Tideland Photography Club

Jul/Aug 2022

Photography Contest

Beginner

Here we have an interesting and fun image. For me, the logo on the front of the cooler conveys a mood of playfulness and excitement over leaving my cares behind for the moment to have a good time and enjoy myself. The red is the dominant color as I think it should be as it is an integral part of your story. I feel you have balanced the colors well as the pastel blue in back compliments the red instead of detracting from or competing with it.

I really like the way you used an extremely tight shot to focus on the boy's enjoyment of his delicious treat. I can almost taste the flavor and feel the nice, cold refreshing ice cream. I like the way you've included the ice cream on his tongue. I feel the colors are subtle and smooth, there are no hot spots and the focus is handled well with the background just a bit soft, which helps me to see and visualize the taste of this delectible delicasy. Although - in most cases - it's nice to see eyes, I feel that here, the closed eyes convey the mood of pleasure. I am, however, a bit distracted by the yellow - what appears to be - flower patals on my left. There is also a blue spot under the flowers and my eye keeps wanting to return to the spot in order to figure out what it is. This is easily remedied in two ways. One, to blur the background even more or two, darken the backgrounf. Either one would serve to bring - and keep - my interest focused on the face.

Intermediate

This image gives me a feeling of cold as well it should. After all, we are in a freezer with ice cream. I like the way you've blurred the background slightly to create a depth of field which draws my attention to the main subject, the beautiful colors of the ice cream. I am also enjoying the blue colors of the background which add to the cold atmosphere. I also lie the other colors in the round tubs. They show a variety but do not compete with your main subject, due to the softness. I like the fact that you've included bith hands balanced by the cut-off at both wrists and that the server's fingernails are almost the same color as the blue background and the serving scooper. I am, however, a bit distracted by the swirling blue lines on my upper left and to the right of the top hand. It looks as if there was some cloning in those spots and it is extremely noticeable, especially at the thumb of the top hand. Whenever cloning or spot-healing, it's best to go lightly. Too heavy a hand can make the procedure more noticeable and create unwanted artifacts as well.

<mark>"Caramel Toffee Crunch 7"</mark>

Sweet amd simple. That's what I like about this image. I like the positioning of the glass in that the low lip of the glass rim is pointing directly at the camera. Usually, judges complain about main subjects in the center but in this case, I believe it is very effective. The lighting is handled very well, there is no blowout and there is good detail in the white ice cream. I like your choice of background color as blue helps give it a cold look. It appears as if you used a slight vignette but to my eye, it feels like there is a bit too much space around the subject. Maybe a reverse vignete would help, and may even enhance that cold feeling. I would try a slightly tighter crop from both sides and the top. Also, it looks to me if the image is a bit soft.

You have done an excellent job of capturing the white and creamy flow of this sweet treat, as it magically slides down the clean, silver spout and into the tray. The whites are handled perfectly with a bit of a shine, and the details in the ripples are well-defined. I especcially like the white vignette as it adds to the cold feeling. Ordinarily, I would be distracted by the orange towel and blue spoon but in this case, I feel they work to emhasize the work space. That said, the white vignette helps them too as it dulls them down and keeps them from interferring with the main subject. I also like the nuts in the other tray bin, although I would like to see the bin filled with them. My eye, however, keeps going to the object - it looks like fingers - at my top right - and that could easity be spot-healed or cloned out.

I enjoy the tight composition which includes her parted hair above her forehead. I also liike how you've included the flow of her hair on my right. I also enjoy the look in her eye and the catch light. Two things that I feel would help this image. One, to my eye, the backgound is a bit too busy and colorful. I would either additionally soften the background or darken it - preferably soften to further enhance the depth of field - and two, the hand at the right border is so close that it is cut off. In my opinion, this makes the image appear to be crunched.

This lady is definitely enjoying herself. To me, the mood conveyed here is happiness with not only her tasty treat, but the fact that someone is taking her picture. The lighting is perfect, There is no blowout or skin shine, her eyes look happy and I see a catch light in both. The entire image is sharp with good texture on the white wall which also has nothing blown. When shooting, be aware of these two things which I find in this image. One, the image is slanting downhill to the right and two, the top of the ladys head is touching the top border. It is always important to make your viewers comforatable and with these two issues, I feel off-balace. Pay close attention to your borders while shooting. This is especially true if printing as something touching the border will get cut off by the matting.

 A wonderful pooch shot. The nose, eye - with catch light - and fur are in focus while the body and collar are soft. I like that because to me, this shows good depth of field. I also enjoy the ice cream on the dog's upper lip and the pink tongue as it licks. Although we only see one eye - which is somewhat hidden - I find it kind of comical in that the one eye is kooing at the photographer. Split concentration I guess. Three things I would try if this were my image which - I believe - would draw my attention more to the dog and peak of action. One, I would crop in from my left, up to a little bit of the dog's ear. Two, I would spot-heal or clone out the green collar and ring and three, I would spot-heal or clone out the hand that is holding the cone. I wouldn't mind seeing the hand it there was more of it.

What I am really enjoying is the composition which I feel is very strong. You've captured the boy with an expression that gives me the feeling that he is tasing this flavor for the first time. Even though your title says so, it actually looks like he is a bit unsure of what he is about to taste. The exposure is handled well and the lighting is soft with no hot spots. I also like the way I can see part of his eyes as he looks trepidatiously at what he is going to put his tongue on. A couple of things that draw my eye away from your main subject are one, the blue wall behind his right ear. That can be easily darkened down and two, the white and yellow background objects next to his left eye. I don't think they should be completely lost because they are helpful in identifying the depth of field but I would certainly darken them so they are not so distracting.

"Leftovers" 9

Talk about leading lines! This is a wonderful example. Although they aren't straight, they are effective in that they give me a feeling of falling into a narrow shaft and landing on ice cream containers. I like the lines and measuremnts on only one wall and that the other three walls are blank. It also appears that three containers have ice on them and one does not. I like that because the one iceless container shows me the difference. If this were my image, I would try a reverse vignette to emphasize cold. I woulsld also like to see the entire number 12 at the top right corner.

This is a really good image. For me, what makes it is everyone else is looking elsewhere and the girl o my right is looking at you with ice cream all over her mouth. Good peak of action ith the girl in the middle reaching into the cupwith her mouth wide open. Almost looks as if she squished her fingers into the cold ice cream. The composiyion and lighting are handled nicely and the positioning of all four subjects is well executed. At first glance, it appeared that you put the logo in the top left but then I saw that it was a sign on the glass. Good job. You fooled my eye for a second. Try and keep an eye on your borders, when shooting and cropping. To me, it's a bit tight on the top. right and bottom. Also, mt eye goes to two small spots. One, a table leg foot on my left border and a white spot in the lower right corner. Those could easily be spot-healed as well as the big, black space in the cement by the white spot in the lower left. Little things like that - when eliminated - can make an image look much cleaner.

<mark>"Ice Cream" 12</mark>

Very creative and imaginative. This image must have been tough to get. I really enjoy the composition. You either got lucky or you planned it but either way, the man and woman walking and holding hands are in the perfect spot. Some judges might complain about the shadow on your hand but I actually think it works well as it shows the shadow of the person holding it. In other words, the shadow adds to the connection the ice cream cone has with you. If this were mine. I would crop from my right just a sliver. To my eye, it would put the cone a little more off-center. While we're at the right border, I would also spot-heal the white pole in the background and white object next to it as - to my eye - it detracts from the ice cream. Ordinarily, I don't like too much headroom but in this case, I like the color of the blue sky. I also enjoy the clouds. The image, however, seems a bit soft but I applaud your imagination.

Advanced

This is a good medium shot and the composition is well executed, You've captured a good expression on her face which tells me that the ice cream is oh so cold …but delicious. My eye, however, keeps going to two things. One, there is blowout on her chest which could be darkened a bit and two, in my opinion, the background is so bright that it competes with your subject. Also - because the background color is the almost the same as the woman's face - I see a lack of separation. I like that you've softened the background slightly but in addition, I feel that darkening the background woild strengthen the image.

<mark>"I Scream for Ice Cream" 8</mark>

This is a good humorous image. Good comosition and great expression on her face with her mouth open, the wide eyes and catch lights. Also, the shot is nice and sharp. The title matches the expression as it appears as if the woman could very well be screaming. Although the lighting is soft and subtle, there is one area that my eye keeps landing on. Below her right eye there is a small area that's blown out. The same blowout appears on the fingers of her right hand. These areas can easily be darkebed just a tad

"Ice Cream Overload" 8

I am enjoying the lighting on the girl's face and the skin tones are hanlded well. Normally, judges like to see eyes and I must admit, it would be nice but - in this case - I think it works well, because to me, the main subject is the ice cream and candy and the secondary subject is the girl. I would, however, like to see a bit more space on my left as the girl's fingertips are cut off, Also, I feel that the outside background is so bright that it seriously compromises the rest of the image. If this were mine, I would darken the background as I feel this would bring more attention to the ice cream and girl.

"What Refreshing Looks Like" 8

This is a very simple image. I am enjoying the texture of the choclate and nuts. I also enjoy how you've captured the chocotate on the stick which tells me the ice cream bar was dipped. I think what really makes this image is the bite taken out of it, the ice cream under the chocolate and the piece of chocolate and glob of ice cream that are hanging on for dear life. I wish, however, that I could see more depth. Perhaps selecting and darkening the bright white background would do the trick.

I like the colors, swirls and texture of the ice cream. I also enjoy how you've captured the shiny areas of the ice cream which gives me the idea thet you had better eat it soon as it is beginning to melt. The lighting is soft and subtle and I like the positioning of the ice cream mountain on the side of the dish. I only wish I could see the entire red spoon which - I believe - is an integal part of the image. In addition to the red spoon being cut, I find that - althogh colorful - the blue spot in the upper right is a bit distracting, Also, there are four white areas at the top border which could easily be handled by either spot-healing. cloning or cropping out.

This is an extremely creative image. I suspect a filter was used and I like how the fiter effects cover just a little part of the girl, but not the main action which is her right arm, hand, ice cream cone and face. The colors are handled well and don't compete with the main subject. Your color choices are very palitable and work well together. The sunlight is also subtle and I see no blowout with the exception of a bright and shiny spot on her left shoulder which could easily be spot-healed or cloned out. Even though there is shade on her face, I think it works to your advantage in that there is no direct and/or hasrsh sunlight on her face. In addition, you haven't lost any of the detail in her face. Nice job.

Open

A gorgeous scene with the blue sky, white peak, darker range and ground. I am enjoying the colors which are vibrant and striking and I like the layers you have captured. I must say however, I feel the image suffers from over-processing. Be careful not to be too heavy-handed in your processing as it can cause all sorts of problems. For instance, I am noticing a fair amonut of noise and there is a dark halo around the top of the white mountain. Both are most likely the result of over-processing. Noise can also be caused by too high an ISO, a tight zoom, low lighting, a small censor or all of the above. I don't. however, think any of those - in this case - are to blame because I can only see noise in the sky. Also, to my eye, the image is slanting down to my right. Always make sure your horizons are straight. Finally, to my eye, the foreground is cluttered with many disrtractions. Two of the flowers are cut off and the dead branches - in my opinion - do absolutely nothing to help the image.

<mark>"Thrill of a Ride" 7</mark>

Good action shot and yet, you were successful in freezing the action. The lighting is dappled and soft and therefore is also very successful. You have captured the fun and excitement of these people as they fly through the water at what appears to be a high speed. I can tell they are moving fast because you've included the water spray, not only on the side of the boat, but at the back as well. If you hadn't included the back spray, the image would be less successful in showing the speed. One thing. I would like to see a little more space at the bottom of the boat. Always make sure your subjects have "breathing room" at all four borders.

Cute shot. Makes me want one as a pet. Good title to fit the scene. This - I'm guessing - was taken either on a cloudy day of just after sunset. I say that because there is no harsh, direct sunlight. The lighting is handled successfully with no blowout and there is good detail on the birds fur ...I guess they are too young to have feathers yet. The composition is good although I think it might have been better to have more on the bottom and less on top. This way, the image would hve been sharper in totality. This is one of those time I will say that you need to play around with it and see what you like. I would at least try it. I always say, "When in doubt, try it out." Also, if you decide to keep it as is, I would darken the background and spot-heal the white and yellow spots as - to my eye - they are distractions.

This - to me - is a simple and elegant image. I love the fore, mid and backgrounds. The dappled lighting is nicely handled and I really enjoy the colors and textures in the foreground grasses. The horizon is straight and the after-sunset clouds and sky are a very nice touch. In my opinion - because I feel a little off balance - to crop down from the top to a little above the lighthouse and eliminate a lot of the empty sky, would remedy that.

Now, this is a simple but artsy image. I enjoy how you've framed the trees from small, to tall, then back to small. Also, I like the reflections for without those, we wouldn't know that the bottom half is water. In addition, I am enjoying the subtle ripples in the water which is particularly noticeable in the reflections of the trees. This is something I'd like you to try. Reverse the image and go from small to tall, We are all conditioned to read from left to right and I would be very curious to see what it would look like to start small, build to a crescendo, then abruptly end. You never know, you might like it, you might not. "When in doubt, try it out."

<mark>"Dragonfly on Cosmos Bud" 10</mark>

This is a very nice image. Dappled light is your friend in that there is no harsh blowout as the lighting is evenly distributed across the entire image. This isn't always the case, in fact, in many instances, an image without shadows can sometimes be flat and boring. That is not the case here. With the treatment of this image - it appears to be a texture filter - it gaives me a mixture of reality and ethereal. The butterfly and flowers are sharp. My eye, however, keeps going to the lower right corner where there are the faint buds of other flowers. Perhaps removing them would let my concentration stay more on the main subjects. Also - to my eye - I would like to see a little less headroom. This as well would bring my atention more to the main subject.

I like that you placed the tree slightly off to the right and that it isn't dead-center. Sometimes dead-center works but in this case, I feel it would not. The lighting and colors are both soft and invting and the shadows are nice, in fact, I like the way the two shadows parallel each other. The sky is beautiful, in fact, the clouds appear to be emanating from the tree. One thing distracts me. I would spot heal or clone out the orange object at the bottom of the tree as - to my eye - it makes me keep wanting to return to it, and therefore pulls my attention away from the rest of the beautiful scene.

<mark>"Pawleys Island View" 10</mark>

I think this is a very artful image. It almost looks like a painting. I am enjoying the clouds - especially the pink ones - against the pastel-looking sky. You've captured good wave action and I particularly enjoy the one tidal swirl at the bottom. In my opinion, this image would have a little more impact if the shoreline - including the structures - was a bit darker. To my eye, they seem a bit milky and washed out. Pumping up the contrast just a tad - I believe - would strengthen this image tremendously.
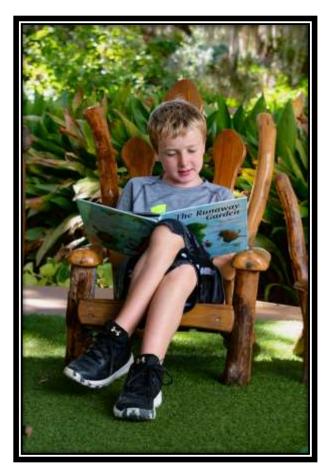
To me, this is the story of old and new. The rusty old metal with peeling paint, and the new growth of a young ivy vine are truly dichotomous. The lighting is perfect and the image is clear and sharp. The colors of red, grey and green are complimentary and I love the composition in that the vine curls down from the left corner, winds down the image, not in the center, and ends up curling in almost a resting position at the bottom of the frame. I like how the bottom is curled up as if to say it's looking up to try and figure out where to go next. I like that because it keeps me in the image. If it were curling down, it would take me out of the image and, therefore, be a different story. Little, tiny things like that can tell a different story and - in some cases - be a major difference between a pleasing image and an uncomfortable one.

<mark>"Garden Growth" 11</mark>

This is a nice, peaceful and serene image. I enjoy the composition and the expression on the boy's face. The lighting is handled well and the foregorund - including the boy - is sharp and clear. I especially like the way you included the book title and that none of the words are cut off by his left knee. I also appreciate how you softened the background to show depth of field. In my opinion, however, the background competes a bit with the main subject and therefore - if this were my image - I would darken it a bit. There are also three clumps of bright spots - leaves at the right side of the chair - which force my eye to travel to them. My eye doesn't stop there though, as more bright spots on the patio behind the chair and on the grass make me look there as well. The bright spots are easily remedied by selecting them and darkening them down so they aren't overpowering. Finally, I would clean up the two leaves on the grass. These points may seem trivial but this is a really nice shot and you'd be surprised at how much better images can look just by cleaning them up a little.
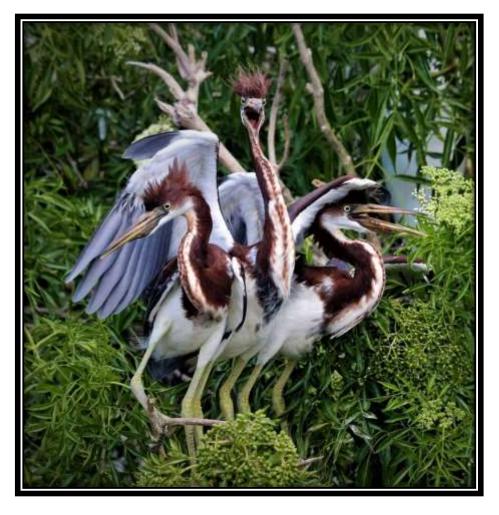
This is a gorgeous image and the panoramic treatment serves it well. You've capture the colors and the cloud cover aided you in controlling the lighting, I love your positioing as you stood in a spot that allowed you to capture the valley that forms a leading line which curves into the distance and leads my eye to the little peak on the horizon. Speaking of clouds, I'm glad that you included the dramatic sky, however, being that the sky is so dramtic, I would like to see a liittle more of it. Not too much, mind you, but a little more.

"The Three Stooges" 11

What a fun shot. Moe, Larry and Curly indeed. Gee, I wonder which one is Moe! You've captured this scene marvelously. The positions of all three birds is wonderful, great peak of action with Moe hitting Curly on the head and Larry about to get bonked. The image is tack sharp even though there must have been a lot of serious movement. Also, the colors are great and the texture in the feathers is handled very well. One thing, I am a bit distracted by the background in that the light brown branches behind the birds competes with them. I believe that if you darken them - or maybe darken the entire background - it would seriously aid me in focuing more on the birds. Why you...

I think this is a very beautiful image. The colors are vibrant and alive and the mushroom is sharp and clear with superb lighting. The composition is good and I particularly like how - even though the head of the mushrroom is equally centered between the two side borders, the stem is not. I enjoy the texture in the stem and also, how you've shaded the stem as it exits the image at the bottom border. I also like the blurred background which shows good depth of field. Normally, I do not like too much headroom but in theis case, I think it works, The reason? The background colors of purple and white are marvelous and I wouldn't want you to lose them. One thing you might try. I believe if you darkened the background a bit, it would create more separation between your main subject and the background. As is - at least to my eye - the mushroom and background - mainly because they are so close in color - blend together a little too much. Try it and see if you like it.

<mark>"Coneflower Friends" 12</mark>

Now, I think this is a wonderful image. It clearly shows two insects competing for the same source, but tolerating each other as well. The butterfly and bee are tack sharp and I can see the shine on the little head of the bee. Not just that, but you even captured the butterfly's proboscis as it sucks up its sweet treat. The lighting is good and the colors are complimentary. One might say that the foreground petals of the flower are a bit soft and - while true - I think that in this case, it's fine. Reason being, my main interest is the bee and butterfly and softnesss surrounding the main subjects actually aids in the telling of your story. Just a couple of things, One, my eye keeps bouncing back and forth to the two bottom corners where the partial petals lead me away from the main subjects. If this were mine, I would spot-heal them out and two, I would darken the background a bit, which would also help to trap my eye and keep it focused on the bee and butterfly. One other thing to note, I feel the subjects are a bit tight and need a little more breathing room. It's important to leave a nice amount of space around your borders, especially if you want to print, mat and frame your work.

I absolutely love the colors and depth of field in this image. The texture on both the flower and leaves is stunning. I can even see the fuzz on the leaves. The lighting is perfect with just the right amount of highlight at the top of the flower and no blowout. My eye, however, keeps going to the yellow stem which - in my opinion - clashes with the colors of magenta and green. If this were mine, I would either darken the yellow stem down or spot-heal it out. Also, I feel a bit off-balance because the leaf on my right is cut. If you have the original and the leaf is in it, please redo this and include it. If not, I would try cropping the left up to just before the dominant leaf point to make it look as if the right border cut was by design and not a mistake. Not just that but this move would bring my attention in even more to this gorgeous flower.

This could be either a foggy morning or afternoon. At any rate, it has a very calm and peaceful energy. I really like how you exposed the houses instead of silhouetting them. I enjoy seeing the detail in them as it adds to the foggy feeling. You've exposed the sky and layers of fog nicely and I like how you've positioned the sun as it looks to be cradled between the trees. The reflections are nice and I am particularly enjoying how the sun's reflection is dominant over the "dreamy" reflections of the houses in the water. I also enjoy the chair as it shows a sense of foreground, for without it, the entire story would be different. If the chair was not there, it would give the sense of being on a boat, although - I guess - the chair could indeed be on a boat. I, however, don't get that feeling. I just wish I could see more of the chair. I like how only part of the chair is seen but I would just like to see a little more of it.

<mark>"Lion Spotlighted" 14</mark>

A striking image indeed. The lighting is elegant and brings out the detail in the lion's fur. I am really enjoying the color difference between the foreground and background as the fore is a golden color and the back, a sivery color. This - to me - gives the image good separation. I love the eyes with even a catch light and that the lion is sharp and clear. Something that - to my eye - is a bit distracting, is the one plant stalk that is reaching down just above the lion's head. Even though the lion is in its natural environment, I believe eliminating that one stalk would strengthen the image immensely.

"Postcard from Alaska" 15

This is beautiful. To my eye, it has a painterly look. The colors are complimentary, strong and vibrant and the reflections are superb. The leading lines of the shoreline and greenery along with the divides in the mountain ranges, gives a curving effect which I think is very successful. I don't believe it is a sky replacement but if it is, you get extra points. Do you know why? Because you have duplicated the cloud's reflections in the water to a T. Good work!