

## Results of March 2015 CCC Forum Competition, "Go Green"

1) "Need an Apartment" - Toni Zappone: What a fun image! This image definitely meets the criteria of filling the frame with green, and it is a great find for this competition. I can't say I have ever really looked at these dispensers of printed matter so thoroughly, and this one is a surprise with the roof and dormers! The photographer definitely has a fun sense of humour.

2) "Tea leaves - market in Bagan, Burma" - Karen Lang: This image is fascinating! Not only does it fit the category perfectly, filling the frame with green, but the tea leaves are so wonderfully detailed in their layering and placement in the basket. This is a slice of life I have never seen before, and it really holds my interest. Enhancing that experience is the use of circles, and their placement along a diagonal. Circles tend to hold our eye within the circle, and is a very strong compositional element. The color toning also lends to a mood that is exceptional - a very exceptional image!

3) "All Things Bright and Beautiful" - Stan Kaslusky: What a perfect moment captured here! How often do we get to see the sheep along with the shepherd (or farmer lol) interacting in such a lovely pastoral setting! Green definitely dominates this image. The DOF is perfect, with the sheep and farmer sharp then focus drops off to the background which keeps attention on the subjects. Light areas, like white areas, grab our eyes. The first thing I saw was the bright grass at the bottom of the image. This bright grass is strongly juxtaposed against a horizontal line created by the shade, sheep and gate that then takes the eye out of the photo along that horizontal. If the eye leaves the photo, much of the background and sense of depth can get lost. I suggest darkening the grass with a gradient or burning to keep the eye grounded within the image and not drawn to that horizontal line, and brightening the sheep and shepherd to pull them out of shadow and draw attention to what really matters in this image. I really enjoyed this image and the visual it created has stuck with me since posted, attesting to its emotional impact. A very well-seen image!

4) "Green Power Green Fields" - Gene Runion: This image definitely suits the theme of going green in the ecological sense, and I applaud Gene for including this! There are some great leading lines created by the crop rows in the foreground. To me, the mass of greenery in the foreground does not add to the photo and I would suggest cropping from the bottom up to just below where the leading lines start, and then to keep the 3:2 aspect ratio crop the left side as well. That brings the horizon lower in the image and makes the image more dynamic. Although the leading lines are placed on the rule of thirds line, I believe the photo would be stronger if the leading lines lead straight up to the wind turbine. That also would put the wind turbine along a "rule of thirds" line rather than centered. Great job of bringing something to suit the ecology theme to us!

5) "Green Ghoulie" - Sandy Hodge: Definitely a green image! And what a great find, looks like a gigantic dragon or praying mantis in the woods! My eye keeps seeing "thread"-like white lines just above his neck, suggesting he has been captured and hung lol. You did a nice job of filling the frame with color, not allowing bright patches of sky to distract the eye. A slight distraction to me are the green fern fronds at the base of the tree. I suspect the wind was blowing causing them to be out of focus. I am thinking a faster shutter speed would have froze the movement resulting in sharpness throughout.

6) "River Cruiser, Les Andeles, France" - David Katz: I am always fascinated by the images our club members submit from travels all over the world, and a bit jealous as well lol. A very verdant green image, broken up by the cruiser as well as those very stark, sheer white cliffs. I like the perspective from high on a hillside looking into the river valley. Compositionally there is a foreground (trees in front), middle ground (river and buildings) and background (cliffs and hillside), and I suspect you wisely avoided the sky which was most likely cloud covered based on lack of shadows on the ground. But it lacks a bit of "life" that light would have brought to the image. Different light may have provided a little more variation in the greens - more color separation between the tree tops, river reflection, and grassy areas. Overall a very pleasing image, with some cool geology to think about!

7) "View in a Rain Drop" - Alda Vidrich: Lovely macro hitting all the right accords compositionally - rain drop is sharp, located at the intersection of two "rule of thirds" lines, remainder of image is blurred putting the interest fully on the front rain drop and removing any distractions, nice contrast between dark background and light leaf, and the raindrop contains an image of the leaf. A beautifully created image!

8) "Web Wonder" - Katie Moran: Another wonderful macro meeting all the compositional suggestions for holding interest - dew drops are sharp, forming a slight oblique along a "rule of thirds" line, remainder of image is out of focus putting the interest fully on the dew drops, nice contrast between dark background and white dew drops. and I particularly like the sharpness of the webbing. Beautifully done!

9) "Look this way!" - George Beller: What a great image for a photographer's bio! Love how the turtle is facing right into the long lens of the photographer, creating a bit of an oblique and adding tension to the image. Both photographer and turtle look sharply focused - very nice! When opportunities such as this arise it may not be possible to explore different points of view. But I am wondering if walking behind the photographer and shooting over his shoulder, almost looking down the barrel of the camera lens, including all the photographer in the shot (but from behind) and capturing the turtle's face pointed towards the lens would have helped cut down the amount of grasses and foliage in the foreground and background that just aren't all that interesting. Just thinking out loud, it is rare we have the flexibility to walk up into the scene like that. If there were the option of shooting this again - and I realize that is very unlikely - I would suggest using a narrower DOF (perhaps f/2.8-f/4.5, depending on your distance to subject) to put the background out of focus and just keep the plane in which the photographer and turtle sit in focus. Blurring the background would keep the attention on the subjects and minimize the distraction of the crazy background. Capturing a photographer "at work" is a great thrill - we all want to be that photographer at that moment, so the image has emotional impact. Overall, I would be proud to have an image like this on my Bio page!

10) "Butterfly" - Joyce Walton: A very lovely butterfly filling the frame - well spotted and captured! I've not seen this butterfly before, so as such it captures my attention and my eye readily explores every bit of it. I believe the closest antennae and the legs are in focus, but I wonder how sharp the eye and remainder of the butterfly is - it looks a little soft but that could just be the size of the file transferred to

the internet. Sometimes you have to crank up sharpening in post production. Overall a very pleasing image!

11) "Time to Open" - Robert Fehnel: Beautiful image with a lovely juxtaposition of the deep purple tulip against the backlit green foliage which is softly blurred - a beautiful background, well done! I believe that the very tip of the flower petals are focused, and that focus drops off beyond that spot, which is a lovely use of DOF. The focused portion is strategically placed on a "rule of thirds" cross point, which usually works for an image. But I feel a little unbalanced as a viewer of this image. The majority of the visual "weight" of the tulip flower is centered. I would suggest cropping a bit of the right side to move the weight of the tulip out of the center. Because of the unique angle chosen by the photographer, I am mindful of balance - the purple flower is such a strong visual element against the background, it has weight that needs a strong counterpoint bottom left to balance it. It may also work as a vertical and flipped, such that the stem still comes from bottom left to flower upper right. The vertical tends towards what we expect to see, but I suspect you were looking for something more visually unique. Those colors are really great together - very pretty!

12) "Go Green" - Greg Dudley: Another delightful green photo - who doesn't love a "frog" (could be a toad, I don't know the difference lol)! The frog/toad is nicely placed in the image, with his eyes looking into the photo (centered on right rule of thirds line) and just enough room for him/her to get up the steam to leap! I applaud your skill at thinking quick to get this green guy so well placed. The color variations attract attention and keeps my eye in the photo, exploring. I believe the eye is tack sharp, another kudo to the photographer! Excellent image!

13) "Veratrum Viride False Indian Poke" - Deborah Kellams - now this is the type of image I expected to see more of! Green fills the frame! The composition reminds me of hands in a praying position - this is an example of an image that has emotional impact. I love the color of the leaves, such a spring green, and exploring all the veining in the leaves. I am having a bit of trouble understanding the placement of the focal point. It is generally believed that the eye goes towards bright areas and things in sharp focus. In this case, it appears to me that the focus is sharpest on the far right on top of the curled leaf - the tiny hairs or perhaps water droplets are bright and sharp there, but not so much in the rest of the image. I am wondering if that was intentional. If there is no clear point at which the photographer wants the viewer to look, then focus throughout the image would be expected. That is very hard to do with close-ups, and focus stacking is often required. This is such an interesting image of curled leaves and I enjoyed exploring it.

14) "Green Hideaway" - Judy Edwards: Great image which evokes memories of fawn hunting in Big Meadows - this little guy has found a great "blind" with only ears and perhaps eyes above the greenery. Nicely focused on the eye and ears of the fawn, with the focus dropping off foreground and background - a great use of DOF. The fawn is looking into the photo, with room to move out to the right - all the composition "rules" are met to create this pleasing image, I can't see anything that could be done better!

Conclusion: As you can tell from my comments, there are many amazing images in this competition! If I were giving scores of 1-5, there would be a bunch of 4s and 5s. But I am expected to pick a "winner" and there is one image that I saw early in the competition that has stuck with me throughout the competition. But before I name the winner, there are a few "honorable mentions" - "View in a Rain Drop" by Alda Vidrich is my 2nd place choice, a very beautiful image! "Butterfly" by Joyce Walton would be 3rd, with honorable mentions to "All Things Bright and Beautiful" by Stan Kaslusky , "Green Hideaway" by Judy Edwards, and "Go Green" by Greg Dudley - all of these images kept my interest and were technically well done, making it difficult to pick a winner!

The winner is "Tea leaves - market in Bagan, Burma" by Karen Lang! Karen has captured the tea leaves in wonderful detail, and I am fascinated by the layering of the tea leaves in a circular pattern in the baskets. In addition the image is taken on an oblique - circles and obliques are strong compositional elements. Congratulations, Karen!