



Nature's Mysterious Art

FROST ON WINDOWS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANICE STREET

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"The frost images which Janice has photographed somehow makes me feel at home in the world. It amazed me that here are these exquisite, elegant patterns just happening without effort. It was an invitation to trust the unfolding of my own life."

Dana Cunningham
Pianist



Over the years, I have found these miracles of nature on my windows. Like a snow flake, no two are alike. They vary in colour, patterns and texture, depending on the time of day, the angle of light and what was behind it. The refracted light sometimes produced a colourful display that exploded into a three-dimensional abstract. Many were transformed by the slide film and not by Photoshop manipulation. And some were taken with my digital camera as recently as 2009.

Years ago I lived in an old building with double storm windows. You know the ones with the three holes in the bottom frame with the pivoting wood cover. Well, if you are under thirty years old you may not. One winter it was very cold and I recall getting up early, excited to discover what new masterpiece I would find to photograph. In most cases there was a small window of opportunity (pardon the pun) to capture them. As soon as the sun hit the window, they melted, gone, until the next masterpiece would appear.

It's hard to find frost like this anymore, as today's windows are well made and do not provide the leakage and moisture required to form the frost. But I am always looking, and if I find frost on a friend's window I invite myself to stay the night and bring my camera.

I have had many shows of these delicate beauties and 99% of people viewing them are surprised to hear they are frost on a window. As in anything abstract people interpret them in many different ways.

What will you see?



Janice Street

Dedication...

As a child, I spent many happy hours with my dog, exploring the woods and creek's edge and building forts and rafts with my friends. Sometimes I would make my way down the hill that led to the opening under a small old stone bridge where I would step carefully, barefoot trying not to slip on the mossy cement floor. I loved how the cool trickle of water felt around my feet, but the moss between my toes took some getting used to.

I recall quickly scooping up a pollywog, its slippery wiggling body tickling my cupped hands before gently returning it to the stream. Singing here was much better than in the shower. Singing and watching my dog along the shore, sniffing and darting after whatever moved in the grass. I spent those lazy summer days discovering nature and its creatures.

Many times while growing up I would hear my mother recite a poem written by my grandfather. It was about their summer place called Blue Sea Lake. The poem is filled with words that described the beauty in nature – twilight shadows, purple mountains, green water, and azure sky's, gulls that dip and soar...

I still hear the echo of its final words: So if I love this lake so fair, with memories sweet and beauty rare... 'tis just because each bending tree throughout my life will call to me...and at this point my mothers' eyes would fill with tears.

The poem is a hauntingly wonderful reminder of a man I never met; a man whose love of nature and family continues to call to me. It is an important connection to my past; a spirit that lives in me and that I feel compelled to share.

This is where my lifelong appreciation for nature and its magnificence began. The spirit of his poem began to grow in me and I started to look and see and feel with all my senses.

Born and raised in the Ottawa area, I graduated from high school believing my future would focus on business and commerce. I worked for a few years doing clerical things, but the artist in me was calling. I wanted more out of life. So, I went back to school and earned a diploma in commercial art. It was during this time that I received my first photographic training. Graphic design challenged me creatively. I had always photographed as a hobby, (another world to explore and discover and create through the lens). Over the years although my camera had become a part of me my passion had waned.

In 2006 my passion for photography was unexpectedly re-ignited. My imagination exploded with possibilities. I allowed it to guide me. The risk was not in doing it, but in not doing it.

Perhaps this will seem odd. The inspiration for my newfound enthusiasm did not come from a fellow photographer. It came from a brilliant musician whose music touches me to the core. Unknowingly, by just doing what he does best, William Ackerman gave me the drive to pursue what I love most. I started out putting together a house concert for him so that Canadians could experience his music, and I ended up inspired to pursue my dream. Thanks Will.

I hope this book will inspire someone to stop and look and feel the spirit of nature's beauty, not just while on holiday, but every day.

Photography and nature go hand and hand now. It fills my soul and gives my spirit such joy. When the light is right, nature calls.

I dedicate this book to my Grandfather, John E Martin, whose poem became a part of me at a young age and opened my eyes and heart to nature's beauty....

Thank you for this gift grandfather.

Blue Sea Lake

In the beauty and lure of the Lake of Lakes nestled in the heart of the Gatineau Hills, I dedicate this little poem.

I have seen the Rocky Mountains,
Nova Scotia's rugged shore,
Columbia's towering forests,
Heard Niagara's mighty roar.
But high among the Gatineau Hills,
If you will come with me,
I'll show you Nature's masterpiece,
A lake they call Blue Sea.

'Tis rimmed by purple mountains,
Green waters kiss its shore,
And up on high, in azure sky,
White Sea Gulls dip and soar.
I would that you, at eventide,
When twilight's shadows fall,
Could stand and watch the sun go down,
A vivid golden ball.
And see the hills and waters,
In all their glorious hue,
Forget your cares and sorrows,
Alone just God and you.

And now today in reverie,
My heart goes out to this Blue Sea,
For 30 years has passed and more,
Since my first-born played by her shore.
My brow has felt time's honoured hand,
Grandchildren's feet now mark her sand.

So if I love this lake so fair,
With memories sweet, and beauty rare,
It's just because each bending tree,
Throughout my life will call to me.

John E. Martin
August 3, 1940

This poem was written 13 years before I was born....

Janice Street 2010

I have photographed hundreds of frost art on many windows over the past twenty years.



Like a snowflake no two are the same.









Taken early morning with the sun at roughly
a 45 degree angle to the window.
I was surprised and amazed by the 3-D shapes in this series
taken with slide film.



Some photographs are taken with a macro lens and what you see is a very small piece of a larger pattern.



"A true photograph need not be explained,
nor can it be contained in words."
Ansel Adams



