

Number	Image Title	Grade	Comments
1	AO Bewildered	Highly Commended	The photographer skillfully captures a universal moment of travel, effectively conveying the multitude of emotions within the group. The use of vignetting tactfully directs the viewer's attention towards the subjects, adding focus and intimacy to the scene. While the image could potentially benefit from a more dramatic focal point within the frame, the composition still adheres well to the rule of thirds, creating a balanced and engaging visual narrative. The lowered perspective and appropriate depth of field further enhance the storytelling by emphasizing the interaction and atmosphere of the moment. Overall, the incorporation of humor contributes to the charm of the photograph, making it a delightful piece of storytelling that resonates with viewers.
2	AO Caught on the Window Pane	Highly Commended	Caught on the Window Pane showcases a skilled approach to macro photography. The perspective, looking down into the image, effectively emphasizes the size of the fly caught in the trap, creating a compelling visual impact. While utilizing the rule of thirds for framing and incorporating more leading space might have enhanced the flow and movement within the composition, the choice of lighting is commendable. The soft shadows add depth and dimension to the photograph, enhancing the texture and detail of the scene. Overall, this photograph demonstrates a thoughtful execution of macro photography, capturing a moment with both technical proficiency and aesthetic appeal.
3	AO Happy hour for Silveryeyes	Honours	This work is truly exquisite and beautifully captured. The photographer has masterfully utilized stunning lighting, with sunlight filtering through the crystal to create captivating prisms of light. This play of light adds a magical quality to the photograph, enhancing its beauty and allure. The attention to detail in capturing such a moment is commendable, resulting in a mesmerizing image that delights the viewer.
4	AO Kelly	Merit	This reflective portrait captures the subject's calm and natural expression beautifully. The soft lighting contributes to the serene atmosphere, although some balance improvements could be achieved with curves adjustment layers to enhance the overall effect. Currently, the viewer's attention is drawn more to the subject's darker top rather than her gaze. The slightly off-centred composition is engaging and adheres to the rule of thirds, which adds a dynamic element to the photograph. Additionally, the creative choice to incorporate grain adds a pleasing texture and depth to the image.
5	AO Kotuku	Honours	The photographer has demonstrated remarkable patience and a thoughtful approach in capturing this image. The composition effectively conveys a sense of movement, not only in the bird but also in the gracefully swaying grasses in the foreground. This dynamic element adds depth and energy to the photograph, enhancing its visual appeal and storytelling.
6	AO Legosaurus	Merit	"The scale of the Legosaurus is captured well against the young child's expression by shooting from a lower perspective. The image would have had more impact without the distraction of the children walking in the background, which would have directed our eyes more powerfully to the main subject. Nonetheless, this is a lovely, candid capture that beautifully captures the moment."
7	AO Pied Shag	Highly Commended	"The photographer has excellently captured the alert gaze of the Pied Shag on the rock, which draws your eye into the image. The side lighting beautifully highlights its beak and feathers, creating a striking contrast against the flowing movement of the water."
8	AO Split Gill Fungi	Highly Commended	The photographer has captured the intricate details and textures within the fungi, leading to well-defined gills that draw the viewer's attention. The choice of background works effectively, allowing the subject to stand out prominently. The image benefits from a perfect depth of field, creating a seamless transition from foreground to background. However, a unique perspective or angle could have elevated this image, making it even more distinctive. Macro photography is a real art, and the photographer has created a very pleasing image that showcases their skill and attention to detail.
9	AO Waxeye On High	Highly Commended	"A beautifully composed portrait of a wax eye with a clean and pleasing background. However, the clarity of the image has been compromised due to processing and movement during capture. The use of adjust curves layers could be utilised to balance the image and make the wax eye pop out of the image. Creating such lovely images requires real patience, and the photographer should be commended for their effort and dedication."
10	AO Yes Im Busy	Highly Commended	"A lovely, well-composed portrait of this bird. However, the image's clarity has been compromised due to the zoomed capture. Bird photography often demands higher capabilities from your equipment and budget. As a tip, try to ensure your shutter speed matches or exceeds your focal length; for example, if shooting at 400mm, set your shutter speed to at least 1/400. Additionally, use image stabilization if your lens allows. Despite these challenges, you have beautifully captured the subject with good use of depth of field."
11	AS Apres Ski Mates	Highly Commended	"Apres Ski Mates' has effectively captured the mood and personality of these blokes enjoying a beer together on the slopes. The use of a longer focal length has nicely cleaned up the background, creating a clear separation between the subjects and the busy ski fields. This is a lovely candid shot that beautifully captures the camaraderie and relationship of three mates sharing a beer."
12	AS Cousins in York.jpg	Merit	"The photographer has skillfully mirrored the flow of lines from the wall with the subject's composition, creating a harmonious image. For future reference, consider allowing more space for the subject on the left to lead into the frame, enhancing the overall balance. Be mindful of harsh sunlight, as it can cause the subject to squint; directing their gaze slightly can help mitigate this issue. You have successfully captured a lovely, fun portrait that celebrates the joyful relationships of cousins."
13	AS Damon and Dara	Highly Commended	"The photographer has crafted a lovely composition to celebrate the connection between this couple. The studio lighting on the main subject is beautiful and adds a refined touch to the portrait. To enhance the image further, consider having the partner lift his gaze slightly and use additional lighting to prevent him from blending into the background. A balanced tonal range is crucial for a cohesive portrait, and this consideration will improve the overall harmony of the image."
14	AS Family Portrait	Merit	"The photographer has beautifully captured the lovely expressions of this family, demonstrating a keen eye for emotion. The use of a triangle composition is effective and well-executed. A tip for future work: always be mindful of the positioning of your subjects' hands. Sue Bryce offers excellent advice on 'ballet hands' to achieve a softer profile, which can enhance the overall portrait. Consider taking time to advise your subjects on clothing choices for the portrait, avoiding stripes and busy patterns to ensure a harmonious tonal range. It's commendable that you managed to capture the family's glasses without reflections. For portraits with a black background, lighting the subjects to create separation is crucial for a more defined and polished look. Overall, you've successfully captured the connection and fun of this family, showcasing their bond and joy."
15	AS Nearly time to get the Huskies out	Highly Commended	"This is a great environmental portrait, effectively capturing the anticipation of the group awaiting their husky ride. The photographer skillfully applied the rule of thirds, thoughtfully positioning the sleigh to enhance the composition. The lighting complements the mood and atmosphere of the mountainous environment."
16	AS The Graduates.jpeg	Merit	"This is a lovely capture of a special moment celebrating students graduating. The photographer skillfully steered the subjects away from the busy, chaotic event to a neutral background. Some minor adjustments to the flowers could have enhanced the image, and zooming in closer to focus on the subjects' expressions would have added a personal touch. Nevertheless, the photographer has effectively captured the significance of this moment and conveyed the excitement after many hours of studying."
17	AS Three generations	Highly Commended	"This is a lovely portrait celebrating three generations of this family. The studio lighting is expertly executed, enhancing the cohesion of their attire. The closeness and warmth between these three generations are palpable, beautifully capturing their relationship. The photographer has skillfully portrayed the precious bond within this family."
18	BO Lake Brunner Reflections	Highly Commended	"This is a stunning landscape of Lake Brunner, showcasing its magical beauty. The photographer has expertly captured the essence of this picturesque area. For future visits, exploring different times of day—sunrise, sunset, and the elusive mist—can reveal varied moods and atmospheres. Experimenting with the rule of thirds in composition can add dynamic interest to these expansive landscapes. Patience in waiting for wildlife moments can further enrich the scene. Overall, the photographer skillfully portrays the mood and lighting of this breathtaking environment."
19	BO Peace	Highly Commended	"Bless, this scene brought a smile to my face. I'm glad you were as captivated by this beautiful landscape as I was, returning to capture all its glorious moods. The photographer has skillfully captured a stunning scene, showcasing a beautifully composed and executed image."
20	BS Sticky Sisters	Merit	"The spontaneous energy of this hug is palpable in this capture, conveying a truly joyful moment. When using flash in portraits, consider avoiding full flash and instead use fill-in flash to gently fill in shadows. Balancing tones more evenly within the image could be achieved through adjustments with curves adjustment layers. Overall, the photographer has beautifully captured this lovely moment."
21	BS We did it	Merit	"The photograph eloquently portrays the juxtaposition of elation and exhaustion after completing the Northern Circuit trek. The natural and relaxed composition in the bush lends authenticity to this candid capture, effectively conveying the emotions of the moment."
22	BS Wistful	Merit	"The photographer has beautifully captured a wistful moment here. To enhance this type of composition, consider increasing the depth of field range to ensure all subjects remain in sharp focus. Additionally, adjusting the lighting style could help achieve a more balanced flow across the entire scene. Families are fortunate to have you capture such precious moments for them."
23	BS Young Love	Merit	"The photographer beautifully captures the connection of love in this moment. However, the overall print appears too dark, which diminishes the impact of the scene. Lightening the exposure would help to capture the emotional connection between the subjects and prevent the moment from being lost in darkness. Additionally, enhancing the separation of the subjects from the black background would further emphasize their relationship. It's a lovely moment captured, with the potential to enhance its visual impact through these adjustments."