



**The Monthly Newsletter of the Santa Rosa Photographic Society
Serving Santa Rosa and Sonoma County for over 34 years**

Focusing on...

THE ROADS NOW TRAVELED

by Howard Bruensteiner

You know all those little side streets and country roads that you have passed by on your way to the store or to work... year after year? Maybe you have even wondered what you might find if you took the time to take those turns and see what there is to see. Well, if you are doing 365, you make that turn. Sometimes you find something interesting, and sometimes, nothing of note. But you no longer wonder.

And sometimes you find an image:



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~ CALENDAR ~

FEBRUARY

- 06 Digital images due**
- 12 Dinner with the Judge 5:30pm**
Monthly Competition 7:00pm
- 23 Newsletter items to Sheri**
- 26 Program: tutorial and demo on portrait photography by Ron Pearson 7:00 pm**

MARCH

- 06 Digital images due**
- 12 Dinner with the Judge 5:30pm**
Monthly Competition 7:00pm
- 23 Newsletter items to Sheri**
- 26 Program: Electronic Salon 7:00 pm**

APRIL

- 03 Digital images due**
- 07 Board Meeting at LBA&G Center 7:00 PM**
- 09 Dinner with the Judge 5:30pm**
Monthly Competition 7:00pm
- 23 Program: Bird Photography by Oliver Klink, Incredible Travel Photos 7:00 pm**
- 24 Newsletter items to Sheri**

~ EXHIBITIONS AND ONGOING CALLS TO ARTISTS ~

EXHIBITIONS, ETC.

Deadline March 31: Napa City-County Library invites artists and photographers to submit work for jurying to exhibit at the library in the coming year. For details, email Stephania Pramuk at spramuk@co.napa.ca.us

ONGOING CALLS TO ARTISTS

Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks Department: Exhibits at Finley and Steele Lane Community Centers and City Hall. To apply, go to Finley Community Center, 2060 West College Avenue, Santa Rosa, to pick up an application. Community Center hours are Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 7:00 pm and on Saturday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. For further information, call 707-543-4512; contact is Tara Matheny-Schuster, email tmatheny_schuster@srcity.org

The Atrium Gallery at Marin General Hospital mounts four shows a year of "healing art." The gallery is looking for local artists for future shows. Previous artists have included Ernest Braun. Send slides and SASE to Wende Heath, Institute for Health and Healing, PO Box 8010, San Rafael, CA 94912.

Open deadline: SHOWCASE 2008. Plaza Arts Center is now taking applications for the Showcase 2008 season. Showcase exhibits are juried and run for a period of four weeks - including weekends, a reception and promotional postcards. Each artist is allocated 8 linear feet of display space except for the January Showcase which allocates 12 linear feet. All media are considered. The fee is \$125 for a 4-week event. Showcase guidelines at: <http://www.plazaartscenter.org/artistShowcaseGuidelines.htm>

Popeye said it eloquently, many years ago: I am what I am and that's all that I am.

My face has always been my fortune. For years I was broke. Then along comes mylar and Photoshop. Move over, Popeye, here I AM.

I have made some twenty variations on that theme. Some are mylar reflections using film. Some are film and a long cable release. Some are mylar and digital. Others are simply hand held digital point and shoot. All were Photoshopped.

They are all on display at my show that opens February 12th (Lincoln's REAL birthday) at the Steele Lane Community Center in Santa Rosa.

Please come to the reception the 12th from 4-7p.m. (before the SRPS meeting) and enjoy some wine and nuts and some nutty pictures.

See you there.
Barbara Larson



~ MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ~

SPRS WEBSITE

<http://www.santarosaphotographicsociety.org/index.html>

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION AND CORRECTIONS:

Contact Sheri Prager, Editor, The Positive Print

See SRPS roster for email address

~ Program ~

26 February

Former member Ron Pearson will give us a program on Portraiture. He will have some of his own work on display for us to view.

Ron will set up his camera and lighting equipment and demonstrate his techniques for us. Portraiture has always been a favorite of Ron's. This is one program you won't want to miss. Although he still works at Shutterbug on Santa Rosa Avenue, he also has a studio in Windsor, Rone Photo at 9940 Starr Road.

You can see his work on his website <http://www.ronephoto.com/>

You are invited to bring a portrait print for Ron to critique.

Please join us for dinner at the Sizzler on Farmers Lane at 5:30.

~ New Member ~

TERRY CONNELLY

WELCOME!

~ Photo Op ~

Amgen Tour of California

The finish of Stage 1 of the annual bike race takes place in downtown Santa Rosa on Sunday, February 15th, from about 3:30-5 p.m. The city is hosting a festival in Courthouse Square and Railroad Square from 12 noon on that day. The riders' circuit goes along B Street and 3rd Street downtown and Wilson Avenue at Railroad Square.

For full information, see

<http://www.amgentourofcalifornia.com/Route/stages/stage1.html>

~ Membership ~

Your 2009 SPRS dues are now due. Send a check, payable to "SRPS", for \$55 (full member) or \$35 (associate member) to SRPS Treasurer Diane Miller at 10044 Loch Haven Drive, Santa Rosa, CA 95404.

ANYONE NOT PAID BY THE END FEBRUARY WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE ROSTER.

JANUARY COMPETITION RESULTS

GENERAL

Level B

1st Moscow Metro	Bob Walker
2nd Forest Lights	Anne Abrams
3rd Blue Vase	Phil Wright

Level A

1st Another Rainy Day	Harold Moore
2nd Sunrise at Bosque del Apache	Ira Gelfman
3rd Not For a Rainy Day	Jeremy Joan Hewes

Level AA

1st Mount Rundle Sunrise	Linda Caldwell
2nd Small Clothes	Liz Lawson
3rd In a Tough Spot	Gary Saxe

Level M

1st Untitled	Edmond Bridant
2nd Autumn Splendor	Tania Amochaev
3rd At the Well	Gus Feissel

NATURE

Level B

1st Anemone	Bob Walker
2nd xxx	
3rd xxx	

Level A

1st Sandhill Crane Bosque del Apache	Ira Gelfman
2nd Blue Dragonfly	Harold Moore
3rd Double Crested Cormorants	Adele Wikner

Level AA

1st Nuzzling Elephants	Sheri Prager
2nd Leaning Oak	Drew Jackson
3rd Exploding Milkweed	Joe Simons

Level M

1st Waxwings Feed on Hawthorne Tree	Marilyn Brooner
2nd Sacramento Valley Sunset	Gus Feissel
3rd Sea Palms	Russ Dieter

CREATIVE

Level B

1st Music in the Air	James Oswald
2nd Fake Plastic Trees	Katrina Thomas
3rd xxx	

Level A

1st Smoke Cloud	Lorna Peters
2nd Life in the Fast Lane	Phillip Hann
3rd Tracks	Lorna Peters

Level AA

1st Pensive Chimp	Sheri Prager
2 nd The Old Pump	Liz Lawson
3rd Paradise Rose with Buds	Linda Caldwell

Level M

1st Flight	Barbara Larson
2nd Medicare Reject	Barbara Larson
3rd Shadow Figures	H Bruensteiner

2008 End of Year Winners A—General

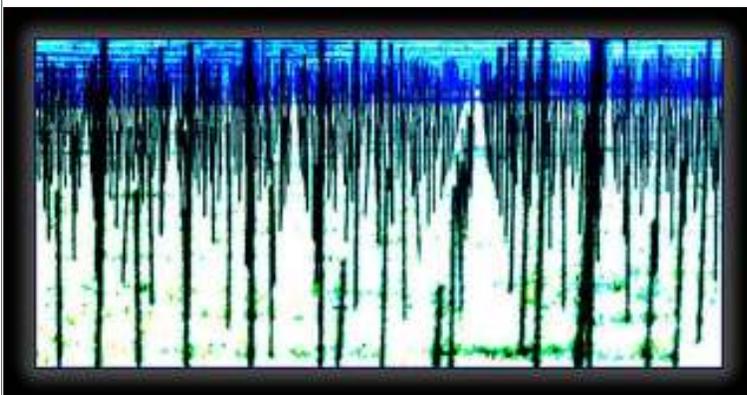
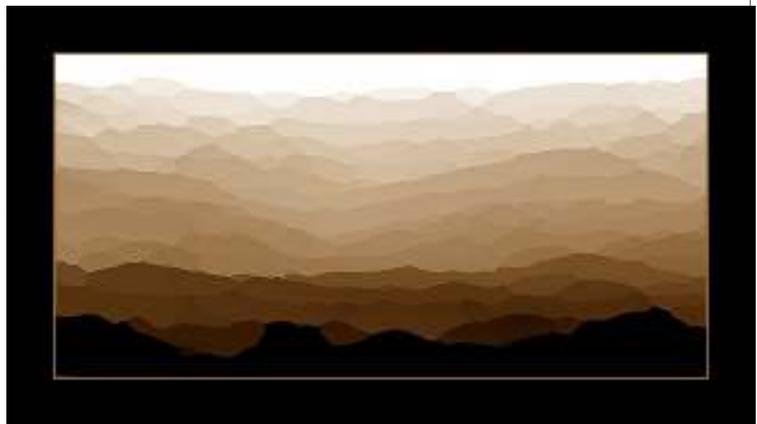
**"WHITE ANEMONE"
BY STEVE PALMER**



(continued from page 1)

I suppose it takes a certain tweak in one's personality to hear someone challenge you to take and then edit and display a photo on the web EVERY DAY for a year. Maybe it's just the pure challenge of it. Maybe it's the increased possibility of taking a good picture... or more pictures... or better odds. That's true enough for anyone. The more you take the better your chances. Or maybe you're just the kind of person who finds making a commitment irresistible. You could compare this project to signing up for a class and showing up once or twice a week... rather than just promising yourself to read a book about archeology.

But beyond the commitment and expectation of a few decent images, 365 did much more... more than anything I imagined. This was a combination of complete creative freedom that was still subject to the pressure of a self-imposed discipline. Both of these forces worked together to bring out hidden creativity and new directions for my photography. In the early months I went through my existing bag of tricks to come up with an image when it was getting late in the day and I hadn't yet just come across an interesting subject. I used cheap tricks like this one... a mediocre picture taken of the distant hills with a point and shoot while driving down the freeway, that was transformed by a Photoshop filter.



Or this drive by shooting of grape stakes near Fulton.

But later, the images came from a more involved perception of the world around me.

Some of the learning curve included an improved familiarity with Photoshop.

One evening I took a picture of a hawk perched on an oak tree. The light wasn't all that interesting, but I needed a picture for the day. So after some Photoshopping:



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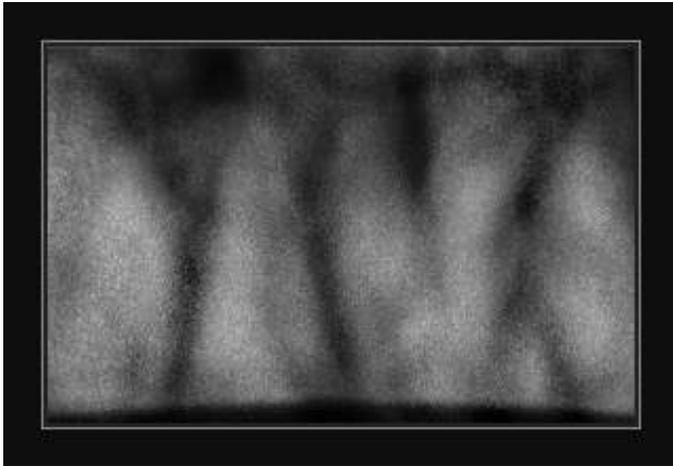
The same thing happened one evening when I took an image of the hills west of Ukiah during the fires:



We can accept a challenge to photograph an assigned subject. These exercises help us to expand our knowledge and instincts regarding that subject. But experiences like that do not significantly expand our blank canvas imagination... our seeing. A project with an unspecified subject, however, did. Most of my 365 images would never have happened without this commitment. And images like these were beyond the range of my imagination just one year ago.



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After reviewing all 366 images, I found 257 that turned out pretty well. And 84 of those I am truly happy with. If anyone is interested they can be seen at: <http://www.sonic.net/roadman/forum/366>

One additional advantage gained during 2008 is that this project broke down my inertia... that tendency to keep diving when I see fertile photographic ground. My camera is now much more at hand.

I took more pictures I'm really happy with in 2008 than in any year I can remember.... pictures I never would have conceived of without the push this project gave me. Would I have taken the time to explore these roads and methods without making a commitment to 365? Honestly, no. But I'm certainly glad I did.

So thank you Greg, and thank you 365.

Howard

~ FIELD TRIPS 2009 ~

February 6, 7 and 8th: Our field trip to the Monterey Bay – Aquarium, Butterflies and Pacific Grove is rapidly approaching. The hotel where we plan to stay is: Best Western Monarch Resort, located at 1111 Lighthouse Avenue, Pacific Grove, CA 93950; telephone number is 831-646-8885. Be sure to tell them if you are a AAA member or a Senior and let them know you are part of the Santa Rosa Photographic Society. Breakfast is included and begins at 7:30 each morning. Buy your Aquarium tickets at the hotel as they will entitle you to two consecutive days' entrance to the Aquarium and allow you to go in through the short line. No tripods or monopods are permitted at the Aquarium.

People will be arriving according to their own schedules. **IF YOU WANT TO CONFER WITH OTHERS ABOUT PLACES TO SHOOT BE AT BREAKFAST AT 7:30 AM ON SATURDAY AND SUNDAY MORNINGS.** We will have supper together Saturday evening at a restaurant to be announced.

For more information about the butterflies please go to www.ci.pg.ca.us/monarchs. The Monarch Grove Sanctuary is located on Ridge Road between Lighthouse and Short Street in Pacific Grove. As of mid January there were over 13,000 butterflies in the sanctuary. There is a docent available from 12 to 3 every day except Friday.

For information on Pt. Pinos Lighthouse, please go to www.ci.pg.ca.us/lighthouse. The Pt. Pinos Lighthouse is located on Asilomar Avenue between Lighthouse Avenue and Del Monte Boulevard. The Lighthouse is open Thursday through Sunday from 1 to 4 PM. A donation is appreciated.

For information on the Monterey Bay Aquarium, please go to www.mbayaq.org. The Aquarium is located at 886 Cannery Row, and is open from 10AM – 6PM, daily.

Pacific Grove itself is filled with places to photograph and of course the coast itself is easily accessible along the road leading from Pacific Grove to the Aquarium; Seventeen Mile Drive is also close by.

Either on your way to or from Pacific Grove, you may wish to stop at Ano Nuevo State Park to see the northern elephant seals which are breeding and calving at this time. Please go to www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=523 to learn more about visiting this park at this time. It appears that reservations may be required. The Pigeon Point Lighthouse is also nearby.

Images from any of these attractions taken during this trip may be submitted for the Palmer Field Trip Competition at the end of the year. Please submit five of your favorite images from this trip to ladybear@sonic.net so that we may compile an on-line book for the viewing enjoyment of our members. The images should be sized as if they were going into competition.

February 8th: In addition to this trip, FOR THOSE OF YOU STAYING CLOSER TO HOME, you are welcome to go to the Orchid Show at the Veterans Museum on Sunday, February 8, 2009, for one hour prior to opening. Please do not touch the orchids or interfere in any way with the show. We will ask that you provide images to ladybear@sonic.net so that a CD may be given to the Orchid Society.

March 21st: Time for our Mustard Shoot and Potluck Supper. We will meet at Donna and Tom Cambell's home (see roster for address please) at 1 PM. When you sign up, please indicate whether you will bring a salad, vegetable or dessert. Donna and Janet will provide the meat dishes. After dropping off your food and perhaps teaming up with a couple of other members, you will take off to explore for spring images including mustard – if mustard is still to be found. We are seeing it already – so we hope some will still be around for our trip. We will return to the Campbells by 5 PM where we will set out the supper and spend some time enjoying one another's company.

THE SIGN UP BINDER FOR ALL FIELD TRIPS FOR 2009 IS ON THE SIDE TABLE AT EVERY MEETING. PLEASE NOTE IF YOU PLAN TO BRING FAMILY AND/OR FRIENDS WITH YOU.

~ FORUM FEATURE ~

~ General or Creative? ~

[Marilyn Brooner](#)

This is one of those in between images we all have. I did some Photoshop work of course. Too much for general? Not enough for creative? Your thoughts please, general or creative?



[Greg Gorsiski](#)

Good question.

My initial reaction is Creative because everything is changed. Light, Color, Glow, Blur/Sharpening. But yet its a full on picture of a tree. I'm going to stick with creative for my choice.

[Marilyn Brooner](#)

Yes, I agree. I would say creative also. It's really not worked enough to do well in creative and yet to much for gen.

[Drew Jackson](#)

Personally, I think it is worked plenty to do well in creative. It has a surreal quality to it . . . a not-of-this-world quality.

[Marcia Hart](#)

Well, I'm going "out on a limb" (pun intended) and I'll say this belongs in general. There is nothing abstract about it. It's beautiful! It's clearly had some work, but it looks very real - in it's surreality...

[Greg Gorsiski](#)

Abstract isn't the only criteria, otherwise we should call it just abstract. You could argue that surreality is abstract.

[Janet Gelfman](#)

This is surely one of the borderline images as between the two categories. I think I would say, based upon some prior experience, that it is too recognizable to go into Creative. Whatever you decide, it is a beautiful image. I like quality of fantasy in the background -- and the moss moving in the breeze.

[Greg Gorsiski](#)

OK, look at my avatar in my post here. This was a photo I Photoshopped



It's a face. Is that General?

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What about this?

Photo of a flamingo at the zoo, which I Photoshopped. Is this general because its recognizable?



I don't think being recognizable can be used as the only or main criteria.

I offer that Marilyn's edits are just as extensive as what I did here. I chose to be very BOLD, she chose to be ETHEREAL. But the amount of 'work' is the same. It's that amount of total change in the image that, to me, makes it creative.

[Marcia Hart](#)

And, that is in the eye of the beholder when it comes to a judge looking at it. Most of our judges seem to have no concept of what has gone into the creative images and would likely opt for something a little more obviously "creative" to reward with a high score. Either way, I do love this one.

[Greg Gorsiski](#)

This is an excellent thread that points out this problem.

To us, we can set up all these rules, and make us understand the concepts, but when it comes down to it, the judges (for the most part) don't have that history, understanding, experience.

I believe they would judge these images no matter where they are placed as the image. Most of them would not understand my processing and either love it or hate it. Most of them would understand Marilyn's and score it the same in either category. They will see a 'filter' was used, and accept it in either category.

How do we make it better? By better understanding where we put our own images.

Marilyn's image was a total makeover with a LOT of effects. I believe she used both Photoshop and Painter. I believe she used Surface texture with a 3D brush stroke to create the embossing. This is just as much work as my Fractal processing of each pixel. The glows and ethereal work is also a lot of reworking.

Because of all this reworking and reprocessing of everything in the image, it's creative. But what's the difference if only we understand this when 80% of our more traditional judges don't? So we can keep working it here, but it can be REALLY frustrating on Thursday night.

We could beat this to death in getting right, but if they don't what's the point? Our competitions are all about getting high scores, so if I enter the Flamingo, I can only hope for the judges that says.... "Wow, I don't understand this, it must be Photoshopped, I give it a 98" or "Wow, I don't do Photoshop, 82" (because we don't score anything under 82)

Either one of those are useless responses to me. I don't bother anymore. I want a judge to talk about Marilyn's ethereal qualities, about how she reworked the palette. How she brought out the texture in the tree with the embossing, giving it the brushed feel. How the grasses soften out into the haze as it goes back into the image. How she maintained the detail in the very front of the image, and wonderfully took it away in the back.

All of these comments belong in a discussion of a creative image, not a general comment on a tree shot. (Why I say Creative for this one)

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I entered one of my fractal images last year, it did great, I won the creative image of year in "A". Why? "Wow, I don't understand this, how did you do that, that's wild, ahhhhhhh 98." Not one comment on composition, design, execution, nothing. I have a trophy for "I don't understand this" It's in a box.

We don't have (many) qualified creative judges which is totally explained by the fact we are more progressive than our judges and their experience. I understand this and accept it. And I rarely enter. I don't believe we can educate a judge on creative category they way we are discussing this right now. I do enter in Marin and San Francisco clubs more. But their judging is completely different. (Plus honestly, their meetings are closer to my work and I can make them in time)

If you want to take our creative category seriously, we should leave the judging of General and Nature to our guest judges and we should self judge creative.

Marilyn Brooner

Thanks for all the comments.

I'm still confused about where I could enter this. I still think right now it's creative, but I hope general allows a little more Photoshopped work. I know we all have these kind of images. If I chose to enter this in general, would it be allowed? Just how much can we change an image and put it in general, or is it just our choice? I personally think we should be able to enter an image like this one in general.

Janet, you're right, we probably did the same amount of work on our images, but your flamingo would definitely be creative, while mine should be either. Your avatar is another either image.

I would like to see other images that you feel are questionable.

Janet Gelfman

Greg, it was "strongly suggested" to me that I move an image of mine which had been very heavily worked so that it looked more nearly like a painting than a photograph from Creative to General "because the subjects were recognizable". Of course, it didn't do well in General because the judge thought it was too heavily Photoshopped, etc. So I agree that there really needs to be a better set of definitions. And Marilyn, I would love to take credit for the flamingo and the garden guy but Greg has the rights to those all himself. I agree with Greg about judging Creative ourselves. I have expressed my belief that the judges are not able to do so while we have many members who are very capable of these kinds of discussions. I know there are some thoughts being given to rule changes and I would hope the Board would take Greg's comments and my concerns under advisement for a potential further change. Frankly, I would like the "outside" judge to be present when we switch to members to critique the creative work because I think they could learn from us and do a better job in the future.

Greg Gorsiski

I know this doesn't help, but what the hell, I'm an ass anyways.

If you want a better score, with our more traditional judges, it will probably do better in General. But sometimes the judges fool us, so I agree with you on the difficulty here. Using historical judging at competitions and caring about the score, I'd do General. Using our more self educated judging here on the forum, I'd do Creative. I stand behind my feeling that an outside judge will score this image about the same in either category. So do you want to compete with other trees? Or fractal flamingos?

Drew Jackson

I'll throw out another monkey wrench if we are talking about which category to enter this image in to win the highest score from a judge: Creative or Nature!

Most judges I have heard make no distinctions whatsoever for the category entered and judge the image by the criteria of "they like" it or "they don't like it". (forget about them even attempting to interpret our rules) That being said, the chances for scoring high will be in the categories with the fewest number of entries and where it has a chance to stand out from the rest. Since we screen Nature and it would probably not pass the scrutiny of the preview, I would place this in Creative. (This assessment is strictly for those who seem to be caught up in the number/score game. Those that play the game best win . . . and this is a game.)

Howard Bruensteiner

One thought is that those entering a standard or realistic looking image in General might not appreciate competing against a manipulated image that may have more impact from the "effect" or "filter" used.

While I expect that almost all of us use Photoshop or at least some brand of image editor to prepare our images, and that the use of these effects is certainly available to all, those choosing to present a realistic image should be able to do so in like company.

One way of differentiating General vs. Creative could be to restrict General to images that have an appearance that "could" (not "was") have been accomplished by traditional means including slow shutter, camera movement, diffusion over the lens, multiple exposure, panoramas, soft focus, infrared, prismatic filters, monochrome, and many more field techniques.

This wouldn't mean that a perfectly standard images that have a creative appearance due to something like a blur resulting from camera movement couldn't be used in Creative, they probably should be, but that those images that could not have been created without an image editor's "filter" or "effect" might be more appropriately submitted in Creative.

I suspect there is some hole in this logic, but it's just a thought I thought I'd throw out for discussion.

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[Butch Conner](#)

I agree with Howard on the appearance verbiage. I thought that was where we were headed with this last year or even further back. We won't ever get every judge on board with our thoughts as long as the creative category has the name "creative", it's just too wide open to interpretation on what creative means. This image is a perfect example of this. It is very creative, but we have a split on if it is creative enough for one category or another. And that's from us! What are different judges going to think.

Howard's has a good point here, if we state "the appearance of it being able to be done in camera", and that should be loosely interpreted, it would not fit in General.

If that were the case this image would go in creative because it is obviously manipulated (beautifully done Marilyn!) heavily.

Who cares if it's an abstract or realistic, it's had a lot of work done and the maker had some very creative thought and hand in doing so.

Or we change the category name to something like digital imaging/creation.

[Howard Bruensteiner](#)

The key word here has to be "loosely". And I would suggest using "looks like" rather than "appearance" as I think it would be less open to individual interpretation.

Here's some additional examples. These have both been edited with regard to exposure and color levels and some shadow/highlights, but no Photoshop effects or "filters".

This is a traditional looking image that has been done for years using a longer exposure. It doesn't look like real life to me, but it doesn't look Photoshopy either, and I would enter it in General:



This next one has a Photoshopy look but was done by panning the camera during the exposure. No filters were used, the glow came from the panning, not from the diffuse glow filter. I would consider this a Creative entry that should not be allowed in General:



[Marilyn Brooner](#)

I agree the top one of Howard's would be general. The second one could be either creative or general, the makers choice.

[Howard Bruensteiner](#)

If I was entering an image in the General category I wouldn't want to have to compete with the second one.

Since this year's Al Shelton General category combined both General and Creative, it might be interesting to compare the scores of the general entries vs. the creative ones