

Congratulations to this year's finalists! Via your newsletters, I've been able to enjoy the creative and technical progression of the PTCC members and your strong sense of community. Judging this year's finals was a challenge with so many compelling images. I was drawn to both simple or elaborate images that were technically well managed that showed me something new, not previously seen or experienced, and that the image was driven by the artist decisions and not by software.

Digital photography is an accessible medium that allows unlimited altering of one's files. With this in mind, I sensed that many of the images in this year's collection could benefit from simple cropping and judicious exposure, contrast and color correction. Making simple adjustments can heighten the visual impact and can elevate the commonplace while instilling a unique creative signature.

Rick Murai



**Overall Image of the Year and
Creative Image of the Year - Blue Group
“Lighting the Way”**

Christine Johnson

Harmonious blending of various visual elements and the somber light provides a complex yet believable image. The smattering of birds in the shadow areas is the icing on the cake!

As a digital image, *Lighting the Way* is subtle yet elaborate, visually seamless and believable. It's digitally well-constructed and the subtle inclusion of the birds in the shadows enhanced reality and moves the storyline further. The warmth of the crescent moon is amplified by the cool ambient light. Four other images document special or unique encounters, are extremely well managed, and were strong contenders (*Chincoteague Pony Swim, Lawrence's Golden Finch, No Place to Land and Tulips in the Bathroom Window*).



**Human Hand in Nature Image of the year - Blue Group
“No place to land”**

Julie Chen

Fabulous use of shutter speed and focus provides the visual tension of landing amongst a dense field of other birds.



Nature Image of the Year - Blue group
“Clark’s Grebe vs Western Grebe Rushing”

Julie Chen

Very effective stop action and follow focus of the two birds interacting with the splashing, trailing water. High energy and excitement!



Pictorial Image of the Year - Blue Group
“Windswept”

Christine Johnson

This image best fulfilled the category. A simple composition that offers a sense of time and space with the warm light and the bent trees. Other images were very well seen with strong compositions (Left Behind, Astoria Bridge) but could’ve benefited from the aforementioned cropping exposure, contrast, and color temperature changes.



Travel Image of the Year - Blue Group
“Chincoteague Island Pony Swim in Chincoteague, Virginia”

Carol Silveira

A visually satisfying documentation of horses fording an estuary. A simple composition with soft overcast skies.