

Print Competition, Strategy of Winning
John Murray B.B.A., M. Photog., CR

Introduction

- Why compete?
- What is a National Award Merit print?
- Who am I?

Where We are Headed

- What the PEC evaluates in your print- The Twelve Elements
- The request of the work on the viewer- Emotionally drawn into the work, "Take a Longer Look"
- Case studies with tidbits

The Twelve Elements

- **Impact** is the "wow" sense of surprise one gets upon viewing an image for the first time.
- **Technical excellence** is the print quality and application of skill as it is presented for viewing.
- **Creativity** is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker.
- **Style** is the repeated, exhibited inclination of the photographer.
- **Lighting** is consideration for light quality, quantity, and direction. Does it contain one of five true light forms?
- **Subject Matter** should be interesting, not a normal treatment, and in keeping with the story.
- **Technique** is how to pose, how to light, how to print, how to prepare the concept, and how to post process.
- **Story Telling is the** ability of the image to speak for itself and present a story.
- **Composition** is subject placement and design flow within the image. 4 Compositional placement theories: Quadrant theory, thirds/fifths/sevenths/ninths/elevenths, Golden Mean, Bakker Saddle,
- **Presentation** is the preparation environment of the photograph's (or book's) viewing.
- **Color Balance** is the related issue of color that affect the viewers attention. Is it one of five color schemes? Is it congruent with its interpretation?
- **Center of Interest** – The main thing is that the main thing remains the main thing.

Art is the ability to draw the viewer into the image and want to be a part. The emotional connection allows time for the viewer to maintain involvement in the piece. This connection is through the element of depth.

Take A Longer Look – 4 Philosophies

- **Light**
- **Color**
- **Line**
- **Circular observation**

LIGHT

- Mood is represented by the quality of light and the quantity of light used.
- A direct main-light statement is the most powerful use of frontal light.
- Light separates the subject from the background. There is a strength of lighting placements: back-light (into the light source), side-light, then portrait frontal light.
- The eye is drawn to the shadows to enjoy depth and emotion.
- The eye is attracted to the area of greatest contrast.
- Light defines roundness, shape and translucency.

COLOR

- Color polarity (vibration) adds depth.
- The use of color relates to everyone, thereby creating interest.
- Color saturation placed against de-saturation will intensify the color in the saturated area.
- The color of subject need to be "in scheme" with its color environment.
- A planned color palette is preferred to an unplanned mixing of various indiscriminate colors.

LINE studies

- There is a "Hierarchy of Compositional Shapes" Triangle, oval/circle with a diagonal through it, diagonals, vertical-horizontal intersections, curvilinear compositions (oval, circle, heart shapes, S, C, Lazy S, backward c), alpha-numeric representations, vertical line, & horizontal line is last.
- When a subject has a recognizable shape, it is lingers in memory retention.
- Balance dictates the composition.
- When the subject is placed in 1 of 4 placement theories it will draw the viewer into the image.
- Diagonal inclinations determine flow (power or grace) motion.

CIRCULAR OBSERVATION

- Eye entrance into the image is usually bottom left third.

- The eye flow pattern should spiral toward the impact point.
- Balance theories-
 - Equidistance, when to use the center
 - Balance of the Steelyard
 - Primary - Secondary relationships
- Eye flow is directed by vertical horizontal intersections.

Case Studies