

# JUDGES REPORT

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**2022 - April – THEME – Looking Through**

**Description: An image taken through an opening looking out, door, window, hole in a wall or any other solid object**

**Judge: Jenny Graff**

**Tasmania**

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
A		Flower viewed through lattice frame	This is a good concept, and you could not have chosen a better flower than this striking 'bird of paradise'. The colours are beautiful. It would have been good to have the flower a little more central in the image, and the pot not visible at the bottom of the opening. The out of focus lattice is ok but interestingly most viewers find a foreground like this somewhat disconcerting. It would be good to revisit this and take the shot using the 'double the distance' method and compare the two images to see which you prefer.	6
A		Looking through tree hole	This is another absolutely beautiful image. I would retake it with everything in focus and compare the two – as I have mentioned before a lot of people find a soft foreground disconcerting, particularly when they don't know what it is. In this case it would give context by enabling the viewer to see what they are actually looking through. Having said all that I think that scene through the tree hole is just magical.	8
A		Beyond the cave	The colours in this image make it visually appealing and the rock formations add extra interest. Situations like this present a real lighting challenge and I have mentioned this in a comment on another image. Just a tiny bit more light on the rocks at the top and left of the opening would add more depth to the image. Reflectors, torches, flash on low are all ways this can be achieved.	6
A		The mountain & the relic	Now this image has definitely been taken looking through a car window! The colours are great and it is interesting and well done. Some detail has been retained in the dark areas. It's a good image – well done.	8
A		Obidos Archway	This is a well-done image – the brick walls are sharp and very well exposed – the light on the right wall is beautiful. The countryside is slightly soft but not enough to be an issue. The sun is either setting or rising and the glow is just visible on the left, however the sky lacks interest and colour which does detract	6

			from the image. There is one tiny white area right at the top that should be removed.	
<b>A</b>		Through the looking glass	This is a well-presented image of what looks like quite a large city. It is well exposed, has good colours and a lovely sky to go with it. The light showing the tiles gives context. Good work.	7.5
<b>A</b>		Nature's fancy window	A great image! There are a couple of very small white areas at the edge of the sky that need to be fixed. The patterns in the foreground rocks are amazing. Excellent work.	8
<b>A</b>		Peek into Buddhist Monastery	What an interesting image – the colours are great and it is well exposed and composed. In this image the key stoning adds character so needs to stay. Great work.	8
<b>A</b>		Buddha at front door	This is an attractive entry, and although it is looking through a door it doesn't really meet the intent of the theme. There are a couple of technical issues – the doorframe leans slightly to the left on the left side, which is easily rectified in post processing. The plants are just disappearing out of the top and would be better contained in the image. There is a white vignette which detracts from the image rather than adding to it. There are some very photogenic items here though so I would take advantage of that and trial different approaches.	4.5
<b>A</b>		Lake Fairfield Viewing Platform	The view looking out through this window / door is very attractive, and it is sharp and well exposed with good colours. The door itself is a little soft and it would be worth retaking the shot with everything sharp and then comparing them to see which one you prefer. It would also be good to take a shot with the bottom of the opening in the image so see what it looks like with an enclosed opening. The white vignette is not good – it makes the walls look dirty and detracts from the texture and colour of the grass.	5.5
<b>A</b>		The beach beyond	This is a good image – well exposed and interesting and I love the vertical panoramic presentation. One issue – the horizon is crooked. Always check for this and correct it.	7
<b>A</b>		Through the porthole	This is an interesting image, and the warm gold rim of the porthole really adds something extra, and contrasts with the cold seascape outside. The out of focus foreground in this image is not a problem because there is more than enough detail visible to give total context, and it in fact really highlights the view outside. It's a great image and you were lucky to be in a position to take it.	7.5
<b>A</b>		Through a Gun-Bunker Window	This is actually a very attractive image and is well presented in monochrome. The window is somewhat larger than I would expect a gun bunker window to be. Composition is good although having a little more room on top would allow the entire window surround to be	7

			in the image. There is quite a lot of noise in the sky, and a double mountain line – I'm not sure if there is glass in this window or not. Overall, it is a pleasant image to sit and look at.	
<b>A</b>		Works in both directions	This is an interesting concept but I'm not sure that it does work in both directions as far as this theme goes. The eyes behind are definitely looking out but from this side we are definitely not looking out, rather we are looking at. To look out at something it has to be a little further away from what we are looking through than these eyes are.	4
<b>A</b>		Through the fallen tree	This is a fascinating structure – roots or branches? There is a lot of noise particularly in the upper left corner – it would be worth cropping to try to minimize the area affected, and to use noise reduction. The main focus of this image is the tunnel caused by the twisted tree roots, branches – there are only a few small areas where the viewer can actually look out. It isn't a particularly good image for this theme, but it could certainly be used for other subjects.	4
<b>A</b>		View through the cloisters	This is a very artistic image. The main building is perfectly situated in the main archway. The sun has caused a lovely gold to show on the building walls. There is a large amount of colour noise visible in the arches themselves which will be in part from pushing the colours and I suspect this has also been embellished by the creator of this image. The key stoning is part of the artistry in this image and needs to stay.	5
<b>A</b>		Looking back through time	This is a beautiful image. My only suggestion – fix the key stoning using the vertical slider in Transform (if you use Lightroom / Photoshop – I don't know what to tell you to use in other software).	8
<b>A</b>		The gardens beyond	This is another interesting image as far as the theme goes. This is more a 'frame within a frame' image but could be interpreted as 'looking through'. The greenery is attractive but there is nothing here to grab the attention. The sky is a little dull and possibly using the dehaze feature could improve this and add a little more depth to the image.	5
<b>A</b>		Into the Light	This is a most interesting image it raises questions as to what is going on – there appears to be freshly disturbed earth along with overgrown rocks; the textures are also fascinating. The area through the opening is perfectly exposed but the walls of the cavern have been lifted a little too much and this has made them very noisy. I have mentioned this a couple of times already but in case you are not at the meeting next time try using a reflector, torch, or flash on low to add some fill light so the contrast between inside and outside is not as great.	5

A		Keeping an eye on the traffic	This image demonstrates a typical scene on a rural road when people are moving large pieces of equipment – the only thing missing is the ‘wide load’ warning car. The scene through the windscreen is technically good, but the dash is soft and has a lot of colour noise. There is a light area on the bottom at the right that needs to be cropped. There is an image that is similar to another you will see tonight, and the same principle applies – this has been taken through a windscreen but there is only the dash at the bottom and nothing else to support ‘looking through’ – this could well be ‘looking over’ or ‘looking out’.	5
A		Looking at the Pylons	This is a nice image that has been well taken and is technically sound. Moving in close and cropping at the outer edges of the vertical piers would give a much stronger image in terms of ‘looking through’.	6
A		The Apartments	Apartment buildings aren’t usually an interesting subject, but these ones have interesting angles and colours and are set against a fascinating sky. The image is well exposed. Although there are not sides to this ‘window’ there is a top and a bottom constraining the subject, so it just meets the criteria.	6
A		Arches through the Abbey	This is a lovely image that is technically good, although I am not sure if the pinkish colour on the bricks is entirely true to life. One is looking through arches to more arches and finally to the arches that one actually looks through to the outside. Well done.	7.5
A		Lest we forget	This is another image that close to the edge when it comes to the definition of looking through – that archway is made of solid material but is it really a solid object? You have exposed well for the lighter areas in this image, but the shadowed areas are too dark and lack definition of features. It would be better to have the tips of the structures included in the image. The big technical issue here is the lack of symmetry. If you are photographing something like this it needs to be symmetrical – the memorial needs to be central, the ground needs to be level and when there are two items that need to be central it is important to line them up – here the flame and the memorial are not lined up. When you are composing the shot prior to taking it check these things – change position until it all sits the way you want it to. (Another thing to remember when taking symmetrical images – the sensor must be parallel to the subject). Also remember when cropping – make things symmetrical.	4.5
A		Watch out mouse	Full marks for thinking of this – it’s a great idea and you have done it well. When using a backdrop make sure to keep it flat on the surface you are working on, so it doesn’t roll up like this one has – put a heavy book on it or use a fine pin to hold it down.	5

<b>A</b>		Polsetas Kanals, Riga	This is a lovely, restful image with soft colours and lighting. The river view and its reflection are beautifully framed by the arch and its reflection. Great work.	8.5
<b>A</b>		Remarkable Cave	There is another image of this cave – it's very popular – I've been there myself and know what a challenge it is. The colour of the rocks is great and they are sharp. The very dark areas of the image would be better with a little light to show some features at least, rather than being completely black. However, it is an attractive image with that very blue ocean and the orange brown of the rocks.	6
<b>A</b>		Looking through rock arch	This is a superb image that has been ruined by the white vignette. A vignette isn't really necessary here but if you prefer to have one a smaller and darker one would be infinitely better – try it and see. It will enclose the opening and give the image more depth.	7.5
<b>A</b>		View through a big window	This is a beautiful image in every way. The window and view from it form the highlight of the image, but there is also a story inside. My only suggestion is to reduce the thickness of the border down to 3-5 pixels – it does need to be there, but only just visible. Excellent work.	9
<b>A</b>		Down the Alley	This is a great social documentary image that is very well done. There is enough light in the darker areas to show detail. The bright blue of the cart and window contrast with the dull and dingy colours of the rundown alley. It is an excellent image.	8.5
<b>A</b>		Hailes Abbey Ruins	This is a good image – technically excellent, well composed, well exposed and it even has a person in it to add interest and give scale. There are areas that seem to have too much of a yellow/orange tint, and it is worth going back and looking at the colour balance.	7

### IMAGE OF THE MONTH

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

Grade	ID	Image Title	Reason for Placing
<b>A</b>		View through a big window	It is an outstanding image. Composition is great; the window is the point of focus; there is mystery; there are objects in the room that are delicately highlighted – I could go on but all you need to do is look at and it is obvious that it is exceptional <b>(Phensri Rutledge)</b>

Grade	ID	Image Title	Comments	Score
<b>AB</b>		Natures Window Kalbarri	This is a fascinating structure and so typical of our outback, which unfortunately a lot of Australians never get to see. You have nailed the colours and exposure, but focus is another. With this type of image, it is best to have the whole thing in focus, because what you are looking at through the opening is a very significant part of the image. This is where using 'double the distance	6.5

			to the closest object you want in focus' can be useful, because using this will generally put the entire image in focus. In a situation like this where you don't have anything to focus on but air, turning around, estimating the correct distance, and focusing on a solid object then setting your focus manually is a good fix. Nevertheless, it is an attractive image, so well done.	
<b>AB</b>		Through the gates	This is looking through on a multiple scale but still meets the definition – it would fit within the theme better if it was cropped at the top to remove the sky. It is a well exposed, sharp and colourful image – the wall and gates have strong features, and the gardens are very attractive. As an aside – and this is not a criticism – if the image was mine, I would adjust the vertical perspective to correct the very tiny bit of key stoning that is present, just because I am one of those irritating people with a 'straight' eye, and it would annoy me. However, the majority of viewers would not notice it, so adjusting it is not essential at all.	5
<b>AB</b>		In Plane View	This is another image that does not quite fit the definition – although it is obvious to everyone that you have to be looking through a plane window to get this shot it has not been made evident in this image. The image itself is attractive – it is sharp and well exposed with good colour.	4.5
<b>AB</b>		Tunnel vision	This is another image that is on the edge as far as fitting the definition goes – it is looking through a window but there is only one border to demonstrate that; and it is looking into a tunnel but not through it. The image itself is interesting but not beautiful – I guess tunnels aren't designed to be aesthetically pleasing. There is a lot of banding around the lights - which is always most noticeable in areas of an image where there are strong changes from bright to dark. Colour is not well demonstrated, with only red standing out (I suspect the truck is dark blue). It would have been quite a difficult image to take so you have done well to get it.	4
<b>AB</b>		Looking out the Window	This is a colourful image with a different approach. It is indeed looking through a window and what is outside is attractive, although the sky is a bit overexposed (understandable with the lighting conditions you would have been dealing with here). The theme would be better illustrated with a border on the right to complete the 'framing'. The colourful bottles are certainly the first thing that strikes the viewer, but the eye does then go past them to the view outside, which is attractive and even has leading lines. I would definitely crop at the left to remove the overlap in the glass window – this will strengthen the image considerably.	7

<b>AB</b>		Secret Garden	This is lovely - the warm colour of the bricks complements the green of the garden through the doorway; the dappled sunlight adds highlights. Exposure is good and the image is sharp. This image is one that would benefit from cropping, which would remove unnecessary areas and bring that beautiful garden closer to the viewer. Well done.	7
<b>AB</b>		Cascade through the trees	The contrast of the row of trees against the water provides the foundation for a good image and you were lucky to find this place; the way the water runs around the rocks at the bottom is also a very attractive feature. The lighting would have been challenging and as a result what is visible of the sky is overexposed. Shading has been applied in the upper to corners to frame the opening and give an impression of looking through foliage, but unfortunately this has not been done in such a way as to make it 'invisible'. The tree trunk on the right unbalances the image and looks quite artificial at the top as can be seen by comparing it to that on the left. Cropping the image on the right side so the trunk matches that on the left would help, but there would have to be quite a lot of work done to fix the top part of the trunk. This is an image that I would revisit from the start – the concept is great and if you can get the technical side of it right it would be quite striking.	4
<b>AB</b>		Seaside cavern	This an attractive image that would have been quite difficult to take – I know from personal experience that the lighting in situations like this can be terribly difficult to deal with (it looks like Remarkable Cave, and it is one of the places with a real lighting challenge). The ocean is beautifully in focus from front to back. The rocks on the left are sharp and have enough light on them to display their attractive shapes. The top and right side of the image are both quite dark and heavy, but would no doubt be very noisy if you tried to lift the shadows – though it worth testing – just a tiny bit. An alternative I have found helpful is to have someone with me to either hold a light or a reflector to add just a little light to the foreground – you can also use fill flash but set very low. However, it is a great image.	7.5
<b>AB</b>		Cattle through the fence	These curious animals make good subjects particularly when they are inspecting the photographer as these two are. They are sharp and contrast nicely with the background. To take this image you are looking through a fence, which is not a solid object, so it is debatable as to whether or not this fits within the theme definition, which is through an opening looking out.	4.5
<b>AB</b>		Rainbow through the mist	While this is an attractive image, it does not meet the theme definition. You have captured the colours of the rainbow well; I will assume the dull sky could be related to the mist but suggest that you revisit this and review	4

			the sky colour; I would also look at reducing the noise in the sky if you are able to. There is also quite a large sensor spot almost centrally in the image which needs to be removed. As I mentioned earlier, it is an attractive image and worth revisiting.	
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IMAGE OF THE MONTH (ONE only for each Grade in Theme and Open please)			
Grade	ID	Image Title	Reason for Placing
AB		Seaside Cavern	A technically difficult image that has been well done; sharp throughout; good colour and composition. <b>(Dawn Furrage)</b>