

the EPSON international

# [p]pano awards

**PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Winners announced**

### *The EPSON International Pano Awards 2016*

[thepanoawards.com](http://thepanoawards.com)

Professional and amateur photographers around the world were invited to enter *The EPSON International Pano Awards* to compete for more than **\$60,000 in cash and prizes**.

This year the competition received 4545 entries from 1066 photographers in 60 countries.

The 7th *Epson International Pano Awards* is dedicated to the art and craft of panoramic photography. Advances in digital photography and editing software has resulted in a surge in the popularity of image stitching, especially in the panoramic format. Panoramic film photography also remains alive and well.

*The Epson International Pano Awards* showcases the work of panoramic photographers worldwide and is the largest competition for panoramic photography.

The overall winner of the 2016 Open competition is **Alex Noriega** from the USA!



'Hibernation', Mount Rainier, Washington – Alex Noriega

Alex says, 'I'm honored that the judges appreciated these images as much as I enjoyed making them! We all, as nature photographers, have surely chased wide, grand vistas and colorful skies at some point or another. But the first and second-place images, "Hibernation" and "Funnel Factory", are the most satisfying type of image for me to make. Almost abstract, in soft light, and isolated. They were made at a couple of my favorite places - Mount Rainier, Washington, and the middle of the desert in Utah. The image of Mount Whitney, California, is likewise my ideal type of mountain image - a tighter panoramic portrait that shows the details of the peak in dappled storm light. All of these images are among my personal favorites, so thank you to the judges for rating them so highly!'

The runner-up in the 2016 Open competition is **Xose Casal** from Spain.



'Submerged Church', Sau Lake, Barcelona, Spain – Xose Casal

The overall winner of the 2016 Amateur competition is **Nicholas Roemmelt** from Austria.



'Perfect Night', Tyrol, Austria – Nicholas Roemmelt

Nicholas says, 'It really makes me proud that these three pictures chosen by the jury won me the title of the "Epson International Pano Awards Amateur Photographer of the Year 2016" as they all have one thing in common: Each of those pictures are in the TOP 10 of my personal favorite panoramas that I have taken in year 2016 and each of those pictures have a story. No one was an easy snap and as a full time dentist it is sometimes hard to live your (photographic) dreams next to your everyday business. So I made a virtue of necessity and focused on starscape photography mainly, being able to capture my dreams 'after work'.

The Milky Way panorama has been taken on a peak next to my little hometown in Tyrol, and you even can see the lights of my city in the valley. Though it has taken me 2 years and several fruitless trials to realize that planned shot due to bad weather conditions on that mountain.

The three peaks of the "Tre cime di lavaredo" in the Dolomites are probably one of the most often photographed spots within the Dolomites or even within Europe and I wanted to find a different angle at that location. I had to scramble over some rocks off the beaten paths to find that spot that I already had planned virtually at home. Finally I found that place and the weather gods meant well for me that evening and gave this magical light during sunset.

After all my personal favorite is "The Photographer" on the top of that sand dune in front of the Icelandic Vestrahorn. My buddy Niki Haselwanter was struggling to stand his ground on that sand dune for the exposure while being sandblasted. Blizzards kept on hitting the coastline that night. But during the short gaps in the clouds we were able to witness wonderful northern lights over the Vestrahorn. The clearing gaps only lasted for a few minutes so we had to be quick to take our shots before the next blizzard was hitting us again.'

The runner-up in the 2016 Amateur competition is **Andreas Paehge** from Germany.



'Colored 14', Gelsenkirchen, Germany – Andreas Paehge

The winner of the VR/360 competition this year is **Oleg Gaponyuk** of Russia, for his astonishing underwater VR image of the Pit Cave in Mexico. The interactive version can be viewed on the website.



'The Beauty of the Pit Cave', Mexico – Oleg Gaponyuk

The winner of the **Carolyn Mitchum Award** is **Hougaard Malan** from South Africa.

The aim of this award in this age of accelerating digital progression is to reward photography that conveys 'feeling' and tells a story...to encourage images that elicit emotive responses, in addition to being well crafted through photographic technique. Images entered for consideration must have been created predominantly 'in camera'. The award honours the late wife of judge and patron, Jeff Mitchum.



'Will to Live', Ruacana Falls, Namibia – Hougaard Malan

Hougaard says, 'Namibia has always been a land of extreme juxtapositions and this image is no exception. While the majority of the country is in one of the worst droughts of the past century, it's border to the North; the Kunene river, was flowing in full force for most of February and March this year. This was thanks to plentiful rainfall in the highlands of Angola. Driving through a drought-stricken Namibia for days to eventually arrive at the mighty Kunene plunging down this gorge, was an experience I'll never forget. Despite having a full two days there, I was immediately overwhelmed with the panic and fear of not capturing this majestic and ultra-rare display of nature. After a lot of exploring I eventually found this angle and the ideal composition of it. In the frantic shooting I broke my Lee Little Stopper, but luckily only after I captured this frame.'

I am completely overwhelmed and grateful to be the winner of this award. It carries two special meanings to me - The first is that it's in honour of Carolyn Mitchum, who recently lost her battle with cancer. The primary artistic influence in my life was my mom, who I also lost to cancer several years ago. I'm humbled that I can honour the two of them with a photograph of mine - a special thanks to Jeff and his late wife. The second reason is what this reward represents - honesty and integrity in photography. In a time when the hype is all around post processing and making images on the computer, I'm proud to be able to show people that striking images can still be made almost entirely in-camera. People need to be reminded of the merits of chasing the light and making images in the field and how rewarding it is when the hard work pays off.'

The winner of the **EPSON Digital Art Prize** is **Marsel van Oosten** from The Netherlands. This award aims to reward excellence in modern digital post-processing.



'The Lone Taureg', Libya – Marsel van Oosten

The winner of the **One-of-a-Kind 'Extreme Moment' Award** is **Simon Roppel** from Switzerland. Simon wins a trip to Antarctica with One-of-a-Kind Photography Adventures.



'From the Inside', Canadian Rockies – Simon Roppel

Simon says, 'I'm really overwhelmed by the message of that great achievement on this really important competition. It's a big an honor for me that my work made it to the top of the One-of-a-Kind Extreme Moment Award. I'm sure it wasn't easy to pick out one Panorama out of all those awesome photographs you must have received. Winning this amazing trip to the Antarctic tells me that I'm on the right way and I can't wait for this next adventure to begin!

The day I took this panorama I spent about 2 hours exploring that area searching for a good composition without any satisfying results. I started to get kind of desperate when I saw that the light started to get quite amazing. I made the decision to grab my snowshoes and just walk into the woods, not knowing if I'll find something good or probably miss one of the best conditions I might have during my stay there. I finally found that creek in the middle of all that snow. I knew this could be a unique composition with all the light hitting the ice cycles. so I got down in to the ice cold water and started to capture the scene. I made a panorama of 9 vertical shots at 14mm to cover as much as possible. I really had to hurry up because my tripod started to made his way down the swampy bottom of the waterhole and the icecap all around the tripod was getting thicker and thicker. at the end of the shooting I was barely able to get out of the swampy waterhole. But when I checked my shots afterwards I knew it was worth it.'

The winner of the new **Curator's Award** is **Rodney Trenchard** from Australia. This prize is awarded by competition curator, David Evans.



'The Cloud Piercer', Lake Pukaki, New Zealand – Rodney Trenchard

“At Epson we focus on developing imaging technology that inspires people to do amazing things and the Pano Awards images are truly amazing. It is incredible and exciting to see the standard in this year’s competition higher than it has ever been.

We are very proud to be sponsoring this prestigious competition and we wish to congratulate all of this year’s finalists and winners.”

Craig Heckenberg, General Manager – Business Division, Epson Australia

Prizes include US\$25,000 cash, an Epson SureColor P-7070 printer, an Epson Stylus Pro SP-4900 printer, and an Epson EB-1776W Ultra-Slim Projector.

The judging panel includes some of the world's top panoramic photographers and industry professionals, including **Jeff Mitchum, Erin Babnik, Alexandre Deschaumes, Rodney Lough Jr, Iurie Belegurschi, Stefan Hefele, Viral Padiya, Chris Collacott, Hillary Younger, Paul Marcellini Aaron Spence, Bill Bailey and Luc Villeneuve.**

[thepanoawards.com](http://thepanoawards.com)

-ends-

For enquiries and more information;

David Evans, Curator

[contact@thepanoawards.com](mailto:contact@thepanoawards.com)

Images are available for publication on request

**EPSON**  
EXCEED YOUR VISION

