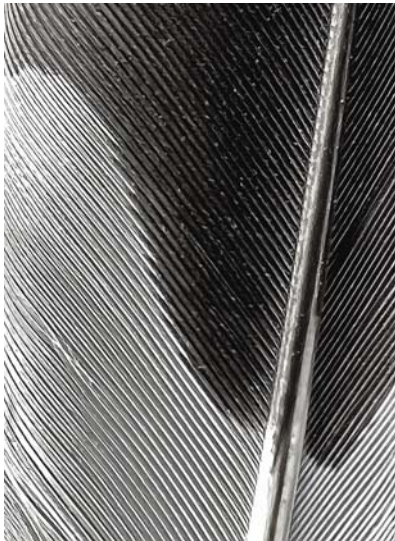




01-Bee on Garlic.jpg

Jerry Loomis

This detailed view of the bee rises to high level of artistry via the original approach, soft palette, and well-captured detail. A very creative approach to the subject, with lovely ethereal light and soft colors setting a mood. The profile of the bee shows a close up and tactile view of bee parts and design. We really “see” the subject and seem to “feel” each part of the body. And the light and fluffy garlic sprouts seem to float (even though they’re a bit overexposed, that works to create a more “heavenly” mood). Love the originality of this image. Well done. *****



02-Black and White Feather Detail.jpg

Ken Jones

An interesting subject and approach to highlight the detail of line and light. The lighting/tonal changes are a bit hard to read. As in, I’m not sure what the dark areas are (part of the feather, or a shadow of some sort?). For me, I don’t think the dark areas enhance the composition, which by itself is strong, especially with the center stem as a strong diagonal. I find the flecks in the left-hand dark area distracting rather than interesting. Wishing that the left-hand dark side were more like the right-hand dark side. Just graphic contrast.



03-Budding Iris.jpg

Carol Fuessenich

This iris becomes quite sensuous with its curves and rich color. Because of the hills and valleys, the viewer gets a real feeling of depth in this image ... always a goal with a two dimensional medium. I know in my heart that the flower has to have a stem, but I find the stem compositionally distracting. The background’s solid color works well to highlight the flower, but that shade of green is not a favorite color.



04-California Wild Iris (Iris douglasiana).jpg

Jared Ikeda

This idea has great potential. The blues and turquoises and cyans are a beautiful blend of color, and the approach to make this a graphic abstract image is solid. I particularly like the glistening luminescence of the leaves. I only wish for a little less of the heavy green/yellow stems. They seem to break the mood of the palette. And I would love to see where the strong center stem/leaf ends up. It seems too abruptly cut off.



05-Eschscholzia californica California Poppy.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

It took me awhile to embrace this image, but, ultimately, I did. I think I was wishing for a little more contrast, since it was hard to discern the long, seemingly fragile, but ultimately strong stem. But once you see it, you marvel at how it's doing its job. I was also hoping for a bit more saturation on the flower to make it pop more and to bring out the orange markings. But, at the end of the day, the subtlety of the image won my heart.



06-Euphorbia myrsinites Myrtle Spurge.jpg

Denice Loria Woyski

An excellent choice for a black and white conversion, which allows us to see tonal contrasts and the unique shapes and forms of this plant. As the subject has been done before, it's important to bring something unique to the image. A rich tonal range and good use of shallow depth of field help to make this a vision of the artist. I would give a little more space to the edges (top and sides). The bottom space is perfect.



07-Gilia.jpg

Elke Ikeda

The colors of this flower are exquisite. Good choice of subject. Because the background, although nicely blurred, is a bit distracting with strong vertical lines, I would suggest a tighter crop so that the flower and buds become the real focus. You might even consider cropping out the buds to really give center stage to the flowers, but I think they are quite interesting themselves, so I would probably leave them in, but crop up from the bottom to get rid of some of the stem. Both the flowers and the buds could use better focus.



08-Graceful Conch Swirls - Unidentified.jpg

Ken Jones

A great set-up of an interestingly graphic subject. The composition is very strong, with much inherent movement in the image. The uneven lighting adds some interest and depth, without losing detail in the shadows or highlights. If only the center swirls were in focus.



09-Honey Bee at Work.jpg

Frank Penner

I love the idea of a bee at work. Seldom do we see one in motion like this. The background is dramatic, and the colors are rich. The bee shadow would be very cool if the whole body showed as a shadow in the flower. As is, it's more distracting than interesting. The fluttering bee wings are really beautiful. I only wish the bee body was in focus.



10-Honey Bee.jpg

Jerry Loomis

A very dramatic, memorable image ... mostly because of the vibrancy of color, but also because we see the bee at work in nicely focused detail. The composition is good, with perfect space around the flower edges and the background is appropriately out of focus so as to add nice spots of color but not be distracting. Well done.



11-Indian Paint Brush-(Castilleja affinis).jpg

Jared Ikeda

The choice of subject here makes for a strong image. The colors and movement of the leaves is like a plant on fire. I appreciate the changes in focus because of the shallow depth of field. While that doesn't always work in macro images, here it adds to the painterly quality. Nicely done.



12-Jumping Spider (Phidippus californicus).jpg

John Drum

Yep, another hairy creature we should be afraid of. This guy is caught in a great position, so we can see legs and eyes and wonder about why it has prickly skin and and just how many eyes does it have. The tilt of the spider and of the greenery perch keeps us moving through the photo. I love the setting of green and blues against the relatively neutral spider. Everything is working here. I for one love spending time with the image. Well done.



13-Lichen It a Lot - Uvas Canyon, CA.jpg

Sandie McCafferty

A+ for title (and I'm usually not a fan of photo titles). My question is ... what is it about the lichen that you lichened most? And do you think you captured that in the photo? I see many interesting things here, particularly in the volcanic shapes and moonscape textures. But I don't know where to focus my attention. There is a wonderful portion of this lichen mass that is particularly interesting. Consider doing in to show that.



14-Long May They Reign.jpg

Sandie McCafferty

What makes this a good science/nature picture is perhaps what makes it less strong compositionally. I like that the butterfly is nestled among flowers and leaves, light and shadow. This is real life. However, it makes for a more confusing photo, with just a few too many compositional distractions. With that said, you have perfectly captured the butterfly profile and exquisite wing design. (Would have liked all parts of the butterfly to be in focus, though, and perhaps a few less hot spots in the background.) ****



15-Macro of Moss.jpg

Nicole Asselborn

It's amazing the things macro can do ... bringing to our attention things so small that we would never consider how interesting they can be. Such is the case with moss. Who knew this is what it looks like? That, in itself, is a *raison d'être* for this photo. But, I am looking for something compositionally strong and I don't find it. It is a sea of moss that goes in and out of focus due to the DOF issues. My suggestion is to experiment with different sections of the image to find a tiny part that is the most interesting. (You probably already know where to start because there is one really interesting sculpture in there.) ***



16-Monarch Butterfly (Danaus Plexippus).jpg

John Drum

A perfect ad for Pacific Grove. A beautiful representation of our Monarch, positioned so that we can see the detail of the body and wings and savor the wonderful designer that nature is. That the butterfly is feasting on a vibrant similarly colored flower is icing on the cake. A mysterious background with hints of bokeh adds to the image and the texture. Whether you're shooting through a window or whether you layered some texture over the scene works very well. Bravo. *****



17-Not Happy!.jpg

Nicole Asselborn

This is one of those truly frightening looks at a monster face. You know where Spielberg and Lucas get their alien inspirations. Bravo for finding this guy. While it is scientifically interesting to place him/her in so much context, the main show gets lost. I suggest cropping in tightly to the face, with a few hints at environment (because the textures behind the face are quite interesting). Then we get the full effect of this character. (All the while wishing for sharper focus on the details of the face.) ***



18-Sea Shell Swirl.jpg

Carol Fuessenich

A nice idea for subject. Very graphic. Unfortunately, the background does not enhance the photo, as it is not as strong/interesting as the subject itself. I would suggest experimenting with tighter cropping to focus on the beauty of the swirl. The image is also dark (underexposed). A bit of lightening would enhance the colors of the shell.



19-Uropappus.jpg

Elke Ikeda

It is always interesting to gain a macro view of nature's design expertise. The crosses and spikes of this flower are quite beautiful. You have positioned the subject perfectly according to the guideline of thirds, and the background glows add important color and mystery. All I wish for is sharper focus on the subject.



20-Welwitschia Seed Pods.jpg

Janet Azevedo

There is lots going on in this image from the main seed pods to the shadows, to the background swirl and textures. It's a lot to take in, especially since the shadows are so prominent and first draw our attention. I would suggest experimenting with tighter cropping to simplify the image and give proper attention to the very interesting seed pods. Technically well done, with good lighting and focus.



21-Work of Art.jpg

Frank Penner

While spider webs are not news in the photo world, there is something about this photo that makes it unique and beautiful. First, it is the design of the web. I could stare at it for hours, thinking about how hard the spider had to work and how creative he/she was in designing it. Also, the background, with tonal changes and glowing spots adds to the mystery. The lower part of the web forms an arrow that keeps us moving in that wonderful diagonal direction. All lovely to look at.

Winning Images:

Honorable Mentions:

Honey Bee
Jerry Loomis



Jumping Spider (Phidippus californicus)
John Drum



Indian Paint Brush
(Castilleja affinis)
Jared Ikeda

Third Place

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*)
John Drum



2nd Place:



Work of Art
Frank Penner

First Place:

Bee on Garlic
Jerry Loomis

