



**01-A Shared Meal.jpg**

*Christina Parsons*

There's a story here; great composition with an image full of information; Focus just where it needs to be. I wouldn't mind just a tiny bit more level (as in exposure in editing) to help the white of the gulls pop out a bit, but that might just be my monitor.

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**02-A Wealth of Lady Bugs (Coccinellidae).jpg**

*Sandie McCafferty*

I like the in-your-face composition and the color; you want to reach out and touch these guys. This image could benefit from a pass with a sharpening/enlargement tool like Topaz Photo AI, which will help cut down the sharpening / enlargement noise.

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**03-Balloon Flower (platycodon grandiflorus) in Livermore, CA.jpg**

*Carol Fuessenich*

Nice composition with both symmetry and color. But I have an urge to try and make the image snap a bit more by tweaking the color or composition to see if there's a way cut the formality of what we have right now.

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**04-Black Oyster Catcher Pair-Haematopus bachmani.jpg**

*Ken Jones*

How can you beat two black birds with red beaks against white water standing on black bivalves? And one of them has a foot in the air. 5 stars because you were there, and you were ready. As I say... every now and then....

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**05-Brown Pelican (Pelicanus occidentalis).jpg**

*Bill Shewchuk*

Well executed Pelican headshot. Excellent detail, lighting coming from behind. But is there more to this story? Are there other shots in this series that might tell us just a little bit more about where this guy is located?

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**06-Brown Pelican Morning Patrol-Pelecanus occidentalis.jpg**

*Ken Jones*

Excellent. These four guys composed exactly where they need to be, with lighting that separates them from the natural 'bokeh' of the grey mountains and fog, each wing in a different stroke.

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**07-Budding Grevillea 'Long John'.jpg**

*Charlie Gibson*

Excellent. An image that fills the screen, edge to edge, with detail. The depth of field is exactly where it needs to be, front to back, of the flower, with just enough soft detail and lower color and exposure levels in the background to give some context.

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**08-Dead Horse Point State Park.jpg**

*Fernando Ibanez*

Landscapes are hard to do well, but this one just really works. Edge-to-edge composition that has horizontal layers, a classic s-curve through the middle, red rocks and green plant life along the riverbank. I think we've all seen this turn in the river from the apex just a little more to the right, but this is much more interesting. What would it look like in a few more hours as the sun goes down?

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**09-Dense Fog Threatening the Light.jpg**

*Janet Azevedo*

You really caught a break with the lighting on the breaking wave set, but I'm wanting to spend just a little more time with the image somehow. A little more horizontal cropping and some additional level (lighting) on the whites so that that those waves become the absolute focal point, juxtaposed with the ominous sky in the background.

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### **10-Designs on Red Dunes of Namibia.jpg**

*Janet Azevedo*

I like the strong color composition, with just the tan sand and the blue sky. The breakdown of the dune wall in the center of the image adds some nicely-lit contrast and interest. At first I thought it needed some other point of interest, like someone traversing the scene, but on second thought the strong graphic sense of the image stands on its own.

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### **11-Great Blue Heron Self-Reflection.jpg**

*Christina Parsons*

Perfection. This image has it all: A story, wonderful technical detail in the feathers, composition in the reflected subject, and the story is the sense of anticipation in what the heron is concentrating on and about to strike.

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### **12-Humpback Whale Breaching Splash.jpg**

*Kent Van Vuren*

Right place at the right time, but I originally thought this was water crashing onto the rocks somewhere in Big Sur. But now that I know it's whales, I like studying the sheer power of the water that's in play here. Is there another one in this series that has just a hint of the whale?

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### 13-Humpback Whales in Monterey Bay.jpg

*Don Eastman*

4 stars for being ready when the action starts. I'd like to take the original and run it through Topaz Photo AI app to cut down on the noise a bit and soften up the detail and contrast, but that might be my editing bias creeping into my comments.

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### 14-Native Alaskan Salmon Fishing.jpg

*Dick Light*

OK. I just love this image. It's a fresh take on a theme we've all seen before. The big guy is teetering on the slippery rocks with his face underwater. Cheers to you for keeping this one.

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### 15-Petoskey Stone in Rindge, New Hampshire.jpg

*Carol Fuessenich*

As a rock nut that loves the symmetry of nature, this image is right in my lane. Oh, and let's just throw in a little quartz in the top of the image to round it out. I want to go see this thing, and when I do I'll get the composition that's here, but also look for another opportunity for some context by backing up a bit or coming down lower in front and get a take that says 'Oh, by the way, here's this ridiculously gorgeous stone in amongst all of the granite and quartz.' Watch your step.'

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**16-Prothonotary Warbler, Texas.jpg**

**Kent Van Vuren**

This is just a great shot to get. The yellow guy surrounded by a natural vignette of leaves and a red flower. Nicely done.

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**17-Reflection Convict Lake.jpg**

*Lillie Grossman*

As I wrote before, landscapes are tough to get right. Any picture needs a focus of attention and this one has it, twice. The mountain in the center, reflected on the water, transected by the line of rocks across the center of composition. White snow, blue sky (above and below) and the tan, almost red vegetation adding to the cut across the center. It's an image that puts you right there with no wasted space.

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**18-Salmon Lunch Alaskan Brown Bear (Ursus arctos) Katmai National Park.jpg**

*Sandie McCafferty*

Nice composition with great colors green, brown and red) and there's a bit of a story here, as the big guy is doing his otter impression. There's a little bit of noise that would be fixed with an enlargement/denoise pass with Topaz. This lets those of us without a 600 mm f4 lens to squeeze some life out of our 300 mm f5.6 piece of glass.

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**19-Scene in Denali National Park.jpg**

*Don Eastman*

Wonderful color, excellent detail. But I want to get the composition reset to force a more assertive focal point of interest.

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**20-Spiny Pincushion Cactus (Mammillaria spinosissima).**

*Bill Shewchuk*

The red-tipped spines, the milky-way spiral that draws your eyes to the center; you want to study this picture and see what else you can find in there. The composition both with symmetry and color make this a beautiful image.

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**21-The Catch. . .with Apologies to Dwight Clark.jpg**

*Dick Light*

I like the other picture in this series (with someone's head in the water) so this take is a little anti-climatic.

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**22-The Mitt, Monument Valley.jpg**

*Fernando Ibanez*

Just beautiful. This is what happens when you wait for the light, which I'm guessing is at the end of the day. It's so much more interesting with clouds in the background and the low light that defines the rock face, and the valley floor.

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## Winning Images:

### Honorable Mentions:

#### **Brown Pelican Morning Patrol (Pelecanus occidentalis)**

*Ken Jones*



#### **Black Oyster Catcher Pair- (Haematopus bachmani)**

*Ken Jones*







**Budding Grevillea 'Long John'**  
*Charlie Gibson*

Third Place

**A Shared Meal**  
*Christina Parsons*



2nd Place:



**Native Alaskan Salmon Fishing**  
*Dick Light*

First Place:

**Reflection Convict Lake**  
*Lillie Grossman*

