

Reflections about Photography-Competitions

- the digital photography has made it possible to make more and better pictures than ever with the analogue photography, which has several reasons
- earlier during a vacation I have exposed about 10 films with 36 images each, today in the digital age I make up to 6000 shots - it is similar to other photographers
- therefore it is not any more a question of money to make a multitude of pictures
- out of this multitude of pictures it is much more easier to sort out good pictures for competitions, moreover the processing and editing on computers offer a lot more, even faster, easier and more convenient ways of image processing than it has been ever possible before with the analogue photography - if the analogue photography has had been more straightforward and honest would be another wrangling topic
- as these possibilities of the digital photography apply to all ambitious photographers, in these days much more and better pictures get filed to competitions - there are infinitely good pictures existing
- what is a high-end picture is purely a matter of taste and therefore luck, a picture can win in one competition and not get even accepted in another
- if at the WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD 2015 about 175 k (!!!) pictures have been submitted, then the few winning pictures meet the taste of the few judges, with another jury the result definitely would be completely different - therefore it's simply luck, as a lottery win
- to be successful in competitions, mainly steadiness is needed in the sense to participate in as many as possible competitions and by this the hit rate is increased
- that takes time to compile and to dispatch, patience and most of all a lot of money, because postage and entry fees are expensive
- if one invests all this, with certainty one will gain with the time many different "awards and photography titles"
- therefore all photography titles are only a matter of time, steadiness and money, and by this competitions have fishy perspective
- if one has already one or some more successful pictures, his lottery-chances at other competitions are increased when jurors may have known them already and rather select already awarded ones, a photographer may therefore come to titles with few pictures only - it would be much more difficult to

achieve titles if a certain picture could be submitted once only, and this worldwide, however this would be almost impossible to control

- many famous photographers did not participate in any competition, have no title and their pictures reach high prices determined by the market and not a jury – however the market has its own rules, but this again is another topic
- there are judges for photography who never or only a few times have participated in competitions, not even a picture from them is known, in spite of this they act as jury members
- this also but not only applies to the Austrian Photographic Organisation (VÖAV)
- also, in well known competitions jury members are active who have their roots in newspapers, general art, art painting, design or similar, but never had or have anything or little to do with photography
- a high-end image should have first of all a statement and not necessarily and not predominantly comply some formal requirements of art-painting
- since the existence of photography there is an antagonism between art-painting and photography, in my opinion photography is something completely different, has a completely different expression and shall be judged quite differently
- the competition photography, as I have observed it in the last couple of years mainly in Austria, is unchanged conservative in the sense that the emphasis is based on formal criteria and not so much on the image statement
- I am in a dilemma: on the one hand I struggle with the formalism of the photography-competitions, I try to make pictures according their criteria, take part in competitions, on the other hand I do not want any more the lottery-game of photography-competitions, I would like to find my own expression, I would like to care not any more about formalism, not to do that any more what others like to see – only to aspire further on what I understand of good photography
- **in the next future I will have to decide for one of these ways, both at the same do not work, I cannot pursue two different goals with the same ambition.....**