



01-Buzzed on Salsa.jpg

Karen Schofield

Loved everything about this photo. Creative. Unique. Humorous. Well designed. Perfectly composed and balanced. It tells a story with aesthetic strength and originality. Every element is exactly right, from the tiled/patterned background with a hint of green to the position of the legs of the bee to the gentle curve of the bowl (with just a tiny edge at the bottom to hold us in the frame) to the intense red of the salsa to the tiny white spoon, whose diagonal continues the movement. Exceptional.



02-Carson River souths-1.JPG

David Eisen

A lovely scene, with all the elements of a good landscape. A great feeling of space and depth created by the foreground road, the midground stand of trees, the curving stream that allows the viewer to continue the journey into the scene, and several layers of background. The muted light is nice, so that the softer color palette (greens and earth tones) can speak. I'm not sure what is causing the resolution problem, whether it was file size, compression, or transfer of the image, but we are not getting good resolution, which is too bad.



03-Defying gravity.jpg

Carole Gan

Any time I see a still life with a fork, I think of Kertesz (one of my favorite photographers). This image, however, takes fork still life to a magical new level. A wonderfully original idea that leaves us with many questions. But a magician never reveals the secrets, so we will just have to admire in wonder.

I appreciate the composition and the choice of B&W (perhaps an homage to Kertesz?). A composition full of diagonals always add strength to an image. An

exploration of different depth of field settings might have provided some additional choices. Personally, I would like to see a bit more in focus, but I applaud the originality of the very shallow depth of field. One other suggestion might be to keep the tonal value of the background consistent (preferably darker) so that it doesn't distract from the forks. *****



04-Downward spiral.jpg

Karen Schofield

This image has immediate impact as an interesting and original graphic. For me, every line and shape in this photo is in the right place. The composition challenges viewers to discern space and depth in their own way. What is flat? What is deep? How should the eye travel (clockwise, counterclockwise, up or down)? However the viewer decides to descend (or ascend), it is a spiral, which very much gives us a sensory feeling of being "in" the photo. The feet (and the red flipflop color) are a perfect addition to the story ... to be interpreted by viewers in their own way.

By the way, this is a great set. I see potential for a series, with interesting things appearing on the edge and in the staircase.



05-Eldred Rock Lighthouse, Alaska.jpg

Brooks. Leffler

This photo gives the impression that the photographer has stumbled on a private, isolated, rugged part of our planet, where life in the lighthouse is a solitary, but grand, adventure. The scale of the mountains against the small manmade structures tells the age-old story of the power of nature and the smallness of humankind. The grayness of the day and the seeming iciness of the water (as well as the snow on the mountains) makes viewers feel with more senses than just sight. It's cold out there and we feel it.

I'm not sure what is causing the pattern in the water, but I like it. It's more interesting than a calm reflection.

For me, I'd like to see a bit more contrast in the mountains (especially darker shadow areas) and a tad of brightening on the lighthouse. (A polarizing filter perhaps or some localized post production work.) The scene doesn't "pop" as much as I'd like, but that may have been an artistic choice by the photographer ... to keep things a bit dark and hazy ... like the day.



06-Harmonica Player Near Monterey Wharf.jpg

Dick Light

A revealing portrait of an interesting character. So many details in this image give us clues to his personality, from the worn hat to the silver rings to the scraggly beard and the unmatching flowing brown hair to the dark glasses to the sun-spotted weathered hands to the dirty fingernails to the telltale sweatshirt emblems. We begin to know this man. We do not need to see more of his face, nor do we need to see the harmonica to know he's deep into his music.

The only (slight) criticism is the harsh lighting (but the photographer did the best possible under the circumstances) and the somewhat distracting background (perhaps tightening the crop would help). ****



07-Hot Creek Geological Site.jpg

Carole Gan

A landscape with several otherworldly elements that make it interestingly unique. The standard elements of a good landscape are all present: a curving stream/river that brings viewers right into the scene and sends them meandering back into the landscape along the curving water. A lovely palette of earth tones and varying shades of nature's greens, with the added subtle beauty of the purplish flowers covering the hillside. Then we get the steam and the beautiful reflection of the warm light on the distant mountains. This is a difficult exposure situation, and the photographer has handled it well.

(The resolution/sharpness is a bit lacking. I'm not sure why. Is it the file size or the focus during capture or slight camera movement? I wish it were sharper.) *****



08-Mauve Stingers Pas de Deux.jpg

Charle Gibson

The "jellies" are not an unusual subject, so it is important to find one's own approach. In this case, the stark black background and the vibrant color of this particular species work well. I also appreciate the separation of the two subjects and the graphic design of the tentacles. The exposure is spot on. With all that said, I find I'm personally left a little "unconnected," even though it's beautiful. Maybe because I've seen so many jelly photos, living so close to the aquarium.



09-Mushrooms In The Wild (Galerina marginata).jpg

Charlie Gibson

Excellent technical quality here, with rich tones, sharp focus, interesting lighting and spot-on exposure. Viewers can feel the textures and perhaps smell the earth, as if they find themselves lying in the woods in a world of discovery. Detail by detail, the microcosm comes alive ... the clover, the grass, the mushrooms, the wood. A very sensuous photo. ****



10-Ocean Rainbow-1.jpg

David Eisen

Wow. This image is the true meaning of “timing is everything.” A magical/mystical moment captured in a way that makes one feel as if entering another time/era of the planet. I love that there is no evidence of humans and that the detail of the sea is textured and sharp and the rainbow and sky morph into fantasy. It is also rare that one can see all the colors of the rainbow so clearly (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet ... well, maybe the indigo and violet are a little intermingled). Stunning and unique.

(There might be a bit too much water in the composition, as the frame is divided exactly in half, which contradicts traditional composition guidelines. But because the water is interesting and the weight of that much water makes us feel like we’re in the middle of the ocean, I don’t mind as much. Also Hiroshi Sugimoto made putting a horizon line at half frame artistically acceptable.) *****



11-Reflections of Refinery in Stockholm Harbor. JPG

JPG

Don Eastman

Strength in reflection. For me, the subject is not that aesthetically interesting, although this works as a documentary photograph. The calm clean water is an excellent reflective surface, which is what gives this photo some interest. Technically, the image is a bit underexposed (as it has lost detail in the shadows) and the highlights could be brighter. There is also a blue color cast that should perhaps be removed. (Also some spots in the sky (lefthand side) denote some debris on the sensor. Time to clean.) ***



12-Sea Lion Sleepover.jpg

Christina Parsons

What an opportunity ... for sea lion personalities and a little humor in our lives. A special moment “seen” by the photographer and now shared. We know sea lions like to hang out together (especially when there are great whites in the ocean). This really looks like a slumber party, full of flippers, whiskers, topsy turvy noses, and heavily breathing bodies. Really fun to look at. Love it (especially the center sea lion, upside down, with beautifully lit whiskers). Well done. *****



13-Small Section of Stain Glass Window on Last Chance Gulch.jpg

Don Eastman

It’s always tricky to photograph someone else’s art. You must ask yourself, “What do I bring to the table? How do I make this my own artistic statement?” In this case, I imagine you took a portion of the window and turned it into a strong abstract. A good start. The colors are dramatic and the lines interesting. It appears that the light coming through is uneven, causing some overexposure in spots and underexposure in spots. A difficult lighting condition that distracts from the overall power of the image.



14-Wrinkles.jpg

Brooks. Leffler

What an interesting subject choice. Quite unique. Not easy to look at, as we all probably fear the aging process, but a very strong visual message, with excellent lighting and sharp detail that provides a close up look at wrinkles. (I am a little bothered by the highlight on the ring. It draws attention where perhaps you don’t want the viewer to linger. A slight adjustment in subject angle would have eliminated that (or a post production cloning process).



15-Yosemite Valley in the Spring.jpg

Dick Light

Ah, the iconic view. So many photographers have paused here. So ... how do you make this image unique? Perhaps more dramatic lighting, more contrast (polarizing filter). The clouds are beginning to be interesting, but are not quite there yet. It is a well composed image, but many others have composed this in exactly the same way. The old adage: If you've seen it before, try something new.

Winning Images:

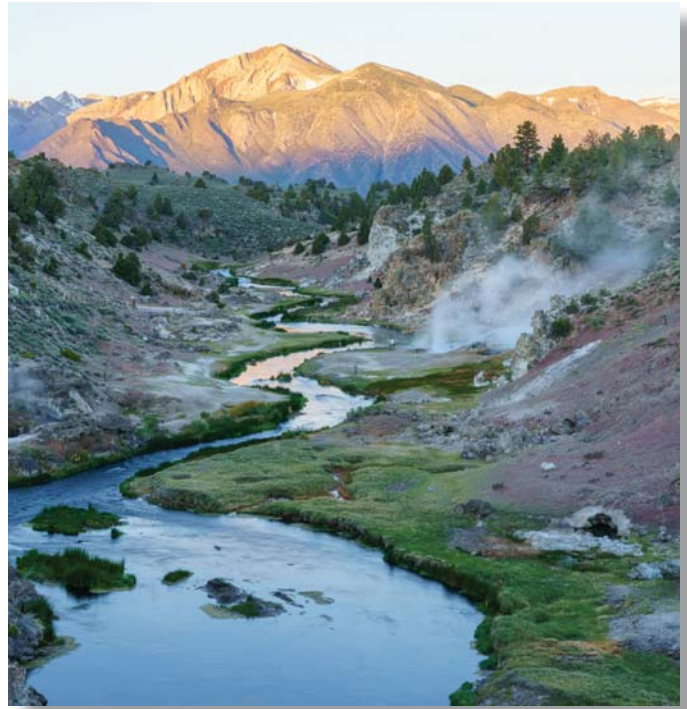
Honorable Mentions:

Wrinkles
Brooks Leffler



Mauve Stingers Pas de Deux
Charlie Gibson

Hot Creek Geological Site
Carole Gan



Defying Gravity
Carol Gan

Third Place: - tie

Downward Spiral
Karen Schofield



Ocean Rainbow
David Eisen



2nd Place:

Sea Lion Sleepover
Christina Parsons



First Place:

Buzzed on Salsa
Karen Schofield

