

NCC Competition Categories

Many photographs may fit into more than one category and it is up to the photographer to choose in which category he/she wishes to compete.

ABSTRACT

The subject matter is secondary. Elements such as line, shape, texture, shadow, color, form and pattern become the primary concern of the photographer.

ANIMALS/PETS

COMMERCIAL

A photograph whose purpose is to sell a product or concept.

CREATIVE

Work in which the normal photographic processes have been exaggerated or manipulated by chemistry or other means for the purpose of creating special effects that are not achieved in the normal photographic process, i.e., filters, background replacements, overlays, AI generative fill, etc. A photographer may use any elements available to them for this category as long as they photographed the main subject,

DOCUMENTARY

To record without embellishment.

NATURE/WILDLIFE

Nature photography depicts 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. Human elements shall not be present, except on the rare occasion where those human elements enhance the nature story. The presence of scientific bands of wild animals is acceptable. 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. Wildlife is defined as one or more organisms living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat.

PEOPLE

Entries in the "People" category should feature one or more persons where the lighting and subject matter are not necessarily under the control of the photographer. It is intended to be a less formal category than "Portraiture".

PHOTOJOURNALISM

Depicts a photographic story of an event and its impact, including but not limited to: Hard news, sports, features, personalities, and human interest. The journalistic value of the photograph shall be weighed more than the pictorial quality. In the interest of credibility, photographs which misrepresent the truth, such as manipulation to alter the subject matter, or situations which are set up for the purpose of photography, are unacceptable in Photojournalism competition.

PICTORIAL

The artistic portrayal of scene(s) and/or person(s) expressed through mood, composition and tone.

PORTRAITURE

Any photograph of a person(s) or animal(s) with the lighting and subject matter under the control of the photographer.

STILL LIFE

An object or a group of objects either man-made or natural, found or arranged, and photographed under natural or enhanced lighting.

UNCLASSIFIED

CLUB CHALLENGE

Scoring and placement will be based on how well the photograph expresses the theme of the club challenge while using quality photographic guidelines. There is no distinction between color and monochrome in the club challenge category.

Additional Category Definitions for Special Competitions Only

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict 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 certify 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 are integral parts of the nature story or where those human elements are in situations depicting natural forces, like earthquakes or hurricanes. Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals are permissible. Photographs of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.

Images entered in **Wildlife** are defined as one or more zoological or botanical organisms free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Landscapes and geological formations, photographs of zoo or game farm animals, or any zoological or botanical species taken under controlled conditions are not eligible in Wildlife. Wildlife is not limited to animals, birds, and insects. Marine subjects and botanical subjects including fungi and algae, taken in the wild are suitable wildlife subjects as are carcasses of existing species.

A **Travel** image expresses the characteristic features or culture of a land as they are found naturally. There are no geographic limitations. Images from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subject directed or hired for photography are not appropriate. Close up pictures of people or objects must include features that provide information about the environment. Techniques that add, replicate, replace, or remove an element of the original image, except by cropping, are not permitted. The only allowable adjustments are removal of dust or digital noise, restoration of the appearance of the original scene, and complete conversion to greyscale monochrome. Other derivations, including infrared, are not permitted. All allowed adjustments must appear natural.

NCC Judging Guidelines

IMPACT

This generally is determined by what the viewer sees first upon looking at a photograph. What creates the viewer's first impression? Does the image create a strong feeling? What holds the viewer's eye? Impact can be created by any of the remaining elements.

CREATIVITY

Does the image spur the viewer's imagination? Is the photographer original and fresh in his approach to the subject? Is the subject matter shown creatively? Abstraction, invention, design, feeling and imagination can lift a photograph into the realm of art.

STYLE

Does the photograph stand out? Does it reveal a different way of seeing? A different way of approaching the subject? Is the approach real rather than contrived? Does it demonstrate individuality?

COMPOSITION

Look for good placement of the main and secondary subjects. Are they successfully arranged? Does it create good rhythm, repetition of color, space, mood, or divisions within the photograph?

PRESENTATION

Does the presentation enhance the photograph? Does cropping add to the composition? Was a good color selected for the matting? Does it dare to be different? Dynamic? Traditional? A viewer's first impression of a photograph can be affected by creative mounting.

BALANCE

The balance between light and dark, highlight and shadow. Also balance of tones or colors that make a photograph alive or boring. Look for coordination of color between the subjects and the subject background.

LIGHTING

Lighting is the art of reproducing the characteristics of subject or object. Look for a statement made with light. Look for dynamic lighting. Do patterns of light enhance the image? Light should create depth and dimension and accentuate the texture of surfaces.

CENTER OF INTEREST

Does one object or subject dominate? Does it hold the viewer's eye with no distraction? Does it create a mood? Secondary points of interest are important to a successfully executed photograph. However, they must not be so strong that they prevent the viewer from returning to the primary point of interest.

SUBJECT MATTER

Does the image give an outstanding interpretation of the subject? Is the camera angle correct for the subject? Is the model or object selected photogenic? Contrasts here can be very creative. (For example, young and old.)

PRINT QUALITY

Look for strong tonal contrast with a good range of middle tones. Look for color balance. Simplest statements often are the strongest.

TECHNIQUE

Does the photographic technique suit the subject? Technique is the foundation of photography. However, application of art of principles is necessary.

STORY TELLING

Does the image make a statement? Does it present a complete story? Can the viewer grasp the image's complete meaning at first glance? Does the image portray a strong emotion or mood in the subject? Does it build an emotional response, challenge the viewer's imagination?