

When I Judge any image, I'm looking at a combination of the 4 elements in my Diagram, all are equally important, and interconnect.

This is the initial "**Visual gathering of information**"

P = Personal impact of the shot - mostly at first viewing I must admit, but does the Image strike me immediately as standing out in at least one of the 4 elements, if it does then most Judges would say it has the "Wow Factor" !! ... next is the property of ...

E = Experience - in my own personal photographic journey and knowledge base, has this subject matter or content type, or even physical or digital process, come within my zone of experience. Judges are often looking for that something NEW, or more difficult to photograph OR production-Edit, than normal ... this is element that prevents boredom in the viewing of the Image.

S = Symbolism - If an emotional response, Happy sad, funny, erotic, disgust, pleasure, wonderment, etc. etc. etc., is quickly forthcoming, then the image is usually more important to me as a viewer.

T = Technicals - Am I looking at the most favourable technical qualities in the image for the subject matter, especially composition of main elements, Depth of field, point of focus, correct use of positive and negative space, the basics of good digital image production (Levels, Curves, Brightness-Contrast, Colour quality and Saturation, Noise, Sharpening, Jpeg artefacts and Resolution). Of course, I'm also on the lookout for the cases where less favourable technical qualities MAY be present but are quite appropriate to the Image made by the Author, examples such as, excessive Blur to enhance motion, or excessive Noise to emphasize applied textures. These cases are then NOT at all penalised obviously.

Finally having bought all of these into account, I make a "**decision where the Image may fit into my Judging**" scheme ... Thus **scoring** it from say 1 to 5 OR **awarding** it a Non-Acceptance up to an Honour.

I will finally say that any particular winning image MAY NOT have all of these 4 elements in equal proportion, but will usually contain some elements of them all and sometimes MORE !!!

It is also important to say that at NO TIME do all Judges agree (The others are of course quite entitled to be wrong !! ... just kidding !!) We are Judging a rapidly changing Artform, Any Judge should keep themselves abreast of modern developments and especially Digital image editing and production processes. Modern Photography is centred around our modern Digital world, we as Photographers MUST adjust. The artform has now progressed into fields such as Altered-Reality, Surrealism and Abstraction, more akin to Digital artwork. Mind you I personally appreciate nothing more than a great and well edited Pictorial landscape for instance.

Understanding the elements above, indicates the difficult Job, Judges have when carrying out their duties, especially if it is an Impact Judging, such as occurs in many Nationals and Internationals, when the timeframe to consider these elements might literally be 15 seconds !! In my opinion Judges must always consider supportively both Positive and Negative elements when giving advice to any Image maker.

STEP 1: GATHERING VISUAL INFORMATION

P

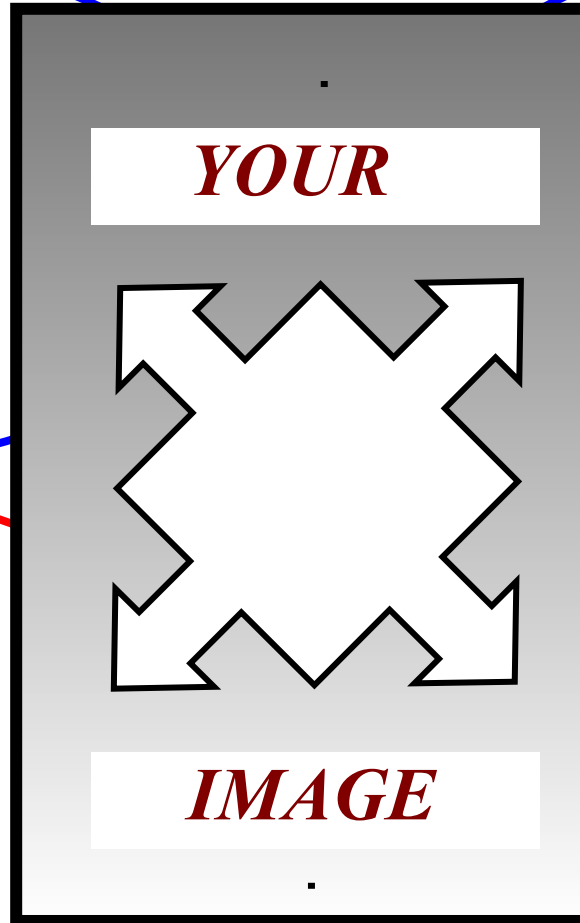
PERSONAL IMPACT

Does your image have
Visual WOW factor !!

E

EXPERIENCE

HOW does its Content
relate to my own
knowledge base



Does your Image
invoke an emotional
response or represents
good Symbolism

S

SYMBOLISM

Are the Image Technical
qualities
Appropriate

TECHNICALS

T

STEP 2: FORMING A DECISION & JUDGEMENT