

JUDGES REPORT

March 2020 - Open

Judge: Robin Yates

Gympie

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
A		Sneaky Side Entrance	An interesting image although I would prefer to have seen her walking into the image rather than out of it. Bit of a problem with the harsh light has been negated to some extent with opening up the shadows and shutting down the highlights with the dynamic range sliders in whichever post image processing program you are using. Although it has given the image a bit of an HDR look it works. Perhaps it could be a tad less busy if you cropped out the top windows from the line on the window on the left	6
A		Tiled Roofs of Lisbon	Oh my goodness – so many shapes, colors, angles, I find my eyes searching everywhere but I can't find Wally! It's so busy but at the same time I find it appealing; maybe it's the diagonals or the unique post image editing techniques (Buzz Sim??) but the more I look at it the more I like it – Focus has been retained throughout the image	8
A		Hungry White Tern Chick	Nice that there is a bit of a story with the image although the focus has just missed mum, the fledglings mouth and down beneath it has retained a sharp focus and as your title suggests that the young un is what this image is about, perhaps we can be a bit lenient with the fact that mum is a bit soft. Nice composition but it would have been a better score if the fledgling's eye was sharp and visible.	6
A		Buddhist Pilgrim	I like the colors and the ¾ portrait position as well as a bit of a story. However, the image seems to be a bit soft. The eyes would improve if they were lighter brighter and sharper. I think the use of a dodge tool has also overlapped into the background which is pronounced on her left arm between the elbow and shoulder and from the left eye. A good subject which would score higher with a bit more attention.	5
A		Glenorchy Boat Shed	Not much of a day down by Glenorchy Boatshed – pity as I think the blue sky and snowcapped mountains would have been a better picture. Bad luck if you're a tourist as you only get what you get! This image might work better in Monochrome with a bit more contrast and the boatshed itself has a bit of a list to the port side probably because of a wide-angle lens but easily	5

			corrected with a perspective adjustment in post processing. The Glenorchy wording is also strong enough to be a distraction	
A		Overgrown	A nice peaceful feel accompanies this image; however, it may be worth remembering that because we read from left to right, we tend to prefer an image that flows from left to right. Certainly not the end of the world but you might try a horizontal flip see what you think. I like the path leading through the open gate with an air of mystery as to what's around the corner. Hopefully not a Nigerian selling selfie sticks!	7
A		Giving Their Best	Great action shot as the horse rounds the barrel, you have controlled the exposure well considering the bright sunlight. If it were mine I would consider an even higher shutter speed to allow the lens to be opened up more with the background thrown out of focus which would bring the viewers' attention back to the horse and rider as it is the background keeps pulling my eyes away.	6
A		Keeping an Eye Out	A nice composition and nice colors but the focus is soft and the biggest thing with birds and animals is the eyes. They really must be clear and sharp to get a good score. The bright sunlight has also blown out some highlights behind his head. Very difficult with harsh sunlight if you have the opportunity it is much easier to get the exposure right in soft light. A bright cloudy day is my favorite. But as I have said a bit difficult if you are a tourist as the time of day and weather are beyond your control	5
A		Colours of a Soap Bubble	There is some impact here with the highly saturated colors set against the black. I would have thought the soap bubble could have had a more defined or sharper edge and the brightness continued a little deeper into the image. I personally don't like too much saturation, but it has worked here to create some impact	6
A		Koala on Magnetic Island	Once again we see the difficulties of shooting on a bright sunny day although in this image you have done well to overcome the harsh light problems. A bit of blowout by the neck which could have been corrected with a neat bit of cloning from the adjacent fur. However, the eyes are sharp and he has a bit of a "what's up doc" look	7
A		Bruny Island Cruise	The image has a very blue cast, could be that the pic was taken with auto white balance and the sky then tainted the white water and the rocks. The wake is a nice leading line to the rain on the horizon. Use your image editing software to correct the blue cast and you will score higher.	5
A		Maria Island	Lovely colors and patterns in the rocks but you have committed a photographic crime.... Your horizon isn't level I know it's not by much, but it did draw my eye.	6.5

			Easily fixed in post image editing and a rookie error we have all made.	
A		Grand Torii Gate	Image is a bit flat and with so many people the viewers eyes tend to get drawn away from the main subject. If it were mine, I would remove a few people with the spot removal tool or drawing around them and hitting fill / content aware in post image processing software. One could also brighten it up a bit. A walk around the gate to look for a leading line, better angle and tighter crop might also have yielded some pleasing results.	5
A		Watching the Sunset	And what a nice sunset to watch! I'm searching for the glass of wine or sunset nibbles, but the rocks are a bit dark to find them. If it were mine, I would have a play with the shadows slider to open up the dynamic range a bit which would allow us to glimpse some detail in the dark areas between the sky and the water. Perhaps also cut off a bit of the big black area at the bottom. Perhaps the glass of wine, holding hands or an engagement ring would put a bit of a story to it which always helps an image score higher	7

IMAGE OF THE MONTH

(ONE only for each Grade in Open and Theme please)

Grade	ID	Image Title	Reason for Placing
A		Tiled roofs of Lisbon	I'm a nature man normally but the artistic touch here, has for me given it the nod. Even though I still can't find Wally. (Cassie McMahon)

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
AB		Misty Morning	This has some immediate appeal probably because it's a beautiful picture of a beautiful place – it captures my eyes as I try to peer through the mist to see what lies beyond. For all those who have had harsh light remarks take note how much easier a photographer's life becomes with soft light. If it was mine, I would just tweak the colour balance to take out a bit of the warmth and just see if its really leaning left a bit or if that's my imagination.	7.5
AB		Stunning Flower	This is a lovely flower and the colors work well as do the obligatory water droplets. Composition focus and exposure tick their respective boxes although the green leaf on the right might be better removed	7
AB		Lighting Up Tree of Knowledge	Image seems to be leaning to the left which could be easily fixed with a few degrees rotation to the right you could also try your highlight and shadows sliders in your image editing software to drop the highlights and open up the shadows although harsh light always presents difficulties.	5

AB		Lining Up for Record Attempt	Not sure what record they are attempting to break, perhaps it's the longest queue for the world's best campsite! Love the sky but feel the shadows could be opened up some more.	5
AB		Colours After Sunset	Nice afterglow you have captured here with a lovely tree as well but the houses in the background bring me back to man made things after the beauty of nature. If it were mine I would open up the dynamic range – the highlight and shadows sliders make a great job of this I would also cut a bit off the top and add a bit to the bottom then maybe have a go at cloning out the man made things in the background. The 3 trees are nice	5
AB		Sunset on Ross River	Another nice sunset but that is the problem; it's just another nice sunset. How about an additional element to add interest or a story? A boy fishing, a canoe or picnic basket. Better still a nice bottle of wine and a cheese platter. Sorry Judges can get very subjective especially when they like wine and cheese.	5
AB		Let Me Scratch that Itch	You have been able to add a nice sharp image to your story and have just scraped home with the exposure although I would have tried to pull the highlights back a bit. Might have also been worth trying a monochrome with his head and neck as a spot color.	6
AB		Reaching for The Sky	Nice campfire but I would like to see a bit more detail in the shadows – I can't see if you are drinking a red or a white. Some glowing embers and an old iron pot would add a bit of a story and get you higher points	5
AB		Jabiru	Another lovely bird but the harsh light has once again given you a problem. He is also a bit soft on the focus which could be because of tight cropping. The depth of field effect is good, but I might have also left his legs on.	5
AB		Strangler Fig	Lovely old fig but you have got to tell the photo bombers in the background to get out of there! A nice blue sky would have been good too. Just before you push the shutter button check your background – not a bad idea to check shutter speed as well although focus isn't your problem here.	5
AB		Carnation	An unusual more abstract sort composition with nice shades for a monochrome but I feel it lacks a real wow factor or story. It would also need to be pin sharp throughout to score a bit higher and perhaps with a bit more of the flowers centre	5
AB		Paronella Falls at Night	Not often we see waterfalls at night, the contrast is very high and there is not a great range of grey tones which are normally required for a monochrome image to score well. I also find the walkway up top a distraction as it keeps pulling my eyes away from the falls. I would also remove the bright area behind the tree on the far left	5.5

AB		Below the Canopy	An interesting picture leading up to the sunlight however I think it could be improved with toning down the highlights and opening up the shadows in post image editing. Might also try a tighter crop to get rid of some of the big white area in the top region that draws the eye away from the main subject and maybe include a bit more of the interesting lower part of the tree	5
AB		Ziggy	First thing that jumps out of the image is the almost white eye, is poor Ziggy blind? Maybe that's why his nose crashed into the mud wall. The focus is great and the background unobtrusive. If it were mine, I would possibly remove the council tag as there is quite a lot going on down in that area which can draw the eye away from Ziggy. The sand on the nose does tell a bit of a story and the look could be interpreted as sorry about your favorite plant but it was getting more attention than me. I think the very light unnatural eye does not help the otherwise lovely image.	6
AB		Rainbow Bee-Eater	They really are a beautiful bird and he is well placed in the image. The bright light has made it difficult for you as the best time for bird photography is a soft light such as a bright overcast day. I would also if it were mine clone out or spot remove some of the branches	6
AB		On the Lookout	Well you have the animal shot rule sorted out and I don't think you could get his eyes any sharper and with exposure and composition all getting ticks it scores well. I'm not sure about the chopped off tail; maybe I would try a tighter crop with no tail at all then it couldn't lead my eye out of the image.	7
AB		Brahminy Kite	Nicely positioned in the image with a diagonal and some space to fly into although he is a little soft which might be shutter speed. The sunny day issues have also taken your detail away from the head area and with birds the eye must be clear and sharp.	5.5
AB		Bath Time	You have got you focus and shutter speed spot on with this one with great detail and a bit of a story. I do however, find the big red band along the bottom a distraction. Might be worth a try to vignette out some of the impact of the bird bath. Or crop a bit tighter as you still have a lot of space on the left you could cut into.	6
AB		I've Got Him	The good old Rodeo shot with a bit of an action / story going on. Time of day is as always, a problem with bright highlights and very dark shadows. If it were mine, I would try and darken down the overexposed top quarter. You might also have changed your camera angle to give the calf a bit more space to run into which would have also then cut off some of the top. There's always a point or two on offer for a story too. Some of the overexposed top might also be able to be cropped away	6

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AB		Misty Morning	Lovely image and a great example of the benefits of soft light (Pat Anderson)