

CVDCC Competition Definitions and Editing Guidelines—February 2023

Introduction

This document is meant to summarize the image competition rules for the 6 Divisions for entry that the CVDCC has adopted. Our six Divisions consist of 2 unrestricted Divisions; **Pictorial Image** and **Monochrome**; and 4 “Reality Divisions”, **Travel**, **Nature General**, **Photojournalism General**, and **Photojournalism Human Interest**. Each is described below.

The CVDCC is a member club of the Photographic Society of America (PSA), and normally utilizes similar division definitions to those that PSA publishes as to what will and will not be allowed into competition as far as content is concerned.

Division Definitions will be rigorously followed by competition judges. Failure to follow these definitions can result in an image being disqualified (DQ'd).

Pictorial Image Division

The subject matter is unrestricted for images in either Pictorial or Monochrome Divisions. Images eligible for entry into Pictorial Color may not be entered into Pictorial Monochrome and vice-versa.

Pictorial Color images are judged both for their technical and pictorial merit. The image must be properly exposed, be appropriately in focus, and have appropriate depth of field. A Pictorial Color image should have strong composition, pleasing quality, and color impact.

Monochrome Division

The subject matter is unrestricted for images in either Pictorial or Monochrome Divisions. Images eligible for entry into Pictorial Color may not be entered into Pictorial Monochrome and vice-versa.

An image is considered to be Monochrome only if it gives the impression of having no color (i.e. contains only shades of gray which can include pure black and pure white) OR it gives the impression of being a gray image that has been toned in one color across the entire image. (For example, by sepia, red, gold, etc.)

A grayscale or multi-colored image modified or giving the impression of having been modified by partial toning, multi-toning or by the inclusion of spot coloring does not meet the definition of monochrome and shall be classified as a Color Work.

Reality-based Divisions (Nature, Travel, Photojournalism) --Editing Guidelines

Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, except that conversion to grayscale monochrome is allowed.

Allowed editing techniques:

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
- Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome.
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking);
- Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas);

Editing techniques that are not allowed:

- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- Adding a vignette during processing.
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
- Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color

Borders

Borders are optional, **but must be 3 to 5 pixels in width and must be white or a shade of gray.** Images are presented in the final competition catalogs at reduced size and jpeg artifacts that occur in the reduction process can distort the appearance of borders, so the larger width is recommended.

Subject Matter

The fundamental rule that must be observed at all times and applies to all sections offered in exhibitions with PSA recognition is that the welfare of living creatures is more important than any photograph. This means that practices such as baiting of subjects with a living creature and removal of birds from nests, for the purpose of obtaining a photograph, are highly unethical, and such photographs are not allowed in any exhibition with PSA recognition. Under no circumstances may a living creature be placed in a situation where it will be killed, injured or stressed for the purpose of obtaining a photograph. Images that show live creatures being fed to captive animals, birds or reptiles are not permitted under any circumstances.

Photo Travel Division

A Photo Travel image is a portrayal of the real world we live in, as it is found naturally. It expresses the characteristic (distinctive) features or culture of a land as they are found naturally. There are no geographic limitations.

Content guidance:

- If the image is predominantly or exclusively a land-, sea- or cityscape, these “scapes” must include characteristic, distinctive and recognizable physical features, although it is not necessary that the image identify the exact location.
- Images that predominantly or exclusively depict people and their activities must illustrate a distinctive culture of a country, region, or continent.
- Images that predominately or exclusively depict animal populations are allowed, if the animals are in their native environment and are characteristic of that country, region, or continent.
- Portraits or other close-ups of people or objects, in addition to meeting the above paragraphs as applicable, must include elements depicting some of the surrounding environment to make it obvious that the image was not taken in a studio setting.
- Images from events or activities arranged for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are NOT allowed.

- Time exposures are allowed, if they do not dominate the image as a special effect (star trails, for example, are a dominating effect).
Highly distorted images such as those produced by fisheye lenses are NOT allowed.

Nature General Division

Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both animate and inanimate, that have not been made or modified by humans.

- Nature images must convey the truth of the scene that was photographed. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity that threatens the life or welfare of a living organism are not allowed.
- The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells. High technical standards are expected and the image must look natural.
- Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
- Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
- Images taken with subjects under controlled conditions, such as zoos, are allowed.
- Controlling live subjects by chilling, anesthetic or any other method of restricting natural movement for the purpose of a photograph is not allowed.
- Images entered in Nature open sections meeting the Nature Photography Definition above can have landscapes, geologic formations, weather phenomena, and extant organisms as the primary subject matter. This includes images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food.

Photojournalism General Division

Photojournalism entries are images with informative content and emotional impact, reflecting the human presence in our world.

- The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality.
- Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.
- *Note: Entrants are cautioned that the previous sentence includes any images that appear to be arranged or posed to the judges. Entrants are therefore advised that such images are likely to be disqualified (DQ'd).*
- Attention is drawn to the PSA Statement on Subject Matter which applies to all sections and to the Editing Guidelines for Nature, Photojournalism and Photo Travel

Photojournalism Human Interest Division

- When Human Interest is specified, those images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation, excluding sports action.
- The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality.

- Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.
- *Note: Entrants are cautioned that the previous sentence includes any images that appear to be arranged or posed to the judges. Entrants are therefore advised that such images are likely to be disqualified (DQed).*
- Attention is drawn to the PSA Statement on Subject Matter which applies to all sections and to the Editing Guidelines for Nature, Photojournalism and Photo Travel