

The Challenge of being a Good Judge

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Providing Feedback

We are all judges of what our camera takes and where and when they take it. We use this experience and skill to evaluate the images of others. We never know-it-all and must always be ready to learn.

In competition, we learn to take better pictures by seeing the scores our images receive and why.

The goals are to help, teach, and avoid clichés. It is of importance to recognize the positive elements in an image and to be honest regarding image weakness.

Sensitivity is vital, but one must above all be honest.

Evaluation of an image on its own merits

Judge on the merits of an image e.g., a portrait by portrait standards, landscape by landscape standards.

We all have favorite subjects, but we must not let this blind us in the evaluation of an image.

Judges need to follow specific guidelines; e.g. Photo Journalism, Photo Travel and Nature allow no pixel movement. Photo Journalism allows no right/left reversal. Nature allows no important hand-of-man elements and allows no cultivated plants.

Evaluation of skill, craft and artistry

Does the image work as a whole?

Is the image fresh, emotional and original?

If a recognizable subject, is it well done?

Does the image advance the Art of Photography due to its creativity?

Consistency in judging

Okay to be a bit high or low if consistent throughout the entire judging.

Vote before any discussion. Stick to your evaluation **normally!!**

There is never complete agreement!

Judging: Important Rules

Rule of thirds:

The Image should be divided by two vertical and two horizontal lines. The four places where the lines intersect are best for subject placement. The right upper place is, in most cases, best of all. This does not have to be exact. This rule is from the Greek ideas of classic beauty. Thus rule is for small objects.

Centering:

If an object is large in comparison to the canvas, it should be centered by eye. Do not measure. It need not be exact.

Symmetrical subjects:

These subjects should be centered in an approximate manner with the two halves approximately the same. Do not measure.

Room to move:

If an object is in motion, it should be given some space in front of the object in motion in which to move into. Again, this is not exact.

Examples

6 points

An acceptable image but no strong points

No significant or notable technique flaws

“Record” shot

Unable to generate special interest

Unable to stir emotional energy

Non-difficult lighting situation

Little or no creativity

Doesn't exhibit freshness

7 points

A good solid image, technically correct

At least one element indicating polish of craft

Shows knowledge of subject selection, favorable lighting, Depth of Field and composition

Uses rules, or if broken rule, good reason

Insufficient impact for an 8 or 9

Insufficient inspiration for score of 8 or 9

8 points

A very strong image

Technically strong, Minimal or no flaws

Composition strong

Any rule infringement is done for impact.

Difficult exposure, Depth of Field, Selective Focus, and other techniques found.

Stronger than a “7”

9 Points

A truly exceptional image

Shows photographic excellence

Essentially without flaws

“Knock-out” impact

Shows proficiency of selective focus, Depth of Field, Advanced technique

Score given only with special reason, love of image, awestruck emotions