

The Battle April 2021

Scored as follows: 20 points total

Composition (5), Technical Skill (5), Post Processing/Printing(5), Aesthetic Impact (5)

1 Land of The Setting Sun 4-4-3-4. 15

Well handled lighting in the top 2/3rds of the image. Good sharpness. The tree line with the stack of hay bales is dark and bringing up the shadows would have exposed more of that feature.

2 Tulip Angelique 3-2-3-4. 12

A beautiful and interesting specimen. Good DOF. However, the eye must travel 3/4 the way up the bloom to find the petals that are in sharp focus. Where the image is sharpest is determined by the subject and in this instance it might have been better to focus just above the lowest petal, using a smaller aperture if possible, bringing more of the bloom into sharp focus. Try experimenting further with focus point, aperture and focal length. Be careful of over sharpening and noise that could be the result of oversharpening or low light.

3. Goodnight 4-4-3-3. 14

Good foreground interest, well exposed. Not pin sharp. Some noise that might have been corrected in post processing.

4 Conseugra 5-5-5-5. 20

Anyone who's been there will know how difficult these windmills are to capture well, and the photographer has spent time and effort in choosing the best spot to photograph these iconic structures. The composition is well considered, good perspective, the main focus point on the right third vertical, leading lines taking the eye to the subjects on and just below the horizon line which is well placed near the lower horizontal third of the image. Good movement in the clouds, a well timed long exposure? Beautifully sharp throughout, good monochrome conversion in post processing.

5 Girl With Mask 5-5-5-5. 20

A much covered subject, and this particular image ranks highly among all its contemporaries. A well thought out and well executed image. Good composition, with the emphasis on the girl's eyes on the upper third grid, beautifully sharp. Well chosen depth of field for this close up portrait with DOF falling off nicely on the left while still providing a glimpse of her earring. Good tonal values, well executed lighting.

6 Distortions in Time 3-4-2-4 13

Creative and a good attempt overall. Compositionally, the placement of the forks leaves an empty space in the center of the image. A slight change in perspective might have tightened up the space. Colours are complementary, but the blue speckles are distracting. Was this the printer, or photographer intent? A crisper cleaner image would provide greater impact.

7 Calm Day at the Sea Shore 4-4-4-3 15

Foreground interest provided by the weed, reflection. Sharp back to front. Some slight oversharpening in the reflections of clouds on water. Well handled light.

8 Lewis Hamilton Barcelona 4-3-3-4. 14

Question: show the entire car, or crop tight? In this case the tight crop adds impact, the yellow stripe and red exhaust immediately catch the eye and attract the viewer to the center of the frame. There's movement in the wheels, and the yellow stripe helps the wheel anchor the car in the frame. Nice blurred background. A bit soft in places, hence some oversharpening.

9 Footpath to Ambleside 4-3-3-4 14

Good composition, POV, slightly oversharpened.

10 Iridescence 3-3-3-3. 12

The main focus point is on the eye of the fly, making it the dominant element, while the title reflects the colours of the flowers rather than the insect. Nicely blurred background. Well controlled highlights, but lacking sharpness.

11 Ice Sail 4-4-3-3 14

Title reflected in the image. The shadow behind the sail helps reinforce the idea of a windsurfing sail (though it's a bit ambiguous) as does the choppy water indicating wind. Interesting textures. Slightly oversharpened.

12 Beached Yacht 4-4-4-4. 16

Good use of dynamic lines in the composition, the vessel well placed. Well controlled light and shadows, sharp where necessary.

13 Grey Crowned Crane 4-4-4-4. 16

Well taken avian image. Nicely blurred background, sharpness, texture in the feathers, good profile pose highlighting the crest.

14 Car in Cuba 4-4-3-3. 14

Nice low perspective/POV. Nicely defined textures, sharp. Verticals not quite straight. Very slight colour cast.

15 Caveman 5-3-5-5. 18

Good title! Well considered portrait of the primate taken at the right moment, inviting the viewer to imagine a story as the ape peers curiously from his safe space. Fills the frame. Not perfectly sharp, but just enough sharpness down to fingers and toes. Good catchlight in the eyes, good use of light and shadow. A bit grainy, whether or not deliberately added, it emphasises the texture of the animal's fur.

16 Young Squirrels 5-5-5-5. 20

Well captured wildlife image, sharp in all the right places with emphasis on their eyes with well defined catchlights, good behavioral study, nicely muted background, well rendered colours, well chosen letterbox crop. Nothing out of focus, very well done.

17 Isabela 5-5-5-5. 20

Well composed altered reality image, creative, nicely printed. The only very slight drawback is that the feathers and beads on her headdress are slightly sharper than her facial features, which then dominate and allows her face to recede slightly, so draws the eye away. Well done.

18 Creation. 5-5-4-5. 19

Clever idea successfully carried through. Good use of light and/or colour gels. Sharp, well defined hands, pointing to the center of attention.

19. Painting Axarquia 4-2-3-4 13

Brings a smile. Creative, the concept is carried throughout the image. The protagonist artist makes good strong eye contact with the viewer, the perspective rendering the artist's hand as the dominant feature competes with his face for the viewer's attention but still works. Some technical concerns but a great idea.

20 Let Battle Commence 5-4-4-5. 18

Striking impactful monochrome image. Well lit. Good perspective, POV. The image would have gotten a perfect score if the rear chess pieces were sharp. It's a decision that the photographer (and judge) must make, whether to ensure sharpness throughout. Be mindful of oversharpening, particularly with high contrast images.

21 Sunset at Dovedale 4-4-4-3 15

Sharp, detailed image of this very attractive church. The hills behind the church are a very bright yellow which is distracting, and competes with the softer deeper golden tones on the church building. Could that harshness be toned down in post processing or would waiting a few minutes have rendered the colour of the hills a softer gold and brought more uniformity and less harsh contrast in the light between the two?

22 Sam on His Tablet 5-5-5-5. 20

Creative portrait that tells a story. Well executed, good solid black tones, very thoughtfully and carefully lit, carried through in post processing. A slight blemish in the eye, possibly from the light, the only very small defect.

23 Old Woman in India 5-3-3-5. 16

Strong portrait, good strong eye contact, the photographer has positioned himself/herself on the same level as the sitter, important when photographing people to avoid looking down on them. Uncluttered background. The photographer had to utilize available light, and not disturb the sitter. Consequentially the highlights in her lower right arm and left hand have lost some definition.

24 Brighurga Lavender Field 4-4-4-5. 17

The tree placed in the center of the frame works in this image. There's definition in the foliage - lightening the shadows, especially around the top leaves would have brought out a bit more definition. Overall, good control of available light. The movement in the lavender adds a dynamic touch.

25 Lest We Forget 3-3-3-3. 12

Pastoral landscape with poppies. The image is selectively sharp through the center and in the clouds, while the remaining image is soft. Was it a windy day? The composition makes the farm buildings the center of attention while the title draws attention to the poppies, perhaps not enough emphasis has been placed on the foreground and too few poppies are sharp enough to carry the theme to full effect. A lower and closer perspective, reducing the emphasis on the farm building might have placed these flowers in more dominant position in the scene to match the title.

26 Two Poppies 3-3-3-3. 12

The grasses and seed heads are sharp and well defined, with good dynamic movement, but the colours of the main focal point, the poppy flowers, have bled slightly and they have lost definition. Nice blurred background.

27 The Boxer 5-4-3-5. 17

This is a great story, following on from the title. Everything is there, expressions, props, location. Generally good lighting, good POV, but it's slightly soft, and some of the white areas are overexposed and have lost definition. A good well considered portrait.

28 Silent Water 3-4-3-4. 14

Good composition, taken in what looked to be challenging light, with interest in foreground, middle and background, fills the frame well. Nice soft reflections, as the title states. Sharpness not quite 100%. The image looks to have been slightly oversharpened in post processing and there's a slight magenta caste to the monochrome conversion. Shadows could possibly be lifted to provide more interest in those areas in the upper half of the image.

29 Lightning Strike 3-4-3-3. 13

Well caught, nicely defined streak of lightning. The sky is also well defined with a sense of movement. The immediate foreground is very dark, shadows in this area bringing up, if possible, would result in a higher score. Not always possible if shooting in jpeg, which is why shooting in RAW is preferable if the camera offers that option.

30 Bowls 5-5-5-5. 20

Simple minimalist image beautifully executed. Shapes, lighting, compositionally considered, the bowls effectively arranged. Muted soft monochrome colours highlighted against the black background with the soft pink tone of the third bowl down adding the necessary pop of colour. Well lit, good rendition of light and shadow. A quiet image that still carries a punch, creative and effective, using basic everyday objects.

31 Trainer Driver 4-5-4-4. 17

Fun image with an appropriate title. Good altered reality image, the composite elements successfully constructed and blended. Brings a smile.

32 Cottage in the Woods 4-4-4-4. 16

Good choice of viewpoint, perspective, good composition and sharpness where necessary. There are some lost highlights in the moving water and on the wall of the cottage. If possible post processing may have corrected this. The image looks to have a textured or slight HDR effect applied. If so, it's been well applied and not overly done.

33 Pueblo Blanco 4-3-2-4. 13

Good overall composition, the photographer's shooting position well chosen. Slightly soft, and slightly oversharpened.

34 Reach for the Sky 4-4-4-4. 16

Good composition, sharpness, well handled whites, good tonal variation in the conversion to monochrome.

35 Vulture 5-4-3-5 17

Well captured image of this bird of prey in flight, a Griffon Vulture? The blueish tones on the wings are a slight concern (this could be a result of a reflection or light when taken?) though the remaining of colours match what would be expected on this bird, light coloured head and neck ruff, brown feathers growing darker toward the tips, otherwise a good capture. Good timing, the moment where the wings are gracefully unfolding and the head is well positioned. There's some loss of definition in the highlights on the head, ruff and shoulders, some slight oversharpening and noise.

36 Bottles in Frigiliana 4-4-4-4. 16

Vibrant colourful image of altered reality bottles. The most important details retained in the foremost bottles, and sufficient definition in the rear bottles. Good composition.

37 The Anatomy of Flight 3-4-3-4. 14

Good choice of title. A good attempt at a difficult wildlife subject. Good composition, filling the frame with what the viewer would expect from the title. There's a bit of softness in the three most dominant birds. Maybe try a faster shutter speed, as available light looks to have been good. Alternately, try panning and blurring with a larger aperture for a different look.

38 Yellow Dragonfly 3-4-3-3. 13

A decisive moment well caught as the dragonfly is about to light on the branch. The main point of focus, which should be the head and eyes, has strayed slightly to where the wing meets the thorax. Nice sense of movement in the wings. A slightly smaller aperture would have extended sharpness to more of the branch. Good wildlife effort, with a d

39 Rising Sun Finland 4-4-4-4. 16

Evocative misty morning view, good use of trees and vegetation to frame the scene. Sharp front to back, good control of light. Difficult subject.

40 Dock on a Calm Night 4-4-3-4. 15

Composition with leading lines takes the eye through the scene. The blue light provides an

effective focal point. Sharp, good blue hour image. Some noise is present, and a few blown highlights but well controlled overall.

41 Zipping up 5-5-5-5. 20

Creative, sharp where it needs to be, well lit, good POV, nicely printed.

42 Bald Eagle 5-5-4-5. 19

A good close up portrait study of this predator. Good viewer impact. Nicely diffused sky. Sharp and well defined features. Taken in good light. Feathers well defined. As it's a close up portrait, cropping in a bit on the left would give even more impact.

A thought on replacement skies, if a sky is replaced it must be appropriate and exceptionally and realistically well done.

43 Reflections on Water 3-4-4-3 14

Strong verticals. The composition while balanced, lacks a primary focus point. For images like this it's worth calculating depth of field accurately so that more of the scene is sharp, if this was the photographer's intent. The whites on the flower heads have lost definition. It looks to have been a tricky scene to meter and to control exposure, good attempt.

44 Water off a Duck's Back 3-4-4-4. 15

The crop is well chosen and suits the image. Good wildlife portrait of this female (or non breeding male) mallard duck. Well composed. Taken in good light. Good decisive moment. The body of the duck loses a bit of sharpness as its wings and feet move rapidly-a faster shutter speed would have maintained sharpness here.

45 Local Gas Station 4-5-5-5. 19

It's difficult sometimes to choose where to crop an image of this type. Verticals are all perfectly upright, and the image is sharp throughout. Shadows are well handled. Placing the emphasis on the main building, offsetting it slightly and converting the image to monochrome pulls the image together and keeps the eye focused in what is otherwise a busy scene. Good monochrome conversion, well printed.

46 The Wave 4-4-4-4. 16

The square crop suits the image well. Well chosen monochrome conversion with overall good tonal values. Pleasing composition, nice diagonal lines. What lets the image down is the lack of sharpness where it matters, in the center, on the crest of the wave.

47 Old Boat in Almunecar 4-3-3-4 14

In the composition the fishing boat is well placed on the third and is nicely framed by the palms, however the larger palms on the left tend to dominate the scene slightly. There is a great deal of interesting detail lost in the shadows. Pulling out the detail in the shadows in post processing would make the image stronger and given the viewer more to discover. The people down on the waterline, though small, are a nice touch!

48 Ridge View 5-4-3-5. 17

Good composition, perspective, well handled mist, some slight muddy areas in the foreground.

Scores

12 (4)

13 thru 17 (32)

18, 19 (5)

Full points (7)