



Red Rock, Joel Simpson

**Tuesday, November 23: Joel Simpson**

**Wednesday, December 15: Members' Night**

# Tuesday, November 23 (7:00 pm) - via Zoom

## Joel Simpson — Playgrounds for the Mind: The Metaphoric Eye

This slide presentation dives deeply into the photographic landscape genre by skipping over traditional place-evoking views to look closely at the rocks themselves—in search of their suggestive power as metaphor. Having immersed myself in Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist art—the last schools of Modernism—I have discovered their themes in rock formations around the world. These are purely natural forms that, properly framed and processed, can stir up desires, dreams and fears in the vast underground of our unconscious (as Surrealism seeks to do), as well as offer visual representations of energy itself (the overall aim of Abstract Expressionism).

**JOEL SIMPSON** began conscious life enamored of nature, collecting and studying rocks, fossils, insects and seashells. He taught himself photography starting at age 13, beginning with a fascination with landscapes. His formal studies broadened out into literature, music, psychology, history, languages, and modern and contemporary art, including a PhD from Brown in comparative literature (1976) and a Master of Music from Loyola (New Orleans, 1994), with a focus on theory and criticism. He was also a performing and composing jazz pianist for 22 years, based in New Orleans.

Since returning to photography as a professional in 2002, he explored a number of photographic genres, but found himself drawn back to his childhood passion, rocks. Having immersed himself in 20th Century art, he discovered formal resonances in geological subjects with stylistic gestures and aesthetic approaches of Surrealist and Abstract Expressionist painters. The resulting rock images barely fit into standard landscape categories—so he invented his own: geological photography.

Simpson's work has been exhibited in Paris (Musée de l'érotisme), Tours, Rome, Barcelona, and many US galleries and art fairs. His images have been published in Silvershotz (Australia), View Magazine (Brussels), Camera Arts (Boulder, CO) and Focus Exposures (online). Having explored many photographic modes (e.g. social documentary, figure studies, scrap metal, portraiture, fashion, archeology), he now focuses on geological and landscape photography. He went around the world in 2014 and continues to travel extensively in search of provocative mineral formations.

In 2007 Simpson curated a 125-artist photography show at the Williamsburg Art and Historical (WAH) Center in Brooklyn, Sun Pictures to Mega-Pixels, focusing on non-silver-based photography. The WAH Center continues to show and collect his work. He has lectured and taught photography extensively, including seminars on the Colorado Plateau. His awards include ten Black and White Spider Awards (2012–2020, UK), and was named one of the “10 Best Landscape Photographers of 2019” and one of the “18 Best Landscape Photographers of 2021” by One Eyeland (India). His 168-pp book, *Earthforms: Intimate Portraits of Our Planet*, was featured on the cover of *Natural History* magazine (June, 2019), and won the 2019 Nautilus Gold Award for Art and Photography. A shorter book, *Playgrounds for the Mind: The Art of Geological Photography* (50 pp., 2021), distills his original approach to photographing rock formations for their metaphorical charge.

Both books can be seen on the website, <https://earthforms.net>.

Portfolio website: <https://joelsimpsonart.com>

## Wednesday, December 15 (7:00 pm) - via Zoom Members' Night

For Members' Night, sixth edition, all are invited to share their nature-themed photos on our Zoom call. We look forward to seeing a stunning variety of locations and perspectives!

Deadline for submitting images: **Sunday, December 12 at 6:00 pm.**

1. You may submit up to 8 of your nature-themed images.
2. Format each image as a JPEG file, sRGB format at 72 pixels per inch, with 1280 pixels on the long side.
3. Label each image with your name and a sequential number (from 1 to 8): Jones\_Mary#1.jpg. Use the sequence in which you would like to have the photos shown.
4. Email the photos as attachments (not embedded) to [sierraphotonyc2@gmail.com](mailto:sierraphotonyc2@gmail.com).

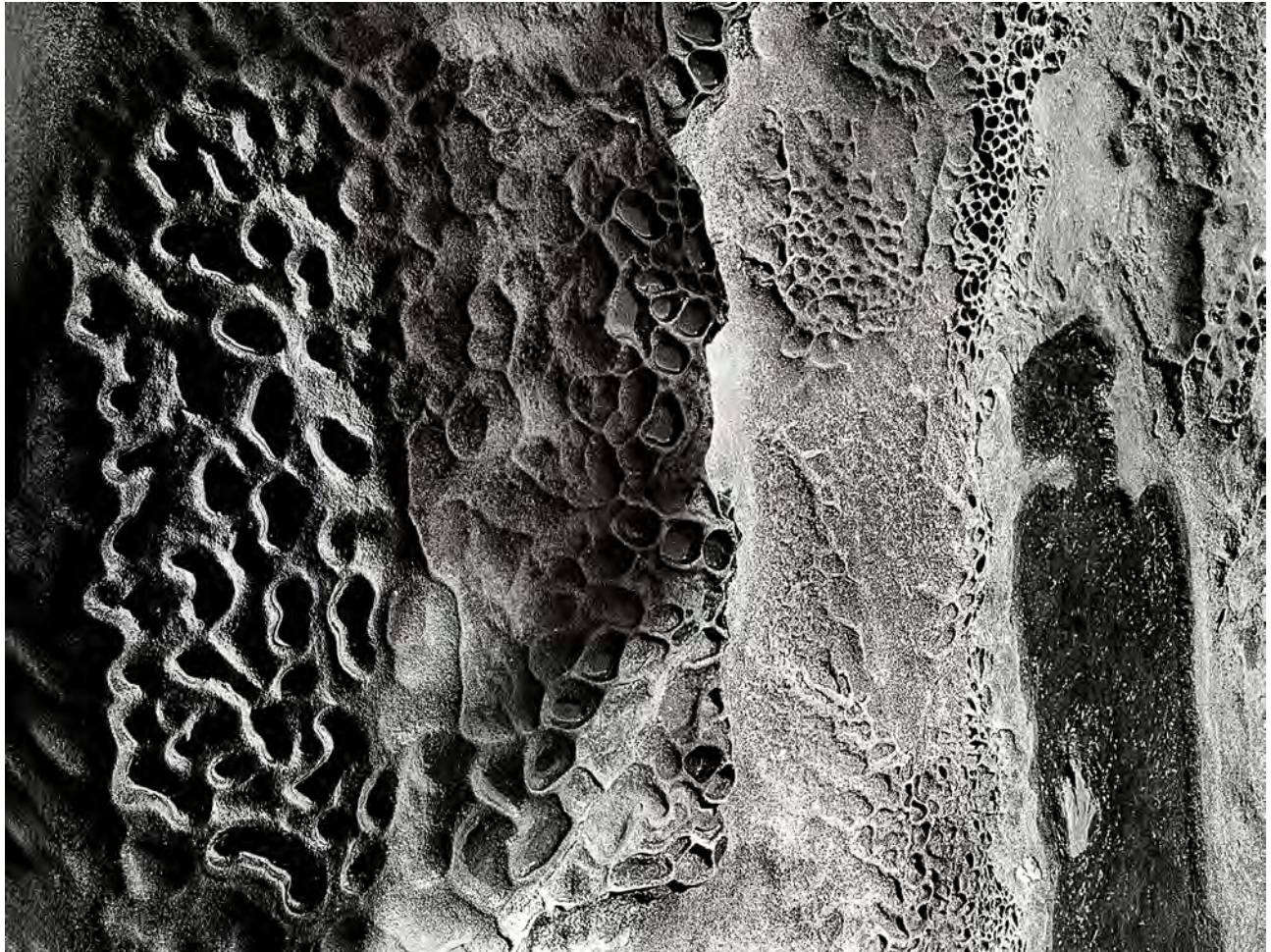
When you join the Zoom call on December 15, use the name you used to label the photos as your participant name, so that we can announce your photos.

Please note:

We would like to feature some Members' Night Photos on our website, [www.sierraphotonyc.com](http://www.sierraphotonyc.com). A committee will select one photo from each contributor. By submitting photos, we will assume you have granted permission to post one of your photos on our website. However, if you do not want a photo posted, please indicate this in your submission email.



*Iguana*, © Helen Bohmart Pine



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## Member Outings for November and January

Fall outings are “meetup only” and accessible by public transportation. Should crowded situations arise, [wear a mask](#) to protect yourself and others. Leader: Charles Dexter, 917-593-8381, call until 10:30 pm.

### November 17, Wednesday

#### Paulus Hook Exchange Place, NJ

Watch moonrise above the Manhattan skyline at sunset (4:36 PM) as seen from New Jersey. Meet 3:00 pm at New York Waterways Brookfield Place Ferry terminal at Vesey Street, Battery Park City on the Hudson River. Purchase round trip ticket to “Paulus Hook” for 3:30 pm departure. Adults \$14, Seniors (62+) \$13. Return via NYC Ferry at 7:15 pm; perhaps dinner in NYC afterwards. Subway to Brookfield Place: 1, 2, 3 trains to Chambers Street Station. Also, there is a “Downtown Connection” shuttle to the ferry.

NY Waterways schedule: <https://www.nywaterway.com/PaulusHook-WTCRoute.aspx#weekday>

NY Waterways map: <https://www.nywaterway.com/WorldFinancialCenterTerminal.aspx>

Shuttle: <https://downtownny.com/about-us/services/downtown-connection-bus/>

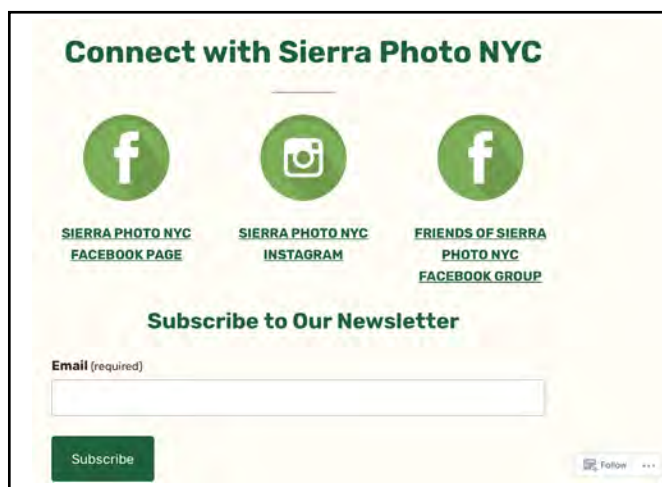
Bring tripod, telephoto and normal lenses. Dress for a cold windy evening by the river. Bring good walking shoes, rain gear, snacks and water.

### January 8, Saturday

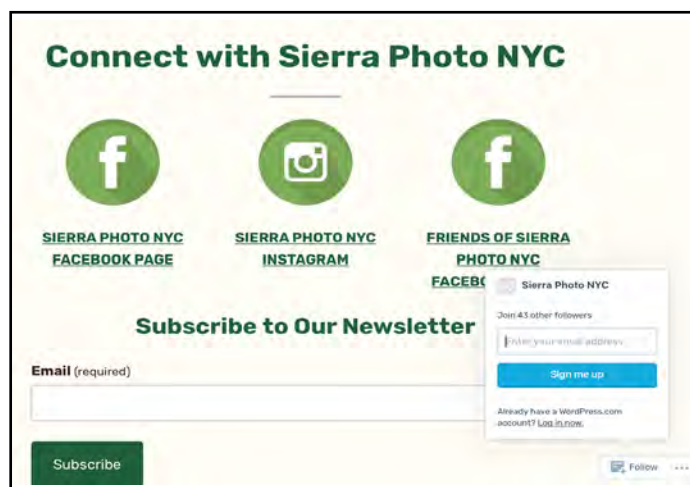
#### Central Park, New York City

Hopefully snowy walk around the rowing lake, woods, skyline views, an icy bog and pond. A blizzard could be great! Long stroll through park, possible frozen, slippery paths. Meet 1:00 pm at the West 72nd St entrance. Shoot until dark, about 5:00 pm; possible dinner afterward. Wear warm layers, boots, hat and gloves; bring lunch, snacks and water. See <https://www.centralparknyc.org>

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Step 2: enter your email address, click “sign me up”, and respond to the confirmation email you will receive.

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