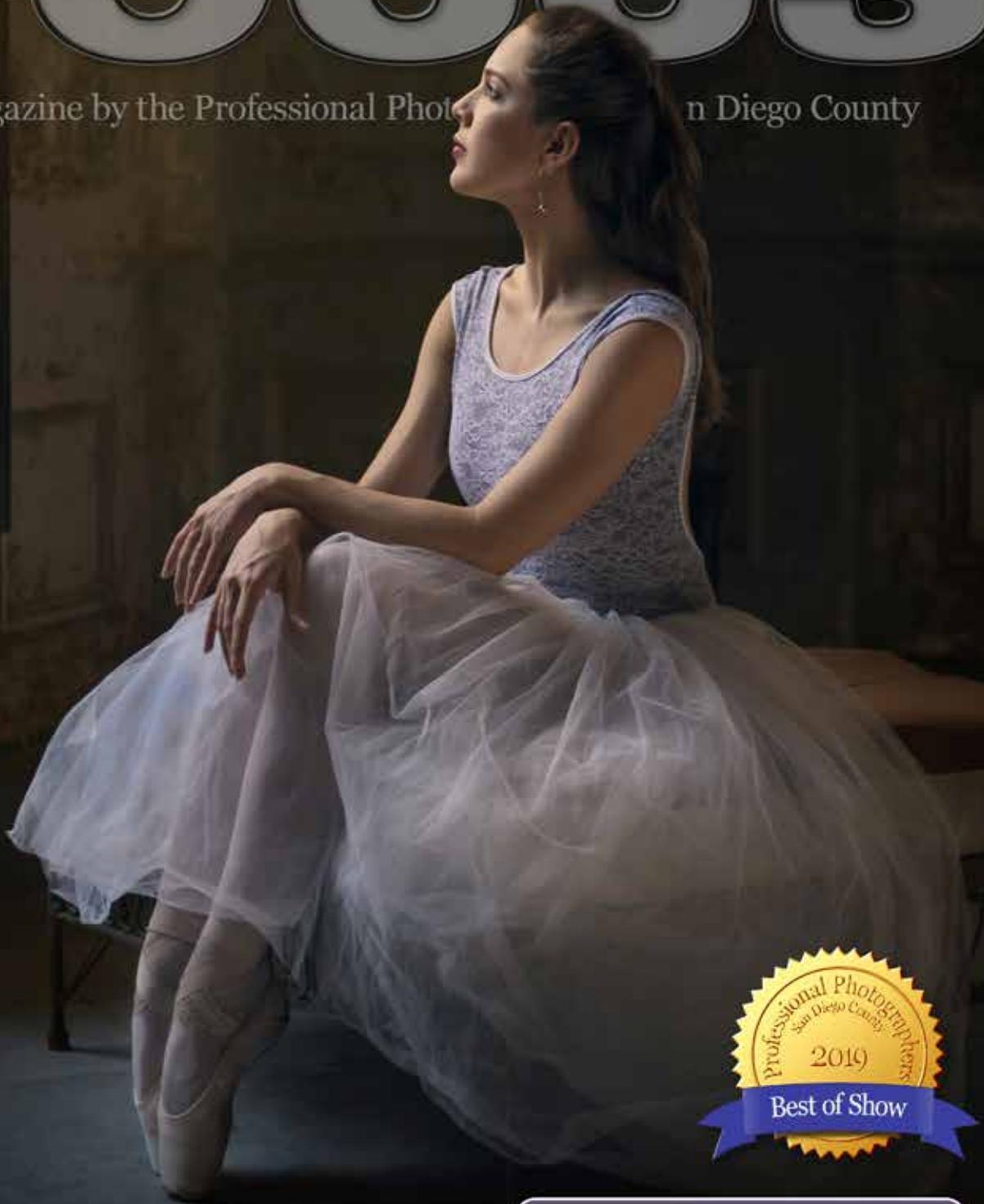


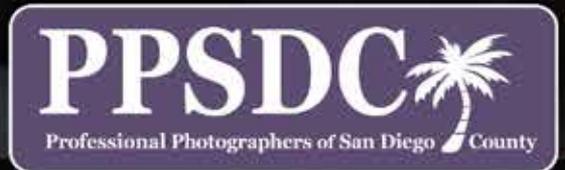
November 2019

# FOCUS

a magazine by the Professional Photographers of San Diego County



*Ballerina In Old Havana*  
by Willie Sakai



[www.ppsdc.com](http://www.ppsdc.com)

# Code of Ethics

- 1 Observe the highest standard of honesty in all my transactions, avoiding the use of false, confusing, inaccurate and misleading terms, descriptions and claims.
- 2 At all times endeavor to produce photographs of a quality equal or superior to the samples I display; to apply my best efforts towards providing the best possible photographic services and to play my part in raising the general standard of photographic craftsmanship.
- 3 Show a friendly spirit of cooperation to my fellow professional photographers and assist them whenever possible should they be in trouble or difficulty.
- 4 At all times avoid the use of unfair competitive practices and hereby subscribe to the Federal Trade Commission Rules of Fair Competitive Practices for the professional photographic industry.
- 5 Assist my fellow professional photographers and share my knowledge with them and encourage them individually and collectively to achieve and maintain the highest standards of quality.
- 6 Recognize the authority of the Association in all matters relating to the interpretation of this code.

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Monthly Meeting:  
 Ramada Hotel & Conference Center  
 5550 Kearny Mesa Rd, SD 92111  
 6:30 PM - 2nd Tuesday <http://www.ppsdc.com>  
 Check our site to confirm.

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## President's Message

One of the amazing benefits of being a PPSDC Member is the opportunity to enter Image Competitions. We are one of the few local affiliates that still sees value in Live Judging. Not only do you get to hear live feedback and critique on your images from Master Photographer judges, but you learn from the critiques on fellow member's images as well. Having a judge take the time to give you personalized tips on how to improve your work is a priceless opportunity to take your photography to the next level!

What makes an award winning merit image you wonder? Study the *12 Elements of a Merit Image* to see what the judges are critiquing your image on.

- Impact
- Creativity
- Technical Excellence
- Composition
- Lighting
- Style
- Image Presentation
- Center of Interest
- Subject Matter
- Color Balance
- Technique
- Story Telling

Check out our website for more information on the 12 elements.  
<http://ppsd.com/twelve-elements-of-a-merit-image/>

*Continued on page 19*





**Ballerina In Old Havana**

*By Willie Sakai*

This image is special to me on many levels. First, it is a memento from a truly wonderful 10 day visit to Cuba. Next, dancers are a favorite subject because of my daughter's involvement with competitive dance. Finally, this is validation of lessons learned from participating in PPSDC image competitions for the past few years.

On our fourth (and last) day in Havana, our tour guide arranged an incredible photo opportunity with company dancers from the world-renowned *Ballet Nacional de Cuba*. The venue was the Josie Alonso mansion, which is a paradise for natural light portraits wrapped in the faded patina of pre-revolution grandeur. Annie Leibovitz and Joe McNally have also used this location, so you know it's special! The funny thing about this session was the subjects spoke very little English, and my Spanish is decidedly terrible. But being experienced dancers, they needed minimal direction to create beautiful looks - their years of ballet training were evident through the lens. Did I mention that dancers rock?

*Nikon D850 50mm  
1/1000, f/1.4, ISO 80*

*Continued on page 19*



— **BEST-IN-CHILDREN**

*Seriously You Woke Me Up For This  
- Violet Bowlan*

**BEST-IN-COMMERCIAL** —

*Atkinson Hall  
- Thuan Ton*



**BEST-IN-CATEGORY**



— **BEST-IN-DIGITAL-IMAGING**  
*Face Off*  
- Willie Sakai



**BEST-IN-ILLUSTRATIVE** —  
*Light Painted Lillies*  
- Kip Cothran



Mac to PC conversion  
opt = alt    cmd = ctrl

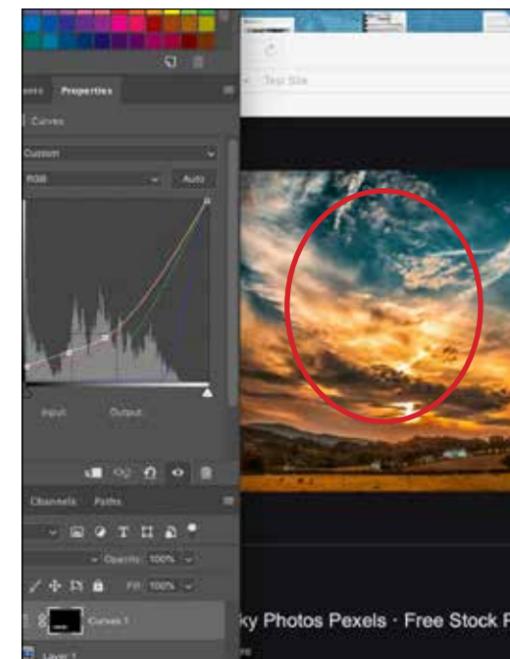
**Photoshop Tips**

By Ken Hofheinz

This time around I have a couple of quick tips. They just make your life easier. So most Photoshopers have heard of using the “bracket” keys to go bigger and smaller on a brush. So with this tip you can go **bigger/smaller and harder/softer** on any brush. Healing brush, Clone Stamp, Paint Brush, Mixer Brush... any kind of brush, this will work. As you are using your brush hold down Option & Ctrl and move your cursor left for smaller and right for larger. That’s so easy. Now hold down Option & Ctrl and move your cursor up for softer and down for harder. WOW that is amazing. I love using this method to visually match an existing image edge.

It’s actually faster and more precise than using the bracket keys. And you get you get hard and soft as a bonus.

**Pick a color any color.** Well any color on your screen. Select the Eyedropper tool, making sure you are on an image layer. Now click-and-hold inside your document and drag to whatever color you want on your screen and release. It picks the color you were last over. This has amazing potential. You have found a great image on the web and now you would like to use a couple colors from that image. Easy just use this tip. You have to be able to see the color you want to sample and make sure you don’t release your click until you are over your intend color. •

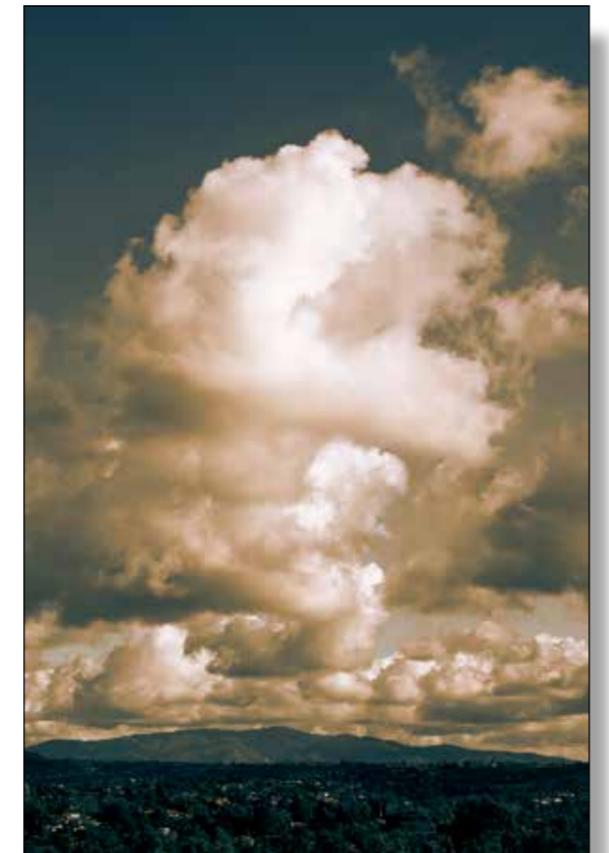


Picked two colors out of this image and used them in a Gradient Map.

Before



After



**BEST-IN-CATEGORY**

**BEST-IN-PHOTOJOURNALISM** —  
*First Feeding*  
- Antoine Didienne



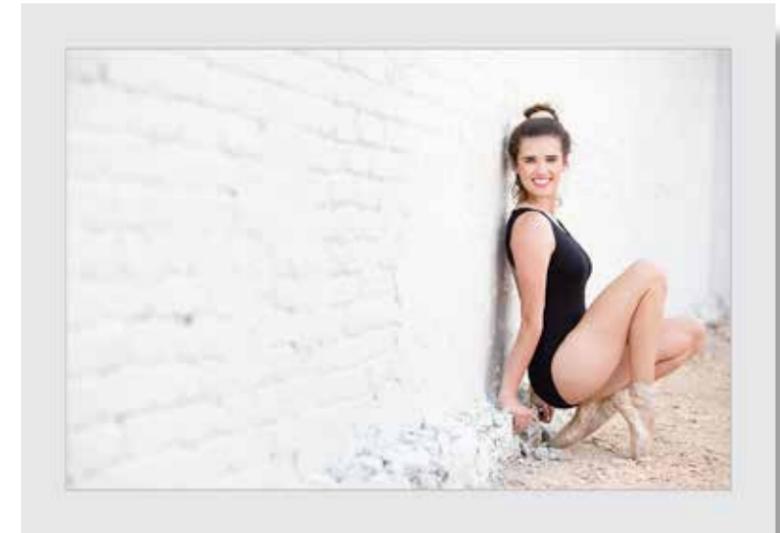
— **BEST-IN-PETS**  
*My Mom Did This to Me*  
- Michelle Pennings

**BEST-IN-NATURE** —  
*Albion Falls*  
- Cindie Wolf



**BEST-IN-CATEGORY**

**BEST-IN-SENIOR** —  
*Ballet in the Rubble*  
- Melanie Robertson



— **BEST-IN-WEDDING**  
*Sunset Portrait*  
- Yaneck Wasiek

**MERIT AWARDS**



**CHILDREN**

*Ahhh, Now  
This is More Like It*  
- Nancy Hazen

— *Isn't She Something*  
- Cindie Wolf

*Her Fine Features* —  
- Therese Ruffner



↳ *The Sunflowers*  
- Svetlana Aleynikova



— *Baby Mowgli*  
- Therese Ruffner

*She is My Sister* —  
- Michelle Pennings



— *Watching*  
- Nancy Hazen

*The Giggles* —  
- Violet Bowlan

↳ *Newsie*  
- Violet Bowlan



— *Arielle*  
- Cindie Wolf



*Rosie* —  
- Therese Ruffner

— *When I Grow Up*  
- Therese Ruffner



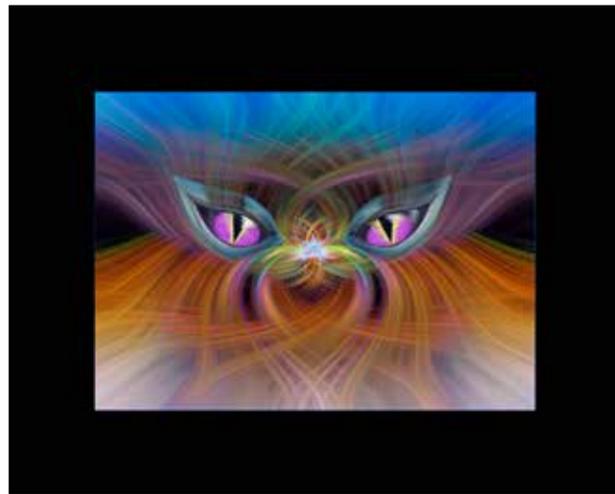
**MERIT AWARDS**

**MERIT AWARDS**

**DIGITAL**



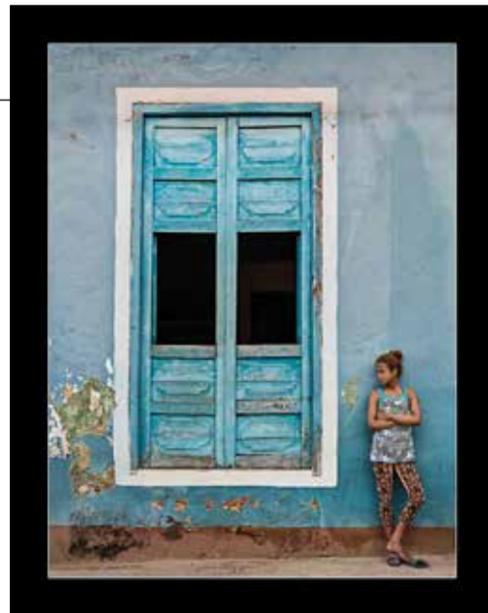
*Fiery Feline* —  
- Michelle Pennings



**ILLUSTRATIVE**



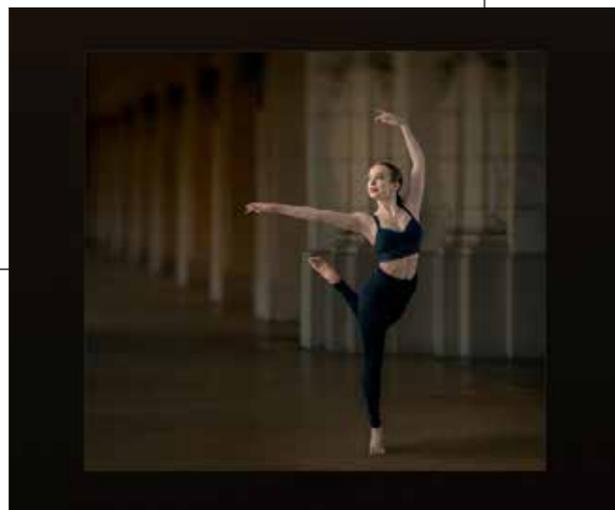
*The Beat Goes On*  
- Osia Strasner



*Feeling Blue* —  
- Osia Strasner



*A Still Life*  
- Janet Bark



*Graceful Lines* —  
- Willie Sakai

**PHOTOJOURNALISM**



*Cuban Morning Commute*  
- Lois Fong Sakai

*Mirror Mirror* —  
- Jim Tomcik



*Classical Dance*  
- Jim Tomcik

**MERIT AWARDS**

**WEDDING**



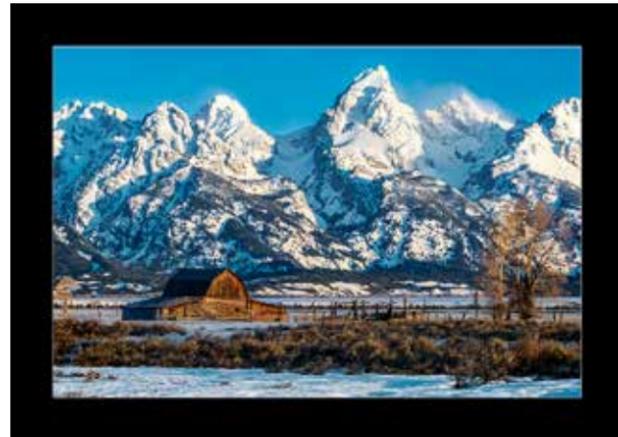
*Perfect Love in an Imperfect World*  
- Yaneck Wasiek



*Sunset Winery Walk*  
- Yaneck Wasiek

**MERIT AWARDS**

*Moonset at the Tetons –  
- Osia Strasner*



*– Mormon Barn at the Tetons  
- Osia Strasner*

**NATURE/LANDSCAPE**



*– A Zen Afternoon  
- Jean Eichenlaub*



*– Oregon Coast  
- Joyce muscat*

*This is My Place –  
- Jean Eichenlaub*

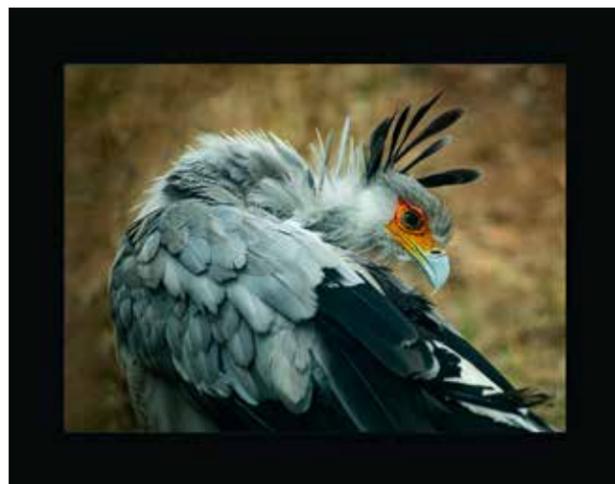


*– Kansas Storm Clouds at Sunset  
- Oliver Asis*

*Zooming in for Dessert –  
- Nancy Hazen*



*Feather in My Cap –  
- Lois Fong-Sakai*



*– Morning Walk  
- Kip Cothran*



**PETS**

*– Hey Where's My Treat  
- Therese Ruffner*



**MERIT AWARDS**

**PORTRAIT**



↳ *Summer Fog*  
- Patricia Martinez



*Blossoming into Motherhood* ↳  
- Violet Bowlan



↳ *Queen of Motherhood*  
- Monique Hoppe

**MERIT AWARDS**



*Broken Angel* -  
- Monique Hoppe



*Sweet Lydia* -  
- Michelle Pennings

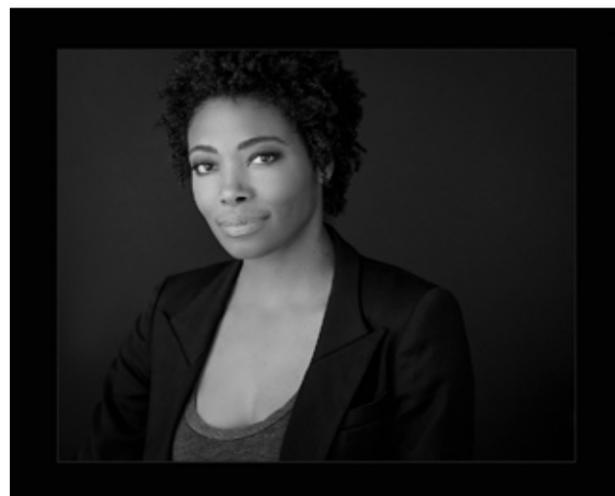


*Miracle Baby* -  
- Monique Hoppe



*Pretty in Print* -  
- Jules Kirkeby

*Beauty in Black and White* -  
- Janet Bark



↳ *Goddess*  
- Monique Hoppe



## MERIT AWARDS



### SENIOR

– *Breaking Some of the Rules*  
– Janet Bark



*Ready For The Debutante Ball* –  
– Willie Sakai

*You Can Lean On Me Sis* –  
– Janet Bark



### My Image Didn't Look Right in Comp

Your file MUST:

- Be in sRGB Color Space
- Be saved at 300dpi in .jpg format
- Sized so that the longest side is 4000 pixels
- Not exceed 4MB in size.
- Follow the naming conventions: category\_Title\_Makerfirstname\_Makerlastname.jpg.

Images submitted without following these guidelines may not appear at their best on the judges' monitor, and you may be asked to fix your title and resubmit if it does not follow the naming convention.

Continued from page 3

### President's Message

The most important thing, and first on the list rightfully so, is Impact. What's the first reaction you get when the image appears? Does it make the viewer want to stay and look? What emotions does it evoke?

Then, the judges will look for the images' Technical Excellence. Is it a technically sound image? The judges will let some things slide, but if there are huge errors, then it most likely won't merit.

Does your image have a presentation? (Meaning a digital mat). This helps the image stand out from the background, and also helps bring the viewer into your image. It's the

finishing touch! Make sure it doesn't pull attention away from your image.

Lastly, the title has a significant impact on the judges. (For me this is the hardest part!) A judge shouldn't take points off for a title that doesn't work, but sometimes the title will set the stage for your image. If it's too long, or it confuses the judges, it won't help your image. On the other hand, a good title can sometimes enhance the overall impact, and thus the score of your image. Name your work of art wisely!

Of course all 12 elements are important, but after experiencing years of live judging these are the areas the judges will focus on the most. Keeping the *12 Elements of a Merit*

*Image* in mind the next time you create will surely result in better work!

Competition is fun and rewarding as an artist. You will learn a lot by entering, and the opportunity to win awards is another perk!

Stay involved and you will see the benefits of your PPSDC Membership in your creative life. As always, let us know how we can serve you better!

Cheers,  
Janet Bark, CPP  
President PPSDC 2019/20

Continued from page 4

### Ballerina In Old Havana

By Willie Sakai

This portrait of Daniela was made with natural light from an open window. No strobes, no reflectors, and a basic 50mm prime. Experience suggested that spot metering and underexposing would produce a dramatic mood. The original capture was vertical, so the scene was digitally extended to balance the horizontal composition.

Post-processing was all Photoshop after a slight Shadows push to the Lightroom original. The first step was removing a wall clock behind the subject's head. Next, it took quite a long time to rework the background for a horizontal crop - this couldn't be done in-camera since furniture was in the way! Once the crop was set, dodge/burn/curves layers were added to sculpt/brighten/toned. A hand-painted subtle warm glow, added a soft light blend for some contrast, and then finished with a hand-painted vignette to bring back the drama of the original capture.

It has been a long yet rewarding journey to this first Best of Show honor. Many thanks to the judges, plus a big shout out to my PPSDC peers for motivating me to improve!

Willie Sakai  
Jade Coast Photography

I UNDERSTAND  
[SMALL BUSINESS]  
BECAUSE I AM ONE.



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