



Digital Color, HM, by Dave Edens. See more HMs starting on p.11.

In Focus

June Program—Storytelling for Photographers By J.T. Stones

June 13, 2022 via Zoom, 6:00 p.m.

We are privileged to have JP Stones to present to the Huntsville Photographic Society. JP will be coming to us from Mexico so this presentation will naturally be presented on Zoom only.

Great storytelling can help your audience connect emotionally with your images, but understanding how to weave a narrative into your photography can be confusing. How can one photo tell a whole story, with a beginning, middle, and end?

JP has spent the last 5 years photographing the same group of Mexica, or Aztec, dancers. In that time he learned how connected the Mexica are to their mythology and to stories passed down across generations. That’s when he decided that, as these stories were so vital to Mexica culture, they needed to play a bigger role in his portraits.



This is a talk about what happened next. About how a desire to tell stories visually, ended up changing his entire creative process, and the way people react to his photos.

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Using examples from his cultural photography work in Mexico, JP Stones explores different ways to improve that emotional connection. Including how myths and character archetypes can be harnessed for better storytelling.

Working with narratives won't just change the way people engage with your photos, it will fundamentally change the way you create them. Because that narrative can also be used to guide decisions on posing, composition, lighting, and color. Focusing your creative decisions and ensuring you create cohesive work.

JP has presented for professional organizations and camera clubs across the US, Mexico, and the UK. His work has been featured on the cover of multiple publications, including Good Light Magazine. He's also been teaching his Photo Workshops for close to 10 years.

TOPICS DISCUSSED IN JP'S TALK

- How much of a story can one photo really tell?
- How being more intentional can change your approach to photography.
- How photography can be about making an emotional connection as well as creating beautiful work.
- How thinking in stories can help guide your entire creative decision-making process.

You can watch JP present on his YouTube channel:

- <https://www.youtube.com/c/jpstones>

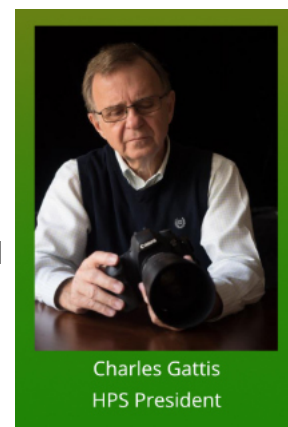
If you would rather just link to talk details:

- <https://jpestonesphotography.com/online-photography-talk-storytelling-for-photographers-by-jp-stones-hire-jp-stones/>



Skills—Processing

Processing is the third skill set photographers need today, and perhaps have always needed, even though some would strongly disagree that very little processing should ever be done to a photo. I was never of that opinion. Part of my first job, indeed my first endeavor into photography, was to help in the dark room of a local photography studio. I was thirteen years old at the time so most of my “assisting” had to do with cleaning and straightening up, though I was allowed to do a little of mixing of the chemicals when the boss was under a lot of pressure. I was allowed in the darkroom, however, when the master was producing his art and was aware even at that early age that the photograph that appeared at the end of the process wasn’t exactly the image that the camera captured. Some process was taking place, even though in those days it was very little.



Charles Gattis
HPS President

Of course, with digital photography, all of that changed. Now everything can be altered, manipulated, and even manufactured to a certain extent with our modern computer software. From all of that comes the whole range of arguments as to how much alteration is acceptable in a photograph. I contend, that even though there are disagreements, processing is an essential skillset for a photographer to develop, whether the full range of those skills are used on any one photograph or not. I have often heard it said that you can’t take a bad photograph and turn it into a great photograph through editing, but you can take a good photograph and turn it into a much better photograph. Or you can take the image you were able to get and turn it into the image you really wanted.

I offer my own experience as an example. Some twelve years ago we were traveling with a group of people in Prague—truly a beautiful city that I enjoyed so much. We had walked down and hill and were crossing a bridge over a little canal when I looked to my left and saw this little boat making its way down the canal. I had my camera on my side and just picked it up and shot. I liked the image enough to frame it and give it to my mother for



Christmas one year—it hangs in my son’s living room as I write this. Over the years, however, as I have looked at the image on the wall, I have felt that the lighting was all wrong. I wanted more emphasis on the little boat and wished I could correct that.

A few months ago, I took Matt Kloskowski’s new course on lighting and decided to use this image as a practice image for the course. I completely changed the lighting in the image to make it what I thought the boat might look like coming down the canal at the end of the day illuminated by a bright light showing through from the river beyond. It wasn’t the scene I saw on that day, but rather the scene I always thought about when looking at the

picture. You can see the recreated image on the left. I was so pleased with my work that I sent both images to Matt for comments. About a week later, he wrote me back with a somewhat disappointing comment, “you know, I really like both images—one about as much as the other.” To further disappoint, I told my son recently that I had completely relit the picture and that I could provide him with a substitute if he wanted. He thought for a minute and said, “No, I’ll take this one—it was Nana’s.”

I suppose all that says the real value of an image is in the eye of the beholder and the attachment he or she has to a particular scene. That doesn’t necessarily make the case for going through the steep learning curve of learning how to edit a picture, except to say that the processing of the image in some way is a part of the creative flow of producing art. Remember, there is the seeing, the capturing, the processing, and the presenting—all leading to producing a piece of art that brings the joy and pleasure of a scene that the photographer wants to convey to the viewer. Only the photographer knows completely what he or she is trying to convey (hopefully), but only the viewer knows what emotions and feelings a certain image brings to bear. It’s in the connection between the artist and the viewer that the magic happens. And I would say that some of the process of creating that magic comes out of the skill of processing an image in some way.

I had thought about mentioning some of the modern digital tools available now for the photographer, but I think a quick search of the internet would be more valuable than my comments. Personally, I started with Lightroom and Photoshop and am still a big fan. For me, since I derive a lot of pleasure from “playing around” with both of those pieces of software, the monthly fee is well worth the expense for the therapy it brings me. Finding pleasure in that, however, has taken a few years of angst and frustration. There are a lot of other editors out there these days including On1, Luminar Neo, and Affinity Photo, not to mention a whole host of plugins to use if you choose. Perhaps the skill level we need to acquire here is some proficiency with the software, or part of it, that helps us do what we normally want to do with a photograph. For some of us, that may be very little—some sharpening, a little noise reduction, some cropping, and maybe a touch of tone and color adjustments. For others, it may require the complete relighting of the image to produce what we really wanted to see and would like to convey to the viewer but could not get in capture due to lack of skill, time of day, etc. It’s very subjective.

As in all these articles, I’ll post this one in my blog and you can make comments by clicking [here](#).

June Judge—Joe Fikes Subject—Landscapes

June 27, Trinity United Methodist Church, 6:00 p.m.

Joe Fikes is certainly no stranger to the Huntsville Photographic Society. He has judged for the Huntsville Photographic Society every year since 2012. A distinguished scientist in the field of laser research, he has also created a successful business as a photographer. Joe’s art excels in attention to detail, creativity in composition, and rich color palettes. You will find pieces of his art in homes throughout North Alabama and southern Tennessee. If you are not familiar with his work, you can visit his site at www.joefikes.com/.



May Competition Results Subject—Urban Jungle Judge—Cara Fuller

	Color Digital (49)	Monochrome Digital (42)	Color Print (15)	Monochrome Print (15)
1st	C.T. Chi	Allen Gary	Doris Leveritt	Don Wolfe
2nd	Judy Kennemer-DeBlanc	Earl Todd	Don Wolfe	Charles Leveritt
3rd	Chris Baker	Chris Baker	Barbara Staggs	Barbara Staggs
HM	Bob Gathany	C.T. Chi	Charles Leveritt	Doris Leveritt
HM	Dave Edens	Dave Edens	Charles Leveritt	Charles Leveritt
HM	Ed Townsend	Ed Townsend		
HM	Ed Townsend	Mat Bevill		
HM	Patricia Haag			

Points for the Year to Date

Name	2022 points	2022 Wins
CT Chi	29	8
Christopher Baker	18	7
Don Wolfe	18	6
Charles Leverett	17	9
Barbara Staggs	17	7
Henry Smith	15	4
Doris Leverett	14	5
Ed Townsend	13	9
Emily Saile	13	4
Charles Gattis	13	3
Judy Kennamer-DeBlanc	11	6
John Shriver	10	5
Earl Todd	10	5
Allen Gary	10	4
Carolyn Eidson	9	4
Julie Gary	8	4
Philip Flowers	7	3
Tom Bryant	6	2
Mat Bevill	5	3
Jack Eidson	5	2
Alice Searcy	4	2
Steve Mitchell	4	1
Bob Gathany	3	3
Jim Spinoso	3	3
Carolyn Shadden	3	1
Dave Edens	2	2
Joy Henderson	2	2
Susan Chi	1	1
Jack DeBlanc	1	1
Eric Deylius	1	1
Trudi Gardner-Fay	1	1
Patricia Haag	1	1
Eddie Sewall	1	1
Sam Tumminello	1	1

New Members
 Buddy Aswin
 Norma Finney

2022 Competition Topics

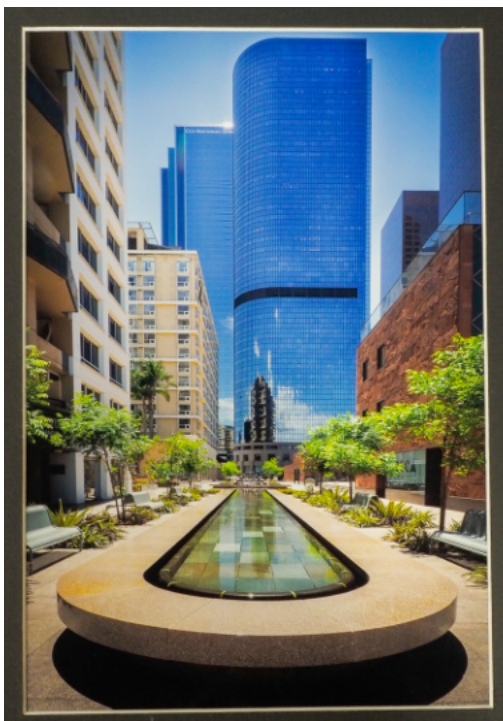
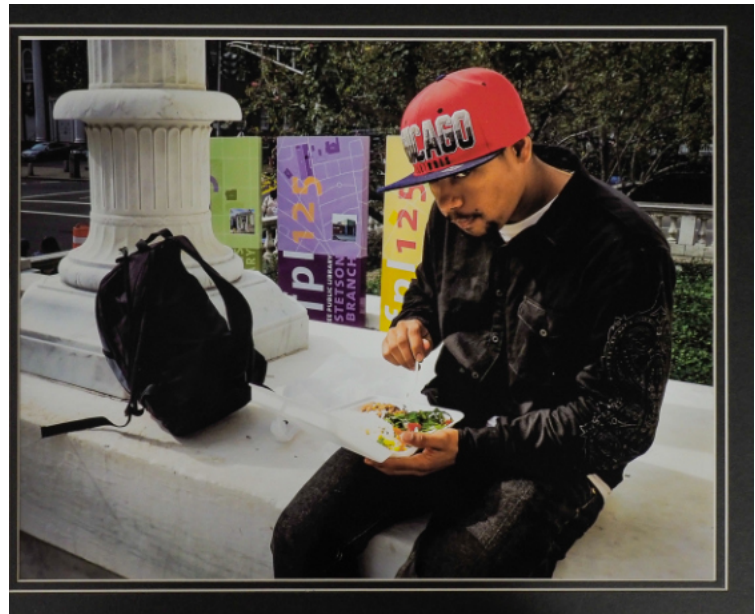
6/27— LANDSCAPES	8/22— HSV/ MADISON CTY	10/24— OPEN
7/25— FAMILY	9/26— NIGHT/ LOW LIGHT	11/28— TRUST

May 2022 Images



Color Print 1st place
by Doris Leveritt

Color Print 2nd place
by Don Wolfe



Color Print 3rd place
by Barbara Staggs



Monochrome Print
1st place
by Don Wolfe



Monochrome Print
2nd place
by Charles Leveritt



Monochrome Print
3rd place
by Barbara Staggs

Color Digital 1st place
by C.T. Chi



Color Digital 2nd place
by Judy Kennemer-DeBlanc

Color Digital 3rd place
by Chris Baker



Monochrome Digital
1st place
by Allen Gary

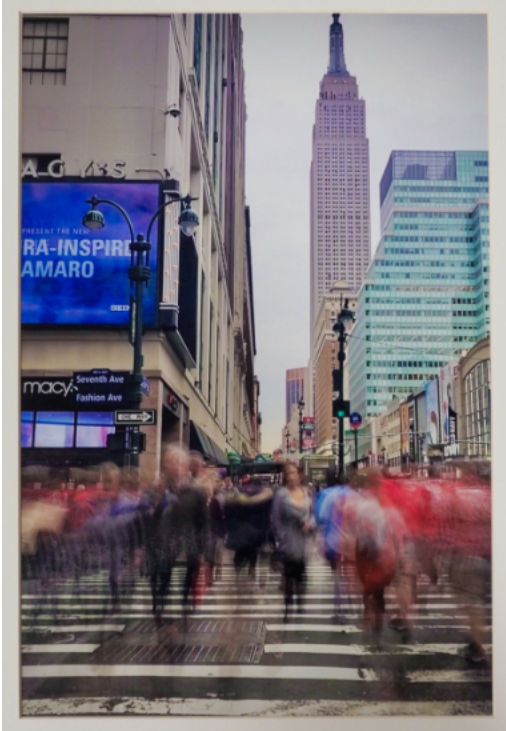


Monochrome Digital
2nd Place
by Earl Todd



Monochrome Digital
3rd Place
by Chris Baker

Honorable Mention—Print



Charles Leveritt



Charles Leveritt



Doris Leveritt



Charles Leveritt

Honorable Mention—Digital



Bob Gathany



Dave Edens



Ed Townsend



Ed Townsend



Patricia Haag



Matt Bevill



Dave Edens

C.T.Chi



Ed Townsend

Officers of HPS

President: Charles Gattis
Primary Competition Officer: Steve Mitchell
Digital Competition Officer: Chris Baker
Competition Records Officer: Eddie Sewall
Program Officer: Roger Hunter
Outreach & Activities Officer: Brenda Barnes
Workshop Chairman: Charlie Leverett
Publicity Officer: Rosemary Davidson
Treasurer: Emily Saile
Communications Officer: Jay Bain
Historian: Tom Bryant
Exhibition Officer: Bob Gower
PSA Representative: Lee Pratt

Non Board Positions

Webmaster: John Shriver
Membership Officer: Alice Searcy
Mentor/Novice Program Officer: Henry Smith

HPS is meeting at the Huntsville Madison County Library on the second Monday of the month, 6-8 p.m., and Trinity United Methodist Church on the fourth Monday, 6-8 p.m.

Website: www.huntsvillephotographicsociety.org
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/399566463394251/> (closed group)