



01 - Arched Entrance to Palace Square, Alexander Column, Hermitage.jpg

Rick Verbanec

This has beautiful movement in it and I really appreciate the way you have arranged the objects in the image. My eye enters this image in the lower portion and then rises up and then down again. I like that you have anchored the bottom of the image with darker tones and a gathering of people. This visual weight serves to balance out the upper trajectory that the eye makes in the image. The arch at the top of the image helps to pull the eye back down into the image keeping the eye in the middle of the image.



02 - Art in the desert.jpeg

Nicole Asselborn

This image not only has very strong visual impact but a solid conceptual element as well. As a landscape image it is quite beautiful, but the way that you have chosen to photograph this site specific art creates a very interesting conceptual impact. These stacks of tires photographed the way that they have been, lead my eye into the distance as if I'm looking down a lonely road. As if I am seeing all of the traces of cars and humans and the impact of humanity on this landscape tread their way across the earth. The repeating shapes in the image that the columns and tires create is quite interesting contrasted against the looming mountainous background. This image pulls me in and makes me really want to visit this place. ****



03 - Chez Ginette_Parisian Cafe Culture.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

I love the sense of place that this image creates. You've really pulled me in and put me in this location. As my eye stays in the image longer, I am able to enjoy the lovely repeating shapes that the windows make and I especially appreciate the reflection of the neon sign on the awning of the building. The intimacy of the people in the foreground of the image pull my eye in and a journey through the image up into the building and then into the background and then back around. This

journey through the image helps me take in all of the nuances that you have included. An image like this can get quite busy, but you have done a deft job of formally arranging the elements to create an image that is very visually appealing. ****



04 - Early spring morning in the Great Smoky Mountains of North Carolina.JPG

Margret Cordts

The nuanced usage of light in this image is what drew me into it. Images like this can become visually very busy, but you have chosen to photograph a locale at just the right time period the light coming into highlight the tree leaves that are in the middle of the photograph are really what helps differentiate the foliage. It's easy to set up a photograph like this only to have it become a jumbled mess of texture where the eye cannot discern foreground from middle ground from background because of how much all of the leaves kind of jumble together. Because of the usage of light in this, you have been able to pull out and highlight some of the foliage which pulls it to the forefront of the image. The usage of the slow shutter speed gives a calming quality to the image and it becomes very serene. I feel as if I am there observing this myself.



05 - Eiffel Tower from Palais Chailot.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

I do love the balance in this image. The Eiffel Tower on the left of the image is balanced out quite effectively with the weight of the building on the right hand side. Using the intense clouds as negative space in the image is a great touch. These clouds, I think also help to give this image just a bit of a visual tweak, kind of like a visual speed bump. Since this is an image that I feel I've seen before, it could become expected, but what intrigued me were those clouds. The clouds seem ominous and dark which give this image an interesting and unexpected visual twist.



06 - Heading Into Monument Valley. Arizona.jpg

Jeff Hobbs

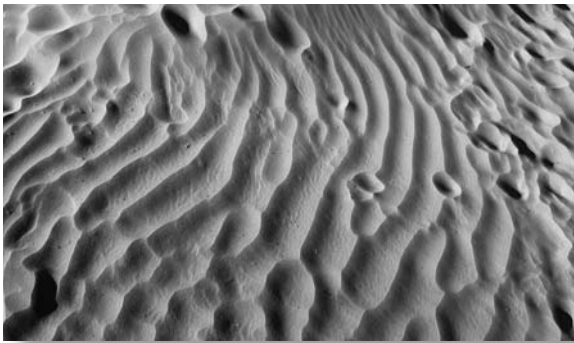
I respond quite effectively to where you have placed the road in this image. It's so tempting to place it in the middle, but I do love that this is placed off to the side. This is a very nicely balanced landscape also. Something seems to be missing in this image and it can be hard to put my finger on it. It seems like it is "almost there." What I think might help make this more visually effective could be a couple of things. I'm wondering if a different time of day could help elevate the impact of the image—usage of shadows, light playing against the visual elements in the image, etc. I know we can't control what the sky is like, but I think what this image does need is some visual information in the sky. Usually this is in the form of clouds or cloud formations or something to break up the sky. Since there were no clouds when this image was taken, the image could be cropped down to be more panoramic and contain less of a sky. With a crop, this would take the horizon line out of the middle of the photograph. The horizon line would be raised up a bit and it would conform really quite nicely to the rule of thirds. If a crop doesn't interest you, perhaps an adjustment to black and white might be of interest. When converting to black and white you could apply filtration that could darken the sky. I think since you have such interesting texture in the foreground of the image, having some kind of foil to that on the top portion of the image could help give this image a more nuanced visual impact.



07 - Kauai Sunset.jpg

Jerry Heisel

I am not sure if you are familiar with the painter William Turner, but this sunset image made me think of his seascape paintings. His paintings are quite arresting and very visually stunning. I love the fiery intensity of this sunset. What appears to be a boat in the background of the image is so small and makes me really think about how tiny we truly are and how futile we are when we go up against nature. This image is both calm and contains turmoil at the same time, much like a Turner painting. I felt drawn into this image and wanted to stay with it for quite some time. The visual balance of the image is quite effective. I also like how the glowing warmth of the sunset is reflected in the water. This is a really lovely way to encapsulate the boat that is off in the horizon line. The lowered horizon line is also extremely effective.



08 - Mesquite Dunes, Death Valley NP.jpg

Kent Van Vuren

I appreciate the abstraction of this image and respond quite positively to that. I also like that scale has been played with. When I look at this image, I have no idea if I'm looking at something large or small (this is a great thing!). Your title helps to give me some information about that, but I still am intrigued because even with that information I have no idea if I'm looking at something larger than life or extremely small. A visual mystery is always nice in a photo! I also appreciate the conversion to black and white and how it really helps the abstraction of the image. This image harkens to Edward Weston's lovely images of dunes that he photographed alongside his assistant (and ultimately wife, Charis).



09 - Morro Bay Gull.jpg

Karen Schofield

love the humor in this image and appreciate the fact that you were able to get so close to this bird! I do feel that I would love to see perhaps a little bit more visual room around the bird. What I mean is maybe pulling back just a little bit so that there is a little bit more information around him (or her!). One other thing that you might want to consider is utilizing a bit more shallow depth of field. It would help too separate the bird from the background. I also want to make sure that when you are processing your images that you are aware of things like "haloing" around the outside of objects. I see some haloing around the bird which translates a little different to the eye. The first thing that I wondered was if this image was composited. I know that composites aren't allowed in this competition, so I took a closer look and saw that it was haloing that caused this effect. Sometimes when haloing like this happens, it can make the objects in the image looked like they were cut out and placed in the image. This is just something to keep in mind as you are post processing your imagery. I do love how you can post this image and place the bird off to the side as it really helps to anchor the image.



10 - Okanagan Valley in Spring.jpg

Rick Verbanec

This image pulls me into it and gives me a strong sense of place. I love how you have utilized the landscape through the frame of the window. I also like that there is human interaction in this image and you have captured some action. I really love this aspect of it. One thing that I would keep in mind is to try not to have a tangent in an image. What I mean is that when one object kind of kisses against another object and they appear to be connected. In this instance, the row of wine glasses, kisses against the line of the window. I think moving your body in a way when you are shooting that separates those two things is something to keep in mind. I do respond quite effectively to the warmth of this image and the warm colors contrasted with the cooler colors in the background.



11 - Ring-tailed Lemur, Madagascar.jpg

Kent Van Vuren

Wow, I am so excited that you got to see a ring tailed lemur in the wild! How lucky! I also really like the square cropping of this image. It feels like it could go straight to social media and be at home advertising your travel photo skills! I do respond quite effectively to the monochromatic textual background. I like that you have placed the lemur a little bit below the geometric center of the square of this image. The slight curve of the tail leading the eye upwards is nice. I wonder if this could be pushed a little further in post processing to crop the image a little bit so that the lemur is not in the center of the image but off to one side just a bit. In my mind I'd like it placed over to the right of the image since the lemur is looking off to the left. I think having some textual background is negative space will help to offset the weight of having the lemur over in the right hand side.



12 - Salvation Mountain.jpg

Carol Silveira

I have always wanted to see this place in person and I'm excited you got to go here. I think this might just be a calibration issue, but the image seems to be either a little under exposed or needs to be opened up a little bit more. I think playing with the exposure could also help bring out the clouds that are in the background of the image also. I do respond quite effectively to the triangular composition using salvation mountain as a large triangle.

I like the sign that's in the lower right hand corner. I'm wondering if when you photographed this if you were to utilize that sign as a bit more of an anchor point to the image. Perhaps getting up a little bit closer and using a wider angle lens could allow you to be able to create an interesting juxtaposition between the sign and the mountain.



13 - Silhouette Of A Joshua Tree At Sunset, Joshua Tree National Park.jpg

Jeff Hobbs

This image has such a strong and lovely composition to it. I love the time of day that you chose to use for this image and feel that it helps to portray the wonder of Joshua Tree National Park. Placing the Joshua tree off to the right hand side is a great anchor to the image. The beautiful sky and lovely subtle colors also help create an impactful visual punch. This image pulls me in and makes me want to be right here at this moment enjoying this scene.



14 - Street in San Miguel de Allende.jpg

Carol Silveira

To me this image seems like a play on the fairy tale Red Riding Hood, except for Red Riding Hood is now older and has lived a long life. That was an interesting unexpected conceptual twist to the image. I love the composition of this image and where you have placed the subject. Her gaze right into the camera's lens becomes very effective. She is seemingly suspicious of me as the viewer perhaps pensive and a little wary of my gaze as the viewer.

The beautiful pops of color against the monochromatic background also helped to tell an interesting story. The sliver of the meandering street that you included helps place me in the image also. ****

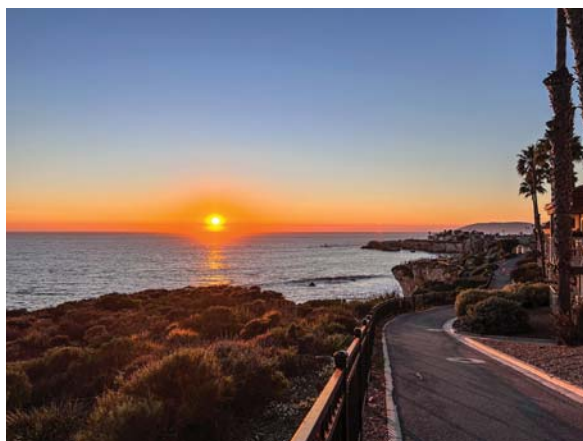


15 - Sunrise over Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona.jpg

Chris Johnson

This is a lovely image of sunrise and exhibits the expansiveness of this incredible place. You managed to capture a really lovely time of day with this image and some unique light here. I love the curve of the greenery in the bottom of the image and feel drawn into the image and into this Canyon. This image does a great job of making me want to feel like I want to visit this place

at this time. I do also really love the streaks of clouds right at the horizon line as I feel this helps to balance out the texture and the bottom of the image and also break up what could be a very expansive sky with not a lot of visual interest going into it. The quality of light that you have piercing through the sky combined with these clouds really helps set a nice tone here.



16 - Sunset at Pismo Beach.jpg

Karen Schofield

This is such a solidly composed image and gives me a sense of place and a sense of time. I love how you have balanced the sun setting in the image with the road on the right hand side of the image. I feel like I am right here in this moment. The warm waning colors also help to set the tone for this image. I feel like I either want to see less of the right hand side or more of what's on the right hand side of this image. I can't quite make up my mind, but I'm wondering if including or not including visual information there would elevate this image. I know my opinion is subjective, and I'm off base sometimes so it's just something to consider. ****



17 - Totem Pole Pillar and Milky Way in Monument Valley, Arizona.jpg

Chris Johnson

This is a superbly composed image. I loved the lowered horizon line, and the beautiful sky filled with stars and the Milky Way (I'm showing my ignorance, but I think it's the milky way) placed in just the right spot. The diagonal that the galaxy creates draws me in to the image visually allowing my eye to move down to the totem pole, around the bottom of the image and then back up to the top left of the image. I also appreciate the subtle colors that you have been able to achieve in this image. I feel like it has superb visual impact.



18 - Zigzag.jpeg

Nicole Asselborn

I enjoyed this image, but when I saw the title of the image, it gave me a whole new understanding of the image. At first I wondered why it was titled zigzag and then the visuals began popping out at me. All I saw were zigzags. It's a testament to how strong a title can be and how much impact a title can give an image. I love the cool colors in this image and the visual play that the zigzag lines make. I feel like you have divided this image visually very nicely. One thing that I think is quite effective is the neutral texture at the bottom of the image as it serves as a nice balance to the intense zigzagging in the mountains in the background.

Winning Images:

Honorable Mentions:

Eiffel Tower from Palais Chaillot

Denise Loria Woyski



**Early Spring morning in the
Great Smoky Mountains of North
Carolina**
Margret Cordts



Art in the Desert
Nicole Asselborn



Third Place:

Silhouette of a Johsua Tree at Sunset,
Joshua Tree National Park
Jeff Hobbs



2nd Place:

Street in San Miguel de Allende
Carol Silveira



First Place:

**Totem Pole Pillar and Milky Way in
Monument Valley, Arizona**
Chris Johnson

