

January 6, 2010
Juror Statement

Beyond the Lens IV

I was very impressed by the overall quality of the photographs submitted for the show. Upon entering the gallery and perusing the photographs, certain larger scale images jumped out of the group and caught my eye. I then noticed a number of very graphic and compositionally strong photographs. Eventually, I discovered the smaller, more intimate prints that entice the eye to stay and savor the delightful moment of magical discovery.

It was a rewarding experience to narrow down the entries to what I believed to be a consistently strong group of images. Upon concentrated study, eventually the strong images came forward. It is a sense of discovery as if these wonderful works quietly wait to tell their story. I find that parameters that I set for myself in my own work tend to fall away as I discover successful images made in a variety of mediums ranging from film to digital and video stills.

There were effective images in the traditional black and white medium, such as “Serenity” with its rich tonal range from black to white, and others like “Harbor at Dawn” that were subtle and utilized a minimal gray scale. On the other hand, I was enamored and taught new visual lessons by works such as the video still “Hydrogenesis”, which had the underpinnings of primordial creation and called to mind Surrealist images.

I very much appreciate color photography and was not disappointed by the vibrant color, but still true to nature in “Sunrise” with its beautiful warm reflected tones and cool blues escaping the morning sun. Then there is the subtle and delightful color of “It’s a Kite” with its Holga like softness and stunningly sharp focal point of the floating kite. The abstract “Dynamic Orange” seems to utilize digital imaging in the most natural way, which appears to be an image remarkably captured from observation.

Others appeared as strong compositions, such as the natural light and color of “Fall-Elsah” with its sheer balance of vertical shapes and “The Art of Coffee” produced from the venerable medium of film with its captivating graphic design of contrast and black negative space. Last, but not least is the beautiful “Machu Picchu, Peru”, an image of Inca ruins that I have seen photographed many times. However, this is fresh and new with textured, subtle, harmonious color and a centered, dark mountainous shape surrounded by a panoramic setting.

Jeffrey Vaughn