October 19, 2021

From Good to Great - Howard Clark

Motivation: All artists and photographers produce some "good pictures" that satisfy us completely. We, also, produce some stinkers and, maybe, a few great ones. I wondered what we could do to shift the distribution in a positive direction.

My Approach: For more than year, I reviewed hundreds of prize-wining photos with the objective of identifying what elements in those pictures lifted them far above the average.

T**he Result**: Of course, the standard elements of composition (leading lines, s-curves, repeating details, balance, et al.), were at the top of the list. The effects of weather, location, camera position, or time of day, also, were major contributors to image success. However, our images can also benefit from subjective elements – things like humor, mystery, or surprise. This lecture illustrates all of these and many more. It ends with a look at about 15 high-quality images – giving the audience an opportunity to consider what elements may have contributed to the success of those subjects.

Howard Clark is a professional photographer with over 55 years of experience with "enthusiast" and professional level gear. Landscapes and scenics account for most of his images, and water appears in about 80% of those. He participates in two camera clubs and two art associations.

For the first seven years after his retirement in 2011, Howard and his wife participated in 10 to 12 weekend art fairs each year. Also, since retirement, he has exhibited photos in 31 different galleries around D.C. Solo exhibits account for 9 of the 31.

Last June, Howard began a new career as an Adjunct Professor at Frederick Community College where he's teaching courses on "Getting the Best from Your Digital Camera," "Digital Photo Management," "Introduction to Editing without Adobe Products," and "Getting from Good to Great," which is an extension of tonight's lecture. These courses are presented on Zoom and can be seen from anywhere – no travel required.