

THE MAGISTERIAL EYE OF THE MARVELOUS MAGISTRATE JUDGE HON. ROBERT M. LEVY

SIMEON H. BAUM



A view of the Brooklyn Bridge from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York.



Before attending NYU Law School, the now Hon. Robert M. Levy was seriously considering becoming a professional photographer, taking seminars with such noted photographers as Ansel Adams, Lisette Model, and Lee Friedlander. He ultimately chose the law as his profession, but never abandoned photography. Yet the viewer of the following pictorial will see that Judge Levy really made a difficult choice. He has an eye for human detail and the technical capacity to capture life through a camera's lens.

Judge Levy's legal accomplishments are lengthy. After briefly representing juveniles for New York City's Legal Aid Society, he moved to the New York Civil Liberties Union, where, among other things, he served for many years as lead counsel in the Willowbrook litigation, which closed a notorious institution for people with intellectual disabilities on Staten Island and created a system of effective community alternatives. He then served as general counsel to New York Lawyers for the Public Interest. It was from this latter position that he became a magistrate judge in the Eastern District of New York, where he remains. As the EDNY's ADR oversight judge, he has been the leader in developing dispute resolution programs in the district and a force in the ADR world internationally. He has traveled extensively both at home and abroad to help design court-related dispute resolution programs, train new judges and mediators, and investigate human rights abuses.

Over the years, his camera has been his constant companion. I first witnessed these two sides of Judge Levy when joining him in 2009 on a trip sponsored by the U.S. State Department and the Department of Justice to speak at a conference on commercial mediation in Russia. We met the day before the conference to



We have assembled a sample of Judge Levy's work, in both black-and-white and color, including photos from long-term projects in Romania and Turkey and a recent shot from the top of the Eastern District of NY courthouse. We hope you will have your own view from the EDNY this September at the annual meeting when you join us on Friday evening for a celebration hosted by our EDNY colleagues. ☺



Simeon H. Baum, litigator and president of Resolve Mediation Services Inc. (mediators.com), is a former member of the FBA board of directors, former chair of the FBA's ADR Section, and former president of the SDNY Chapter. He has conducted over 1,000 mediations since 1992, and has three times been selected as

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discuss comments on a bill before the Russian State Duma to promote mediation in the courts and presented a master class to judges and lawyers on commercial mediation the day after. As we explored the streets of Moscow during our few free moments, I witnessed Judge Levy, camera in hand, taking shots of fellow pedestrians inches away or capturing sweeping images of the Moscow cityscape.

Judge Levy currently teaches mental disability law at NYU, Columbia, and Brooklyn Law Schools and trains extensively on the methods and benefits of ADR in resolving disputes in the district courts. He was appointed by Chief Justice John Roberts to the Federal Judicial Center's Education Advisory Committee for Magistrate Judges. Judge Levy's photographs have appeared in publications such as *Popular Photography* and *The New York Times*, as well as on "60 Minutes."

