SEP 12, 2009

Comments on 2009 New Mexico State Fair Professional Photography Scenics Category Winners

By Glenn F. Hohnstreiter, Ph.D., M. Photog. Cr.

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General Comment

The judging of photographs is always subject to criticism. Some seem to think the attitude is too regimented, some think the process ignores the creative process involved with the making of a photograph and the inherent process or difficulty involved. Since photography means many things to many people with a myriad of styles and methodology, evaluating the merits of a photograph is indeed a complex issue.

Professional Photographers of America has been judging thousands of photographs every year for over a hundred years. They have evolved into a process that involves 12 elements by which they establish the criteria of a meaningful photograph. These are listed below (copied directly from the PPA website www.ppa.com)

Impact is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion. There can be impact in any of these twelve elements.

Creativity is the original, fresh, and external expression of the maker's imagination by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought.

Technical excellence is print quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing. Retouching, manipulation, sharpness, exposure, printing, mounting, and correct color are some items that speak to qualities of the physical print.

Composition is important to design of an image, bringing all visual elements together in concert to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on intent of the image maker.

Lighting—use and control of light—refers to how dimension, shape and roundness are defined in an image. Whether light applied to an image is manmade or natural, proper use of it should enhance an image.

Style is defined in a number of ways as it applies to a creative image. It might be defined by a specific genre or simply be recognizable as characteristics of how a specific artist applies light to a subject. It can impact an image in a positive manner when subject matter and style are appropriate for each other, or it can have a negative effect when they are at odds.

Mountain Trail Photo Blog
Recent Work Posted on Mountain Trail Photo
6 days ago

Canadian Rockies Vacations Guide - Banff National Park
Dining Out in Banff City!
1 week ago

Photoshop World Conference & Expo | Blog
Pre-Game Warm Up
1 week ago

Michael E. Gordon Photography
The Station Fire, Los Angeles
1 week ago

William Neill's Light on the Landscape Photoblog
Announcing my new Photoblog!
2 weeks ago

Richard Bernabe's Photography Journal
Late Spring in the Smokies
3 months ago

Tom Till Photography - Stock Photography - Blog

HDR - TIPS & TRICKS

Finessing HDR

Apples to Oranges

Intuitive Tone Mapping CS4-LR2

Issues in HDR Tone Mapping

HDR - Tips & Tricks - Autostacking

HDR - Tips & Tricks - Noise

Future of HDR - III

Future of HDR - II

Print Presentation affects an image by giving a finished look. The mats and borders used should support and enhance the image, not distract from it.

Center of Interest is the point or points on the image where the maker wants the viewer to stop as they view the image. There can be primary and secondary centers of interest. Occasionally there will be no specific center of interest, when the entire scene collectively serves as the center of interest.

Subject Matter should always be appropriate to the story being told in an image.

Color Balance supplies harmony to an image. An image in which tones work together, effectively supporting the image, can enhance its emotional appeal. Color balance is not always harmonious and can be used to evoke diverse feelings for effect.

Technique is the approach used to create the image. Printing, lighting, posing, capture, presentation media, and more are part of the technique applied to an image.

Story Telling refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image.

Obviously, a great deal of thought and effort has gone into this evaluation process. In my own journey to become a better photographer by creating better photographs, I studied many concepts by which my own photography could improve and also how I could better explain these concepts to other photographers. As a result of my personal work, I wrote an article in View Camera Magazine, November/December 2002. In this article I assumed that professional photographers were well aware of the very important but basic concepts of composition, clarity, center of interest, and presentation. I then described in detail the advanced concepts listed below:

Image Intent: One clear strong message. Too often, as

Future of HDR

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our photographic experience grows, we become so intent on technical aspects of our work that we forget the importance of communicating a message to the viewer. The image must be well enough defined if it is to communicate a clear strong message to the viewer. One of PPA's claims is "The Worlds Best Storyteller."

Left-Brain/Right-Brain Balance: The left brain controls analytical functions, while the right brain controls artistic functions. When balance is achieved in an image the left brain reacts to the inherent meaning while the right brain appreciates the artistic expression.

Emotional Appeal: A great photograph always generates and communicates an emotional response to the viewer. I like to concentrate on finding what attracted me to a scene in the first place, and then try to understand the emotion that I feel about it so that I can communicate that emotion to the viewer.

Originality: Originality and individual style are essential for creating prize-winning photographs. It is necessary to make a photograph "new" by your choice of location, your particular photographic technique, or your individual style.

Impact: Impact in a photograph is difficult to describe, but you know it when you see it. It is that riveting quality that demands attention and is impossible to ignore.

Perhaps these comments will aid in explaining the process by which images are evaluated at the professional level, and also, how I personally evaluate images that I see. Note that I do not believe in "rules," but rather common-sense rationales for outstanding photographic images.

"Wisdom of Trees" by Peter Davies
Judging Result: Best of Show, Professional Category, First Place, Professional Scenics

photography, Lightroom 2, and Photoshop. Galleries, Books, Workshops, and Digital Tours...

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Lightroom 2 Workflow

Paths of Light

Galleries

Awards

Anasazi Adventures

Enchanted Lens Camera Club

BISTI CHRONICLES

Intimate Landscape

Water Woman

Abstract Bisti

Bisti Dementia

Creative Bisti Imagination

Bisti Rainforest

Is Bisti Like Mars?

Bisti : Small Scale

Back Country Horsemen

Sense and Sensibility

Been to the Bisti Lately

The Agony and the Ecstasy

God's Hand

Bisti Badlands

Creative Bisti Imagination

Creative Bisti Imagination

What a wonderful image! Clearly this photograph has the advanced elements listed above and expresses them in a meaningful and beautiful manner. Note the compositional elements of power-point placement of the lit center of interest, the diagonal trees framing the center, and the overall single message conveyed. Under the bright judging lights this image simply is stunning with very strong impact and beauty. One simply cannot look anywhere but the lit area for long. There was no debate in the judging as to naming this image the Best of Show. Congratulations Peter on an exceptional contribution to the world of photographic art.

"Shiprock" by Joe Bridwell
Judging Result: Second Place, Professional Scenics

"Shiprock" is a most wonderful image. When I first saw this image I was stunned by the clarity, the originality, and the deep rich colors. This is clearly an example of originality in that Shiprock is photographed often, but this image, for the first time that I have seen it, combines all these factors. The photographic location, the time of season and day, and the presentation all combine to produce this exceptional photograph. The

use of HDR in a photograph, like all techniques, should be an adjunct to the photograph and not be dominant or even noticeable. This image clearly uses HDR, but its use emphasizes without domination of the image. Congratulations on your hard work, Joe and your dedication to producing such an exceptional image.

"Sand Dune" by Bob Barton

Judging Result: Third Place, Professional Scenics

Again, "Sand Dune" is another stunning and wonderful image. As a lover of both sand dunes and black and white photography, I was very impressed with this image. This image is striking in the detail, the impact, the beauty, and the overall impact of the dune shimmering in the morning sun. John Sexton stresses "luminosity" in his workshops, and this image is a perfect example of luminosity. Digital photography has come a long way in its ability to render such an image with the clarity, depth, and impact that this image portrays. Congratulations Bob, on seeing the dune, on driving to the location without getting stuck in the sand (as I have done more than once at other sand dunes), and for producing such an exceptional image.

"Morning Glory" by Leslie Davis

Judging Result: Honorable Mention, Professional Scenics

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"Morning Glory" is another exceptional image. Leslie is to be congratulated on this example of the importance of dawn photography. This was most emphatically demonstrated by this image. I doubt if this image could have been taken a half-hour later. The Grand Tetons are always difficult to photograph well because they are so often photographed that the element of originality is usually missing. Leslie has produced an image that is very definitely original in the use of dawn lighting, impact of scene, breathtaking beauty, and composition. The minimal use of Photoshop results in a sense of "being there." The added bonus of lake reflections simply "nails" this image as a truly outstanding image. Congratulations, Leslie on providing this image for the photographic community.

"Orange Creekside" by Jim Gale
Judging Result: Honorable Mention, Professional Scenics

Here is another exceptional image. What makes this image outstanding is the clear intent as defined by the title. Note the left-brain/right-brain balance of the image: vivid orange rocks are most definitely a rarity in nature; they are seen here in a manner that is pleasing

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ALL THINGS GOOGLE...

to both the left brain in trying to understand the rocks unusual color and to the right brain in relating strongly to the beauty of the scene, the background, the creek and the portrayal. Composition is excellent, and the impact of the image is clear. Taking images on a backpacking trip is always a problem, but this was done very well indeed. Congratulations, Jim on this outstanding image.

Editor's Comments

The depth of Glenn Hohnstreiter's comments is clearly strengthened by PPA's 13 Guidelines. Having both watched Glenn Judge at State Fair and listened to Glenn's ELCC talk, I know his dedication and insight are deep and abiding. I think mention of PPA rules and elaboration on each image quality places our 2009 Scenic Class Winners, Professional Category, in distinct perspective...

Thanks, Glenn, Peter, Bob, Leslie, and Jim ... I consider it an honor to stand among you and sincerely applaud both your individual images and our combined efforts!

Enjoy...

POST - BISTIART AT 1:34 PM   0 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP
LABELS: 2009 NEW MEXICO SATE FAIR, COMMENTS GLENN HOHNSTREITER, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, SCENIC CLASS WINNERS

SEP 9, 2009

Reflection on "Wisdom of Trees" – by Peter Davies

Googland
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3 days ago

BRAIN FOOD...

Creative Digital Darkroom - Eismann and Duggan

Real World Adobe Camera Raw CS4 - Fraser & Schewe

Adobe Lightroom 2 Book - Kelby

Nature Photographers Online

Adobe Lightroom 2 Videos

Mountain Light - Rowell

Creative Digital Darkroom - Eismann and Duggan

MONTHLY ARCHIVES

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  ▼ September (6)

Wisdom of Trees
© Peter Davies
1st Place
Scenic Class Award
Professional Category
2009 New Mexico State Fair

In the final chapter of his book *Mountain Light*, Galen Rowell describes 3 elements that must merge to make a truly fine photograph of the natural world: technical proficiency, personal vision, and light. Creating the photograph *Wisdom of Trees* was truly a convergence of these elements for me.

I shot this image on October 6, 2008 at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve, just north of Half Moon Bay on the California coast. I had just finished taking a four-day Fine Art Digital Printing workshop with Steven Johnson at his studio in Pacifica. Those four days brought not only intense focus on refining my technical proficiency, but also total immersion in further exploration of my personal photographic vision. At the end of each workshop day, I drove out to the coast to explore with my camera.

While I have been to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve before, I had not realized that in addition to a small

CLOUD NINE

beautiful cove populated with harbor seals, pelicans and other sea life, there is a high terrace behind and above the cove. And, on this terrace is a large, almost surreal grove of cypress trees. Once I saw these trees, I found myself drawn back each evening to explore and experience them further. I took many, many photographs in the late afternoon light, trying to capture some sense of this place.

After the workshop was over, I had several hours the next morning before catching my flight back to New Mexico. I headed straight for the cypress grove, hoping to experience the morning light. Again, I wandered, explored and took more photographs. Finally, I sat down at the base of one of these trees and quietly began to reflect on my recent total immersion in my passion for photography, a mix of building technical proficiency and refining my personal photographic vision. Reflection turned into subconscious contemplation. Some time later, I opened my eyes to a different world.

A fine sea mist had come into the cypress grove off the ocean. The morning sun created a multitude of sun beams playing through the trees. Light had arrived. I quickly grabbed my camera to capture the experience. Having just come off of four days immersed in technique, my photographic instincts were sharp. I knew the dynamic range of the bright sunbeams and dark shadows of bark on the cypress trees was well beyond the dynamic range capacity of my camera's sensor. Shooting from a tripod, I captured multiple sets of multiple exposures of different scenes as light played through the trees. I took 46 images in 16 minutes, and then the light was gone.

Technical proficiency, personal vision and light... they all came together in experiencing and capturing the *Wisdom of Trees*.

Adobe Photoshop (4)

Adobe Photoshop CS4 (5)

Adobe TV (1)

advanced masking (1)

Alcove House (1)

Anasazi (1)

Anasazi Adventures (3)

Anasazi Drummer (1)

Ansel Adams Gallery (1)

arches (2)

around the world in 80 days (1)

attention to detail (1)

Back Country Horsemen (1)

Balloon Fiesta (1)

Bandelier (1)

Basic (1)

best of bisti (4)

Bisti (14)

Bisti Adventure Tours (3)

Bisti Badlands (14)

Bisti Beast (1)

Bisti Chronicles (2)

Bisti Rainforest (1)

blog creation (1)

blog management (1)

blog rolls (1)

Blogger (2)

blogosphere (1)

blogrolls (2)

blogs (1)

Blurb BookSmart (1)

blurb.com (1)

Bob Barton (1)

books (2)

Bosque (3)

Technical Details

Wisdom of Trees was shot with a Canon D-5, using a Canon 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 DO lens set at 120mm. Three exposures were taken with the aperture set at f/16 and exposures times of 0.60, 0.25 and 1.60 seconds.

Conversion of the RAW files was accomplished using Lightroom 2. High Dynamic Range (HDR) processing to combine all three exposures into a 32 bit image was completed using Photomatix Pro. My primary objective in HRD processing was to capture as much tonal detail as possible in the shadows and dark tree bark without blowing out the soft highlights of the sun beams. Final image adjustments and sharpening were done in Photoshop CS3.

The final image was printed on a HP Z3200 on HP Professional Satin Paper using 200-year pigment ink. The final photograph was archival mounted, using an acid-free museum mount.

Closing Comments

I would like to thank the judges for their time, energy and expertise... and for the learning that comes through their discussions during scoring challenges. I would also like to thank Joe Bridwell for creating this opportunity to reflect and share.

Peter Davies
Fine Art Photographer
www.peterdaviesphoto.com

Editor's Comments

Peter Davies is the 1st Place award-winner of Scenic Class, Professional Category, 2009 New Mexico State Fair. His enthusiasm about learning, photography, and expression is clearly shown in this piece...

Glenn Hohnstreiter has agreed to provide an overview of our effort to express sentiments from Scenic Winners. Publication date is presentlyTDB; but it should be soon…

Thanks, Peter… Well DONE!

Enjoy…

POST - BISTIART AT 9:51 AM 0 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP
LABELS: 2009 NEW MEXICO SATE FAIR, PETER DAVIES, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, SCENIC CLASS WINNERS, WISDOM OF TREES

SEP 7, 2009

Shiprock – by Joe Bridwell

Shiprock
© Joe Bridwell
2nd Place
Scenic Class Award
Professional Category
2009 New Mexico State Fair

Light's Subtle Luminance
From my vantage point along the ancient dike, the sun dropped below the western horizon, casting long

compositing (2)
Corona Arch (1)
Cottonwood Canyon (1)
Cottonwood Narrows (1)
creative art (1)
Crinoids (1)
CS3 (1)
CS4 (6)
CS4 for Photographers (1)
CS4 hdr (2)
CS4 Videos (2)
Deke McClelland (1)
Detail (Landscape Sharpen (1)
Develop (1)
Develop Module (1)
digital photography (4)
digital photos (1)
DNG (1)
Dream Team (1)
Edit in… (1)
enhanced workflow (1)
Escalante (2)
eSeminars (1)
Exporting (1)
eye (1)
Fallen Man (1)
fantasy (1)
Farmington (2)
fine art (3)
Fine Arts Photography Exhibition (1)
Fired Up Too (1)
Firefox 3 (1)
Firmware (1)
flags (1)
forum (1)

shadows down Shiprock's backside. Yet, direct sunlight was reflecting from Shiprock. A slight cod front was trending southeastward from Utah, up north past Four Corners. Highest cirrus clouds, seeming to consolidate the eye, jaded from Shiprock's beauty, trailed to the edge of the world.

The basalt dike, Mother Nature's bold brickwork wall, trending in a spiral from the upper right edge toward distant Shiprock, acted as an arresting lower frame for our eye. Magic Hour's shifting sunset pastels, some direct, some reflected, add a softer, evocative tone.

Shiprock, that ancient almost Gothic spire, lit by golden hues of the setting sun, assists with the same silent wonder. It bears prolonged witness to ancient man's long time wanderings back and forth across this dry, semi-arid desert. The distant Roman nose shape of Sleeping Ute Mountain is another famous, dominant Four Corners landmark.

Fall shots of Shiprock can capture many interesting, yet subtle pastel colors. The combination of light sky, golden haze, and sundown's reflection from Shiprock create part of a captivating natural scene. But it's the foreground dike's grand swirl which immediately frames, then focuses our eye to liberate Shiprock itself. Shiprock is a unique New Mexico landmark with international recognition. It's actually the 27 million year old eroded core of an extinct volcanic neck. Volcanic dikes, read 'bold brickwork wall', radiate away from Shiprock.

In Memoriam…

I want to honor two people whose influence finally brought me to Shiprock…

My mother graced my boyhood home and present abode with wonderful charcoals, pastels, and oils of churches, landscapes, and seascapes. As an award winning artist, she provided a sense of beauty, permanence, and artistic endeavor which I would only come to rather late, after a life in science… her paintings adorn my

forums (1)
free videos (1)
future of hdr (1)
gadgets (1)
Galen Rowell (2)
Garmin (1)
gear (1)
glowdeo (2)
google (2)
Google Earth (1)
GPS (1)
GPU (1)
gradient (1)
gradient overlay (1)
graduated filter tool (1)
Grand Staircase (1)
Grand staircase Escalante (1)
grandkids (1)
graphics card (1)
hdr (17)
HDR - Tips and Tricks (1)
high dynamic range (1)
highdynamic range (1)
Hogarty (1)
Hole In The Rock Road (1)
Honorable Mention (2)
hoodoo (1)
hoodoos (4)
hope (1)
horses (2)
HSL (1)
HTML (1)
Hue (1)
IE 7 (1)
images (1)
iPhone (1)

walls, providing me deeply emotional windows into our past.

If I could talk with her now, I would say, "Each, in our own way, has put brush to canvas to create beauty…" and share my feeling 'Shiprock was a winner when I shot it', then eagerly listen to her evocative response! Thanks, Anno! *Mary Anno Brown Bridwell, 1905-1979.*

A remarkable author led me through intriguing mystery, Navajo tradition, and the byways of ancient Anasazi land – the Four Corners Region of the southwestern US. As an award winning author, Tony Hillerman wrote so many deeply satisfying novels in the famous Leaphorn-Chee series. "I love the place," Tony Hillerman wrote of vast tribal lands that span the northeast corner of Arizona and straddle the borders of New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado. "I need only drive west from Shiprock into that great emptiness to feel my spirit lift."

I have often followed his spiritual dictum, cassette tape instilling his intricately involved mysteries in my reeling brain, as I trample byways and seek out-of-the-way wilderness beauty of this fascinating land.

Thanks, Tony! *Anthony Hillerman, 1925-2008.*

As to the living, I would thank Jack Houser and Eric Jones. One day Eric said, "Joe, your pictures are flat…!" Jack taught me Photoshop. To which I now respond, Thanks, Guys, your inspirations have really helped!

Digital Darkroom

Our high dynamic range HDR image is a composite of three images shot at +/- 2 EV using a Nikon D300 in raw mode at 14 bits. Photomatix Pro compiled an initial tone compressed HDR version - but at default settings. Adobe Lightroom 2 and Photoshop CS4 were used for initial global and final local tone mapping.

Photomatix

We shoot many HDR nature images at dusk. Such high

Jerry Goffe (1)

Jim Gale (1)

Joe Bridwell (1)

Julianne Kost (1)

juried competition (1)

Keeper of the Gate (1)

Kelby (2)

Kenny Weng (2)

keyboard shortcuts (1)

kids (1)

Kloskowski (1)

Kost (1)

Laforet (2)

landscapes (2)

Leaphorn (1)

learning (1)

Leslie Davis (1)

Library (1)

Library module (1)

Lightroom (2)

Lightroom 2 (29)

Lightroom 2.3 (2)

Lightroom Forums (2)

Lightroom workflow (1)

local adaptation (1)

local adjustment took (1)

LR2 (3)

magazine cover (1)

Magic Hour (3)

main catalog (1)

Majestic Blessing (1)

manage image portfolio (1)

manual (1)

Mapsource (2)

Marge to Panorama (1)

Mariner 9 (1)

contrast captures maybe noisy, usually have a distinct bimodal histogram, and require delicate tone mapping. While Photomatix can assemble a 32-bit HDR image, its default choice of detail enhancer seems to mutilate a bimodal histogram - a rather nasty pitfall. Through experimentation, we found it's second choice, tone compressor, if carefully used with default settings, provides us the best histogram while creating a good 32-bit HDR image. We save that image as 32-bit hdr, then convert it to 16-bit tiff.

Lightroom

We use Lightroom for initial HDR global tone mapping, following the Adobe Camera Raw workflow set out by Fraser and Schewe (2008). With Adobe's latest Camera Profiles, we drop down to the Camera Calibration panel and choose a preset which most closely resembles our visual memory of the scene.

We then begin in the Basic panel adjusting Clipping, Clarity, and Vibrance. We move to Curves panel, usually setting Medium Contrast. We then examine individual elements of sky and foreground with Gradient Filter using Targeted Adjustment Tool (TAT).

If required, we use this versatile TAT tool to also process Hue, Saturation, and Luminance.

Lightroom provides us with an initial pass which usually makes global corrections so we can begin our more precise tone mapping in Photoshop.

Photoshop CS4

CS4 is unparalleled for its remarkable power of adjustment layers and selective masking in creating a final version for our digital workflow. Through precise tone mapping, we're able to bring our images alive with a vibrant, almost Velvia-like ambience.

For Shiprock, we darkened the sweeping dike frame, removing distracting bushes in the lower right-hand corner. We also cloned the sky/dike interface to provide a smooth frame swirl – Mother Nature was more

marketing (2)
mars (2)
mars rovers (2)
Mask) (1)
masking (2)
Masks Panel (3)
memory leak (1)
Merge to HDR (2)
Merge to Panorama (3)
Michael Frye (1)
Michael Phelps (1)
Miralle (1)
monsoon (1)
moonrise (1)
Morning Glory (1)
Mountain Light (1)
multiple catalogs (2)
NAPP (2)
nature (3)
nature photographers online (1)
New Mexico (1)
New Mexico Magazine (1)
New Mexico State Fair (2)
new plugin (1)
Newsome (1)
Newsweek (1)
Nikon (1)
Nikon D300 (2)
Nikon D700 (1)
Nikonians (1)
NM (4)
Noise (1)
noise reduction (2)
NWR (1)
off world shapes (1)

random... We carefully removed noise from the lemon/peach sky between dike and Sleeping Ute to emphasize Shiprock itself. We masked the far sky, and used TAT tool to slightly enhance the peach effect. Finally, we selectively sharpened portions of the dike, then Shiprock itself, using Pixel Genius' Creative Sharpener.

Closure

I want to thank our judges; Glen Hohnstreiter, Marlene Loria, Jessica Lazoya, Peter Barrett, and Dana Foy. For one brief moment, Shiprock, scored at 88, was the highest score that evening. But, as in all endeavors, you can't count your chickens till the fat lady sings...

I congratulate Peter Davies on Wisdom of Trees, Shiprock's superior, and 2009 Best of Show, Scenic Class, Professional Photography Category - New Mexico State Fair!

Enjoy...

POST - BISTIART AT 8:20 AM   0 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP
LABELS: 2009 NEW MEXICO SATE FAIR, JOE BRIDWELL, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, SCENIC CLASS WINNERS, SHIPROCK

SEP 5, 2009

Sand Dune – by Bob Barton

Ojito (1)
Olympics (1)
On Demand (1)
on location (1)
OpenGL (1)
Orange Creekside (1)
out of the box (1)
Output (1)
pan and zoom (1)
Panorama (1)
panoramas (1)
pastel poster mats (1)
Paths of Light (2)
PDF (1)
Pecos (1)
Pecos River (2)
pen tablet (1)
Peoples Choice (1)
Peter Davies (1)
Pharaohs Saddle (1)
photography's future (1)
Photomatix (4)
photomatix hdr (2)
Photomatix Pro (1)
Photoshop (3)
Photoshop CS4 (1)
Photoshop CS3 (3)
Photoshop CS4 (6)
Photoshop Insider (1)
Photoshop workflow (1)
PhotoshopUserTV (1)
Picks (1)
pixel grid (1)
Placitas (1)
Planeteers (1)
podcast (1)

Sand Dune
© Bob Barton

3rd Place

Scenic Class Award

Professional Category

2009 New Mexico State Fair

It was a lovely early August morning; we were eastbound on U. S. Highway 50 in central Nevada. We were discussing how straight the highway was, mile after mile, not even a wiggle. We had not met another car for about an hour. Why had they built a good paved road that no-one wanted to travel? Booooring!

Then in the distance, the sun reflected from something, something that appeared to be white with shadows. As we got closer the "white thing" presented itself as a sand dune. Excitement took hold of me. "How can I get closer?" "Where is a gate?" "I have to get there before the shadows go away." I was seeing a black and white image with the dune glowing in the morning light when the gate finally appeared in the distance. I turned into the park area and drove, entirely too fast, to a parking area, grabbed the camera gear and took off for the far end of the dune.

I was able to click off five or six frames before the sun got too high for good shadows. I was certain there would be at least one frame that would yield a good print. With images in the camera, I could finally relax and felt I had been productive for the day.

When we got home, I processed the "Raw" file in Photoshop CS3 and produced a good color image which was converted to black and white. I found the contrast slider to be very important in making the dune seem to "glow" in the final print.

pond (1)
pouring hot metal (1)
Powell (1)
presets (2)
Professional Category (6)
Rabbit Ears (1)
reality (1)
recreation (1)
recreational ride (1)
red dog hill (2)
Red Rock Country (1)
rotate (1)
routes (1)
San Juan basin (1)
Sand Dune (1)
Saturation (1)
Scenic Class Winners (6)
Scott Kelby (1)
seamless (1)
Shidoni Foundry (1)
Ship Rock (2)
Shiprock (1)
silhouette (1)
slideshow (1)
slot canyons (1)
soft light (1)
Star Trek. digital photography (1)
steroids (1)
sunset (2)
surreal (1)
surreal Hoodoos (1)
Targeted Adjustment tool (3)
TAT (2)
technology (1)
Thom Hogan (1)

The final print has drawn considerable attention in two shows.

The dune is known as "Sand Mountain" and is located east of Fallon Naval Air Station, NV, on Highway 50.

Editor's Comments

In the next few blogs, 3 remaining award-winners of Scenic Class, Professional Category, 2009 New Mexico State Fair present their feelings about taking the image and technical aspects of digital processing…

Our second image is *Sand Dune* by Bob Barton. I like Bob's excitement– "I was seeing a black and white image with the dune glowing in the morning light…" Thanks, Bob… Well DONE!

Enjoy…

POST - BISTIART AT 8:29 AM   0 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP
LABELS: 2009 NEW MEXICO SATE FAIR, BOB BARTON, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, SAND DUNE, SCENIC CLASS WINNERS

SEP 3, 2009

Orange Creekside – by Jim Gale

Orange Creekside
© Jim Gale
Honorable Mention
Scenic Class Award
Professional Category
2009 New Mexico State Fair

The image of "Orange Creekside" was taken in the Nelson Lakes region of New Zealand on a 5 day backpack trip across the high peaks and lakes. These orange lichen covered rocks were found off-trail while exploring the area near camp. The initial photos I took that evening were fine, but when I returned in the morning, the fog created an atmosphere of remoteness I was feeling, while increasing the saturation of all the colors. I photographed about 20 different compositions in the 30 minutes before the fog cleared. In the end there were 3 to 4 compositions that I felt might fit the judging style of the State Fair (the 100 point system that favors the old photography dogmas and conformity over creativity; see my comment at the end). The image I finally selected had a pleasing flow with the placement of rocks, flowers, forest and creek along with great light in the fog and enough space around all these elements to really give the scene a sense of being an unusual, hidden place.

The photo was taken on a Nikon D90 and Nikkor 12-24 lens. To quickly explore many compositions in a limited time and rapidly respond to continually changing light, I left my tripod on my pack and worked hand-held. As is my style, I used Photoshop very sparingly to attempt to replicate the true colors and lighting I saw that day.

For me Photography and Nature are deeply intertwined. In the great outdoors I find peace, renewal and spirituality. While the photographer in me drives me to continually discover and explore new beautiful places at their best times of year and motivates me to be up

before sunrise and shoot till well after dark. Essentially, photography enriches and expands my outdoor experience. The more remote the wilderness and off-trail I explore the better. You will rarely see me in those iconic places overrun by photographers. Really, what's the point of shooting another photo of a subject already photographed a million times before. I figure that the vast majority of photos are taken within a mile of their car. By going deeper into the wilderness and exploring off-trail, I find places seldom seen or photographed, like the image presented here.

Since I mentioned the State Fair judging, I would like air a gripe I have had with judging there for some time. Although I was not there this time for the judging, in the past I have seen judges regularly critique the professional images like they were amateurs needing their wise guidance. I believe a good judge of professional work should start with the assumption that every single element of the photograph was placed there on purpose and is specifically part of that photographer's vision. It is not for the judges to try to remake the photo in their style, tell us how they would do it, or try to make it conform to some "rules" about composition; but to truly accept that this image is EXACTLY how this photographer wanted the image to appear in EVERY detail and judge it from that perspective.

Editor's Comments

In the next few blogs, 3 remaining award-winners of Scenic Class, Professional Category, 2009 New Mexico State Fair present their feelings about taking the image and technical aspects of digital processing…

Our second image is Orange Creekside by Jim Gale. I like Jim's sentiment – find the spot, then wait for the light…
Thanks, Jim… Well DONE!

Enjoy…

SEP 1, 2009

Morning Glory – by Leslie Davis

Morning Glory
© Leslie Davis
Honorable Mention
Scenic Class Award
Professional Category
2009 New Mexico State Fair

For those of us who photograph, we've all found that eating can wait. Getting warm can wait. Sleep will sometimes be in short supply. But when the alarm rings at 4:00 in the morning, we get out of our warm beds, we munch on a granola bar and if we're lucky, we have a cup of coffee on the 45 minute drive to where we want to be when the sun comes up. But, do we really know what we are getting up for? It's dark. Is that sun going to come up? Or will it rain? Will I have the perfect clouds? Too many clouds? Horizon clouds? (ugh!) And

let's not forget the wind.

Having the opportunity to shoot a location wedding in Jackson Hole last year, I made a week out of it, getting up early each morning and shooting each evening. What a feast of lush green for my starved New Mexico senses! You know, just being in gorgeous surroundings should be enough, but no, we have to make it harder by lugging around equipment, searching for the perfect shot, fretting over whether we will get the right conditions and hoping we don't have some brain contusion wherein we blow the shot. Why do we do this to ourselves when we could just sit back and joyfully soak it all in……? (or just stay in bed!) I don't know. I just don't know… Except to say, personally, I just have to be out there with a camera. Just have to… It's in my bones – I was born with the disease.

So on one of those mornings only a matter of feet from the Schwabacker's Landing parking lot, Morning Glory materialized and suddenly, every other minute spent in the　　not-so-good-could-have-stayed-home-conditions, was forgotten. Every instance of alarm cursing was dismissed. Oooh la! I'm here for this moment in time! AND I get to take it home with me!

You've been there… You know…

Technical Data
I don't like spending time in front of a computer screen, so my goal is always to get it "right" in the camera to minimize that computer time. Morning Glory is one file, shot in raw and post-processed in CS3. A curves layer to adjust densities, using masking, and painting only those areas I wanted to lighten and darken. Add a little saturation to bring it to what I remember seeing, a slight skewing to straighten the trees on the outer edges, and lastly, the always necessary sharpening. Done.

Camera Data: Gitzo Basalt Tripod, Canon 40D, 1/20 @ f8, ISO 200, Canon 17-35 lens.

In the next few blogs, 5 award-winners of Scenic Class, Professional Category, 2009 New Mexico State Fair present their feelings about taking the image and technical aspects of digital processing...

Our first image is *Morning Glory* by Leslie Davis. In her email, Leslie wanted to know "Does this work for you...?"
Most Decidedly...
Thanks, Leslie... Well DONE!

Enjoy...

POST - BISTIART AT 9:03 AM   3 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP
LABELS: 2009 NEW MEXICO SATE FAIR, HONORABLE MENTION, LESLIE DAVIS, MORNING GLORY, PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY, SCENIC CLASS WINNERS

AUG 28, 2009

2009 NMSF Winning Images – Scenic Class, Professional Category

2009 New Mexico State Fair
Professional Photography Division
Scenic Class - Judges & Big Winner

Peter Davies
Wisdom of Trees
Best of Show

Pat Berrett
Wisdom of Trees
1st Place

Glen Hohnstreiter
Shiprock
2nd Place

Dana Foy
Sand Dune
3rd Place

Jessica Lazoya
Morning Glory
Honorable Mention

Marlene Loria
Orange Creekside
Honorable Mention

Professional Judging

Tuesday evening, August 18, 5 judges, ~ 15 Enchanted Lens Camera Club volunteers, and a room full of excited New Mexicans judged and viewed images submitted as Professional Photography at 2009 New Mexico State Fair.

My long time landscape geology interest focused only on the Scenic Class. After an initial public judging, images were segregated by score, then presented again to judges in closed session.

This enclave discussed each image more closely – placing them in final agreed award order for public presentation. Each judge mentally prepared a short discussion of why this particular image won this particular place in the competition.

Once again, winning images appeared on an easel in front of our excited crowd. Each judge then vocalized

closed forum discussions, superior image qualities, and why that image won such honors.

Our highlight is Best of Show award. *Peter Davies, Best of Show Winner*, was then asked to present his image and offer any wisdom garnered during capture, digital darkroom processing, and presentation.

I did not hear much of each presentation – I was busy capturing ceremonial shots to preserve and commemorate qualities and high honors of this event.

Guest Blogger

In the next several weeks, Pathways of Light is honored to host each winner presenting his or her victorious image. I've asked each winner to provide a small image, begin discussion with touchy-feely aspects of choosing that locale, image capture, then discuss their digital darkroom path to State Fair presentation.

To honor the State Fair judging process, we will present each image in the order New Mexicans observed this event; *Honorable Mention, 3rd, 2nd,* and *1st Place*.

Lest We Forget…

OOPs – here are your award winners, in order, with titles…

HM Morning Glory Leslie Davis

HM Orange Creekside Jim Gale

3rd Sand Dune Bob Barton

2nd Shiprock Joe Bridwell

1st Wisdom of Trees Peter Davies

We anticipate these Guest Blogs will appear prior to State Fair opening September 11, 2009.

Enjoy…

POST - BISTIART AT 10:17 AM   0 COMMENTS-KEEP US IN THE LOOP

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