Editorial

Art appreciation

🔴 Check for updates

This month we continue our annual celebration of beautiful images.

Here at *Nature Methods*, we have a deep appreciation for images — both for their ability to convey scientific concepts and sometimes just for their sheer beauty. One very enjoyable aspect of our jobs is selecting an image to feature on our cover each month. Occasionally, there may be some friendly competition as different team members pull for their favorites. But much of the time, we are largely in agreement on the most striking pick of the bunch up for selection — as in this month's submission from Siyuan Rao's group, depicting hydrogel-based optical fibers for long-term perturbation experiments on peripheral nerves in mice.

On this page, we highlight some of the top images from the 2023 Nikon Small World photomicrography competition. The winning image, featured in the top right corner, depicts a rodent optic nerve head with astrocytes (in yellow), contractile proteins (in red) and retinal vasculature (in green). The other competition images featured here are ones that also caught our eyes. We hope you enjoy them as much as we do!

A selection of Small World top 20 images, honorable mentions and images of distinction. Clockwise, from top left: *Pyrocystis lunula* (Dinophyceae), image of distinction, captured by Frank Fox; rodent optic nerve head, 1st place, captured by Hassanain Qambari and Jayden Dickson; adult transgenic zebrafish showing blood and lymphatic vessels, 20th place, captured by Daniel Castranova and Brant M. Weinstein; mushroom gills showing sporophores, image of distinction, captured by Charles B. Krebs; blood and lymphatic vasculature in the ear skin of an adult mouse, 13th place, captured by Satu Paavonsalo and Sinem Karaman; leaf epidermis stomata from *Stromanthe*, image of distinction, captured by Marek Miś; neonatal mouse intestinal cells, honorable mention, captured by Amy Engevik; and algae from a mud puddle, image of distinction, captured by Thomas G. W. Graham.

Published online: 7 November 2023