

Tidelands Photography Club

Jul/Aug
Photography Contest

2021

Tidelands Photography Club

Jul/Aug 2021
Photography Contest

Beginner
“Shadows”



Beginner
“Boardwalk”
8

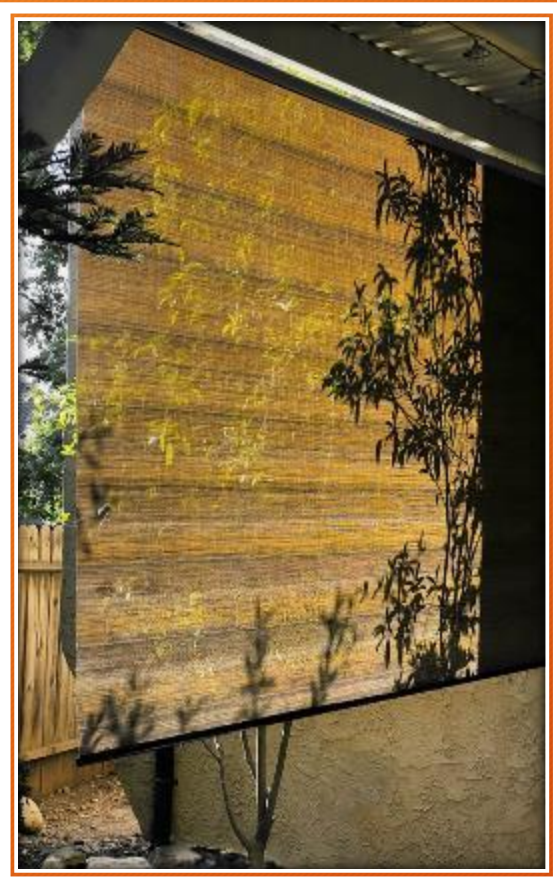
The photo "Boardwalk" is a fun example of using a vanishing point in an image. I find the photograph is sharp, and there is good light. The wooden railing and the vertical shadows lead my eye to the end of the boardwalk nicely. The tonality of the photograph shows a good range from dark shadows to whites on the histogram, and the highlights are well under control.

It is of my opinion that I would like to see the distant horizon positioned better at the end of the boardwalk. It appears that the point now ends a bit high when using the rule of thirds grid. To correct this, I suggest a new crop from the bottom upward to bring the horizon line to the top horizontal line on the rule of thirds.

Tidelands Photography Club

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Photography Contest

Intermediate
“Shadows”



**Intermediate
“Shadow Tree”
5**

This image of a shadow tree taken behind sunscreen is interesting. I like the natural color palette; there is a wide assortment of neutral colors and tones across the histogram. The image at this angle appears to be in focus.

Unfortunately, for me, the point of view is not at an angle that is comfortable to see the subject; the shade is pointing away from the viewer's eye, causing tension in the photograph. In addition, it is not clear which shadow is the subject. I also find distractions in the background behind the screen, the lights overhead, and the unorganized rocks under the shade. My suggestion is to declutter the scene and try to simplify so there is no confusion as to what the subject is for the viewer and where you want my eye to go.



Intermediate
“Tripod & It’s Shadow”
5

This photograph is simple; it shows a subject and its partial shadow. The color palette fills the mid-tones of the histogram, and I find the light to be good for the overall scene.

For me, I find the photograph was a bit rushed. The tripod leg is off the bottom edge of the frame (cropped too tight), and the shadow (the competition's theme) is not in clear, full view; the camera strap is in my line of sight. I recommend creating an inviting scene that draws the viewer in the scene to view the full shadow. Maybe try a lower point of view rather than from above the camera.



**Intermediate
“Light & Dark”
5**

The shadows in this photo are interesting because the lines are radiating from two light sources. I find the tones in the blacks and shadows area of the histogram; the light is low, producing the shadows on the gravel.

For me, the curved cobblestone edging feels out of alignment because the light is not on the rule of thirds impact point (upper left). But the photo can be remedied with a new crop; I suggest cropping it from the left side of the frame up to the edge of the stone. Lastly, the image seems blurry due to the slow shutter speed, so I recommend additional sharpening. Overall, for a competition photograph, the image lacks impact. I suggest finding subjects that have more interest to grab the viewer's attention, so they want to linger.



**Intermediate
“Palm Shadows”
6**

What a lovely walkway of over-hanging palm branches, an excellent relief from the hot sun, I am sure. I like the color palette of green, red, and ivory. The image has a sharp focus front to back, and the light level tells me this must be late afternoon. The shadows on the wall fill the ivory space nicely.

As I see it, the angle and point of view are not in sync. The brick pathway takes my eye away from the subject shadows on the path. My gaze wanders to the area at the end of the path. The shadows are not obvious because nothing leads my eye to them; if I did not know shadows were the theme, I would not notice them as a neutral viewer. My suggestion is to look for locations with minimal distracting elements so that the shadows stand out more as the subject.



Intermediate
“Strike a Pose”
6

This photo is telling a cute story of a girl that meets her shadow. They each seem to have a little different pose giving the photo interest. I also find a good tonal range from blacks to whites, and the photo is sharp from front to back.

For me, the background is busy and takes away from the photo's subject. I also find the mid-day light bright, and the highlights are a bit overexposed. My suggestion in the future is to pose the model, so her angle to the camera draws the eye into the frame; currently, she is positioned horizontally from left to right across the frame, and my eye is not led into the frame, so the image appears stagnant. I recommend using the rule of thirds to align the subjects in the frame on one of the four impact points.



**Intermediate
“Shadows”
6**

Peacocks are such pretty birds, and this one has quite a large shadow. The colors and tones in the photograph are evenly distributed across the histogram. I find the image reasonably sharp, and I can see some details in the bird's feathers. He is moving and appears interested in his shadow, which gives the photo interest (active participation is good).

The one thing that catches my eye is the dark shadows on the birds chest that prevent me from seeing the details of those feathers. The photographer could adjust this by raising the shadow slider in post-processing. Also, the bird's leg is in motion, so this makes the focus a bit soft. A faster shutter speed would help in the future.



Intermediate
“Old Graves Shadows”

6

The three gravestones next to a river make an interesting composition. The tree shadows on the flat stone, I find, give character to the old stone. The color palette is natural, as I expect if I was there, and the light is good; there are no blown highlights.

When I look at the vertical stone, I find the angle out of balance; it is tipping left. Unfortunately, the three subjects fill the frame so that a new crop won't work. In the future, I recommend leaving more space around the subjects in case you need to crop when editing the photo.



Intermediate
“My Shadowed
Egret”
7

This egret makes a cute wall plaque hidden in the shadows of the diagonal slats of a shutter; I almost thought it was real. I find the scene minimalistic in style, the color palette is neutral, the subject fills the frame compositionally, the light is good, the rule of thirds aligns well, and the highlights are not over-exposed.

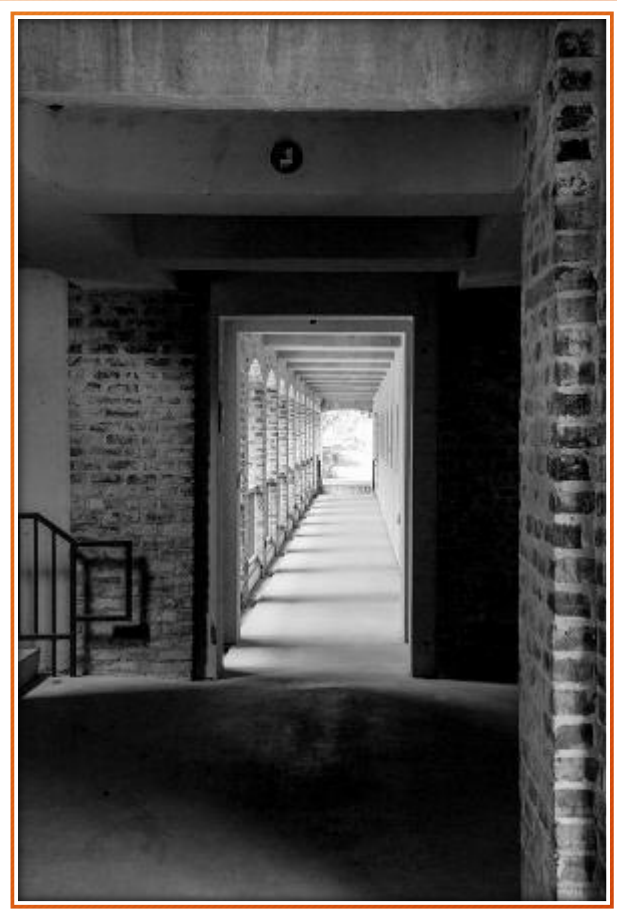
For me, the photo seems a little soft, but you can remedy this with sharpening. Lastly, I would like to see the whole egret's shape.



**Intermediate
“Night Shadows”
7**

I like the idea of this moody black and white photograph in which the photographer captured the light shadows on the wall; this is a very moody scene, and I enjoy looking at it. There are many geometric shapes and lines for interest and a feeling of a hidden mystery. The focus is sharp, and the scene is simple.

To me, the scene needs a couple on the couch or a single person contemplating a thought to finish the story and hold my attention. The shadows on the wall and the blinds on the window lead my eye to the fig tree in the corner, but it is in shadow. Having a person or interesting subject to compliment the mood of the image would be an excellent finish.



Intermediate “Light at the End of the Tunnel”

9

In this image, I find several different types of shadows which I find creative. Shadows stand out in the tunnel area like a stairway of steps. Also, the shadows on the actual stairway's railing are geometric, and the central corridor's shadow is organic in shape. I like the tonal range from blacks to whites, and the detailing of the brick adds interest to the scene.

The one thing that catches my eye is the overexposed light at the end of the tunnel. The next opportunity you have for this type of shot, I recommend having someone stand looking out at the end of the tunnel with their arms and legs in a good position with space between the limbs and their body. This suggestion will help camouflage the bright light and purposely draw the viewer into the photograph.



**Intermediate
“Morning Walk”
10**

What a great walking bridge and a long one at that; I wish I could be there! The shadows lead me right into the frame to the person at the midway point on the bridge. The scene and the sky are simple and do not take away from the shadows. I also find the overall exposure to be well done.

My only suggestion to enhance the image is to level the horizon on the rule of thirds and position the person on the upper left impact point of the rule of thirds grid. The result will bring the viewer's eye a little closer to the person on the bridge and improve the balance of the image.



Intermediate
“Weee! Look at Me!”
13

The lively colored yellow and blue characters brought a chuckle and smile to my face when I saw them. The colors are sharp; the simple background gives these characters center stage with their shadow and no distractions. The image, to me, has balance, there is a sense of stop action in their jump, and the photo shows creativity. The dark line at the top of the frame adds interest and tension for me; it is like they were reaching for the bar they didn't quite catch as they jumped!

I have no suggestions to improve the photo. Well done!

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**Advanced
“Shadows”**



**Advanced
“Walk the Line”
6**

I see lots of geometric shapes in this photo, along with their respective shadows. The perspective is high, and I appreciate the sun is not in the image; it's just a beautiful boardwalk surrounded by lush greenery in a summer color palette.

In my opinion, the boardwalk is not in balance within the frame because of the missing right-hand railing. Also, I would like to see more of the image in focus; currently, only a few boards in the foreground are relatively sharp; I attribute this to the slow shutter speed.



Advanced “Beach Shadows”

6

The children playing on the beach with their shadows are a delight to see! I find a good separation of the girl's arms and her pigtail reflecting in the shadow. The little boy reaches out, but his shadow hands are behind him, all making this an adorable image! The rule of thirds has the children well balanced, and the warm and cool color palette is good.

The challenge I have with this image is post-processing. To me, the image shows heavy pixelation, which could come from over-cropping or over processing a jpg file. I am seeing outlining around the children especially.



**Advanced
“Me & My Shadow”
6**

This Egret is such an elegant-looking bird with its pristine white feathers and a lovely shadow. The board fence background is simple, and the neutral color helps set off the bird in front. The rule of thirds has the bird well positioned in the frame.

The first thing I notice is the photo is not sharp, and the highlights are overexposed. In my opinion, improving the sharpness can be done in post-processing, but the highlight recovery might not be recoverable. In the future, I recommend using a polarizing filter to help control the highlights or make adjustments to the aperture, shutter, and/or ISO to compensate for bright highlight's.



**Advanced
“Morning Arrivals”
7**

This photo brought a smile to my face, first for the interesting composition (and use of the shadow) and second for the diagonal line of the subjects! I find the white background is perfect, and it does not detract from the scene. The rule of thirds, I see, shows a diagonal movement of birds and shadows. I also find the camera settings were good; the birds are sharp and in focus.

The image's exposure does seem a little overexposed, so I recommend adjusting the exposure and highlighting sliders a bit. Lastly, I notice some halos around the bird feeders; this may have come from postprocessing edits.



Advanced
“Bird in Shadow”
7

This photo is a beautiful capture of a white egret in a low-key photo setting; very creative point of view, and an interesting shadow. I find the bird nicely balanced on the rule of thirds grid with an interesting foreground that adds a bit of color. I like the feather detail that visually says the feathers have a soft texture under this low light setting.

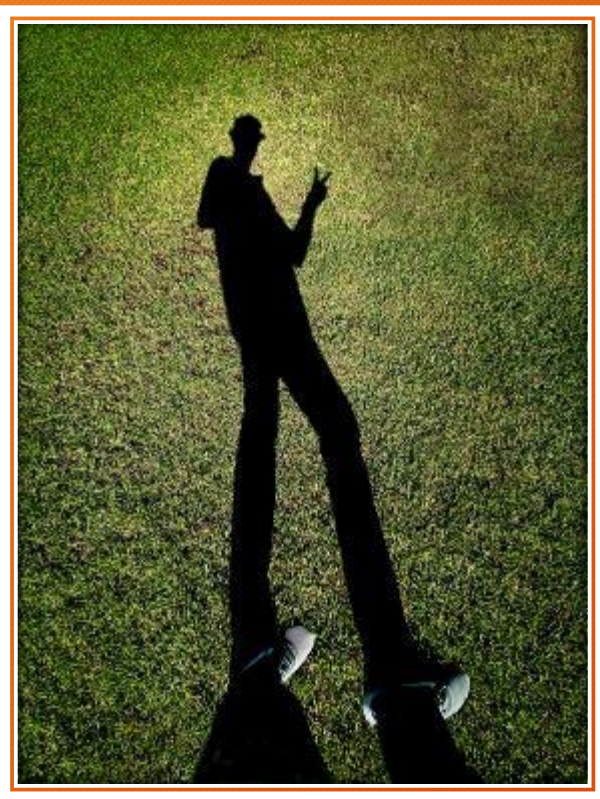
For me, I really would like to see the bird's eye; it is there in the dark shadows; it is the pathway to the heart and soul of this bird. His head tips perfectly to capture the eye and beak. Lastly, the bird's left-wing shows a loss of feather detail under the bright side-light, and the image seems to be soft perhaps from camera movement. My suggestion is to use a diffuser for harsh lighting environments, and in post-processing these highlights may be recoverable.



**Advanced
“Shadow”
9**

I like this abstract photo of twisted wire and shadow; I found myself spending time pondering what it was I was seeing. I conclude it's a man, like Charlie Chaplin in this photo. He is riding a bike and smoking a cigar. To me, the shadow behind him is a dark trail leading to a bridge. How creative! I appreciate the choice of monochrome; it allows the viewer to focus on the art. The shadow emanates from bottom left to upper right, leading my eye upward. The texture in the background and the twist of the wire gives the illusion of motion. Even the soft-focus could imply a memory from a day in the past.

Well done!



**Advanced
“Peace Shadow”
11**

I like this image; it has a cool vibe. The tall, slender shadow with a peace symbol is a welcoming sign. The photo's background is simple, with no distractions to interrupt the subject. I find ample spacing between the legs to imply motion, and the person's head seems to be looking at the camera. The color palette is neutral, and the focus is sharp with adequate light to show the shadow well.

For me, the white tennis shoes are a bit of a distraction because they take my eye away from the shadow.



**Advanced
“Candle & Shadow”
12**

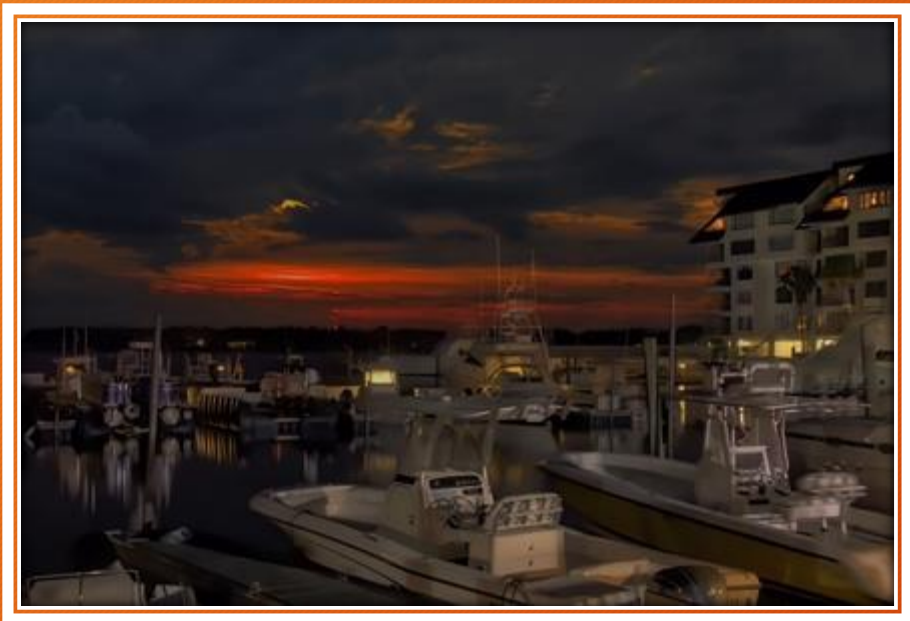
I like the creativity in this photo of the candle and shadow with the texture application. The scene is simple with the three elements. I find the picture is sharp, the neutral background choice is appealing, and the pop of color in the bowl makes an excellent presentation. I also notice the implication of the window light on the right working well. The crooked lamp makes for a creative artistic element, in my opinion.

The one thing that catches my attention upon viewing is the unusual angle of the table. I suggest a new crop up from the bottom of the frame and center the flame on the left vertical in the rule of thirds grid.

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Open



Open
“Stormy Sunset
at Marlin Quay”
6

I like the stillness of the water against this angry sky; it makes for a nice sunset scene. The fiery red sky draws my eye deep into the image. I can't help but look at the angry clouds for their details. The boats lying in wait make for a good story.

My challenge with this photo is that the slow shutter speed has the boats in soft focus, and the lighting in the foreground distracts the subject of the sky. The slow shutter made the water smooth but brought with it distractions in the motion of the vessels. One suggestion is to crop the front boats out with a tighter crop. Or, in the future, may I suggest a different vantage point in front of the boats making the sky the single subject.



Open
“Open Range Flatbed”
6

A beautiful mountain range and a classic old flatbed truck make for a fun photo; nicely taken at an angle, I can see some of the truck details. The puffy clouds add interest to the scene, and the open pasture and barbed wire fencing speak of the great wide-open spaces - a story to ponder.

For me, the bright mid-day sun is desaturating the color palette; the sky especially looks washed out. My recommendation is, if you are unable to recover the color, then next time out, try using an ND (neutral density) filter to compensate for the harsh sunlight. I find this filter will allow you to use a wider aperture and low ISO yet retain the natural colors in the scene. Choose one that is recommended for your type and brand of camera and lens.



Open
“Little Beauties”
6

Three little beauty queens; what fun they are having! There is a great story unfolding in their joyful expressions. The colors are vivid and bright; the skin colors look natural in hue and tone. The image, to me, is sharp and balanced.

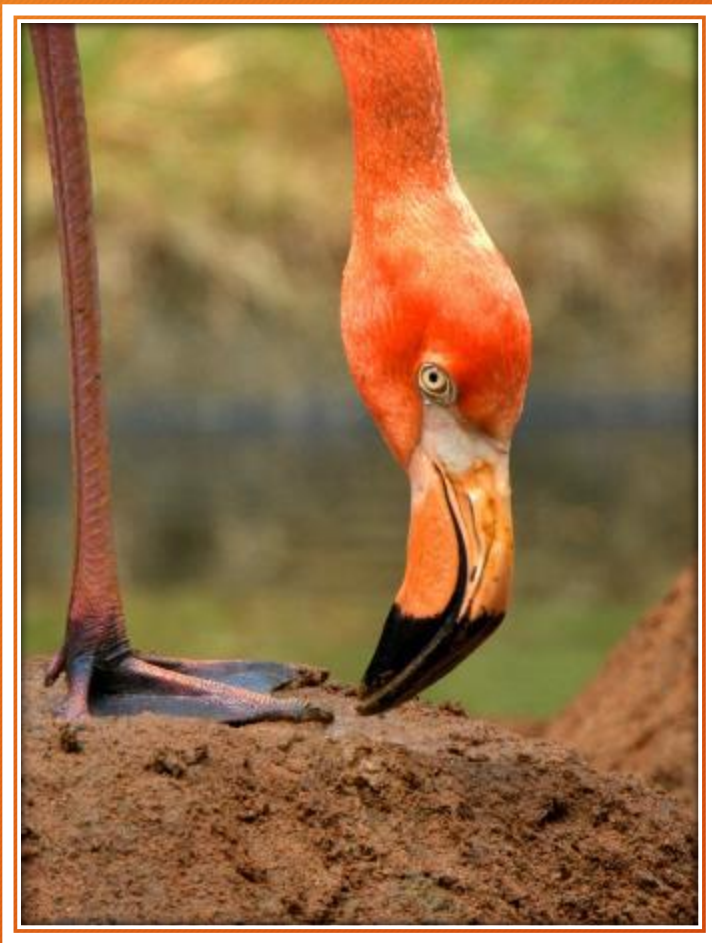
I have a couple of comments about this photograph. First, I find that this photo's editing method has left unnatural blotchy skin tones on the girls, and the contrast level used was too strong. I see PicsArt was used for editing. There may be a chance to correct this by scaling back the contrast slider in post-processing. Lastly, the woman behind the girls is in an unfortunate position; her white arms are very distracting. In the future, check around your subjects for things like this before clicking the shutter.



Open
“Bok Tower Reflection”
7

This photograph of Bok Tower is picturesque. I like the reflection in the pond with lily pads sprinkled in the water. The clouds in the sky make a lovely backdrop, and the beautiful foliage completes this beautiful garden scene. The photo is sharp, and there is a pathway that leads my eye to the door of the tower; very inviting. There is a sizeable reflection of the tower in the water, and I find all these elements very pleasing.

My struggle with the photo is the tower is not straight, and the over-saturation of the foliage, blue sky, and the pink and gray marble coquina stone of the building does not appear natural in hue.



Open
“I See You”
7

What an eye-popping red-orange flamingo! The bird and its leg stand out well with no background distractions. The brown sand implies the bird is in a beach area. The intense color shows this bird is fed well, receiving the nutrients it needs for this vibrant coloring, and the light is good with no blown highlights, and I find the image in balance on the rule of thirds.

When I look closely at the bird's eye, I see the image is soft. I recommend adding sharpening in the post-processing of this image.



Open
“High Key Flower”
7

The challenge for me is the flowers do not align with the rule of thirds, and there are too many unorganized petals distracting my eye from the main subjects. I also find the angle of the carnation stem from the upper left to the lower right adds tension to the photo; a viewer enters a photograph from the lower left of the frame, similar to reading left to right that is why there is tension. I suggest putting the subject(s) on the impact points (4 intersecting areas) of the rule of thirds grid and then using just a few petals for a splash effect (less is more). Lastly, consider rotating the image once to the left and notice a different feel; your eye comfortably moves from the lower-left corner into the frame.



Open
“Early Morning Fishing”
9

What a cute composite with an impressionistic texture! The bird, for me, adds an exciting element to the storyline; it sure brought a smile to my face. This oceanfront scene is well done and simplistic. The color palette is cool in tone, there are nice cloud formations in the sky, the light is not overly bright, and the distant shoreline and tiny people on the beach tell me about the vastness of the environment. The subjects also align on the rule of thirds well.

My only comment is with the impressionistic texture. I notice a strange outline around the two people, especially around the man's head, back, the boy's head, elbow areas, and side of his trunks. I suggest smoothing these areas or change the brushstroke in these areas so it is not so obvious.



**Open
“Bird on Branch”
9**

I like this high-key photo; lovely composition with only two elements; a bird and a branch. The colors are vivid but not overwhelming. I like the angle of the branch; my eye can easily flow from right to left to view the subject. The overall light illuminates the subject, and I can see satisfying detail in the leaves and on the bird. The focus is good as well.

For me, I feel the light is a bit bright and distorts the soft downy texture of the feathers on the bird.



Open
“Worm”
9

Wow, this is one giant worm! Is this a *Manduca sexta* (tobacco hornworm)-amazing! The overall light is good; no harsh shadows or over-exposed highlights. The colors are natural as I would expect them in nature. I like the background, which tells a story this insect may be in a vegetable garden for a tasty meal. There is also good detail in the worm's body, and it is balanced nicely on the rule of thirds.

My only comment for you is some selective sharpening would help especially on the head.



**Open
“Abandoned Cloister”
10**

I find interest in this lovely black and white photo of a cloister. I like the point of view as it draws my eye deep into the image giving it depth. The light is perfect with good exposure levels. I like the detail in the path and on the architectural elements. As I linger, I now wonder what is through the open door - just a pondering thought.

My suggestion to help improve this photo is to add light sharpening; the second pillar on the left is a tiny bit soft.



**Open
“Sea Oats”
11**

I like the contrast between the clouds and the texture of the sand in this photo. There is an excellent tonal range on the histogram and the soft light of the day is void of over-exposure. The sea oats, I find to be an interesting subject. The image, I find, is also in sharp focus.

In my opinion, the sea oats are not obvious enough to my eye, so I recommend a tighter crop to make them more prevalent. One suggested crop idea is to align the three oat clumps on the two lower impact points of the rule of thirds grid. This idea will allow a portion of land formation on the right and a trailing of oats leading to the sea on the left. The extra sand and clouds do not seem to contribute interest to the scene enough to keep. This crop brings the subject closer to the viewer's eye for observation.



Open
“African Lily”
12

Beautiful African Lily! As my eye enters from the lower-left corner of the frame, I go immediately to the stamen in the center of the flower; they are in good focus. My eye follows the lines and shapes in this photo, bringing me full circle back to the stamens. The color palette has a balance of warm and cool tones and compliments the flower nicely. I like the center of the textured background with all the exciting details and text to observe. The image holds my attention for quite a time.

The one thing that I find distracting is the cross-hatching in the textured background material. I do not feel it compliments this elegant flower.



Open
“Southern Beauty”
12

What a magnificent garden! All the beautiful pink and white flowers set the stage for this location. I find the photo aligns with the rule of thirds, and it has a warm color palette surrounding the water with natural hues and saturation levels. I like the use of the tree branch for a creative frame, and the image, to me, has good light and focus.

The only thing I would suggest is to add a gradient at the top of the frame to help compensate for the bright marsh area in the background; it seems a bit over-exposed to me.



**Open
“Lightbox Flower”
12**

What a lovely arrangement of flowers! The color palette immediately caught my attention. The pink and purple flowers' gradation, along with the green leaves' detailing, are natural, eye-catching, and pristine.

My only suggestion to help enhance this image is to use a square crop aligning the tall pink flower head just under the top horizontal line of the rule of thirds (just under the right impact point) and align the center of the pink pansy in the center on the lower horizontal line. This slightly off-center alignment makes for a more appealing composition.



Open
“Babcock Grist Mill”
13

The Grist Mill is quite interesting, and the location is picturesque. As I understand, it is still in operation and constructed from parts of other old mills; how unique! I love how it is tucked back in a nook of this woodland area. The rule of thirds places the mill in a good position with lots of geometric and organic shapes and textures to explore. I find the color palette is natural in hue and tone as I would expect it if I were there.

My only comment to help improve this photograph is experimenting with some dodging and burning techniques on the shadow and highlighting areas. The overall brightness of the image is just a tiny bit high. Sculpting with dodging and burning will help direct the eye through the frame.



Bare Winter Tree photo is a beautiful winter scene; I love it! Winter is what will soon be upon us here in the upper midwest, and looking at this photo, I might enjoy winter this time around! This lone tree is an excellent subject for monochrome. I like the very subtle details under the tree that add contrast; I can't help but think I have trees just like that in my yard. The treeline in the background also adds depth to the photograph. The branches on the tree are all within the frame's bounds, and I find the highlights are at a good point for this image.

I have a suggestion to help enhance this photo a little. I would like to see a softer treeline in the background because this will add even more depth to the photograph, in my opinion. This enhancement can be done with the radial filter (inverted) on the tree, raise the exposure a tad, move the contrast slider to the right, and decrease the dehaze slider; these adjustments will soften the trees in the background. I hope this is helpful.

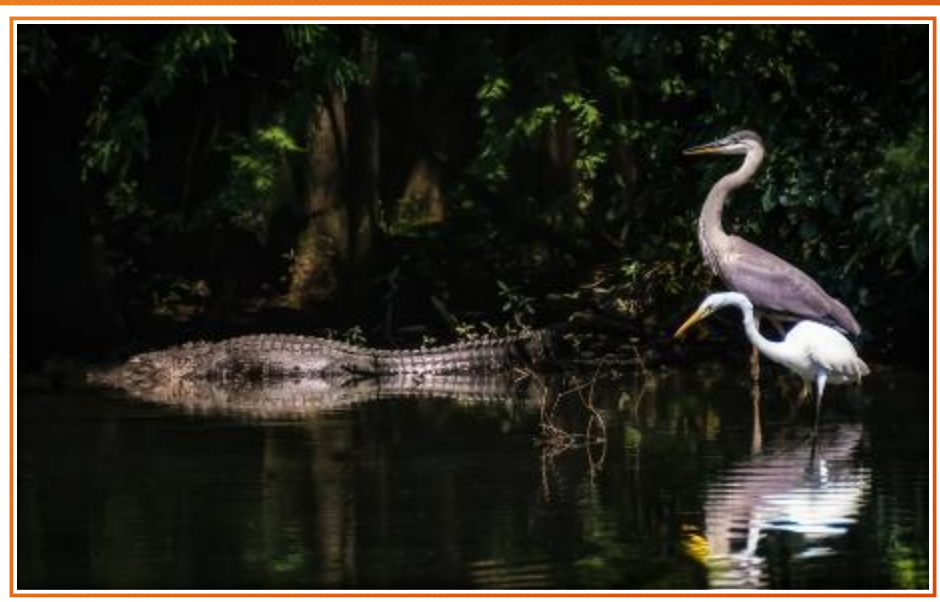
Open
“Bare Winter Tree”
14



**Open
“Free Form”
14**

I believe this is a hummingbird; what a beauty he is. The colors of his feathers blend well with the background, and there is lovely detailing in the feathers. The light in the photograph and the catch-light in the eye is perfect. He sits nicely on the rule of thirds grid, so I conclude this photo is well composed.

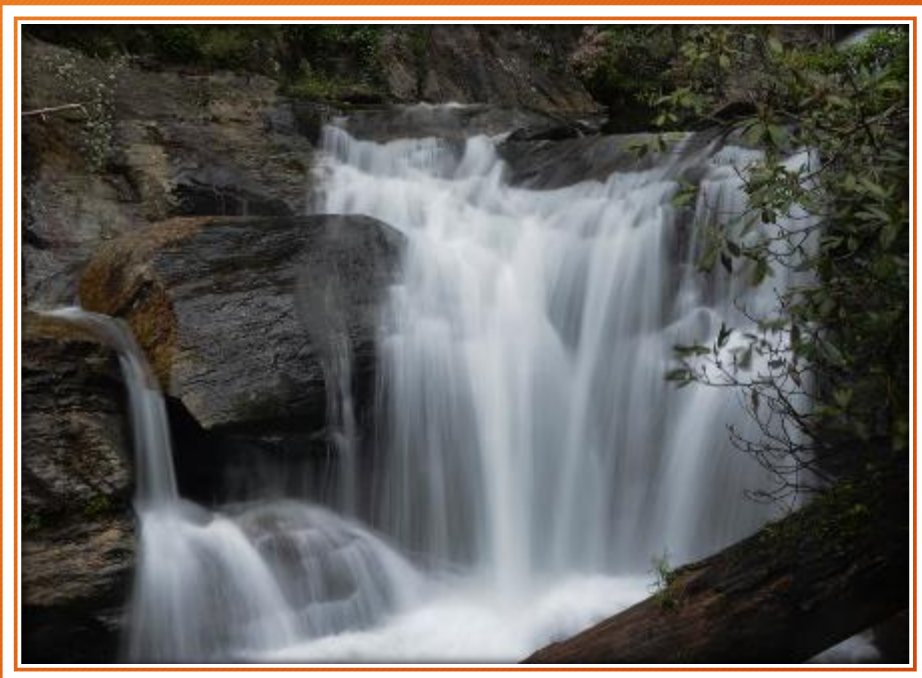
With that said, one of the rules of competition is no logos. This image would be disqualified if this were a competition for points because your logo is part of the image.



Open
“Harmony”
15

Wow, what impact peaceful coexistence like this is heavenly. If we only had a world like this, right. Beautiful light on the gator and birds accentuates them as the subjects. I am taken back by the true-to-nature color palette. The background tree and foliage hint at the quiet and solitaire environment these creatures call home—the subtle lighting of the background giving awareness to the story taking place. And the gentle ripple in the water indeed contributes to the impactful story.

In my opinion, this is a remarkable image and worthy of merit. Well done.



Open
“Duke Creek Falls”
15

What a breathtaking view overlooking Duke Creek Falls; I could stand here all day and ponder my thoughts. The scene feels intimate and close, with gently flowing water cascading over the boulders. The texture in the rocks is full of detail, and the image is sharp and in focus; I love the silky-smooth flow of the water. I even like the small twig in the upper left corner; it is part of the story and tells me the scene is natural and untouched. The color palette of greens and browns is natural in hue and tone, and the light falls perfectly on this smooth flowing waterfall.

Nicely done.



Open
“Osprey”
15+

This Osprey photograph is so beautiful and captured so well that the bird seems to pop out of the frame! I find the foreground nesting area (and the wide aperture) helps add a 3D-like depth between bird and background. The rich colors of the feathers are vibrant, and the details on the bird are tack sharp. The orange eyes are striking and in clear view, and the blurred background is a perfect natural compliment. If I look closely, I can even see tiny baby-sized feathers in the front of the nest; what a great story! Well done!