

B GRADE DIGITAL

COMMENTS: Congratulations on some strong images. I view your images on a calibrated screen so these can look brighter, with either less or more or different colours when projected. This is why I like prints as the author has total control over what is seen. My critique of your image is meant to be helpful and if there is something you would like further explained or have any questions then please ask me.

61/BOATWATCHING: I like that you have interest both in the foreground and the distance which tells us a story. There is a lack of sharpness possibly due to camera movement. When hand holding your camera check that you have your camera set at about an F11 to allow your faithful subjects to be in focus and that your speed is fast enough to avoid movement. Otherwise if the light is not great you could decide to use a narrower depth of field (a smaller number) and make the seals your main subject. The boat would then become just a suggestion in the distance. ACCEPTANCE.

62/ CARD SCHOOL: I love the strong story and the composition in this image. The brave positioning of your subjects to the right and the use of negative space in the shadowed area to the left of your image shows you are a very confident photographer. The only thing I would advise is to perhaps clone out the partial chair on the right edge. Technically a well accomplished image well suited to the black and white presentation. HONOURS. Steve Ford

63/ CONTEMPLATION, NGAMBA ISLAND, UGANDA: I think this image has been taken in strong sunlight as there are very bright areas on the chimpanzees hand and face. The branch in the front is distracting as is the busy background. I imagine this image may have been taken in the wild and this may have been a favorite seat. Taking an image from a distance means it is harder to have the background out of focus. Underexpose more for the highlights which keeps detail in the brighter areas and keep an eye on your histogram as you go. You can bring back detail easier from the shadowed areas, however details in the burnt out highlights are usually lost. ACCEPTANCE.

64/ DREAMING ON THE JOB: Here a story is told of a person caught napping, perhaps after lunch. The body leans on an angle which contrasts nicely with the straight horizontal and vertical lines of the building. I would take the time to straighten these and this will give the leaning figure more strength within your image. Our eyes like uniformity and are distracted by lines that are not straight. MERIT. Steve Ford

65/ EGRETTA NOVAEHOLLANDIAE- HERON: I like the drops of water trailing from the heron's beak which creates some interest in this image. Maybe he has perhaps just swallowed a crab or missed his dinner this time around. When taking an image of a bird or animal it is rewarding to have some movement with the bird doing something of interest rather than just sitting or standing in place. I feel the colour in this image has been over saturated. I would like to suggest a square crop for this image as this will increase the size of the bird in the frame and still leave room in front, plus will keep his reflection intact. ACCEPTANCE

66/ FAITHFULL: I like the composition and the story in this image of a locked doorway with a cat patiently waiting on the step for the owner to come home and feed it. The black metal scroll work is interesting on the door, and the two red and one white flower casually poked through them give us a focal point to rest on. I feel that a little more contrast and sharpness, together with a slight straighten would bring this image closer to an honours . MERIT. Deb Corbett

67/ GENTLE PANT HOOTS, NGAMBA ISLAND, UGANDA: You have captured an expression that tells me this chimpanzee is communicating with another chimpanzee as the title describes to us. I can identify with the human like emotion you show in this portrait of a chimpanzee. I like the way you have cropped the image across his chest and have given room for him to look into. The colour tone appears very flat and yellowed and this might be easiest to improve by going back to your original file and looking at some basic processing. I hope it was a raw file? I would also advise applying a little more contrast which should give more definition and help his eyes stand out. Good potential in this image. ACCEPTANCE.

68/ GOT TO SCRATCH THAT ITCH: The author of this image of a sparrow preening on a branch has replaced the background which perhaps may have originally been distracting due to the brightness which is also obvious on his neck and leg. At first glance it looks fine but look closer and you will notice the breakup of the feathers on the sparrows back. This is a difficult task to accomplish and would also mean this image cannot be entered in a Natural History competition, but good on you for trying as the background does suit the image. I liked the curve in the birds body as it grooms its feathers. ACCEPTANCE

69/ ITS A SECRET: Although this is someone's art, you have arranged the image with the hat perched jauntily on an angle and made it your own. It is a catchy story with the orange hat contrasting well with the blacks in your image although some more brightness and contrast will help the colour and detail to stand out and deepen the blacks even more. MERIT. Helen Atkinson

70/ JOY OF AUTUMN: Zooming your lens so that movement blurs your subject with a burst of colour is a great technique to learn. It can be quite effective if you leave a small portion in the centre which is still in focus. Either go slow to begin with and then faster, or begin with the lens partially open. The tree trunk has less zoom so you are beginning to master this technique. **MERIT. Debbie Musso**

71/ OPPTS: BOAT ON CORAL: An interesting subject which rather suggests a shipwreck perhaps. A nice black background allows the subject to stand but there is a small piece of dust at bottom left which my eye keeps going back to. I think a small increase in both brightness and contrast might be a useful addition to the image. ACCEPTANCE.

72/ PARKING LIGHTS: This image relies on the negative space to the right to create the strength in this image. Because it is a very graphic image I would recommend you simplify it by cloning out the brown tones towards the base and any distracting highlights to the left. I imagine this may be a subjective view however. I recommend that you intensify the blue in colour management and possibly straighten the image. **MERIT. Tim Leyland**

73/ PLATO'S WALL: An eye catching very graphic image which I kept going back to. The pointing hand leads me into the image and to the very indistinct shadow on the right mostly hidden by the black wall. The composition is strengthened by the black triangular shape to the bottom left which balances the weight of the black wall to the right. The orange illumination is a powerful contrast to the blacks and highlights the mostly negative space in the centre. Well done. **HONOURS. Tim Leyland**

74/ POWELLIPHANTA: You have named this as you would for a Natural History image so I am looking for surroundings that show some of the natural habitat. As you have entered in an open competition I will critique it as an open entry. I like the way the golden brown contrasts with the black although there are burnt highlights on the side that may have been avoided if a diffuser was used, or try pointing your flash at the ceiling. If your camera is on a tripod, use natural light from a window plus perhaps a reflector to direct light into the any shadowed area on the shell. Use a greater depth of field if you are using a macro lens, or focus stack at least 3 images together. ACCEPTANCE.

75/ RELAXING WORKOUT: You have caught all four feet off the ground as the horse trots around the track pulling the sulky and driver. I would prefer to see the rest of the rider as a figure at the edge of an image cut in half makes me feel uncomfortable. There are nice tones in the coat of the horse and the image is sharp. I did notice the tongue is protruding. ACCEPTANCE.

76/ PHIPIDURIDAE> WILLY WAG TAIL- DINNER: I like the way you have captured the bird with his wings out stretched and I think I see an insect in his mouth so well done. Unfortunately the colour appears to be over saturated which may have happened in your post processing, and also while I don't mind the movement in the wings, there is also a lack of sharpness in the birds face. Keep your speed up around 1250 if you can for birds, however this will depend on the available light. ACCEPTANCE.

77/ SPLIT SECOND: Well done for creating something different. I think this image would also suit a square crop if you would like to try it. You have given me the impression that something is trying hard to escape and is ready to explode from the glass decanter. The container and the sparkles stand out dramatically against the simple black background. A competent technical entry for a B grade entry. **HONOURS Debbie Musso**

78/ THE OLD GAME OF I SPY: Nice to catch this group of three cows together at the fence line and a little humour goes a long way. The middle cow is sneaking a cheeky look through the fence at us. The sepia tone suits the image although I would recommend darkening the highlights in the background which tend to pull our attention away from the cows. **MERIT.**
Jane Pordon

B GRADE PRINTS

COMMENTS: I was very impressed by the quality of the images in B grade that were chosen to be presented as your prints. All four would score well in the A grade section. They were all nicely matted, however consider using wing mats which can be reused for your next entry in a competition.

81/ FERNS AND MERMAIDS: This does not strike me as a very relaxed pose but it is certainly a dramatic and rather suggestive one I suggest. The angle of the right arm mirrors the angle of the left knee, with the left arm very straight beside the body which creates tenseness. The models head is tilted back and angled so her gaze connects with the viewer. The background ferns suggest both soft and hard to me as did the model's posture. The dark vignette concentrates our attention on our model. I am sorry for being fussy but there is a small white mark in front of her feet which I would go back and remove from your file. **HONOURS. Steve Ford**

82/ LOOK SHARP: Black and white is really the only way to present this print. It brings out the texture of the hair in both the horse and the man. I like that the man has his back to us and this is all about the horse. This is a brave crop which for most will be a little tight. If the ears were included this would bring the eye nearer the third but this will be subjective. The nose of the horse connects with the curve of the man's shoulder and suggests a connection between them both. **MERIT.**

Steve Ford

83/ THE GOLDEN TICKET: The light dances as it ripples over the stones and the leaf. The more I study this image the more I see, particularly in the top portion where the blues and browns combine in an impressionist symphony of light. You almost do not need the yellow leaf which demands my attention and takes me away from the subtle ripples happening among the stones. You might consider turning this image to a vertical presentation which I also enjoyed and perhaps use a black mat as I feel the white is rather bright and fights the subject for attention. **HONOURS.**

Jane Pordon

84/ THE WHITE ORCHID: The light has been controlled well in this print as the detail shows well in the petals. I would like to see a little more room between the lower petals and the bottom of the matt frame as this feels tight compared to the room left at the top. If you still have the orchid I suggest that you consider recording just one flower which would simplify the image and allow the lovely markings to stand out. The background is a lovely crisp black. **MERIT. Jane Pordon**