

COMPETITION

The purpose of the Houston Photochrome Club Intra club monthly competition is to encourage member participation in club activities and in the process enhance their overall knowledge of and skill in photography. It is an effective learning tool.

WHEN ARE THEY HELD

Competitions are held monthly at the general meeting, the second Thursday of the month.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

All members are eligible to submit images for competition.

COMPETITION RULES

The entrant must have exposed all images entered. Copies of printed material are not acceptable. Entries are to be made as digital images. A member may submit a maximum of three color (3) images in the following four categories and a maximum of one (1) monochrome image in Black & White:

Nature Assigned (NA)

Nature General (NG)

Pictorial Assigned (PA)

Pictorial General (PG)

Black & White (BW)

A single monochrome image per month may be entered regardless of the number of color images entered.

Digital Nature images must have been taken in a digital camera or scanned from a slide taken by the member. However, Pictorial and Black & White images may be scanned from slides, film, or prints of an image taken originally by you. In addition, certain other rules apply to digital images. Houston Photochrome Digital Competition Guidelines are intended to be in compliance with those of PSA EID and PSA Nature Digital and GSCCC Digital Interclub Competitions.

Members must enter an images as digital images. All manipulated images are to be entered in one of the Pictorial categories.

If three color images are entered, then at least one image must be submitted in an assigned category. Only one image may be entered in each assigned category.

Points garnered in the Black & White category will not count towards the high point award. However, Black & White images may be entered for the Black & White Image of the Year Award.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS

NATURE

Nature is defined by PSA as the use of the photographic process to depict observations from all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archeology, in such a fashion that a well informed person will be able to identify the subject material and to certify as to its honest presentation. The story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality. Human elements shall not be present, except on the rare occasion where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.

Photographs of artificially produced hybrid plants or animals, mounted specimens, and obviously set arrangements are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement of the

original nature story. Man made articles and domesticated animals are some examples of items to avoid, (otherwise known as “the hand of man”).

PICTORIAL

Pictorial encompasses all subject matter, including hybrid plants, creative images, domestic animals, pets, glassware, light grams, tabletops, portraits, landscapes, architecture, black light etc. Even images that may otherwise meet the Nature criteria may be entered as Pictorial images. Images that are a departure from realistic representation, altered, manipulated digital images, double exposures, experimental, imaginative or fanciful images are to be entered in a Pictorial category. Images that are created outside of the camera are to be included in this category. Techniques including slide montages, diffractions, distortions, black light, bas relief, wild color, zoomed exposures, and selective focus are also to be entered in the Pictorial category.

BLACK & WHITE

Black and White images are digital images that are entered as monochromatic or black and white images. All Nature and Pictorial black and white images will be entered in this category.

Any technique that is acceptable in the Pictorial category (see above) is acceptable in the Black & White category .

PREPARING A DIGITAL IMAGE FOR COMPETITION

All the rules pertaining to content for Nature, Pictorial, and Black and White categories as well as their respective assignments and scoring of same, apply.

Sizing and Labeling Digital Images for Competition

Image size. Image may be any size or shape that does not exceed 1024 pixels wide or 768 high, JPEG, 300KB or smaller file size, sRGB, 96ppi recommended. Cropping is allowed prior to resizing. No cloning, copying or creative editing in Nature. (See exceptions under “Digital Post Processing” section). No limits to editing in the Pictorial or Black & White category except size.

Color space should be sRGB, so if your camera and RAW converter uses Adobe RGB, you should *convert* your image to sRGB before saving the final version. A file with Adobe RGB color space may display with colors that are flat and less intense than they were intended to look.

PSA Nature Digital limits width of an image to 768 pixels and height to 768 pixels. Images selected for PSA will have to be resized to those limits. A 1024x768 image will be resized to 768x576 for PSA Nature only.

Other sizes larger than 768 pixels wide will be resized proportionately for PSA Nature.

File Naming

The image file should be named using the following form: Category_ Image Title_ Submitter's Name.

Files lacking this information or not named following this form, may be omitted from competition.

Example of proper form: NG_Skimmer in Flight_NicholasW.jpg

Categories: NG = Nature General NA=Nature Assigned

PG=Pictorial General PA=Pictorial Assigned

BW=Black & White

DIGITAL POST PROCESSING GUIDELINES

Nature, Pictorial and Black and White

Digital post-processing is allowed in HPC to the same extent allowed in PSA

EID Interclub competition. That means that most digital darkroom procedures are allowed

Examples of allowed editing: levels, curves, brightness/contrast, saturation, sharpening, dodging, burning, layer masks—all with the objective of restoring the scene to that which the photographer saw through the viewfinder, or to mimic the look of popular films. Also allowed is cropping of the image to adjust composition or change the aspect ratio of the final image. Image rotation—to level a horizon, for example—is permitted.

Not allowed for Nature: Cloning, other than to remove sensor dust shadows, healing, cutting/copying and pasting objects from another image, adding or removing objects, blurring or desaturating backgrounds, or erasing/replacing backgrounds (e.g. replacing a white sky with blue sky and White cumulus clouds).

Club Intraclub or Interclub competition committee members may request a copy of an original RAW or original JPEG image as taken from the camera, if a Nature or Pictorial entry is challenged by a club member, judge, or PSA. Committee members, with assistance of other club officers and the Digital Integration chair will review the provided originals and report back to the maker within two weeks, after which the maker may accept or appeal their findings in accordance with club competition rules. Failure to provide a requested original file will automatically disqualify the challenged image. A club member may telephone or send a challenge by email to the competition committee member within two days of a competition meeting. Your identity will not be disclosed beyond the competition committee.

Pictorial And Black & White All of the editing that is allowed in Nature and Black and White is allowed...plus all the things specifically excluded from those categories are also OK. In addition, other modifications—simulated infrared or solarization, brush strokes, line art, and other editing techniques which may be employed to achieve an artistic effect—are acceptable for creative Pictorial images, so long as the original image was taken by the photographer.

Digital images posted on the club's website will be credited to its maker and will carry a copyright notice and /or copyright symbol

JUDGING and SCORING

JUDGES

Three judges, usually club members, are appointed by the Intra club Competition Chairmen and are notified in advance of the meeting. Judges are normally selected from those members who regularly participate in the monthly competition.

Digital Competitions

Judging of digital images will be done by projecting images on a screen with an electronic projector at a resolution of 1024 x 768 and with a laptop PC using a digital slide show program chosen by the club. Borders to the image will be black.

SCORING

Our club uses a 27-point scoring system. Each of the three judges awards a score ranging from 1-9 points on each image. The three judges scores are then totaled which gives the image a combined score ranging from 3-27 points. If an image made by one of the judges appears on the screen, that judge immediately disqualifies himself by giving it a score of 0. The remaining two judges' scores are then averaged and this average is used as the score from the disqualified judge. Only after scoring is completed is the name of the maker and the title of the slide announced. All scores are recorded for entry in the High Point Competition at the end of the year. (Except for Black & White category images)

HIGH POINT AWARD

Each member could enter 36 images during the year. At the end of the year, monthly scores from the top 30 scoring images are tallied for each

member. The member is assigned to one of the following High Point awards categories based on his or her image entry pattern that year. Based upon the point total, awards are given for first, second and third place .

CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

An image that creates emotion, passion, and a lasting impact is much better than one lacking the former but is technically perfect, well composed and in perfect focus and with great color. Images with impact and emotion that might break the standard technical and compositional rules might be better images than those that meet 100 % of the normal rules. What the image communicates is more important than the image's content or technical aspects. Static and predictable images rarely become contest winners.

Judging, by definition, is a subjective process with a strong emotional component that involves some objective criteria.

That is why we use three judges at each competition.

When you are asked to be a judge, please review the Instructions to Judges on page 35 of this manual.

YEAR END AWARDS

IMAGE OF THE YEAR

Image of the Year awards will be given in all three categories, Nature, Pictorial and Black & White. Images for this award must have been entered in a monthly competition between August 1 of the previous year and July 31 of the current year. Each member will receive a list of eligible images prior to the July meeting. Images will be entered into each unique category by the member and must bear all required information. Awards will be made for first, second and third place plus first and second honorable mention in all image categories. Judging of images will be determined by the executive board. Awards will be presented at the annual Awards Banquet held in September.

IMAGE OF THE YEAR SUBMISSION

Awards will be made for Nature, Pictorial, and Black & White images. Members may enter up to three images per category entered into club competition during the competition year. The entry deadline is July competition and digital entries are to be submitted on a CD.