

Les Schmidt

Biography

Les Schmidt was born and raised in the Northeast, where frequent family trips to the shore and through farm country served as early influences. New York City, with its grand architecture and gritty atmosphere, was also a travel destination and source of inspiration. He moved to New Orleans in the early 1980s, where he became stimulated by the city's rich history of artists, Old World architecture and famous waterways. Schmidt started shooting in 2000 after being asked to style photo shoots for a local modern architect and became instantly captivated by the art and process of photography. Les received his first 35mm camera and immediately enrolled in the New Orleans Academy of Fine Arts. After two semesters in the school and twice winning the Owen Murphy Faculty Award for Photography, he was offered his first exhibition at Soren Christensen Gallery in New Orleans.

Schmidt primarily captures austere, coastal landscapes, but has recently developed a body of work focused on still life, as seen in his 2015 solo exhibit *Dorothy Jean* at Guy Lyman Fine Art in New Orleans. He has documented Hurricane Katrina and newly added his abstract *Storm* collection to his portfolio. His work has been shown nationally in Molena and Atlanta, GA; Monroe, Lafayette, Breaux Bridge, Covington, Grand Isle and New Orleans, LA; Seaside and Naples, FL; San Jose and Los Angeles, CA; Attleboro, MA; Huntsville, AL; Cape Girardeau, MO; Wichita, KS; Johnson City, TX; Minneapolis, MN; Nashville, TN; Essex Junction, VT; Portland, OR; Cooperstown, NY and internationally in Crete, Greece and Budapest, Hungary. His photographs have also been used in the 2013 film *Ender's Game*, in the January 2012 issue of *IQ Magazine*, and in Chrysler's Super Bowl XLVI half-time commercial starring Clint Eastwood. His work has been reviewed in *Art Voices* (Issue 21, 2009) and *Pelican Bomb* (November 2015).