

What Makes a Competition Picture

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Often when judging I am asked what makes a competition picture?

These days technical competence is assumed:

- **Correct exposure** - most cameras have very sophisticated exposure calculation systems.
- **Sharpness** – autofocus cameras have covered this.
- **Perfect print/slide quality** – photographic labs are now fully automated.

All these things can be done automatically, so in competition you won't get any marks for getting this right. You may not have all of the above functions available to you but that is what you are competing against, therefore failing on any of these matters will see your picture put straight into the reject rubbish bin!

AIM OF COMPETITION PHOTOGRAPHY:

“To get people looking at your picture longer than everyone else’s”

So what does make a competition picture?

- ☺ **Heart** – It must show how the photographer felt about the subject, in a way that all viewers see it.
- ☺ **Interest** – It must be of interest to many viewers, not just the photographer.
- ☺ **Feeling** – It should capture the feeling of the moment.
- ☺ **Design** – It should have a sense of design or pattern.
- ☺ **Interpretation** – It should show how the photographer interpreted what they saw.
- ☺ **Seeing eye** – It should capture the subject in a slightly different way to how most people view it.
- ☺ **Composition** – It needs to be well composed, “the rules” are only guidelines.
- ☺ **Lighting** – It should use creative lighting using shadows to add mood and modeling.

Very rarely will a photograph have all of these items, but what a winner if it does have!!!

Hope these points help you in selecting your next work for competition.