

POLY SPEAKS

Magazine of the Polyphoto Camera Club



POLY
PHOTO CLUB

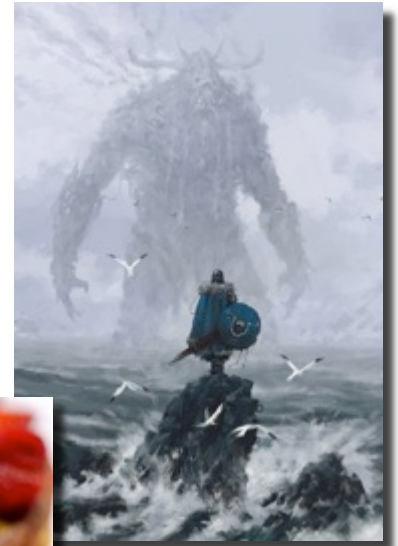
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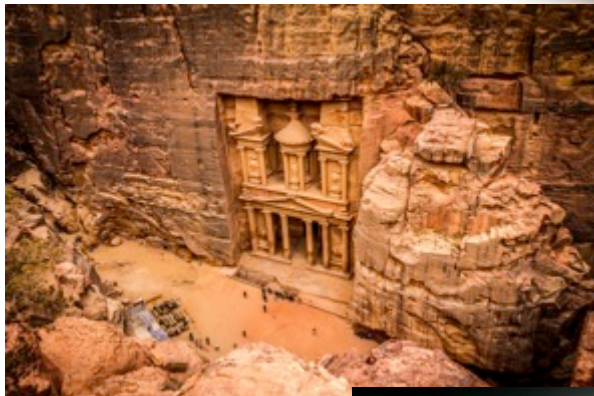
Altered Reality (*directly out of the camera*)



Altered Reality



Altered Reality
(*Unreal color*)



Reality



Altered Reality



Reality or Altered Reality
(*you decide*)

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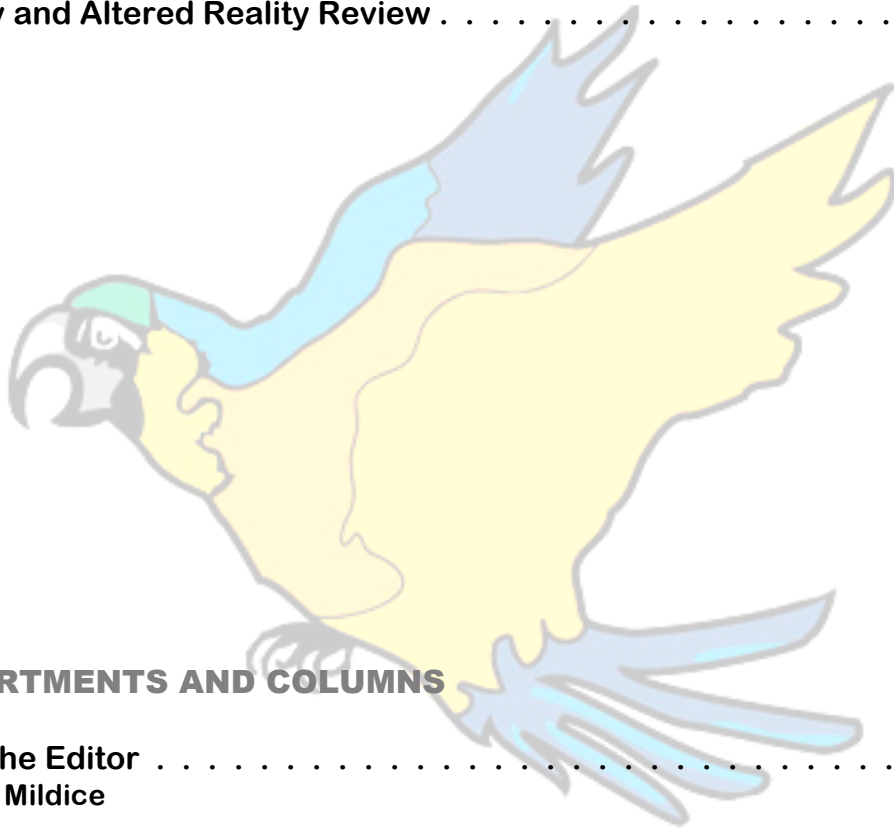
News and Views of Poly Photo Camera Club Members

August/September, 2018

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Poly Speaks is published by the Poly Photo Camera Club, in San Diego, California.

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Editor – Jim Mildice

From the Editor

In the last month, there has been a lot of conversation about competition categories. This seems to have been engendered by the strict interpretation used by our monthly competition judge in August. He typically deducted a point from the score of images that were entered in “Reality” when it appeared that they should have been in “Altered Reality.” Several people didn’t like that, or didn’t agree with his choices; so I decided to talk about some of the main points of discussion in this month’s issue.

First of all, let me remind you that all our requirements for competition category eligibility are strictly based on the content of the final, photographic image, as it appears when it is submitted. It doesn’t matter if there was a lot of post-processing or none at all. And since there is no prescreening, the judge is the sole arbiter of which picture belongs where.

I have often talked about judges doing what they wanted, independent of the actual competition requirements. So I was happy to watch a judge actually do what we asked him to do with our categories, and recognize when pictures were in the wrong category. But after the judging, some of you didn’t like his choices.

Clearly, from what I have heard, some of you are applying the wrong criteria when you choose the category into which you enter your pictures.

The only criterion that I use for “Reality” (R) is that the final image **appears** to be or could be **Real**. If it departs from that in any way or for any reason, it belongs in “Altered Reality.”

Some of you still seem to be applying a variation of last year’s Cat1 and Cat2 requirements. Cat1 rules were obviously designed to limit the use of Photoshop for its pictures. But Cat1 is not related to our “Reality” category.

For example, some competitors seem to think that if a

picture comes “*straight from the camera*,” with little or no post-processing, it must be reality. But that’s not necessarily true.

Since photography was first invented, photographers have been producing images that “altered” reality. Selecting lighting, framing, cropping, perspective, juxtaposition, point-of-view, color cast, etc. can each “alter” objective reality.

If a photographer does any of that, but his/her image still appears real, it could be entered in “Reality.” If it no longer appears real, it goes into “Altered Reality,” independent of the fact that Photoshop was never used.

The forced perspective picture at the bottom of the page (on the left) is an obvious example of straight-out-of-the-camera altered reality. The picture on the right shows how the scene was actually set up.

An extreme wide-angle lens can produce images with distortions and curves that are not consistent with reality.

There can be even more subtle changes that can make an image appear *not real*. Photoshop plug-ins, filters, color changes, and adjustments can make it appear less real, even though its basic structure has not changed.

We all need to think this through and get it right, so we are in control of our own competition entry categories.



“Reality” and “Altered Reality” Requirements

A six-month review of our two new competition categories

After watching the monthly judging of our recent competitions, we have noticed that there seems to still be confusion (among both entrants and judges) about which pictures are supposed to go into which category.

There was a great deal of discussion and dissatisfaction about the detailed requirements for Cat1 and Cat2 in our first attempt to separate simply-processed images from those that were extensively post-processed.

After a year of experience with trying to live with a set of rules that tried to define which Photoshop processes and procedures were OK for Cat1 and which ones were not; the membership voted to simplify the rules and focus on the presented image, with no requirements about how it was created. So our present requirements for our two entry categories simply say (paraphrased):

If an image looks real or could be real, it can be entered in the **“Reality”** category. There are no limits on what you did to produce a **real-looking** image.

If an image depicts something that is obviously fiction, or that a viewer could not have actually seen (even if he/she was at the right place and right time), it belongs in the **“Altered Reality”** category.

So what can we do about clarifying the judgments of which images go into which categories (both for the competitors and the judges). Let’s talk (one more time!!) about which images belong in which category; and to decide if we need additional judges’ instructions about what to do if an image appears to be in the wrong category.

When we have finished processing a selected competition image, and before we add an R or AR to the title, we can ask ourselves a few simple questions.

1. **Does this image look real?** There should be no consideration about “coming straight from the camera” or how much post-processing was performed. If the answer is yes, the image is **R**.
2. **Are there any unreal elements?** Have I added any details or elements that don’t look real? If the answer is yes, the image is **AR**.
3. **Have I used any filters that subtract from reality?** If the answer is yes, the image is **AR**.
4. **Are the colors natural?** If the answer is yes, the image is **R**. If the answer is no, the image could be **AR**.
5. **Does this image look unreal?** If the answer is yes, the image is **AR**.
6. **Is this a composite? If so, are the elements well-integrated and natural?** If the answer is yes, the image is **R**.
7. **Is the image a fiction?** If the answer is yes, the image is **AR**.
8. **Is the image a fantasy?** If the answer is yes, the image is **AR**.

The “bottom line” is if we are to do justice to the images that fit properly into Reality and Altered Reality, we need to consider unreality from both from picture-taking and picture-processing sources.

Hopefully, if we all get this figured out, the judges will not need to try to sort our images between the competition categories.

Quote of the Month

“In photography there is a reality so subtle that it becomes more real than reality.”

– Alfred Stieglitz

Musings from Dee on “*The Future of Photography – Part 2*”

By Dee Elwin

In the July Newsletter, I shared information from a panel discussion at the Fair. The leaders were David King, Melissa (Melinda?) Holden, Seth Mayer and Yevgeny Yorobe.

Going back to film seems to be a trend. (I’ve read this on several online articles about photography trends.) Some photographers don’t want to bother with PhotoShop. Alternative processes such as tintype, antique, wet plate process, cyanotype, etc. have made a resurgence. This may be a response to digital art. David suggested the website, “Lens Culture” to check out new competition categories and to see what other photographers are shooting. He also stated that storytelling is important in photography.

Whether you print your own photos or have them done commercially, don’t be afraid to try using new (to you) printing materials such as aluminum, metallic paper or acrylic. The panel thought highly of Bay Photo.

Technology makes it easy to take a picture, but we need to learn the aesthetics of good photography. Many photographers are self-taught, and the panel agreed that YouTube tutorials are great learning tools – AND, they’re free!

The panelists all agreed to do what you can to stand out as a photographer. At the Fair, Best of Show is usually NOT a landscape image. Those are too common. To be above average, a photographer needs to experiment and come up with new, creative

ideas. Don’t be afraid to experiment. It doesn’t matter if you’re using a cell phone or a Hasselblad. “Nice” shots need to go a step further to be “great” shots – photographers need to push themselves. Go to museum shows, openings and galleries to see what’s going on in the photo world.

To be successful you need to analyze the market to see what sells. Find out where the people who like your art are - then get your art out where they can see it. To market yourself, go to coffee shops, libraries, or anywhere you can hang your art. People will begin to remember you and your work. Enter competitions. Use the internet (Instagram). The panelists warned that you need to be prepared to be a business person. Several complained that it’s not the fun side of photography, but a necessary one.

While perusing various photography trend articles online I came across one from Adobe. In part it reads: “Creative reality, Adobe says, is a growing trend of turning a scene that exists in real life into a fantasy, blending what’s real with some imagination. The category uses a number of different techniques to create that mix, including the crazy colors of infrared photography, double exposure, software manipulation, unexpected colors or simply props that wouldn’t be normally paired together in an image.”

Until next time - Happy Shooting and Be Creative!

Happy Shooting!
Dee Elwin

This and That

By Clark Winsor

Here's quick look at the monthly entries from January through August (by Category).

January:

51 entries in the Realistic Category.
9 entries in the Altered-Reality Category.
7 members entered Altered-Reality.

February:

45 entries in the Realistic Category.
10 images in the Altered-Reality Category.
8 members entered Altered-Reality.

March:

42 images in the Realistic Category.
8 images in the Altered-Reality Category.
7 members entered Altered-Reality.

April:

49 images in the Realistic Category.
12 images in the Altered-Reality Category.
10 members entered Altered-Reality.

May:

55 images in the Realistic Category.
7 images in the Altered-Reality Category.
5 members entered Altered-Reality.

June:

43 entries in the Realistic Category.
9 images in Altered-Reality.
6 members entered Altered-Reality.

July:

45 entries in the Realistic Category.
12 entries in the Altered-Reality Category.
8 members entered Altered-Reality

August:

34 entries in the Realistic Category.
9 entries in Altered-Reality.
7 members entered Altered-Reality

Our lowest number of members submitting images to Altered-Reality has been 5, and the highest number has been 10.

I am sure you all have seen the confusion our system has created for our judges and competitors; and by now most of you have created your own opinions of the present two-category system.

The members who developed the two-category judging system felt this would be the best way to show the creativity of each member. Given time, it will start to work very well and will provide a very successful way to showcase our competition images.

I believe there are two types of photographers in Poly. One type will envision the final image before they pick up their camera. They like all the filter tools, and aps to change reality. You're more likely to see their images in the Altered-Reality group.

Then there are the photographers love the art involved in taking the picture. They care very little for creating images on a computer. They make minimal of adjustments to their images in post processing. You will usually see their images in the Reality category.

So, what does the future hold. We have seen the fantastic results of downloaded Aps onto an I-phone or I-pad. Some day an Aps may be available for the high-end DSLR's. When that happens, Poly will once again be faced with changing its rules of judging. Where will we draw the line between the taken image and the added elements? Already we're seeing images being created with less than 20% of the image taken with a camera.

What the future holds is uncertain. How Poly handles the advances of technology will decide if we remain a Camera Club or a Digital Art Club.

Programs and Coming Events

Josi Ross

September 1 – Competition PROJECT – “Neon Signs”

Our judge for this month will be **Lin Craft**. Here’s a little about her.

Lin grew up in Oregon, received her B.S. in Zoology from Oregon State University and a Master’s degree in Marine Science from the University of Puerto Rico. After teaching for several years at the College of the Virgin Islands she moved to California to pursue a Doctoral degree in Marine Biology at USC in Los Angeles. She still resides in Southern California. As a diving marine biologist she made more than 4500 SCUBA dives and was a NAUI SCUBA Instructor. For many years her photography was focused on the underwater world, but has since expanded to include all nature subjects, landscape, and travel photography.

Lin joined PSA in 1987 and has received honors for her photography and service. She has been President of the Fallbrook Camera Club since 1987 and is past-President of the Southern California Association of Camera Clubs where she has been elected a Fellow.

Lin judges frequently for camera clubs and PSA-recognized International Exhibitions, specializing in Nature and Travel. She has presented numerous programs including ten for PSA Conferences. She has had several gallery shows, and her images have been used in books, calendars, and brochures. Lin has received numerous acceptances and awards in International Exhibitions, earning many Star Ratings. She earned her APSA in 2000 and her FPSA in 2015.

September 15

Field Trip – “Laguna Beach Tower Shoot”

Details – We’ll meet at “Dizz’s As Is” restaurant at 5:00 PM (2794 S. Coast Hwy. 949-494-5250). Then we’ll head over to the tower for an interesting shoot.

If you want to take photos and enjoy the area before dinner, Mission San Juan

Capistrano is not far, and Laguna Beach is a great place to enjoy the day)

For those who want to spend the night and return the next day, a hotel near the pirate tower is the Laguna Beach Inn, 2020 S. Coast Hwy 855-516-1090

Barbara Fletcher is the leader of this trip.



The structure, known as “La Tour” (French for tower), is a 60-foot castle-inspired tower. It was built at the same time as the house at the top of the bluff, in 1926, and was used as a way to get from the house down to the shore below, which is a beautiful stretch of sand called Victoria Beach. The beach tower is made of poured concrete with an ocean stone foundation and cone-shaped roof made of shingles. Several narrow window openings in the tower wall allow light to pass through to the wooden spiral stairway inside.

For more information on the tower visit:
<https://www.californiabeaches.com/la-tour-mysterious-tower-laguna/>

September 29

Photoshop presentation by Larry Vogel

There’s always something to learn when it comes to Photoshop. Larry’s teaching style is engaging and entertaining as he shows us how to make our photos shine. Join Larry Vogel as he teaches us a thing or two.