

Judges Comments Group AAA

01. Amazing Sunset - Nice Sunset colors, good capture of an amazing sunset. It would be a stronger image concentrating on the lower right part of the image, with the contrast of the puffy clouds and the reddish weeping clouds. The dark top clouds at the top are not as interesting as the brightly lit elements.

03. Bikes Hidden - Effective use of the horizontal component in the image, with the pipe and general line of the handle bars. Interesting peek at the fence in the background, with horizontal emphasis. The mostly hidden view of the bikes, make one do a second look to see what is going on in the image.

04. Boats on Monterey harbor at night - Very blue, perhaps a less blue rendition with a little more foreground interest, placing the boats and horizon a little higher nearer a 1/3 intersection, but a nice balance of the larger and smaller boats.

05. Capitol Reef Pasture - Interesting scene. The mountains seem to visually overpower the farm scene. Perhaps a little more foreground would lead the eye to the farmhouse and horse. Interesting image. Perhaps the flat lighting takes away some three dimensional visual clues for depth and values. Has a very flat, one plane of content feeling, but a very interesting image.

07. Clock Reflected - Interesting details one might not ordinarily notice. Competing features lessen the impact of the clock reflection. If the title were the Awning, it might be more apropos. Maybe a tighter crop, would emphasize the reflection, making more of the centerpiece of the image.

08. Day is Done - Good use of depth of field, with aperture settings. Good placement of the subject in the lower 1/3 and 1/3 area. Perhaps more detail in the bottom third would give a better context to the image.

09. Door_County_Hot_Rod - The color scheme is striking with predominant blue, yellow and green. Perhaps the hot rod taken from an angle or placed off center and smaller would have made the image more dynamic, to lead the eye through the image.

10. Door_County_Marechel_Foch_Grapes - Nice lighting, good exposure capturing the disturbed patina on the grapes. It is a nice image, but maybe a little static, one's eye goes to the two clusters of grapes and sort of bounces between them trying to decide which is the subject.

11. Door_County_Sunset.jpg - Nice sunset colors, interesting clouds. Sharper focus might have made the land/water contrast crisper. Raising the horizon would add a little more balance to the composition.

13. Flags on Santa Cruz Pier - Colorful, scary! (all those skulls!) A little more contrast with brighter whites and sky would make it pop more. It is clear what attracted one, to photograph this scene. Happy and lighthearted appeal of the display of banners and flags.

14. Foundation Underground Seattle - It is evident what this photo is taken of, but there does not seem to be a strong, recognizable subject. One's eye tends to wander looking for a focal point/subject of the image.

15. Golden Gate Bridge at Night - Interesting treatment of a familiar scene. Good near/far relations, and contrasting colors of the foreground and sky. It would be stronger if the horizon was level and the far tower was true plumb. (The near tower will be slightly tilted because of lens distortion, which could be compensated for, also in photoshop.)

16. Horse's eye - Interesting vignette, but would be more dramatic if the eyelashes/eye were tack sharp, as

they are the subject. Critical and selective focus help lead the viewer to one's subject. Also the eye being very black with no reflection, tends to make it recede, rather than come forward. A little catch light, highlight would draw more attention to the eye.

18. La Mirada reflections - Nice composition, roughly thirds horizontally. Contrast and gradations lend interest and lead the eye through the composition. (Do not be offended, but flip the image top to bottom and it is very interesting in a different way, and it still works graphically.)

19. Lamppost Duo - Contrast of style, color, light and dark, usually create visual interest. Near and far relations with scale and proportion. Interesting image of two identical objects with different styles, with good placement in relationship to each other. The swatch of green, adds a different point of interest and context.

20. Light Reflections on Stainless Steel Cask - Interesting play of color, form and shape. Good sharp focus in one section that brings the eye there. (Since it is abstract, the eye tends to wander a bit, looking for the exact subject, but overall interesting, well done.) Good color harmonies.

22. Lone Surfer - Strategic cropping would help focus one's attention on the dramatic clouds and the surfer. The surfer is not the subject of this image. The real points of interest of this image are the shafts of light from the clouds, the jetty end and the surfer. Selecting a vertical crop of those elements would be stronger and bring the focus on the interesting aspects that attracts one to the image.

23. Moon over Steinbeck's Country. - Moonrises are very difficult to photograph. What distracts from this image is that the moon is bright over a solid background of clouds. Thick clouds would obscure the moon, the moon would only peek out from behind a thin spot in the clouds. The clouds would also be lit from behind with the moon peeping through. It feels like a image created in photoshop. But, an interesting idea.

24. Old doorknob, Fisherman's Wharf Monterey - Interesting vignette round bisected by vertical lines of interest, even light, good detail and texture and color palate. Good balance of interesting elements.

25. Point Cabrillo Lighthouse Mendocino, CA - Nice soft evening light, with pastels that fit the open feeling of the image. The forced perspective of the wide angle tends to make the main light seem to come from two sources. The sun appears to be behind the lighthouse, yet the light source feels like it is coming from the viewer's side of the lighthouse. Seems contradictory and confusing from that aspect, but a nice image.

26. Reflection of an Old Farmhouse - Good reflection, great clouds, and an engaging scene. Nice composition, good tonal range shadow to highlights. Would a tad more contrast make it pop just a bit more, and make it more dramatic? Very nice overall.

28. Ribera Beach Sunset – Carmel, CA. - Good overall exposure and detail, balanced tonal range and vibrant colors. It is well executed balancing the sky and foreground detail with good balance in each. Here the forced perspective tends to distract from the impact of the image.

29. Shy Barn Kitten - This image is charming and playful. It seems that the eyes should be sharper to make one's attention there more distinct. The vignette may not add to the overall effect. Just crisper focus would be good, make the kitten stand out from the surroundings.

30. Succulent Garden Quilt - This image has many good qualities, it is well and evenly lit, nice color, sharp focus, an interesting vignette of a common but often overlooked subject. It is well done, but the eye

has a tendency to wander about the image looking for a place to rest. There are too many competing area for one's eye to try to rest on. It is easy to see what draws a person to this image, but finding a specific subject is difficult.

31. Sunrise Over the Monterey Wharf - A nice representation of the harbor, but it tends to be monochromatic, and mono-tonal, so that it appears all flat and stacked together. One must rely on mentally separating the elements, because there are no lighting cues to distinguish foreground, mid and distance elements. Everything appears on one visual plane, even though one knows they are not.

32. Sunset on Laureles Grade – Carmel Valley, CA. - Interesting image, but there does not seem to be one strong element to focus one's attention. Leveling the apparent horizon, the pink hills, would be a beneficial edit as well. The pink hills tend to be lost in the magnitude of the surrounding image.

33. Turnstyles. - This is a strong image, with a juxtaposition of the receding perspective and the square rails, a good contrast. Contrasting colors and nice light. If it were possible to include the whole edge of the last vertical rail, it would stop one's eye inside the composition. The rails tend to lead one out of the image as it is now. But well done and interesting.

34. Up with the Sun - Nice focus and depth of field use to emphasis the bloom. A little more foreground detail (being a bit lighter) would give more balance to the image.

36. Wild Horse know as Marley - A nice image, with good lighting, and and interesting composition. A shallow depth of field would have enhanced the horse's detachment from the background, making the image more dramatic, and visually make the background less competing, the horse would jump out of the background.

37. Winter Cave - An interesting image, that is sharp and a good basic exposure. A little more contrast between the foreground and distance would help the perspective pop, making it more 3 dimensional, adding a little more impact. Just enhancing the cave exposure to add more depth would be helpful.

Awards -

Honorable Mention -35. Wild Horse Herd at Sand Wash Basin. - This is a nice image, interesting and nice lighting that makes the horses stand out from each other and seem dimensional. It also has a foreground, mid and background composition that shows depth.

Honorable Mention - 12. Dr. Hart's Mansion – Pacific Grove, CA - This image has soft even light, which complements the subject, sharp details. The forced perspective of the ultra wide angle produces a little contradiction to the eye and is bit unsettling. It is a lovely image, but the curvature of the sidewalk makes it seem a little contrived, when it is very well done overall.

Honorable Mention - 17. Illumination and Reflection.at Mission San Antonio. - Good image, good exposure, nice light, good tight crop to the essentials of the image. It includes enough detail to give a context, but a tight enough composition to draw the eye to the reflection. The dynamic of the slanting trees works to emphasize the square grid of the window. Very nice image.

Honorable Mention - 02. Backstairs at Carmel Mission - Good image, strong lines of stairway, nice soft light complements the mood of the vintage feel of the image. Interesting and strong. Could it use a tad more contrast?

3rd Place - 06. Castroville Cypress - Really interesting image of a common place setting. Good cross light gives the image a good 3D look, nice placement of the barns in the frame, and the trees give a perspective as does the artichoke field. Drove by the barn recently and appreciated the skill of the capture.

2nd Place - 21. Limetini. - Graphic, strong, sharp, good placement in the frame. A strong image, with balance and interest. The slight diagonal tilt gives a dynamic edge to the image with the stirrer adding interest.

1st Place - 27. Restored Kitchen at El Presidio de Santa Barbara. - Very nice image, soft omnidirectional light, that gives three dimensions and depth to the image. Warm and inviting. The catch lights in the ceramic on the table reveal the added dimension of light that give it a multi-dimensional feel. Also good focus, depth of field, and tonal gradation. Good balance of elements in the photo add interest.