

About the Cover Art



The art of Navy veteran Michael G. Thompson is featured on this issue's cover. Thompson's digital photograph *Kayak* won him a silver medal in the 2007 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. *Kayak* is one of three images that our *JRRD* Editorial Board chose to grace the 2008 journal cover.

Like most previous featured artists, Thompson is an art therapy participant who has demonstrated extraordinary artistic expression despite physical or psychological challenges. "I enjoy working in photography. It helps me to concentrate and provides a vehicle to improve my social skills," explained Thompson about the benefits of his therapy.

Thompson's first exposure to photography in the context of art therapy was at the Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare System in 1973. This exposure revealed a hidden talent and sparked a lifelong study of the art. Thompson has taken several college-level photography courses and studied the zone system, a photographic technique for determining optimal film exposure and development.

Ultimately, Thompson hones his craft through practice. In his free time, Thompson loves to photograph flowers, old barns, coal mines, and ghost towns in Utah's desert. Like many artists, Thompson is most inspired by a natural landscape. "I do not arrange my photographs. I find my composites within the borders of the camera range finder and often look for macro images that are ordinarily missed by people who do not look closely enough," explained Thompson.

