

Critiques February 2012 – THEME – Human Emotion

From the Judge

To capture human emotion is not an easy task. In this collection of images, I feel that in most cases the photographers have done very well in their task and have produced an interesting set of images for all to study and enjoy.



All's right with the world – Sonya

B Grade

This image carries the emotion and bonding of a child and a parent very well. The expression on the child's face tells it all. The parent's face adding to the bond achieved here. Just enough of the older face to provide the balance needed to hold the two together.

Honours

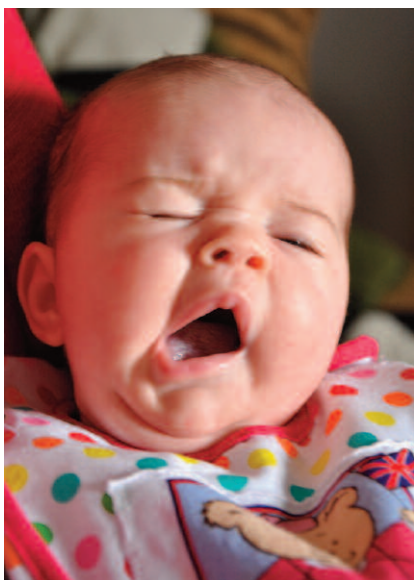


Anticipation – Jo M

B Grade

The title should be 'Anticipation', and here I don't think that the expression on this boy's face is one of anticipation rather than a worried look or doubt about what he might have to be involved with. The person in the background, having his hand in the air draws the eye away from your subject. His bright clothes against a dark background makes him show up more than I would like him to be. If an editing program were available, he could have been darkened down so as not to intrude into the image. A darkening of the highlights will also improve the picture as the white shirt has lost some colour and detail.

Acceptance



Bed time – Tina

B Grade

A well chosen title here. A good expression of emotion, and probably commotion as well, to confirm the title I am sure. The background could do with a bit of tidying to reduce the impact of the person standing at the rear. Otherwise, your composition and colour has been well handled.

Acceptance



Concert Happiness – Cushla

B Grade

The title here tells it all. A nicely chosen image and cropping to hold our interest only on the figure. Her expression is either elation or happiness, but one can feel the emotion flowing from this image. Well cropped to provide a good composition. The angle of her arms adding to the strong diagonals.

Highly commended



Flying High – Liz

B Grade

The viewer can feel the joy of the participants in this image – all three. The title is well chosen to convey this feeling in this delightful family fun time. As it appears to be a holiday snap, the cropping has been done to reflect some of this, however, I think a further crop from the right to remove up to the dip in the trees and down to take off some of the sky further increases the strength of this image. The dull light has not helped unfortunately, but many images must be taken whatever the light.

Acceptance



Go man go – Tracey

C Grade

One of the participants here is most enthusiastic about the event, the other seems to be backing the opposite team! Tight cropping has helped to concentrate the viewer on the subject and study these delightful expressions. I would have like this to have been a colour image, which I think would have strengthened the image even more.

Honours



Good to see you – Keith

B Grade

Well taken and titled. The tight cropping composes these figures to minimise the information and concentrates the viewer on the figures. The expression on the face tells it all, the arms around the neck confirming the emotion between these two figures. Nice one.

Acceptance



Grin and bear it – Liz

B Grade

Presumably these are brother and sister, hence the reaction. The contrast range in this image is fairly high, with the white sand absorbing a lot of the interest. This makes the lighting of the girl a little darker than I would have liked. An editing program to darken highlights a little and lighten the shadows improves this a lot. The expression on the boy's face is delightful and fits the title very well. One can feel the embarrassment he is probably feeling. I wonder if you have tried a head and shoulders crop for this image in a horizontal format. This concentrates the viewer on the image and works well to illustrate the title.

Acceptance



Groovin to the music – Cushla

B Grade

Going the opposite way on this image, I think to help your title, you should have used a full frame to show the full body movement that would go with the title. The expression is good, and the depth of field used has rendered the background soft which separates the figure very well. A great expression caught nicely here. The movement of the hand and arm we can see sets the tone of the title. Full frame may have improved the effect.

Acceptance



I'm not amused Dad – Geoff

B Grade

I am not sure that this image reflects the title. There certainly is an expression of dead pan face – perhaps this is the same thing. Your image is quite soft which does not assist the black and white image. The flashes of light shining through the lathes in the background are an annoyance as they are full white whereas the rest of the image appears muddy to me.

Acceptance



In the crowd alone – Carl

A Grade

A vague expression of desperation is shown here, or it is one of extreme sadness or prayer. The vignette helps to concentrate the viewer to the central image. The black and white image working here for this image. I wonder if the title would be more accurate if this figure was shown in the centre of a crowd, even if the crowd were on a seat in a bus or train.

Acceptance



Its cold, but I like it – Esther

C Grade

The body language here tells a different story to the title I think. Cold, yes, but liking the water spray would not appear to be on the agenda. Just enough water being shown to let us know what is going on and a shutter speed chosen to stop some of the water spray which shows up best on the dark background. This poor kid would love to get even I am sure.

Acceptance



Joy and Sadness. Last Day – Andy

B Grade

From this image, I see more joy than any sadness that the school year has come to an end or the exams are over for the year. The expressions on the girl's faces convey this to me very well. You seem to have used a vignette on this image. The dark upper left corner has possibly dulled the girl's face in this area where the other girl's faces are well lit and quite expressive. A good idea which has worked well.

Acceptance

L.O.L. – Dianna

A Grade

Certainly there are loud laughs here. Contrived perhaps? Either way, the triptych works and tells the story for us. The way the figures have been arranged to turn about slowly across the images makes this set even more interesting.

Honours





**Laughter is the best medicine – Jo M
B Grade**

I can understand the intention of this image, but it was taken either a little early or a little late to get the expression the photographer really wanted. The empty space on the left is a good idea as it allows the subject to look into this area rather than have a tight crop on the subject. There is a little burn out on the subject's right cheek as it tends to merge with the background. A good idea and generally it works well.

Acceptance



**Let's go – Tina
B Grade**

A very busy image, but one that carries a lot of energy from the central figure. This confirms your idea for the title. I like the way that the "seconds" in this picture are only partly included, thus concentrating the viewer on the central figure.

Acceptance



**Proud Dad happy Bubs – John
B Grade**

A great family image that will, I am sure, turn up at a 21st or a 50th birthday party, depending on the player at the time. The photographer has caught the faces well with pleasant lighting to display the image. The double diagonal composition is effective and the child's expression is one of joy.

Honours



**Put That B@##\$Y Camera Away – Geoff
B Grade**

I think that you have captured the expression for your title Perhaps grabbed at a party or some other event, to the ire of the subject which is plain to see. The white rail in the background shows up very strongly in this picture which tends to break it up somewhat. Toning it down would improve the image.

Acceptance



Safe – Esther

C Grade

The bond between the two figures here is obvious in this image. The arrangement of the faces and the child's arm grasping dad's shoulder enhances the title. Appropriate lighting, perhaps a little bright, but the detail is good and the image tells the story well.

Highly commended



Satisfaction – Andy

B Grade

Yes, the grin tells it all. Nicely captured in a crowd situation. The other figures are either looking away or partially hidden. Thus, the main character dominates the photograph for us. Good lighting and arrangement.

Honours



Shark maybe – Hennie

B Grade

More likely the water is cold. You have caught a great expression here and some action as well. The tight crop limiting excess information for the viewer and concentrates us on the image of the figure.

Acceptance



That Hurts – Tracey

C Grade

I think we need to see more in this image to complete the story. Otherwise we only have the face of the subject looking down with a partial frown on the face. To see the cause of the “hurt” would add to the story in this case I feel.

Acceptance



The Challenge – Robbo

B Grade

What an expression, and well captured too. Look hard and we can see that there is rain in the air. Nice light despite the overcast – which of course limits shadows that may have otherwise damaged this image. You have positioned the subject well which allows us to enjoy this image.

Highly commended



The winners – Robbo

B Grade

Quite an expressive pair of faces here. Fits the title well and shows us what they were doing to win. Nice soft light and good exposure. The interaction between the two is quite expressive.

Merit



Weary Traveller – Keith

B Grade

To some extent, the patterns in this image indicate the passing of the figure in a vehicle of some sort. I would have liked her left hand to have been on her eye – like her right – as this would to my mind indicate more that she was tired. The patch of light across the top of her face works well in this picture and lets us concentrate on the image, rather than the background.

Acceptance



What's happening – Marissa

B Grade

The various looks here seem to tell different stories. From interest to amusement to shocked stare. At events it is not always the action on the arena that is of interest, but the reactions of the audience, as we have here. I think that you have caught it well, the soft lighting giving us good detail without harsh shadows.

Acceptance



Who's one today – Adrian

C Grade

The expressions on all the players in this image tells it all for us. One does not have to ask who's party it is as the enthusiasm shown by this child is electric. A well captured image and worth the honours I have given it.

Honours



Yee haa – Marissa

B Grade

Three characters linked together by the girl's leg, all snapped at a party somewhere. The title is appropriate here I am sure and the expression on the girl's face repeats the title very well. A good expression of enjoyment on each of the players here, a nice circular composition captured by the photographer.

Merit



Yes Men Hug in Public – Hennie

B Grade

Yes, obviously the winning team or they have scored a try. Well caught with the action. I think your image can be even more effective if it was cropped from the bottom to leave out those on the ground, and from each side to remove the two people on the right and the left. This concentrates us on the stars of the show and yet keeps the most dynamic player on a third.

Acceptance

Critiques February 2012 – OPEN

From the Judge

Some really delightful and well thought images in this Open collection. The A grade workers will have to watch out, as some of the B and C grade images are right up there in quality. A good effort all round. Watch out for spelling errors in your original entries, particularly with place names.



Balancing Act – Liz

B Grade

A pleasant study of this child attempting to balance on a frame. The expression on the face shows the effort involved in achieving this. To some extent, having the right foot missing defeats the intent of the title. The photographer has captured this well I think with good exposure and the composition attractively achieved.

Acceptance



Brown eyed friends – Cushla

B Grade

A delightful image of these two girls. Well done to have the front one well in focus, and the other a little soft. This creates a little division and yet a bonding of the two faces in the image, letting us consider the faces and what the photographer is trying to tell us. The expressions on their faces tell it all. Well done.

Honours



Cicada husk – Geoff

B Grade

An interesting Natural History subject. These are not all that easy to find in such good condition. The cicada nymph sheds its outer husk after it emerges from the ground and comes free as an adult cicada, leaving the husk hanging onto something. You have caught the image well with good lighting and sufficient depth of field to allow us good detail of the image.

Highly commended



Coromandel sun line – Marissa

B Grade

All of the interest in this picture is concentrated in the centre of the frame with such power and brightness, the interesting parts each side seem less visible. I like the line of birds entering the frame on the right. A little longer before the shutter was pressed may have put them further into the frame. As it is, I think there has been too much included. A crop down to remove the blue at the top and about a quarter off the water at the bottom makes a nice panel. But over all there is too much going on in the centre.

Acceptance



Going for it – Adrian

C Grade

A good idea to use follow focus for this image. There is great expression on the face of the rider, which fits the title very well. I think a shallower depth of field to blur the background even more would have added to the effect of 'going for it'. Probably a shame that the buildings are so light in colour as the rider does not show up as well as he might have otherwise.

Honours



Heading home – Tracey

C Grade

Delightfully delicate colours produced in this image. A nice idea handled well. I would have liked the photographer to have moved slightly to the right to allow us to see just a little of the distance of home. The way it is we have a closed lane. The white coloured fence in the distance does brighten the end of the view, but a little more might have improved my appeal of this image even more.

Highly commended



Lampost no more – Dianna

A Grade

A good use of colour here to produce an image. The only way that we can believe that this was a lamp post is the identity disc pressed into the post. Otherwise it is only a red lichen covered post pointing skyward nicely presented strongly on the thirds.

Acceptance



NZ Rower – Robbo

B Grade

The use of a sepia colour tone here has made this image look a little 'muddy' to me. Adding to the contrast or reducing the saturation to black and white creates a more expressive image for me. That aside, I think that the idea has been created well for your title with a minimum of information to clutter the image.

A good idea.

Merit



Rainbow – Hennie

B Grade

A very strong light caught here with nice light on the trees across the water. The foreground tends to be a little messy and had the photographer been able to look over it, there may have been nice light on the water also. The few leaves at the top right of the picture are un-necessary. Good exposure and a pleasant arrangement otherwise.

Acceptance



Summer colour – John

B Grade

We have a clever arrangement of the flower and balance of the colour across the frame. The flower has been placed at an angle, which aids composition and the colour blurs in the background reflect the real image very well. An attractive and well handled image.

Highly commended



Tea – Carl

A Grade

This is a subtle image using the minimum of information to create a picture. The red of the cloths and the placing of the tea utensils have created an interesting image for us to see.

The blank space at the bottom right is a bit of a worry and could have been reduced by cropping up to leave just the tip of the table cloth at the bottom.

Honours



The wonder of nature – Jo M

B Grade

With subjects like these, it is a toss up as to how much depth of field to use. This lichen is a plant that has a lot of fronds and can be difficult to take well. You have done a good job here with what you have had. I don't know how far away the background was, but here, if the light area behind on the left had been darkened, the image may have been improved.

We usually take a dark umbrella to create shadow on a background which works well.

Good exposure and the diagonal composition creates more interest.

Acceptance



Up and Away – Tina

B Grade

You have caught this bird lifting off well. The flash has unfortunately not helped with the lighting making for a very confusing background. Flash often increases the contrast, as we have here, and the background has been close enough that the shadows of the bird are an annoyance. The next problem we have is with the short depth of field used. The bird has turned its head and gone out of focus and yet the detail in the tail feathers is good and shows good detail. A good idea, but not handled as well as it might have been.

Acceptance



Wistful thinking – Keith

B Grade

I like the dreamy look here, the over pattern helping with the wistfulness of the image. All of your subject is more or less central here, the empty space being mainly on the right, where I feel that more space on the left would improve this image. To make it more dream like, try a reduction in contrast which will then tend to make the image more high key in appearance.

Acceptance