Roebuck in the Mist (E image)

Judge 1: Well handled backlit image with deer in just the right place. Not sure about sky and sun. (17)

Judge 2: A very nice image with a very nice ethereal feeling. Very good sharpness where sharpness is needed i.e. the horizontal row of trees in the middle foreground as well as the doe of course. I enjoy the way the background retreats into the fog or mist while still showing sufficient information to allow the viewer to feel and absorb the effects of the wooded area. (16)

Radiant Dancer (VCC Image)

Judge 1: Lighting, exposure and tone well handled. Movement effect post processing? (15)

Judge 2: A very nice black and white capture. Ethereal but at the same time the sense of the now with the visual sharpness/ intent of the subject matter. Composition is very nice. Exposure values for the most part of very good. A couple things that I suggest might be considered to possibly improve this image: there is a 'ghosting' between her face and her hairline and ear that I find a bit distracting considering for the most part the rest of the body parts are more distinctive in their separation from the foreground/ background. Also, I would remove the hem lines in the material both the horizontal near her waist on the left and right and the strong vertical from her left leg down to the floor and a very small consideration would be to remove the small black line that is visible to the lower right of her left foot. (14)

Splish Splash (E image)

Judge 1: Impact! Impact! Impact! You can almost hear the car, and just look at that spray - pin sharp. Great Image. (20)

Judge2: A good capture. Good sharpness, shutter speed to stop the water spraying up from the tires and mud splashing underneath the undercarriage. The background is fine but possibly a little bit too sharp. I can see the fencing in the back and I'm not sure that's any advantage in fact I might consider cropping the image from the top down to the black horizontal line between the fencing and the grass area. Although of course that does leave you with that one significant vertical black post 1/3 in from the left at the top to deal with. Exposure is good within the helmet. The overall' grittiness' of the image I will suggest offers a bit too much distraction In the overall quality of the image. I would suggest turning it down by at least 50%. personally. With the noise reduction luminance slider at 100% detail at 50 in Lightroom on this image I would suggest there would have an overall better viewing experience. (IMHO). (13)

Wish We Could be Alberta Bound

Judge 1: Not sure if HDR has been used here but do like the effect. Good composition and use of colour. (19)

Judge 2: An interesting image with of course significant post-production done to it. The image works well enough but it would be nice to see a little bit more detail in the main car, I would like to know what type of car it is and I can't quite make it out, possibly a Dodge? The emblem and trunk release above the license plate in my opinion is a bit too bright and could have been toned down before the post-processing process. There is a grit to the image which works well on the cars but I suggest lessens the visual impact of the sky. I do like the left hand sky with that tumultuous clouds/storm system but I find the black or darker clouds on the right to be less inviting in this dreamscape of taking this old vehicle out on a road trip. (13)

Sunset scavenger in Botswana (E image)

Judge 1: Bird nicely lit but not sure about all the out of focus leaves. What is black bit at bottom right? (17)

Judge 2: Very good exposure and the sharpening for the most part looks very good although possibly for the submission a little bit over sharpened on the face of the vulture. The background is good as it doesn't distract from the bird but I wonder if we can have more of the foreground in the image as opposed to what looks to be the top portion of the next bird and a very smallest hint of the Horn of the dead animal. Right now, it looks like this vulture is going to step directly on the bottom vulture and I imagine that was not actually the case. I would remove the fly that is hovering behind the back wing area of the top vulture (if this is allowed in the competition). I do enjoy seeing the 'dirt' kicking up from the vulture's talon that is just leaving the carcass of the dead animal. (14)

Caracaras Fighting (VCC)

Judge 1: Probably better if head of left hand bird was visible but action very well caught. (17)

Judge 2: A good moment with very good sharpness on both birds. Not being able to see the head of the lower bird and therefore the intensity of the duel between these two makes for a less dynamic capture. The background is good but I suggest could be Improved upon if it didn't have quite as much sharpness. If this could have been shot at f4 then that would help make the birds' pop' more. And there's some noise in the shot that could have possibly been calmed a bit in post-production using the luminance slider in the detail panel in Lightroom or a multitude of noise reduction techniques available in post-production in Photoshop. (13)

Young Caravaggio

Judge 1: Low key and detail retained in highlights. Window light? No shadows. Maybe a little heavy. (16)

Judge 2: Excellent. What is there more to say? Fantastic sharpness, excellent exposure value, excellent use of lighting with the catch lights in the eyes at the 2 o'clock position. I can just see enough of the ear on the right hand side head/hair and then the excellent darkening of the background. You can't help look into the eyes. Very well done. (20)

Zip

Judge 1: Well composed and action well captured. Perhaps not possible to bring detail back to bottom right.(16)

Judge 2: A strong and controlled image. Excellent black and white tones. Very good sharpening. Excellent motion of the grinding wheel and of course the sparks coming off in a radial pattern. Excellent sharpness enforcing visual attention to the grinding wheel, the hand the eye and the beard. The background is nicely out of focus therefore reinforcing the visual sharpness of the subject. A very nice crop, tight and bright ensuring the viewer is to look directly at the subject. (17)

Tit Fight

Judge1: Has the same bird been dropped in - does it matter? Sharp colourful nature picture with loads of impact. (19)

Judge2: A good moment for the capture but ultimately the focus is a bit soft and it shouldn't be. On the left hand bird the focus has missed the head and instead settled on the feathers of the Wing just back of the body. That is the bird we're going to look at first and foremost because of the catch light in it's eye. It would be great if there was focus and a catch light on the right hand bird as well thereby increasing the visual intensity which is somewhat lacking at this point. The background is excellent, the moment is very good. And of course this is an extraordinary difficult moment to capture. The contrast is very good as well. (13)

Three's Company

Judge 1: Pin sharp pintails. Cropped to advantage and well presented. A nice gentle image (16)

Judge 2: A nice and sharp and clean image. I am wondering if there should be a little bit more room on the left hand side of the image? Or is it the fact that the right hand side of the image the bird's head is not as bright as the center or left hand bird? I would suggest giving the right-hand birds head a bit of a dodge to bring it up to the same visual brightness as the other two, in fact I would probably work on the entire body to bring it to the same visual brightness as the other two. I would also consider lightening up the cresting water at the breast of the far right-hand duck. (13)

The bond preview

Judge 1: Diffused background accentuates the beautiful lighting to the faces and captures a special moment. Superb image. (20)

Judge 2: A truly beautiful capture. More than enough visual information to help the viewer understand the location/ situation/ environment. Beautiful lighting on the faces. Excellent intent in the gaze between the two. Very nice tonal values being demonstrated this image. Superb dark tones separating from even darker background tones. One very small consideration that I think is worth exploring would be to make darker the child's fingers as the way they are presented currently I find them visually a touch bright and therefore possibly pulling my eyes away from where I believe I should be looking and that is the faces of the two and their gaze. You could simply use the radial filter in Lightroom (if this is allowed for the competition) invert the mask and probably just tone down the highlights which would allow for the fingers to be part of the image but bring down there brightness and therefore possibly make them a little less distracted, in my opinion. well done. (19)

Flying over the Sun

Judge1: Out of the box thinking gives an extra edge to a colourful and well thought out image. (17)

Judge 2: Quite the moment of capture. Very good sharpness and for the most part the exposure is very good. I would consider burning the bright area on her right arm making it just a bit darker and I would consider lightening her left leg the touch in the shadows. The background: I enjoy the surreal 'Northern Lights effect' but I wonder about the repetition of diagonals just to the right of her left hand (the number of them) as well as the three diagonal verticals directly below her body. I suggest having them either less focused or less repetition would be of benefit. And finally even though the title is flying over the sun I do find the sun to be visually distracting in the image and with it gone I would suggest the image might be stronger. (13)

Vasco de Gama Bridge

Judge1: Very nice feel to this view which has been taken at just the right time. Colour contrast and presentation both good. (17)

Judge2: The beautiful tranquil capture with very good sharpness and clarity. Very good smoothness of the water which help the 'quietness' of the shot. A couple of considerations: first whether part of the sharpening or part of the jpeg compression for the competition there is a dark Halo Around the upper left tall vertical stanchions as they meet the sky. Also at the bottom of the bridge on the left hand side as it edges towards the left frame of the image we can see some white halo where the bridge and the yellow/orange sky meet, again this could be over sharpening and or caused by the jpeg compression for submission. One final very small consideration (if this is allowed in the competition) would be to remove the marker buoy in the bottom left portion of the image where the water meets the orange sky. (15)

Pixie by Starlight

Judge 1: Super composition and balance. Good use of fill in flash to light tree in foreground. (19)

Judge 2: A very nice capture. Excellent exposure of the Twisted gnarled tree and of course the Milky Way in the background. Very good sharpness on the tree in the foreground as well as the grasses at the base and the trees on the horizon. There's a couple of components on this image that I would consider working on. The first is the straight line in the middle of the Milky Way whether that is a satellite or meteor as I find it a bit strong and distracting from the rest of the image. I think removing the line there would be a better blend visually between the foreground and background without the strength of that straight line calling attention to itself. The other very small consideration is the small illuminated green bush on the right-hand side of the image I believe I would either darken it or clone it out. The rest image works very well. (16)

Coupall Falls

Judge 1: Long exposure, composition, heavy sky and front to back sharpness make for a powerful landscape image (17)

Judge2: An excellent image. Beautiful black and white tonal values throughout the image. Excellent sharpness, excellent use of shutter speed to convey the soft water effect, excellent use of inclusive depth of field have everything visually sharp in the image. Sharpening is excellent, I'm not seeing any halos on the tree to the left which of course would be one of the first items to fall apart technically with over-sharpening, well done. The only consideration/suggestion that I might explore would be working on the somewhat flat contrast area at the bottom or foot of the mountain. There's a small strip of a lighter tone between the rocks of the stream and the bottom of the mountain that for whatever reason is possibly lacking a touch of snap. Possibly some cautious use of the adjustment brush in Lightroom and work with the exposure, contrast, highlights and the clarity and possibly by doing so my suggestion would be this would bring that portion of the image more into line with the contrast and clarity and details that you demonstrate in the rest of image. As always; in my opinion. Very nice shot. (18)

Southwood Pier

Judge 1: Proof that you don't need in your face colours.Duplication of the diagonal is good and foregrond colour and long exposure help. (16)

Judge 2: A nice 'quiet' capture. Very nice exposure values. Very good sharpness from foreground to background. A few things to consider for the composition: perhaps cropping out a good portion of the bottom rock and pebble area? By doing sow there be more visual emphasis on the quietness of the water and the graphic nature of the pier? Or maybe a bit of a neutral grad filter application either during the exposure or post-production to darken the foreground a touch and bring the visual emphasis back up to the pier itself. I believe the intent is to look more at the pier than the rocks in this image? I find the image, cropped to remove the pier is quite strong with the rocks and the soft water or to crop out the bottom half of the rocks and pebbles, makes the peer stand out more. Right now, I have a visual battle between the visual strength of the rocks and the pier. Another small consideration with the pier would be to use perspective control in post-production(if this is allowed in the competition) to straighten up the verticals especially for the pylons and buildings on the right hand side of the image. (15)

The Fencer

Judge 1: Shading well done, however a portrait with an obstruction over the face has to work very hard.(15)

Judge 2: Well done, a very good capture. Composition works very well. Highlights, shadows, brightness, contrast sharpness… everything works as it should. Just enough detail in the hands and in the sword (epee). I quite enjoy the brightness of the fencing mask and the detail in the protector of webbing. The background of course going to black really helped highlight the subject beautifully. One small consideration and possibly worth trying would be to burn or darken the forehead a touch and see if you can visually bring out the right eye (his left eye) a touch more. I'm finding that I'm looking too much at the forehead when I really should be looking at the eyes. This would definitely take a very subtle hand and would be difficult to do because by burning in or making darker the forehead you could adversely affect the protective metal screening which may or may not help you over all image. In Photoshop, if using that program, you can selectively dodge or burn highlights so that might offer you an opportunity to work on more of the highlight value of the forehead but I suspect the webbing would also be affected to some degree. A very nice image. (18)

The Moment (VCC image)

Judge 1: Well lit and sepia presentation works well. Would have removed lettering on top right though. (16)

Judge 2: Very well done. I would suggest a touch of over-processing (pseudo HDR effect) in her face on the shadow side as well as her back and along her left arm. I would also consider toning down 'Ballet Victoria', brightness of those words and of the two light figures in the background just a touch as right now I would suggest that area is a bit commanding visually and therefore taking us away from the two actual dancers. Even a post crop vignette without the Highlight priority selected if you're using Lightroom I think adds a stronger sense of visual center to the two dancers. I do not mind the amount of brightness coming in through the window with the sunbeams on the left-hand side. I suggest it is the visual strength of the lettering that is distracting from the two main dancers. (16)

Skeletons

Judge 1: Airy well composed wide angle image.Trunks and tracery work well from low viewpoint. (16)

Judge 2: A very interesting capture. I think the component of this image that separates it from other vertical shots looking up into the trees is the highlight open areas between the various trees separating each of the tree from its surrounding neighbor as opposed to just one canopy of gnarled branches. We now have the separation of each of these enormous trees. Of course, shooting up into the sky like this makes it difficult to be able to expose for the highlight and the shadows and in this case, we're not getting any or very little of the Shadow detail in the trunks of the trees themselves. This could be the considered to a plus or the negative to this image. A plus if we're looking for more graphic representation or negative in the case that were wanting to see detail in the trunks and not being able to see it. Possibly an HDR capture of this image would allow for more details to be brought out in the trunks and therefore make this is stronger image. Well done. (16)

White Sands of New Mexico

Judge 1: The patterns give a nice depth to the picture but it needs a figure as a focal point and to give a sense of scale. (15)

Judge 2: Very nice composition. I enjoy the wider horizontal crop. It seems to be somewhat lacking sharpness especially in the foreground bottom right and on the horizon where the dunes meet the sky. Whether this is due to depth of field, which could certainly account for the bottom right portion image and possibly the back Horizon. But the lack of sharpness could also be a haze at the time of photographic capture? Or perhaps a JPEG compression for this particular image being overly aggressive? I can see a slight Halo especially encompassing the top far left dune. Also, the footprints throughout the image, I suggest take away from the serendipitous nature of this image. And one final Comment there is a green Posterization in the center top Dune (I green area within the Dune that I suspect should not be there). (13)

It's Rude to Stare

Judge 1: Superb nature shot. Three of a kind always works and the differential focus is great. A lovely 'aah' image. (20)

Judge 2: This is just a plain cute shot. No getting around that at all. Nice to have three sets of eyes looking at you, nice to have that triangle of beaks. The background is beautifully out of focus to therefore emphasize or subject. Overall the image has either been sharpened slightly too much or most likely the jpeg compression used to bring your original file size down to the required image size for the competition was overdone. There is a 'grittiness' to this image due to the jpeg over compression. Next time maybe try resampling in smaller amounts from a large file down to the final required size is that sometimes allows for a better final image presentation. (16)

African Lions on Honeymoon

Judge 1: Not just a portrait but an excellent capture of an intimate lion moment, and technically sound. (17)

Judge 2: Just the right moment for this capture with the female looking back up at the male. Excellent sharpness and exposure. The background is excellent as it does not distract it all from the 'moment'. Excellent image being in the right place at the right time and with the right camera settings already 'dialed' in to allow for the capture. (14)

Machir Bay

Judge 1: Lovely rich tones to this picture. A small trim to the left would have moved the house to the third. (17)

Judge 2: A strong capture. I quite enjoy the long horizontal crop to this image. Obviously, the house is your main visual focal point from that point I'm nicely rewarded with my journeys around this image looking at the various aspects of this bay. There is certainly a lot to look at in this image. I would suggest my only concerns with this image is the possible significant contrast in the dark and white tones of the image especially in the wave area of the water and on the dotted Hillside to the right of the house. I find these two spots having a bit too much contrast and therefore being visually aggressive compared to the rest of the image and their associated grey tones. Another item that I would consider doing (I'm uncertain if it's allowed in the competition or not) is it I would remove the reflection of the house in the dark sandy beach area of the image. Obviously it's a natural reflection but I find that strong linear dotted line a bit of a sticking point for me visually. (16)

Lighting the Night

Judge 1: Lighting well balanced for foreground and main subject matter. Nice complimentary colours and composition. (17)

Judge 2: The image simply jumps of the screen. Excellent exposure, sharpness, contrast and clarity. So much to look at and explore.

I would suggest using Lightroom or photoshop, running the perspective correction to straighten the slight vertical convergence on the red brick building as well as the sides of the shed. By correcting the vertical perspective I feel there is a stronger sense of placement and acceptance all of the lines within the image making for a more comfortable 'read'. Otherwise, nicely done. (16)

Falling Waters

Judge 1: Vibrant mono image that portrays three different properties of water. Lovely detail in the curved overflow (18)

Judge 2: Excellent black and white tones. Excellent exposure values including the splashing white water off of the rock in the bottom left of the image. If it all possible I'd like to see a little bit more on the left vertical top of the image as the cascading water is just cut off and that would also allow a little bit more room for the water to 'leave' the image. While I really enjoy the contrast and graphic nature of this image I do find it a little 'compressed' i.e. the individual space between the arc of the waterfall and the cascading water off of the rock face. Again a little bit more room for the water to leave the image on the left and bottom, if it all possible might be advantageous. (14)

Wild Card

Judge 1: Is the rider being thrown from the horse? Background nicely darkened but would prefer to see face. Looks odd. (15)

Judge 2: An excellent moment for the capture. Very good sharpness and clarity. More careful consideration needs to be done with your dodging and burning as you can see a halo around the cowboy hat as well as a glow around the feet and the right hand chaps in the air.

Another consideration if this is allowed would be to fix up the spectators Cowboys hats. The cowboy on the left the hat is of one shape, the Cowboys hat behind the cowboy on the horse has a double edge and again if this is allowed I would clean that up so the Hat on the center Cowboys spectator and the bottom right Cowboy spectator (looking the other way) had the same clarity as the far left hand cowboy's hat. (15)

Marina

Judge 1: Lovely lead in which takes you into and round the picture. Velvity blacks and punchy highlights - great! (19)

Judge 2: A wonderful image, striking in the contrast of tones in this black and white capture. A very nice crop with that semi-circle on the left hand side leading you in towards all the buildings. Very nice contrast and therefore highlighting of boats in the marina. Very good Shadow detail in this case of shadows from the buildings crossing the water which is already very nice dark gray tone and yet the shadow areas on the water still being able to see the ripples in the water itself. The only consideration that I have for this image (if allowed for the competition) is within Lightroom or photoshop adjusting the vertical of the buildings as the far-left building has the look of convergent. You could try correcting the vertical perspective a touch but I'm also considering that perhaps there's some Barrel Distortion in the lens as there is a curvature to some of these verticals. Now perhaps is building on the left was actually built with a curve moving up doubtful but a possibility. The second building from the left also appears on the white strong vertical to still have some barrel distortion. Barrel or pincushion distortion can be corrected in Lightroom or photoshop as required. Well done. (18)

Foundry Office

Judge 1: Shapes, colours and clutter work well to capture the essence of a blue collar office.Shading on left and figure help. (18)

Judge 2: A strong image overall. Very good exposure, contrast, clarity and sharpness. I very much enjoyed looking around this entire image at all of the interesting components that make up this office. A couple of things that stop me from getting right into the image completely and that is; one I would suggest that this HDR effect has been applied a bit too aggressively and I believe it would be better if the gentleman was either doing something and therefore working in his work environment or if he was looking directly at the camera. As it is right now it's still an interesting moment, it's still an interesting capture but I'm not quite getting enough from him visually. If he was actually turning those pages that he's looking at with pen in hand and this was a fly on the wall moment where we saw him actually working I believe that would work nicely. Or if he was as comfortable as he appears to be in the image but looking straight at the camera I also believe that to be a very strong image suggesting 'this is my environments this is who I am'. (16)

Sedge Warbler

Judge 1: Bird well placed in frame and sharp in the right place. Background tends to compete. (16)

Judge 2: I enjoy the square crop. Good exposure. Perhaps your background could be a little less sharp and therefore hopefully make the bird and the stem 'pop' a little bit more. The background is a touch' noisy' and the bird itself is not quite sharp or possibly the noise issue is affecting the 'clarity' of the bird. Very good color within the image. Perhaps the noise may have become more visible from excessive cropping of the image as it is usually very hard to get close enough to fill the frame. (13)

Just Holding On

Judge 1: Flash has brought out the vivid colours.A closer crop would lose a lot of the black and enable frog to be placed off centre (16)

Judge 2: Excellent colors, contrast. Good sharpness for most of the image, although the nose of the frog is a little bit 'soft'. The background darkness does an excellent job of contrasting the vibrant colors of the Frog as well as intensity of the materials on the branch. (13)