



**01-Acorn Woodpecker Stops for a Drink.jpg**

*Christina Parsons*

This is a very nice shot of the woodpecker leaning and drinking from a faucet. I appreciate that the tall pipe is placed on the left side, that the colors are muted, and that the background is soft and not distracting. The softer colors also enhance the strong red of the bird's head, which is a strong focal point and pulls my eye into the image. Good cropping and composition. I do wish we saw more of the bird's face, but these subjects aren't always posing for us. This is also a strong combination of man's hand and nature. \*\*\*\*



**02-Artichoke in Bloom (Cynara cardunculus).jpg**

*Brooks Leffler*

A very nice image of the artichoke as it opens and reveals its thistle stage. I like the strong purple color, it pulls me into the image. The areas of the background are also nicely included and not cropped or cut off. A couple of suggestions: The light is very bright on the scene and it might have been more saturated if you had held an umbrella or something overhead to block the sun, or returned at a later time of day when the light was softer. (2) Shooting a flower (or animal) from the top is one way to see the scene, perhaps the way we all begin. After you do this, try moving the camera lower so you are shooting from either the side or below. You will lose some of the thistle, but show the plant in a way that we do not normally see it. It took me a while to catch onto this, and I still make the mistake of shooting down all the time, but different perspectives are usually much more visually interesting. I am not sure how this shows the hand of man? Perhaps because the artichoke is planted? \*\*\*



**03-Boardwalk into Yellowstone.jpg**

*Ken Jones*

A nice perspective on the lines in Grand Prismatic Hot Springs. I was just there a couple of weeks ago. The two strong elements in this image, the leading lines and the boardwalk with people at the top, make a strong composition that is interesting for the viewer. It is nice that you included all of the hill in the upper right and did not cut off the top, it completes the scene nicely. I am not sure if you used a circular polarizer or not, but it probably would have removed a lot of the glare or reflection on the water in the middle section of the scene, and saturated the foreground colors a little more. When I take shots in this location I am always torn between shooting low to get more foreground, or shooting higher to get more of the pattern, so I often do both and decide later. \*\*\*



#### **04-Brown moth on lawn chair.jpg**

*Jared Ikeda*

This is a very nice close up photograph of the brown moth. I like the square cropping and the diagonal lines created by the chair and the moth. If this were mine, I would probably vignette it a little—darken the corners—so the bright areas there do not pull my eye away from the central subject—the moth. I appreciate the sharp focus on the subject and softness of the background areas. The bright yellow area keeps this from being a stronger image. Perhaps an umbrella or some sort of shade would have reduced or eliminated the very strong light.

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#### **05-Bull Fighting Man.jpg**

*Rick Thau*

This is a wonderful action shot of the bull and man in motion, but I see it more as a pictorial or journalistic image than a nature one. The composition and fast shutter speed to stop the motion both work very well with this scene, it certainly makes me wonder what happened next.

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#### **06-Connecting two seas-Kiel canal Germany.jpg**

*Ken Jones*

I like the strong composition with the diagonal lines and the monochrome tonality works well with the industrial/harbor setting. This is another photograph that I think would work better as a pictorial image as there is not a lot of “nature” involved.

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#### **07-Fox Squirrel Lunch Break.jpg**

*Frank Penner*

This is a very strong image of the squirrel eating the corn. I like the three vertical parts of the scene and think they work well with each other. The squirrel and corn are very sharp, while the background is soft and not distracting. The bright color of the corn makes a statement and the squirrel makes us smile. The front paws are perfect and it's nice to be able to see his face so clearly. A very well done image and perfect for this competition.

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**08-Mama Rhinoceros and Calf San Diego Safari Park.jpg**

*Dick Light*

A nice image of the mother and young white rhino in a game park. Having the two in the scene makes it stronger, but this seems a bit of a specimen shot. It's a good idea to wait for some kind of interesting interaction between the mother and baby, although I appreciate that this may take a lot of time and might not happen. Still, I always look for some sort of dynamic interaction. This is a good photograph for this competition as the rhinos are clearly in captivity. It looks like you were down low, shooting more or less at their level, which always makes the image more compelling. \*\*\*

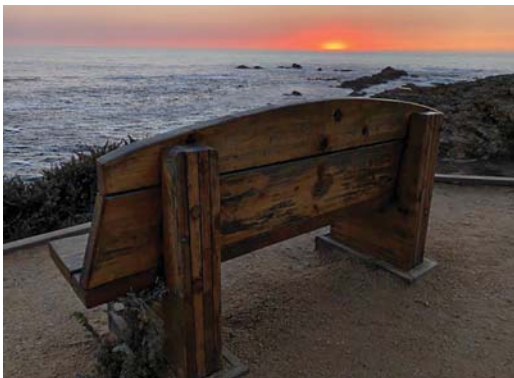


**09-Over the Neighbor's Fence .jpg**

*Carol Fuuessenich*

This is a strong image of the flowers cascading over the fence. The lighting is soft, which allows the colors to be saturated and there is a feeling that they are reaching out to the viewer. The fence below and leaves above provide strong borders, framing the flowers. You might want to turn it slightly counter-clockwise to straighten the fence posts, the slight lean is a little distracting.

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**10-Point Lobos at Sunset .jpg**

*Carol Fuuessenich*

I always like the metaphor of an empty bench overlooking a beautiful scene, it makes me want to fill in the missing space. Both the exposure and composition are very strong and the setting sun in the upper right provides a nice counterpoint. Overall a very nice photograph.

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**11-Red Tail.jpg**

*Jerry Loomis*

I always like the metaphor of an empty bench overlooking a beautiful scene, it makes me want to fill in the missing space. Both the exposure and composition are very strong and the setting sun in the upper right provides a nice counterpoint. Overall a very nice photograph.

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### 12-Rock Doves Billing and Cooing at Fisherman's Wharf.jpg

*Brooks Leffler*

This is an interesting scene of the two birds interacting, it looks like one is sharing food with the other one, or perhaps they have something else going on. I wonder if you could have gotten another shot with the eyes open? Maybe the pigeon closed them because the other one was so close, or maybe it was blinking, but the closed eye is a little distracting. It's nice that you were able to capture this fleeting moment of the birds together. I know it's not always easy or possible, but the more you can be down at the level of the birds, the better.

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### 13-Scrub Jay Company For Breakfast.jpg

*Frank Penner*

I like this moment and know what the bird is thinking, the face is very expressive. But he probably won't be able to do anything with the nut waiting for him. It's also interesting having all the birds on the coffee cup. This photograph makes me wonder what happened next, and if there was another nice scene after he hopped up onto the bench. I like the straightforward composition and diagonal lines.

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### 14-South African Lion -I have the right of way--1808.jpg

*Dick Light*

Nice shot of the male lion walking down the road. It's apparent that they are accustomed to people, or at least to vehicles. This younger male lion doesn't have a lot of battle scars yet, but he will get them. It's nice that you were shooting from a low angle, which is much better for any wildlife. I also like the muted tonalities and the sun is not overly bright so the contrast is under control.

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### 15-Towhee on a fence.jpg

*Jerry Loomis*

This is a very strong image of the towhee, the tight cropping works well and the lower perspective adds a lot of interest. It's also more than a "specimen" shot with the bird looking over his shoulder. The photo is in very sharp focus and having the plain sky as a background is very helpful. If I could make one small suggestion—I would move the bird over to the right a little and add a little canvas or space to the left. This would take the bird out of the center of the frame and make the composition a little stronger. And you might want to move your name to the lower right, so it is not overlapping the tail feathers. Overall, a very strong image. \*\*\*\*\*



**16-Training a show horse, France 2017.jpg**

*Rick Thau*

This is a good capture of the rearing horse and trainer. I think it is better suited for a pictorial competition as it does not seem to be a nature shot with the hand of man as an element. Watch the focus with these difficult images, there are areas of the horse that are sharper than the head and face, probably because they were so far from center.

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**17-Western Gulls Ponder Crumbs.jpg**

*Christina Parsons*

This is a nice photograph of the two gulls about to go after the bread crumbs. It makes me wonder what happened next and if you were able to take a series of images in the next few minutes. I like the cropping and arrangement of the birds, they create a nice diagonal line, which keeps the scene from being static. The darker, out of focus, background also enhances the scene. This looks like it was taken early or late, as the light is from the side, creating long shadows. I can tell that you were shooting from a low angle, which makes them more visually interesting.

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**Winning Images:**

**Honorable Mentions:**

**Brown Moth on Lawn Chair**

*Jared Ikeda*



**Boardwalk into Yellowstone**  
*Ken Jones*



**Acorn Woodpecker Stops for a Drink**  
*Christina Parsons*



Third Place:

**Over the Neighbor's Fence**  
*Carol Fuessenich*



2nd Place:

**Fox Squirrel Lunch Break**  
*Frank Penner*



First Place:

**Towhee On a Fence**  
*Jerry Loomis*

