

Millbrae Camera Club
Member Guide
February 2012

Welcome!

The purpose of our club, the Millbrae Camera Club (MCC), is to educate amateur photographers and for them to have a good time while they learn. Membership is open to anyone wishing to participate in digital image or print competitions, workshops, and/or field trips with the intention of furthering his or her photographic knowledge and ability. MCC affords excellent opportunities to exchange ideas with other photographers. There is something interesting happening every first and second Thursday evenings of the month from 7:15 to 9:30 pm.

The following is intended to help you understand the club. If you don't understand something, please don't hesitate to ask. If you have any suggestions, please offer them. The club always needs help; please volunteer if you can. Most important of all, please enjoy club participation and learning about photography!

Why Should You Enter Your Work into Club Competitions?

The differences between images of beginners (Basic level) and images of the Master workers indicate that it is possible to become proficient in photography with education, experience, and most of all, sustained effort. You can get out of photography as much as you put into it. The club provides educational opportunities that can supplement your own experience and reading.

Experience comes from actually taking lots of pictures! You must know how to operate your equipment and understand its limitations. When your images appear on the back of your camera, or your computer screen or even come back from the processing laboratory you can examine them for merit and for ideas of what you'd like to do differently next time. The work must come from you, but the club can help you to gain insight.

Competition is one of the ways to learn. Judges critique the images during the competitions. Although judges' comments can be subjective, there is a lot to be learned from the opinions of others. The more images you enter, the more you learn about these specific images. And the more new images you enter, the more comments you can hear about the different types of photographs you have taken. Judges' comments help you to develop your "eye."

In addition, competitions are a yardstick by which you can measure your progress and ability by entering your work--you get an idea of how it compares with the work of others of your skill level.

Participating in competitions also helps you gain recognition and helps you develop confidence in your work.

Competition Categories

All categories are open to all members, from beginners to advanced amateurs. If you have a good photograph, but are not sure into which category it belongs, enter it in the Pictorial category. Then, if a judge or competent critic indicates the image really belongs in one of the other categories, that is, Travel, Journalism, Creative, or Nature, simply re-enter it in the more appropriate category next time.

Category definitions are not completely precise, since individual judges do not all evaluate images in exactly the same way.

The Millbrae Camera Club uses the same category definitions as the N4C – please see the N4C website: <http://www.n4c.org/?p=competition-cat-definitions.html>

Here is a summary based on the N4C definitions:

Pictorial - Pictorial photography is the use of the photographic medium as an art form. The emphasis is on interest, visual impact, composition, and technical excellence. Images in the Pictorial Division are not confined to any particular subject, type, or style of photography. Pictorial images may be manipulated in the darkroom, on the computer or in the camera in a manner consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions.

Travel - A Travel picture must express the feeling of a time and place, portray a land, its people or a culture in its natural state, and has no geographic limitations. Ultra close-ups which lose their identity, studio-type model shots, or photographic manipulations which misrepresent the true situation or alter the content of the image are unacceptable in Travel competition.

No manipulation or modification is permitted except resizing, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original color of the scene. No special effect filters can be applied. Any sharpening must appear natural. No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged or combined.

In Travel competition the title is read when showing the image. The title should give the location and complement the travel story. All Travel images must be consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions.

A strong travel picture should:

1. Tell a story (see above)
2. Be of interest to the average viewer
3. Show good technique
4. Have composition quality relative to the subject matter

Journalism - Journalism entries shall consist of pictures with informative content and emotional impact, including human interest, documentary and spot news. Sequences in Journalism show a chronology of events or tells a story. Up to four (4) images are permitted in a Sequence in the Journalism category, which applies to projected image competition only. The journalistic value of the photograph shall be considered over pictorial quality. In the interest of

credibility, photographs which misrepresent the truth, such as manipulation of the image, or situations which are set up for the purpose of photography, are unacceptable in Journalism competition. The primary concern is to make story-telling and/or newsworthy photographs. In competition the title is read when showing the image. Good titles are important and should add to the photo-story. No manipulation or modification of Journalism images is permitted except resizing, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original color of the scene. No special effect filters can be applied. Any sharpening must appear natural. No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged or combined.

Journalism photography is the making of story-telling pictures, such as those seen in our news media and periodicals. J may include documentary, advertising, spot news, sports, human interest, and humorous images and images that portray contemporary ways of life.

It might be useful to think of the photojournalist as a reporter with, instead of a notebook and pen, a camera in hand. The objective is to seek out the story, not to create it or make it up. The primary concern is to make story-telling or newsworthy photographs, or both. The photographs, in general, should show a high degree of spontaneity rather than direction and control by the photographer.

In Journalism competitions it is the story-telling aspects of a photograph that make or break it. The stronger the story element, the better the chance for success in competition. In the competition the title is read as the image is viewed to aid the viewers and judge in interpreting the story the photographer is attempting to convey. Good titles, therefore, are important and should add to the photo story.

Besides the obvious subject matter, such as disasters, destruction, and sports, the human condition offers unlimited potential for journalistic pictures. The human-interest image in J is a spontaneous moment captured forever by the eye of the camera. It is the story-telling aspects of the moment that make for a strong journalism picture.

A strong Journalism picture should:

1. Tell an instantly recognizable story; the more impact the better
2. Be of interest to the average viewer
3. Show good technique, i.e., focus, exposure, and use of light
4. Have composition quality relative to the subject matter

Nature - The Nature Division is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict 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 matter and certify as to its honest presentation. The informative or nature value of the photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality. Sequences in Nature show a chronology of events or tells a story. Up to four (4) images are permitted in a Sequence in the Nature category, which applies to projected image competition only.

Human elements may be present only where those human elements add to the viewers understanding of the nature subject's behavior and/or habitat. This habitat may be natural or adopted. The presence of scientific bands on wild animals is acceptable.

Photographs of artificially produced hybrid plants or animals (any plant or animal that has its appearance changed by breeding and selection by man (domesticated)), mounted specimens, or obviously set arrangements, are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.

In Nature competition the title should be factual and descriptive and should be read when showing the image. Scientific names are encouraged but are not required.

No manipulation or modification of Nature images is permitted except resizing, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, and restoration of original color of the scene. Combining multiple images to achieve High Dynamic Range (HDR) is acceptable but no special effect filters can be applied. Any sharpening must appear natural. No elements may be moved, cloned, added, deleted, rearranged or combined. Horizontal flipping (equivalent to reversing the image) is an acceptable modification. Nature images must be consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions.

Creative - Creative photography is producing an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from competition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept. Creative images may include modifications in the darkroom, on the computer, or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view, imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a collection of photographs. Creative images must be consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions. In Creative image competition the title is read when showing the image.

Sequence - A sequence consists of two or more related images on one mount, printed separately on the same sheet of paper or overlapping as in a multiple exposure or panorama. Sequences will be judged in prints only. All Sequence prints must be consistent with the standards stated in the preamble to these definitions.

Monochrome - Monochrome Prints are defined as shades of any one color and the color of the paper.

Club Affiliations

MCC is affiliated with the Northern California Council of Camera Clubs (N4C).

N4C is composed of amateur photography clubs, like MCC and delegates attend N4C to represent MCC. Delegates submit MCC members' images to N4C competitions and distribute publications and notices of activities you can attend. N4C awards ribbons, certificates, or "stickers" on the backs of prints to the MCC members whose images have won in their competitions. N4C collects annual dues from MCC. N4C bestows honors upon persons who have contributed valuable services to their own clubs and to N4C. These honors are in the form of "titles," an example of which is the title, "Associate," awarded by N4C.

N4C

N4C consists of about a dozen clubs located in most of the San Francisco Bay Area counties. MCC's delegate to N4C submits prints and digital images selected from entries in MCC competitions by the judges of these competitions. An N4C judge then judges the prints and images submitted by MCC together with those submitted by all the other clubs. Prints are returned after the N4C judging, usually the following month. The makers of winning images are awarded certificates with labels designating a print award are affixed to the back of the winning print. All submitted prints are returned to their makers. An image may be submitted repeatedly for the monthly N4C competitions until it receives an award, after which time it cannot be re-entered, except for an annual competition.

All images that have received an Award of Merit or Honorable Mention in the monthly competitions during the previous year are eligible to be judged in that year's annual competition. Makers whose entries place first in each annual category receive medals. Second- through fifth-place winners receive ribbons. Plaques are awarded to the makers of the Digital Projected Image and Print of the Year. Annual competition awards are presented at the annual banquet - typically held in February.

FotoClave

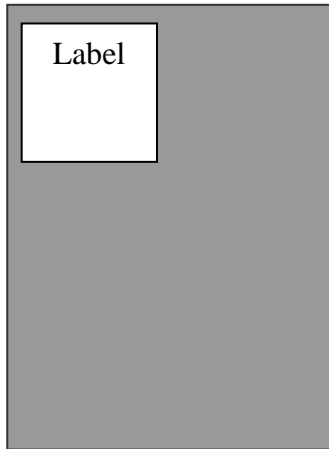
FotoClave is held every year, usually on a weekend in October or November. It consists of juried competitions and various photographic presentations and lectures (how-tos, travel shows, etc.). It is hosted, on a rotating three year basis, by:

- *Northern California Council of Camera Clubs (N4C)* (last hosted in 2011)
- *San Joaquin Valley Camera Club Council (SJVCCC)* (will host in 2012)
- *Central Coast Counties Camera Club Council (6C)*

The three councils submit their members' best images and prints for a competition in each of several categories. MCC members may submit any number of slides and prints to the club's N4C delegate for the FotoClave competition. However, since the competitions are juried, not all of the submitted images might be accepted. FotoClave locations, dates, and other information are announced at MCC's regular meetings.

How to complete the label and attach to the back of a print

Place the label supplied by the club on the back of the print in the upper left corner. Fill in label information:



Top of Portrait Print



Top of Landscape Print

Millbrae Camera Club				N/A Div. Level					
Title: <u>Male Musk Ox (Ovibos Moschatus),</u> <u>Showing Head and Shoulders</u>									
Name: <u>Ima Cameranut</u>									
Division	Level			Division	Level				
Monochrome (M)	B	I	A	M	Travel (T)	B	-	A	-
Color (P)	B	I	A	M	Creative (C)	B	-	A	-
Nature (N)	B	-	A	-	Journalism (J)	B	-	A	-
Sequence (S) - All Levels (leave blank)									
Date: <u>01/12/2012</u>				Place: _____					
Date: _____				Place: _____					
Date: _____				Place: _____					

Example Label

It is difficult, and sometimes impossible, to process prints for the MCC, and N4C competitions when the information listed on the print sticker is illegible, incomplete, or inaccurate. Please be aware that N4C sometimes will disqualify a print if the sticker information is illegible, incomplete, inaccurate or inconsistent with the title submitted via the website (or sign-up sheet).

Print stickers should contain the following:

1. Title, which should be descriptive enough to properly orient the viewer
 - For Journalism and Travel entries, please include the location of the subject in the title.
 - Note that the Nature category has some additional requirements:
 - The title should identify the subject, using only proper and descriptive names. "Thundering Waterfall Creates Rainbow and Spray" is better than, "Victoria Falls."
 - The title may include the Latin scientific name. There are various sources for the Latin names. One of the best is a dictionary.
 - If part of a subject is shown the title should state this. For example, "Male Musk Ox (Ovibos Moschatus), Showing Head and Shoulders."
2. Maker's Name
3. At the top right of the label on the Division / Level line:
 - i) Division (Category): Monochrome (M), Color (P), Nature (N), Creative (C), Travel (T), Journalism (J), or Sequence (S)
 - ii) Level of maker (B, I, A or M) or for special categories (B or A)
4. Date of the MCC competition entered

Please note: A correct and accurate title will sometimes make a Winner!

Rules for MCC Print and Digital Competitions

1. Digital image competitions will be held on the 1st Thursday of each month. Print competitions will be held on the 2nd Thursday of each month. There will be no competitions in December. The competition year begins in November and concludes in October.
2. Each maker will be assigned to a level in each category he or she wishes to enter. These levels are used for scoring points toward year-end totals and awards. New members will be placed in an appropriate level based on a review of their work by a panel or in the competition level assigned by another club.

Levels are:

- Level B (Basic)
- Level I (Intermediate)
- Level A (Advanced)
- Level M (Masters)

3. Improperly marked or improperly submitted images may be disqualified.
4. A maker may enter a maximum of 2 images per category, per month.
5. If a maker participates, he or she must submit at least one new image per category, per month.
6. An image must be *substantially* different from one previously entered during the previous, or current, calendar month in either medium. For example, if an image is submitted in January, that image, or an image that is substantially the same, may not be entered in either Digital or Print before March.
7. An image that is substantially the same may be submitted no more than 3 times in each medium.
8. An image that has won 2 awards (Honorable Mention and/or Award of Merit) in a medium may not be submitted a third time in that medium. However, that image may be submitted up to 3 times in another medium.
9. There will be an Image of the Month award for each category in each medium, worth one extra point.
10. Competition awards and scoring, per entry, will be as follows:

Entering	=	1 point
Honorable Mention (HM)	=	1 point (plus 1 point for entering)
Award of Merit (AM)	=	2 points (plus 1 point for entering)
Image of the Month	=	1 point (plus 1 point for entering plus 2 points for AM)

11. Total number of awards per level and category is approximately 50% of the number of entries:

Total # images submitted	# AMs	# HMs	Total # Awards
3	1	0	1
4 or 5	1	1	2
6 or 7	2	1	3
8 or 9	2	2	4
10 or 11	3	2	5
12 or 13	3	3	6
etc.			

12. There must be no less than 3 images and 2 makers to have a competition in a level. If the group of entries or makers is too small, that level will be combined with the next higher level, if one exists, otherwise next lower. Any points earned will go to the maker in his or her regularly assigned level.
13. Submission of images to the MCC website by 10pm on the Wednesday before competition is:
- required for Projected Image competitions
 - encouraged for Print competitions
14. If a Print has not been previously submitted to the relevant competition on the website it must be submitted onto the sign-up sheet with a complete label by 7:00pm on competition night.
15. Winning prints should not be taken home at the end of the competition. They are needed for record-keeping purposes and may be selected for inter-club (N4C) competitions.
16. Any print that has been re-matted must have a sticker indicating the print's history on re-entry. The old sticker must be removed from the original backing and placed on the new backing or a new sticker must be affixed to the new backing containing the history copied from the old sticker.
17. Mat sizes from a minimum of 11" x 14" up to a maximum of 16" x 20" and with a maximum total thickness of 1/4" are accepted. Unmatted prints with a minimum size of 8" x 10" to a maximum size of 16" x 20" are accepted.
18. Changes to the above rules can be proposed to the board at any time during the year by the club members. The Board needs to ratify any changes. Changes will be announced in the newsletter.