

Wendi Schneider



Wendi Schneider



photo by Kristin Hatgi Sink

BIOGRAPHY

Wendi Schneider is a Denver-based visual artist widely known for her ongoing series of hand-gilded photographs, *States of Grace* – illuminated impressions of grace in the natural world. Drawn to the serenity she finds in the sinuous elegance of organic forms, she embraces photography to preserve vanishing moments of beauty in our vulnerable environment. Schneider's gilding process creates images that seemingly dance on the paper's surface amidst reflections of light on precious metals, creating a synthesis of technique and subject.

Born in Memphis, TN in 1955, Schneider grew up in a family of artists, later earning an AA in Art History from Stephens College and a BA in Painting from Newcomb College at Tulane University. Her interest in photography germinated in the early 1980s with the use of a camera to reference models for oil paintings. Mesmerized by the possibilities of the photographic art form and the alchemy of the darkroom, yet missing the sensuousness of oils, Schneider began to layer oils on photographs to manipulate the boundaries between the real and the imagined. This process laid the groundwork for the unique layering and gilding that would later become the foundation of *States of Grace*.

In 1988, Schneider moved to New York City and began a diverse and successful career that included fine art commissions, photography for magazines, book covers, and advertising, and later (after a move to Denver in 1994) design and art direction. In 2012, she began to produce a collection of photographs featuring flora and fauna – the *States of Grace* series, which was to become her signature body of work.

Schneider's photographs are held in the permanent collections of The New Orleans Museum of Art, The Center for Creative Photography, The Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, The Auburn University Library Special Collections, and The Try-Me Collection, as well as numerous private collections. Her work has been published and exhibited extensively in solo and group exhibitions worldwide including AIPAD and Art Basel. Schneider is represented by A Gallery for Fine Photography (New Orleans), Arnika Dawkins Gallery (Atlanta), Catherine Couturier Gallery (Houston), Galeria PhotoGraphic (San Miguel de Allende), Rick Wester Fine Art (New York), and Vision Gallery (Jerusalem).

Schneider is a collector of art and objects from the turn of the 20th century – primarily Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts and photogravures. She has juried several successful exhibitions and sits on the board of the Colorado Photographic Arts Center.

CV

1994-Present – Denver, CO
1988-1994 – New York, NY
1975-1988 – New Orleans, LA
1973-75 – Columbia, MO
1955 Born – Memphis, TN

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA
Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN
The Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ
Special Collections & Archives – Auburn University Libraries, Auburn, AL
Try-Me Collection, Richmond, VA
Robert Bruce Collection, Red Bank, NJ
Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT

SELECTED PRESS

2021 *Lens Magazine*. Issue #82. July.
2021 *Voyage Denver*. Daily Inspiration: Meet Wendi Schneider. July 7.
2021 *SXSE Magazine*. Evenings with the Moon. June/July.
2020 *ArtDoc*. Japanese Gardens. November.
2020 *Denver Women Magazine*. Meet Denver-based Visual Artist Wendi Schneider. November.
2020 *Dodho*. Stillness: Trees. January.
2020 *Royal Photographic Society Visual Arts Magazine*. Wendi Schneider. No. 158, Issue 2, October.
2019 *Shots Magazine*. Interview. Issue No. 145, Fall.
2019 *Lenscratch*. Wendi Schneider: Evenings with the Moon. October 3.
2019 *Catalyst*. Interviews: Wendi Schneider. May 22.
2019 *Shuttertalk*. A Conversation with Wendi Schneider. April 14.
2018 *Denver Life Magazine*. Spotlight: Wendi Schneider. November 26.
2018 *Edge of Humanity*. Artist Exposé | Women's Portraits. August 31.
2018 *Blur Magazine*. Issue 60. April/May. 2020 *Art Doc*. Wendi Schneider Portfolio. December.
2018 *Rfotofolio*. Wendi Schneider. April 27.
2018 *Lenscratch*. Wendi Schneider: States of Grace. March 2.
2018 *Uncoated*. Wendi Schneider: States of Grace.
2018 *Dodho*. States of Grace by Wendi Schneider.
2017 *Don't Take Pictures*. Rule Breakers: Wendi Schneider. December 18.
2017 *Dodho*. States of Grace by Wendi Schneider.
2017 *Bokeh Bokeh*. States of Grace: Wendi Schneider.
2017 *UnderExposed Magazine*. Wendi Schneider.
2012 *Silvershotz*. Women in Photography International. Vol. 8, Edition 5, May.
1998 *Colorado Homes and Lifestyle*
1996 *Victoria Magazine*. A Timeless Point of View.
1991 *Confetti Magazine*
1991 *Victoria Magazine*. A Picture Portfolio.

"Wendi is a photographic artist who seeks beauty in a world that challenges our sense of inner peace. Each image is a unique consideration and elevated through her use of vellum and white gold, silver or 24k gold leaf, resulting in photographic objects that shimmer with luminosity and sumptuous elegance."

– Aline Smithson, *Lenscratch*

SELECTED AWARDS

2021 The Independent Photographer - Color | Bronze
2021 Passepartout Photo Prize | Special Mention
2020 Prix de la Photographie, Paris (PX3) - Nature/Trees | Gold
2019 San Francisco Bay Month of Photography | Gold
2018 National Association of Women Artists - Small Works on Paper | Silver
2018 Prix de la Photographie, Paris (PX3) - Fine Art Landscape | Bronze
2018 Moscow International Photo Awards - Nature | Bronze
2017 Gala Awards- Urban & Rural Landscape | Gold
2017 The Center For Fine Art Photography - Animalia | Director's Award
2017 Florida Museum of Photographic Arts - Intl. Exhibit- Nature, Science & Animals | Bronze
2016 9th Annual Julia Margaret Cameron Awards - Nude/Figure - Single Image
2016 San Diego Natural History Museum Best of Nature | First Place
2016 International Color Awards - Wildlife | Silver & Merit of Excellence
2014 Black & White Magazine - Animals | Best Single Image



photo by Kristin Hatgi Sink

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

(solo exhibitions *)

2022 Rick Wester Fine Art, New York, NY – Into the Mist*
2022 Catherine Couturier Gallery, Houston, TX – Into the Mist*
2022 Arnika Dawkins Gallery, Atlanta, GA – States of Grace*
2022 Galeria Photographic, San Miguel de Allende – Alchemy
2021 Rick Wester Fine Art, New York, NY – Love Devotion Surrender Dedication
2021 Rick Wester Fine Art, New York, NY – If 6
2020 Photos de Femmes, Chateau de LaLande, Crozon-sur-Vauvre, France – SeeingWOMEN
2020 The Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ – The Qualities of Light
2019 Catherine Couturier Gallery, Houston, TX – States of Grace *
2019 SE Center For Photography, Greenville, SC – Evenings with the Moon *
2019 Catherine Couturier Gallery, Houston, TX – Garden Party
2019 The Gallery at Mr. Pool, Boulder, CO – Evenings with the Moon *
2018 The Griffin Museum of Photography, Winchester, MA – States of Grace *
2018 Galeria PhotoGraphic, San Miguel de Allende, Mexico – States of Grace *
2018 A Smith Gallery, Johnson City, TX – States of Grace *
2018 Candela Gallery, Richmond, VA – Unbound 7
2018 Panopticon Gallery, Boston, MA – In the Garden
2018 PH21 Gallery, Budapest, Hungary – Peripheral Visions
2017 The Center For Fine Art Photography, Fort Collins, CO – Small Works / Animalia
2017 Pace Center for the Arts, Parker, CO – Women Behind the Lens

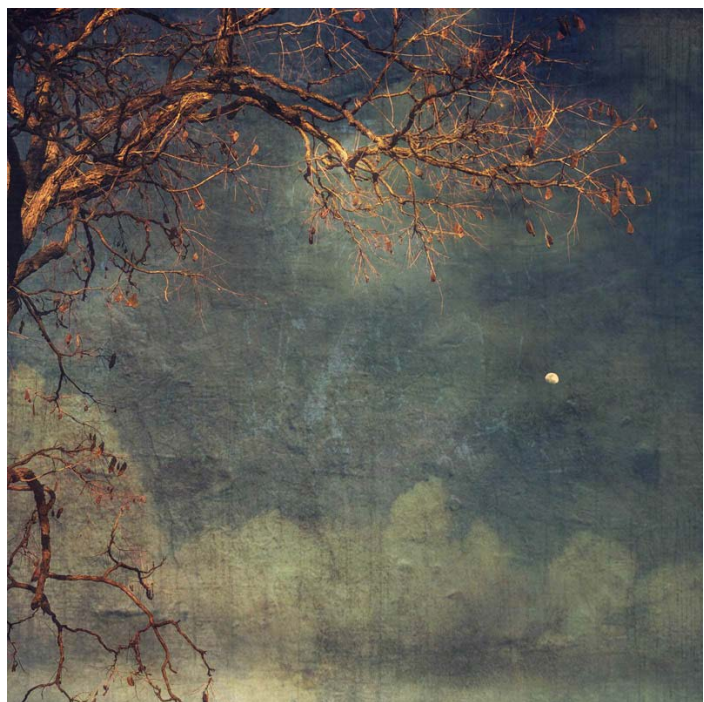


photo by Kristin Hatgi Sink

- 2017 A Gallery For Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA – In Color
- 2016 International Biennial of Fine Art & Documentary Photography, Berlin, Germany
- 2016 San Diego Natural History Museum, CA – Best of Nature
- 2015 A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA – Where
- 2014 Carmen Wiedenhoefte Gallery, Denver, LA – Lovers Collaborations
- 2013 San Diego Natural History Museum, CA – Best of Nature
- 2008 Reed Gallery, Denver, CO – A Luscious Lens *
- 1996 Merrill Gallery of Fine Art, Denver, CO
- 1995 University of Denver, CO – Other Visions
- 1995 A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA – Naked
- 1995 AIPAD, New York, NY
- 1994 Stuart Levy Fine Art, New York, NY – Eros & the Identity
- 1994 Carol Siple Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1994 Rule Modern, Denver, CO – Nature Morte
- 1994 Wach Gallery, Avon Lakes, OH – Women in Photography
- 1994 & 1993 AIPAD, New York, NY
- 1993 Wach Gallery, Avon Lakes, OH
- 1992 AIPAD, Washington, D.C.
- 1992 Foto-Fest, Houston, TX
- 1992 Art Fair 23, Basel, Switzerland
- 1992 Eastern Shore Art Center, Fairhope, AL – History of Photography
- 1992 Cheap Shots Gallery, Aspen, CO
- 1991 Art Fair 22, Basel, Switzerland
- 1991 Wild Plum Gallery, Sag Harbor, NY
- 1990 Georg C. Puluje Kunsthandel, Munich, Germany
- 1990 Art Fair 21, Basel, Switzerland
- 1992 Bell-Ross Fine Art Gallery, Memphis, TN – New York Exposure *
- 1991 A Gallery for Fine Photography, New Orleans, LA – Mille-Fleur *
- 1989 Theatre Memphis, Memphis, TN *
- 1989 Wilkov-Goldfeder Gallery, New York, NY – Three Photographers
- 1989 Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN – Vision & Inspiration
- 1986 Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA – Art for Art's Sake
- 1985 Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, LA – Major Miniatures, Louisiana Now, Kathy B
- 1985 Jewish Community Center, New Orleans, LA *

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS & EDITORIALS

2021 BETA Developments in Photography
2021 *Diffusion*. Volume X.
2020 *Photography: A 21st Century Practice*, Bloomsbury Visual Arts.
2018 *American Photography* 34, Amilus Incorporated.
2018 *Diffusion*. Volume IX.
1989 – 1999 *Victoria Magazine*
1996 *From Heart & Hand*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1996 *A Book of Perfume*, Flammarion (Germany).
1996 *La Livre du Parfum*, Flammarion (Paris).
1994 *Hand Coloring Photographs*, Amphoto.
1994 *The Romance of Hats*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1994 *The Ways of Flowers*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1994 *A Newborn Joy*, Smallwood & Stewart/Andrews & McMeel.
1994 *I Call Thee Friend*, Smallwood & Stewart/Andrews & McMeel.
1993 *A Love is Born*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1993 *No Friend Like A Sister*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1993 *From This Day Forward*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1993 *To Grandmother with Love*, Smallwood & Stewart/Andrews & McMeel.
1992 *A Vow of Love*, Smallwood & Stewart/Andrews & McMeel.
1992 *Intimate Homes*, Victoria Magazine Books.
1990 *By Any Other Name: A Book of Roses*, Smallwood & Stewart/Andrews & McMeel.
1988 *The 67th Art Director's Club Annual*, Madison Square Press.
1988 *Best of College Photography Annual*, Photographer's Forum Magazine.
1988 *Louisiana Photographers*, Contemporary Arts Center.
1988 *The Picayune's Creole Cook Book*, Random House.
1987 *The Picayune's Creole Cook Book*, the Times-Picayune



Moonglow, 2019, pigment ink on kozo over white gold leaf

JUROR – CURATOR

2021 A Smith Gallery – *Botanical*
2021 SE Center For Photography – *Flora*
2020 PhotoPlace Gallery – *Trees*
2019 A Smith Gallery – *Botanical*
2019 Robert Anderson Gallery – *Small Works*
2018 Darkroom Gallery – *Metamorphosis*
2018 LA Photo Curator – *Serenity*

BOARD MEMBER

Colorado Photographic Arts Center

STATES OF GRACE



Locust, 2016, pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

My work is rooted in the serenity I find in the sinuous elegance of organic forms. I'm transformed in capturing the stillness of the suspended movement of light and compelled to preserve the visual poetry of these fleeting moments of vanishing beauty in our vulnerable environment.

I photograph intuitively – what I feel, as much as what I see. Informed by a background in painting and art history, my images are layered digitally with color and texture to manipulate the boundaries between the real and imagined, and are often altered within the edition, honoring the variations. Printed on translucent vellum or kozo, these ethereal impressions are illuminated with white gold, moon gold, silver or 24k gold on the verso, creating a luminosity that varies as the viewer's position and ambient light transition. My process infuses the artist's hand and suffuses the treasured subjects with the implied spirituality and sanctity of the precious metals – echoing the moment of capture and ensuring each print is a unique object of reverence.

The *States of Grace* series has evolved organically into series within series that can be curated by subject, feeling or treatment.

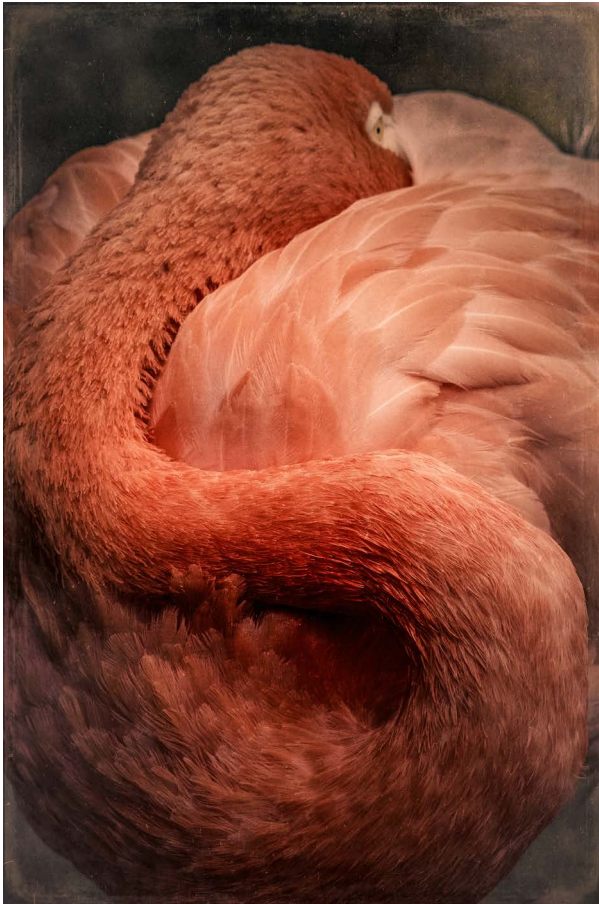
PATINA COLLECTION



Dusk Falls, 2020
pigment ink on kozo over white gold leaf

The *Patina Collection* is an assemblage of gilded prints in the *State of Grace* series paired with antique frames – the synthesis of 40 years of collecting turn-of-the-twentieth-century art and objects and creating images inspired by the sinuous elegance of organic forms. The serpentine shapes are echoed in the subjects I photograph and the undulating curves of the Art Nouveau frames that house these works. I photograph intuitively – what I feel as much as what I see – and I strive to make the intangible tangible, preserving the visual poetry of these vanishing moments of beauty in our vulnerable environment. My images are layered digitally to manipulate the boundaries between the real and imagined, often altered within the edition to honor the inconsistency. Printed on kozo or vellum, white gold, moon gold or 24k gold leaf is applied on the verso, infusing the artist's hand and suffusing the subjects with the spirituality of the precious metal. Each of these unique framed prints is a one-of-a-kind object of reverence.

ACQUIRE



Flamingo, 2012
pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

REPRESENTATION

A Gallery for Fine Photography

New Orleans, LA
agallery.com

Arnika Dawkins Gallery

Atlanta, GA
adawkinsgallery.com

Catherine Couturier Gallery

Houston, TX
catherinecouturier.com

Galeria PhotoGraphic

San Miguel de Allende, MX
acdphoto.com

Rick Wester Fine Art

New York, NY
rickwesterfineart.com

Vision Gallery

Jerusalem, Israel
visiongallery.com

All prints from *States of Grace* are signed and numbered pigment inks on vellum or kozo paper over white gold, 24k gold, moon gold, or silver leaf. Prints may differ in color or texture, and, as the effect of gilding inherently varies, each print is unique.

Prints are generally available in three sizes: 8.5 x 11", 12.5 x 18", and 17 x 22". Larger, site-specific images are available upon request.

Early Work: There are a limited number of vintage prints available, including hand-painted photographs and Polaroid transfers. Please inquire for availability.

For inquiries including exhibitions, commissions, image licensing, editorial assignments and studio visit, please contact: wendi@wendischneider.com.

"Wendi Schneider's captivating image is an exquisite coalescence of form, light, and color. Captured close up, the flamingo's contorted, textural shape reveals a sculptural quality and recalls the works of master portrayers of the organic form such as Ruth Bernhard and Edward Weston, whilst the innovative marriage of digital and physical techniques, serves to augment the beauty of the striking coral shades and creates a subtle ethereality that evokes the 'Autochrome' color photographs of the early 20th century."

– *The Independent Photographer Editors*



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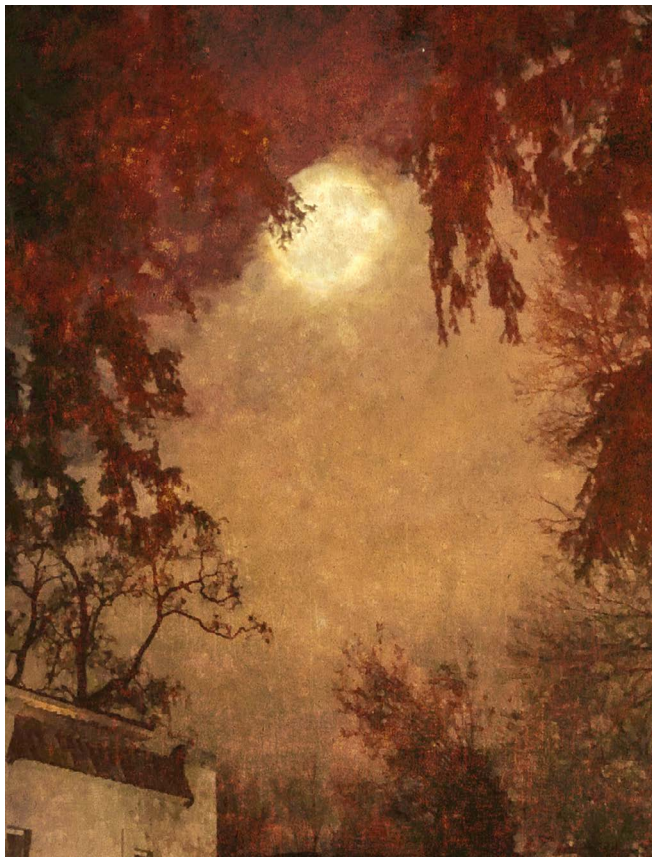
www.catalystinterviews.com/interviews
Published May 22, 2019

Last Light, 2017
pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

Wendi Schneider

I first ran into Wendi Schneider during Photo L.A. three or four years ago. I'd seen some of her work via social media in the past, but only going back a short time, really. In viewing her prints, well, this was yet another example of why we need to view photography in person as much as humanly possible, instead of casually flipping through it while online, staring at a glowing screen. The intricacies are there - color, texture, form, and the tactile nature of a photographic object. Wendi's photographs most certainly scream this from the mountaintops like no other. Images like her are achieved only through a process of thoughtful examination and execution. A lifetime of being involved in not just photography, but design as well, her images are quite literally built from the ground up. The artist's hand is evident in every single one of them, and they share the same qualities as their creator - uniqueness, elegance, and a reverence for the tangible.

My own knowledge of Wendi's work may only go back a short time, but it has had a profound impact. Her talent and reputation in the arts withdraw much farther than I originally knew. In seeing her work now, with this knowledge, I feel as though I should have spotted it immediately. A bit of a failure on my part, initially, I must confess. Photographs like hers are not idly made, and I feel as though I must make amends for my deficiency by doing my best to find out even more, in order to share her words that support her beautiful creations. There are always questions regarding the art of others, and a friend and colleague with the talent and conviction as Wendi Schneider are necessary in getting those questions answered. My hope is that you find a place for her thoughts and ideas in your own process, as they are as successful and beautiful as the photographs she creates.



An Evening with the Moon, 2018
pigment ink on kozo over white gold leaf

Interview -

Michael Kirchoff: How did your start in photography come about? Was it always about photography as an art form for you?

Wendi Schneider: I bought my first Nikon in the early 1980s, primarily to create black and white reference images for my figurative paintings. I was spellbound with the speed of creating an image – in contrast to my slow layering of oils on canvas – and bewitched by the play of light on film. Lured to the alchemy of a developing print, I frequently preferred my missteps, often increasing the grain in the darkroom and in-camera to more closely resemble my earlier drawings. My photographs expressed my feelings in a more powerful (yet subtle and refined) way than my paintings, even more so when I merged the two. It quickly became my chosen art form – one which honored and elevated the intrinsic beauty and value of the subjects and exposed my heart in a way my words could not.

MK: Your days as a designer are well known. Tell us a little of how that came about initially, and why photography ultimately won you over again.

WS: My mother had a sophisticated eye and appreciation for design, particularly in fashion and interiors. When she no longer painted, my sisters and I often assisted as she designed needlepoint canvases. Post-college and after a few years working in the French Quarter hotel and restaurant world, I was hired in marketing at The Times-Picayune newspaper, which included

creating, designing, illustrating, writing and editing campaigns for a myriad of needs. My last project there was the re-creation of the 1901 Picayune Creole Cook Book for the newspaper's sesquicentennial, merging my loves of photography, design, art direction, image research, history, editing, antiquing, and cooking. My personal work was consumed with creating and painting my photographs and I knew I wanted to follow the path to New York to work in editorial, advertising, and fine art. It was a circuitous path: in addition to photography for clients, I later returned to print design, adding web design and art direction when our son was young. When I was nearing sixty, I felt it was time to get back to my personal photography work.

MK: What is it that drives you as a creator?

WS: I'm driven by a search for grace and the otherwise elusive glow of flow, when the awareness of time and space disappear. It's the focus to discover the composition, to discern how best to convey the spirit of the subject, to develop an image or print that elicits a quickened heartbeat. It's that magical moment when the senses align - when my eyes and essence are engaged and intertwined. It's an addiction – calming and centering, exciting and enchanting.

MK: It would seem that the transition between photography and design and art direction would be a simple one, but was it really? Have they always informed and inspired one another?

WS: They have always informed one another and are indeed part of each other. Composition is integral to my photographic work, as it is to design. Art direction informs the choices made within an image, and also sequencing, curating, and jurying. Ultimately all must work together to create a cohesive whole. I believe our senses absorb everything we experience to emerge in some synthesized expression in the future.

MK: Your signature body of work, *States of Grace*, is a multi-faceted collection. How has it evolved since its inception? Was it always destined to develop in this way?

WS: I'd never really thought of my work in terms of series and had not been part of the fine art world since the '90s. My early work was defined by process and subject. Reentering the fine art photography world, I felt I needed a way to express my intent and group the images into an over-arching theme, so the possibility of expansion was built in. The series has developed organically, echoing the subject matter, though there are now images outside the confines of figura, flora and fauna. Within the theme, there are photographs that can be grouped by subject, mood, treatment, type of print, color, and composition.

MK: You clearly have a reverence for the natural world as reflected in your work. You portray these themes intimately and with a balance that only someone very close to them could possibly achieve. What brought you to these affectionate manifestations within your creative process?

WS: I suppose it started as a child seeking serenity under the undulating limbs of a weeping willow, a love affair with the elegant whiplash lines of art nouveau, the unexpected discovery of a book of photomicrography in college, and the soothing grace of the simple, sinuous lines of organic forms. I do feel a deep reverence and curiosity for the natural world. Many of us turn to nature for nurture. I think we have an innate desire or compulsion to commune with our surroundings and, at this time in particular, to appreciate what we have and bring awareness to what we are losing. The veneration of fleeting moments of beauty that began long ago is now intensified by the quickening pace of loss. Species are disappearing at 1,000 to 10,000 times the natural rate, with as many as 30 to 50 percent of all possibly heading toward extinction by mid-century. It's mind-boggling, frightening, and frustrating. My work is testament and tribute, adoration and obligation.



Thoughts of Silence, 2012, pigment ink on kozo over white gold leaf

MK: Never an easy question...for you, what is it that makes for a successful photograph?

WS: It is one that makes me feel something, see something that otherwise would have been missed, or is seen in an unexpected way. If I can create something that touches someone else, that's the icing on the cake.

MK: The tools and materials available to photographers and artists have changed dramatically over the years. How have you kept up with these changes, or do you prefer to continue working in a way that has always worked for you? Have the changes affected your artistic sensibilities in any way?

WS: I slowly transitioned to digital as soon as it was affordable. My first digital camera was less than three megapixels. While I rented darkroom space in New York, I wasn't allowed to tone or to print larger than 20x24, so I worked closely with printers there and later in Denver. I was excited to start making my own prints digitally in 2012, as I'm constantly tweaking them. I don't know if my sensibility has changed, but I've enthusiastically embraced the immediate feedback and freedom to experiment of digital imaging: the layering I once did with paint, I can now explore digitally. I've also experimented with some alternative processes over the years and would like to do more. I'm drawn to hands-on work, which was one of the reasons I started working with precious metals. I appreciate the options the later technologies offer, especially when combined with other processes.



Island, 2018, pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

MK: You’ve lived in some wide ranging locations in the US over the years. Have these changes been work specific, and did you find the differences being reflected in the work you were creating at the time?

WS: Having fallen in love with the architecture, romance, and lushness of New Orleans as a child, I transferred to Newcomb as a Junior to paint and breathe the hallowed air where Newcomb Pottery flourished. Years later I moved to New York to work in photography, so the editorial work was reflective of the move, but even that work, my painted photographs and Polaroid transfers echoed the early themes of flowers, women, and old architecture. Sinuous lines found their way into many images for book covers and Victoria Magazine. Much of my work in New Orleans and New York was captured in my home studios and on location in historic buildings; the images of nature from those cities that found their way into my series evolved from later visits.

MK: I know that when I first met you, you were already making a big push to promote your work while also making as many personal appearances as possible with your exhibitions, both solo and group. Do you feel that that has been an important part of getting your work seen and developing the relationships necessary to further your goals?

WS: It has been a huge shift for me, an introvert, to channel my outgoing parents. It has enriched my life immensely in relationships, support systems, and seeing others’ work. I chose to attend as many events as I could to share and see work, including exhibitions and reviews, for the last few years. I think it was crucial as I felt I was starting over and needed to learn about the current photography world, which is vastly different from the world of the ‘80s and ‘90s, and get my work back out there. While I wholeheartedly enjoyed and benefited from this effort, I’m now craving and planning more alone time and more time to make work.

MK: You recently received artist representation through the Catherine Couturier Gallery. How was this achieved, and how has the working relationship affected the way you create and sell your photographs?

WS: I began following Catherine on social media a few years go and entered two shows she juried last year with hopes of meeting her. I was unable to make it to the exhibit at Center for Photographic Art, but was able to spend time and share my work with her at the Center For Fine Art Photography in Fort Collins. It hasn’t changed the way I make work, though I have been spending time replacing sold prints and fulfilling commissions. It has added a wonderful venue for my work in Houston, which I hope to soon visit, and an opportunity to have my work back at AIPAD after several decades. I have tremendous respect for the vision, knowledge, dedication, and perseverance of gallerists, and have been extremely honored and fortunate to be represented by A Gallery For Fine Photography in New Orleans and Galeria Photographic in San Miguel de Allende.



Young Great Blue Heron, 2017
pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

MK: You apply gold and silver leaf in the majority of your prints. Was there a process of discovery in using these materials in your prints? I would imagine a specific learning curve as well.

WS: I tried, unsuccessfully, painting with gold pigments in the '70s, after having fallen in love with Klimt's paintings. Seeing Louviere and Vanessa's work with gold leaf in 2010, I was inspired to find a way to incorporate leafing into my photographic work. In 2012, I attended a platinum and gold leaf workshop with Dan Burkholder. We spent a little time printing on vellum and leafing, but it was all I needed to get started. I then began experimenting with different materials and applications. As a painter, I am drawn to nuanced color and the luminosity the leafing infers, and I continue to play with the metals to enhance the palette. I'm still experimenting and refining the process seven years later.

MK: With regard to creativity and the projects you take on. Do you feel it is better to create work that fits a particular style for yourself, branch out and try new things, or better to simply leave yourself open to possibilities that happen organically?

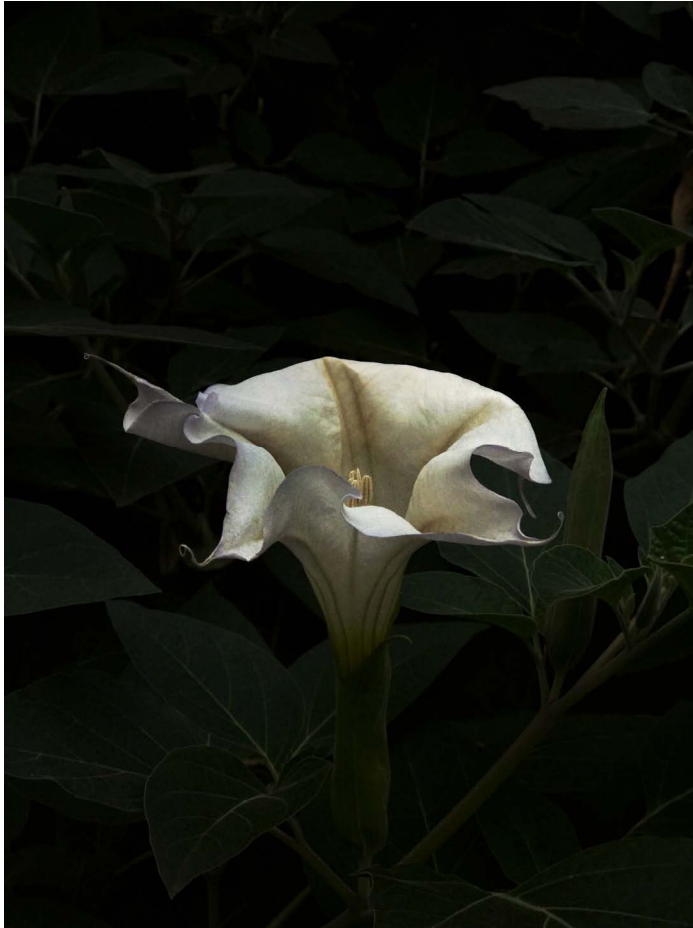
WS: I've always lived and worked rather organically and intuitively. There are several old processes I would like to learn, but I have not made time to devote to them. The ones that I have dabbled in are on a back burner, simmering with ideas for subject matter, method, and presentation. They may develop in the future, or perhaps meld into something else. So while I do enjoy experimenting with new processes, ultimately it will still develop organically. As far as style goes, it seems that whatever I do, some can always identify the work as mine.

MK: I have to ask this question of you because we've touched upon it in the planning and scheduling of this very interview. I think of time as both a friend and enemy within the creative process. So, time management - how do you handle this aspect of your life in a very real and honest way with regard to balancing personal and working obligations?

WS: Time management is kind of like a dance, musical score, or puzzle. There are rhythms and fluctuations and you have to find a space for all the pieces. Since I opened my business in 1988, I've always worked at home, so I intersperse work and home tasks and find the breaks from concentration necessary. That said, there are of course deadlines to be met and tasks that are less pleasant than others, but I enjoy most of them and find balance in accomplishing them. When I first started creating book covers or magazine assignments, I would feel pressure to get jobs done quickly, but soon learned that doing so would impede the creative process. I was on my own until I was 39 and have always found it best to do what I was inspired to do at the time. My husband is creative and self-sufficient and we were able to find a balance that leans towards more work than together time. When our son was born, it was more challenging. I still feel that I was too wrapped up in my work and didn't give him enough time, but fortunately he feels that I was always there when needed and inspired his independence. Ultimately, I prioritize, but go with the flow of what I feel I can do best or what needs to be done at the time, and somehow the pieces of the puzzle magically fit together most of the time.

MK: I always like to ask those with a lifetime of experience in the arts if they have any thoughts or advice for those willing to take the plunge into photography as a career. Any words of wisdom?

WS: Find your voice. It will come if you follow your heart and make images of what you are drawn to in the way you want to make them. Experiment, take chances, soak in everything you can – visually and otherwise. Explore all of the senses. Visit museums, galleries and libraries. Watch films. Study the history of art and photography. Volunteer at a non-profit photography center. Work as an assistant for someone whose work you admire in your area of interest. Research reviewers at portfolio reviews. Look for multiple outlets in which to market your work. Keep in mind that you can raise your prices but not lower them. Find your audience. Breathe. Live. Make work.



Datura, 2017, pigment ink on vellum over white gold leaf

MK: How do you see your work progressing into the future? Do you have anything new you are currently working on that we should be on the lookout for?

WS: My current exhibition 'Evenings with the Moon' includes a selection of illuminated impressions of the night paired with poetry and music. Engaging the moon as muse, I draw on the power of our universal needs and desires for harmony and balance amidst the chaos in which we live. The images are printed on kozo or vellum and gilded with white gold to echo the luminosity of their celestial inspiration and to suffuse the subjects with the implied spirituality and sanctity of the precious metal. Hopefully this synthesis of form and content will allow the viewer to consider the commonalities in our collective consciousness – to unify and find acceptance and transcendence. We all live under the same moon. The next incarnation of the exhibit opens in September at the SE Center for Photography in Greenville, SC. I have a few things percolating that I've not yet had time for, so too soon to say what's to come, but hopefully it will be an evolution.

You can find more of Wendi's work at her website.
All photographs, © Wendi Schneider.

Source:

<https://www.catalystinterviews.com/interviews/2019/5/22/wendi-schneider>