

| Grade | Image #1 Title | Award | Coment |
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| A Grade | AO By Candlelight | H | A delightful image which is nicely focused, well-exposed, and I really sense a medieval feel about it. I enjoy the soft beam of light that appears from the upper right to evenly light the subjects while providing a diagonal area that softly lights the textures of the back ground. In my opinion, the composition is nicely balanced by the two eggs in the nest playing off against the taller structure of the candelabras while being subtly connected by the details in the surface they are placed upon. I am drawn to the soft wisp of smoke from the right candle and I like that it suggests to me that the photographer has only just lit that particular candle. I particularly like the overall colour palette of the image and I find the touch of colour from the two eggs fits in well. Well done |
| A Grade | AO Hues of gold | HC | A wonderful wide scene with the sun near the horizon of a vast area of grassland. I love how the light is captured in the golden tones of the grass and to the almost pastel colours in the clouds above, providing a richness of tones that I find pleasing. In my opinion the area to the left of the tree adds little to the story and wonder if it was cropped out to where the central tree is the viewer's attention would be pulled further into the image. I appreciate that the photographer has included the sheep in the image as they provide a sense of scale to the vastness of the distances across the image. |
| A Grade | AO Kai Iwi beach panorama | M | A very wide shot looking back at the beach with the two headlands rising out from a central community as guardians of the area and directing the viewer's eye into the centre of the image. In my mind, I would like to see a tighter crop to bring the centre of the image to the viewer while still retaining the panorama format. I feel that the lighting in the image is a bit flat and perhaps an adjustment with the Contrast in post would give more boost to the colour depth. I like how there are subtle reflections of the clouds and sky in the water in the immediate foreground. The focus is sharp from the small gull to the left through to the houses in the distance. The photographer, I suspect, has taken this from the water's edge and it has me thinking of looking over my shoulder so as not to be caught by the incoming tide. |
| A Grade | AO Waiting | HC | I find that it is tricky to shoot insects with close macro techniques and I do like that photographer has pinned the focus to the spider's head defining the fine details and even capturing reflections in the eyes. To my mind, I feel that the spider is a little lost in the frame and I am distracted by the stamens and pistils to the left that are in sharp focus. I wonder if a tighter crop with the head of the spider near the right centre and cutting out most of the area of the stamens and pistils visible in the left of the image, would give the spider a more dominant position. I like that the spider is aligned with the radiating red tones in the petal it is standing on. |

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| A Grade | AS Celebrating 2024 | M | An interesting image of multiple fireworks bursting with colour and light telling me it is party time. I like that the shutter speed selected shows the paths of the fireworks as they burst into life. I do appreciate that taking photos of fireworks is challenging and perhaps some exposure compensation to reduce the highlights in the centre of the image could be tried. The pleasing pinkish tones in the smoke in the background adds a nice contrast to the image. |
| A Grade | AS Celebrating Chester | HC | A lovely blue hour image that has my interest and it doesn't matter to me that the what and where is unknown as I like the strong lines presented by the curves. I feel that the column coming from the bottom right and reaching into the blue above is slightly out of focus and I would like to see a smaller aperture for depth of field control used. In my mind, the building tower in the bottom left is a distraction and I wonder if that adds to the story or could it be cloned out to provide more of a negative space. I like that some of the possibly public lighting casts the slight orange tone to the structure to the left and that the lighting on the rest of the subjects is well managed. The photographer has seen an interesting opportunity to present a pleasing and almost abstract image from an everyday scene. |
| A Grade | AS Down Under Emerge to new life in A | HC | A clever photograph of a bank of escalators with a sole traveller gives me a sense of being at this location late at night. By hitting the shutter when the person on the left unit is midway through the travel, the photographer has given the viewer a sense that there is movement at the station. I find that the highlighted balustrades provide me with strong lines into and through the image and I like that the lighting on the front edges of the steps draws the eyes up through the image as it softens towards the top. In my mind, once noticed the two lighter patches near the left edge of the image cannot be unseen. I would like to see the image cropped in from both sides to the edge of the entry to the outer escalators as you might not need so much of the black space around the units. The pop of colour from the blue suitcase defines the traveller and a point of interest for the image. |

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| A Grade | AS Dual Gazing | HC | To me this is a street-type image where the photographer has used this perspective to align with the theme of Underneath. The two models or mannequins seen from the street level below seem to me to be enjoying a laugh at the world through the window. I find that the left and right sides of the window enter the image at different positions of the frame causing the image to look off-centre and unbalanced to me. To my mind, the perspective adds to that feel of being unbalanced, yet I appreciate that this would be acceptable in the street-style genre. I like that the window sill and frame is in focus with the details (and defects) in the paint clearly defined. I do find that the two patches of red at the top of the window frame seem to draw the eye and I wonder if these could be cloned out. There is a nice touch of the internal ceiling details and what looks like a smoke alarm being visible through the window above the two ladies. And to me , the two ladies add some titillating intrigue to the story. |
| A Grade | AS Ducking Under | M | I appreciate the difficulty of capturing action where the subject is moving and turning toward the camera. This is great positioning by the photographer to get the rider as he turns to go under the tree with the focus on the rider and the bike. I appreciate the detail that is brought out by the focus on the rider and the bike and I like that you can see that the rider's eyes are looking to where he next needs to be. I find that there are areas of the bike and the rider's legs where the detail is a little over-exposed and I wonder if some exposure compensation when taking the shot would balance the high and low exposure areas. I feel tones of the trees in the far background are a bit light and flat and I wonder if some selective use of the Dodge and Burn Tools in post would give more balance the lighting and separate it from the rider. A close action shot in the bushy terrain that makes me feel I am really in amongst the action. |
| A Grade | AS Gannet | A | An image of a gannet soaring on the wind above the viewer with outstretched wings. The photographer has framed the image so that the wings align from corner to corner giving a pleasing balance to the composition with enough space ahead of the bird for it to fly into. To my mind, the focus on the bird seems soft, and lacking sharp details on the head and eye. I also find that the underside of the body is soft with a loss of detail in the feathers and I wonder if this could be recovered with some adjustments in post. I do like that the clean blue sky in the background provides separation with the bird |

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| A Grade | AS Gliding overhead | M | Paragliding on a sunny day and I can only image what the two pilots are feeling, it is not something I see myself doing at all. Try cropping a little tighter, say from the left and bottom, as to my mind, there is a lot of space around the two subjects and by bringing the viewer closer to the subjects, the image would be strengthened. I would like to have seen the faces of the pilots flying towards the camera rather than their rear sides flying away, and I can appreciate that you have to press the shutter when that is what you have. The focus is sharp and there is a nice detail where the sun is highlighting some of the harness lines. I do like how the pop of red and yellow colour from the two canopies compliments, yet sets them apart, from the clear blue of the sky. |
| A Grade | AS Hard Case Ceiling | H | A quirky means of decorating a space that the photographer has cleverly captured and I do wonder if this is a composite of images. I am drawn to the ceiling and then follow the rows of cases to the end wall where the ceiling seems to continue on around the corner. I find myself asking just far does that ceiling go? The focus to the left foreground doesn't seem as sharp as the rest of the scene where there nice details picked out on the latches, handles and straps of the cases above. To me, the stronger brown tones of the cases in the foreground are progressively softened and changed as you move further into the image, providing a sense of distance. While I feel the lamp on the right side of the wall and the right hand window are both a touch overexposed, they do not distract my eye from the cases on the ceiling. I like that the image has a lot of details that peek my interest and caused my imagination to wander into and through the image. |
| A Grade | AS Hurry up its my turn | A | I sense that these couple of parakeets are at their local watering hole. I like that the depth of field used has clearly separated the birds from the background which is suitably blurred and out of focus. For me, the image is not showing me how it relates to the set subject of Underneath, and I wonder if the photographer had the positioning of the parakeets to each other as the link rather than one waiting for the other to finish, I am not sure? I find the framing of the image is a bit tight where birds' tails extend beyond the frame. I would like to see a wider shot by stepping back a bit (or a bit less length if using a zoom lens) so that the tails are in the frame. To me, the stroke of bright highlights under the throat of the left bird draws me away from the bird and I would try to tone this down with the Burn Tool in post. I really like the sharp focus on the subjects and that the eye of the waiting bird is clear and well defined. |

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| A Grade | AS Ive Got The Munchies | HC | In my mind, I see a horse resting and refuelling after a ride in the pasture. I appreciate the unique viewpoint of the photographer who is positioned low to the ground to make the image. In my opinion, the low perspective works well in removing any distracting objects in the background while offering a window to the blue sky beyond in the area between the horse's head and front leg. I wonder if the slight vignette could be removed in post, as I feel it is not needed to draw in the eye to the image. The depth of field centres the focus to the horse's head while the grass in the foreground is soft. I love the definition in the hair and the mane, especially where it falls across and slightly hides the eye. I almost feel I want to give my head a flick to push the hair back. I like this unconventional viewpoint, which ties in nicely with the set subject. |
| A Grade | AS Marilyn | A | A humorous image that made me chuckle at how it cleverly aligns with the set subject, whether viewed from the side or, dare I say it, the rear. The side profile view provides a subtle curve up and over towards the human in front of Marilyn. In my opinion, this is not a great composite image, as I can see there is a different background above the human's head and in front of the tummy that could be from some imprecise masking, and the lighting on and around the person is not quite realistic to me. I do find the lighting of the statue to have been well handled and the way the sun seems to cast the light from a low angle I wonder if this could be either early morning or late afternoon. The background is soft in focus and tones, providing, in my opinion, good separation from the statute. The focus on the statue is sharp with plenty of fine details to enhance the story being told. I do like the sense of scale that the photographer has created in this cheeky image by including the human in front of the Marilyn statue. |
| A Grade | AS Prepare to soar | HC | A very unique way of documenting the crew getting ready for a flight that I find very pleasing to the eye. I do love the radiant nature of the coloured balloon panels and how they draw into the central green area of the hot air balloon. To my mind the image is tilting to the right and while it is possible this may have been taken on a slope, I would like the photographer to try levelling the grass line to align the image within the frame. I appreciate that the image is well focussed and details are sharply defined. The lighting has been well controlled and I enjoy the way it graduates in tones from the left to the right . The photographer is to be commended for capturing one of the crew in mid-stride, it has added a sense of movement to the activity in the image. |

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| A Grade | AS Renovations | A | An image of a partly gutted kitchen under a stripped ceiling is what I assume from this image is the nod to the set subject. Living with a kitchen renovation is a undeniably a challenge, that I have experienced myself, and do not wish to do again. I am looking for a point of interest that speaks to the theme as my eye is drawn through the lower part of the image to the window and the yard beyond. I feel the natural light coming through the window is too strong, especially at the window and on the cupboards below. I would try exposing for the highlights (or adding some exposure compensation) when faced with scenes like this, to tone down the highlights and evenly balance the lighting. I can appreciate the photographer has seen an interesting scene telling the story of an unfinished kitchen renovation. |
| A Grade | AS Seeking sunshine | M | Under the debris amongst the overgrown grasses is a pop of colour from the emerging flowers. I get the feeling of a dilapidated building long-since abandoned to the march of nature. The photographer has captured the lovely range of textures in the crossing diagonal forms of the timber and the tin pieces which nicely frame the flowers near the centre. To my mind a little less of the tin on the right by a tighter crop would to give more dominance to the flowers. The photographer has done well to have seen this in the context of the set subject. |
| A Grade | AS Silver fern fronds | M | The photographer made a great choice to present this image as a monochrome to emphasis the silver underside of the fern. To me, while the details in the veins are seen, the focus does seem a bit soft and I wonder if this is from camera movement or unskilled sharp focusing techniques? Perhaps the photographer would consider refining their focus to ensure all elements are sharp and well-defined. I find the spots of highlights in the waterdrops a little distracting and wonder if these could be toned down in post. I like that the photographer has chosen an orientation of the image that enhances the repetitive aspect of the fronds across the horizontal plane of the frame. |
| A Grade | AS Swallow Bypass | M | I know what a challenge it is to capture the swallow in full flight and I commend the photographer for this full action shot. I like the nicely balanced composition with the wings stretching along a corner-to-corner alignment and the bird flying out of the image to the right. To my mind the focus is a touch soft and wonder if that is a result of camera movement or some over-processing of the image. While I appreciate that a vignette can aid in drawing attention to the point of interest, in this case I find the vignette too strong and I would try the image without it, or reduce its impact in post. The white spots on each tail feather are clearly aligned forming a white band as the tail opens wide that mirrors the spread of the wings, good timing by the photographer. |

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| A Grade | AS The Bell | HC | <p>I am pretty certain that this is my first one-eyed view of a bell. I like how the strong circular shape of the bell is centrally positioned in the frame as the dominant feature with some of the supporting structure evident at the edges. To me the partial face of the person at the top of the frame looking into the camera adds a touch of the Kiwi larrikin to the story which causes me to smile. I do find that the tuft of the larrikin's white hair is very bright and over-powering and I wonder if it could be toned down to keep my eye on the subject bell? I do like how the lighting has nicely exposed the patina up through the waist of the bell and that the sharpness and focus has detailed the wear of the clapper on the inside surface of the sound ring. A nice representation of the set subject</p> |
| A Grade | AS The Diver | M | <p>I can see how a jump into the refreshing river would be appealing on these hot summer days we are having. I can assume from the title and the single human foot that is poking out of the water, that good timing by the photographer has captured somebody just underneath the water surface. I feel the shadows of the overhead tree canopy are quite strong on the water and partially obscure the point of impact of the person. In my opinion, there is a lot of space of shadowed foliage around the lower and right sides of the splash zone that dominates the image. I believe that the image would be improved if some of this was cropped out to make the splash zone the dominant aspect of this image. The image is focused well to bring out the finer details in the toes and sole of the foot. I can appreciate how the shutter speed selected has captured the movement of the water as it splashes out from the point of impact.</p> |
| A Grade | AS The Gilded Cage The Atrium Sofitel | H | <p>Wow! What a myriad of shapes, lines and reflections that has been seen and captured from a unique viewpoint. From this architectural-style image I get a strong sense of the height of the structure as my eye is encouraged to rise up the vertical elements to the roof framework above, and then to the hint of the clouds outside. I love the colour palette of soft golden hues that vary in depth as my eye looks around in the image. I really like the sweeping curve of the lines rising from the bottom left corner into the upper third middle of the frame. A pleasing rich and warm image, well done.</p> |

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| A Grade | AS Under lock and key | HC | I get the feeling from the strong chain and padlock bridging the gap between a fence and what could be a gate, that this is a story of entry by authorised persons only. The tonal contrast between the foreground elements and the expanse of sky in the background suits the monochrome treatment used by the photographer. In my mind, I am distracted by what may be dust spots or possibly distant birds in the sky area, or are they parts of the spider web clinging to the chain? Perhaps the photographer would consider going over images in post with a view to cleaning up such distractions? I do like the clarity and sharpness that the appropriate focus has brought to the details that can be seen in the image. I think that the rough and flaking effect seen on the metal surfaces adds to the story of this being exposed to all sorts of weather conditions over a period of time. I like the creativity the photographers has expressed in this image. |
| A Grade | AS Under Mother's Wing.jpg | H | What a lovely image of a mother nurturing and protecting a chick who appears to have pushed aside the feathers to see what is going on out there. I find that the composition is nicely structured with the soft diagonal shape of the feathers wrapping around the head of the chick. The depth of field is effective in providing a soft embracing cover of feathers around the nicely sharp and focused chick's head. There is the pleasing pop of colour of the chick's beak as a centre point that draws in the viewer. And while I find the eye of the chick is a bit dark, I feel it connects to the darker tones tying the elements together. The colour palette of the image works well and there is a cohesive feel from the foreground to the background from the complimentary tones adding to the balance the image. I get a feeling of peace from the story. Well done. |
| A Grade | AS Under Mum | A | The photographer has nicely portrayed the story of a duck and ducklings nesting in the grass. While mother duck is the dominant element in the scene, I find her torso is soft in focus and contrast, affecting the detail of the feathers. I wonder if we would see more of the details with a stop or two of aperture to widen the depth of field. I do wonder at the two long stalks of grass cutting in front of the duck's bill and suggest that foreground distractions be looked for when framing an image. I enjoy that the composition shows how the mother is providing some cover for the ducklings in their safe haven. |

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| A Grade | AS Under the canopy | A | In this monochrome image, the photographer has shown the viewer the complexity of the dense foliage in the canopy of the tree above. Good focusing has revealed the detail in the shapes and forms of the foliage. To me this image is flat across the mid-tones with some bright highlights on the branch and in the background. I would suggest revisiting the treatment techniques in post to maintain a more authentic feel to the scene. I like how the composition has a strong directional element with the trunk and branch rising from the base of the frame into the canopy above. |
| A Grade | AS Under the rocks | M | I am taken back to those carefree days in my youth poking around in the rock pools to see what could be found. I get the feeling from the green algae on the rocks that the tide is out providing these youngsters with natural wonders in the pools and beneath the rocks. In my mind I find the image is a little over-exposed and perhaps using some exposure compensation would tone that down a touch. While the two children in the foreground are in focus, I like the way that the focus also carries beyond them across the boulders and onto the cliff. From a composition point of view, I get the feeling that the children are lost in the bottom of the scene and wonder if a crop from the top to just above the boulders would bring them into dominance as the point of interest? I appreciate how the photographer has captured the reflected colours from the girl's pink pants and the boy in the water in the foreground. |
| A Grade | AS Under the tower | HC | What a magnificent and imposing structure this tower is. I like how the photographer has handled the exposure to give a touch of detail in the shadows on the tower and in the doorway without over-exposing the sky and cloud highlights. To me, while I appreciate the difficulty of perspective issues when pointing up with a wide lens, it does seem that this tower also tilts slightly to the right which the photographer may choose to correct in post. The focus on the tower is sharp and I like the way the detail of the stonework is clear all the way up the tower. By including two people at the base of the tower to pay homage to the set subject, the photographer has also provided a sense of scale to the image. |

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| A Grade | AS Underneath Dublin Street Bridge | HC | A very urban street scene in a large city complete with the obligatory graffiti. I find the structural elements that form the underside of the bridge and the graffiti wall are in focus and clearly defined. The large overhead beams cover a significant section of the composition giving me an insight to the extensive engineering that has gone into building this bridge. The jogger is positioned mid-way between the columns, nice timing by the photographer, but I would like to see a bit more of the ground beneath his feet as I feel he is too close to the edge of the frame. I enjoy the sense of movement the photographer has created in the image, by the blurred jogger in mid-stride as he passes under the bridge. |
| A Grade | As Underneath the Canopy | M | The photographer has given us a view of a belt of trees against the clouds in the sky and I appreciate that there is a hint of the distant pastures in the bottom between the tree trunks that gives some dimension the image. I found my eyes were jumping around in the trees trying to find a point of interest to ground the image. In my mind, the lower right corner and the area on the right edge are a touch dark and perhaps some selective application of the Dodge Tool in post could be used to lighten these dark areas. I like the way that the exposure for the sky and clouds has given the strong silhouette style to the trees. |
| A Grade | AS Underneath The Water Tower.jpg | A | I enjoy the narrative in my mind as I imagine looking out from under the structure to the sunset beyond. In my mind, the wonderful pastel colours in the sky set behind an almost symmetrical foreground silhouette of the building elements is a nice balanced composition. I do think the sky has been added in post as there are white edges indicating some issues with the application of the technique. I also feel like there are some cloning blobs or similar inconsistencies in the details in the right hand sky panel that once seen cannot be unseen. I like how there is some dimension to the structure by the way that the lighting has picked up the a hint of the internal edges either side in the silhouette area. In my opinion, the photographer has created the basis of image that has immediate impact and with some polishing of post-processing skills, it could be a visually pleasing image. Keep trying. |

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| A Grade | AS Underpass | H | An evening street-style image that has captured a piece of city life at the underpass. Are they heading home or going out? My first look is to the coloured bands of lighting on top of the underpass, and then I am drawn down to the strikingly curved roofline of the underpass itself. It is in this area where my attention is centred and where I believe the story of the set subject is told. I feel there is a nice juxtaposition where the lights along the roofline above the street provide soft almost warm tones that contrasts to the colder tones of the natural lighting in the distance. I enjoy how the photographer has framed the full structure of the underpass to give a sense of scale to the underpass and the city life beneath it. |
| A Grade | AS Underside of native lily in the bright | M | A different view of this lily showing the structure of the leaf by what I see as the light coming through the leaf from above. The lighting enhances the folds and shapes of the leaf and I like the calming feel I get from the green palette. In my opinion, it is distracting that the central vertical midrib of the leaf seems to be of a different tone to the rest of the image and I wonder if it has been over-processed a touch? To me it appears that the focus is not as sharp as it could be on the midrib, yet I can pick out the details of the fine veins in the leaf, indicating to me that a shallow depth of field was used. The photographer has framed the image in a portrait orientation that to me compliments the strong vertical alignment of the midrib and veins. |
| A Grade | AS White fungi underside | HC | The photographer has done well to see these delicate white fungi that are usually found growing on rotting wood. I like the composition of the lead in up the tree trunk to the subjects above and then falling off to the dark space beyond. To my mind, a tighter crop to remove part of the dark background to left and right of the subjects could be tried to strengthen their dominance in the frame. I appreciate the challenge is always to balance the lighting to expose the scene correctly without over-exposing the subjects and I feel this has been achieved here. I am, however, somewhat distracted by the spots of highlights from reflected light source on some of the stems. I do like the toning of the pin line border that picks up the tones of the tree and serves to contain the image. |

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| B Grade | BO Condensing Breath | M | I am assuming this is underground in a cave, and I am not sure what the gentleman is doing. The composition of the image is almost creative, as it draws the eye to the man who is nicely positioned at the bottom right corner standing on a timber platform or landing. I appreciate that the photographer has chosen to present this as a monochrome image which I feel nicely shows the soft tones of the vapour from the breath against the harder more defined tones of the rock surfaces. The focus of this image is sharp and I can clearly see details in his clothing, although I find his right hand is a blur (is this from a shutter speed that was too slow?) indicating to me he is moving it for the activity he is doing. In my mind, there are some nice textures in the mid-tones and highlights on the rocks and on the wooden handrails. I think the photographer has maintained a pleasing exposure in a challenging scenario. |
| B Grade | BO It's Water Under the Bridge | HC | I can image a summer's stroll along the bank of a stream and coming to this peaceful scene underneath a bridge. I appreciate the long straight edge created by where the water meets the embankment wall drawing my eye from right to left into the image. The image is exposed well, capturing details in the dark areas and not over-exposing the lights. I feel that the angular bands of sunlight and shadows cast against the wall and onto the water surface, add some tonal contrast to balance the feel of the image. I feel that the busy area of vegetation to the left of the image draws the eye and I wonder if it could be cropped out to lift the feel of the image? I do find that there is a small distracting white spot in the bottom right that cannot be unseen and could be removed in post. I think it is a nice touch how the photographer has included the silhouetted duck gliding into the image which to me, adds to the serenity of the scene. |
| B Grade | BO Journey's End | M | From the scene full of canoes, the river and the disembarking, exhausted explorers, this tells the story of adventure to me. To me the focus seems soft and I would consider refining focusing techniques to ensure all elements are in sharp focus. In my mind, I find the image falls away to the right, and while this may be the curve of the far river bank, I would suggest to try levelling that bank to help balance the composition in the frame. Perhaps the photographer would like to try just a touch of Contrast in post to define the colour contrasts for greater impact. From the width of the river and that I can see there are still more canoes from the convoy yet to land, I can appreciate the scale of this adventure that has been told in this narrative by the photographer. |

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| B Grade | BS Concrete Mushroom | H | The humble spiral staircase has never looked so beautiful in my opinion. I find the composition nicely balanced on the concrete column while the steps fan around and up from the bottom right corner, however I would have liked to see a bit more space around the edge of the step at the left of the frame. The sharpness and clarity throughout the image shows good focus techniques in use, bringing out small details from the formwork marks in the concrete to the graffiti on the underside of the steps. I particularly like the way the apricot tones of the painted brickwork through to the grey tones of the concrete column have been well exposed, with nicely balanced lighting. A very unique and pleasing image. Well done. |
| B Grade | BS I've Been Naughty | HC | Oops, I've been caught, but maybe I can blame the cat? The cheeky look from underneath the cover (or is it a bed?) has me wondering and wanting to know more about this fellow. I do find that the cover is tilted down at the left and perhaps, as it is so dominant in the tones, it would be more balanced if it was level to the frame. I like that the depth of field used has most elements of the image in sharp focus and I wonder if the eyes are sharply focused? To my mind, the exposure for the dog's eyes is a bit dark and some selective application in post of the Dodge Tool on the dog could lift out the details more. I really enjoy how there is a continuity where the brown tones in the carpet are also picked up in the brown tones of the dog and then the white hair is picked up by the white tones of the top third of the frame. |
| B Grade | BS Touch the sky | M | There is a sense of uniformity with each of the trees as they converge near the upper centre of the frame. I feel that this could be a plantation rather than the randomness of naturally grown trees. I find that pointing the camera up through trees towards the sky and not creating overly blown-out highlights from the bright sun is always a challenge in getting a balanced image. In my opinion, the exposure needs some more work to soften the contrast between the bright green foliage at the tree tops and the dark trunks of the trees. And perhaps a smaller aperture (higher f-stop number) could tone down the impact of the sun and even produce some pleasing sun star rays. I like the way the photographer has seen the converging lines of the tree trunks reaching into the sky to portray an atmosphere of being underneath the canopy of giants. |

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| B Grade | BS Under the tracks | H | A unique viewpoint of the structure of a rail bridge that suits the monochrome treatment presented by the photographer. I am immersed in the strong geometrical shapes and lines and I like that the composition has framed the scene so that it has some symmetry between the top half and the bottom half. The horizontal and vertical lines of the structural elements are carefully framed by the diagonal braces in each corner adding to the balance of the image. The sharpness and focus has been well handled by the photographer with some exquisite details that can be seen in the way the bridge has been built. I like that the cross members are a repeating pattern that add to my interest in the complexity of the bridge's structure. Well done |
| B Grade | BS Underneath my foot | HC | I guess this is just like having that annoying pebble in your shoe that you just can't seem to get rid of. I appreciate that the portrait orientation of the frame suits the composition with just enough space allowed around the subject to balance the image. In my opinion, the lighting of the image is a bit flat and I wonder if the photographer could try some tweaking of Contrast and Exposure in post to improve this, especially around the dark eye? I like the good focus from the bottom of the foot through to the head of the bird. I do like how the photographer has been a touch creative with this viewpoint of the bird ,and by using that bright pop of colour of the leg tag, drawing attention to the underside of the foot and the story of the set subject. |
| B Grade | BS Underneath the lamp | M | An interesting scene that speaks to me of a town square with the central clock tower and civic gardens. From this perspective, I get the sense that the clock tower dominates the image and being tilted, to me it throws the balance of the image off. The flowering plant beneath the lamp has some dark shadow areas and I feel that these could be lifted and provide more structure to the plant by some work in post with the Dodge Tool, or even selectively tweaking the Curves for the darks. I feel that as the top of the clock tower is already beyond the frame, a tighter crop drawing down to near the top of the lamp would feature the plant as the dominant element in the image aligning more with the set subject. I like the way the photographer has maintained good focus throughout the image . |

| Grade | Image #1 Title | Award | Coment |
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| B Grade | BS Underneath the rails | HC | The depth marking on the pier add support to how this image speaks to me of the height of the rail tracks above the water below. I appreciate how this is a nicely constructed image, and the portrait orientation adds a sense of depth to the image. I find that the railway sleepers at the top of the image are a bit soft while the focus is detailed from the beam under the sleepers down to the water depth marking on the pier. I can appreciate that the lighting has been managed well by the photographer, especially when coping with the potential for highlights from the sun bouncing light off the water. The colour palette is nicely balanced by the tones of the soft rust patina of the metal elements and the tones of the timber rail ties or sleepers. I like how there is a repetitive aspect to the bracing to the pier and the shapes created over the water. |
| B Grade | BS Underneath the vines | HC | I get sense that I have been taken back to the Mediterranean where these minstrels are entertaining me under the grape vines. To me this is a lovely image of travel and enjoyment. The subjects are nicely framed in the image under the vines while sitting on the exquisite mosaic tiled parapet. I would like to see more of the image on the left where the guitar is cut by the frame to balance the scene. I find the slight light line running up the right edge of the column by the girl and the object in the bottom corner a touch distracting and wonder if a slight crop from that edge would be possible to clean the edge? I do like that the photographer has maintained good clarity and focus throughout the image. |
| B Grade | BS Who Me | H | This fellow is high on the cute scale and it made me smile. The 16:9 letter-box crop is a good choice to frame this composition. I can appreciate how the photographer has positioned the camera low to the ground to look directly at the dog which in my mind creates a sense of intimacy with the dog. I do feel that a touch of lightening on the upper lip would provide a bit more definition between the black dirt and black nose. I like that the photographer has paid attention to executing good focus techniques to highlight and sharply focus on the point of interest with a nice separation from the background which is softly blurred. I find this an enjoyable and totally relatable image of this dog. Well done. |