

Fort Worth Camera Club April 2026 Competition - Judge: Larry Petterborg

Class B Digital							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
B	1107	Available For Quiet Reflection	8				Nice try, interior shots of old churches are fun to do. I think that if the maker had moved to the right and lined up with the center of the door, a symmetric composition may have worked better. The tilting pew and slanted walls are distracting.
B	1701	Taking Off	10				The maker is to be commended for getting up early and going out in the cold to get this shot. The crane's eyes are sharp which is critical for this type of photo. A faster shutter speed would have made the wing tips sharp as well. The overall blue cast is a bit much for me, perhaps a warmer white balance would help. Also, if possible, giving the lead bird more space to move into would help the overall composition.
B	1830	Shadow of Death	7				An interesting subject with very strong backlighting. The maker was right to attempt this shot. It often important to take many frames to insure getting at least one that works. Unfortunately, for me, this image is cropped much too tightly (cutting off the bottom of the vulture) and clipping the back of the bird. I also find the material in front of the subject to be a distraction. If possible, give your subjects space and adjust in post.
B	1866	Grace in Phi	10				I feel that photographing things that are well known is important for developing one's skills and unique style. The Thanksgiving Square stained-glass is a great example. It is good practice but at the same time, it isn't necessarily a good candidate for a contest entry because it has been done so many times already. For me, this image would be stronger if it not quite so dark (using HDR techniques might be a good way to handle that) and if the entire spiral at the top was included.
B	1876	Winslows	7				In general, it is best to have a well defined main subject at the heart of any contest entry. It isn't clear when first looking at this image what the maker intended. One's eye is immediately drawn to the bright spot on the wall and the overhead light responsible for it.
B	1825	Jag-U-R	10	HM		Kara Powell	This is a well made photo of the front end of a car. As such it offers many things for the viewer to look at. Maybe too many. There are many more and possibly more interesting subjects in this scene if the maker was able to get closer and isolate them.
B	1856	Fruit Bowl	11	3		Earl Key	This is a good attempt at a still life. It would be improved if the maker had included the bottom of the fruit, used focus stacking to get everything in the frame sharp, and better managed the reflections.
B	1835	A Snake In The Grass	12	2		Bill Coston	I think that what had been my favorite image in this group if had been cropped tighter. The focus and exposure of the snake's head are great. If most of the left half of the frame were to be removed, it would be a big improvement. When you can simplify an image and remove distractions, you should.
B	1885	Shared Waters Nassau	12	1		Raul Pena	What a fun shot! Getting down on eye level with the pig is key to making this photo work. The subject takes up most of the frame. I like that the horizon is located above the pig. It would have been useful to have some holding a reflector to throw some light on the eye. It is possible in editing this file that the shadowed side of the face could have been brightened.

Award all 4 ribbons

Class A Digital							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
A	929	Iguana in Tree	7				This is a very unflattering rendering of a lizard. The subject is flat and the white rears have no detail. The background is a distraction.
A	1113	Reflections	11			Mike Gill	A generally well made landscape. The sky, reflection, and midground look good. I don't think that the foreground contributes anything. Cropping up to the major cloud might be an improvement.
A	1394	Hello Baby!	8				Who doesn't like baby animals? Two things keep this from being a good photograph. First is the partial Zebra behind the subject and second is the babies butt is much brighter than its face. I suggest taking more time and waiting for conditions to change to get the shot.
A	1479	Trees Frozen in Time	9				The Petrified Forest is an interesting place for sure. This appears to me to be a well exposed document of a visit the park. I think a more interesting image could be made by including fewer elements in the scene
A	1534	Alone Again	7				On first glance, this is an intriguing image but on closer examination, it does not hold up for me. The woman and dog should be the stars of this show but their faces are not visible. The very strong back light is hard to understand. Why is her's the dense shadow on the street? There appear to me to be strange blurred areas in the scene as well.
A	1731	Golden Glide	11			Vicki Lai	There certainly are a lot of golden tones in the background to contrast with this duck and set it off by itself. The fast shutter speed froze the action very well. When viewed from a considerable distance from the monitor, the bird looks good but on closer inspection there is virtually no feather detail giving the subject a plastic appearance.
A	1776	Dandelion	8				This monochromatic photo of a dandelion seedhead is an interesting attempt at making a simple graphic image of a common object. For me, it doesn't quite work. I think that the top half of the frame could be better used by showing more of the subject. The white vignette at the bottom is a distraction.
A	1787	Where Water Wins	10				I don't know what the maker wanted the viewer to see here. I see this scene as an abstract of several vertical columns. It is a static composition. The white column looks like soft milk in contrast to the rocks on the sides. To make this more dynamic, I suggest a faster shutter speed to maintain more texture in the water. Also, try rotating the top of the frame to right to create a diagonal to add some energy.
A	1817	Honeyed Moments	11			Saskia Vaughan	This is a good capture of a bee hard at work. The exposure is good. The focus seems off to me, I think that you should be able to see the facets of the bee's compound eyes more clearly. Try using a square crop to make the bee appear larger and see what you think.
A	1824	Spring	11			Gosia Bodurka	The rich saturated colors in the image are delightful; an advantage of photographing in low contrast lighting conditions. It appears to me that the maker rendered the foliage somewhat impressionistically, an interesting choice.
A	1833	Metal Disks	11			Duane Sager	This is an interesting pattern shot made with strong directional light. For me, there isn't a good stopping point for my wandering eye.
A	1841	Ember and Wing	7				I appreciate the maker's attempt to capture a butterfly on a flower. The bright white background, is for me, a bit of a distraction because it demands attention while providing no information in support of the composition. Unfortunately the busyness of the flower distracts from the subject. When trying to make a close-up photograph of a non-flat subject, you need a great deal of DOF to keep the wing sharp.
A	1842	Blue Door	10				I like the simplicity of this photo. If it was possible, I would have more on the right side and less on the left. I feel the door handle is much too close to the edge of the frame.
A	1845	Ba Na Hills Magical Hands	10				This is a well rendered image of an interesting location. The soft light enhances the appearance of the scene. I feel that is missing something such as a person walking down the path that would create more interest for the viewer and elevate the impact of the photo.
A	1847	Gathering Storm	8				The best landscape photographs are made in strong directional light either early in the morning or late in the day. While this image has a great cloud formation, the rest of the scenery seems flat. By darkening the sky, I think the maker has created contrast halos along the mountain ridge line which is distracting.

A	1851	Caddo Air BnB	11			Dee Overturf	I've seen this duckblind several times before while on Caddo Lake. I like the B&W treatment but question the need for the white vignette. Try it as a sepia tone and see what you think. For me that would go better with the vignette.
A	1699	Long Live the Longhorn!	12	HM		Susan Taylor	A Texas icon! The exposure and focus are good and the background is under control. It would be a more interesting photo if the cow was doing something. Try flipping it 180 degrees so that it isn't looking out of the frame and taking the viewer with it.
A	1829	Sailing at Sunset	12	HM		Ginny Young	This is a dramatic silhouette of a three-masted sailing vessel. Most of the ship's rigging is below the horizon and shows up well. The rich colors are wonderful. I think that a crop of a quarter of the right side of the frame would enhance the size of the ship. Consider cloning out the 2 boats in the background.
A	1874	Setting sun @ Ranger Air Show	13	3		Jay Rektorik	What is the difference between a truly evocative photograph and a document? I think it is the "story" being told. This image goes beyond showing the viewer what the photographer saw but encourages you to feel what the maker felt. Good job!
A	1637	Photo Op Between Clubs	13	2		Richard Payson	For me me, this is a well exposed and sharp photo of an animated group. The subdued background adds context with being distracting. I think it may have been even better if what appears to be on camera flash could have been moved above and to one side to create more depth in the faces.
A	1865	Serenity	14	1		Margaret Mayo	Congrats to the maker for doing something different. This for me was a real treat to see. It is simple yet powerful. Fun to look at.

Award 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 2 Honorable Mentions

Masters Digital							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
M	554	First Light at Convict Lake	12			Jack Young	This is a technically well done landscape. I think that cropping darker areas on the sides would enhance the presentation.
M	605	What Goes Up	12			Robert Chura	What an interesting perspective of this structure. The light is exquisite. You can spend much time looking at and appreciating all of the symbols.
M	669	Big Swing and a Hit	10			Tom Savage	Good job capturing this moment. For me, I think that it could be better if it were cropped differently if possible. Remove the half catcher and give the ball a little more room to move into. The guy in the background in an unfortunate distraction.
M	1227	Ray of Sunshine	11			Roy Richardson	The maker has captured a well lit butterfly with beautiful light. It was shot nearly perpendicular to the plane of the wings with with sufficient depth of field to render the both antennae acceptably sharp. If you are not following PSA rules for nature, I suggest removing the distraction on the leaf in front and below the subject as well as the flower bud above and behind.
M	1352	Construction Worker and Reflections	10			John Nixon	This is a sharp and well exposed photo of a worker surrounded by the work environment. For me, this is such a very busy scene that I feel overwhelms the subject.
M	1353	The Abandoned Forest	12			David Morgan	This waterfall scene appears to have been shot in soft lighting conditions which help bring out the rich saturated greens of the forest. The shutter speed of slow enough to to create the silky water but with some texture. I think a slight crop from the top of the frame could remove the distraction of the bright small falls that are detached from the main interest in the foreground.
M	1387	Osprey Fishing Mono Lake	9			Marilyn Graham	Great light and a wonderful subject. Unfortunately, I feel the tufa formation dominates the poor osprey and its dinner.
M	1531	Playing with Intensity	11			Chad Fenner	This is a gritty high contrast image of the a performer that just misses the mark for me. I don't feel that there is enough detail in his face or neck of the guitar for me to connect. I would like to see the intensity in his expression. The bright spot on the side of his head is a distraction.
M	1539	Don't Touch My Hat	11			Jeff Heyer	This cowboy does not appear to be all that pleased to be in front of the camera. It also looks like he has had his nose rearranged a time or two. The right side of the subject's face seems to be over exposed as the beard highlights are blown out and lack detail.
M	1671	Castel Sant'Angelo	12			Stephen Stookey	I feel that this photo is well done technically. The exposure and depth of focus are supported by a strong composition.
M	1711	Tulip	11			KP Wilska	A very evocative image. The complimentary red and green colors are pleasing. The composition, in my opinion, could be tightened up by applying a square crop to reduce the negative space above and below the main subject.
M	720	Sinclair Station With Walker	12	HM		Ken Spencer	I find this to be a wonderfully different photo. The old gas station and pickup truck are rendered very well and would have made a fine photo. But the guy walking by adds a element of mystery that elevates the image.
M	1499	The Intercept	13	3		Ron Shue	Great shot, its important to have nature subjects doing something and this one sure is. The background wonderfully non-distracting. I suggest either crop above or below the foot.
M	1449	Still Life With Roses and Pears	14	2		Roy O'Rear	A wonderful still life. The lighting and focus are great. I suggest moving pear on the right a little to cover the twine binding the rose stems.
M	1621	RamBo	15	1	Y	Brian Fesko	For me, this is a superb rendering of an interesting subject in excellent light with no significant distractions.

Award all 4 ribbons

Class B Prints							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
B	1866	Unblinking	7				This print is a snapshot of a marble sculpture. Generally, a picture of someone's art is not considered a suitable contest subject. The face of the subject doesn't seem to be in focus.
B	1856	Basket With Balls	10	1		Earl Key	This print is a well exposed and in focus still life. I suggest the maker think about simplifying any future similar photos. The steaming watering can with dried items has nothing to do with the "Basket with Balls" (I do not normally comment on titles but in this case, the element for which the piece was named, is the least significant one in the frame). The whole setup needs to be pushed to the left to balance the space on both sides of the cutting board.

Award 1st place only

Class A Prints							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
A	1776	Mary Leonard Chapel	11			Manny Lois	I commend the maker for trying something different. I can appreciate the extra time and effort that went into making this piece. For me, the base photo seem too dark/dense to really shine with the foil behind the thin paper. The building detail is good. I feel the area of uncovered foil on the right edge is a distraction as is the the little black strip in the lower left corner.
A	1817	Sandhill in Liquid Gold	10				Cranes aare magnificent birds. The composition of the image is good, it give the bird plenty fo room while excluding any distractions in the surrounding area. A gentle light illuminates the subject. I don't feel that the bird is as sharp and it could be.
A	1833	Refracting Droplets	13	2		Duane Sager	This image grabs you with its vibrant colors and draws you in to see what is going on in the droplets. The diagonal adds a dynamic energy to this print.
A	1874	Heading Out On a Foggy Morning	14	1		Jay Rektorik	This print has a warm comforting feel to it. You can imagine the sun coming up out there somewhere and the day just beginning. Great detail in the boat rigging.

Award 1st and 2nd places only

Masters Prints							
Class	Number	Title	Score	Place	Best in Show	Name	Comments
M	605	Dock Circle	10			Robert Chura	This is an interesting "abstract" images of lines and textures. The tonal range goes from black to white while maintaining detail. I think I like it better as a horizontal presentation where the bold dark shape acts as an arrow to the white subject.
M	669	Fishing	10			Tom Savage	This brightly colored photo of two fishermen is well composed. For me, there is too much contrast. I would like to see more shadow detail in their faces and perhaps the surface of the water.
M	720	Second Floor McClennon County Courthouse (Wa	12			Ken Spencer	This is a technically well made monochrome print. It is sharp front to back and the appears to be a full range of tones. For me, it is very static and sterile. I would like to have seen some human activity taking place.
M	1449	Hard Stop	10			Roy O'Rear	The timing on the calf roping shot is terrific, the horses expression is very powerful. I think the crop is a bit tight. The background is very busy but reasonably well controlled. It is just near impossible to obtain a clean separation however.
M	1621	The Interview	12			Brian Fesko	For me, this well done monochrome print forces me to wonder what is going on here. The leading lines guide the eye to the chair's wonderful shadow. I would consider removing the lighted area on the floor left of the chair.
M	1539	Stay Away From My Corn	12	HM		Jeff Heyer	"They" say that you can't take good pictures in mid-day sun. Well, I think this shot says that you can. The maker had the correct shutter speed and aperture to stop the action and keep the subjects sharp.
M	1499	Between Rides	12	3		Ron shue	I feel that this very evocative print provides the viewer a great visual experience from the tack hanging from the barn wall to the cowboy's fingers stroking the dog's head. You have to wonder what he is thinking about and what he sees out in the bright daylight.
M	1352	Cuyahoga Valley Bridge	13	2		John Nixon	For me, this is a wonderful B&W architectural print. Tonal range is excellent. It is sharp all the way back and the vertical lines are parallel. The vanishing point perspective gives the photo depth. Well done.
M	1531	Spanish Chocolate	14	1		Chad Fenner	A very well done "studio" portrait of two young dancers.

Award all 4 ribbons