of her posing over a New York City subway grate in character for the filming of "The Seven Year Itch." Monroe's then-husband, Joe DiMaggio, reportedly witnessed the spectacle and became enraged with jealousy. They divorced weeks later.

Although the scene was intended as a visual gag, Monroe's husband at the time, the pin-striped and straight-laced Yankee legend Joe DiMaggio, failed to see the humor, and the scene reputedly played a role in their divorce. Still, that Marilyn Monroe moment lives on to this day, both in the photographs and in the form of a 26-foot-tall traveling statue titled "Forever Marilyn."

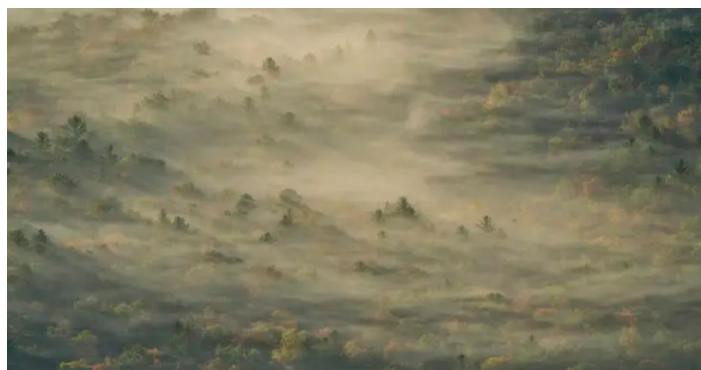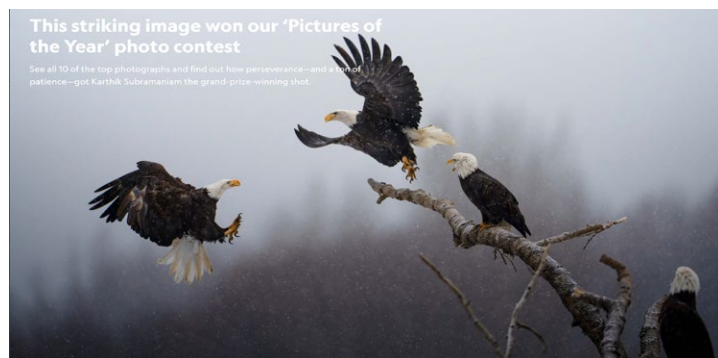# National Geographic's 'Pictures of the Year'

From cnbc.com *by Audrey Wan*

National Geographic announced the winning photographs from its first "Pictures of the Year" photo competition. The contest, which opened to U.S. residents in early December, invited readers to submit a digital photograph in one of four categories: nature, people, places and animals. The contest required that photographs be largely unaltered. According to the rules, "only minor burning, dodging and/or color correction is acceptable, as is minor cropping." Photos with other changes are "unacceptable and ineligible for a prize."

Karthik Subramaniam, a software engineer in San Francisco who is passionate about wildlife photography, clinched the grand prize. He said he captured his winning shot at the end of a weeklong photography trip in Haines, Alaska, which hosts the world's largest congregation of bald eagles each fall.

As Subramaniam watched the eagles hunt for salmon in their fishing grounds, an eagle swooped in to steal another's perch on a tree. "Hours of observing their patterns and behavior helped me capture moments like these," he said.

Entire article here

This striking image won our 'Pictures of the Year' photo contest

See all 10 of the top photographs and find out how perseverance—and a lot of patience—got Karthik Subramaniam the grand-prize-winning shot.

A view of the foggy valley from North Carolina's Blue Ridge Parkway.
Tihomir Trichkov
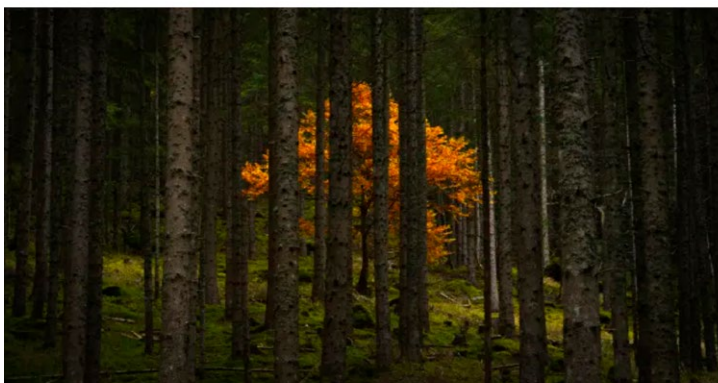
A golden tree deep in the Austrian Alps.
Alex Berger

Salt wells on a hillside in the Salt Mines of Maras in Peru.
An Li

Great Photography Articles

Webinar on Composition - https://mattk.com/composition-webinar/
Video - Removing Objects in Photoshop - https://creativecloud.adobe.com/discover/article/remove-unwanted-objects
Video - Better Photoshop Techniques? - https://mattk.com/one-click-to-better-photoshop-selections

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