

## Group A Critiques.

1. A Whale of a Tale... This is an interesting collage of two images of multiple whales. It would be nice to know how they were shot and manipulated after capture (other than the captions, which as whimsical and humorous, but for me detracts from the images). I really like looking down as some of the whales are blowing/spouts. I probably would not have combined the images as I'd pick the stronger image, and be good with it... Besides how many folks out there have an image with this many whales in each frame???
2. Bubble Aquarium... Once again, I'd like to know how this image was manipulated. The fish are sharp (good), but the pink background is a little distracting as it's not sharp throughout...
3. Cadillac Memories... I really like this image. Just goes to show you don't have to shoot an entire subject to create a strong image. I like the reflection of the pavement as well as the white vignette rather than dark. The Sepia tone was a good choice as well... Great job...
4. Carmel Valley Dragon... I'd like to see this guy in person... Living in the Sacramento area, I'm not familiar with this beast... I like the composition... Generally, I don't care for the primary subject coming directly out of the corner of the frame, but this one works for me (possibly due to the foliage at its base). From a color standpoint, the different tones of green are tough usually to create a nice image. The red eyes and mouth help quite a bit. This image grows on me...
5. Lily Pads & Dragonfly... Another graphic art smorgasboard for the eyes!!!! I like the color pallet... I suppose, if you're gonna go for it graphically, you go for it!?!? I like the complementary colors of the Lilly pads (mostly warm) with the cool blues of the water. But with so many colors to look at, the dragonfly is kind of camouflaged (Where's Waldo???)... But this is an image I'd like to see in print, as I think it would be even better.
6. Little Sur River Mouth... Very cool place!!! I've driven past this spot, but have yet to shoot it. I love the lines and composition. Great sky and color pallet, but would liked to have seen the original image. Though not my style, I do like the way the lines move through the composition. Let's go shoot this spot!!!

7. Those Old Worn Boots... I really like this image... Once again Monochromatic works here. Great sense of time. Good choice of Sepia tone. I'm not sure I'm crazy about the framing as it's a little hard at first to figure out what you were trying to accomplish, and it's such a strong image, for me it's a little distracting. Otherwise, I love this image..
8. When Books Come Alive... More graphical art!!! I like the lines and curves and the thought of the stack of books being morphed... I'm not sure what the tan zone at the bottom of the image is there for. Also, I probably wouldn't leave the terminal end of the stack going out of the frame (unless you do it boldly) as you want the viewers' eyes moving into and through the image. But interesting...
9. Beached Boat Composite - Moss Landing... I love old boats like this just like I love shooting old barns. I enjoy the HDR look, even though it's a little overdone. I'm not a fan of Compositing the additional images as I think they detract from the main foreground boat (anchoring point), and they detract from the sky. I love Moss Landing and will be shooting the Elkhorn Slough twice next weekend. For this image less would be definitely MORE. I do love the position you placed the boat in the composition, and its depth.
10. Chilly Gas Stop... Let me leave the graphical comments for this image (as I'm sure by now you have an idea of my taste). Compositionally, I really like this image. The old truck and gas pumps work well. I do like the contrast of the dark, relatively desaturated sky, with the bright and colorful ground elements. I really like the sense of depth one gets, and the eye can follow the image from front to back.. This image is a good one to point out the importance of "border patrol"... I'd have not cropped the shadow of the gas pumps, nor would I have cropped the building on the back right area. Finally, it's a little picky, but IF you can separate elements, i.e. the right side of the roof of the truck, and the background building, you should try to in general whenever possible. Another image that grows on me.
11. Fiery Flight... Is this a photo??? Really??? I know it is, but would love to see the original image. A blastoff of a group of birds like these (i.e. what happens at Bosque Del Apache), is really cool, especially if you have great colors in the sky with silhouettes of the birds... Nice title for this manipulation though. The almost complete black on the bottom of the image detracts from what you are trying to accomplish as well, and I'd probably crop much of the bottom out. Interesting effort.

12. Mystical Waterfall... I very much like the composition as the water flows from the upper falls and leaves to the left and below the lower fall. Interesting mix of “almost” photo realism of the leaves and pink flowers to the right of the lower falls and on both sides of the upper falls, with the almost neon manipulation of the rest of the image. Once again, I would have loved to see the original image...
13. Orange Flowers... I do like this graphical rendition, especially the placement of the closer flower to the farthest, giving a sense of depth... Nice shadows as well. Very clean image without distractions. Like the shadows completely on the red base. Not sure about the bases of each “flower” though.
14. Padre Trails Perspective... I really like the butterfly and the purple flowers around it. That being said, the busy collaging with the notepad, while cute/smart, distracts from the main image, which I really would have liked to see more of. But if you’re going to collage, at least all the elements don’t compete with each other (just the image), and stack well... Good border patrol...
15. Raindrops on Windshield... This graphical image of a color conversion of water on a windshield, works for me. Great contrast between the outlines of the drops and streaks with the nice blend of colors. I don’t think it’s a strong image, but it is pleasing, once you figure out what the subject was.
16. Ugly Duckling... IS RIGHT.... Once again, you have sooo much to work with; a great reflection, sharp bird, great water (but cropped too tight, especially on the right side where the ring of water is cut off before its terminus. I would have liked to see the orange continue to the right to help define the ring).... Yet all this neon manipulation makes it more graphic art than photography (yet I suspect it was probably a very good original image). So keep at it, and if graphical manipulation is what you like, just keep striving to define what draws you to this style and focus on building your skills to fulfill your vision.

### **Group A Winners.**

#### **Honorable Mention.**

6 Little Sur River Mouth. Ben Grasmuck

#### **3rd Place.**

3 Cadillac Memories. Ben Grasmuck

**2nd Place.**

10 Chilly Gas Stop.

Richard Bucich

**1st Place.**

7 Those Old Worn Boots.

Carol Fuessenich