



Photographic Society of South Africa  
PSSA NATIONAL Judges Accreditation Program 2023

## **JAP 23 Refresher**







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Why do you want your  
**MASTERPIECE**  
to be judged?



Judging  
always is  
and  
always has been  
**CONTROVERSIAL**





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so .... what is judging <sup>& JAP</sup> all about?

A programme designed to increase the judging pool  
and to help you to develop from a "back of the room expert"  
to a judge whose public comments are  
**helpful, fair, unbiased and interesting.**

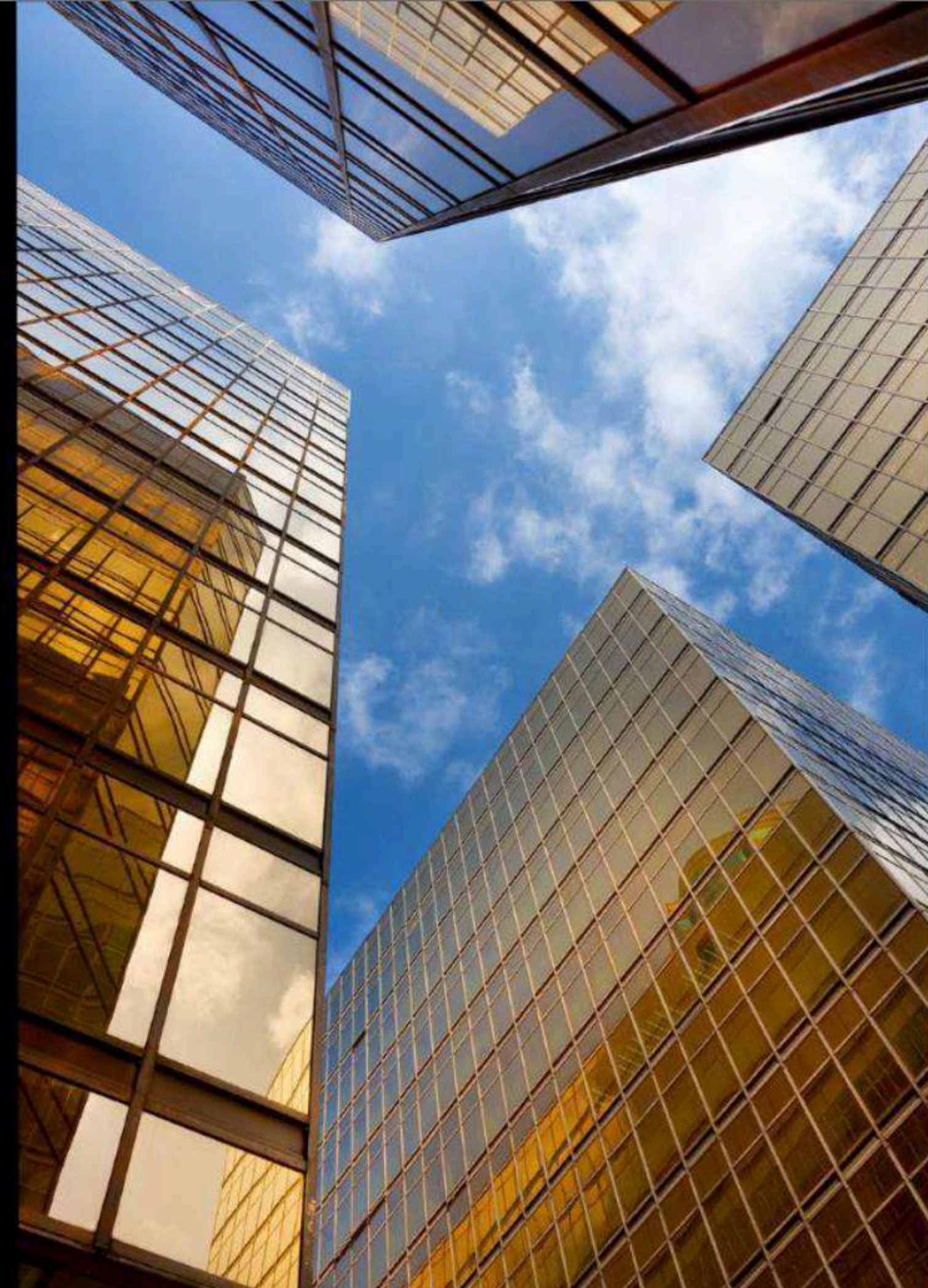
Ken Holland ARPS, DPAGB



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One of the most difficult moments in the life of any photographer is hearing an analysis of his/her work.





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#### Photographer

#### Decides

what to photograph

what to include

how to process

how to present



#### Viewer

judge, friend,  
club members etc.

Interpret what has been  
photographed based on, what  
may be, a totally different set  
of values, experiences etc.

As a judge you do have a difficult task - you must be fair to the photographer  
but you have to be careful not to go overboard  
- you mustn't be too critical but equally you mustn't be too lenient -



## Rules & Judging

- Subject in the middle / thirds / center of interest
- Negative space
- Leading Lines
- Wrong time of day / Unnatural Colours
- Even/uneven numbers
- Can't see the face / eyes / highlights
- Cropping vs amputating
- Borders - yes or no
- Distortion / Verticals not vertical
- Mono must have from pure White To Black
- Personal likes/dislikes

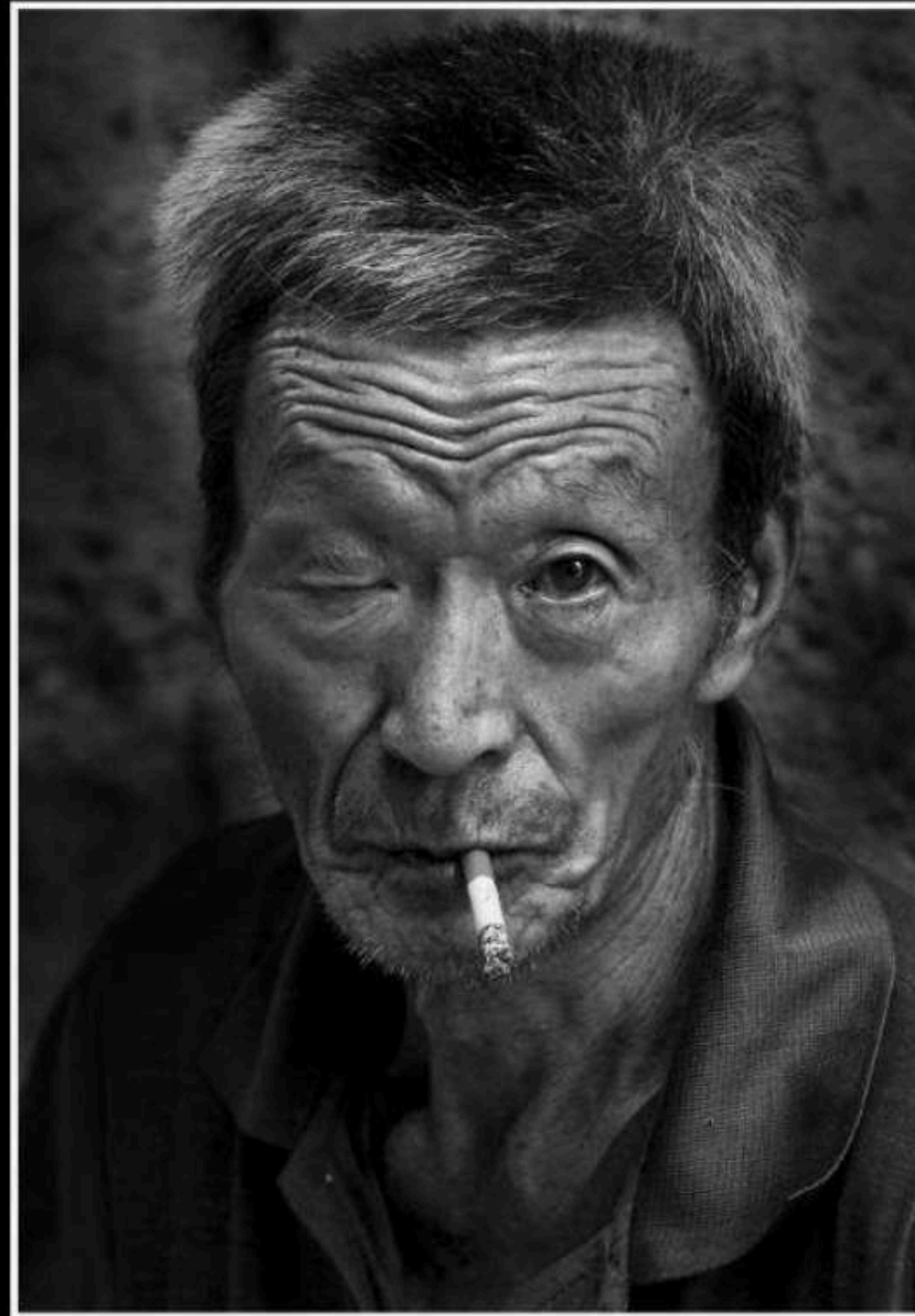




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JAP  
Workshops

## Rules & Judging

Subject in the middle / thirds / centre of interest  
Negative space  
Leading Lines  
Wrong time of day / Unnatural Colours  
Even/uneven numbers  
Can't see the face / eyes / highlights  
Cropping vs amputating  
Borders - yes or no  
Distortion / Verticals not vertical  
Monochrome must have from pure White To Black  
Personal likes/dislikes

*There are NOOOO rules in photography, only guidelines!!!!!!!*



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Eddie Sethna  
Hon RPS, FRPS, AFIAP  
An Analysis of Judging

In good judging I found that three attributes of the picture were taken into account:

1. What the picture communicates - the message



It is neither essential nor important for a judge to find out what the author of the picture was trying to communicate. What matters is what feelings and thoughts it engenders in the viewer - the judge.



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Hon RPS, FRPS, AFIAP  
An Analysis of Judging

In good judging I found that three attributes of the picture were taken into account:

### 2. The Content of the Picture - the medium



What appears good to the eye does not necessarily make a good photograph.



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Eddie Sethna  
Hon RPS, FRPS, AFIAP  
An Analysis of Judging

In good judging I found that three attributes of the picture were taken into account:

3. The Technical aspects of the picture





### 3. The Technical aspects of the picture

If there are basic technical problems such as lack of focus, exposure/lighting and processing problems these are going to come into play even before you consider points 1 & 2.





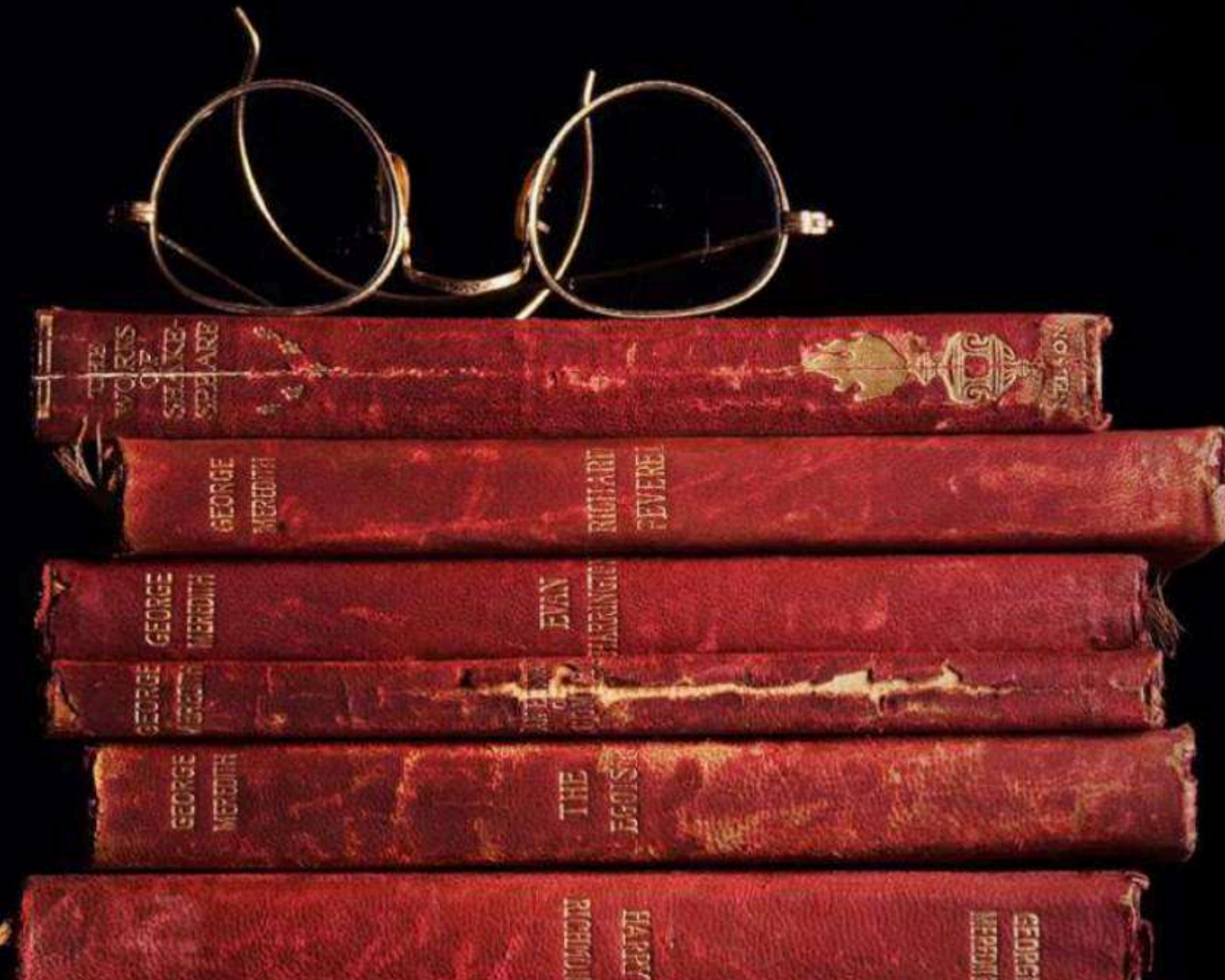
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## Hendrik Ferreira FPSSA On Judging and Evaluation

Through his commentary,  
this person is also an educator  
whose comments on a specific picture  
may influence the  
future work of several other learning  
and aspiring  
photographers in the audience.





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JAP  
Workshops



1. An Introduction to Judging
2. The pitfalls of judging
3. Getting the score right
4. How and what to say



A photograph is not GOOD  
just because you like it.

You judge the image,  
not the person or the place  
or the difficulty.

It doesn't matter what it is,  
you judge the image  
as presented.

Nor is it BAD  
just because you don't like it.





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Reading  
&  
Viewing

The important point about judging is that you need to have the knowledge and understanding of photography to have confidence in yourself.

Provided you are clear and confident in your judgement, and are able to support it, then you are on the right track.

**BUT**

You do need to listen to others and be open to different viewpoints.



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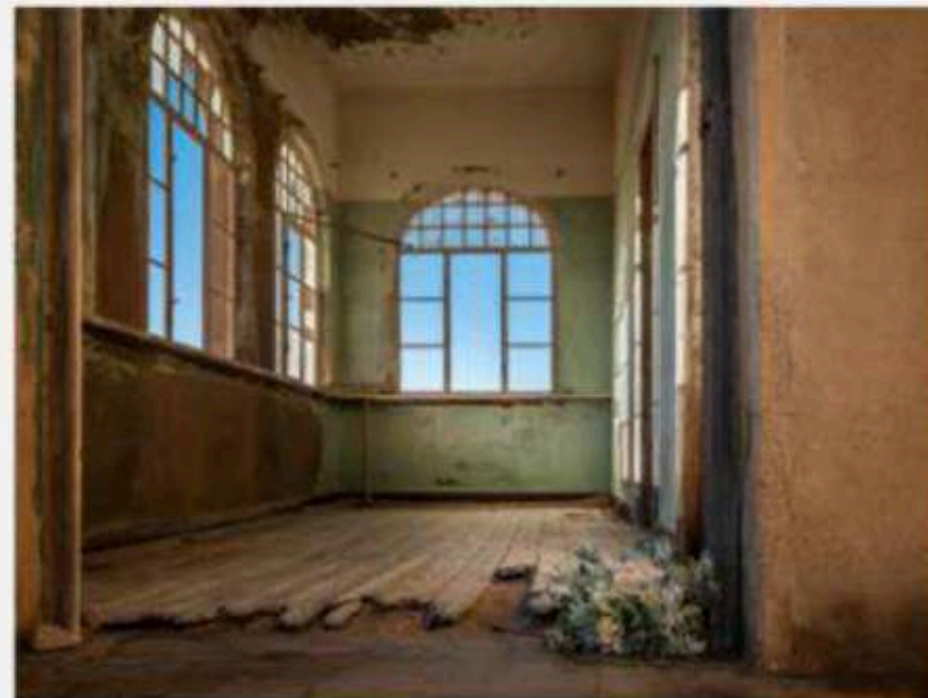
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Although not necessarily having produced all categories of photography, or being expert in them, a judge should have seen many examples.

### 3rd Pretoria Photographic Society PDI Salon Medal Winners



PSSA Silver Medal - Creative or Visual Art Colour and Mono - going to work - Johan Brits - Vanderbijlpark Fotografiese Vereniging



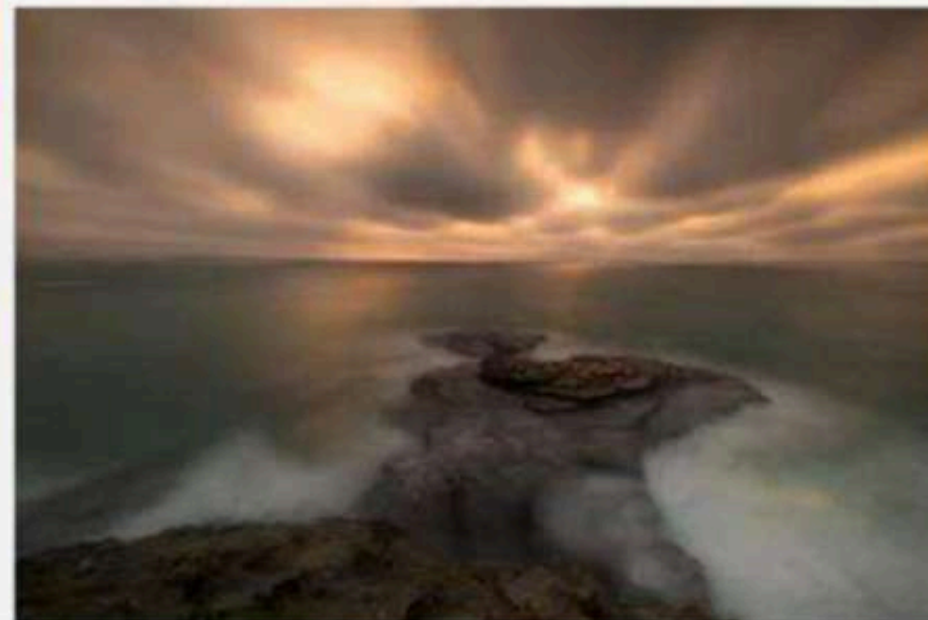
PSSA Silver Medal - Open Colour - Past to Present - Joy Mullin - Amber Camera Club



PSSA Silver Medal - Open Mono - after dinner coffee - David Barnes - Tygerberg Photographic Society



PSSA Silver Medal - PJ incl Sport Travel and Street - Colour Colour run - Marleen La Grange - Tygerberg Photographic Society



PSSA Silver Medal - Wildlife incl birds Colour - Playful attack - Annette Ligthelm - AFO Photography Club

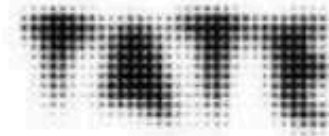


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Some background knowledge of art can empower a judge to identify and understand artistic styles, concepts and ideas.



Search

Shop



John Singer Sargent  
*Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose*  
1885-6



Wassily Kandinsky  
*Cossacks*  
1910-1



Henri Matisse  
*The Snail*  
1953



Salvador Dalí  
*Lobster Telephone*  
1936



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Ken Holland ARPS, DPAGB  
Looking at Photographs

In my opinion a good judge does not  
pass judgement. He/she should regard judging as  
appraisal, assessment and analysis.

In other words judging should be evaluative, not judgemental.





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# PSQA

Although a judge may be able to contribute to club members' craft of photography, this is ultimately not their task at hand.

The main task of a PSQA (PSQ accredited judge) is to assist fellow photographers to develop as photographic artists.

Discussion

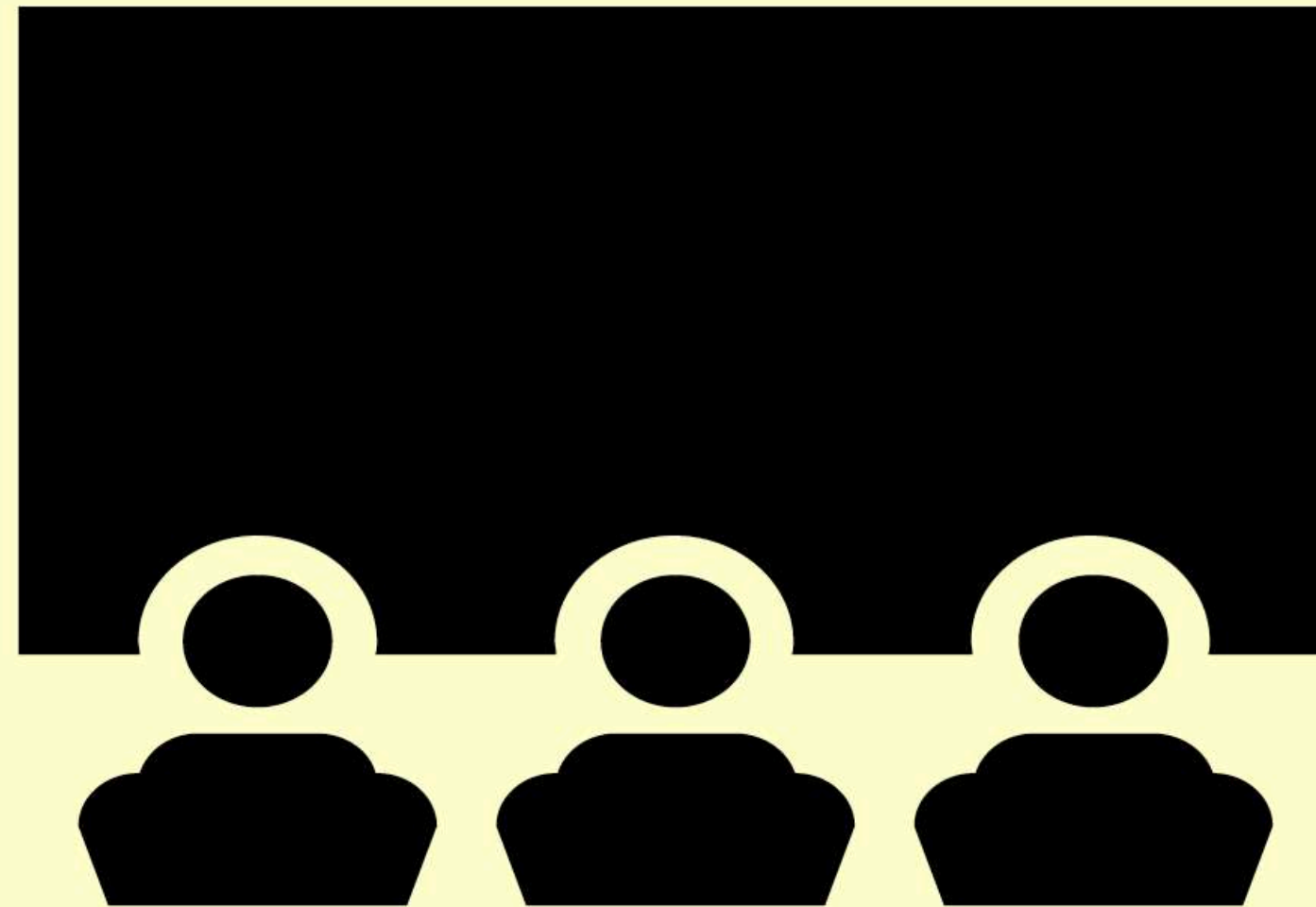


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# PSSA - JAP

## Judging Pitfalls 2023





## Judging Pitfalls 2023

1. There are NOOOO rules in photography; only guidelines!!!!!!
2. There will always be those who look at technique, who ask “how”, while others of a more curious nature will ask “why”.
3. Judging will **ALWAYS** be **SUBJECTIVE**. The trick is to be as **OBJECTIVE** in this subjective world as is possible.

*I have always preferred inspiration to information.  
Man Ray.*



4. **Club Judging: Sharing and learning. Listen to advice that is offered.**
5. **Club Judging: Appraisal; teaching. Give modest advice on how you think the photograph can be improved. To judge is a big responsibility.**
6. **Did your photographic technique improve since joining the camera club?**
7. **We are all judges; even if only you judge the judges!**
  - \*\* You start by assessing your own work;  
- how objective are you then?**





## 8. What is judging about:

- Looking for the message that a picture is trying to convey
- Analysing the picture content and treatment
- Considering the technical aspects
- Delivered in a constructive package
- It is not about promoting your own ideas, neither being over critical or negative (looking for faults, something wrong)
- You as judge will often be judged/criticized.
- Be clear, honest and consistent in your judgement and comments.



9. **Good Photography start with the Technical aspects.** *Photography is ALL about light, composition and EMOTION. Larry Wilder.*

- **Correct exposure**
- **Correct sharpness**
- **Correct colour and Tonal balance (Mono and Colour)**
- **Well composed**
- **Processing:**
  - **Noise (but...)**
  - **Halos (but...)**
  - **Chromatic Aberration**
  - **Over Saturation (but...)**



## 10. Good judging – Express yourself correctly!!

Do not pass judgement, appraise, assess and analyse. Do NOT describe the photo!!

Judging should be evaluative, not critical. Be:

- Helpful
- Fair
- Informed. How often do I look at pictures other than my own? Read books; visit exhibitions!
- Interesting
- Unbiased
- A good time manager: positive comments, constructive, friendly, respectful, don't waffle, admit if you don't know (but...)



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- Enjoy judging
- Don't lecture
- Don't make assumptions (you will most likely be wrong)
- Judge what you see on the screen;  
**You DON'T judge difficulty**
- Keep an open mind
- Don't compare; or be prejudiced by what you have seen before.
- Be helpful, encourage and develop high standards of photography. Promote photography as a pleasure; other people's work is a joy to behold.



11. The message of the photograph is all important. It might be that the photographer got it “right” and you as judge “failed” to read the message; or visa versa.
12. Mindset: do I look with a critical mind, or with an appreciative mind?
13. Your score and comments **MUST** match!!!!

The judge however has the final decision, after all, you have been asked to give your opinion. **BUT** remember: Judging is a **HUGE** responsibility.

**Why did I enter my Image: To get someone else’s opinion!!**



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### **The Challenge:**

- **Apply Your Mind for the CORRECT advice**
- **Expressing Yourself Correctly!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**



## Clichés: (Real Pitfalls)

1. Nit-picking
  2. Subject In the middle
  3. Negative space
  4. Even/uneven numbers
  5. Must see the face?
  6. Photographing other people's Art
  7. Movement in the wheels
  8. Not all images require cropping
  9. Not all images require a border/Unfit borders
  10. Wrong time of day
  11. Horizon in the middle/skew
  12. Sharp from front to the back
  13. Catchlight in the eye
  14. Mono must have from pure White To Black....
- Personal likes/dislikes

And there are many more .....



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### Nitpicking

- does it have an influence on the score?  
If it does, mention it, if it doesn't DON'T  
mention it



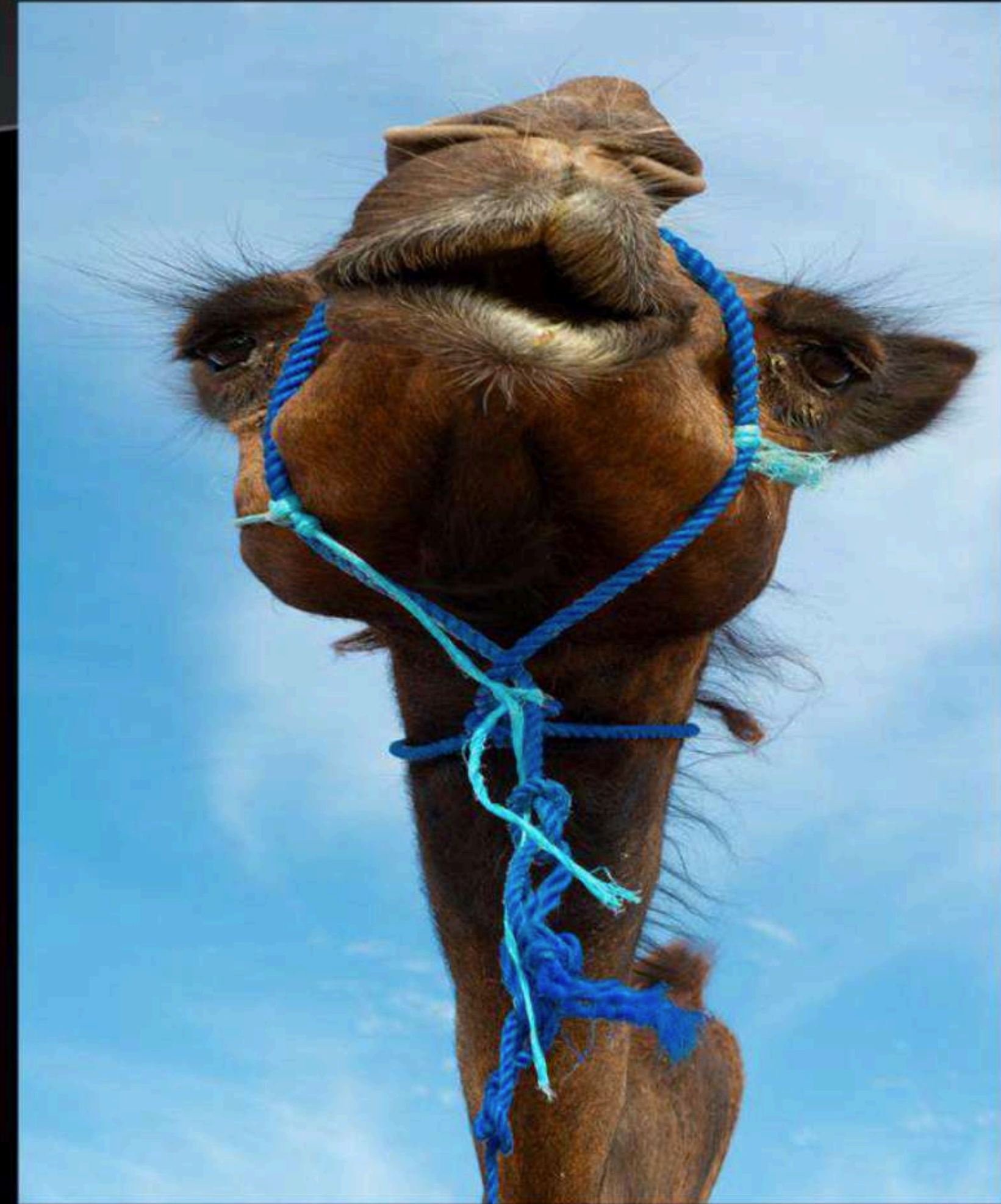




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A photograph is not GOOD  
just because you like it.

Nor is it BAD  
just because you don't like it.





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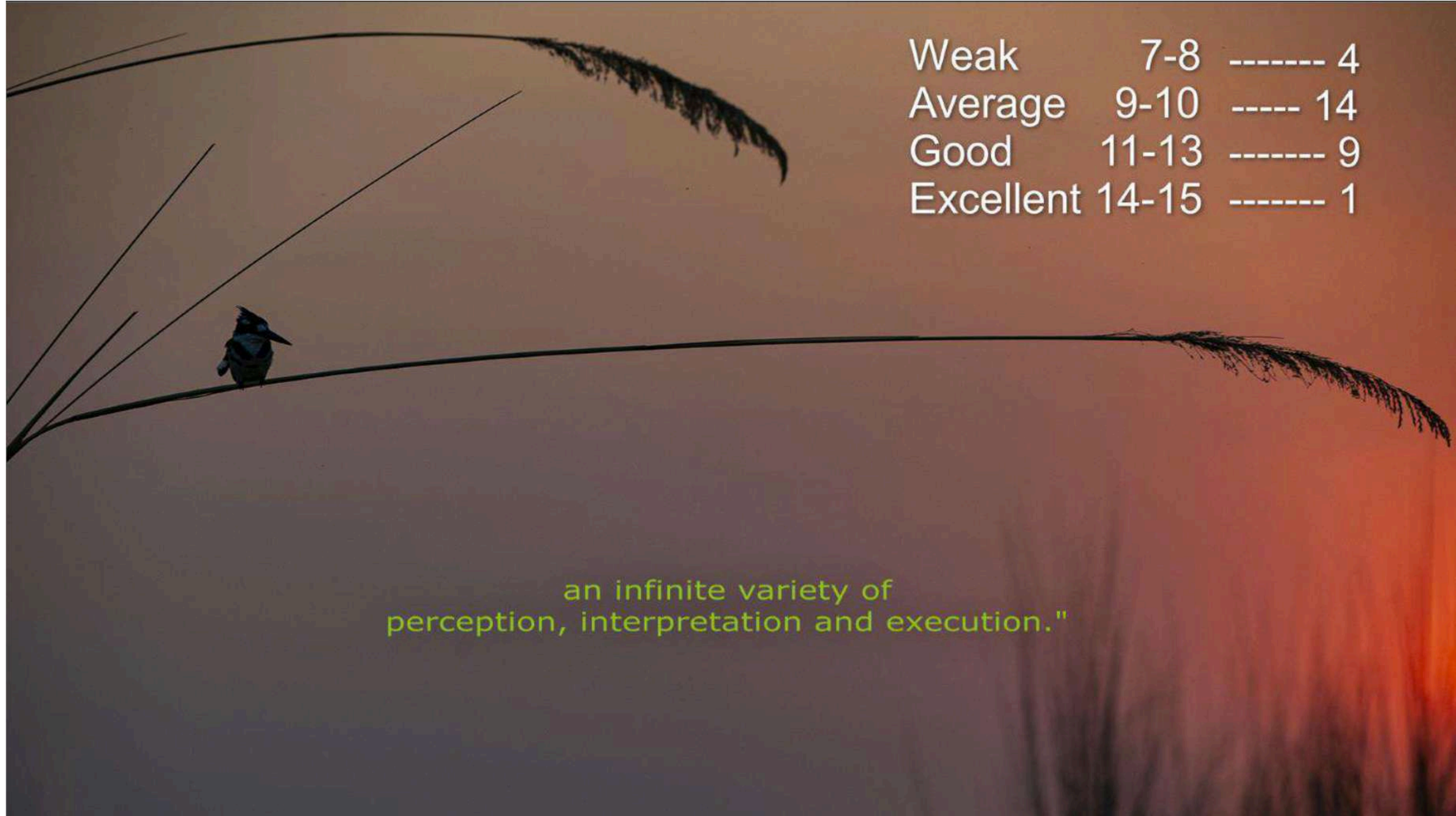
You judge the image,  
not the person or the place  
or the difficulty.

It doesn't matter what it is,  
you judge the image  
as presented.





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Weak	7-8	-----	4
Average	9-10	-----	14
Good	11-13	-----	9
Excellent	14-15	-----	1

an infinite variety of  
perception, interpretation and execution."



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You have scored the images

now comes the difficult part

**HOW and WHAT to SAY**



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## IDENTIFY the GOOD

it is the feelings, emotions and mood that a picture conveys  
which form the basis of evaluation.

## IDENTIFY the BAD

what doesn't work in the picture - art or craft -  
composition, focus, exposure, post processing etc.

and how to make it **BETTER**

Constructive advice on how to improve the picture.



Be careful in what you say and how you say it  
Just as images are interpreted so too are our comments  
Remember that an image belongs to someone and  
he or she has feelings about that image and for most  
of us a criticism of an image feels like a criticism  
of ourselves.



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The important point about judging is that you need to have the knowledge and understanding of photography to have confidence in yourself.

Provided you are clear and confident in your judgement, and are able to support it, then you are on the right track.

**BUT**

Don't try to show how much you know!



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Do

Be  
Positive  
Honest  
Confident

If you don't know - say so.  
None of us know everything.

Look before you leap - think before you comment





**Do NOT**

Describe the scene

Use cliches

Nit pick

Show how much you know

Give a lesson

Criticise the author

Make a whole new picture

Suggest changes that couldn't be done

Make assumptions



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**Do NOT**

Make assumptions  
Repeat yourself  
Tell your own story  
Use should



# The use of



Say "The Image" rather than "I"

it takes out the personal opinion  
and concentrates on the image rather than the judge



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# Do

JUDGE what you SEE

COMMENT what you KNOW



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As part of the discussion last Sunday (2nd session) we were discussing images with subjects moving into and out of frame and what constituted a good composition relating to that. Particularly, the notion that the subject always has to be looking or be perceived to be moving into space to constitute a good composition.

My view is that this is not always the case, as a composition contrary to those guidelines can still constitute a good image and be quite dynamic, depending of course on the image.

And as a judge, one should not automatically mark down unconventional composition.

Alan Nixon



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When a member leaves a meeting  
he most often remembers what the judge  
didn't do well.

It would be great if the opposite were true.

That should be your aim when judging.



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**Any questions?**