IMAGES OF

BLOOMINGTON

by SHANNON ZAHNLE

When Bloomington native Shannon Zahnle bought her first camera in 2007, her goal was to develop a professional skill that could offer an alternative to waiting tables. She had no photography training, learning instead by relentlessly shooting under all conditions and in any circumstances. Through trial and error, library books, and the Bloomington Photography Club (particularly her friend James Kellar), she honed the style and technique that have made her a consummate creator of images, at once both a photojournalist and an artist.

If you are a regular reader of *Bloom*, you have seen hundreds of her photographs over the years. She has shot 10 cover stories, some of the magazine's best, including last issue's "Buddies," as well as "Gay Bloomington: Then & Now," "Bloomington Ink," and "Comedy in Bloomington." For this feature, we asked her to select photographs she takes when she's not on assignment. "I rounded up everything that wasn't just of my family or my cats," she says.

Shannon, 37, is adamant that anyone with interest and persistence can develop photography skills, emphasizing that each person can bring a unique approach and vision. "I just want to encourage everyone to experiment. I don't like hearing people say, 'I could never do that,'" she says. "You don't have to make your photographs look like someone else took them. If you take enough photographs, they start to have your own look."

The *Bloom* editorial staff chose these 13 images as representations of the Zahnle "look."

You can see many more of her "Images of Bloomington" at magbloom.com/shannonsbloomington.

"This boat has been by the side of the road on West 3rd Street for years," Shannon says. "I kept waiting for snow so I could get this picture."

(inset) Shannon Zahnle on the job. *Photo by John Fernandez*

Opposite Page:

Shannon captured this summer storm from Rose Hill Cemetery.
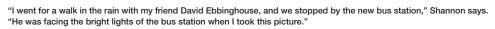
Clockwise from top:

This 2011 photo captures the final Fun Frolic, an annual event in the Assembly Hall parking lot that lasted for more than 50 years. "I started going when I was a kid," Shannon says. "I have a collection of the colored shells that fell off the lights of the Ferris wheel."

Part of an ongoing series of images of Bloomington's water tower, this photo was taken from the Indiana University Golf Course driving range. "That tower has been there as long as I can remember," Shannon, a native Bloomingtonian, says. "I still think of my brother explaining that you can tell how high the water is by looking for the line of condensation."

Father and son share a quiet moment at Lake Monroe as the sun sets.

"I went for a walk in the rain with my friend David Ebbinghouse, and we stopped by the new bus station," Shannon says. "He was facing the bright lights of the bus station when I took this picture."
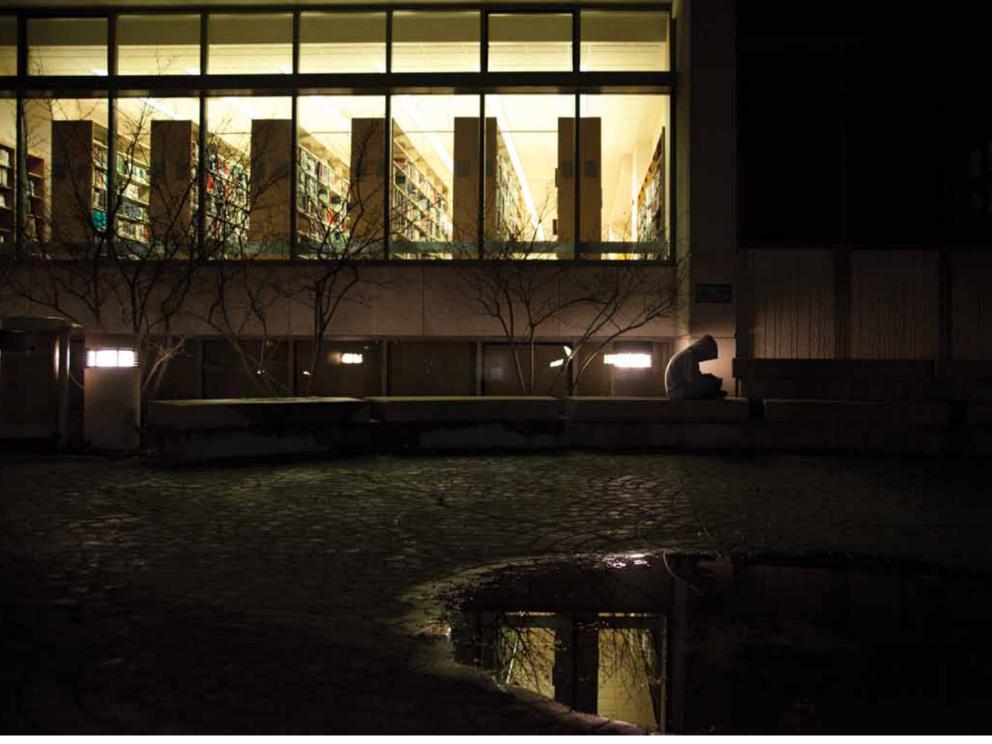

From top:

Shannon says of this shot of Bloomington's far west side, "People wait for the bus with their shopping outside the plasma center on a hot day in August."

Bloomington busker and IU Systems Administrator Mitch Rice serenades Charlie Bird outside Bloomingfoods Near West Side.

Clockwise from top left:

Shannon captured this shot of South Walnut from the top of the 4th Street Garage, a structure she associates with childhood heartbreak. "When they were building it, they put up a huge sign that said, 'PARK.' I thought there was going to be a giant park inside it."

The Monroe County Public Library had just closed for the night when Shannon snapped this shot from East Kirkwood.

Halloween 2010. "This photo of a nameless cat was taken with my phone. Let's call him 'Herschel,'" Shannon says.

Taken while waiting in the parking lot for her husband to run an errand, Shannon recalls this photo as one of her earliest experiments with night photography. The 2007 photo, which captures the rear of the former Waffle House and the facade of the now-relocated Lola Rue & Company shop, "is memorable for me," she says, "but all photos are. They always bring back the state of mind I had while taking the picture."