

JUDGES REPORT

2021 – December - Open

Judge: Gerard Saide

Toowoomba

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
A		Where the wild things are 1	The image was going well until you asked your model to place her hand under her chin. The pose is cliched and we need to think of other ways to express ideas and emotions. Of course, this is just my opinion. However, I think the image would be perfect with her hand out of view altogether. The fingers look uncomfortable and are distracting. The expression on your model's face is wonderful and tells us that she is in a pensive state. A little bit of fill-in flash or reflected light would add just a tiny bit more detail to her hair and horns as they are an important part of the character being portrayed.	7
A		Where the wild things are 2	An interesting image with a mythical-type story. The horns are interesting, but I won't make any silly puns. The composition works well simply because your model is glancing back towards the camera, otherwise I would have said she needs to be more to the right. There is just a little too much space above her head. The flow of the dress on the water's surface adds a sense of fantasy as do the moody lighting and unusual colours. Well-conceived.	8
A		Delicate Walk	This image is striking because of the combination of the reds and blues. Its crispness is enhanced by the good composition and the action of the woman trying to keep her balance. Interest is added by the fact her hands are covered by her long sleeves. Is she expecting to fall over and cut herself so wishes to protect her hands? This is what I would consider a punctum. It would have been preferable if her head was fully below the horizon line, but this is a great capture of a moment.	8.5
A		The Complete Family	Your interpretation of the scene is a good one and instantly understood. We can see the family of mum and dad and three children, one of whom has reached puberty. This is a colourful family and one that obviously lives in harmony.	6
A		Who me	This image has a touch of quirkiness and humour to it. Your timing is excellent. There is consistency across the image with the colouring and the branches - all part of the environment.	7.5
A		Whoa Boy	You have caught the action well and there is a creditable degree of sharpness considering how quickly everything is happening. The drum, however, is problematic. It is too central in the image and is distracting. The easiest ways to attend to this would have been to move to a spot where the horse and rider are in a fuller view and the drum more to the left or wait a few seconds until they are around the right side of the drum. Alternatively, consider getting in closer to the	7

			rider and horse with a telephoto lens, if possible. There is a winning image just in the expressions on their faces.	
A		Bumble-bee on a Thistle	The author has selected an appropriate narrow d.o.f to draw our attention to the bee and thistle. The grains of pollen on the bee add an extra dimension to the activity. Beautifully sharp and well composed. A small amount of reflected or fill in light on the bee would add a little bit more detail in the dark patches.	7
A		Enjoying a smoke	There is a great sense of ease between the subject and the photographer. The relaxed nature of the man tells how much he is enjoying his smoke even though there is just a little too much directly in front of his face. Composition is a strong point here and the colours work well together.	7
A		Glacier Outlet	The blue tones in this image really convey the sense of coldness of this environment. The separation of the individual blocks of ice are clues to the desolation and isolation of the area. This has been conveyed well by the composition.	7.5
A		Peacock Performing	Possibly I have scored this image a little too generously as the performance is not set in the context of a female nearby. However, your meaning is clear, and it is an image with good detail in the feathers.	7
A		Frogmouth Family	The tight cropping really makes this image. The bokeh adds effect but is non-intrusive. The use of the branches for framing suggests this is a family portrait and indicates the closeness of the babies to their mother and her protective nature.	7
A		Into the Sahara	An image very much in contrast with the image of the glacier. Here we have the colours of the sand and the empty sky conveying a place of dryness. The composition has been effective in creating a leading line composed of the camels and riders which takes us diagonally through the story. Of interest is the caravan leader at the front and his camel at the back.	6.5

IMAGE OF THE MONTH
(ONE only for each Grade please)

Grade	ID	Image Title	Reason for Placing
A	22	Delicate Walk	This image reminded me of a famous photo by Henri Cartier de Bresson. It depicts a man jumping over a puddle. I like the way the images are opposite in many areas. (Elsbeth Twyman)

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
AB	9	Boulders of WA	This is an interesting bit of rock. Though it looks dangerous, the hollow centre would be a bit of an attraction. The colours are quite rich and the lighting provides sufficient detail considering it was taken in the middle of a bright day. You have included just enough background to give us an idea of the landscape.	6
AB	9	Coming into land	Good composition has drawn our attention to what matters in this image. The bird, just about to seize the branch with its rather sharp talons, looks pretty fearsome. Its colouring	7.5

			blends in with the background, a hint that anyone would have to be careful in this area. You did well to be prepared for this shot. Excellent timing.	
AB	10	Kitty Cat	I'll be honest. I am not a cat lover. However, if I were to ever want a photo of a cat for any reason, this would be it. Apart from being technically excellent in lighting and composition, this image is VERY clever. Look carefully. What can you see? This cat is special. . . and rather fussy about decor. The background must blend in. Everything surrounding the cat is a reflection of the stripes in its fur. For starters there are the four different stripe patterns on the sheets but even more cleverly, notice the stripe pattern in the timberwork of the bedhead! This is a really clever photo. Well done.	7.5
AB	11	Flowering Ponytail Palm	The image is very sharp and crisp, but its content is not drawing us in. The full light is strong so perhaps try some early or late hours of the day to help with modeling the palm. Also, be selective. Would a portion of the palm be enough to tell the story instead of having a lot !	5.5
AB	11	What is behind me	I like the story here. Though the bird isn't 'doing' much, it looks rather concerned that someone or something is on his tail. The tree branch cuts the image in two diagonally, but it works really well. The empty space adds to the tension as the bird fears it's about to be invaded.	6.5
AB	12	Shake a leg	As a judge, I have seen many images of indigenous dancers. It is refreshing to see some creative use of filters to strip the colours and other distractions to just see the dance symbolism. For example, is that a crocodile about to consume an innocent swimmer? What is the story? We don't necessarily need to know but at least we can be aware of it.	8
AB	14	Beautiful Bonsai Tree	On my first two viewings of this image, I decided I didn't like the part of the patio visible beyond the wall to the right. However, now I think it gives the image strength and context. That's a pretty impressive bonsai too. I like the tones in the timber, and they complement the colours of the bonsai.	5
AB	14	Gondola Sailor	This image would be useful in a travel brochure for Venice. It could probably be used by the Cancer Council to advocate for covering up in the sun! The gondolier is the classic representation of a popular image we conjure up when thinking of Venice. The central composition of the gondolier with the Venetian buildings on a typical canal says everything you want it to say from a marketing perspective. Edit	6.5
AB	16	Feather flower	A wonderful image that attracts the eye immediately. The contrast of the red on black means we are seeing the beauty of the flower without being distracted by less essential elements in the scene. It is good that you foregrounded one flower and used the others as a backdrop.	6.5
AB	16	Off duty	I can so totally relate to this right now. What a great nature shot. The colours blend into the environment but the gem is the way the? is staring right at the camera as if to say 'this is all you're gonna get!' Excellent composition.	7.5
AB	20	Breakfast caught	Everything about this image works well except for one thing. No doubt your members will notice it straightaway. This is not a fault of the photographer but what a shame the bird	5.5

			was on the other side of the branch. Had it been on the nearside, you would have had an unimpeded view of the bird and no shadow. A strong point is that you have captured the bird with an insect rather than just having it sit there.	
AB	20	Sea star cluster	Nature can always be relied upon to give us something interesting to photograph. These stars are no exception. Like members of a family, they look alike but are all very different from each other. A few bubbles indicate that water is present, but I think a slightly broader view of the area would give us a clearer picture of the overall scene.	7.5
AB	23	Hoya	Mmmmm ! I am wondering why I thought of coronavirus as soon as I saw this. Then again, I also thought of Iced VoVo's. Or it could be someone's fascinators from the Melbourne Cup. Whatever it is, I think it was taken with a filter on the camera - probably a Hoya! An interesting flower. Could we have more context here? For example, some green leafage would suit it more than the grey surrounds.	5.5
AB	23	Red Hibiscus	The singular Hibiscus is vivid, and the black background gives it good contrast. There is good detail in the stamens (?) but the inner portion of the flower could be sharper. The overall effect is quite good.	6
AB	33	Afternoon in the fields	This portrait "breaks" a few rules but manages to get away with it. The right half is not essential to the story but still provides an agreeable backdrop to the country look of the model. The backlighting on her hair and partial rim lighting gives shape and depth to the model. The background tones are fairly neutral and enhance the simplicity evident in the theme. The only change I would make is to have the model's right lower arm fully in the scene.	7.5
AB	33	At the peak	Unfortunately, the potential of this image has been lost due to the flat lighting. Its strength lies in its simplicity which is almost approaching minimalism. The image is clear enough, but it would be good to have some fill-in light on the bird to give it some detail.	5.5
AB	35	Golden Shower	In contrast to the flowering palm in the previous image, this photo just shows a small portion of a much larger plant. Interest has been added through the use of early light (or late) to model the fronds hanging in the light and framed by thin branches (?) to direct our attention to the middle.	6
AB	35	Sitting pretty	The contrast of the colourful flower against the almost monochromatic rocky background gives this image the lift it needs. The buds are symbolic of the life they are yet to achieve, that of the open flower. Though the lighting is strong, it seems to work well here.	7
AB	42	Just Resting	This is technically a good image that has an element of fear slyly built into it. The viewer is just waiting for the snake to bite and is not put off by that half grin. The combination of colours and lighting suit the story well.	7
AB	42	Tasty Snack	It is good to see another animal image in tonight's collection where the animal is doing something. Raoul Slater, son of a famous bird photographer, says that animal photographs need to move away from the staid, rigid images of past decades and show animals of all kinds doing what they do. Modern digital technology has allowed this to happen more easily for us than for our forebears. This image represents	7.5

			the bird with its insect prey; far more interesting than just the bird sitting on a branch.	
AB	66	Bath Time	You have captured the moment perfectly. As this is not a nature competition, you can remove the bits of grass etc, especially those on the right. The fence in the background has been suitably blurred through a narrow d.o.f. but there could be a small increase in contrast to give the image more jump. The hues are beautiful.	6
AB	66	Touch Down	This image could have been almost an 8. The bird has just landed with lunch and baby bird is ready to share. What a story. Oh, what a disappointment that the camera wasn't just a couple of degrees to the left to capture the second bird fully in the frame and have a little less empty sky on the right. An excellent shot nonetheless.	6.5
AB	76	By the Sea	This is a colourful seascape image with a lot of hidden images in it. The light is harsh, but you could have been restricted in terms of time. The yellows would be superb in an early morning light, assuming we are on an east coast somewhere. I think the area deserves a relook. Consider doing a close-up of the rocks showing some of the details in the polishing, textures and striations, particularly in the central portion of the image.	6.5
AB	76	Water bird	The emotion this bird seems to be showing is almost palpable. It looks so disappointed. Has his lady friend gone away? No fish around? Who knows? He seems so sad. Though the rock in the background is distracting, it is more important that you were able to capture this very 'human' bird.	7
AB	128	Layers of mountains	This is a great image. All the elements - light, tones, hues, composition and viewpoint create a scene which is calming, reflective, peaceful and balanced.	7.5
AB	128	Sandstone columns	A good landscape image of the drier parts of the US. The column at the front looks like a castle keep. Geographers could use this image as an excellent example of scree slopes and weathering in a desert environment. The composition suits the scape and the foreground gives us an idea of the size of these buttes. Careful, I think I just saw John Wayne sneaking around.	6.5

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AB	12	Shake a Leg	The author has been daring in doing something different with a fairly popular topic. (Ina Pryor)