

Grade	COMMENTS	Pts	IMAGE
A	A DEVOTED SADHU SITS ALONE IN VARANASSI I find this a captivating image. For me the subject is well positioned against the vehicle and the vehicle parked on an angle adds interest. I find the colour palette works well and I am enjoying the framing of shadows to the bottom left and the right sides. I am unsure whether the hand raised is 'no photos' or 'hello' but for me it creates a good connection between the artist and the subject.	6 Merit	
A	ALL AT SEA I am enjoying the streaks on the window from top to bottom going through the subject however for me the subject is too dark and needs some lightened exposure and some saturation and I feel the background needs to have some of the whites and highlights lowered to give some contrast to the sky. Although the subject is on the left third line, in my view he would be better placed on the right third line as he is looking into the left side. This could be achieved by choosing a slightly different angle to capture this from. For me the image has created a strong story.	9 Merit	
A	ALONE ON THE LAKE I find this image to be a taste of New Zealand. I am enjoying seeing the journey of the boat along the wake and it appears very much alone on the lake. The mountains in the background are well placed to the right of the boat but for me the oversaturation of blue feels quite distracting and I know we all have preferences regarding colour saturation but in my view a slight addition of some warmth would soften the overall look. I find the soft ripples in the water add to the calmness and serenity of the image.	14 Highly Commended	
A	A QUIET MOMENT For me the shadow has created some mystery and drama. I feel the image has a lovely frame of foliage around the edges and the shadow of the fence adds more to the story. I find that looking at the back of the subject adds little interest whereas if the artist had taken the subject from another angle I may get some hand or facial outlines to give the figure more interest. In my view the wall texture has too much contrast and I find my focus being led to the lovely colour and texture rather than the lonely figure. I am enjoying the colour palette with the shadow tones.	10 Commended	
A	CONTEMPLATING FARMING LIFE I find the farmer well placed on the left third line facing into the scene before him. I am enjoying the longer depth of field with the layers of hills in good focus but feel like the image needs some saturation, whites and highlights to lift the colours. I wondered if the artist had considered removing the tree directly to the left of the gentleman as the closeness of it appears distracting. To take this on a slightly different angle would have put some distance between the tree and the subject. I find his choice of shirt very rural and a strong element in the overall image.	12 Commended	
A	COOT This Coot certainly met the brief by not bringing friends along. I find this a lovely stretch of habitation for this Coot however I feel the habitation takes all my attention. For me the blue of the water is my focal point. In my view this image could be cropped from the top right corner downward to include some water and vegetation but put the Coot on the bottom third to make it the focal point. I feel the image is in good focus and I find the colours are good.	6 Merit	
A	EMERGING ALONE I am a fan of the lovely minimalist calla lilly. I am enjoying the lovely curved shape of the Lilly and wondered if the artist had considered a portrait shape with a tighter crop to showcase the detail on the flower. This may also remove the fern and the stalk which I don't feel add to the image. In my view the background needs more exposure to compliment the highlights on the lilly. I am enjoying the lighting on the white petal and the colours.	11 Commended	

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A	GOING SOLO I find the lighting soft and diffused and the scene has a tranquility about it. I feel the sharp focus on the boat works well but for me I think the shallow depth of field has taken some of the contrast off the hills beyond. I think the fisherman and boat are well placed in the image with a good colour saturation but for me although the desaturated background draws full attention to the boat it may have worked better with a small amount of saturated colour in the background to prevent the boat and background losing connection. I find the small wake behind the boat tells me that the boat is moving and adds to the story.	18 Honours	
A	HE's GONE I find the image has captured the look of separation well and creates a story with unanswered questions. I think that the backlighting on the subject's hair is lovely but for me the side lighting below her cheekbone could have been raised to the side of her face using a side light or diffuser. In my view the subject's skin has an over saturation of redness which may be a reflection from something in front and could be desaturated or given less contrast to get a better overall skin tone. I think the area she is leaning on to the right, and a small area at the top could be cropped to a narrower size and the white line to the left could be removed to create a less busy background. I find the colour tones in her dress and earrings give authenticity to the image.	7 Merit	
A	IS ANYONE OUT THERE? Poor wee dog. The tyre tracks leading to and from the dog made me feel it had been dumped there. The image suits the All Alone subject but for me the dog appears quite insignificant on the scene. In my mind taking this from a different angle to get the dog side on or cropping it closer to the dog may have had more impact. The dog definitely seems to be waiting patiently.	6 Merit	
A	LONE ROSE I am enjoying the depth of field with sharp focus allowing the rose to be the focal point but also a part of the whole scene. I find the muted colours and contrasting textures work well against the blood red rose which looks well established against the wall. For me the door feels a bit cramped to the right side and I think more of the building in the image to the right would give it more balance. I find the angle this image has been taken from is interesting but I feel it needs to line up straight to the lines on the right side of the wall as presently the light above the door appears crooked. I find the touches of yellow throughout the image work well.	12 Commended	
A	LONELY CHICK Oh dear I'm hoping it's mumma isn't far away. I was able to locate the chick quite quickly but my focus kept shifting to the abundance of greenery in the background. I feel this image may have reached greater heights if the artist had the time to wait until the chick was in the water or in an area where the chick became the hero rather than the busyness around. The blue of the water is very still and looks like ink to me.	6 Merit	
A	LONELY PENGUIN I am enjoying the soft overcast lighting and the contrasting layers of texture between the stones, the sand and the sea. For me the gold colour on the sand is oversaturated for this image as it takes my focus away from the penguin. I feel the exposure overall could be lifted and some of the warmth removed. I find the two smaller rocks and the larger one on the sand in front of the penguin distracting and may remove them also. In my view the penguin has good focus and detail.	7 Merit	
A	LONELY SEAT IN THE WILDERNESS This seat begs the ' Why?' question really. The juxtaposition of a fabric covered armchair in a rural scene grabs my attention and keeps taking me back there. The scene is lovely and the lighting is centred well onto the chair which has been placed to the right and onto the thirds grid. I find this image meets the "All Alone' brief well.	16 Highly Commended	

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A	PINING I am enjoying the title and wonder where this cone's love match has gone. I find the crop of this image awkward as although the image is all about the cone there is no headroom above to put it in context anywhere. The colour palette is lovely but for me the large cone on a beach looks both out of place and out of context. I find the cone in good focus and the depth of field works well.	5 Accepted	
A	RIDING OUT THE STORM For me this is an apt title as the weather looks stormy and the angle of the beacon looks tossed around in the water. The beacon for me appears over sharpened and darkened which I feel doesn't match the grey moodiness of the overall image. I feel the moodiness is enhanced by the monochromatic treatment but for me some of the darker areas in the bush on the left could have exposure added to give it more form. In my view the unusual texture in the water appears to have areas that have been unfinished in post processing and the texture in the water looks artificial. I am enjoying the repetitive lines of both the layers of hills and the ripples in the water.	3 Accepted	
A	SCENIC WINTER WALK I am enjoying the colours and the textures in the scene and I find the solitary subject takes my attention with the bright green on his shirt however in my view the scene has become the subject rather than the aloneness of the person. I feel the photographer could have used a shallow depth of field to focus on the subject and slightly blur the background to separate them a little or crop into a panoramic crop where the trees and sky are not the heroes. I find the trees leaning into the subject tell me that this is the way the wind blows. The subject is well placed in the image on the thirds line.	11 Commended	
A	SENTINAL I find the Sentinel a great focal point which I feel is enhanced by the monochromatic shades of blue around it. For me the sentinels placement in the image then leads me into the layers of hills behind. I often find too much blue a bit distracting but the black sentinel and the soft blue of the sky balances it here and I feel it works.	19 Honours	
A	SOLITARY SAILOR I find this a dramatic image with a monochromatic background creating the story. For me the yacht is well placed on the right third and I feel the panoramic crop adds to the drama. I think for me I need to see some more contrast in the water and wondered if the artist had thought about reducing the whites a little to do this. This in turn may also take some of the brightness out of the sky area. I find this a lovely example of minimalism.	13 Highly Commended	
A	SOLO BALLOON In my view the red balloon is a great contrast against the vivid blue sky. I find the balloon off centre and the trees forming a frame around the left and bottom work well although I think if this had been taken further back or before the balloon got so close the image would feel less crowded and I would be able to see more of the trees below. This looks to me like the perfect day for a balloon ride.	10 Commended	
A	THE LONE TREE The tree acts as a focal point for me meeting the all alone brief. I am enjoying the muted tones and the textures of rocks and grasses in the foreground. I feel the dark sky is a great backdrop for the tree which helps it stand out. I think the lower angle the photographer has used works well and suggest that an even lower angle may work well too. I find the pops of golden light on the grasses add interest.	16 Highly Commended	
A	THE ONLY ONE ON THE BEACH I am enjoying the low angle this image has been taken from. For me however I would have taken this image from further back to emphasise the vast beach area and the loneliness of the subject. I find the square crop has crowded the image into a small space and wonder if the photographer may like to try a landscape crop placing the subject on the right side thirds line walking into the image. In my view the subject is quite dark compared to the beach scene and I feel she could have more exposure added. I am enjoying the sun's rays on the subject's hair and the side of her face.	8 Merit	

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A	TUI 02 The Tui is such a photogenic bird. I find the Tui centered to left facing into the right works well but for me the brightness of the background takes my focus away from the bird. In my view the background would benefit from lowering the exposure especially in the bottom right corner and the tui could have some exposure added especially around the head. I think I would remove the part of the pink flower on the bottom right. The depth of field works well with the softening of the background.	12 Comme nded	
A	TUI05 I am enjoying the angle of the bird and the contrast amongst the blossoms. I feel the depth of field works well but find the crossover of so many branches distracting. I wondered if the photographer had considered darkening the background and cropping more tightly around the Tui to remove the excess branches. I feel the Tui colours have been well captured.	13 Highly Comme nded	
B	ALL ALONE LIGHTHOUSE I find the lighthouse well placed to the right of the image drawing my eye to it. For me the time of day has created a lot of bright areas on the lighthouse and the bright grass to the right of the lighthouse. I find using a polarising filter helps to avoid this. In my view the colours are a bit oversaturated and I feel a lowering of the blue and green saturation would be effective. I find the depth of field works well.	9 Merit	
B	ALL ALONE For me the lone walker with a dog meets the brief of "All Alone" and highlights the smallness of them, giving perspective to the size of the building behind. In my view the building appears to be leaning backwards. The photographer may consider using the transform tool in Lightroom which helps to restore angles. I find the brightness of the building and the bright blue sky oversaturated and I think by taking some of the blues and highlights down may help this appear more realistic. I find the pop of gold on the subject a good contrast in this image.	9 Merit	
B	ALONE IN THOUGHT I am enjoying the moodiness of this image and in my opinion the colour palette works well to create the moodiness. I think if the exposure were raised it would showcase the lovely colours on the horizon. I find the solitary figure works well and the gaps between the elbows and the body help to give the silhouette some form. I think the golden grass in the foreground creates a strong frame for the image.	17 Honour s	
B	BLACK SWAN I find the pops of pink flowers around the swan quite pretty and in my opinion a crop from the bottom of the lower pink flowers may highlight the swan more easily. For me the image feels cluttered and I find the grasses across the middle of the image distracting and wondered if the photographer had thought about removing them. I find the beak and neck reflection of the swan rather nice.	9 Merit	
B	FLORIDA SNOW And why wouldn't you be making snow hats outside in your pyjamas? I find the red plaid pyjamas contrast well with the whiteness of the snow and I'm enjoying the snow on the child's front. The lighting works well but I feel to fully meet the brief, this could be taken from further away and include the whole body which would give a more solitary image. . The depth of field is good and has given good separation between the child and the background.	9 Merit	
B	HAVING A WHALE OF A TIME That was a good find, I'm guessing this was taken from onboard a vessel from a distance. I find the colour in the sky and its reflection in the water lovely and the whale tail takes my focus immediately. I am enjoying the tones in the background and the sky.	17 Highly Comme nded	

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B	LEMUR ME ALONE Great title. They really do seem to have turned their back on him. I am enjoying the crop and the line of overlapping lemurs along the fenceline however for me I think this could have been taken from further back to enable the front subject to be on the third line. This would also enable the whole tail of the lemur to be included. Alternatively this could be cropped down from the top left to remove some of the background lemurs. In my view the foliage needs the saturation lowered as I feel the colours are competing against the Lemur colours. I am always quite intrigued by the brightness of the Lemurs' eyes.	10 Comme nded	
B	SOLID AS A ROCK What photographers will do for "That Shot" .. I am enjoying the drama of this image and although the subject is small, my focus goes there immediately. In my view the subject could be enhanced with some more exposure which I feel would stand out better against the sky. I find the rocks in good focus and dramatic.	11 Comme nded	
B	SOLITUDE To me this seagull almost appears to be a garden ornament. I am enjoying the sky and the sea but I feel the seagull so centrally placed is distracting. I wonder if the artist might like to try putting this into a panoramic crop where the gull is on the back vertical third line and only a small area of the post is showing. I feel this would give the bird more context in the image. I find the image dark and feel as if lifting the exposure would help. I find the cloud formations lovely.	6 Merit	
B	SOLO I am enjoying the subject's position in the image where she appears to be part of the musical notes. For me taking this from further back to include the whole subject may enhance this more. I feel the black and white treatment and the girls black dress blend the subject and background together. I find the rough texture of the wall contrasts well with the smooth texture at the subject's level and the patches of paint missing to the top left put this in context. I find the subject's facial expression and the head set make me feel as if she is lost in the music.	16 Highly Comme nded	
B	TIMEOUT I am enjoying the title as the car does appear to be in Timeout. I think the red of the car is a great focal point. I wonder if the photographer could try cropping up from the bottom left corner to allow the car to sit on the left thirds line. I feel the car would then be better placed in the image. For me the image seems to have been oversharpened as I see a halo area around the trees and the car. I find the panoramic crop works well.	13 Highly Comme nded	
B	WHERE DID ALL MY FRIENDS GO I am enjoying the composition of this image where the vastness of the backdrop highlights the aloneness of the penguin. I find the white areas have been managed well in post processing and the soft blues give me the sense of coldness. I find the penguin appears oversharpened and wondered if it was a composite. For me however the image gives a great sense of scale and emotion.	9 Merit	
	BEST OF SET SUBJECT- A Devoted Sadhu Alone in Varanassi		

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A	A POOL IN THE BUSH I think the highlights in the forest area create a great frame to lead me to the pool of water. I find the framing of bush at different levels adds perspective to the image. For me the addition of a point of interest in the water would give me a sense of width and size of the pool. I am enjoying the lines leading from the water up to the stream and between the cliff faces and I think the varying shades of green and yellow foliage work well to give a sense of light and shade.	15 Highly Commended	
A	BEE-DRAGGLED I think this bee looks very bedraggled. I find the image well balanced and the bee emerging over the petal well captured. For me the droplets on the petals work well but the whole image appears quite dark. In my view the image could be given greater detail with more exposure and some warmth added. I feel the extra petal to the left adds context and the angle creates a v shape which replicates the v in the bee's leg.	16 Highly Commended	
A	FRUIT N VEG 'Fruit and.....Buxom Melons'. I am enjoying the words through this image which appear cleverly highlighted due to the angle this has been taken from. I feel the vibrant colours on the truck compliment the shop window display and create a layered effect of colour and shape. For me the busy nature of the umbrella at the top feels cluttered. I feel if this were taken from further back it would capture more of the umbrella to put it into context with the truck. I wonder if the image has been taken with a pancake lens which would have created the curve of the image with the shop doorway on an angle, and the truck curved.. For me this works as it compliments the curve of the shop window.	9 Merit	
A	HOLDING THE LIGHT I find this a creative image. In my view the sun's brightness has not overexposed and the rays seem quite symmetrical. For me the subject seems too close and I wonder if the artist may consider cropping this image from further back if that is possible. I feel a landscape crop may allow more of the sky and the clouds to be seen. I am enjoying the colours of the sunset but feel that some more saturation and contrast would give the sea more impact. A lovely celestial scene.	5 Accepted	
A	HORSESHOE FALLS This image captures the beauty of New Zealand nature well. I feel the long exposure has worked well with the water giving it a milky look without overdoing it. I am enjoying the pops of sunlight through the foliage giving us a leading line into the back of the bush area, however the very dark brown area of water in the front which is in the same line of light appears too dark and I wonder if the photographer has used a vignette. The artist may consider giving that area more exposure to compliment the bright green area of moss beside it or to lessen or remove the vignette. The balance of the two falls of water on either side of the bush works well for me.	12 Commended	
A	MICHAEL I feel this image creates a great story about this character using the Film Noir style. In my view the short depth of field works well giving a separation between the subject and the background however for me I think a bit less exposure over the whole image would enhance the cinematic effect. I find the small shaft over the subject's shoulder and onto the face allows me to see the detail on the subject's clothing but still take my attention to the face. I am enjoying the reflections on his glasses.	17 Honours	

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A	NIGHT SPINS I really appreciate astro photography which appears to consume most of the artist's sleep time. For me this image has a 3D look where I feel as if I am being sucked into the vortex. The artist's choice of lens which has caused the left and right sides to lean toward the central point enhances this for me. I think that for me I would prefer the image to be taken either further back or with a lens that was able to capture the full circle of the trails as I find the top has been cropped in an unusual place. I think the yellow sun colouring in the bottom left third is interesting.	16 Highly Commended	
A	OWHAROA FALLS I am enjoying the long exposure effect in both the water and the sky. I find the large tree on the right side skyline adds interest to the composition and allows the central location of the waterfall to work. In my view the colours and tones in the bush work well but I feel the bottom left corner of the water is too dark and the artist may like to brush this area with some exposure and lift the shadows to give this area more light. I am especially enjoying the lovely pops of green moss on the rocks in the waterfall.	15 Highly Commended	
A	RIDING THE WAVE I am enjoying the action element of this image. For me the image appears too dark and I feel by lifting the exposure and highlighting the surfer's face it would appear more dynamic. In my view the surfer is not well placed in the image and to crop up from the bottom right corner until the surfboard is placed along the bottom third line would make it appear more balanced. I am enjoying the capture of the waves which have good exposure and movement.	12 Commended	
A	SCOTTISH BADGER I am enjoying the composition of this image with the badger's face centrally placed and the stump and the front foliage framing the left side and bottom third. I find the badger in sharp focus however the sharp focus and high saturation of colour on the stump tends to take my attention first. I wonder if the artist had thought about taking this image with a shorter depth of field to allow the sharper area of focus on the badger or to lower the saturation on the stump and foreground to allow us to focus more on the badger. I find the full frontal stare into the camera effective as if he were posing.	14 Highly Commended	
A	SPLENDID FAIRY WREN I find the contrasting colours work well together and I am enjoying how the angle of the tail appears to extend down through the branch on the same angle. In my view the composition could be improved if the bird were placed slightly toward the right side looking towards a bit more negative space on the left. I am enjoying the minimalism of this image and the lovely detail in the eye and wing feathers.	19 Honours	
A	TARA DAHLIA I am enjoying the vibrance of this dahlia and the varying tones and shades of colour within the image. I find the square crop and central placement work well and take my eye into the centre of the flower and the contrasting green. In my view the shallow depth of field has created a soft look which emphasizes the petals in sharp focus.	19 Honours	

GRADE	COMMENTS	PTS	IMAGE
A	WATCHING YOU WATCHING ME I am enjoying the vibrancy of this image. The shallow depth of field has created a lovely contrasting bokeh background and the green of the praying mantis gives good contrast and allows it to become the focal point. I find the crop and the mantis leaning into the negative space works well. For me the image appears a bit dark and wondered if the artist may consider adding some highlights and whites. I am enjoying the wonderful detail in the Mantis' eye. For me this image feels almost 3 dimensional with the layers of flower, mantis and bokeh	16 Highly Commended	
B	ALL MY DUCKS IN A ROW These ducks appear ready for the next meal. For me the composition seems quite crowded and I feel that the crop could have allowed for more space on the water side which is where the ducks are facing to give some intent to their line and focus. In my view the two ducks at the top could be removed as I find they are off to one side and apart from the main subjects. I think that the focus and colours are good.	6 Merit	
B	COPYCAT I find this is the norm for most cats, a sunny spot on someone's bed. For me this feels like a very busy image where the cat is not my initial focal point. I realise it's difficult to do with a sleeping cat but a plain coloured cover underneath may have been less busy. The artist may like to try desaturating the background to remove the reds and blues which immediately take my focus. I find the cat and toy quite dark and I feel some heightened exposure may help the cat become the central focal point. I feel as if this spot is a pretty regular napping place.	6 Merit	
B	DARING DESIGN I am enjoying the repetition of the triangles and diamond shapes through the centre of this construction which creates a strong leading line up to the top. I find the colours and tones on the construction work well but for me the background appears overexposed and lacks interest. The artist may consider adding some contrast and shadows to the trees to give them some depth and for me I feel taking this photo with some golden light in the sky may have lifted the colour contrasts on the construction. I find the contrast of materials looking up into this construction appealing.	9 Merit	
B	FEATHER FRIENDS I find I am instantly drawn to the faces of these gannets and the shared feather and I wondered if it might be part of a mating ritual. For me the crop works well and the birds are centrally placed which is aesthetically pleasing. In my view the white gannets in the background could have some of the whites and highlights removed and the gannets in the foreground could have whites and highlights added to separate the subjects from the background. I am enjoying the sharp focus and the grass framing in front of the gannets.	18 Honours	
B	MAJESTIC JABIRU I think that this bird is enjoying the light and warmth from Golden Hour which has reflected some golden light onto the feathers. I find the bird is placed well to the right and facing the left but for me I feel some more space to the top and right side would position the bird more aesthetically. In my view the short depth of field has created a harsh look to the foliage just behind the bird's legs which contrasts to the soft blur of the background and the sharp focus of the bird and foreground. For me lessening the depth of field would still give a soft blur in the background but blend the foreground and background more seamlessly. I am enjoying the colours and foliage of the bird and I see it's got its eye on the viewer.	13 Highly Commended	

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B	<p>STREET SHOOT I am enjoying the dramatic lighting in this image which for me emphasises the vintage look. I find the background images of modern living are a good contrast however I feel this image may be better cropped into a panoramic size to take some of the background and foreground away and give full focus to the subject area. In my view the colour palette works well and the green dress in the centre adds interest. Presently I find the light shards on the wall distracting and suggest removing them but I also understand the author may feel they add to the street theme. A good example of street photography.</p>	12 Commend ed	
	BEST OF OPEN SUBJECT - Tara Dahlia		