

Gladstone Camera Club

September 2021 – Judges Comments

Elements

- E - Catching the Wind** What a sharp image you have of this bird of prey caught mid-flight ! You've managed to keep it **in** from the borders so as not to compromise the 'completeness' of the subject bird. It's good that the bird is located in the upper half of the image, but to improve on this, if you cropped the image so that the bird was at the 'meeting of the thirds' to the top right, then it'd look 'convincing' that the bird was circling over its prey... but even if 'stalled' & not circling, then, you've provided some blue sky for it to 'fly into'. You've used light & shade well. Thanks to the sun's position, there's light & shade to bring out detail in the feathers. (Many a bird photo 'falls down' here) These bird's-eyes look like the windscreen of a 747 coming in to land ! **Merit 11**
- E - All four** An attempt to include all 4-elements in the one image?. Not necessary. I'm not convinced that it 'comes off' as a logical combination. The flames in particular aren't too convincing nor the water stream (a hose?). For better flames maybe try a faster shutter speed (?) or higher ISO ? Maybe the image needs applying just a bit more imagination? **Acceptance 7+**
- E-- Windswept** Water +wind... a dramatic combination of two of the elements that you've so well shown us here. (The colours are 'true'. Breaking surf nearly always looks this colour mix (chroma), & as for the looming storm, again the 'threatening' colours are 'true to life'). However, you could improve colour 'tonal control' This isn't always picked up, but if you were to do the 'squint test' (squint the eyes) you'd note that there's very little difference in tone (colour-density) between the grey of the clouds & the blue-green of the sea. This 'discord' (as it's called) can cause such images not to win competitions. **But** here, you're saved by the wide strip of mid- distance breakers. To be 'picky', why not also 'crop' foreground or sky to avoid a 'mid-shot horizon'. Otherwise this is a truly high impact shot. **Merit 11**
- E – Weathered** You've gone to great lengths to have the boat-at-anchor framed by the beached hollow tree, but then I noted that the horizon falls down severely to the right, so soon we'll all be swamped by all that water out there ! That's a shame because you had a really good mono 'happening' here, all so well-framed by the coastal scrub on the right. **In fact**, that's where the essential shot isthe right-hand 2/3rds of the image! & you'd have scored a few grades higher. **Acceptance 7**
- E – Against the wind** Feel that wind blow....put that reefer jacket or jumper on ! The grass may well look 'too-yellow-green' but from memory, often coastal grasses are of this colour. The shot might have been better not so central L-R. Also maybe the shot might have well done with a human in it too, bent over of course! **Merit 9+**

- E -Dew** Essence of a great close-up, AND sharp. But I find the upper curled leaf rather intrusive & I wonder if the front & rear curled leaves would have been enough, complete with the bokeh effects themselves, magic! **Highly Commended 8**
- E – Incoming tide** In itself, an interesting study, though I'd suggest that in the future you might try to focus on something in-shot. Too much of this is “moving” such that this image is mostly 'out of focus', lowering the possibility of a good grading. **Acceptance 7**
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- E – Wetlands** This is a 'high-impact' image. You've been careful to arrive at a beautifully colour-graded image 'showing-off' in artistic-silhouette these swamp trees. Yes, you might have 'played' with a post-production program to end up with this magnificent, though somewhat lavender-ish, image, but post-production programs are there for a purpose, so why not use them? BUT if this is not colour enhanced then all the more congratulations to you for picking the right time of day. Also you have a 'very acceptable' composition of trunks, not overdone either! Note how the photographer has included thicker-trunked trees to the extreme right & left, which actually act to form a frame-within-a-frame. Add ... the 'right time window' (at dusk). It also gives you some stars as a bonus. I couldn't improve on this. Congratulations! Do yourself a poster-sized print for your wall too! **Honour 14**
- E – Winter Warmer** This image captures the essence of what we all do when the weather turns cold most of us will want to 'warm our hands ...ranging from sitting on them, wrapping them in a 'woolen' rug orfinding a way to get some direct radiant heat from ... an open fire! You've done well in this image that forms an 'L'-shaped composition of design-lines around a 44-gallon-drum fire. Exposure's good (but not pin-sharp. Was the camera hand-held?). What I'd like to add is 'congratulations in having someone in-shot actually warming their hands! (We judges so often find that shots are devoid of the 'human' element.) (If your camera was hand held then next time take your tripod or monopod or find a sturdy post.. The length of time exposure (for the flames) was just about 'spot-on', but you could play with that.. **Merit 12**
- E- Festival of the Wind** You've tried to capture, for the record, a kite-flying event and have been successful. But I wonder if your image might have had greater "impact", had you been able to get closer to the kite-flyer-lady +child (right of centre) as a good 'foreground'-interest'. That would then automatically lead our eyes to the bulk of other kiteflyers, yet still keeping in-shot the yellow keystone kite high above bringing-in the man & boy too as co-foreground. I think this is one way to bring us as viewers into the action! I might also play around with brightness & contrast to give more 'punch!' ('Adjustments' in P'shop') **Merit 10**
- E- Fire and Ice** A good theme. Simple & not competing with any of the other elements. The colours seem right. Composing so that the subject is central to the shot seems the right way to go. To improve, I'd probably have removed the excess tongue of flame to the upper right + bits here & there. **Highly Commended 9**
- E – Flowing.** Here's a great idea but it needs some more work to give it some pictorial value

The waterfall is the central point of interest and it's good that you've framed the shot with the overhanging foliage + dark rock to the left. But to bring us 'closer' to the shot (& swimmers), I might have used a telephoto lens (this will foreshorten the space up to the falls). Alternatively you might enter the water yourself to closer to the kids ?) The falls are just about 'burnt out' in this shot as your lens has focussed on the dark areas or has 'averaged out' what it 'sees'. Play with "adjustments" in post-production ? **Highly Commended 8+**

E – Harsh Earth You've attempted to portray this wide barren landscape of ours and have quite rightly used a bent rail fence to lead our eyes to the subject. Only thing though is that the rail-fence (acting as a leading line) leads to (& blocks off from view) the very subject you want us to appreciate. I suggest that you do the eye-squint test & note a few things about that bent-rail fence **such as**
..... it has great detail (that's a plus)but the 'mass' of the form competes with the distant 'mesa'-hillocks'(and even hides some of the essential grandeur of those formations)...Especially note that the fence finishes almost plumb-centrally to the image (rarely good!) Remove the fence & it becomes a commanding landscape in it's own right (with only a part sky-crop necessary). If however, you prefer to keep the fence, then I suggest that in any future retake you might seriously think about getting that eye height "right" **Acceptance 7+**

E-Milky Water A placid image of a short stretch of water/waterhole that incorporates some rather large features such as a fallen tree + a rock shelf. There are strong leading lines here (that's a big 'plus') taking our attention to the far bank of the creek/river. Unfortunately the image itself lacks some 'dynamism'like, maybe kids playing in the water there would add more point to the shot. As it is, play around with contrasts and perhaps make something even better of the image. **Highly Commended 8+**

Red

Double Red This is a very sharp image. The inclusion of two objects/subjects within the overall frame is a bit of a problem as the eye goes from one to the other and cannot rest. In photography and the other related arts, it has the unusual name of "duality". The eye of the viewer doesn't know which of these equal-size masses to focus upon, the truck or the rock. It's an easy trap to fall into. Other than that & the fact that the rock is more of a brown than red loses you a point. Good try . **Highly Commended 8+**

Ring going on A most unusual image, portrayed in a most unusual way. The ring itself is sharply in focus, but for the first time viewing of the shot, my mind questions "why" the ring is so large, and then raises the question "Why is the thumb there as well?" Whenever you plan a shot, always try to see it from the other-person's point of view. Ask yourself how they might "accept" the image. Is it's purpose clear? There's no question that the 'red' requirement is there (in the ring) & colour generally has good saturation. The use of the diagonal (for the ring) was a good choice. **Highly Commended 9+**

Right wheel to be cast You've used what we call "depth of field" very well here. Note how it tends to make the main subject stand out? You may well have done this consciously (and I prefer to think this); but if not, then congratulations on using either a standard lens up-close to the subject or a telephoto lens from further away. It worked anyway, and for that,yes, congratulations! Interesting far background (wall?). Please also note the (almost) perfect balance of the mass of the wheel to the mass/area of the overall frame. Not all photographers get that right! **Merit 10+**

Red Centre You had great things going for you here, colours, including various ochres. Then when it comes to making this image "leap from the page", unfortunately there's a lack of colour intensity. Just play around with that and if you have a post-production program like "Photoshop", go to "adjustments" (Top tab) & make some magic happen!... (and so add a few points). In the further development of your photographic skills, one vital point worth noting with many a shot is to place your subject (in this case the trees) in what's called " the intersection of the thirds" (i.e. not dead-centre...divide up the width & height then the "thirds" will be about 1/3 along and 1/3 down from from the top or up from the bottom. Note the difference to the resultant image! The "red" you've chosen, whilst not convincingly "red", equates with how we Aussies think of our 'Red Centre". Quite acceptable. **Highly Commended 8+**

Red Flower Not convincingly red**more of a distinct "pink"** but I've penalised you only a few points for that. Nice flower though and you' have used depth of field to help us focus on the main part of the bloom. Always though try to maximise the amount of the shot actually in focus. (The eye rejects images too hard to appreciate, and being out of focus is one of those features). **Acceptance 6**

Red River You've made an interesting pattern from droplets (raindrops?). I like to see photographers using their imaginationshere is a typical flight into imagination and you have done it well, using a diagonal'. The "red" is certainly most acceptable However the range of 'sharpness' is limited, the image showing many of the upper droplets in particular outside the focal range. **Merit 11**

Red glowing in the sun What a beautiful, harmonious shot of leaves of the coleus type, random too ! I'm most impressed. Other photographers would hang around waiting for an insect to land to add interest to the image, but I think the that it stands on it's own feet' (or stem!). Colours are true, and the image is sharp What else could you want ? **Honour 12+**

Red_Vitamin "C" Here's a photographer who likes to apply logic to the interpretation of the Set-subject title. Why not the letter 'C' ? It reinforces the message & does it with imagination. Those who promote the benefits of strawberries as a good source of Vitamin 'C' should take a leaf out of your book. There is a 'Strawberry Growers Association'.Google it ! Maybe approach them & make a few bucks on the side? Nothing to lose if you wanted to pursue it..Those berries are luscious. **Merit 10+**

Red Tug Here This is a very simply-constructed image of the side of an ocean-going vessel

that documents the process for that vessel to be 'piloted' through to a safe harbour. It's one aspect of our busy shipping industry that's very seldom documented. It's very simplicity can baffle even the most astute judge. To avoid this, some in-shot clue might be given e.g. load-line info, ship's rail or similar. The copper-oxide red conforms to the theme. (Perfect the yellow arrow on the 'thirds'!) **Merit 10**

Red Gerbera What an intensely interesting image of a gerbera this is. The colour ('chroma') could not be more precise, the red & green (as in nature) go so well together. I like the way you've placed the flower on (almost) the diagonal thus giving more interest. Just one thing though, when you photograph "almost" the whole object (subject) cutting off just the tips of that object, this is a 'no-no' in photographic circles as the viewer feels 'cheated' of a full appreciation of the object. (Same applies to paintings, sketches etc. Imagine if the back-part of the head-dress in Vermeer's "Girl with the Pearl Earring" was truncated!) Always allow some space around your subjects/objects. (Just 1-point lost.) ... but still a ... **Merit 12**

Red Lady Beetle You've done well to have your lens focus on the lady beetle, and the carpal is just as strictly in focus too. The eye is drawn to them as you've managed to get sufficient of the petals in-focus to support the subject. Your choice of lens has been such that it gives us a good depth of field. The background greenery has about the right 'degree of gaussian blur' for the shot any more & we might not distinguish as background shrubbery, any less & it would have competed with the main subject. The subject is perfectly placed within the frame. The panoramic format is a good choice. . **Honour 13**

Red Powderpuff This shot is just 'MAGIC'.... not just perfect in focus,but colours are just so true, (and complementary red & green really make a perfect balance)not to mention also that you've isolated the subject from the background maybe so as not to cause conflict with the prime subject, I guess. This image Doesn't need any introduced insect. You've good placement within the frame. What more can I say but, congratulations. VERY well done! **Honour 14+**