

HONORS PROGRAM AND ASSIGNMENT/OPEN CATEGORY/DIGITAL RULES

Revised January, 2019

The purpose of the Honors Program is to provide a structure for a critical review that is in keeping with the member's ability. It is one of several options that the photo club offers to allow us to participate in photographic activities that are intended to enhance our abilities in an enjoyable way. Its aim is to be evaluative rather than competitive, and thereby reduce the intimidating aspects of conventional competition and emphasize constructive information. The Assignment and Open Categories allow us to test ourselves against our fellow members. Rankings are published monthly and year-end awards are given.

### Submission Categories

There are three submission categories: Monthly Assignment, Open, and Digital. All submissions, regardless of category, count toward Honors Program points.

**Monthly Assignment** submissions must be applicable to the previously announced topics that are listed under the Honors Program link on our web site. The judging process and time window for taking the photograph are described under **Monthly Assignment Competition** below. Submissions will be judged on both image quality and applicability to the assignment (see **Honors Program Scoring**). Only submissions under the Assignment category count towards Photographer of the Year (POTY) Award. The member receiving the POTY award is not eligible for the Open category award.

**Open** category submissions may be on any subject. There is no time window, but members are encouraged to submit recent work. These submissions will be judged solely on image quality. An annual Open Category Award will be presented to the member who scores highest in this category as described under **Annual Awards** below. The Open Category winner is not eligible for Photographer of the Year. The award is intended to provide a competitive forum for those who prefer not to participate in assignments.

**Digital** category submissions are intended to provide judging opportunities and recognition for members who wish to present an image but prefer to avoid the effort and expense of preparing a print. Digital submissions DO NOT count toward Photographer of the Year or Open Category awards. However, Honors Night scoring of Gold, Silver and Bronze will count for levels of advancement in the club. See **Achievement Levels** below. Participation in Digital submissions DOES NOT preclude competing for POTY or the Open category award.

1. Digital submissions shall be emailed to [Honors@BayAreaPhotoClub.Org](mailto:Honors@BayAreaPhotoClub.Org) by 12:00 Midnight the Monday before the honors night meeting.
2. You must be present on honors night for your digital submission to be considered. There will be a sheet-in sheet for the digital category similar to the "Open" and "Assignment" submissions.
3. The image shall be in jpeg format.
4. The maximum file size is 5MB.
5. The maximum resolution is 1920x1080 at 96 (dpi or ppi).
6. The color space should be sRGB.
7. It is not the responsibility of the honors night personnel to reformat any image.
8. The file naming convention is as follows:

(P|L)-Firstname-Lastname-PictureName.jpg

P or L (P for Portrait or L for Landscape)

First name

Last name

Picture name

Example:

P-John-Doe-Sunset at the Bay.jpg

Photos will be deleted after honors night.

## Submission Requirements

Participants must be current club members in good standing (dues paid).

Members are limited to two submissions per Honors Night in any combination of categories, (i.e., 1 digital and 1 open, 1 open and 1 assignment, 1 digital and 1 assignment, 2 digitals, 2 assignments, or 2 opens).

Entries for Open Category and Assignment must be submitted on judging night no later than 7:20 pm. Digital submissions must be submitted in the correct format no later than midnight the Monday before Honors Night.

For each submitted image, the photographer should enter his/her name and title of the image on the appropriate Submission Sheet (open, assignment or digital). Also, if the photographer does not wish to have a critique, make a note accordingly beside the title.

Note the number for your image from the left-hand column on the Submission Sheet. Write this number on a "sticky-note" and put the "sticky-note on the back/top of the print. Put the print with all the other prints that are to be evaluated for that category (open/assignment).

The Honors Program Meeting will generally be held on the second Tuesday of every month.

**Presentation of prints** – Prints should be matted in a standard all-white mat and unframed. Multi-colored or double mats are not recommended. The mat should look clean with the image/backing board secured sufficiently to avoid becoming dislocated during handling and viewing.

The minimum recommended image size is 8"x10". It is important for the size of the print to best represent the subject matter. Don't ignore presentation. It is important to the viewer's overall perception of your submitted image and could impact the score.

## Critique, Judging, and Scoring

Prior to 2017 judging and scoring was performed by a panel of 3 trained judges selected monthly from members of the Judging Committee. As images were presented, one of the judges would provide a critique, and all three judges would score the submission in accordance with the guidelines below. The final score for photographic merit was determined by summing the three individual scores. For assignment submissions, each judge also provided an "applicability" score, and the final score was determined by a mathematical formula involving summing the scores and multiplying them together.

The judging procedure was revised in 2017. Currently a panel of 3 judges still provides a critique of each image, but scoring is performed by all members in attendance at the meeting. The final scores (for all categories) are determined by mathematical formulas involving averaging and multiplying (for Assignment submissions). To provide for comparisons to and continuity with pre-2017 results, the scores are normalized to appear consistent with the previous procedure involving the 3 judge panel. Additionally, the current procedure provides for discarding one high score and one low score for each individual image when computing the final aggregate score for the image.

On Honors Night all members who wish to participate are issued a scannable score sheet with sections for each of the three categories. The images will be viewed twice. In the first time through, the photographs will be presented one at a time on an easel (or a monitor for digitals). The three-judge panel will present a brief critique (unless the photographer has requested no critique on the score sheet). There will be no audience discussion of the photo at this time. Upon viewing the image and hearing the critique, members will mark (bubble in) a score of 1 to 9 for each

submission. For Assignment category submissions, the member will also mark an applicability score of 0 to 3. Members will not score their own submissions, and should recuse themselves if they feel they cannot judge without bias. Scoring guidelines are provided in following sections

After the images have all been viewed the first time and the judging is complete, the score sheets will be submitted to the scorekeeper for calculation of the final aggregate score for each image. After calculations are complete there will be a second viewing during which the scorekeeper will announce the title, photographer, total points scored, award level (Gold, Silver, Bronze, if applicable), and 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the each category. The determination of Gold, Silver, or Bronze is based on the average aggregate score and the member's "Star Level". See **Image Score for Honors Award** and **Achievement Levels** below.

Prior to 2017 the final aggregate score for non-assignment images was determined by merely adding the scores by the 3 judges and this yielded a maximum score of 27. Under the current procedure with a larger number of scorers, an averaging and normalizing formula is applied which still yields a theoretical maximum score of 27.

During the second viewing all Gold awarded photos (and others if time allows) will be brought to the easel for a brief overview by the photographer concerning methods, intent, etc. (We may have to skip this if we run short on time, but we will try to accommodate it if at all possible).

## Monthly Assignment Competition

Up to two images may be submitted into the Monthly Assignment Competition. Scores from assignment submissions will also be applied to the Honors Program. The assignment topics are posted on the web site for the entire year and announced monthly to the club at the first meeting of the month. Images for the Assignment Category must be photographed after the **Taken after** date indicated in the Assignments list on the web site.

Each picture in the assignment competition will be given a "merit" score and an "applicability" score by each judging member. The scorekeeper will later use these scores to calculate the final aggregate score for the image.

First, each judging member will judge the image for its "merit" using the Honors Program criteria without regard to the assignment subject. This score will be used to determine if the image deserves a Gold, Silver, Bronze, or no award in the Honors Program. Then, each judging member should evaluate the assignment photo on how well it meets the assignment criteria ("applicability") and enter a second score from 0 through 3. [For instance, if the subject was Christmas, judge the image on how well it captured the essence or spirit of the Christmas season. If the subject were a location, ask yourself how well does this image capture what this location is all about. Would this image be suitable for a poster on said subject?

Prior to 2017 the final aggregate score for Assignment images was determined by adding the 3 judges merit scores together (max 27), adding the 3 judges applicability scores together (max 9), then multiplying these two sums to determine the final score. This yielded a theoretical maximum score of 243. Under the current procedure with a larger number of scorers, a similar averaging and normalizing formula is applied which still yields a theoretical maximum (though highly unlikely) score of 243.

## Annual Awards

To be eligible for the **Photographer of the Year (POTY) Award** a member must enter in a minimum of 50% of the monthly assigned topics. All submitted photographs must be taken after the assignment topic **Taken After** date listed on the web site. The final ranking of the entrants will be determined by summing the highest scoring six images from different monthly topics of the qualified photographs submitted. If a member submits two qualifying images in a particular month, only the highest scoring image will be considered.

To be eligible for the **Open Category Award** a member must enter in a minimum of 50% of the monthly Honors Night sessions. The final ranking will be determined in a similar manner to the POTY award by summing highest scoring six images. Again, if a member submits two Open Category images in a particular month, only the highest scoring image will be considered.

As previously stated, no member will be eligible for both awards. In the rare event that a particular member ends the year with the high score in both categories, he or she will receive the **POTY Award**. The **Open Category Award** will go to the next highest scorer in the Open category.

At present, there is no annual award for **Digital** submissions.

Awards will be presented at the Annual Awards Dinner with recognition for 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place winners.

## Scoring Guidelines

### Honors Program scoring guidelines

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| No entry | Judge wishes to recuse himself from scoring.   |
| 1        | Multiple major flaws. For example, subject was out of focus and over exposed.  |
| 2        | Some thought was put into the photo, but photo contains a significant flaw in one category (such as poor composition or exposure).   |
| 3        | No significant flaws - it's adequate technically and compositionally. THAT'S ALL! Nothing particularly noteworthy. "Photo just doesn't do anything for me". Can think of a number of improvements. |
| 4        | Technically good. Starting to show creative promise.   |
| 5        | Very good image, but still needs minor improvements.   |
| 6        | Showing creativity / impact; photographer has used his skills and creativity to shape the image  |
| 7        | Outstanding / high impact - no technical problems, excellent composition, etc. No apparent improvement needed.   |
| 8        |  |
| 9        | Extraordinary, amazing, WORLD CLASS, can't imagine any improvement.  |

Note: Judges should subtract one point for poor presentation.

### Qualities for the Judges to Consider

**Impact** - The viewer's reaction to the photo without in-depth analysis. Is the impact appropriate with consideration of subject and style? Impact is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion.

**Content** - What is the photographer trying to accomplish? What interpretation can be ascribed to the image?

**Technical** - Are the focus and exposure suitable for the conditions and subject matter? Technical Excellence is the print quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing. Sharpness, exposure, printing, mounting, and correct color all speak to the qualities of the physical print.

**Composition** - Does the picture meet principles of composition (balance, harmony, unity, etc.)? Is the print size appropriate for the subject matter? Composition is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together in concert to express the purpose of the image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on the intent of the image-maker.

**Long-term impression** - Does the photo appear to have lasting value? After studying a picture for a while it may be found that there is greater or lesser merit than was perceived in one's initial reaction to it.

**Creativity** is the external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought.

**Style** is defined in a number of ways. It might be defined by a specific genre or simply be recognizable as the characteristics of how a specific artist applies light to a subject. It can impact an image in a positive manner when the subject matter and the style are appropriate for each other, or it can have a negative effect when they are at odds.

**Print Presentation** affects an image by giving it a finished look. The mats and borders used should support and enhance the image, not distract from it.

**Center of Interest** is the point or points on the image where the image-maker wants the viewer to stop as they view the image. There can be primary and secondary centers of interest. Occasionally there will be no specific center of interest and the entire scene collectively serves as the center of interest.

**Lighting** (the use and control of light) refers to how dimension, shape and roundness are defined in an image. Whether the light applied to an image is manmade or natural, proper use of lighting should enhance an image.

**Color Balance** supplies harmony to an image. An image in which the tones work together effectively supporting the image, can enhance its emotional appeal. Color balance is not always harmonious and can be used to evoke diverse feelings for effect.

**Technique** is the approach used to create the image. Printing, lighting, posing, paper selection and other elements are part of the technique applied to an image.

**Storytelling** refers to the ability of the image to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image. Subject Matter should always be appropriate to the story being told in an image.

**Degree of Difficulty** - There is often a consideration for an image created in the field using diminishing light, movement and cooperation, as compared to a studio-made image that might have had lots of time and a controlled environment to capture.

#### Assignment Category Applicability Scoring Guidelines

- 1 Very limited connection to the assignment topic. The assignment is not apparent without being told.
- 2 Clearly applicable to the assignment subject. Lacking creativity.
- 3 Good match with the assignment plus a creative approach to the topic.

#### Image Score for Honors Award:

MEMBER ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
1 STAR	11	14	18
2 STAR	13	16	19
3 STAR	14	17	20
4+ STAR	15	18	21

## Achievement Levels

There are seven levels of achievement in the club – 1–Star through 7–Star. All members start out at the entry level of 1–Star. As they progress upward in levels, the scores required to achieve awards (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) increases as members’ abilities increase (see **Image Score for Honors Award** above).

Achievement levels are reached through the accumulation of Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards (worth 5, 3, and 1 points, respectively), through competition in juried shows, and Body of Work presentations. Juried show acceptances, awards, and fellowships from approved venues (listed below) count towards advancement in the Honors Program. Members may petition the Judging Committee (use '**Juried Show Petition” form**') for Honors Program recognition from other juried shows (See Explanation of Terms below). Acceptances and awards from outside shows do not add to the point total. Points are awarded only in club competition.

When a new level is achieved, the member starts over in points and number of Golds. When one qualifies to advance from one achievement level to the next, the award(s) given for any photograph after the meeting in which it was achieved will be counted in the new level. Achievement other than points and Club Golds may be “banked.” That is, requirements can be achieved before they are needed. For example, a 3–Star may present a body of work even though he doesn’t need to until he is working on 5–Star. It will be recorded and applied to his 5–Star requirements when it is needed. A juried show acceptance can be used to meet only one club requirement. For example, if a member is a 3–Star and receives a Certificate of Merit in an approved juried show, he or she may either use this show acceptance as an achievement toward 4–Star or bank the show award for future use when he or she is a 6–Star.

## Achievement Level Progression

**1–Star** All members begin here

**2–Star** 24 points, 2 Club Golds

**3–Star** 30 points, 3 Club Golds and 1 Juried Show Acceptance

**4–Star** 50 points, 10 Club Golds and 10 Juried Show Acceptances

**5–Star** 75 points, 15 Club Golds and 20 Juried Show Acceptances plus

1 Body of Work presentation at club or BoW acceptance at a juried show

**6–Star** 75 points, 3 Juried Show Awards

**7–Star** 100 points, 5 Juried Show Awards

## Approved Venues – Juried Show Acceptances, Awards and Fellowships

- Photographic Society of America (PSA)
- Gulf States Camera Club Council (GSCCC)
- Houston Center for Photography (HCP)
- Galveston Art League (GAL)
- Texas City Art Festival

## Explanation of terms

Points – Points given for Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards in the Honors Program are 5, 3, and 1 respectively. Points are only given for club competition, not for acceptances or awards achieved through juried shows.

Golds – Gold awards are given to high scoring images (see 'Points Chart') in Club Honors Night competition.

Juried Show Acceptances – Recognition achieved through acceptances at juried shows and competitions at HCP, GSCCC, PSA, GAL and other approved juried competitions with the approval of the Judging Committee. Acceptances do not add to the member's Honors Program points. No single image may count for more than two Juried Show Acceptances plus one Honors Program Gold. To obtain credit for a Juried Show Acceptance the member must complete and submit a 'Juried Show Petition Form' for each acceptance. If the venue is one of the recognized organizations listed above, the form may be submitted directly to the Honors Program Director. For all other venues, the form must be submitted for approval to the Outside Acceptance Coordinator (see General Club Info).

Juried Show Awards – At higher levels of achievement, photographers must do better than acceptance at juried shows; they must get further recognition such as Juror's Merit, Honorable Mention, 1<sup>st</sup> Place, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place, etc.

Body of Work – At some levels there is a BoW requirement. To meet this requirement, a member must either present a BoW to the club or have his BoW accepted in a juried show whose prospectus designates the show submission requirements as BoWs. Judging Committee approval is required for either approach.

*It is the responsibility of the individual club member to submit the Juried Show Petition Form to the appropriate club officer when he or she has Juried Show acceptances or awards.*