

ANNUAL SHOW OF IMAGES

VALUE OF MEMBERS' EXHIBITIONS

The success of a camera club can be measured to a large extent by the amount of member participation in its various activities. An Annual Show is a tremendous source of inspiration and a powerful stimulant to photographic achievement. No club is too new or too small to hold such an activity. From a modest start can grow a traditional event, possibly the highlight of the year. Not only will it prove beneficial to members, it is also one of the best-known methods of publicizing a club in its local community. This is especially valuable in building an organization's membership.

Making pictures is a pleasure for all photographers but that pleasure is greatly enhanced when the results of their efforts are given public exhibition. Club Annual Shows differ from International Exhibitions in that they represent the efforts of a majority of the local members, whereas in the latter, sponsored by a local club, relatively few of the successful participants will be local entrants. Thus Club Annual Shows allow the work of less experienced photographers to be exhibited and for this reason, the shows rate high in member interest.

While organization of an Annual Show follows a general pattern, the details vary with individual clubs. Contributing considerations are the size of the group, whether it is restricted to a single medium or whether several media operate cooperatively or independently. Separate shows may be held for color, nature, travel, photojournalism, stereo, monochrome prints, and color prints; with possibly with two or more combined at one time. In some clubs, the selection of the Print and/or Projected Image of the Year is part of the Annual Show, while in others these awards center around the organization's yearly banquet.

The first decision a club must make is the type of Annual Show it will hold. There are three general categories:

- * A strictly competitive show, in which the judges select the pictures to be exhibited,
- * A show for which each member is asked to submit a predetermined number of prints or digital images, all of which are exhibited, with the judges picking award winners, and
- * A show consisting of pictures selected by judges plus one picture pre-selected by each member who did not have one or more chosen by the judges.

The latter two types of shows assure that every member is represented. In deciding on eligibility and rules, bear in mind the two generally accepted objectives of an Annual Show: first, to recognize the photographic endeavors of the greatest number of members; second, to present only those images which have not been shown in previous club Annual Show.

Many clubs limit the images to those that have been entered in their monthly (or periodic) competitions during the past year. Some have separate groups for advanced and less-experienced workers, while others have specialized categories like nature, creative, portrait, documentary, etc. Size of the club, or of the exhibition space, and the type of show determine, the number of entries each member can submit.

PREPARATION

To start this activity, an Annual Show Committee should be appointed. Select an energetic member as chairperson, since much depends on his or her leadership. Some clubs make this the job of the Competition Director(s). Committee size is dictated by local procedure and conditions.

PROMOTION

The success of an Annual Show depends entirely on the number of participants. Thus all possible means of promotion and publicity are needed. Broadcast plans at an early date and be clear about rules and eligibility. Make frequent announcements at meetings and run reminders in the club newsletter. If the public is invited to an exhibition, keep local newspapers informed of the details.

JUDGING

Strict adherence to the deadline helps the committee to check eligibility of entries well before judging. Announcing titles, or their omission, should be mentioned in the rules.

Methods of judging must be tailored to suit local needs. When selection is made on a purely competitive basis, outside judges are especially desirable since their decision forestalls any feeling of favoritism. Some groups, often in remote areas, send their digital images to other clubs for judging or utilize the services offered by PSA. See the Club Services web site, Club Judging Services webpage.

ANNUAL SHOW: DVD & EXHIBITION

Many clubs today prepare their Annual Show and as a DVD for the club Banquet and the DVD is provided to all club members for their own sharing with friends. The Annual Show is also posted on the Club Web Site for all to enjoy.

Few camera clubs have quarters large enough to hold an Annual Show exhibition to which the public is invited. Finding a suitable place may not be easy but it will not be beyond reach of an enterprising chairman.

ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

A successful Annual Show produces dual rewards... recognition of club members and recognition for the club. This is not achieved without the work of many and the support of the entire club, but the results more than compensate for the time and energy expended.

There are many things a progressive camera club can do to make the Annual Show a major event of the year. Whether it is a private or public showing, judges can comment on the entries or a prominent speaker can be scheduled to offer a short program. Some clubs center these activities around their annual Banquet at which plaques and awards are presented, thus climaxing their season with an enjoyable social happening.