How to Capture the Movement of the Moon in a Single Image

Printed with written permission from Digital Photo Secrets

Discover the secrets of making a moonstack image, as we show you how to capture the movement of the moon across the night sky in a single composite image.

The full moon glowing over a city at night can make for a very striking image, but you don’t need to limit yourself to a single moon. You can shoot and create a lunar timestack like this with nothing more than your DSLR, a mid-range telephoto zoom, a tripod, and image-editing software like Photoshop.
The method is simple: take several photos of the moon as it moves through the sky, and then use Photoshop to composite them into one image.

Because the moon will be much brighter than the landscape, you will also need to take an additional photo to expose for the landscape rather than the moon; this will provide your final image with a correctly-exposed backdrop.

The challenge with creating a moonstack is working out how much time to leave between photos. You need to ensure that there’s plenty of space between successive moons, but not too much space.

If you know where you want to shoot from, it might be worth visiting your location a night or two earlier to take some test shots at different intervals, as we did for our finished image.

Once you’ve found your ideal time gap, you will need to keep it consistent throughout the rest of the sequence – this will save time in the editing process. You can do this manually with a stop watch, or you could use a built-in or external intervalometer.

You just set the number of shots you need, and the time gap between shots, and then hit your shutter release to begin the

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**Get Set Up to Shoot Moonstacks**

1 Setting up
If possible, try to time your shoot for when the moon will be rising or setting soon after dusk (see A Time and a place, below), as it’s easier to get organised and set up when there’s some ambient light to work with.

2 Sense of place
When considering where to shoot your moonstack, try to find somewhere with some foreground detail. Including the local landscape will add interest, and give your final moonstack a sense of place.

3 Focal length
Depending on your vantage point, and how much of the surrounding landscape you want to include, you may need to experiment with focal length. The longer the lens, the bigger the moon will appear in the sky.

4 Stable base
You won’t be able to shoot handheld. Each frame in the moonstack needs to be taken from the same direction and angle, so put your camera on a sturdy tripod, and make sure the tripod head is level.

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**Lunar Research**
1 Take aim
Mount your camera and wide-angle lens on your tripod and aim it at the moon, but include some environment (whether that’s a landscape or cityscape) in the frame. If you are able to fit the skyline in, try to place it in the bottom third of the frame.

2 Make allowances
The moon will move from left to right across the sky, so adjust your composition to position the moon in the left third of the frame, with space to the right for it to travel into in subsequent shots. Also think about whether it will be rising or falling during the sequence.

2 Bigger is better
You also need to work out is when the moon will be full, or nearly full. You can shoot a moonstack of a half moon, but it won’t be as impressive. It’s worth bearing in mind that the moon appears bigger at certain times of the year. Again, www.photoephemeris.com can help with this.

3 Stay sharp
Change your DSLR’s autofocus setting to single-point (this may be in your camera’s menu, or on an AF switch on the body itself). Alternatively, engage Live View and use the zoom button and multi-selector to fill the screen with the moon, then focus the lens manually.

1 A time and a place
You’ll need to do a bit of research if you want to avoid standing around all night waiting for the moon to appear. Use a website or app like www.photoephemeris.com to work out both when the moon will be rising in your location, and – equally critically – where.

How to Shoot the Moon
5 Speed up
If you open your shutter for too long the moon will be blurred. There are two movements at play here: the moon orbiting the earth, and the earth itself rotating on its axis. However, a fullish moon should be bright enough to enable you to set a shutter speed fast enough.

6 Cool down
If you’re shooting above a city, your photo will have an orange hue from light pollution. You could aim your camera above the skyline, but then you’ll lose the city. Instead, set white balance (in-camera, or in your editing software) to Tungsten to remove the orange cast.

4 Retain detail
Expose for the moon. It will probably be much brighter than surrounding sky/landscape, so the latter will look almost black (see Step 8 for how to overcome this). If you expose for the sky/landscape, the moon will be over-exposed. We set 1/125 sec at f/11 and ISO200.

7 Mind the gap
Take some test shots at timed intervals to decide what sort of gap you want between your images of the moon. We went for 30 mins between shots for our moonstack. Once you’ve decided on your interval, keep it consistent between the rest of the images. Now take your shots.

8 Capture the scenery
Exposing for the moon will almost certainly under-expose the foreground to near-blackness, so take a final shot to expose
for the foreground. Extend your shutter speed to around 10 seconds, take a test shot, and adjust the shutter speed as needed for a correct exposure.

Create Your Own Moonstack

1 Stack ‘em up
Open Photoshop, and go to File>Script>Load Files into Stack. Browse to and then select all of your moonstack files, then click on Open. Click on OK. You’ll see all your photos stacked in the Layers palette.

2 Blend the layers
Change the top layer’s blending mode to Lighten. Right-click on the layer and pick Copy Layer Style. Go to Select, and click on All Layers. Right-click on any layer and choose Paste Layer Style to blend your layers.

3 Add the background
Locate the extra shot you took to expose for the scenery, change the blending mode to Normal, then left-click and drag it to the bottom of the Layers palette. All the moons will appear, with the background now visible too.

4 Delete distractions
If the moon in the background image is distracting, select that layer, grab your Patch tool, draw around the moon, and move the selection to somewhere non-distracting. Once that’s complete, save your file.
Club Season (2015-2016) Year In Review

By Mike Garber, President

Our Board had determined that the club should increase the number of educational programs for the year. Input would be needed from our membership to determine where to focus our programs.

Our members were asked about their confidence with various aspects of photography and their preferences for club programs. The majority of members indicated they were confident with their knowledge of basic camera settings and usage, so we did not set up programs in those areas. Instead, Jeff and the Newsletter team provided a number of good articles to teach and review camera basics. Roy established a mentor program for those who would like personal help with use of cameras.

Many members of our Board agreed we should have some educational programs on identification of attributes of good images. I started an ongoing program to remind our members and competition judges of the CACCA and PSA image attributes. The end result expected is that our members will have a better understanding of the attributes of a good image and be able to self-assess their own images.

During September we had two presentations on attributes of good images and how judges may view images for competition. After our first competition, Norm held a critiques session to review how selected images might be enhanced.

We then had a program in a new area and heard from Tom Snitzer about Night/ Celestial photography techniques. After the holidays, we had two meetings on post-processing. We held one meeting on Elements and Lightroom, and the next meeting with Chris Smith, who showed us his top Lightroom techniques.

At the end of January we had a great Post Holiday party, where everyone won something. In February we saw great photography opportunities in Iceland. We recently hosted Alan Cox with a review of HDR techniques. We have two upcoming programs on post-processing topics, on PhotoShop and a new program developed by one of our members.

Our Board hopes that the programs for the year have helped you with your photography skills. We look forward to your input on planning programs for next year. We want to continue with a focus on photography education with a blend of seeing work from professional photographers to keep us inspired.
The Answer Man

Question and answer with written permission from Erik Kassa, FPSA, MPSA

**Question:**

I have a tripod. Do I need a monopod?

**Answer:**

Although a tripod is the best camera support a monopod is sometimes more useful. The smaller size and lower weight are important properties for travel and hiking. A monopod has a small footprint and can be used in crowded areas where a tripod is cumbersome or not permissible. Setting the monopod up for a picture is quicker, and repositioning is easier than with another tripod. Another benefit of a monopod is support for heavy lenses when a tripod is not possible.

Monopods are made of aluminum alloy, magnesium alloy or carbon fiber and there are 3 to 6 sections. The collapsed length is between 15 - 30 inches.

When the camera is on a tripod a remote release can be used. This is not possible on a monopod unless the monopod has stabilizing feet. A monopod allows reducing the shutter speed by 2 or 3 stops as effective as a stabilizer in the lens or camera. Because the camera on a monopod is not as stable as on a tripod the stabilizer can be left on. If it is turned off when the camera is on a monopod the benefit of the monopod is reduced.

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### April CACCA Results

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<tr>
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<td>Eileen Donan Castle</td>
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April 2016 Through the Lens page 7
Flower photography tips for beginners

*With written permission from Digital Photo Secrets*

Improve your flower photography: tips, tricks and techniques for pictures bursting with style. All you need, from the best digital camera settings to lighting for flowers…

Continued…
Flower Photography

Now's the time to improve your flower photos. Spring and summer offer huge potential to shoot stunning plant and flower portraits. Whether it's in your garden, a public park or even on the side of the road, there's plenty of fantastic photos for the taking. In this guide we've got 25 top flower photography tips for you. Use them, and watch your photography, erm... blossom. Sorry.

1 Macro lenses
If you're interested in close-up flower photography then you should invest in a macro lens. Using a macro lens enables you to focus up close so you can really fill the frame with your subject. A true macro lens produces an image recorded on the sensor at life-size or larger. Great care has to be taken when focusing macro lenses as depth of field is very limited when you're so close to your subject.

2 Extension tubes
If you want to try close-up photography without the expense of a macro lens, then extension tubes are a good alternative. Three tubes of varying depth form a set of extension tubes. A tube or combination of tubes is fitted between the camera body and the lens. Moving the lens away from the sensor reduces the minimum focusing

3 Use a tripod
A good tripod is worth its weight in gold when photographing flowers – so pick the heaviest! Using a tripod slows you down and helps you think clearly about what you're trying to achieve. You can fine-tune composition using a tripod and keep the point of focus exactly where you want it. The ideal type is a sturdy tripod with legs that can splay out so you can photograph close to the ground.

4 Remote release
In order to produce flower pictures that are pin-sharp you need to reduce the risk of camera-shake. With your camera mounted on a tripod you should then attach a cable release. This enables you to fire the shutter without risking camera movement as a result of you pressing down on the shutter release button.

5 Go telephoto
In order to isolate a particular flower from its surroundings you should use a telephoto lens. A long lens when used with the camera set to a wide aperture can really throw the foreground and background out of focus so that the viewer's attention is held where you want it. This is a great technique if you want to produce impressive photographs of individual plants.

6 Wide-angle lenses have their place
If you'd like to show an individual plant or a group of plants in their surroundings, then a
wide-angle lens is the tool for the job. Using one enables you to include the plants’ environment in a photograph so there’s more information available for the viewer. Depth of field is also increased, so your image can be sharp all the way from the foreground to the background.

7 Switch off autofocus
Depth of field is so narrow in close-up photography that precise focusing is critical, even with small apertures. To ensure your shots are sharp where you want, try switching to manual focus and doing it yourself. Changing focus alters the magnification of the subject, so set that first, then gently nudge the camera backwards and forwards to position the sweet spot of sharpness where you want it.

8 Use Live View
When shooting close-ups with a macro lens, even at narrow apertures, you need to get your focusing spot on, as your depth of field is so limited that any slight inaccuracy will result in blurred shots. One way round this is to use Live View (if your camera has it) to focus in manually as accurately as possible – use Live View’s zoom facility and then, as above, move your camera back or forth by a few millimeters until the element that you want to be in focus is pin-sharp.

9 Digital camera settings for flower photography
- To achieve maximum image quality with minimum noise you should set your digital camera to the lowest ISO setting available, usually ISO 100 or 200.
- Shoot in RAW format so that the maximum amount of picture information is stored for you to work with later.
- Set White Balance to Daylight to enable easy batch editing later.
- Use single shot drive mode, rather than continuous.
- Use small apertures to maximise detail – at very close range, even the smallest aperture can result in depth of field measured in millimeters.
- Use wide apertures to emphasise a sharply focused subject against a blurred background.

10 Watch the weather
A forecast of wall-to-wall sunshine and cloudless blue skies isn’t ideal for flower photography. Direct sunlight can be harsh and unforgiving, resulting in images with too much contrast, burnt-out highlights and loss of detail in shadow areas. A bright but overcast day can be perfect – the light’s soft and diffuse and it’s much more flattering.
11 Use a reflector
A reflector is a cheap item of equipment but it can really help to boost your flower photographs to the next level. When positioned close to an individual plant it can be angled so that it directs light into shadow areas to reveal detail and to reduce contrast. It can also be used to shade plants from harsh, direct sunlight.

12 Flash flower photography
Used in moderation, flash can help you produce impressive images, but be careful not to overdo it. An off-camera flash can be used to provide a subtle burst of side-lighting (to model your subject), or back lighting (to provide a rim-light). Macro ringflashes are ideal for flower photography, as they produce an even and flattering light, eliminating the harsh shadows that are characteristic of standard flash units. Macro ringflashes are also ideal for picking out reflective details, such as grains of pollen or raindrop.

13 Take your time
When you first encounter a beautiful park or garden it can be quite daunting and difficult to know where to start. Try to be methodical in your approach – you’re more likely to produce impressive photos. Don’t start taking photos as soon as you arrive unless you know where to go to get the best shots. Have a walk round and explore your surroundings. Keeping your camera away will help in the long run!

14 Make a note of the name
Flowers and plants in formal gardens are often accompanied by a stick, which bears both their common and/or Latin names. If you want your images used in books or magazines these details are vital. It can be easy to think you’ll remember it but after a few more photos or a few days you’ll forget. It only takes a minute to write it down.

15 Choose the best viewpoint
Portraits of people and animals often look more impressive when they’ve been taken from eye-level to the subject. The same can be applied to flower photography to great effect.

16 Kneesy does it
Because shooting flowers outdoors involves spending a lot of time on your knees and elbows, a gardener’s mat becomes an essential piece of kit. If you plan on spending a lot of time taking flower pictures, it may end up being the best £5 you’ve ever spent.

17 Watch your backgrounds
The background that you choose to photograph a flower against can either make or break the final image. A plant photographed with a soft, uncluttered background can stand out; a distracting, messy background can easily ruin what could have been a great shot if you’d thought a bit more. Use longer lenses and wider focal lengths to minimize any distraction.
18 Behind the scenes
If you can’t isolate a plant from background clutter, an easy solution is to place a sheet of card behind your subject: white will give it a botanical feel, while colored sheets can be used to complement its colors.

19 Gardening tools
When photographing plants, you need to remove distractions to improve the final shot, but you won’t be very popular if you start breaking plant stems or pulling flowers up. Clothes pegs or twine can be used to hold plants out of a shot without damaging them. Tweezers can also be useful for removing small, distracting items from your subject or the background.

20 Composing flower photos
Placing the subject slap-bang in the middle of the frame rarely works well and can result in a flat, boring image. Composing with the subject off-centre according to the rule of thirds can instantly give your images a professional look. Many beginners to flower photography tend to compose shots horizontally. This may be because it’s easier to hold and use the camera when held this way rather than turning it on its side to produce a vertical composition. However, more vertical images are used in magazines and books than horizontal ones so you should make the effort to shoot both formats if you’d like to see your efforts published!
You may be able to tell just by looking at your subject which composition will work best. As a rough guide, plants that are wider than they are tall will work as horizontal shots and those that are taller than they are wide will work as vertical shots. This is a rough guide – keep looking through the viewfinder as you move the camera to find the best shot.

21 Plant portraits
Consider cropping right in on a plant to isolate details. Look for colour and detail and what it is that makes each subject unique: only by focusing on a plant’s character – the sweep of a leaf, say, or the point of a petal – you’ll be able to create an image that’s more of a portrait of the plant than a standard
We welcome your cards, letters and emails with comments about the newsletter. Good or bad comments are welcome. Wait. Not exactly true. Keep the bad comments to a minimum or make them sound like constructive criticism.

Tell us if you would like to see specific tutorials or special articles. If you are a newbie tell us what you

From Donna Thomas

I thought the February issue of Through the Lens was particularly interesting. When taking images I only think in ‘color’. The article about how to take beautiful black and white photos gave me something to think about. I’m going to try, sometime soon, expanding my idea of doing only color and think about what might make a good black an white image.

The article on explaining camera modes for newbies was a good, quick review. Sometimes a review of the basics is a good thing.

Keep up the good work.

Donna

Thanks Donna. Flattery will get you everywhere.

From Paula Matzek

Some very interesting articles/tutorials! Nice variety of topics. Some run long and I find myself just skimming.

We used to have member birthdays listed in each issue, and I think that gave the club a more personal touch. Is it possible to reinstate that?

Paula

Thanks Paula: Yes, the newsletter sometimes gets too long. We can’t control the length of the articles and don’t know which parts to eliminate. We did eliminate about 8 pages from this newsletter We’ll bring up the birthday issue at the next board meeting. However, if we list all upcoming birthday’s do we have to buy everyone a birthday present?

Note to Rich Milburn: Did Paula say she only “skimmed” our articles?
From Patty Colabuono

You did it again - another great newsletter! Thank you both for all your hard work.

Since you asked for specific feedback, I went through this issue a couple times. Here are a few thoughts . . .

I like the Beautiful B & W Photos article a lot. Very well-written and informative. I couldn’t find the name of the author, though, and would like to know who wrote it. Same with the Answer Man and Camera Modes articles.

Thanks for promoting Helix, Hunt’s, and ProCam. They’ve been very generous to us and it’s good to recognize their help.

I like that the committee chairs are listed in each issue. It gives members an idea of who to contact if they would like to become more involved.

I also like that you include a list of programs, upcoming exhibits, and field trips. I was a little confused by the exhibits, though. The “coming in 2015 and 2016” dates (which I assume are exhibit dates) don’t match up with the dates listed under the upcoming exhibits.  Oops!

One of the things I like best about our club is the mix of people with varying levels of ability. You provide a good mix of articles that appeal to both newbies and more advanced photographers.

I love seeing the winning images from our competitions. We see them for such a short time at the competitions. It’s nice to be able to spend a little more time studying the beautiful winning pics!

The only thing I’d eliminate would be the board meeting recap. It doesn’t really add anything that hasn’t been covered elsewhere in the newsletter.

Just my 2 cents. Thanks again for your work on the newsletter.

Patty

Great comments Patty. Many of the articles come from Digital Photo Secrets as they are a great source of information for us. Periodically I write to an author and ask for their permission to use the article. Credit is given when they respond. You’ll be thrilled to know that board meeting recaps have been eliminated.

From Judie Reynolds

I think the team is doing a great job. It has interesting articles, including some basics. It includes core things like the program schedule and highlights the winning images.

One thing I don’t think belongs in the newsletter is the Minutes of the board meetings.

Judie

Thanks Judie. Minutes of the board meetings have already been deleted.
## REMAINING ACC PROGRAMS FOR THE YEAR

<table>
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<td>4/20/2016</td>
<td>Mort Lerman - Mort's Photo Shop techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/4/2016</td>
<td>Bill and Cindy - Photos for Art Shows</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/18/2016</td>
<td>Jim Beck - Photo Up Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/01/2016</td>
<td>End of year fun competition</td>
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## ONGOING AND UPCOMING EXHIBIT SCHEDULE

From Judy King

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location and Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Through the end of April</td>
<td>Elk Grove Village Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>July, 2016</td>
<td>Not exhibiting this month as a club</td>
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<tr>
<td>August, 2016</td>
<td>Not exhibiting this month as a club</td>
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<tr>
<td>September, 2016</td>
<td>Possibly Arlington Heights Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October, 2016</td>
<td>Schaumburg Library / first floor only (framed, matted and wired are required for this space. Pics can be any size frame. ACC has exhibited here before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November, 2016</td>
<td>Mt. Prospect Public Library (meeting room A - 3 cases which contain glass shelves).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACC meets at the Christian Church of Arlington Heights, 333 W. Thomas Avenue, three blocks west of Arlington Heights Road, across from Hasbrook Park on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7:30 p.m.**

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

126 E. WING ST., ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60004
### OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mike Garber &amp; Jeff Berman</td>
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<td>Jim Narden</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Coens &amp; Paula Matzek</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="mailto:vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org">vpcompetition@arlingtoncameraclub.org</a></td>
</tr>
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APRIL 2016 COMPETITION RESULTS

DPI B&W - Churchill’s Log Cabin - Roy Lobenhofer

DPI B&W - Adopt Me - Ed Martin

DPI B&W - Redwoods - Ed Bible

DPI B&W - Sierra - John Chwalek
DPI Color - Frozen Leaves - Bob Reynolds

DPI Color - Gentle Beauty - Patty Colabuono

DPI Color - Norwegian Valley
Bill Bible

DPI Color - Diva - Patty Colabuono

DPI Color - Got It - Ken Olsen
Large Print B&W - Please - Lance Lagoni

Large Print B&W - Lost in the Desert - Mike Garber

Small Color Print - Enjoying the Clover - Janis Williams

Small Color Print - Unfurling - Paula Matzek
Small Color Print - Comin’ at You -

Small Color Print - White Birch in the Fog -

Small Color Print - 1939 Lincoln Zephyr -
    Jeff Berman

Small Color Print - Beach Monster -
    Lance Lagoni

Small Color Print - Color TV -
    Tim Medema
NOTICE FOR THE END OF YEAR FUN COMPETITION

At the end of the season, the club members bring their winning images to club. At that time, we, the members vote on the winners in each category. We determine a first, second and third place winner in each of the four categories below. Please bring your prints to the last meeting of the season in June. The DPI images will be on display for voting.

The Award and Honorable Mention winners are listed below.

**Small Monochrome Prints**
- Brach View
- Stairway to Nowhere
- Bedtime Story
- Sad
- Garage Stuff
- Reflections
- Steampunk with Attitude
- Wolf at Guffy, Colorado
- Erie Falls
- Face of Hearts
- Truck in the Lot
- Time to go Inside
- Reflections on Anna
- Brianne
- Phil in Fedora
- Eliean Donan Castle
- Pilot
- Capitol Reef
- Heather in High-Key
- The Falls
- I Don’t Know What You Have
- Sail Race
- Mud Face

**Large Monochrome Prints**
- Teamsters Wagon
- Mammoth Hot Spring
- T-Truck
- Mission San Jose’
- Winding Path
- Bodie
- Tioga Pass
- Confederate Captain
- Tree over Canyon
- Yosemite High Country
- Death Valley Dunes
- Please...
- Lost in the Desert
- Water Lily
- Ruby Beach
- Out to Pasture
- Horror
Small Color Prints
On the Range
Bald Eagle
Reflections of the Past
A Stairway at Cantigny
On the North Fork of Long Island
Wyandot Falls
Grand Canal
Refreshed
Balloon over the Lake
Black Canyon of the Denison
Courtyard
Bridge of Sighs
Afternoon Storm
June
Close Finish
Hefty Wheels
Train Moving
Enjoying the Clover
Unfurling
Comin’ at You
White Birch in the Fog
1939 Lincoln Zephyr
Spring Time
Beach Monster
Color TV
Giant Green Anemone
Canna Leaves
Be Still My Heart
A Snack
Blossom Takes a Nap
Buttermilk Gorge
Jellies

Large Color Prints
Our Lady of Lourdes
Edison Engine
Out for a Swim
Sunset over the Pier
Blue Hen Falls
Dammed Up Stream
My Favorite PondCanyon
Waters
Key Hole
Lighthouse in Maine
Cascade Gorge
North Canyon Pool
Oregon Lighthouse
Eagle Falls
Underground at O’Hare
Mono Lake Sunrise
Ford’s Point
Sea Stacks
Color Harbor
American Kestrel
Shy Guy
Canyon Overlook
Copper Creek
Flower Beauty
Washington Island Stave
Church
Horseshoe Bend – Page, AZ
Redwood Down
Red Canoes
Lighthouse Scene
Covered Bridge
Enfield Creek Falls
# ACC Competition Results – April 6, 2016

## DPI Monochrome Images

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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## DPI Color Images

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<td>Patty Colabuono</td>
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<td>Ken Olsen</td>
<td>Got It!</td>
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## Small Monochrome Prints

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**ACC Competition Results – April 6, 2016**

**Small Color Prints**

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