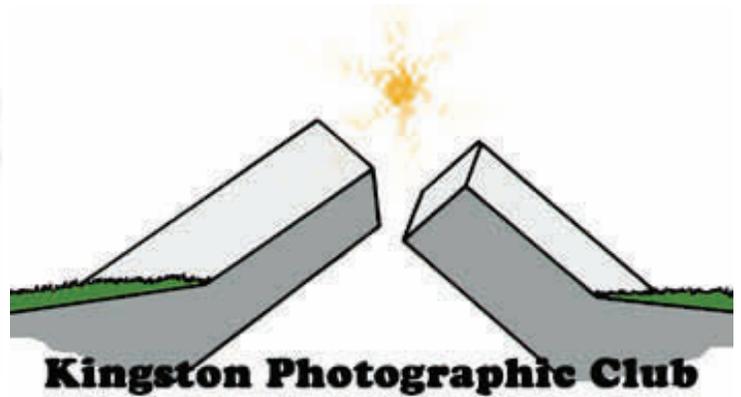


Camera Capers



April 2014
2013 - 2014 Issue No. 3

Winners of January 2014 Competition

Prints – Black & White & Colour (28 entries)

1 st	Everett Park Sunset	Ken Fuller
2 nd	Lisl and Alano	Heather Bashow
3 rd	Perspective	John Hefford
HM	Courtship	Heather Bashow

Pictorial Slide (83 entries)

1 st	Writing on Stone	Paul Fenton
2 nd	Snow Horse	Mary Ann Wamboldt
3 rd	Sneaking a Peek	Marie Dorey

Nature Slide (19 entries)

1 st	Half a Toonie	Dennis Bally
2 nd	Tremblant Moon	Bill McNamara
3 rd	Herb Robert	Bruce Gunion

Judges: Don Gillespie, Guest Judges: Wayne Hiebert and David Bell



Herb Robert

“To photograph truthfully and effectively is to see beneath the surfaces and record the qualities of nature and humanity which live or are latent in all things.”
- Ansel Adams



Half a Toonie

Winning photos thumbnails



Call for nominations

A Nominating Committee, consisting of Ed Fletcher (past president), Don Rogers (present president) and Elizabeth Bourgeois, has been appointed and given responsibility for recruiting members for executive positions. In addition, any three members may nominate any member in good standing for any office or position, not later than two weeks before start of the Annual General Meeting. Such nominations must be in writing, signed by the three members and presented to the Nominating Committee prior to the start of the Annual General Meeting. The consent of the candidate must also be in writing. An election will be held at the Annual General Meeting if necessary. The above method of advance nominations prevents this meeting from turning into an arm twisting session. Any positions for which there are no candidates prior to the start of the AGM will be filled by appointment at a later time, when persons to fill the positions can be found.

Annual Juried Exhibition

The Kingston Photographic Club's "Annual Juried Exhibition and Sale" runs from Wednesday April 2nd until Sunday April 27th.

This year's Annual Juried Exhibition will be held at "Window Gallery", found at 647 Princess Street corner of Victoria Street. Their telephone number is 613-549-1528.

The hours of operation are as follows:

Wednesday: 12 - 4 pm

Thursday: 12 - 8 pm

Friday - Sunday: 12 - 4pm

An Opening Reception will be held on Sunday April 6th between 1 - 4 pm at the gallery.



How can your image win a club competition? (by Geoff Chalcraft)

Sorry, No Idea! How can your image avoid getting low scores from the judges? Ah, that's a different question! Entering images in competitions requires considerable effort by the photographer, especially for prints, and to see your best efforts criticized can be, at best, character building. I have tried to list my "point-losing" criteria roughly in order, but this obviously does vary from judge to judge and, I suspect, the same judge at different times. The KPC is in a great position when it comes to judging in competitions – you're not subject to the 'whims' of a single judge and all images stand a fair chance of earning their potential from the three judges. Along with that, however, comes a risk of getting three low scores when they agree about any common deficiencies in an image. So here are the things you must be aware of...

1. Focus

If the image is a portrait it is vital that the eyes or at least the nearer eye is in sharp focus. If it is, say, a close-up of a flower, at least some part should be in sharp focus for the eye to settle on, but make sure it's an interesting part!

2. Blown highlights

Another easy one for judges! There are obviously some exceptions to this i.e.) spectral highlights, with the sun reflecting off shiny surfaces, or artificial lights at night, etc. But otherwise, be careful. Similar with blocked-out shadow areas – not as bad as highlights, but keep it to a minimum.

3. Too tight cropping

Give the subject room in the picture. Alternatively, crop really close in so there's no mistake as to what is intended. Don't let the main subject flap around in the middle of nothing – strike a balance. Sometimes a deep foreground works well, but it needs a few details. (See 5 below).

4. Over-sharpening

Don't try to compensate for poorly focused or soft images. Over-sharpening is obvious. If the image is to be a print and is not as sharp as you would like, try printing it smaller (within reason). Or save it for the Small Print competition. If you're not happy with the sharpness of an otherwise good picture, enter it as a print. Seeing it at around 11" x 14" (or less) is far better than viewing it at 8ft x 5ft!

5. Bland areas

In landscapes in particular, don't leave too much of what a judge may describe as 'uninteresting sky' or 'bland foreground' visible that doesn't add interest to the picture. If there is, say, a featureless white or grey sky visible, crop it out. Bear in mind, though, the ideas of Miksang, where the space in the image is important.

6. Make the picture look 'right'

Even if the picture is correct geometrically or colour wise, a judge won't necessarily know this. A slightly sloping field in the foreground of a landscape may give an uncomfortable feeling to the viewer. An unusual dominant colour in a scene may look like a colour cast. You may of course have a colour cast, so always view your prints under daylight conditions. Ideally your monitor and printer should be profiled/calibrated.

(continued on page 3)

7. Crooked horizons

Water tends to find its own level, so show it that way. It's amazing how many club pictures have this problem, yet it's a simple edit to correct.

8. Converging verticals

Some judges subscribe to the myth that verticals should be vertical and should not converge. Verticals *do* converge due to perspective, but some judges don't seem to know this. However, perspective distortion is a reality which can be caused when the camera is not square on to the subject and appears worse with wide-angle lenses. The web has many articles that show how to 'correct' converging verticals particularly regarding tall straight-sided buildings. The results appear to me to make the building appear wider at the top. A better method for correcting *excessive* convergence is to adjust the amount of correction by eye until aesthetically correct. This usually means that the verticals are not absolutely vertical, but look natural. A possible exception to this is record photography, often architectural photography, where the emphasis is on portraying the object with total accuracy together with technical excellence. This can demand the use of very expensive 'tilt/shift' lenses and is best left to professionals. For camera club purposes, it is better to go with smaller, more manageable subjects and avoid the problem altogether. So you have a choice (for non-record photography) of making the verticals converge (the way your eye and camera sees them), or have them absolutely vertical to avoid judges' criticisms. Your call!

9. Irrelevant objects

Try not to include objects that do not add to, or maybe more importantly, distract from the main subject of interest. This is especially true if the object is dissected by the edge of the picture. Think of it this way: if you were to attempt to paint the scene that you wanted to photograph, would you include everything you could see? Probably not, so why include it in the photograph if it can be avoided?

10. Black backgrounds

If the subject is a close-up of a flower for example, avoid a solid black background. Some judges like black backgrounds, some don't. Always try to have at least some out of focus detail just visible, preferably complimenting the main subject.

11. HDR/tone mapping

Sadly, some judges just hate HDR – but being able to give details to dark shadows and over-bright highlights is a valid way to photograph and edit. Avoid *excessive* HDR/tone mapping or any other 'artistic' effect, since some judges are just not appreciative. Just don't overdo the sliders! There are other ways to get that detail back, with bracketed images, filters, etc. and they usually give a more natural effect. Remember that 'photography' is about recording light *and* dark.

12. Light edge areas

Avoid light areas near the edges of the image. Some judges don't even like dark areas or high colour contrast areas near the edges, if they contrast too much with the main subject. Judges tend to say these areas 'draw the eye' away from the intended point of interest even if you don't think they do.

Additionally, even if there aren't light areas near the edge, it is sometimes helpful to slightly darken the corners/edges with a soft-edged vignette. This can help to concentrate the viewer's attention on the intended subject. It's surprising how little is needed to produce the desired effect - it shouldn't be obvious, so don't overdo it. Adobe Camera Raw and Lightroom 'Post Crop Vignetting' is a good tool for achieving this.

13. White borders around PDIs

The technique of adding a border may be useful where the image has a dark background and the edges would otherwise be ill-defined from the projector background. To achieve this isolation, try a border preferably of a mid-tone colour sampled from the image itself or plain white. Most judges will adversely comment on white borders if they are thought to be unnecessarily wide, so just keep them as a 'line' rather than a band. A couple of pixels will do.

14. Colour saturation

Don't be tempted to boost colour just to give more impact, it can be beneficial but often isn't. If the image is a landscape, judges love to pick on 'digital-green' grass. If you really think more colour is required, first try reducing the saturation by quite a bit, let your eyes adjust, and then return the saturation as it was before. You may decide the colour is just fine as it is. I find this technique is useful to help decide on other tonal adjustment settings as well.

15. Composition rules

The 'rule of thirds', which is possibly the most well known, is a reasonably good guide, but only a guide, and has many exceptions. At least a judge is less likely to criticise the composition from this perspective. If your picture is lacking that 'something', try editing it to check how it would look by using the 'thirds'.

16. De-spot

Remove any sensor dirt spots that are visible especially in areas of low detail like sky, etc. Blemishes like this have a habit of becoming more visible when viewed on the club projector or print-viewing box.

And finally – Enjoy your photography and don't be too hard on judges. There are good ones and not-so-good ones, but they all try to do their best. Put yourself in their position.

Some links that you might find interesting

www.photolife.com ; <http://www.photonews.ca/>
www.landscapephotographymagazine.com
www.dpreview.com ; www.photographybb.com
www.digital-photography-school.com
<http://craftandvision.com/>
<http://www.craftedlight.com/>
<http://www.dofmaster.com/dofjs.html>
<http://kelbyone.com/> ; www.ppsop.com
<http://onthewingphotography.com/wings/>
<http://www.naturescapes.net/>
<http://outdoorphotographycanada.com/>
<http://www.thephotoargus.com/>
<http://photography.tutsplus.com/>
<http://www.exposureguide.com/photography-basics.htm>

