



Bonnie Matassa

"Oak Alley - A Unique Perspective"

The theme for the Spring 2014 Oak Alley Plantation photo contest has been "Oak Alley - A Unique Perspective." Our concept was simple: we see these lovely grounds everyday, but we wanted to enjoy the opportunity of seeing Oak Alley from our visitors' unique perspectives. Clearly from these amazing photographs, we have achieved that, and we thank all the participants for sharing their vision of Oak Alley Plantation with us.

These photographs, along with some stories, have been a true joy to experience. Thanks to our select panel of photographers who gave so generously of their time and talents to judge this contest:

Chris Bennett
Mark C. Lagrange
Charles Martin

We want to say, "THANK YOU!", to the 200 photographers who submitted more than 320 entries to our Spring 2014 photo contest. We were not able to include them all in this eBook, but we want all participants to know how much we appreciate their support! All of us here at Oak Alley hope that they and others will participate in future contests.

No matter the season, no matter the weather, Oak Alley offers new opportunities to capture magical moments. Thank you to all for joining us in our effort to "hold fast to that which is good!"

Zeb Mayhew, Jr.
Executive Director
Oak Alley Foundation

Oak Alley Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private non-profit trust organized and operated exclusively for charitable, literary and educational purposes. Its trustees are charged with maintaining and preserving the mansion (Big House) and surrounding twenty-five (25) acre National Historic Landmark site for public exhibition as an historical monument to the times and area in which the property was built and for the instruction, education, enlightenment, information, edification and cultural benefit of the citizens of the State of Louisiana, the United States and the public generally.

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Congratulations to our Winners!

A panel of judges reviewed 320+ photographs and rated the images by quality, composition and a 'unique perspective.' The judges are pleased to announce the following winners:

Professionals:

1st Place: Robin Keefe of Orange, California "Breeze Through the Slave Quarters"

2nd Place: Dawn Coen of Homewood, Illinois "Row of Quarters"

3rd Place: Sidney Donaldson Jr. of Reserve, Louisiana for "In the Distance"

Honorable Mentions by the Judges, in random order:

Amie Reinholz - Montgomery, TX

Aimee Abshire - Kaplan, LA

Dylan Barbier - Donaldsonville, LA

Kathleen Parker - Kenner, LA

Bonnie Matassa - Lockport, LA

Rafael Uribe-Montepare - New York, NY

Steve Harrington - Bolton, Ontario, Canada

Giovanna "Joanne" Mandel - Zionsville, IN

Amateurs:

1st Place: Heather Allen Islamorada Florida "The Forge"

2nd Place: Tom Lupton Lake Oswego, Oregon "Door Belle"

3rd Place: Jennifer Sebo, Spiro Oklahoma, "Old Car"

Honorable Mentions by the Judges, in random order:

Jennifer Schmucker- Jenks, OK

Pao-Chen Shan - Chicago, IL

Kristen I. Mallett - Wagoner, OK

James Pickett - Miamisburg, OH

Sunmi Yang - New Orleans, LA

Donna Stelly Jordan - Lake Charles, LA



Aimee Abshire - "American Queen Steam"

I am 28 years old and have recently moved back from living in New York City for about a year. I wanted to really experience Louisiana like I never have before and Oak Alley Plantation was an outstanding choice. Regretfully I never paid much attention to history in grade school, I absolutely love learning about history now. My trip to Oak Alley Plantation was fantastic and very informative. I found it very interesting how the American Queen Steamboat parked its visitors to Oak Alley conveniently at a drop off location to view the amazing sites at the Plantation. I was intrigued by this enormous steamboat docked along the Mississippi River and wanted to learn more. While approaching the boat, I noticed its uniquely made smokestacks and realized I had never seen these to look so eye catching ever before. I was actually trying to capture the design of its smokestacks in my photograph and waited a couple of minutes for the exact moment when it would release steam.



Amy Gardner - "Purrfect Afternoon"

Every single one of the 932 miles from my home to Oak Alley Plantation was worth it. From the age of eight I have dreamed of visiting Vacherie and how I would pose on the balcony, mint julep in hand, and just absorb the moment. Perhaps it was too many mint juleps but the only successful photograph of our tour was of "Alley." It's not the Alley I was hoping to capture but it is one that I will treasure forever. My husband and I stopped on our way to New Orleans to celebrate my birthday and our anniversary and barely caught the last tour on March 3, 2014.

Of all the things to envy in the world I am jealous of this cat. To live at Oak Alley and have free roam of the grounds and be free to nap under one of the massive oaks would be a dream come true.

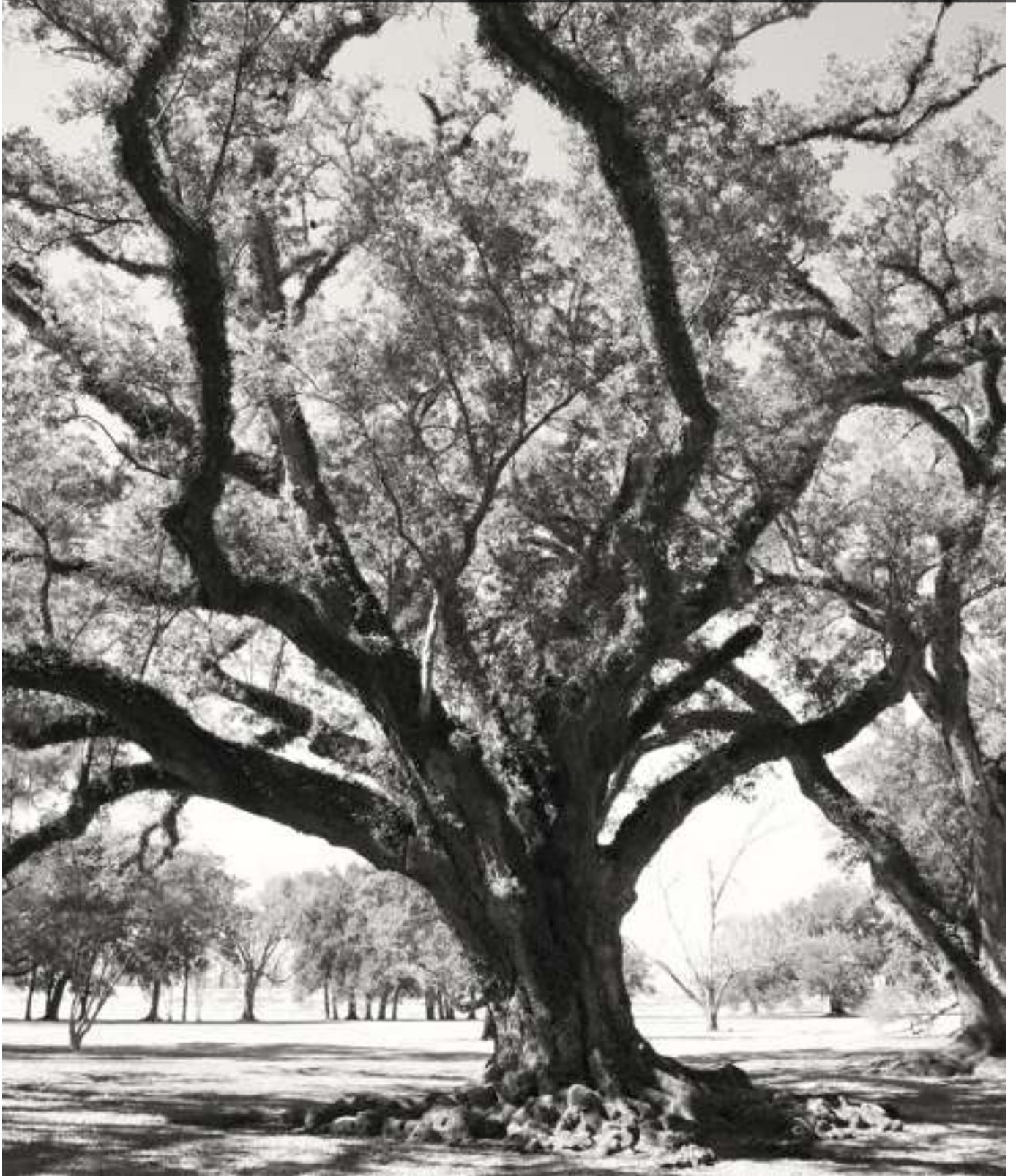
Alley [the cat] followed us all over and even paused with us as we stopped to read about exhibits or smell the gardens. It made us feel special to have our own personal tour guide.



Linda A. Daves - "A Step Back into Time"

To me the interplay of the dark and light is what captures the moment in my photograph. I wanted to capture that feeling of when the door is thrown open and the magnificent alley of trees comes into view giving one the feeling they are actually stepping back into time.

SARAH M. PITRE - "REACHING FOR THE SKY" - I was visiting Oak Alley as the cherry on top of my 13th anniversary trip. What a site! Something about the view made me think of the home's character. These columns would be attitude expressed to passersby. This tree, in particular, stood in front of the house but it sort of seemed alone. It had a stretching quality to it, like the straightening posture of someone that had been sitting too long.





Ryan D. Lips - "The Walk"

Ambra Iacovoni - "Honk"



Janet Tan
"Window View"

I took this photo from the living room during the tour, the lace curtain adds the soft romantic southern charm. This photo shows a different view of the Oak Alley Plantation from within the mansion.





KARINE LABELLE "Living Trees"

Photography is my passion; I love the textures and the colors in this particular one.

I live in Canada, between Montreal and Mont-Tremblant.
I was in New Orleans for a few days for a business convention.

Oak Alley is an wonderful place,
our guide was soooo passionate and amazing too!



Joydene A. Wallace - "View of the Oaks from the Master Bedroom"

Donna Stelly Jordan - "Fresh Bloom"

What I find unique about this photograph is that after having visited Oak Alley Plantation numerous times, I had never even noticed the gardens on the east side of the house. The home and the trees are so grand and magnificent that I didn't notice anything else about the grounds.

My daughter and I were visiting this time so I could take her senior pictures. I wanted to include the house and trees in my pictures, but I didn't want them to be the sole focus of the photos. I was looking for someplace else to shoot- a place that still represented Oak Alley, but showcased my daughter. I saw the gardens when I was looking for a place to put our things, and I immediately fell in love with them. I could see the newness of the blossoms, their beauty and their innocence at the same time. I thought to myself, I can't wait to see this garden when when it's in full bloom! I can't imagine it looking any more beautiful than it is now, but I knew it would. Then I thought, "that's what I'm trying to capture in these photos of my daughter, too. Her innocence and her beauty." And I wondered too, what she would become as she ventured on this new life, life after high school. I couldn't imagine she could get any more beautiful and joyful, but I also knew that she would, in time, do just that.





"Antiques On View" by Dylan Barbier and below; "Sugar Antebellum"



Carol Trahan - "Yucca Bloom at Oak Alley"

My husband & I spent St. Patrick's Day at Oak Alley. We rode the Harley there and began with breakfast at the restaurant. Then we toured the grounds where I took several pictures. Next was the house tour, lunch, my very 1st Mint Julep, & then more pictures. It was a fantastic day! Capturing this yucca bloom was unique!

The oaks at Oak Alley are so captivating and majestic. My favorite field trip with my daughter was to Oak Alley when she was in 1st grade. Each child and parent was assigned a tree. We measured the circumference of the tree and drew a picture of the tree using bark & leaves. This photo was intended to make a new memory while thinking about my previous visits to Oak Alley.





Timothy LaBranche - "Plantation View from Garden"

I was walking around the east side of the house when I noticed that I was just taller than the shrubs that made the square garden. I loved the vantage point that I had. I put my camera on top of the shrubs and took a seven image exposure. I wanted to make this image a HDR photo to capture all of the tones of the house, and because the lighting outside was very flat and boring.

I was trying to get a different subject in the frame, besides the oaks. The grounds have so much more to photograph than just the oaks.



Vicki Wilson - "Oak Alley in Spring"

Vicki Wilson = "Oak Alley in Spring"



Emmanuel Mwandosya



Heather Webb-Robards
"Fern Resurrection"





Crystal Bozeman
"Spiraling View"

The unique aspect of the capture itself, the depth and the way the spirals and depth give almost an unending depth. The view as it stands out among the viewer. When I go to Oak Alley I'm often searching for different ways to capture Oak Alley, ways that most may not see. I feel this one is a definite capture of something not seen or thought of everyday!

Crystal Bozeman
"The Piano"



I am a local that can't get enough of Oak Alley's beauty. I find beauty in everything there. Such as this piano. The time I had come to visit this stood out to me that day, the lighting on the piano was perfect. The perspective was perfect and I don't often find photographs like this being shared. I wanted to share a photograph that I thought was one of my best!

I wanted to capture beauty, and in a different aspect. A piano like this could have been once played. It is often overlooked. I wanted to capture things overlooked at Oak Alley and things that go unseen those who aren't looking for such things!



Sidney Donaldson Jr. of Reserve, Louisiana - "In the Distance"

Kathleen K. Parker - "Inside the Slave Quarters of Oak Alley Plantation"

I am a born and bred New Orleanian and a fine art and destination wedding photographer.

I wanted to capture the beautiful natural light within and the simplicity of the interior of one of the slave quarters buildings. This was shot around 5 PM in March. I felt that black and white suited this scene well.

I brought a Canadian photographer with me, and he fell in love with the oaks and plantation. Oak Alley and its lovely and historical surroundings were an uncommon and spiritual experience for him.



Steve Harrington
"Living History Sepia"



Renee Bailiff - "Reminiscence"



Tom Lupton -
"Door Belle"

I saw this as our
tour group was
walking down
from the top
floor, and
thought it the
perfect
opportunity!
The natural
grace of this Oak
Alley staff, and
the moment,
were just perfect,
I think!



Dylan Nichole Pinckard
"The Signal Bell"

Joe A. Guzman
"Sun shining through trees"





Maggie Bradshaw
"The Lavender Room #1" and
"The Lavender Room #2"

One of my favorite rooms of the plantation was the Lavender Room. I wanted to capture the simplicity of that room, but also show the sophistication of the ladies that used that room. The objects on the dresser spoke of how the ladies took interest in the way they look, yet they were still small objects that seemed simple enough to get the point of wealth across. Focusing on one aspect of the room, rather than the entire room is what I find unique about my photo.



Tracy G. Loupe
"Dining Room View"



Erica Smith
"May Flower at
Oak Alley"





Jamie Lee - "History on the Porch"

Secret Garden by Sarah Pitre

Joyann Maddox - "White Wooden Fence"

I couldn't help but turn around and shoot this picture of the beautiful Azaleas and the fence. Even the smallest things like fences make beautiful pictures.





Robin Keefe - "Breeze Through the Slave Quarters"



Craig Guillot - "Dark Skies"



Photos by Mary Gazze

Terrell Harmon - "Anniversary Under the Oaks"





Joyann Maddox - "Iron Gate"

Sarah Elizabeth Fallen - "Oak Alley Panorama"





Renee Bailiff - "Reminiscence"



Sunmi Yang - "Water Lilies"

As soon as I saw the small artificial pond with the water lilies growing in it, and the big house behind it, I fell in love with it. As much as I love the classic shots of the big house and the live oaks, I wanted to capture this less well-known approach to the house.

I am a medical student from Wisconsin. A friend's visit was the perfect excuse to visit Oak Alley, and I found out about the photo contest while looking up information about the plantation. I love history, and a place like Oak Alley makes the history more real than any museum could ever do.

Jennifer Sebo - "Garden Gate"





Sunmi Yang
"Break Time"



Jennifer Sebo - "Old Car"



Sidney Donaldson, Jr. - "A Look Above"



Emily L Nelson - "Reflection In Lavender"

Domenico Gattozzi - "Life At Oak Alley"

My goal was to capture the essence of the plantation home as well as the living tradition continuing today. For example, the home in the background recalls the past, as well as the metal bowl which was used to make molasses from the harvest of sugar cane from the plantation days. In the meantime, the oaks, from which the plantation gets its name, play a prominent role in creating a background to the photograph, while up front are the multicolored flowers in bloom, showing that still today there is vibrant and colorful life on the grounds. This photograph was taken from my personal Canon digital camera, and my goal was to get the home, oaks, basin, and flowers all in the same shot.



Peggy Fischer - "Look at the Past"



Danilo Lippert - "Back to the Past"

Jamie Sue Smith - "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall"





Katherine Apple
"Grave Yard" and "Times Almost Up"





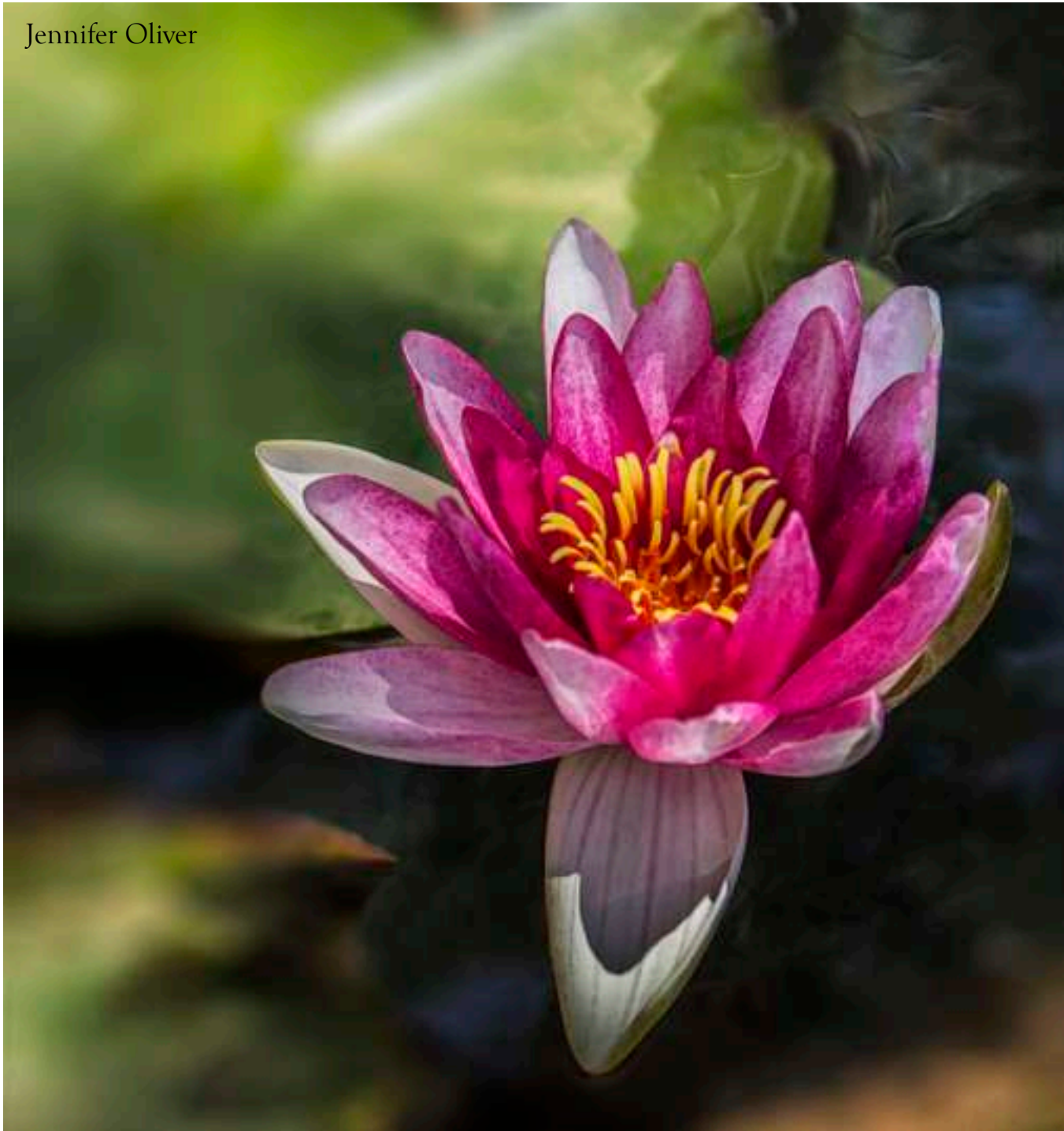
Sandra Carson Adair - "Empty Shoes"

This picture I thought was very powerful. It's a shot of just the pair of slave shoes in one of the slave houses on the property. It's important to learn about the beauty of the house but also the history behind it.



Sharon L Gibbons

Jennifer Oliver





Caroline Morey - "Chandelier Detail"

This is a beautiful detail of a period chandelier inside the plantation main house. I'm a photographer from Southern California with southern roots in Texas and just love New Orleans area and believe Oak Alley to be a very special place. Always love visiting. Love architecture, historical homes. We live in a 1921 vintage California Craftsman

Bungalow. Enjoy visiting and taking in the beautiful place and people.

What do you find unique about your photo; The beautiful quality of light and color to the glass. I was trying to capture how beautiful and elegant each hand crafted detail was.

Right: Caroline Morey
"Dragonfly Lighting on Leaf"





Dawn M. Coen - "Row of Quarters"

Dawn M. Coen - "Slave Quarters"





Pao-Chen Shan - "Same View"

I was wanting to take a photo which could let the viewer have the same vision as people who once lived at Oak Alley, and found this kind of a peaceful corner in the house.

Amie Reinholz - "Unrestrained Emotion"

This soon-to-be-married couple didn't want to see each other before their ceremony but they did want to exchange letters and pray together. Neither of them could hold back their tears. It was one of the more emotional moments I've ever photographed at a wedding.



Heather Allen - "The Forge"

I took this at the very end of the visit, in fact everything was packed away and I walked over and saw the young man working. He was so engaging I unpacked my camera and took a series of shots of him working. I used my wide angle lens and my trusty D800, never lets me down.

I live in the The Florida Keys, but get to travel for work. I work as a supervisor for a valve company and work at nuclear plants around the USA. My husband is working now at River Bend Nuclear Plant and I'm visiting.

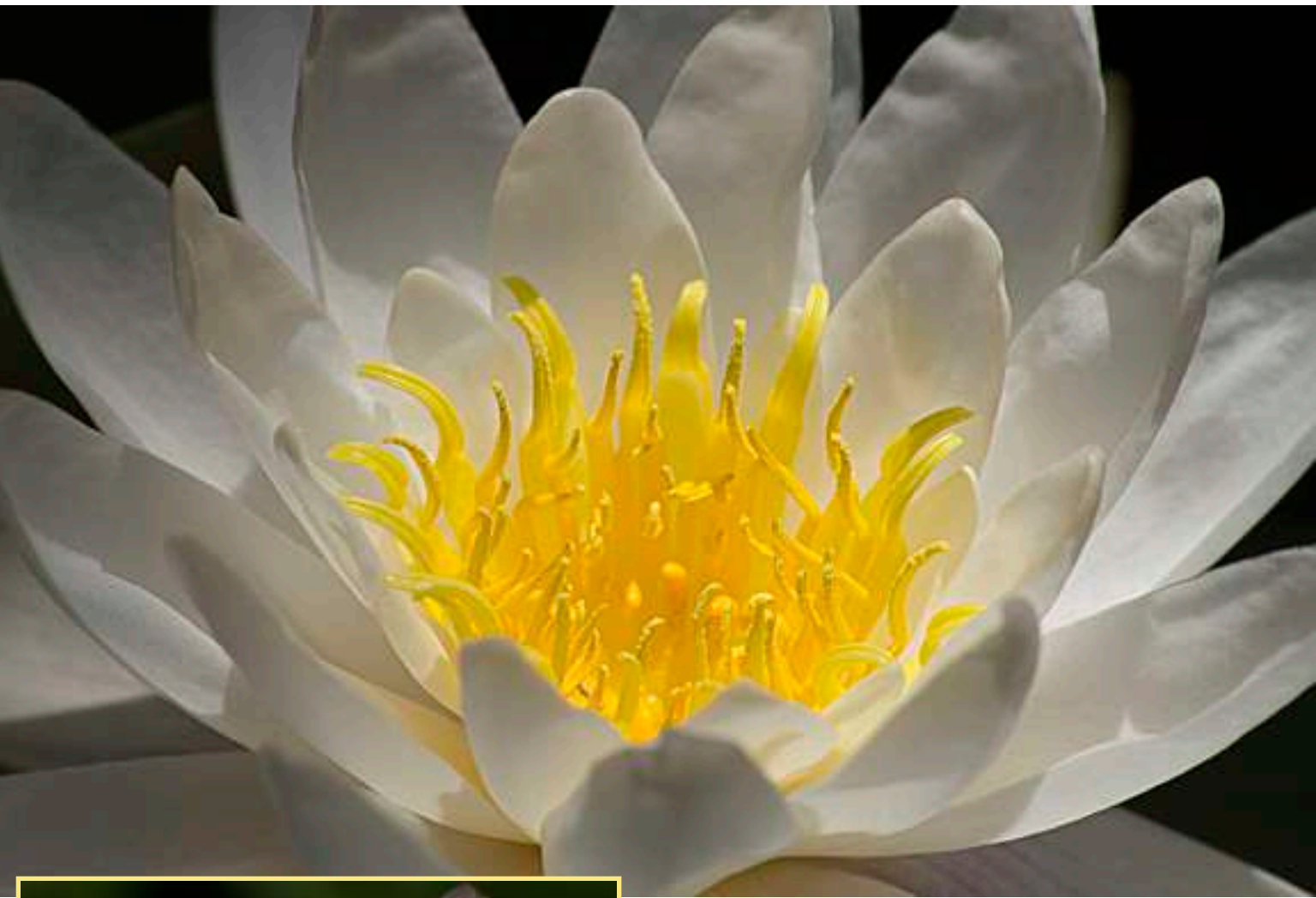
Its great to see the old ways still alive and I was intrigued about the background of the smith, he was a welder who got interested in smithy work. I was trying to get a feeling of heat and dirt, the coal dust leaves a fine dark grain on everything, and the concentration and single mindedness of the Smith doing his work.





Kristen Mallet - "The Alley of Oaks"

My whole life I have enjoyed taking pictures. I began getting serious about photography 7 years ago. I love photographing people, but I begin with nature. I have searched for a view like this for at least 7 years and finally found it at Oak Alley Plantation. I live in Oklahoma, but visit Louisiana often for my family in Houma. I plan to come to this beautiful place every time I return to the state.



Jennifer Oliver



Jennifer Oliver

Lauren George - "In the Shadow of the Big House"

My photos of Oak Alley are largely inspired by 19th-century spirit photography. In the same way that trick photography seeks to capture “ghosts,” my work layers historical images over my own contemporary photos, uncovering some fleeting moment in the plantation’s history, and revealing its “unique perspectives.”

Though history has preserved the stories and names of Oak Alley’s masters, the slaves whose hands built these walls--and who lived out their lives in the shadow of the “big house”-- have been forgotten, their memories erased by time. This photograph imagines some echo of Oak Alley’s enslaved residents.



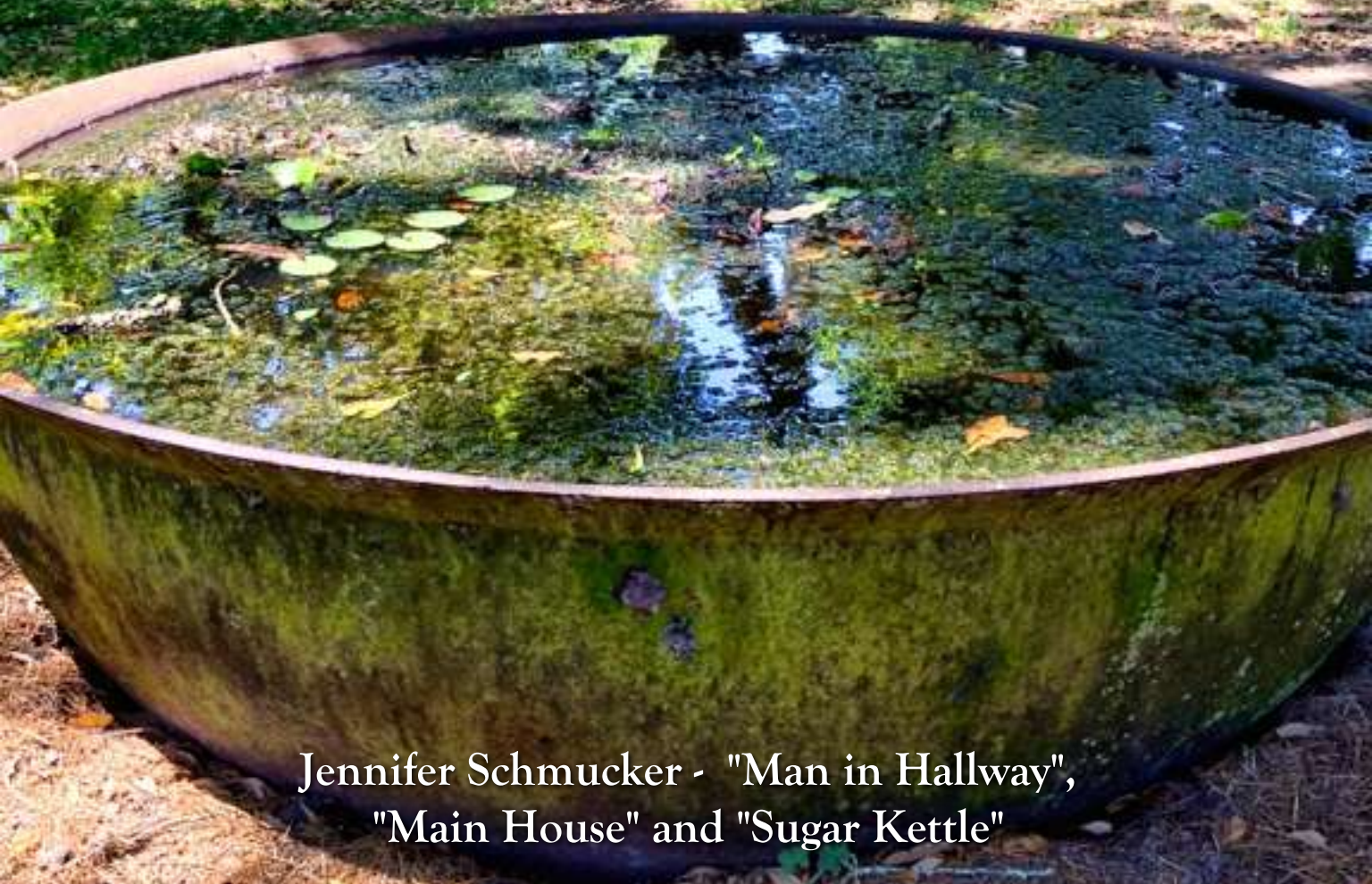


Moon Morey - "Wall of Security"

I love to take photos and am from Southern California. Visiting NOLA on a wedding trip. I love Civil War re-enacting so the south holds a great fascination for me since I have family roots in Texas. This was my first trip to Oak Alley. It was really fascinating and I enjoyed seeing it. We live in a 1921 historical craftsman bungalow in California. I saw this and wondered if the brick was a wall or trying to build another house or secure the Oak in some way. How do you capture an un-asked question?

Below: Moon Morey





Jennifer Schmucker - "Man in Hallway",
"Main House" and "Sugar Kettle"

Sarah Elizabeth Fallen - "Birds Eye View"





Dawn M. Coen - "The Blue Room"

I live in the south suburbs of Chicago and work downtown in the loop for a large healthcare company. My passion is photography, and if money were no object, it is what I would spend all of my time doing. I have been taking pictures since 3rd grade, and have brought my skills up with the advent of digital photography. I love to shoot landscapes, but have also dabbled in portrait and wedding photography. I love to shoot High Dynamic Range (HDR) photos and am excited at the possibilities that technology opens for photographers. I'm a history buff and genealogist as well, and love to visit new places and learn all about the people that once lived there.

This room was set with so many details - the period pieces were so interesting that I wanted to capture as much of the room as I could. When I processed the picture, I felt that the HDR effect really added depth to the shadows and I also applied a hazy /dreamlike effect to soften the overall effect. It feels warm to me and very inviting in this photo.

The standout unique memory for me was the view of the live oaks - breathtaking! The guides were wonderful as well and the tour was informative and entertaining. When a tour guide can hold the attention of my two boys, I know that it was time well spent!



Gail Simpson
"Gazing up Towards the Big House"



Leon Richard - "Men's or Women's?"

Terrell Harmon - "20th Wedding Anniversary"





Larry Kellogg

Marianna Chiaraluce



Ana Cecilia Gonzalez Tamez - "Growing Together in Equality"

I love photography, I love nature, colors, and all the diversity we can enjoy from it. The vivid color of the flowers make feelings of happiness instantly arise in my self-interior. Equality is always beautiful, we are blooming together. We all come from our mother earth to beautify our roots.

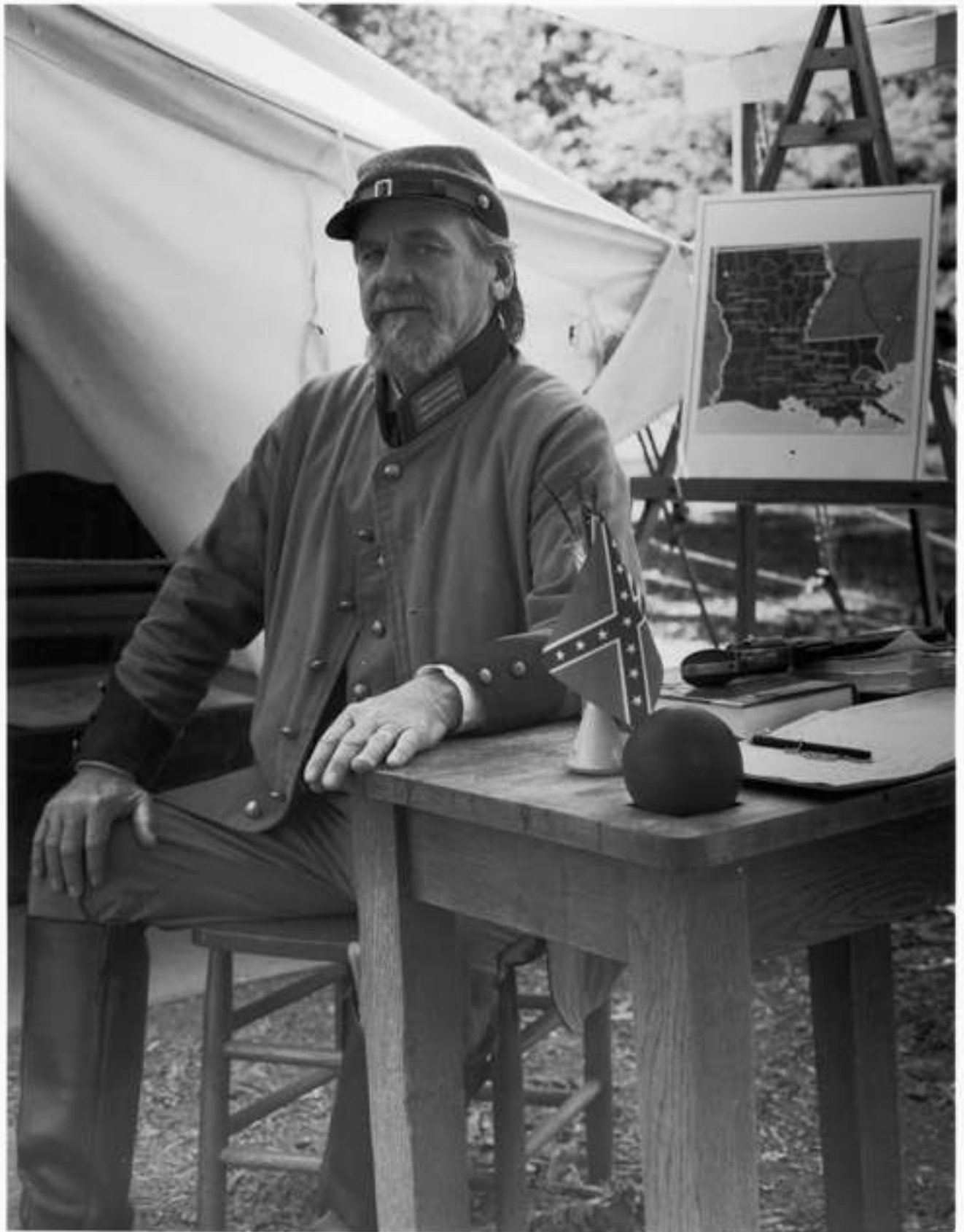




Jennifer Schmucker

Kristen Mallett - "My First Love"





Larry Kellogg

Ava Kalmar - "From Branch To Branch"

Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

I'm a bit of a traveler and like taking photograph's of my findings along the way. I saw Oak Alley online and fell in love with the trees and area so I made the effort to rent a car and travel out there while visiting New Orleans. I could spend hours there photographing the trees and surroundings. When walking around I just envisioned sitting under one of the large oaks, reading a book, shadowed by all the branches. I like lines in photographs and wanted to show the depth of the trees and just how large and detailed they are. That tends to get lost when shooting straight-on because you can only capture so much in your frame.

What was unique about my visit to Oak Alley? Everything, nothing I've ever seen before. We don't have trees like this in my area. I also loved how quiet and peaceful it felt while walking around, like I was in a different time. We also had a lovely tour guide who taught us a lot about the history which I had no idea of prior to visiting.





Giovanna Mandel - "Roots of Oak Alley" . My friend and I felt very fortunate to arrive at Oak Alley just as you opened. We wanted to shoot the grounds without lots of visitors to obstruct views. I tried to find a different perspective on the beautiful walkway leading up to the house. This was my take on that view:-)



Photos by Carol Trahan

Harold Hall - "Azalea Breeze"

Too often we try to get 100% of a photo in focus. Rather than try a fast shutter speed to freeze the moving azalea blooms, I opted for an extra long shutter speed to blur them all the more. As a result, the area of bright color was increased and added to the stormy nature of the photo. It was raining off and on all day as well as quite breezy. Instead of trying to capture blooms in focus at a high shutter speed, I slowed the shutter speed to more than a second, using a tripod and captured the blurred motion of the azalea blooms.



Wendy C McGee
Oakdale
Louisiana

"Porch"



"One of My Favorites"



Lacy Lockhart - "Sunrise Through the Trees"

I am from Southern California, so needless to say it was so awesome to be able to visit the Oak Alley Plantation while on vacation. I love this photo because one of the things I like to take photos of in my spare time is trees, especially what I like to think of as creepy looking ones. Being in Louisiana, I got to see trees like I had never seen before.

Lighting like this can be hard to capture for any photographer so I was thrilled to have the chance to get a photo like this while visiting that famous Oak Alley. I loved feeling like I took a step back in time.

Leon Richard - "Campfire"

This photo was taken from a ground view. It captures a true camp-out feel with a pot about to be heated over the fire and a tent in the background.





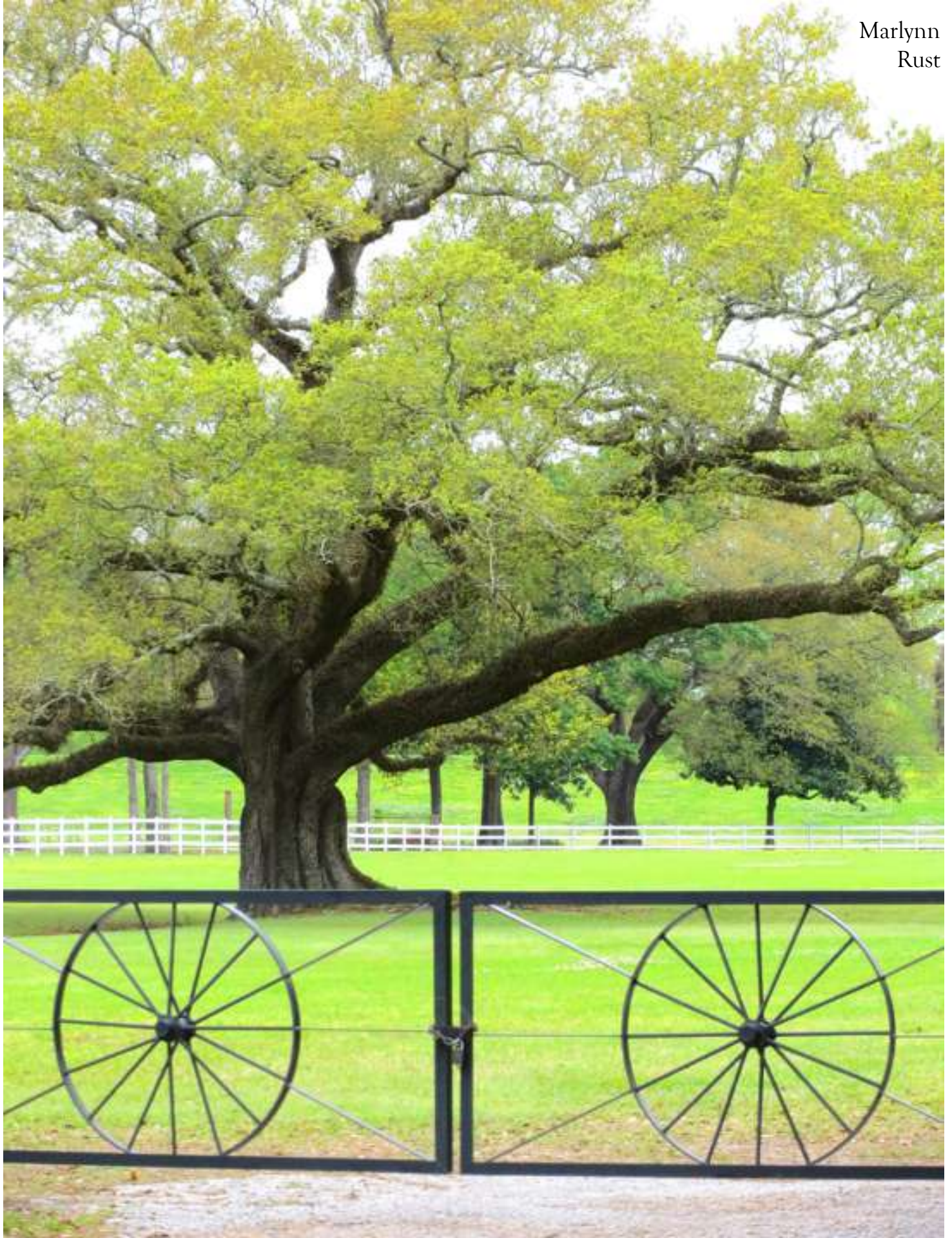
Bonnie Matassa, Vacherie, Louisiana - "The Blacksmith"

"This photo was meant to tell a story, about the workmanship of the blacksmith."

Jessica Smith - "Tree Tunnel" & "Contrast"

These photos were taken while traveling on my first mother/daughter trip with my mom. We don't get to travel much together, so staying at the plantation was a special time for us as a family. I am a travel writer and I live in Ocala, Florida. We stayed in a cottage and ate gumbo at the restaurant. It was a wonderful and peaceful break after leaving the chaos of New Orleans.







Ryan Michael Robinson = "The Price of Admission"

The perspective is well known, but I wanted to capture the standalone beauty that's made Oak Alley so famous. Not one person in the shot on a perfect late afternoon. It's this view, in my opinion, that's worth the \$20 price of admission. To me, the title of "price of admission" also refers to the terrible costs in human capital that helped create this beauty. A reflection and moment of acknowledgement to the beauty of place and the unseen destruction of lives that helped make it so.



Debby Dennis



Marlynn Rust



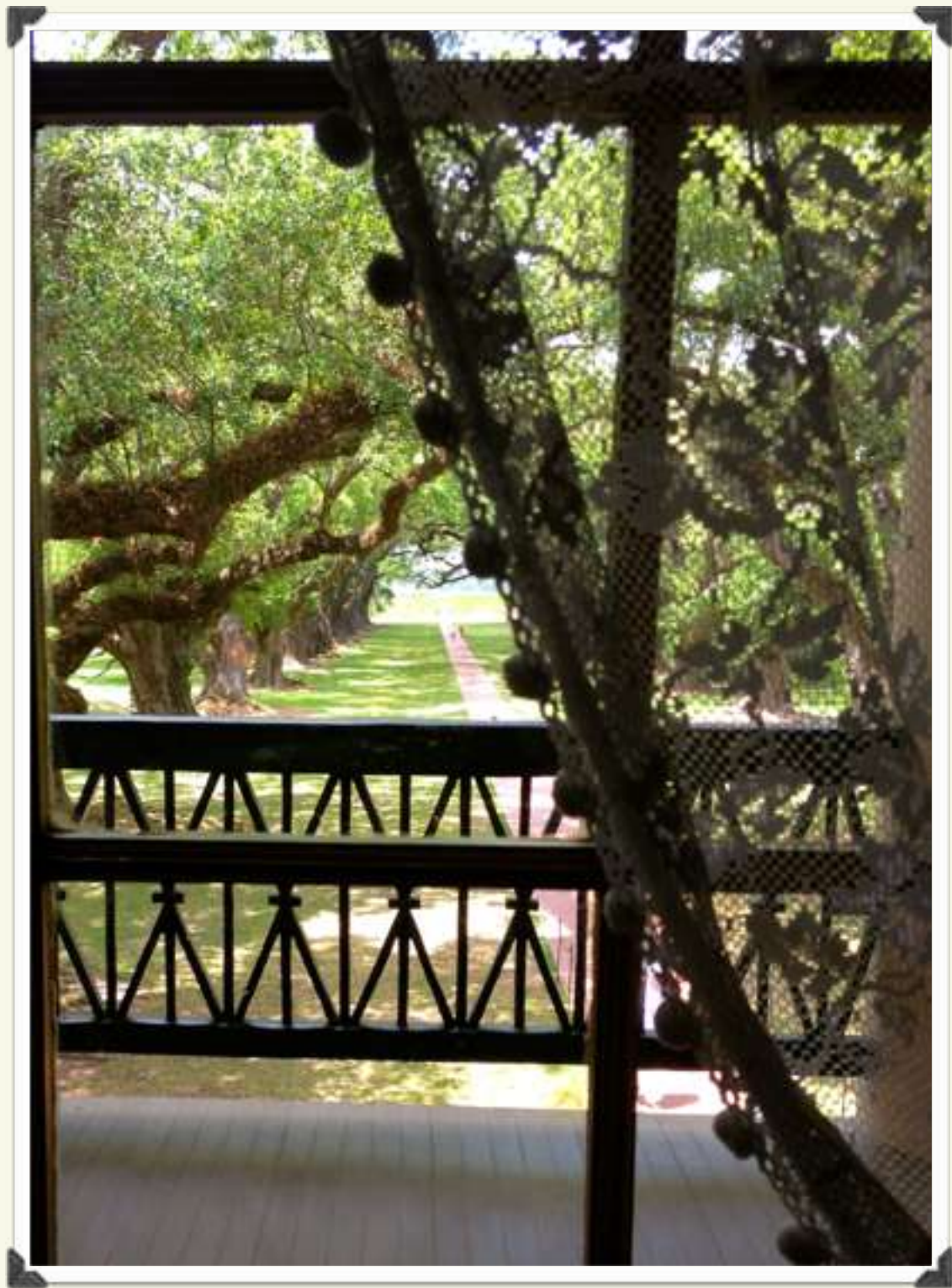
Kathleen Lewis
"Tour Hosts"



Kristen Wheeler - "une vue de la grange" (a view from the barn)

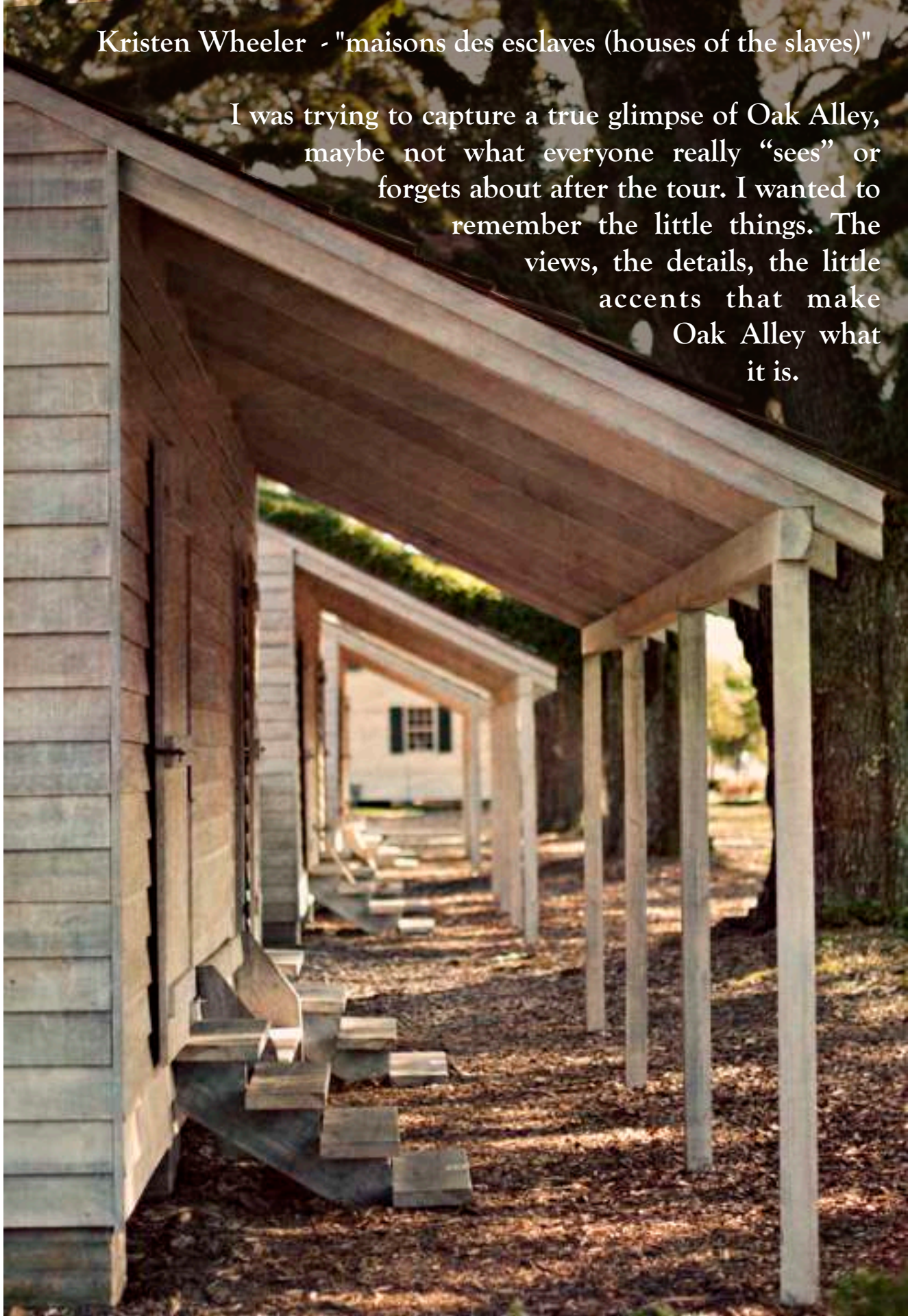
Erin Oftelie - "Understated"

As I peeked into the master bedroom I was drawn to the baby cradle, and just then the tour guide said that it was one of the only items which belonged to the Roman family in the building. I then couldn't help but think about the heartbreak they must have felt when their children died. It's then that my gaze turned to the view from the bedroom window. The simplicity struck me as being just devastatingly beautiful. I thought the view through the lace curtain captured the essence of the space in that moment: breathtakingly beautiful but shrouded in sadness.



Kristen Wheeler - "maisons des esclaves (houses of the slaves)"

I was trying to capture a true glimpse of Oak Alley, maybe not what everyone really "sees" or forgets about after the tour. I wanted to remember the little things. The views, the details, the little accents that make Oak Alley what it is.



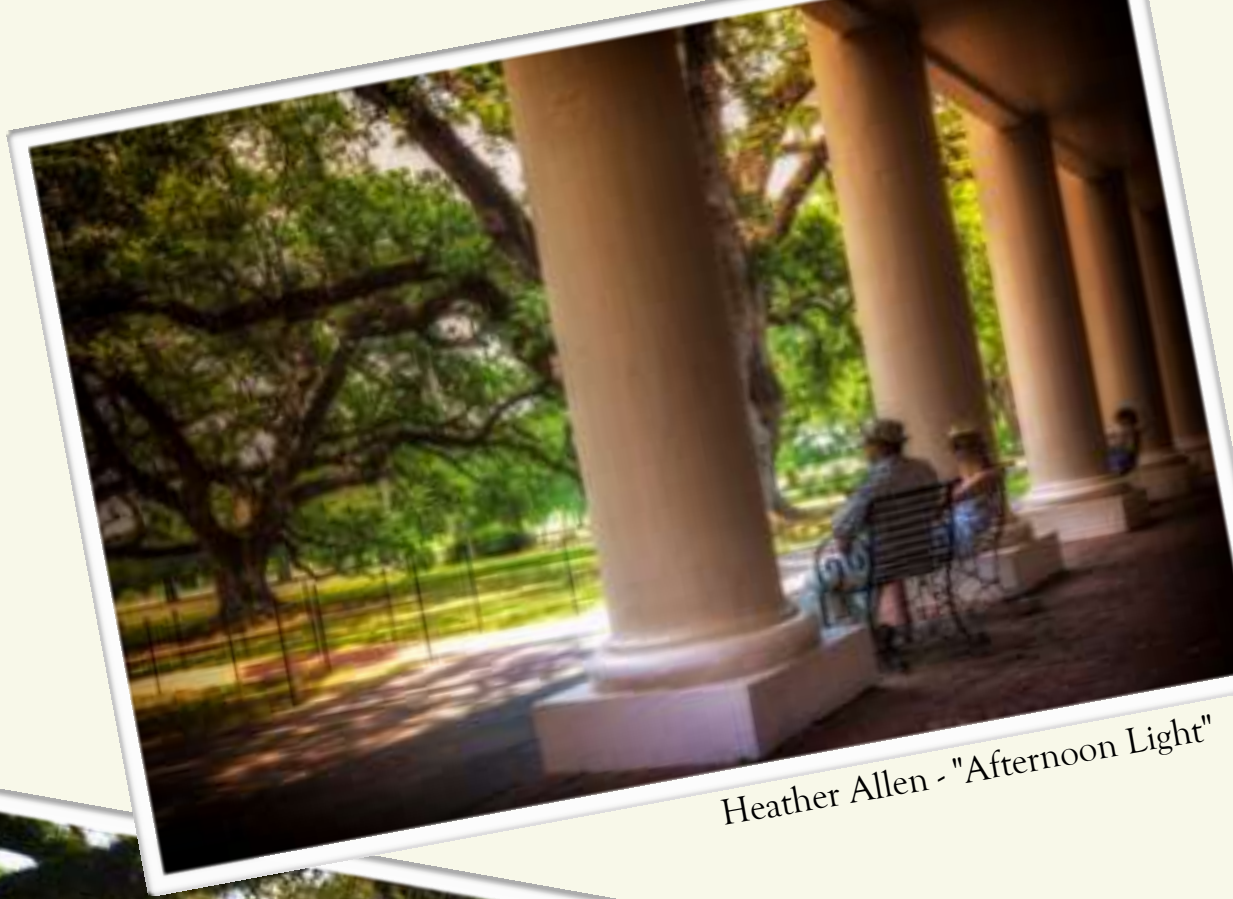
Aimee Abshire - "Serenity within the Oaks"

I have just recently moved back to Louisiana. I am 28 years old and graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, so I am a true 'cajun girl' at heart. I took this photo on my spur of the moment trip to Oak Alley Plantation. Even though I have lived nearly my entire life in Louisiana, I wanted to experience something I never have; something in my own home state, before I even consider to travel the world. While viewing my photographs from this memorable day, I immediately saw something in this picture that was completely unexpected and unplanned. I noticed that I had captured an elderly couple walking on the Plantation. I then, saw my future. I 'pictured' myself coming back to my home to live the rest of my life in that "peace and quiet" that I know I will desire.



Photographs by the Oak Alley Foundation staff!





Heather Allen - "Afternoon Light"



James Pickett - "Pot"

Craig Guillot - "Misty Rainfall Under the Oaks"





Shannon Joliboix - "Southern Sunday"

Steve Harrington - "Slave Quarters"



Kristen Wheeler - "la chambre bleue (the blue room)"

I took this photo on my first visit to Oak Alley in February, 2014. I have always wanted to visit the plantation and had never had the chance. It was perfect outside when we went, the sun was shining, it was just the right temperature with a nice breeze, and we had an amazing tour guide. This is some of my first views of the property as my husband and I were exploring the grounds.





This was far-and-away the photo most enjoyed by the Staff at Oak Alley Foundation. We shared this one on FaceBook, and the photo was viewed by tens-of-thousands of people around the world. The engaged couple was later interviewed on television on station [WBRZ](#). Here's the note that accompanied the photo:

"We visited your beautiful plantation on Sunday, Feb 16 and took many pictures of the property. When we came home I uploaded the pictures to my computer and discovered that I had captured a proposal in one of my pics. I am sure the couple would be happy to have their special moment documented and pictures sent to them, but I have no idea who they are. So, I am sending these pics your way, in the event the couple signed the guest book and you are able to locate the happy couple.

Thanks,

Beth Hamilton and Carl Petre"



Oak Alley Staff photography

Thank you for supporting Oak Alley Foundation through your visitation, your photo entries, and your donations. All of the proceeds from our efforts are applied toward keeping our historic grounds and stately Big House open to the public.

- Oak Alley Foundation

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