

JUDGE'S COMMENTS

THE MONTHLY JUDGE'S COMMENTS OF THE

MARLBOROUGH
Camera Club

Marlborough Camera Club - May 2016 "From a different perspective"

Judge: Paul Byrne AFAIP, APSNZ, ARPS

Overall Evaluation Comments:

I have very much enjoyed viewing and commenting on your club's images. The overall standard is

very pleasing and reflects favourably on the general standard of the Marlborough Camera Club. Please remember that the images were not in competition with each other and that my feedback represents an individual critique to the authors in the hope that they might gain something from a stranger who is unfamiliar with their individual style. Photographic artwork is very subjective and my views may not concur with your own. If you are happy with the image, keep it. If I have made a

suggestion just try it out and make a comparison for yourself. It's a learning curve and we are all somewhere along it's path.

I chose to evaluate all the 'Set Subject' images first to ensure that I retained consistency in my approach. The open category was judged separately.

A couple of things came up on several occasions so I will mention them here. A number of images

were let down by being too soft [not sharp] in places. Please double check this issue as it can have

serious consequences to the marks awarded. With regard to the set subject, my interpretation of the guidelines told me that I was expecting to see images that had been taken "in such a way that

is unusual or unexpected." This was not the case and many images have been marked down on this point as you will see. If there is a competition guideline you do need to make an effort to follow

it. If you enter any outside competition, and the image doesn't comply with the rules it will be reject

without comment.

You have some promising C grade workers and I hope you will continue to support them in every way possible.



AFAIP, APSNZ, ARPS

WEBSITE: WWW.MARLBOROUGHCAMERACLUB.ORG.NZ

POSTAL ADDRESS: PO BOX 617, BLENHEIM 7240

Set Subject: From a Different Perspective.

Guidelines: Images should capture a subject that may be well known in such away that is unusual or unexpected

C Grade Set Subject Images

Ballon's Eye View, Turkey.

We know it has been taken from a ballon hence the ariel view of the ground. My first reaction was

to be very pleased that I was sitting at my desk, as ballooning is definitely not for me! I think we can regard this as something of a pattern picture. I love the way the tracks criss-cross the countryside. Yet somehow they seem to converge just a little to the left of centre which makes for a pleasing composition. The long shadows cast from the trees and shrubs indicate an early morning shot. This is supported by a blueish cast to the image indicating that it might also be chilly. Rather you than me. Acceptance

Inside the Iceberg

What an impressive angel you managed to achieve. It's not every day that we can get into a location such as this. Well done. The whites which make up snow and ice can be difficult to achieve successfully. In this case you have brought the image to life due to the correct exposure and the composition. The white snow outside the iceberg makes a great focal point and the foreground white ice retains the viewer within the image. The hues of blue are magical and the fluorescent nature of the cracks and crevasses really provide a scene of depth and magnitude. There is a little graininess about the image which can be fixed in post production if desired.

Honours

Looking Back

This was a clever idea and meets the set subject criterion very well. The reflected image in the mirror is perfectly sharp and provides information about the location. It also complements the out of focus vehicle. The focal point is rather small within the frame and I find the background car [Singer Vogue?] is strongly competing for attention. Merit

On of these things is not like the other

You have taken the image from a low viewpoint and this has made for an interesting angle. The dog is very sharp and is clearly the centre of attention. In this instance, I suggest you crop off the right hand side of the image so that it stops just short of the cow with the red ear tag. This removes an uninteresting part of the scene and improves the composition by placing the dog onto one of the magic thirds. Depth of field is is shallow and leaves only the dog pin sharp. Had it been slightly deeper, then the left hand cow would have been in focus. The interaction between these two animals is where the real story sits in this instance. Accepted

Peacock

The central feathers stand out of the scene due to the way the photographer has chosen to present the subject matter. A combination of lighting, vignetting and creative focus, push the viewer towards the colourful feathers of the Peacock. A clever pattern image. Merit

Reflections

This is an interesting piece of artwork and I am curious to know more about it. [Location and why is it there etc.] At first view it looks like a giant 'thumb-pin' resting on a polished surface or mirror. The pin is made of wood and has some intricate Maori carvings on the underside. These are reflected onto the mirror. The reflections are interesting and I should like to have seen more detail in this area. I suggest that the real images is the centre part of the picture and I feel this will stand alone very well if much of the remainder is cropped away. As it stands the object is a little too close to the righthand edge. The trees in the reflection provide some information about the setting for the image. Merit

Small stream at the Waihopai Valley

The author has chosen to take a very low angle of the stream using the foreground rocks to lead you into the image. The shallow depth of field [aperture setting] has rendered only the rocks in the foreground to be sharp. The stream and foliage beyond this area has interest and it is a pity that it is not also sharp so that the viewer can enjoy that area too. I do recommend the use of a tripod in this instance and that will enable a deeper depth of field and/or a longer shutter speed and this combination will render the image sharpness throughout. Alternatively Choose a small part of the image e.g. the leaves on the lefthand rock and get in close so that they become the main focal point. The the out of focus background is reduced to supporting the centre of interest. Accepted

Steps

This is an artistic view of some modern architecture. The author has chosen to use lines, blocks and triangles to create interest within the frame. When projected against a black background, the small triangle in the top right tends to merge into the blackness and this becomes rather distracting once seen. I suggest that you place a small bounding box around the image to prevent this. For example a very thin grey line would neatly frame the image without intruding or detracting from it. Accepted

B Grade Set Subject Images:

Different Perspectives

This is an interesting triptych which is worthy of further exploration. The central and righthand images blend well together due to the colour range and the indication that both were taken in a woodland setting. The central image also shows us what is being photographed. Because of the juxtaposition of the righthand subject, we might instinctively presume that a similar object is also being taken. It is not important that the subject matter appears in this image again due to the juxtaposition of those two images. However, the first image is incongruous due to the colour palette and the waterside location. None of the faces of our subjects are shown, but I do not see this as a problem. I can see that you have attempted to make the reds of the clothing in the first and last image complement one and other and likewise both these images face inwards towards the centre which is good. Whilst our three photographers appear to be taking images "From a different Perspective" this author is not and thus this image becomes a weak set subject image. Accepted

Fleece Throwing

Although I am unaccustomed to fleece throwing, I'm not sure I would want to be standing in the line of fire as this author might be. I like the blurred action and the movement of the fleeces tend to direct the viewer to the man in the red shirt. I suggest you take a crop from the bottom and concentrate the viewer's attention to the top half of the image. There is lots of good detail here and it still tells the story you wish to portray. I loved the background detail and I wonder if you can get anymore out of the shadow area by lifting it in post production. Merit

I Spy

This is a lovely shot of the bird's eye, apparently in it's native environment. The lighting has been handled successfully and the composition is good. If possible, I suggest you tone down the bright spot in the top righthand side as it tends to draw attention away from the focal point. The detail in the plumage is excellent around the eye and beak and the colours are very complimentary. However, I again feel that the subject is not taken "From a 'Different Perspective'" although it is unusual to see this element of the subject matter. Merit

Last Gasp of Autumn

You have made great use of the sunlight falling on these leaves to bring that part of the image to life. The palette is pleasing on the eye and the textures within the leaves have interesting detail. I think there is a little too much negative space and suggest cropping in just a bit. The background is unobtrusive and really compliments the image. One again I find myself asking about the definition of "From a Different Perspective" and I do hope I am interpreting the subject matter as intended. In which case I feel this is a weak image in relation to the set subject. Merit

Warning - No Fishing

I'm certain there is a story here but I feel the author has not conveyed it to the audience in a way which is easily understood. Whilst the background is well exposed and has produced pleasant colours, the subject matter is dark and suffers from a lack of detail. At the same time, it is not dark enough to be regarded as a silhouette. Acceptance

A Grade Set Subject Images:

Birds Eye View

This is a lovely image of a bird in flight. The detail in the plumage is superb, the rim lighting and translucent feathers are exquisite and the eye is clear. The bird is nicely positioned within the frame and I find the extended legs an interesting detail too. This is not really a "Bird's Eye View" This is what you would expect to see if you looked up as this bird flew past. So again I feel this image does not fit the set subject definition. In the open category this would have scored higher marks. Merit

Callipygous Cat Lady

I must confess that this is not your ordinary portrait shot! So there is an unusual perspective here! I had to look up the word 'Callipygous' and found that it means "Having well shaped buttocks" which, I guess, makes this image even more subjective than usual! Whilst I can see the humour in the title and the image, I feel this is a photograph of a piece of artwork. I say this as the spot-weld marks on the lady continue throughout her body, the plate she is holding; and the cats. They each appear to be securely fastened to the ground. I cannot see that the photographer has amended the object in anyway to make the image something in its own right. Non Acceptance

Confrontation

The title certainly suggests the apparent feeling that seems to be emanating from this creature. Some of this aggression seems to be exaggerated by the angle or perspective chosen by this photographer and from that point of view I feel this is an acceptable set subject image. The eyes are sharp and it would have been interesting had the mandibles on either side of the mouth been a little more shape. I like the lighting and the colour palette. Merit

Dry Dock

There are some wonderful textures and colours in the paint work on the bow of the boat. The lines in the planking along the side of the boat take you into the image but don't lead to anything in particular. The supporting post on the far left of the image has been cut off rather abruptly and I feel cloning this out would improve the composition. Lighting is a little flat and I find the foliage which runs along the top of the wheelhouse to be unconnected and somewhat distracting. Accepted

Evening Reflection

When projected the brightness of the reflection certainly has a WOW factor about it. What I find unusual about this image is that most photographers would have wanted to include the mountain range which caused the reflection. It is the absence of this information which creates the impact of a different perspective. If you rotate this image 180 degrees it is even more interesting! Well seen and presented. Honours

Going Nowhere

I feel this is all about lines and shape. The monochromatic effect works well and the image is sharp throughout. The perspective is different and placing the person at that point in the frame works well. Another step forward and she may have been too far to the left. Good composition and effective use of negative space. Honours

Linkages

The composition is good and there is interest in the image which will retain the viewer's attention. Overall the image is soft and the only sharp point is the screw/bolt on the lefthand side which is secured in place by wire. I find that my eyes move between the two link eyes secured to the wall so I feel it has become an image of two halves. The monochrome treatment is helpful. Accepted

Passing By

There is a sense of calm and tranquility about this image which is most likely caused by the stillness of the water. The juxtaposition of the two vessels is good and one provides scale to the other. The ferry is well placed within the image so that it has space to move into. The bright blues and white stand out against a subdued backdrop of rolling hills and vegetation. I have to ask myself 'has this image been taken from a different perspective in such a way that it is unusual or unexpected?' For me the answer is 'No' and I feel the image would do better in an open section. Acceptance

Redouble

This image has been taken from a very unusual perspective; to the degree that it breaks the boundaries normally associated with portrait photography. I do feel as if I am up high and looking down on the model(s). For me the composition works well and the bright red lipstick provides focal points. The symmetry is good and the background is unobtrusive. Honours

Teeth

I have the feeling that this aircraft was making a sharp turn of some description at the moment this image was taken. The sunlight illuminating the underside of the fuselage is unusual and the undercarriage is well light. The plane is sharp throughout and there is sufficient blur in the propellers to indicate movement. Together with the teeth, this creates a strong focal point. I feel this image comes within the set subject guidelines due to the unusual way it has been captured. The background is complementary, although there are two dust spots, which once seen tend to attract the eye away from the subject. These need to be removed in post production. Merit

Tunnel Vision

Good title. I think the image is all about what the child is presumed to see from her position. She is the key element of the image. I think that had the photographer crouched down to her level we would have seen a different image but one which was complementing the child's viewpoint rather than the adult viewpoint. Unfortunately, the the people in the tunnel are obscured from view. However, there is plenty of detail in those shadows which could be revealed with a little post production work. Accepted

Under Construction

I feel there is an element of compression within the left hand side of the image which suggests to me that possibly a long telephoto lens may have been used. That side of the image is very busy and I feel it needs a focal point of some description so that the eye can rest a while. You have made use of the wall as a contrast to the business of the scaffolding and I think it was a good idea to include the rusty bolts on the right as they do act as a stop to the image. The nature of the image has an unusual perspective. Merit

Watch for Trains

There is a very strong graphic design element in play here. The angle of the yellow lines leading into and through the frame are quite dynamic. Similarly the train tracks bisecting them at the top of the image create an aggressive and somewhat surreal effect. The whole feel of the image has been achieved by the way the photographer has shot and presented it. Honours

C Grade Open Images:

Dominance in Chrome

The chrome work certainly does dominate; as do the lights of the windows on the paintwork beneath the headlamps. Seeing the side of the bonnet on the left explains why the image feels a little off centre. Of course this may have been deliberate but I believe that a half-step to the right would have given the image more balance. You have done well to avoid having your reflection appear anywhere but the smallest part of the fenders. Even these can be removed in post production using the lasso tool. Merit

I've got Nana's Hat

There is great empathy between the photographer and the child. Viewers will certainly feel that as they look at this image. The pose is very natural and the action of the hands pulling the hat into place leaves the face clear so that we see that lovely expression and the talking eye's. The image is a little noisy through but a small adjustment in post production will resolve this. Honours

Ruffled Feathers

The exposure is successful and you have retained good detail in the plumage of the seagull and a sharpness that is appealing. The background colours are mainly reddish and orange hues from seaweed and this portrays the natural environment of the bird. There is a very small green area at the bottom of the image and I recommend you remove this in post production as it tends to detract from the main subject matter. Merit

Winter Greenfinch

Excellent depth of field has rendered the bird to be sharp whilst providing a beautiful bokeh to the background. The detail from the head to the claws is incredibly fine. The small limb which the bird is sitting on has good detail where it matters and I like the small side shoots which add just a little more information. Honours

B Grade Open Images:

Cygnet

The detail around the eye and beak is wonderfully sharp. There is evidence of a soft sunlight reflected along the beak which hints at a time of day. The scruffiness of the plumage in this portrait is classic of the juvenile bird. I find the blue background to be a little powerful and I suggest that lowering the saturation in this area might make it less dominating. Merit

Harrier Defending

In this stance the bird does look as if it is protecting something. Maybe a chick or perhaps a food supply. In spite of all those distracting vertical grasses in the foreground the photographer has done well to ensure the focus remains on the Harrier. The head is unobstructed and the eye rather piercing or menacing. There is good detail in the plumage. Although the wingtips are clipped out of the image I don't think this is detrimental to the subject matter. Merit

Pooh (Dahlia)

The subject matter is bright and the patterns in the petals and seed cluster are intricate. However there is a soft quality to the image which has concealed some of the fine detail. I feel the lighting to be somewhat flat and I suggest making adjustments to that if this was taken in a studio environment. The green stem adds detail and without it the flower head would look even more flat against the black backdrop. Accepted

Springbok Mantis

In the best of conditions these little creatures are quite difficult to capture in such a way that the whole of the Mantis is sharp. You have made a very good attempt at it here. The markings along the back are detailed and I love the way the length of the body has been captured between two leaves as it makes progress from one to the other. The background is soft and gentle with complimentary colours. Merit

Agapanthus Transformed

A well presented painterly image. The open flower provides a good focal point and is well placed in the image. The background is unobtrusive and compliments the treatment applied to the Agapanthus. Honours

Blush

As with any portrait the eyes are the most important feature because we [humans] talk with our eyes and this is always the place we look for first when meeting people. The eyes can say so much without uttering a word. In this image the eyes are bright and clearly there is contact with the model and the author. The red colour applied to the remainder of the image is overpowering and also confusing to the viewer because we are not sure what the story is about. What caused the redness and why is it so important to this image? What was the author's intention? Accepted

Death Duties

A simple and yet so effective still life study. Grandfather's pocket watch is sharp and well placed within the image. It is also the centre of attention amidst the pile of papers. In part this is due to it's position but the play of light has been well controlled to perfectly illuminate the watch. The paper resting in the top right hand corner has just sufficient detail to enable the viewer to read the words "Death Duties". To me, the story is about someone drawn between retaining the watch or needing to sell it to pay the death duties. Very simple. Very clever. Well presented. Honours

Evening Tide

There is a very surreal quality to this image. The top two thirds seem to have had an artistic movement effect applied to it or this has been produced by a slow shutter speed. In some ways I am reminded of a dust storm as the wind seems to be creating the semicircular striations across the tide. The sharpness of the very small rocks in the foreground, in my view, seems to be vying for attention and drawing the eye downwards away from the very interesting motion effect. I suggest cropping the lower section of the image and let the wind provide the viewer with an impressionistic image. Merit

Fungi

There is a stunning reddish edge to this fungi which provides a great outline to it's shape. It is almost translucent and screams "Look at me". And that is what draws you in to this image. After that the eyes wander around the black area of the fungi and we discover that it is not quite sharp.

Although there is detail in the lines in the gill of the plant and a little moss here and there, I find it difficult to settle on a focal point. The background provides information about the environment of the fungi which is supportive to the story. Acceptance

Grooming

This is quite an unusual image of the two penguins grooming each other. The eyes are pronounced by the yellow plumage about the head and there is good detail here. The pose created is almost a mirror image of the birds who seem completely in tune and trusting of each other. I love the curves of the neck lines and I can't help wondering if the shape created in the lower portion of the image would have continued on to make a sort of heart shape. The grey & green background is sympathetically out of focus. Well seen and well presented. Honours

Just Having Fun

The title says it all. We are immediately drawn to the girl's face and there we are greeted with a happy and natural smile. The running action has been stopped using a fast shutter speed and sharpness is perfect on the main subject. I suggest lightening the blacks in the girls hair, jumper and trousers in post production - just to provide a little detail in those areas. The umbrella is a great prop and the angle of it in relation to the girl is really effective and natural. The dishevelled hair also adds to the story. The background tells us about the kind of weather she is experiencing and the possible need for the umbrella. Some people might suggest that the girl needs a little more negative space to run into; don't listen to them - she is perfect where she is. Honours

Lindus Pass

The strong sunlight and well controlled exposure make this quite a compelling image. The silhouetted ridge line against a blue sky and the yellow sun strike on the left hand hill are so complementary that they make the image sing. You have done a good job of retaining detail in the blue/green hues of the shadows. The area that tends to detract from all the good things about this image is the bright yellow area in the bottom right hand corner. It is so bright and powerful that it pulls the viewer's eye out of the frame. I recommend cropping the image just above this area. I think you will see what an improvement that makes in this case. Merit

Love

A very apt title for a simple story which conveys exactly the mood of this image. The interaction between the dog and the woman is abundantly clear. I recommend that you desaturate the orange glow which appears throughout the image; this is easily done in post production. At the same time just boost the sharpness a little as the image is rather soft. Merit

Mayfly

A good specimen with lots of bright colours revealed in the image which are not necessarily visible to the naked eye. The composition is good with the leaf acting as a leading line to the insect. The background is unobtrusive. I suggest that rotating the image on the horizontal plane may bring about an improved composition due to the fact that we read from left to right but this issue is a personal choice and does not affect my award in this instance. I do find the sharpness to be good overall but slight soft on the head of the mayfly. Merit

NZ Falcon

The falcon appears to be set in its natural environment and could be sitting on its 'pecking post'. There is good definition throughout particularly about the eye and beak. The background is nicely subdued with complementing colours. Again there is also good use of negative space. Honours

PRINTS

C Grade Set Subject Images:

Male Turkey

The colours are very appealing and the details is quite sharp. I am reminded of a tiled roof for some reason. I like the presentation and without out the title I would never have guessed this was in fact a Turkey [or at least, it's feathers]. The difficulty I have with this image is the lack of a focal point. Whilst the texture and gradations are pleasing, I find my eye wanders around the image and is quickly prepared to move on. A focal point of some sort would retain my interest for longer. Accepted

A Grade Set Subject Images:

d' Urvertical

Now this image made me scratch my head! The title is called d'Urvertical, whilst the inscription of the main pillar says Hotel d'Urville. Me, being me, I just had to find out a little more about the location. Within a few clicks of the keyboard Goggle provided the answer! I really like the gothic feel to this image and the up facing perspective really accentuates the unusual angle. The image is presented as a negative form so that the highlights and shadows are reversed and this adds impact in this instance. The matt paper base also helps to prolong the mystique. Well done.

Honours

From the Ground Up

It seems I may not have needed to use Goggle to locate the Hotel d'Urville, as the very next image I picked up was this one. I do not compare images when evaluating content, but what a coincidence and how totally different they are from each other. This author has decided to climb down underneath a bench of some description to claim this very low angle. I feel it could be a 'dog's-eye' view. Or may be the camera is attached to a dog collar because surely this is the perspective that they would see. The white building against that stormy sky has great impact. The orange foliage on the left actually works here because it is balancing the tree on the right. It might be argued that all of the human elements are heading away from the building and out of the image - but it really works this way. I love the detail, the colours and the matt paper presentation. Honours

Follow Me

Another thoughtful and considered interpretation of the set subject. This little chap might be on a car windscreen or similar reflecting material. The tail is sharp as is the reflection. However, the sharpness falls away swiftly and I really want to see the head rather than the rump. The background has picked up the refections of clouds and sky and is unobtrusive. You can see specks of dirt across the surface in the sharpened areas and this adds a little texture to the subject. Acceptance

River Mist

The aerial perspective of the mist in this instance is quite unusual and I needed a moment to gather my bearings. I like the way you are carried through the image along the valley. The distant hills in the top of the image have interesting detail. I feel the lower righthand corner is too dark and I would recommend lightening a fraction. At the same time it would be good if the tree capped hills in the central foreground could also reveal a little more of their detail. Possibly try a bit of doing & burning in those areas would lift this image to another level. Merit

C Grade Open Images:

Curves

I really feel I want to visit this location as I want to take a swim from this beach. It really is inviting. The waves lapping the beach in the foreground curve neatly into that pool of water which has been created by the rock formation on the centre right. Good focal point. On the end of that headland is what appears to be a beacon or light which has a path leading up to it from the beach. After this the eye is drawn up to the skyline and back across to the left hand landscape. A well seen image which works in monochrome. I think the sky suffers from being too blown out in places and I'm not sure this can be corrected in post production. Merit

Ripples

The monochrome works equally well in this image. The tide marks and foreground ripples lead you into the scene to the base of the cliffs. You follow the cliffs to the left and stop at the lighthouse or pinnacle. Good contrast, textures and exposure. A neat little image which has been well presented. Honours

B Grade Open Images:

Late Summer Splash

There is a certain warmth about this image which indicates the feel of late summer. The colours in the water and on the rock are appealing. The reflections in the lower right are particularly interesting as is the detail in the rock. I suggest you try to adjust the highlights slider in post production to remove the strong whites in the wave which is breaking on the rock. I also recommend [if possible] moving the boulder into the frame just a fraction to improve the composition. As it is, I feel the boulder too tight on the frame. Acceptance

A Mother's Love

A good title for this image of a pregnant mum to be. The author has chosen to use a single light source to reveal just sufficient information about the woman's face, whilst simultaneously rim lighting the outline of the body to good effect. Take another look at your original file to see if you have just a little more information on it so that the hand at the bottom and the hair at the top of the image are not quite so abruptly cut off. Also take a look at the backcloth as you can see a part of it just to the right of the woman. I think you can burn this so that it is less distracting. Merit

A Grade Open Images:

Imp

An interesting studio type portrait of a child. The author has captured the innocents of childhood with that abandoned hair style look. It's quite appealing. I like the way the eyes are concentrating on something or someone just out of shot and the overall softness appears to be deliberate. I recommend that the left hand side of the image needs an adjustment to the whites which are very strong here and tend to quickly draw the eye. Although the expression on the child's face is pleasant, I think that a split second either way may have found an even more appealing shot.

Merit

Kaikoura Peninsula

Strong sunlight on the headland and cliffs provide lots of detail. I think the horizon is a little central and the image might be improved if it were less so. The clouds and blue sky have been well retained. There is also a great deal of interest in the line of rocks which provide a focal point for the viewer. The detail of rocks in the foreground shallows is, in my view, not needed and I would favour cropping about an inch and a half from the bottom of this image. This would do two things. 1. It moves the horizon off centre and 2. It really accentuates the row of rocks with the birds on them. I also recommend burning in the bright area of cliff face on the left hand third.

Acceptance

Last Light of the Day

To me, photography is mainly about how we see light and how we control that light. Often we can pre-visualise a scene but unless the photographer can control the light the camera receives the resultant image will not resemble what he/she actually saw or pre-visualised. This image speaks volumes about the author's capabilities. The quality of light is stunning and it has been crafted and controlled in such a way as to make a beautiful image. There is detail throughout the shadows and the highlights have been controlled well too. The reflection on the still waters is an added bonus. Don't anybody say, "This is a lucky shot!" It isn't. It has been well seen, well executed, and well presented. Honours

Timeout

Now this is something a little unusual. I do not profess to know a great deal about riding, show jumping, dressage or horse racing but I have a friend who once explained to me that horse owners are very particular about the way in which horses should be painted or photographed. I am therefore thinking that the owner of this horse is likely to be very pleased with the result. The image overall is sharp. The background provides a related scene which is not intrusive. The sky is well exposed. The main subject is very central but this is quite deliberate. The horse has a rapport with the photographer even if the rider is looking a little stern. The ears on the horse are upright which make it look proud. Two very small points bother me. 1. Why is the jockey not got his foot in the stirrups? [It just seems out of place to the layman in me] 2. I would like to see just a fraction more grass at the foot of the image. Merit