

This document is intended to be used in conjunction with the Official Rulebook and Evaluation Criteria, and not as a substitute for either. Download the Official Fine Arts Rulebook and the Evaluation Criteria at www.faf.ag.org/rules.cfm.

PHOTOGRAPHY

1. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO INTERPRET THE THEME.

This is one of the few categories where you don't have any restrictions. Find subject matter that is outside the box of obvious religious symbols (bible, crosses, doves, etc.). Take the creative lid off! Enjoy the freedom.

2. GRAB OUR ATTENTION.

A photograph has to capture the viewer's attention in about 3 seconds. That means that they need to be able to know what it is. If they are confused at all, the image loses its impact and the average viewer will lose interest.

3. NO STORIES PLEASE.

If you have to write a story to explain what the photograph is or what you think it means, then it isn't a good photograph (and by the way, writing a story is actually disallowed by the rules). Photographs don't tell a whole story, they capture a moment in time or a moment in a story.

4. WHAT'S THE FOCAL POINT?

Most photographs should have a point to which the viewer's eye is drawn. If there is something in the image that you keep noticing but it isn't the most important part- can you get rid of it? Here's a cool thing, turn the picture upside down – it may sound strange but when you aren't seeing something the normal way, sometimes it is easier to pick out the part that doesn't flow with the rest of the image.

5. SIMPLIFY.

Sometimes the simplest photograph can be the most breathtaking – a look of joy or pain or love. A hand. Snow. There doesn't have to be a lot going on to create an affective image.

6. LANDSCAPES.

God has made some amazing scenery, but the way you capture it is what makes an image creative, impactful, and memorable. Pay attention to angles, lighting, what is and isn't in focus, etc. Just because it's a pretty sunset, doesn't make it a technically excellent photograph. Take the photograph 6 different ways and figure out which is the best and why!

7. LOOK AT TECHNICALLY EXCELLENT PHOTOGRAPHY.

Artists learn from other artists. You have access to the internet and libraries. Look at photographs that are published in magazines (not People or Teen Beat). Look at books of photographs. What affects you? Animals, people, buildings, landscapes? Photographs that capture emotion (laughing, crying, loneliness, pride, strength)?

8. "RULE OF THIRDS."

Just about every good artist uses this technique. You may need to Google it or research it in a library, but it will absolutely change your photos (for the better!).

9. PRESENTATION.

When you deliver your piece to the festival Art Gallery, be sure it is a finished piece including mounting/matte. The piece does not need to be framed but it has to be at least mounted. Keep in mind, the color of the matte affects the way that the image is presented. Hold your image up against all different colors of matte and see what happens. Be sure the image is very secure on whatever mounting method you choose.

10. PRACTICE.

Watch life happening and practice capturing the "moment." If you aren't excited about the moment you've captured, it isn't likely that anyone else will be.