

B. I. P. C.

**Bainbridge Island Photo Club
Serving Bainbridge and North Kitsap**

May 2008

Wednesday May 14 Club Meeting
Competition Night at the Commons

Check in your prints between 6:15 and 6:45 PM, or e-mail digital images by May 9. The Special Subject is "Music". You can enter up to six images of any kind, out of your 24 total for the year. Remember that you want to include some Specials and Creatives sometime. At the end of the year, your six best (highest scoring) Creatives, your six best Specials (from at least three different months), and your 18 best Overall (including all of the above plus General) will count for your annual totals.

Fourth of July

We plan to have a public photo exhibition again this year at the Grand Old Fourth, so be getting your prints ready. Every member should plan to have ten prints, mounted as for club competitions, so if you have been entering digitally, you might want to crank up your printer now. As in previous years, the public will be invited to vote for their favorites. We are also thinking about setting up the digital projector with a continuous show of images from club competitions, but we would need some volunteers to set up the equipment and keep an eye on it during the day. Let Genevieve Moyer know if you would be willing to help in this regard.

Bainbridge Photo Spots

Dorothy Matthews is compiling a map of good sites on Bainbridge Island for photographers, and needs your input. So let her know your favorite shooting locations which are accessible to the public. Send her the subject, recommended time or season if it matters, and the address or crossroads. You can reach her at: MatthewsBainbridge@msn.com

Photo Competition

Photographic Center Northwest's 13th Annual Photographic Competition Exhibition, "Please Ring Bell," is being juried by Rod Slemmons, Director of the Museum of Contemporary Photography at Columbia College Chicago. Selected entries exhibit at PCNW from July 11 -August 28. The competition is open to all photographers, all photographic processes, and all themes. The juror is looking for work that represents a larger, cohesive body of work, and is selecting a short series from each of the 25 photographers chosen. Awards sponsored by Getty Images: \$1000, \$750, and \$500. See Submission Guidelines at: www.pcnw.org . Due date: Friday, May 9.

Call for Photographers

"Only in Washington", a juried exhibition of fine art photography capturing distinctive and original locations that can be found only in the Evergreen State, at the Washington State Convention & Trade Center in Seattle, October 2008 to March 2009. See <http://wsctc.com/pdfs/OnlyinWashingtonCall.pdf>

Up to 100 images will be selected for public display. Submit JPEGs on a CD by July 1, with a sentence explaining why each is a special place only in Washington.

Competition Corner

I hear / see? music. The sound / sight? of music. May's special subject, music, is a challenge. How to capture music with our cameras? There are many ways - musical instruments, recording devices and studios, radios, singers, orchestras, nature - all are ways to convince your audience they are looking at and hearing music.

July will be easier - dilapidated buildings. With better weather being forecast this subject should be fun for all.

When May's competition night is over we will be half way thru the year - the point when the scoring gets complicated. Some of us will try to replace old low scores with higher ones. David Warren is using a computer program that will automatically replace your lowest scores with higher ones using one to six of your bonus images should you chose to enter them in competition starting in July.

Good luck from Chuck

Regular Club Meetings

Thursday May 15: Digital Imaging Study Group, 10:00 AM at the Madison Avenue Fire Station. (Ken Hales will talk about "Adobe Camera Raw".)

Monday May 19: Board of Directors Meeting, 2:00 PM in the small conference room at the Commons.

“Other People’s Art” – Photographic Originality and Creativity

The subject often comes up: “What if you submit a photograph of someone else’s artwork?” How should that be judged in a photographic competition?

Suppose, in the extreme, that you photograph a painting, and it fills the frame. It is a “straight” photo, which attempts to faithfully reproduce the look of the original. You certainly exercised artistic judgment in choosing to photograph this particular painting, rather the billions of others in the world. And you used skill and craftsmanship to accurately copy it. But the aesthetic beauty, if any, in the photo is surely derivative from the artist who did the painting.

At another extreme, Ansel Adams’ photographs of Half Dome are generally (and rightfully) considered to be excellent images. But Ansel didn’t create Half Dome (or even cleave it in half). So how much credit should he get? For that matter, if a modern tourist stands at the spot designated by the Park Service and snaps a photo of Half Dome (on autoexposure), in unconscious imitation of Ansel, does he get as much credit, even if the image turns out to be beautiful?

One step up from the painting, suppose you photograph a piece of sculpture. Here you must choose the angle from which to view it, and the lighting to illustrate its three-dimensionality. Now suppose that the statue is partially covered with snow, and that there is a pigeon sitting on it. Is there now more room for photographic artistry?

What about an object created by humans for a mix of artistic and utilitarian motives (architecture fits into that category). The decision to photograph it, as well as the way in which it is photographed, reflects the artistic sensibilities of the photographer, as well as those of the original creators.

Suppose the photograph shows a mix of manmade and natural objects, brought together by natural forces, or by people acting for reasons other than creating an artistic tableau. It could be a weathered building, a city skyline, a marketplace, or a rowboat on a beach. What credit goes to the photographer, versus the creators (or placers) of the included manmade objects?

For that matter, what’s so great about originality, anyway? Maybe an image ought to be judged on its beauty, regardless of where it came from. But wait; suppose you take a superb photo, you enter it in competition, and it gets a great score. While you were at it, you also took a dozen essentially identical images. They may differ microscopically, but they all look very similar and all are equally good. Next month, you enter another one of them; then another. The twelfth is just as good as the first. Do they all get similarly high scores? Maybe they would if there were fresh judges each time, but in reality, people will start to think, “That was a great image, but quit milking it!”

Or is there really any such thing as originality? Hieronymous Bosch, Salvador Dali, and M. C. Escher painted scenes that did not and could not exist, but they were built of elements that do exist in reality. Dali’s limp watch was fanciful, but if there were no watches and no limp objects, he could not have imagined it, and you could not understand it. (Now where does that leave Jackson Pollock? Paint splatters do exist in reality, but ...) I seem to have more questions than answers.

Stan Johnston

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Caution, Photographers!

Two of our club members recently went south to photograph the fine sights along the scenic Columbia Gorge: waterfalls, flowers, scenic overlooks, and whatever. One day, when they parked at a trailhead and went off to find an off-road waterfall, they left some of their gear well-hidden in their car. They returned from the trail about 45 minutes later to find that a thief had shattered a car window and stolen both their camera bags. Total loss: about \$5,000 worth of equipment.

The police officer with whom they filed their report said that such crimes are becoming increasingly common along the Columbia Gorge. The bad guys know that there are many photographers who come to capture the sights there, and it's a juicy opportunity.

The next day, still left with a camera or two, our fellow club members went to another site to photograph wildflowers. When they parked, they found a splash of shattered glass on the ground that looked just like the one outside their car the day before. They were not willing to leave the car out of their sight. Bummer!

Benefit from this unfortunate experience. If you go to the Gorge (or other scenic locations?), be extremely stingy about what you leave in your car. Cameras, computers, GPS units ... no. A bad-tempered Rottweiler, yes! If you can't pack 'em, don't take 'em. Inconvenient: yes. A fact of life: yes.

David Warren