

Getting Started in Club Competitions

Class material is available on my OneDrive

https://1drv.ms/u/s!AoCjb_IY1INRi2k_VGQcDjL0AA2H?e=qbiw5L

Class Syllabus

- Basics of club competitions
- What makes a good competition image
- What judges look for
 - Larry Petterborg Zoom
- Looking at images critically
- Composition
- Discuss your images

Getting Started in Club Competitions

* group member activities

Class material is available on my OneDrive Monday's prior to class

https://1drv.ms/u/s!AoCjb_IY1INRi2k_VGQcDjL0AA2H?e=qbiw5L

1 - Jan 24

Class overview

The club competition basics

Example images with good and not-so-good scores

Thoughts on competing

*Will look at images next class – email one to me

2 - Feb 14

Looking at images

Image evaluation

Composition

*Photo critique – one digital

3 – Feb 28

Composition – Continued

*Photo critique – one digital

Zoom – Feb 23

What judges look for – Larry Petterborg

(See club website for link)

4 - Mar 14

Leading the eye

*Photo critique – one digital

5 - Mar 28

*Photo critique – one print with digital copy

--- April – Banquet

No Class

6 - April 25

*Critique finished May competition images

How to upload digital images and turn-in prints

May – No class

*Turn in May your competition images

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Introduction to Club Competition

January 25, 2023

- Club competition basics
- Example images with good and not-so-good scores
- Thoughts on competing
- What's Next

Monthly Club Competitions

Overview

- Competition year is May through February. Sam Lucas is Competition Director
- Turn-in images first meeting each month and results will be presented at the meeting the following month
- Classes – Beginner, Advanced and Masters. New members may choose to enter either Beginner or Advanced Class
- Categories - Color Prints, Monochrome Prints and Projected Images
- Competition subjects include Open and special Competition Topics
- Outside judges provide feedback. Monthly awards for each class and category (1,2,3,HM)
- Prints and competition results video are shown in the meetings. Competition results videos, year-to-date scores and competition subjects are on club website.
- Class advancement occurs prior to the beginning of each new competition year. Photographer may choose to go from Beginner to Advanced. Board also recommends advancement. Advancement to Masters is by invitation. One refusal of recommended advancement allowed. Cannot go back.

Competition Rules

All Categories

- May enter one image in each category each month.
- All images for a given month, whether projected or print, must be different.
- All elements of the final image must be the maker's own efforts. Beginner and Advanced may have images printed by third party.
- An image that has placed 1st, 2nd or 3rd in a monthly competition is not eligible for entry in *any* future monthly competitions regardless of changes in media, cropping, orientation, processing or title.
- If the photographer has other similar exposures of the same scene, these images are considered duplicates.
- The Competition Director may disqualify photos of nudes or on the grounds of distastefulness.
- Digital images for both projected images and prints must be received by 11:59 p.m. the Sunday before the competition meeting.

Competition Rules

Projected Images

- No restrictions on image presentation – mono, color, manipulation...
- File must be in JPG format
- Color space sRGB is recommended (though not required)
- An image must fit in a box that has a maximum width is 1920 pixels and a maximum height is 1280 pixels - *regardless of the image's orientation*



- File size shall not exceed 3MB. Not an issue with current size limits.

Competition Rules

Prints

- Prints must be mounted, but do not need to be matted.
 - For Advanced and Master Classes, the print *mount* shall not be larger than 16"x20" or smaller than 5"x7". No restrictions on print size.
 - For Beginner Class, the print *mount* shall not be larger than 11"x14" or smaller than 5"x7". The print shall not be larger than 8 ½"x11".
- The title (40 characters max), maker's UserID and competition class must be on the back in the upper left corner. Can print labels from website. Cover any prior labels so that only one label is visible.
- Monochrome Print – Must be completely de-saturated or converted to grayscale or a grayscale image that has been toned with one color across the entire image, eg sepia toned. Spot color not allowed.
- Color Print - Any print that doesn't meet the definition of a monochrome print .
- Make sure that there is no exposed adhesive.
- Must submit digital copy of print (see Projected Images for requirements).

Dallas Camera Club

Scoring Criteria

- The score awarded by judge based upon these Scoring Elements:
 - **Impact** – one's first impression viewing an image. Images that elicit a response, evoke emotion or tell a story. WOW factor
 - **Composition** – the design of an image and how its various elements relate to one another.
 - **Technique** – the approach used to create the image. Lighting, posing, capture, processing, printing, presentation media... applied to making the image.

Yearly Competition Schedule

- First meeting each month (2nd Tuesday) is competition night
- May – First submission for new competition year. Potpourri slideshows presented since there are no images to judge.
- June – Judging of May images. June image submission.
- February - Last submission for competition year
- March – Judging of February images. Last competition judging
- April - Annual Awards Banquet with year-end results
- Start over again

dallascameraclub.org/CompetitionsMenu.aspx

- Competition Rules
- Competition Topics
- Preparing Competition Images

- Competition Results
- Winners Gallery
- Competition Score Sheets
- Contest Videos

- End of Year Awards and Special Contests
- End of Year Awards

- The BIRD - DFW Annual Contest
- Potpourri Night

Some Thoughts on Judging

- Judges may be PSA judges, professional photographers, high school or college instructors, master photographers from other camera clubs...
- One judge's opinion
- We ask judges try to put biases aside, but sometimes hard to do
- Instructions to judges allow a lot of latitude
- Try to choose judges who do not know club photographers
- Photographer's names are not shown, only UserID on images
- Larry Petterborg will discuss judges and judging via Zoom in February

Images that scored well
Images that did not do as well

Images Scored Well

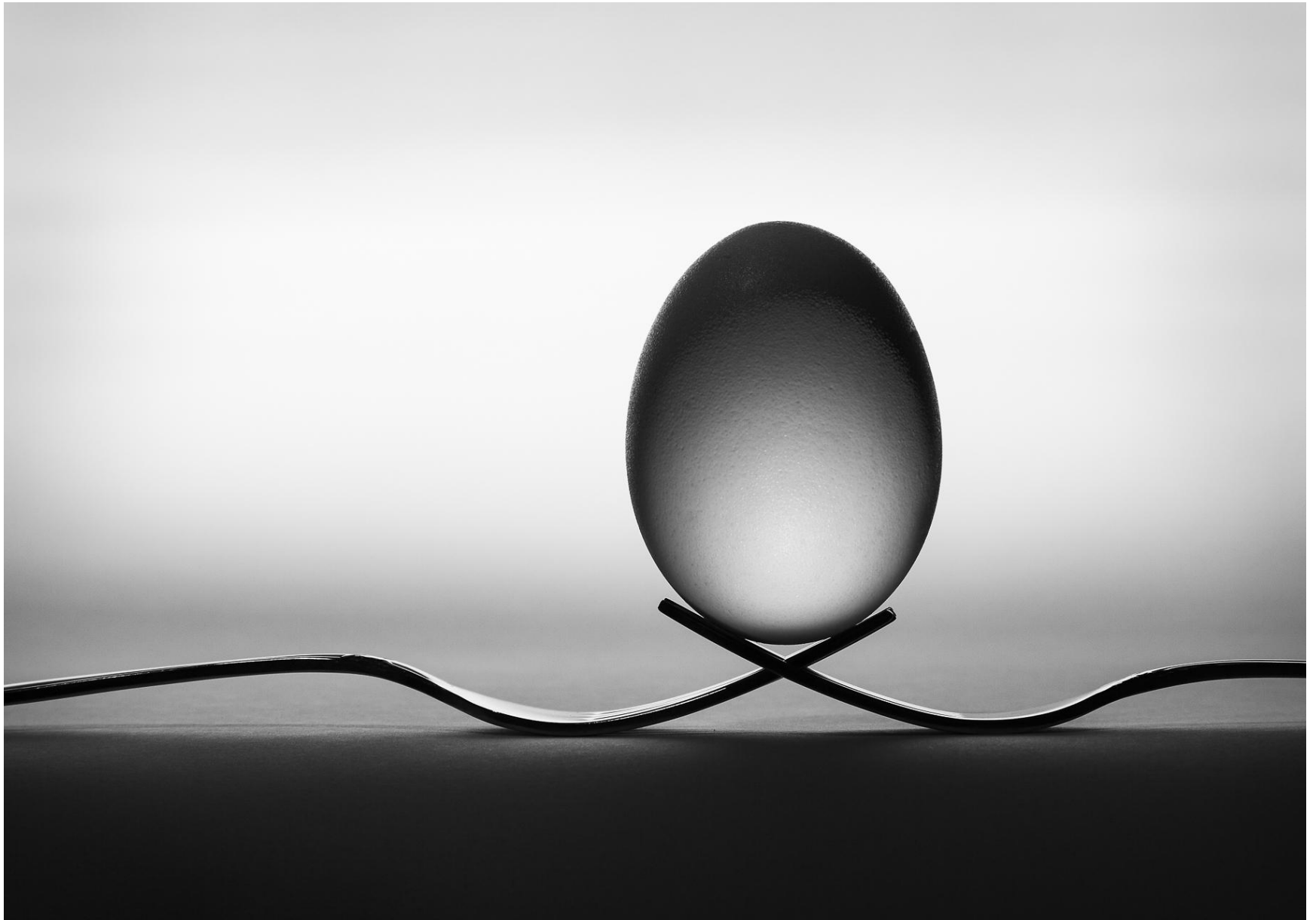
- Five Chairs – to the point, focused, good light and color
- Anatomy of Artichoke – fascinating
- Playing with light – good light, forks, inner glow, balance, graphic, *no story*
- Still Water – abstraction
- Morning Fog Lifting – magic light, dreamy mood, reflections and ripples
- Red Gate – soft, serene, red, color, texture
- Not a Fair Fight – good story telling, interaction
- Don't Forget the Underarms – dynamic composition, intense color, story telling
- Sporty – fun, feel the snow, panorama, room to run, spots of color on white
- Whale of a Tail – stopped action, peak of action, good crop



Five Chairs – to the point, focused, good light and color



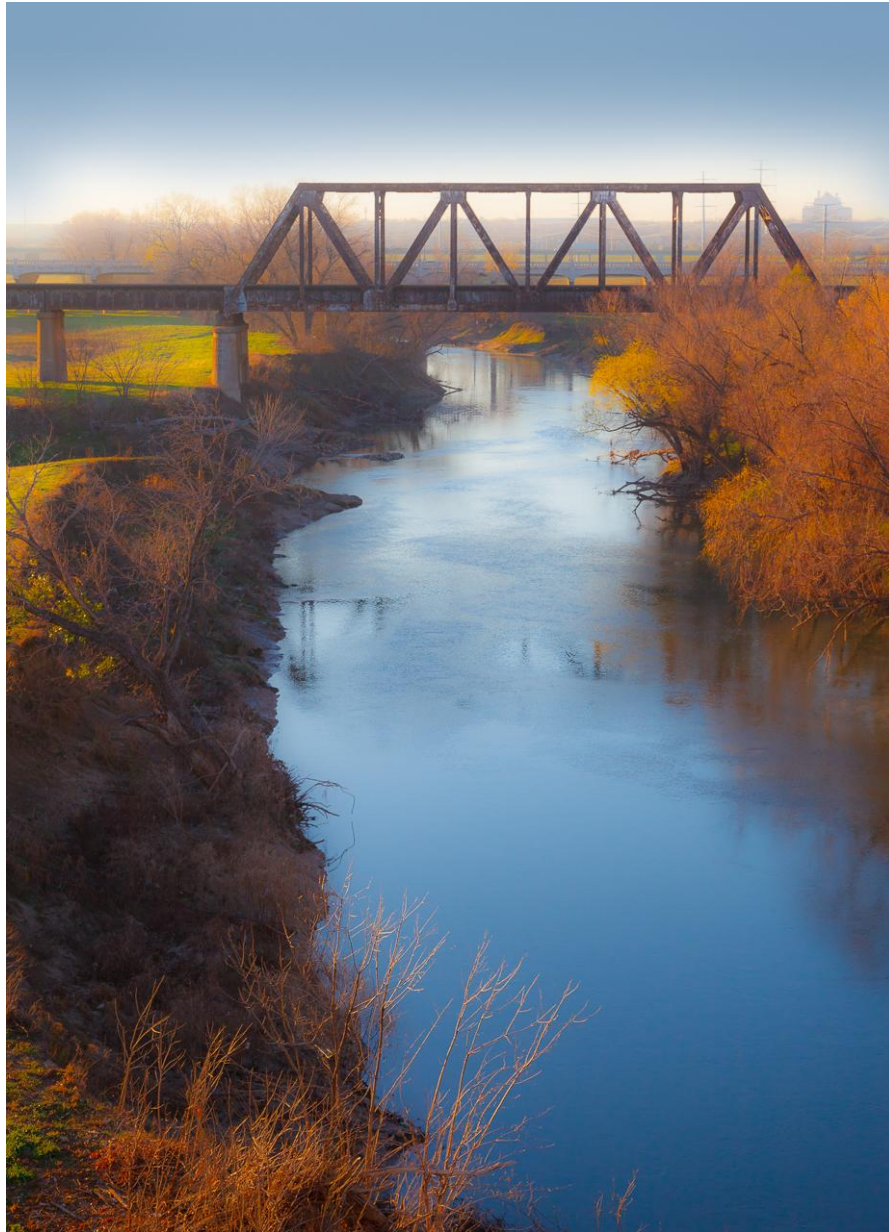
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Whale of a Tail – stopped action, peak of action, good crop

Examples

Images That Did Not Do So Well

- Abandoned – not compelling subject, predictable
- North Sea – add more rocks
- New Year's Prayer – vacation snap shot, need more creative approach, get closer, different angle, busy background, *entered twice*
- 6 Seconds in Shanghai – traditional night shot, need fresh approach
- Caddo Sunset – use ND to blur the water
- Doo Lough – darken bottom right
- Rio Chama – so so light, better in color
- Object d' Art – nothing to tie people together, 4 on wall are not engaged, split image, flat light
- Kil MacDough – confusing, arches need better definition



Abandoned – not compelling subject, predictable



North Sea – add more rocks



New Year's Prayer –
vacation snap shot,
need more creative
approach, get closer,
different angle, busy
background. *Entered
twice*



6 Seconds in Shanghai – traditional night shot, need fresh approach



Caddo Sunset – use ND to blur the water



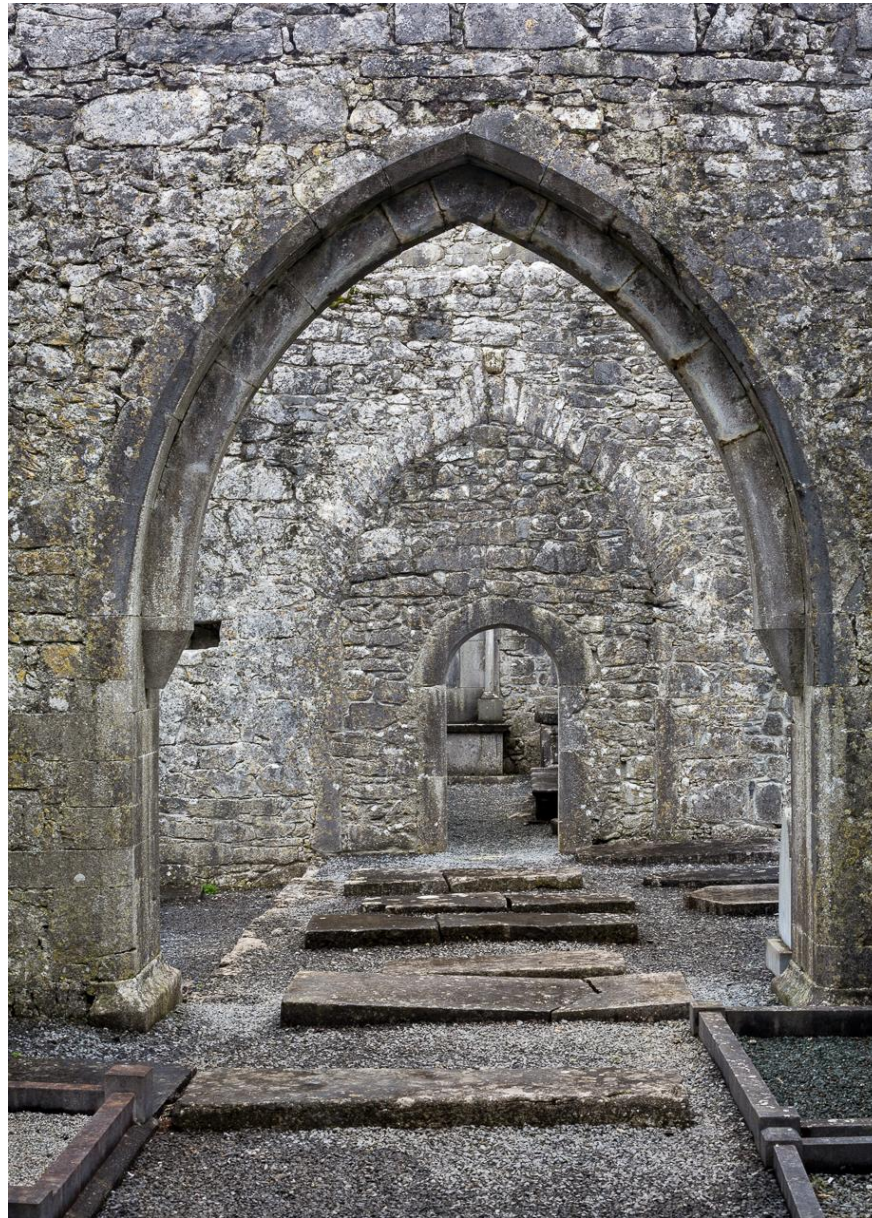
Doo Lough – darken bottom right



Rio Chama – so so light, better in color



Object d' Art – nothing to tie people together, 4 on wall
are not engaged, split image, flat light



Kil MacDough – confusing, arches need better definition

Judges Feedback

- When I started, I wrote down comments about all images. Not just mine.
- After a year or so, the same comments kept recurring. See list on OneDrive.
- A few big picture observations
 - Need clear subject and compelling image
 - Good balanced composition – rule of 3rds, edges, odd numbers, leading lines...
 - Technical problems are distraction – spots, sharpening, saturation...
 - Some subjects are crapshoot– abstracts, wildlife, portraits, others art, highly manipulated...
- Remember, the opinion of a judge is one persons thoughts. Their opinion does not define who you are as a person, photographer or artist.

Looking at Images *Critically*

- Criticism is all about asking questions - “Critical Thinking”.
 - What do I see?
 - What is it about?
 - Is it well composed?
 - Is post processing one well or are there obvious processing issues?
 - What do I think?
- Criticism “slows down” viewing (like using a tripod).
- Criticism provides a way to better understand and appreciate images.
- While the results of critiquing an image may be negative, it may ultimately lead to informed and rational reactions to the image.
- And, ultimately teaches you how to evaluate your own images.

Why Bother?

- Competition is fun. It's challenging. Provides a reason to make photographs
- Good way to learn and share
- Feedback from judges and peers is a good way to improve your skills
- Critically look at other images and learn from them – What works? What does not?
- Try to not worry about scores for a while. Focus on judges comments
- Remember that a single judge is used in monthly competitions – one person's opinion, listen to feedback with an open mind, you are free to disagree
- Nothings personal, but you may need a thick skin at times
- There's a social side
 - Networking and friendships
 - Shared learning – cultivate relationships that you can share with
 - Fieldtrips
 - Mentors
- My hope is that you will start competing in May - the start of the 2023-24 competition year

What's Next

- Looking at images
- Critiquing images
- Start discussion of composition
- *Will discuss your images. Email one image to me prior to Monday before class
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