

Competition Categories

Prints

Black and White
Color Class A and Class B
Theme
Creative
Panoramic

Digital Projection

Open Class A and Class B
Theme
Creative
Nature

Class A is for more advanced photographers and Class B for beginner to intermediate.
Creative Print and Nature will compete in even months; Creative Digital and Panoramic will compete in odd months. All other categories compete every month.

Definitions

Black and White Black and White prints that are hand tinted with only one color may be entered in the Black and White Category (PSA rules). Tinting must be transparent rather than replace the image.

Toning such as Sepia is permitted. B&W images may be entered in Open Digital categories.

Color Print No assigned subject or aspect ratio. Monochrome images must be entered in Black and White.

Open Digital No assigned subject or aspect ratio. May be color or monochrome.

Theme An assigned subject each month. Themes for the full competition year will be announced before the start of the year. Portrayal of the theme is a judging criteria.

Creative Altered reality using the materials at hand to interpret the subject in a unique way. It should convey more than the ordinary photograph, and the creativity should be readily apparent to the viewer. In the creative category, graphic elements may be a part of the composition as long as the element started life as a photograph and the photograph remains a dominant feature of the image.

Panoramic To be considered Panoramic, the width must be at least 2.5 times the height (i.e. divide width by height and the result must be 2.5 or bigger). Horizontal format only is allowed due to the physical limitations of the print display box. There is no requirement on the number of frames used to generate the Panorama.

Nature (PSA Definition) "Nature photography is restricted to 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 while maintaining high technical quality. Human elements shall not be present, except where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals is permissible. Photographs of artificially produced hybrid plants or animals, mounted specimens, or obviously set arrangements, are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement. **No techniques that add to, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content are permitted. Any adjustments must appear natural.**

Year End Competition

1. The competition year runs from May through April.
2. Image competition: At the end of the competition year, there will be a Year End competition. The entries are the monthly winners in each category. All prints and slides which won (HM and above) in monthly competition are to be brought to the April general meeting. Digital entries will be handled automatically and do not need to be resubmitted. A separate Year End judging will take place (offsite at a later date) to award top honors in each category. Images submitted for Year End must be the same entry that won unless the print has become damaged. An identical reprint may be substituted. Submissions will be returned at the June meeting.
3. Top 5 points: The accumulated points in each category will be tallied at Year End. Awards will be given for the 5 highest totals in each category.
4. Make-up: If you missed one or more competition nights, you may make up entries in the last month of the Competition year, April, to count toward the Top points honors. You can enter up to 2 make-up entries for each category except themes. You cannot exceed the maximum entries for the year in any category. Make-up entries are not eligible for honors or for the year-end competition. The entries must be clearly marked on the entry form or digital title as make-ups.
5. Year End awards are announced at the annual banquet in late May or early June.

Ethics of Competition

Images entered in PCC Competitions are to be original artwork, conceived and exposed only by the photographer. This includes making any set-ups as well as any posing or arranging of the subject/model and lighting. An image which is solely a literal depiction of another person's artwork of any genre is not considered to be the photographer's original artwork.

General Rules

1. Members in good standing are eligible to compete. Associate members are not eligible.
2. Two entries per category are permitted, up to a total of eight entries per month.
3. You may choose to compete in either the A or B class. You do not need to compete in the same class in prints and digital. Once chosen, you may not switch during the competition year.
4. Authorship: All entries in all categories must originate as a photographic image (film or digital) exposed by the entrant. Direct copies of paintings, drawings, or another photographer's work by themselves are ineligible but may be a minor part of a composition.
5. No computer generated graphics or drawings are allowed in any category including Creative. Narrow single-color borders generated by extending canvas are allowed.
6. Re-submission: Any entry that receives an award in a PCC competition may not be re-submitted in the same category. No entry may be submitted more than 2 times in any one category. Any image which is substantially the same as an award winner is also ineligible to be submitted in the same category.
7. Manipulation rules apply to all categories but Creative. Using technology to optimize an image is acceptable but manipulating is not. **Optimizing** is making the best of an image that was captured. **Manipulation** involves adding images or elements into an image that were not in the original image capture, or substantially changing the content of the capture, and is considered photo illustration. The following example of what is and is not allowed is meant to give a framework but not to be an exhaustive list of all possible post-processing choices. Note that this applies to prints as well as digital projection.

Allowed:

- Multiple exposures of the same subject may be used for purposes of increased exposure latitude (HDR) or increased depth-of-field.
- Multiple frames may be stitched together to form a panoramic image of a scene.
- Deleting a small objectionable element such as a piece of debris or a small highlight (bright spot).
- Optimizing the capture using tools such as dodging, burning, levels, curves, saturation, sharpening, cropping, white balance adjustment, etc.

Not Allowed:

- Composite images of different subjects. This includes using entire images side-by-side.
- Adding an element or elements from a different image such as a sky or a moon.
- Deleting major elements of the capture such as removing the background or setting by cloning, blurring, or other special effects.

Entry Preparation

Prints

1. Prints must be securely mounted on a stiff mount board. Frames or glass are not allowed.
2. Size (all categories but Panoramic): Mount board must be between 11"x14" and 16"x20". The image may be any any size that fits on the board.
3. Size (Panoramic): Mount board must be between 12"x19" and 20"x36". The maximum print size is 14.4"x36". The print must conform to the aspect ratio rule for the category regardless of board size (width divided by length is 2.5 or greater).
4. Prints labels are supplied by the club and must be completed and affixed to the back of each entry, preferably in the top left corner. If a mount board is recycled, previous labels on the board must be clearly crossed out, or removed.
5. Entry forms supplied by the club shall be filled out at the time of submission.

Digital

1. Format: Images must be in jpg format. The competition is run on a Windows PC and files must be readable on that format.
2. Size: Images must be sized to a maximum width of 1024 pixels and a maximum height of 768 pixels. Oversized images don't display properly on the projector.
3. File Size: There is no restriction on the file size. It is recommended that you save images with "high quality" jpg for best effect. The resulting files should generally be between 200KB and 2MB. Smaller file sizes may suffer quality loss due to compression.
4. Color Space: sRGB is the recommended color space to render properly.
5. File Name: The program running the digital competition requires utilizing exactly the specified file name format. Files which do not conform exactly to the format may be disqualified for entry. Note that the commas are critical as they are field separators that the program utilizes so do not use any commas as part of a name or title. There must be no spaces after a comma. The format is:

Category,Class,Lastname,Firstname,Title.jpg

Category = o (open), t (theme), c (creative), n (nature)

Class = a or b (must be entered even for those categories that don't have a class)

Lastname = your last name

Firstname= your first name

Title = image title

Examples:

o,a,Jones,Jane,my entry.jpg

c,b,Smith,Joe,my artwork.jpg

6. Entry Method: The preferred entry method is to email your files as attachments to: Charlie@cobeen.com. Deadline for email entry is noon on the day of the meeting. Alternately, images can be brought to the meeting on one of the following media: compact flash card (preferred); Jump Drive; Smart Media; Secure Digital; Memory Stick or CD.

Judging Criteria

Each monthly competition has three judges.

Images entered in competition are judged using a set criteria of (1) Technical Merit, (2) Composition, and (3) Impact. Each judge has up to 3 points to award (whole integers only) in each of those areas per image. This allows a judge to award a high total of 9 points. If scoring is done correctly, there will never be an entry with fewer than 9 nor more than 27 points.

Technical Merit is defined as the quality image. Is the exposure correct? Does the image have the proper color balance (are the whites white and the blacks black)? Are those cactus needles well defined or the models eyes in focus? How well did the photographer handle the equipment to create the image.

Composition is how the image was constructed. Does the viewer's eye flow naturally to the center of interest? Was the rule of thirds followed (or is this one of the exceptions that works)? Are there distractions in the foreground or background? This part concerns the photographer's thought on how the image was created.

Impact is probably the most controversial area for judgement. Each judge has emotional triggers that come into play when certain images are seen, and can be a bias that a given judge will rate higher or lower. That is why PCC tries to have 3 judges of different photographic backgrounds for the competition, and the judges have always do their best to be impartial.

In the theme categories, impact is replaced by the portrayal of the theme subject. In the creative category, impact is replaced by creativity of the photographer. In reality, it is always impact that is judged. Instead of just the visual impact, it is the impact in connection with the theme or creative imagination that is used in the non-open competitions.

Good Luck To All