

Howdy. Howdy, and welcome to the Moose podcast. Number 368

Award winning.

How you guys doing? Been a busy week, man. Lots of emails. I want to start off by thanking all the folks who came to the Thursday night Zoom presentation. The Lehigh Valley Camera Club was so kind to host over 600 people registered. 303 people were there at one time. It was a great evening and I really appreciate the opportunity to talk about just one of my favorite topics, mammals. So thank you folks. And emails just keep coming in from that event and wow, it just been it was really he was really as they they kept saying at the club, it was record setting. So thank you guys again. This week I am recording using Adobe Adobe podcast beta. I'm told that the man is transcripts a little bit better this time I'm near. But for those folks who want to use that transcript, it will be, of course, linked in the podcast blog post on the website. I know many of you listen to this other means rather than clicking on the My website. That's fine as well. But that is there for you guys. Hey. I also want to thank my good friend in Bedford Camara. Bedford's dot com has a box coming to me today from my favorite folks. You know, I probably should go get on a couch and talk to somebody about this thing, this problem line of of always calling up Bedford's and buying gear, because obviously my accountant isn't getting through to me, which, of course, is. Oh, yeah. But these guys, they just rock. Great stuff, great prices, great advice. They are taking, of course, preorders for the new Nikon Z 600 P.F. lens. No, I. I have not seen it, and I will not be ordering it, not with the Z six handed out for that be I be kind of redundant but yeah. Bedford's hey by the way, photo con, what is it, ten days away? I'm not going to be there, but sure. Like to have you guys there. Stop by. Tell Bedford thanks for sponsoring the podcast. Take on some great deals for that extra 5% with the moose discount. Oh man. Oh man. It's good stuff. So bad for XCOM. Thank you ever so much for sponsoring the Moose podcast. Our award winning. Award winning. Award winning. Award winning. Award winning. So I guess it's the season for award winning advertising. And that got me to thinking award winning. Going way back. Way back, way back before I even had a driver's license. I was in high school photography class and. Doing all those assignments. We had a lot. We had a great I had a great high school photo teacher, a mentor, Mr. Traub. He was he was my man. He was he. He took my hand, spun it 100 times, and put it straight for me. He was great. And we we we did a lot back class, which include included entering a lot of contests. A lot of contests. It was in Southern California, and there was a lot available for high school students. And my senior year. I was an introvert class because junior year. End of the year, I kind of cleaned up on awards and my head got pretty, pretty big and I cleaned up. I got everything from the L.A. County Fair to all the ones, the local colleges. I mean, I just cleaned up and I had still got them somewhere. I know. I moved to Montana. All the ribbons and the medals and the trophies. And then I started seeing all this stuff this week, award winning. And I just I got to tell you, I. I question the process. I question. The value of something that's called award winning. And why? Well. I can only talk about myself and I. And I started looking, thinking about this when I started all this award winning advertising. I like. Yeah. Who gave you the award and who are they? But anyway, looking at, I went diving and I found a couple the photographs. Emmy Award winning photographs. Can I tell you, man, I put him back in the boxes fast. I found him. Yeah. That's my point. Award winning. You know, the way they use it. They use it to market, to sell us stuff because I guess the assumption is that if it's award winning and we use it in our photography our photography will be award winning. I don't know. Is that the assumption? I don't understand that. It's kind of like professional grade. Yeah. What does that mean? I to be really honest with

you. Because the things that happen, I mean, I got an email just for a record of this podcast and it still has me bit. A bit of it are just perplexed anyway professional anyway so. Had a student. This past month. And they were really, really, really focused on getting their words, the award winning shot for this month's camera club competition. They were really focused on it. And. I was like, Whoa, if that motivates you, that's fine. Till about the third day. Maybe the second day. And I was like, oh, my gosh, this is just this is almost wow, psych. You know, a bit on the cycle side here because. Every photograph is this award winning. This photograph. Award winning is this award winning. So it just got me to wonder what is what qualifies anything as award winning? Who now? Yes, I realize that. Contests put out rules. Those rules, everything from the size, the file, what you can and can't do, blah, blah, blah. But they if you look at them and say, well, the subject has to fill X amount of the frame or the photograph has to be right out of the camera or. I mean, some of the things that really matter aren't listed as criteria for award winning. So then and since I haven't done it for a couple, two years now, I have stopped judging or being part of photo judging contests because. Too often in those contests, the photographs come up. And there are more than one winner. I mean, seriously, there isn't one that is just award winning. There could be. I mean, this last one I did, I got in trouble because they want me to commit to one. And I'm like, these four images are outstanding. And we had a debated why. And I said, Well, you know what these photographers went through to get these photographs? Doesn't matter. You mean it doesn't matter? Course it matters. Yeah. And there's a whole lot if someone, you know, gives you a lobs you a softball. Right. And you hit out of the park. That's expected. If it is, you know, this fast slider outside curve that did a loop de loop in a barrel and you smacked out of the park. Wow. I mean, so. There's you know it's a bat that didn't go into award winning next. Taking something that's really common and bringing it out. Very, very uncommon with a nice twist, artistic light and this heart grabbing little bow on it. And no, it's just a common thing. No, it doesn't. There's nothing in the rules. That said, the subject matter has to be rare or. This thing called award winning. It's used to sell your stuff and it's used to kind of, you know, like a carrot stick. It's it's used to get you to think that. Your photography either isn't worthy enough or. Or what? It just. I just kind of this past week have began to wonder. When will the thing that really matters and that is, as far as I am concerned, the visual storytelling, the reaching out and grabbing heartstrings. When will that be? The criteria for award winning? When can photographers move past it's the camera's not work in the lens ain't working and to the photograph is working. When can we get there? Then maybe that award winning label could actually have some validity, could actually stand on its own two feet. I'm saying to a number of folks out there who I know are you're listening that are very award winning focused. And I'm here to say to all of you as a group. There's more to photography than winning award. And as one who went back and looked ahead, his award winning photographs and two shuttered. I'm here to tell you that. Okay, you might win that award, but I'm here to tell you. Not too far in the future. It isn't award winning. So then how can you move past that? You've got to. I had a really had a marvelous student a week ago and been corresponding with him since. And he had some really good questions and one that really stopped me. Was Where could he leave my workshop and go to the next workshop to keep pushing the ball forward? And, you know, really stumped me. And I, I did some looking. I'd called a couple peers. And I wrote back because I said I was going to, you know, on the flight home, going to think about it and wrote back. And I said, I did not have an answer for him. And he he wrote back a day later. And he said, Well, I went through everything. We went

last week, went through my photographs, went through what you said and stuff. And he goes, You know, I have decided that my best path is to take what I have right now. And force myself to learn more and to move forward before going out and getting other outside influence on my photography. And I'm like, Brilliant. Now that's award winning Pat, his bloody award winning. When a photographer can understand that his photography or her photography, their photography is just that. Their photography, the other labels that their photographs get plastered with and whatever it is good, bad award-winning crap. Whatever happens to be. It's just somebody else's. Opinion. Right. It's it comes down to what is it you feel in your heart about that photograph? You know, we all do this many different things in our daily lives, not just photography. That in and of themselves are award winning. We have all these accomplishments we make. Every day from small to major, there are award winning. And then there's some days where. Yeah, strike out. Does it nullify the other days or does it just give you more empties to do better tomorrow? So I guess the real point of this podcast is avoid labels, avoid label, especially in photography. You know, everything from the most negative that you might see someone play plaster on something to the most positive. You've really got to decide for yourself. For products and for techniques and for education and of course, for that final click. What truly is or isn't award winning? Fall is here. I am taking off. I'm in the park. You happen to see me? Say hello. Remember. You can reach out. And to make every click your story.