What is Creative Altered Reality (CAR)

As some of you know, our club competes with other camera clubs around the world as part of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) Interclub Competition, usually referred to as Interclub or PSA Interclub. Like our own camera club, PSA Interclub competitions have a number of divisions: Nature, Prints, Photojournalism, Photo Travel, and Projected Image or PID (the section we call Open Digital in our own competitions).

Within PSA's Interclub PID section, there is a unique division called "Creative Altered Reality"or CAR. What exactly is CAR and how do you go about achieving it in your photographs?

The PSA definition of Creative Altered Reality is as follows: The image may be of any subject matter and must obviously display a change in natural color, form, shape or any combination of these three. All images must be original and may not incorporate elements produced by anyone else. Artwork or computer graphics generated by the entrant may be incorporated if the original photographic content predominates. Images may not be constructed entirely within a computer. High Dynamic Range (HDR) images without further changes are not considered "Altered Reality."

While our general Open Digital competitions allow for any kind of subject or treatment of your image, CAR is a little more specific in scope. The adjustments made to an image should result in an "altered reality" and not simply the removal, adjustment, or replacement of an element. One should be able to see immediately that the photograph has been creatively manipulated. By definition, it should display a change in natural color, form, shape or combination of the three.

This division gives you a jumping-off point to play with the myriad programs and plugins, tools and techniques that are available to digital photographers and it is the one place where pretty much anything goes as long as it is your original work.

Here are some examples from club members showing a variety of techniques you can employ to make alterations to your images to create your own CAR image.

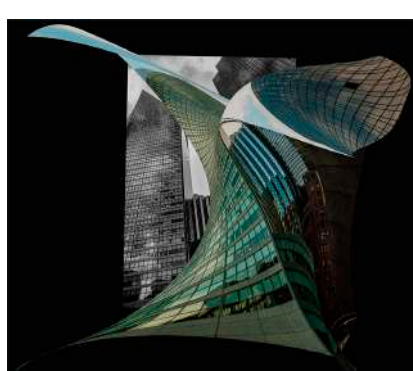## Make your photograph look like a painting

Jeff Hirsch

Paul Fisher

Roger McCarthy

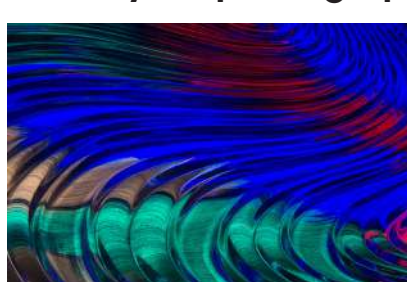## Distort your photograph

Kathy O'Donnell

Dave Hotle

Cindy Lynch

Abstract your photograph
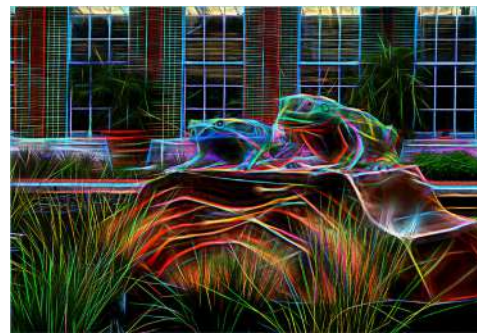

Bob Rickert

Paul Fisher

Bob Rickert

Apply a filter, in these examples, a neon filter

Dick Glass

Dilip Patel

Carolyn Schlueter

Mirroring/Symmetry

Valerie Snyder

Skip LaRue

Bob Rickert

Assemble a composite

Betty Fisher

Kathy O'Donnell

Kim Mulkey Young

Madi Hawn

Michael Matney