



THE IRIS

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Our 56th Year!

April 2010

Rounding the Bend...

Hard to believe...but true. Just one more competition and Year-End...coming up fast! For those newcomers, there's still time to put in make-ups to achieve the minimum entries for participation in End-of-Year. Check out the Rules of Competition on the website.

Our final presentation for the season is Elinor Stecker-Orel's lecture on using Layers in Photoshop. I have seen it, and it is excellent. It's not to be missed!

As we round the bend to the final stretch, here are the standings through April. There are a number of close races, so get those final images ready for next month.

DIGITAL B&W	Apr	Total
Linda Tommasulo	18.0	138.5
Frank Foto	18.0	135.5
Inese Moore	18.0	134.0
Anastasia Tompkins <i>hm</i>	17.5	133.5
Dennis DiBrizzi	16.0	131.5
Harvey Augenbraun <i>im</i>	18.5	128.5
David Feldman	16.5	120.0
Martin Lewis	16.5	118.0
Frank Price	16.5	110.0
Bob Feldman	16.5	92.5
Virginia Franklin	---	84.0
Teena Miller	---	81.5
Suzanne Carter	8.5	79.0
Rudy Finelli	---	76.0
Michael Brummett	---	62.5
Sharon Gumerove	---	61.5
Doreen Rose	---	50.0
Conrad Tinney	---	50.0
Annabelle Washington	---	49.5
Todd Berman	---	46.5
Steven Berger	---	30.0
Gerald Liddelow	---	10.0
Glenda Jones	---	7.5

DIGITAL A	Apr	Total
Andrea Nelson	16.5	133.5
Sharon Gumerove <i>im</i>	18.5	132.5
Inese Moore	17.0	132.0
Erwin Krasnow	16.0	131.0
Martin Lewis	16.0	130.5
Fred Fanelli <i>hm</i>	17.5	127.5
Frank Price	17.5	110.5
Teena Miller	---	80.0

DIGITAL B	Apr	Total
Frank Foto <i>im</i>	18.5	126.5
David Feldman	16.5	126.0
Raymond Flood	17.0	125.0
Bob Feldman	18.0	123.0
Lynne West	8.5	112.0
Virginia Franklin	---	93.0
Doreen Rose	17.5	87.5
Rudy Finelli	---	77.0
Conrad Tinney	---	77.0
Gerald Liddelow <i>hm</i>	17.0	70.5
Michael Brummett	---	64.0
Todd Berman	---	49.0
Stephen Berger	---	32.5
Glenda Jones	---	23.0

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 17th -Program
Photographer, instructor and former editor of Popular Photography Magazine, Elinor Stecker-Orel's presentation on using Layers in Photoshop.

April 22nd -Weill Cornell Reception
Plus refreshments! 7-9pm. Invite your friends!

May 1st - Competition #9 (Final)
Judge - Lila Polinger
Theme - Song Title
(Title will display with photo)

May 8th - End-of-Year Competition
Judges: Ann Harper, Marie Kane, TBA

DIGITAL AA	Apr	Total
Linda A. Tommasulo	17.5	142.5
Anastasia Tompkins	17.5	136.0
Harvey Augenbraun	17.5	133.5
Annabelle Washington	18.0	132.0
Bob Schwartz <i>im</i>	17.0	131.5
Har Er Huang	17.0	128.0
Veronica Saunders	18.0	126.5
Suzanne Carter <i>hm</i>	17.5	125.0

THEME	Apr	Total
	<i>Theme: Fog</i>	
Anastasia Tompkins	17.0	135.0
Linda A. Tommasulo	17.0	132.5
Inese Moore	17.0	126.5
Lynne West	16.5	125.0
Annabelle Washington	16.0	114.0
Har Er Huang <i>im</i>	18.5	112.5
Frank Price	16.0	110.0
Andrea Nelson <i>hm</i>	17.0	107.5
Suzanne Carter	---	101.0
Raymond Flood	17.5	97.0
Rudy Finelli	---	76.5
Bob Feldman	17.5	71.0
Michael Brummett	---	61.0
Conrad Tinney	---	50.0
Teena Miller	---	48.5
David Feldman	---	46.0
Todd Berman	---	45.0
Virginia Franklin	---	41.0
Frank Foto	18.0	36.5
Harvey Augenbraun	---	31.5
Glenda Jones	---	30.5
Stephen Berger	---	29.0
Bob Schwartz	---	16.5
Gerald Liddelow	---	16.0
Doreen Rose	---	14.5
Joe Dionisio	---	7.0



Theme Honorable Mention
 "Fog Over Canyon"
 © Andrea Nelson

COMING SOON TO YOUR E-MAIL BOX

The Board is in the process of compiling your suggestions for Themes for the 2010-2011 season. Watch for the listing in your (e)mailbox soon. Vote for your nine favorites. Vote early - but NOT often! Only one vote per member. The nine entries with the highest votes will be the theme selections for the coming season.

SPECIAL THANKS...

To Walter Kimmel, Salon photographer, and Board Member/Competition Chair of the Westchester Photographic Society for sitting in to judge last week on very short notice!



Theme Image of the Month
 "Street" © Har Er Huang



Executive Board	
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April Winning Images
Judge - Walter Kimmel



Digital B Honorable Mention
"Bird in Flight" © Gerald Liddelow



Digital AA
Image of the Month
"Sunset with Plane"
 © Bob Schwartz



Digital B&W
Image of the Month
"Tai Chi 2"
 © Harvey Augenbraun



Digital A Image of the Month
"Pretty in Pink" © Sharon Gumerove

Digital B
Image of the Month
"On a Life Well Spent"
 © Frank Foto



Digital B&W Honorable Mention
"Wallabe Love" © Anastasia Tompkins

Digital A Honorable Mention
"Variegated Orchid" © Fred Fanelli

Digital AA Honorable Mention
"Engishtown Motocross"
 © Suzanne Carter



Writing a Compelling Artist's Statement

by Adam Eisenstadt (reprinted with permission)

Editor's Note: Now that we are exhibiting our work, we may soon be called upon to write an Artist's Statement. Adam Eisenstadt has graciously granted permission to share his wisdom on this topic with you.

Why is an artist statement important? An artist statement is primarily a marketing piece designed to make someone interested in your work, whether he/she has seen it or not. A good artist statement helps make an artist and his/her work more compelling. An artist statement is a complement to an artist's work and emphasizes key aspects of the artist and his/her work. Many artists like to think their work speaks for itself, which is true to a degree, but a strong written overview or explanation of who you are and what you do really expands and even enhances the work in important ways.

As a freelance writer, I've written statements for many artists, working in a wide variety of styles and genres. I once did a statement for an artist who works in encaustics—wax paintings—and she's a psychologist. A major theme of her work, reflected in the materials she uses, is memory. Her paintings are very colorful and abstract. To look at them you wouldn't necessarily realize memory is a theme, and you certainly wouldn't know that she's a psychologist. Now, this information is crucial to her work, and to know this about her enhances the viewer's understanding. So an artist statement really fills out the picture (pun intended).

What makes a good artist statement? Clarity, Brevity, and Focus.

Clarity. You should get to the point and be thorough about your art, but not exhaustive. There's always more you can say about your work (since you know everything about it), but saying too much can muddle your message.

Brevity. An artist statement should be concise. Rare is the statement that's more than 500 words (one page, single-spaced). You have to assume that the people you send this to will only read two or three paragraphs (if that), which is why the key information should be at the top of the statement. Keep in mind: an artist statement is a work of publicity, not scholarship.

Focus. Initially, before even thinking about the specifics of your artist statement, you have to ask yourself: What am I trying to accomplish as an artist? Then write your statement accordingly. So, there's a strategic dimension to the statement—it should serve your goals and be written accordingly.

What is the best information to include in an artist statement? That of course depends on the artist: what his/her work is about and what he/she is trying to accomplish. It goes back to the idea of being strategic—include what you think is most important, to your art and to your goals. If it's possible to have a general rule for a statement, I'd say it is: stick to the basics. When I'm working with artists to craft a statement, here are some of the questions I ask:

1. What is intent of this piece (what are you trying to accomplish with it)?
2. Who do you want to reach with it?
3. What is the message you want to convey?
4. What do you want to say about your work: • materials used • influences/current inspirations • key themes • overarching message(s)
5. What do you want to retain, if anything, from old bio/artist statement?
6. How heavily should autobiographical elements play into work?

It's impossible to say everything about your art that you might want to say, so you have to be a rigorous editor. For example, if your personal biography is directly relevant to your work, you may want to include more of that information than someone who doesn't overtly draw from his/her life as a basis for their art. Of course every artist draws on his/her life experience, but a lot of those details aren't necessarily relevant and can be left out.

Are there other things an artist should leave out of a statement? Again, it's hard to generalize because different artists chose to emphasize different things. As a rule, though, I think art theory should be used sparingly. Including a lot of jargon and complex ideas tends to muddle a short artist statement. If there are key ideas that drive your work, then certainly include them, but do it concisely.

What should the tone of an artist statement be? An artist statement is a formal communication, that's why it's called a "statement." It's not a conversation or a casual e-mail—in other words it's not a place to be chatty. Generally an artist statement should be written in third person (there may be exceptions to this, like a grant that asks specifically for a first person narrative from the artist). Some experts advocate first person—which is fine, but there's a difference. You can't really trumpet the work in the same way you can with a third person statement. If you use phrases like "compelling work" or "strong, vibrant colors" in first person, it just sounds egotistical, but in third person you can get away with it.

Any final thoughts about this topic? A lot of artists approach self-promotion with dread—it may not be natural for them, and they would just prefer to just work on their art. Maybe the biggest artists don't have to worry about the details of their marketing, but most artists don't have that luxury, so you have to do a lot of your own promotion. It doesn't have to be such a chore. It can be enriching and actually help you understand your own work better. And ultimately, the point is to get your work out there and advance your career. You can make it creative and personally rewarding.

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Adam Eisenstat is a professional writer with extensive experience writing for artists. To learn more about how Adam can help you create powerful written communications that will advance your work, contact him at: adameisenstat@aol.com or visit his online portfolio ("Art Writing" section) at www.mediabistro.com/AdamEisenstat.