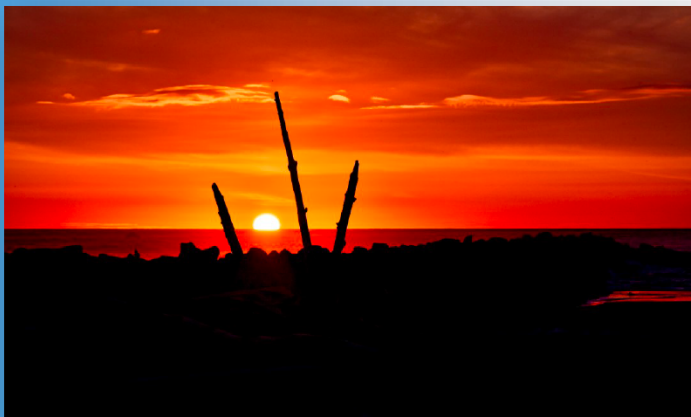


## ***Artist of the Month "Moda" Mark Simon***

***The AAOS Artist of the Month for October, 2023, is Mark Simon. Perhaps better known as "Moda Mark," his photographic art is exhibited at the Tim Rossow & Associates Gallery on Chance a la Mer in Ocean Shores.***

***The Moda Mark name goes back over a quarter-century to the days when Mark operated two fashion boutiques in Seattle, Moda Xpress in Belltown and Nuvo Moda in downtown Seattle, across from the Seattle Art Museum. Part of that entrepreneurial experience led to his becoming interested in high end photography.***



***"I've always been a marketer," he explained, and he was using professional photographers for his businesses' print ads. He was dissatisfied with what he saw as small imperfections in the images he was paying for, was already interested in photography, and thought he could do better himself. So, he bought a good camera,***

***and was soon shooting not only his own ads, but images around town that caught his eye. Within a couple of years, he was doing small exhibits in coffee shop type settings.***

***Along the way, he started getting DJ work, specializing in more sophisticated playlists intended for higher end settings. And he began dabbling in putting together small events. He was then known as DJ Moda Mark.***



***The combination of a couple of big downtown building projects and the recession of 2008 killed off his fashion businesses, and led to his relocating to***

*Suquamish Shores in northern Kitsap County. A decade later, he moved to Ocean Shores.*

*Mark doesn't really have any favorite photographic subjects or motifs, although he has done a fair amount of beach and seascape imagery. He said he likes to use the approach of observing a possible subject, with an eye toward being able to capture a moment "by anticipating when the moment will show up," and being prepared for it.*



*He said sometimes the source of inspiration surprises him – "I just look around and sometimes you realize, 'Hey! I've got to look behind me, too!'"*

*Beyond his photography, which can also be seen on his Facebook page, Moda Mark Media, he may be best known in the AAOS community for having produced the live music portion of this year's 54<sup>th</sup> Annual AAOS Arts & Crafts Festival, held Labor Day Weekend at the Ocean Shores Convention Center.*

*In particular, Mark wanted to offer festival patrons a bit of an ambience upgrade from the traditional live music scene at many festivals, where the audience is scattered about, watching a band play on a large truck bed. Mark pushed for a free-standing outdoor stage with semi-circular seating and a grassy area in front, somewhat evocative of a concert amphitheater setting.*



*The intentional increase in live music content and marketing are believed to be a significant ingredient in the mix that produced a very successful festival last month. Mark is excited about building on that foundation for next year's AAOS Festival.*