

# Frame in a Frame – Judge Caroline Ludford

## B Grade Set subject.

1. **As Sun sets on Bastia Hill** – This looks like an interesting place to visit. I get a feeling of desolation from the structure that is framing the tower, overtaken by the elements and yet a warm feeling from the glow of the setting sun. The choice of the author on composition when making this image shows the water tower quite small. The largest part is the actual frame which in my view, I find quite dominating. I also see a little purple fringing (chromatic aberration) around the edge of the top of the structure. If you have Lightroom or similar, you may be able to tweak this to remove it. (Can be caused by high contrast scenes and/or a failure of a lens to focus all colours to the same point). All that said, well seen and some nice detail shown. **MERIT**
2. **Bush mirror** – I get the view of the bush through the mirror and I can almost hear the bird song emanating from it. In my view the light has been well handled showing us good detail in the trees. The inside and edges of the mirror being darker, help to keep our eyes focused on the bush. Nice use of the mirror for this image and the letterbox format to show us the view too. One small thing to consider, be careful when mounting your images, I found this one to be a little crooked and skewed otherwise nicely done. **MERIT**
3. **Clock Tower** – This looks to me like a bell tower rather than a clock tower, however there may well be a clock on the opposite side that I can't see. Framed by the branches of the tree to a degree with a good closeup showing us some elements of the structure. When I look closely at the image I see magenta in the trees and a little colour fringing in the bottom 1/3 on the edges of the structure. Maybe the photographer could consider looking at the white balance and chromatic aberration. Otherwise nicely done. **ACCEPTED**
4. **Come on in** – A feel a lovely invitation with the gate open for me to venture in. I wonder if morning tea is on offer. I enjoy the way that the author has composed the image so that we see the path which takes us to the door. A nice use of a leading line. The only thing that I would say is that I find the image a little flat and feel that a tweak of the contrast slider would assist with this. Try it, you may agree. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
5. **Reflections of the gallery** – I enjoy the depth of this image and how we have detail in the foreground and background. The photographer has successfully shown us the gallery and the interesting articles within in an artistic way. The red against the dark background draws my eye in and then I look around at the other items. Well done. **HONOURS**
6. **Sunny morning on sodden forest** – This image has me asking 'what will I find in there?' I enjoy the way that the photographer has used the structure to frame the small building. This is good seeing in my view and draws your eye into the shot. Nicely positioned and composed within the frame. Good detail shown. The only thing I may say is that the highlights appear a little blown out to me which is blowing out the detail in the trees (top left of the image). I would suggest that a slight crop off the left hand side and tweak of the highlights would help to enhance this shot. **MERIT**
7. **Water Tower** – Whilst the tower is correctly framed by the tree and we look through to see the structure, I feel that the focus has been missed slightly on this image. The tree is pin sharp and as such is the dominant part of the shot in my view. The tower is a little soft and as it is the star of the show, in my view I feel it should be a little sharper. Nice try though and well worth going back to try again. **ACCEPTED**

## A Grade Open

1. **Autumnal** – This looks like a female song thrush to me enjoying the fruits. We have some lovely detail in the foliage and bird. The catchlight helps to add life to the bird too. In my opinion the added texture takes this image to the next level. Lovely shot which is telling us the story . **HONOURS**
2. **Follow my curves** – Quite striking with the choice of the author to use a plain black background. This really makes the flower stand proud in my view. The contrasting colours are powerful with the red and yellow. I also enjoy the way this image has been composed with some negative space to the right and the way the stem curves. The simple composition lets us concentrate on the colour and form of the flower. In my opinion the flower is a little soft in focus though and I feel it would be a stronger shot if it was sharper. Almost there. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
3. **Lovely lillies** – This has a relaxing and slightly dreamy feel for me. You can let your imagination run away with you with this one. We get a sensation of movement and no main focal point. Now I hope you don't mind, but I flipped your image ¼ turn anti-clockwise. I personally feel that this is a stronger image. I think it is because we don't have the lighter creamy colour on the top and bottom (when flipped). I think the darker green at the bottom gives the shot a base. Just my view though. Try flipping it and see if you agree. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
4. **Male California Quail** – Often found in large groups in autumn. Here we see some lovely detail in the face with the plume or 'top-knot' as it is also known. Good depth of field ensures all the feathers are sharp and a nice blurry background. We have a catchlight in the eye too which helps to bring the quail to life. It isn't always possible to get the catchlight, but if you do, it makes a world of difference in my opinion. I find the background a little noisy which distracts me. The author might like to consider some noise reduction in post processing if they have Lightroom or similar. I would look at a subtle vignetted too. This would bring the eye in. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
5. **Mystery** – This one is a mystery to me and has me a little puzzled. I tried to google the wording and get a translation but it appears that not all the words are shown in the image. That said, it appears to me to be a memorial stone in a Māori cemetery and as such is potentially somebody else's artistic work. I must say though that I like the texture and feel that adds interest. **MERIT**
6. **Photoshop in action**- This image made me smile. The image tells the full story and I enjoy the creativity that the photographer has clearly shown us here. Great detail and something different. Clever. **HONOURS**
7. **Serenity** – I get a feeling of calm and tranquility when I look at this image. The blue tones give a cool and rawness impression in my view. The small creamy coloured lighter streak on the bottom left distracts me a little and there are a couple of tiny dust spots. These are easily removed though. I would remove the dust spots and the creamy streak and you have a winning shot. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**

## A Grade Set

1. **A peer at the Pier** – The hole in the structure takes us to the pier and works well as a frame. I also see the person in red cycling down the pier. This has been well seen by the author. In my opinion, I feel the image could use a little more exposure, especially on the end of the pier. This would help to focus the eye on it. At the moment the brightest part of the shot is the bottom of the circle frame. Usually, our eyes are drawn to the lightest part of a shot. The photographer might like to consider lightening the end a little. I feel this would assist this shot. **ACCEPTED**
2. **Alley Chat** – I like the title for this one. The person is framed to a degree with the building and nicely placed within the shot. His red shorts help him to stand out. I find him a little soft in focus though. I also find that I follow the lighter part of the image to the end of the alley. The photographer might like to lighten him up a bit in post processing. **ACCEPTED**
3. **Festive trees adorn stairwell** – Here we see the bannister as the frame in this image and we are shown the perspective of looking down on the heads of the people and festive trees. I am taken on a journey around and around and I turn back at the bottom of the stairs and come back. I find the trees are a little over exposed and wonder if the author might like to try to reduce the highlights a little to give us more detail in the trees. **ACCEPTED**
4. **Friends of the forest** – They certainly look like they are having a good time and enjoying the beautiful woodland. We really do get to appreciate the size of these trees with the two friends included in the shot. Lovely and sharp with good detail and colour management. I wonder if the photographer might like to consider a crop (mainly off the left hand side). I feel that the white sky drags my eye away and that a crop would prevent this and keep me focused on the main event. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
5. **How we remember them** – It is my opinion that this image does not fit the set subject. Looking at the definition – ‘this subject encourages photographers to look for photographs that naturally or artificially have a frame evident around and/or in the image.’ I do not feel that the black borders found around each of the five images is complying with the set subject. However, the author has interpreted the definition slightly differently to me and has put thought and effort into this piece of work. This image evokes a somber feeling in me with the sorry state of the grave stones. **ACCEPTED**
6. **Outside looking in** – Quite a seductive image with us snooping in. Some may say that they get a feeling of intruding. I enjoy the colour and texture that we see in this image. The delicate blue and the gold in the bottom left of the image really make this one pop for me. It almost has a 3D feel to it. Well seen and handled. **HONOURS**
7. **Port hole vista** – I find the glimpse through the port hole inviting and quite delightful. We are given a peek at the wall and boat in the background. I like the choice of the photographer to include the birds. The port hole works perfect with the subject. I feel that a tweak of clarity on the boat and wall would boost this image, as in my opinion it is a little flat. **MERIT**
8. **Safe Haven** – Instantly recognisable with its bright white bill, frontal shield and red eyes. The coot is nicely framed in the branches and I am happy to say that it doesn't look threatened and seems at ease on its nest. I do feel that the whites of this image are a little blown out and we are losing detail (check the leaf to the left of the head). The author might like to try to reduce the highlights and try a subtle vignette too. This would help to bring the eye in. **MERIT**

9. **Saint Pauls in Reflection** – I get a sinister feeling with this image which is enhanced by the choice to use black and white. There's a grainy gritty feel to this shot and yet we see some lovely detail and sharpness in the brickwork. I think that any colour in this image may have distracted the eye. Good choice. We also have the full range of white through to black with all the shades of grey in between. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
10. **Secrets** – Mysterious indeed. The title certainly fits as we wonder what secrets lie behind those curtains and layers. The dilapidated and decaying structure add to the feeling of neglect that we get. The blue and golden yellow colours towards the bottom of the shot are complementary and contrasting colours (on the opposite sides of the colour wheel). In my opinion the image feels a little off balance with the two sides not being equal. I realise that is the choice of the photographer, however I feel it would be a stronger image with symmetry. **HIGHLY COMMENDED**
11. **Through the castle wall** – The grand stone wall is a good frame for the castle. The image feels balanced to me as we have equal sides giving it some symmetry. Good lighting on the actual castle and not too bright in the wall which allows us to look straight through. In my view there is a little halo around the edge of the wall at the top of the shot and once seen, I feel that my eye is distracted by it. Maybe the author could revisit the image in post processing and look at fixing the halo. **MERIT**
12. **Whio** – Again I looked long and hard at this image and even using a broad interpretation, I personally would say that this does not meet the definition of the set subject. I do not see that the author has found a frame evident around or in the image. The frame in my view, has been added as part of the printing process which the author has interpreted as 'artificially' finding a frame. Again, the author has put some planning and work into this image and has a different interpretation to me. We have some nice detail in the feathers. The choice of the photographer to use a white vignette is interesting and it gives me a feeling of fog. **ACCEPTED**