

Grain Images: Greg Kahn, Lexey Swall and Tristan Spinski

Feature

1st - This photo has great energy, moment, and light. Really feels like you're on the sled with them.

2nd - Love the different elements in photo, each girl is in their own world. Great body language and quiet moments.

3rd - We thought this photo was really beautiful. Love the space the photographer gave this scene to breathe. We felt that the moment could have been better, maybe he or she could have waited for a bit more separation of the skiers and the trees.

News

1st - This is moment that could have easily been missed. It's quiet, but the facial expressions tell the story. The children in the background are a wonderful added element. We've been in these situations many times and know how difficult it can be to come back with a great photo.

2nd - These firefighters look bad ass. It's more than a simple silhouette. The light on their faces is really nice. Photographer had good access in a breaking news situation.

3rd - This was a nice quiet moment from a news situation. Great light, and good caption, although the last sentence contradicts what we see in the photo.

Portrait

1st - Simple yet effective. Great quality of light. A striking photograph

2nd - We felt like we got a sense of who this lady is, despite being in a very busy situation. Nice framing from the trees, shallow depth of field. I feel like we'll look at this photo in 20 years and understand something about the time and place based on how she looks.

3rd - The caption of this photo could be improved. We like the use of light, but the boys could have been positioned better so the tractor parts weren't coming out of the head of the boy on the left.

Sports Feature

1st - Really nice jubilation with layers extending into the stands. Photographer did a nice job positioning him or herself on the court to get this moment.

2nd - Great energy from the bench.

3rd - We really like the moment happening in the background of this photo. love that the photographer was looking for moments after the game, off the field. This photo would have been elevated in placement, but the player on the left of the frame is distracting from the heart of the photo.

Sports Action

- 1st - Really nice composition and mood from this photo. Layering was also well done.
- 2nd - Good sports action, photographer was in the right spot at the right time and was able to compose the frame well.
- 3rd - Good peak moment.

The San Francisco Chronicle

Feature

Good variety of images here. The images generated lively discussion between the judges in regards to the merits of graphics vs. moments, and the originality of some of the scenes.

- 1st - The first place photo is a beautifully clean moment that allows the viewer to connect to the emotion on the officers face. Well done.
- 2nd - The second place photo is a graphic location that was seen well by the photographer. The saturation of color coupled with the negative space is a strong visual. Excellent separation of subjects.
- 3rd - This image made us laugh, although there was some debate as to the frequency with which such scenes occur in Kentucky. Either way, we agreed that this was probably a good example of why a photographer should keep a camera handy with him/her at all times.

News

This category, with its mix of spot and general news, was interesting to judge.

- 1st - In the first place image the raw emotion in the woman's expression carried this frame to the top of our list. Nice spot news moment.
- 2nd - We liked the graphic qualities of the frame in the second place photo - the composition is what makes this photo work. It's a graphic image that conveys the feel of the scene. That being said, we feel that a clean graphic image should be just that. Clean and graphic. We thought the asymmetrical trees on either side of the frame took away from the otherwise clean composition. Overall, though, nice seeing.
- 3rd - In the third place photo we enjoyed the light. While there is undeniably a moment in this image, it was somewhat difficult to read - the girl on the right almost seems to be smiling. Given the uncertainty of building fires, we applaud the photographer for finding a moment and coupling it with nice light.

Portrait

We felt that portrait was one of the strongest categories. In portraits we are always looking for well composed images that bring you to a level of intimacy with the subject that evokes an

emotion in the reader. We feel that there were a few images in this set that did just that.

1st - The first place image is well composed, with the subject framed by the trees and highlighted by a shallow depth of field. We liked the juxtaposition between the woman's proud expression, formal outfit, and her sneakers.

2nd - The second place image automatically makes us feel something. From the scars to the wrinkles to the band aid, there is so much being said by this quiet photo. The use of light and shallow depth of field brings an added layer of intimacy to the image.

3rd - The third place image is light nicely and allows us to see the subject for who he is. The intensity of the moment is subdued by the off camera look, however the feeling of concern is still evident. This photo has nice light and a clean background.

Sports Feature

We were struck by the similarities between this category and sports action. We felt that this contest might be improved by concrete category descriptions. Our understanding of sports feature is a photograph that captures a moment away from game action and introduces a level of intimacy not typically seen by most people. For this reason, although we liked images such as the women's basketball player celebrating on the ground, we felt like this was a action photo shot from a standard photo position (similar to the second place sports action winner).

1st - The first place image is a strong photo that captures the spirit of small town football. It's a moment found after the game that carries emotion and strong composition seen through layers. Good job making a nice frame in a hectic moment.

2nd - The second place photo is a great example of a well seen moment in a place where there is usually limited access. The photographer stepped off the field to find that quiet moment that helps tell the story of the game. This photo could benefit from a slight crop all around to help spotlight the moment.

3rd - The third place photo is a nice moment seen from field level. The initial subjects brings a nice sense of emotion that is augmented by the subject on the right. The weak link to this image is how busy the background is. There is a feeling of disconnect that is created by the distance from the photographer to the player.

Sports Action

In this category, the judges were looking for strong technical images along with photographs that helped tell the moment of the event.

1st - The first place image displays great layers and presents a timeless feel, one that resembles classic cycling photography from past eras. The repetition of shapes (helmets) helps add to the overall appeal. The one thing missing would be a key moment, however, we feel that the overall tone and technical decisions carry this image.

2nd - The second place photograph shows great intensity with a peak moment. Although it shows strong emotion, there seems to be a disconnect between the emotion on the main subject and the players around him. The guy standing in the back is distracting. Cropping in from

the right and top would have improved this image. The helmet in hand adds layer of humor that we liked.

3rd - The third place image captures a great moment and does a good job of conveying the struggle happening on the court. It's a nontraditional action photo, but made successful by the three elements in the center of the frame - namely, the face, ball/hand, and clock. The dead space on the right and bottom left works against the image, such that we thought a tighter crop would make the image stronger and cleaner.