

**-Phillip Island Monthly Club Competition – Judge Feedback for - March 2022 - Subject – OPEN - Judge - Margaret Zommers**

*Please refer to Judge Instruction Letter for ratings: **HC** (Highly Commended) - **C** (Commended)*

Sequence by Title	Member No	Title	Judge Rating	EDPI
1	326	<b>Bath Time</b>		A great subject for a photo– you can understand what pleasure it is giving him/her. I like the vignette as it keeps the focus on the bird in its bath, and removes the impact of the shape bottom right. With more editing skills you will be able to remove that shape and substitute grass there. An issue for you to be aware of – the birdbath is not straight. If you run a plumbline down its stem you will see it is off to the left a little. It can be straightened easily in Lightroom in the transform function – rotate it by 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> of a stop. In future be careful of the angle from where you shoot. You could have removed those distractions before you shot.
2	876	<b>Bay of fire</b>		No wonder you took a shot of that sky. It is stunning with its great horseshoe curve. It is also good composition to have the water flowing in (or out) from bottom right as that leads in to the middle of the image. I think overall the image is a little bit too dark. When I increased the exposure just a little bit or used the shadow slider the image went purple red so I suspect you have used the wrong white balance.
3	377	<b>Beak Orchid</b>	C	Sharp, beautifully coloured and you have worked on the background to make it not intrude. I gave it a C and not an HC because I think even more blurring of the background might add something of benefit. Another suggestion, chop off some of the stem and present it in a square crop. Try that and see what you think.
4	431	<b>Bedraggled</b>	C	Bedraggled is gorgeous. You are so right to put it in a square mode. Well- lit but could be a little sharper. Darken the mid-right edge too.
5	326	<b>Boat shed Cradle Mountain</b>	C	I got a surprise to see this iconic scene with its world- famous lake chopped off. But then it is definitely good photography to take a well- known scene in a different way. Watch out for ghosting on the edge of the mountains, usually caused by over sharpening. Taking any building ¾ on so that you see two sides is usually preferable.

<b>6</b>	399	<b>Bottle brush snack</b>		Good eye contact with the camera, a catchlight in its eye and space in front of its beak – all good compositional aspects. A suggestion, not a criticism, this image would also work as a central, square crop. It could be sharper.
<b>7</b>	866	<b>Calm Morning</b>	HC	You have broken three rules here, shot straight down the middle of a pier, and we always advise standing on one side of a street, lane, road, path, bridge or pier as taking it on one side is more dynamic. The pier is not on an angle which is the second rule and the third rule you have broken is not to have something at the end, a visual reward for travelling along that length. Yet this image works. Always remember rules in photography are guides not gods. However, I would give it a dose of mid tone contrast to crisp it up.
<b>8</b>	487	<b>Centrepiece</b>	HC	Wow. Lovely. A central crop works well. Colourful, well lit, sharp. If you had wanted to you could have darkened the mid-right edge too. But that is not significant.
<b>9</b>	487	<b>Clouds over Dalmeny</b>		Those clouds are to die for. Soundly composed the only suggestion I would make would be to use the shadow slider in Lightroom or similar software package to lighten the darks in the land mass. That gives the whole image a lift.
<b>10</b>	862	<b>Coober pedy SA</b>		Another extraordinary sky, with all the clouds concertinaing into a point just behind the caravan. But the foreground, to my eye, is too dark. There is a hint of a car and another shape and the viewer would prefer to know what is there so use the shadow slider to show what it is. Not too much, just enough so that there is no mystery but there is also no visual rivalry with the sky.
<b>11</b>	866	<b>Crack of dawn</b>		A stunning dawn and a really strong, powerful crack in those rocks in the foreground. Next time you have a major feature like this, place yourself so that you take it off centre. That is usually more dynamic. The issue I have with this image is that the foreground rocks are too large, too dominating in the image.
<b>12</b>	869	<b>Dawn winds through Inverloch</b>		Another really lovely sky and the stack of drift wood is a simple subject almost off centre. I would give this one a vignette too, not because it needs it because of white or pale light round the edges of the image but to give it a polished, completed look. There is something smudged on one of the verticals, towards the middle.

13	869	Daybreak over Andersons inlet	The sky is fantastic the way its rays of light are all dragging the viewer's eye towards the land. The very long shutter speed gives the sea a mirror calm appearance. The issue I have with this image is that the posts sticking out of the water are too far dispersed for balance and they give the whole image an empty feel. Shooting on your tummy would concertina the distance between them, compressing the middle distance.
14	862	Devils marbles NT	These rocks have an extraordinary balance and their shapes are great. There is a strange luminous edge to the sides of this image which I would have shaved off with the crop tool. You have shot into the light which means the marbles are in the shade. A touch of the shadow slider would help bring back detail into them. That same luminous line haloes the marbles too. That needs to be removed in photoshop. Put the brush on darken and run round the rock edge with the sky colour.
15	399	Eagle	This bird looks extraordinarily fierce. You have blurred the background so that it doesn't compete, left room in front of that powerful beak, and got a catchlight in its eye. All great. The focus drops away towards the edges of its body so I would next time have a larger depth of field (he is apparently relatively stationary so a slower shutter speed would allow a higher f stop) but as it is, add some mid tone contrast as that is a pseudo sharpening tool. Drop the highlights to get some detail into that white beak.

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16	601	Little native orchid	This is beautifully placed in portrait mode. It is well lit and the right amount of the orchid is selected. The background has rightly been blurred to keep it from distracting but sadly the orchid is not sharp.
17	601	Pink lakes sunset	I think your compositional skills here are exactly what is called for to capture this pink lake at this time of the day. Very pink. A real ruby golden colour to

				the light. However, the quality of the pixels does not allow for much editing and it is a bit soft, particularly the trees and grasses in the background.
<b>18</b>	875	<b>Egret in flight</b>		A fantastic shape with those long legs, long wings and a goose neck bend in its neck. Quite beautiful. I went into the colour tool and reduced the luminance of blue to make the sky bluer and therefore the bird stands out more.
<b>19</b>	431	<b>Evening colours</b>		This image has a very unusual colour pallet, more green than we normally see. I like it. The colours in the sky are wonderful and the reflection of the setting sun in the water also. The C curve we normally see in the shoreline is here in the line of vegetation that makes for a great foreground. I would add my usual 3 condiments to that foreground though, highlights down, shadows up and mid tone contrast. If you wanted to make the colours more typically Australian, tweak the white balance temperature and tint but I like it as it is. I didn't give it an honour because I suspect you have made a white balance mistake which is very noticeable, though I like it.
<b>20</b>	325	<b>fishing</b>		An artistic concept with its golden emptiness but sadly the finished image has a large patch of blown out highlights which are always a distraction. The histogram does not show that it is blown out so I am guessing that you have changed this to a mono in post processing and then saved it as a Jpeg which means it is now not possible to reduce the highlights. I salute you for experimenting but such a large patch of white is usually not liked by most viewers. Keep experimenting though.
<b>21</b>	361	<b>Fringed Tulip</b>		I have never seen such a tulip and what a beautiful flower it is. It is set off well against the black background, the leaves and green step are blurred so as not to compete and the light on it is great. Sadly, it is not sharp.
<b>22</b>	377	<b>Ghan railway station</b>	C	This has the makings of a really excellent photo because it is sharp, well lit, has texture and colour in the brickwork, a fantastic sky, nice setting but it is too tightly cropped so that the structure appears too big in the frame. It is overwhelming being so dominant. If you have more room in the original, leave more space all around it. If not, next time, take it from further back.
<b>23</b>	869	<b>Healsville Koala</b>		What a sleepy animal. To think we are losing them, soon to be extinct. Here the koala is on a third line, his delightfully clasped hands leading lines to his face. The background is correctly blurred. I would have painted the dead

				branches which are very pale, so that they are darkened, to stop them becoming eye magnets, or crop some of them out.
<b>24</b>	862	<b>Lake Heart SA</b>		This reminds me of the salt flats in Bolivia. Good sky, good detail in the lake, good body stance of the walking figure. Being so small, the figure conveys a sense of scale but to my eye, and this is a very personal reaction, he/she is too small and insignificant. Perhaps that is the message. Also centred. What do others think? Is the lake too big in relation to the person or not? Getting down low would contract the middle distance if you wanted to do that.
<b>25</b>	866	<b>Marina morning</b>	C	Wonderful sunrise, wonderful C curve, great reflections in the water and unlike many marina shots I see the masts all sticking up into the air do NOT distract as they usually do. Try my three condiments, to bring out crispness on the land at the right edge.
<b>26</b>	361	<b>Mario's tomato</b>		Wouldn't that be full of flavour, that home grown tomato! Great to add the sprig of basil and green and red work well together. I am not sure about the bowl it sits in. You know what you are looking at but I didn't know if it was a liquid so that this tomato is about to be reduced down into a soup or was the bowl flecked with that pattern. A minor distraction, that bowl to me only, perhaps and not others. Not sure.
<b>27</b>	876	<b>Melbourne night Glow</b>		The blue hour, before the black of night sets in and wipes out all detail in the sky is a great time to shoot. Here the buildings are almost like a silhouette against that lovely colourful sky. A dark shot, with the two collections of buildings pointing in towards that lovely bridge, almost like fingers on both sides. I personally think it is a little too dark and would increase the exposure by $\frac{3}{4}$ stop then add shadow detail. It works as it is though.
<b>28</b>	487	<b>On guard</b>	HC	A great shot. Good range of blacks through to lights, sell set on a diagonal, and well cropped.
<b>29</b>	325	<b>pegleg</b>		Good camera connection and a non-intrusive background. You have shot nearly into the light, with just rim lighting on its left side but the main part of the bird is in shadow which is not the best presentation. Try a vignette to add a sense of completion, of polish.
<b>30</b>	325	<b>Picture perfect</b>		It is certainly a sunset that could be described as picture perfect. Lovely reflection of the sun on the water and beautiful dark colours throughout the

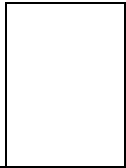


image. However here there are shapes bottom left and at the corner of bottom right which distract and I wonder if the image might work better with more exposure, so that it is clear to non-photographers that it is a tripod and camera we are looking at.

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31	876	Princess pier	HC	This is becoming an iconic shot – I have seen a lot of it over the years but this one is fantastic. Balanced, beautifully lit, sharp, nice detail throughout. Long exposure so the water is smooth.
32	377	Bungles		Excellent sky, fantastic shapes in the Bungles, and an interesting foreground. I like the light part of the foreground as it gives contrast to the heavy bungles but I would take a bit off that foreground to keep the earth being about 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> to 2/3 <sup>rs</sup> middle and background. That is what our eye regards as more or less balanced. There is too much foreground here.
33	447	Family outing	C	You have captured a great sense of movement here with the wake behind the boat and the diagonal. There is room for the boat to move into. The image is sharp. The dog and the girl are looking at the same thing. The others are all looking in different directions.
34	601	Orb spider	C	You have done well to get this spider with its black legs so well contrasted with a grey background. However, I would have burned (as in dodged and burned) the light patches there with a brush. The body is sharp and a wonderful colour.
35	447	View down spencer street		I didn't know we had a twisted skyscraper in Melbourne. Shows you how long it has been since I was in the city and down that end. It is a good shot because of that weird building. Note that it is possible to straighten the other buildings but in photoshop, using the transform function, then distort by pulling at the edges of the frame.
36	601	Xerochrysum Viscosum		I wonder why you did this one in Black and White? It is okay as it is but I think it might have worked even better as a colour image. The condiments crisps it up. In a single flower shot, try not to crop off a petal.

37	377	<b>Yellow Tailed Wallaby</b>		The quite darkish vignette works well here because the wallaby's limbs are the same colour as the sandy earth. If it were my image I would have brushed some light into its face as that is in shadow. It is nice to see it mid hop and you have left space in front for it to move into but there is motion blur in its legs. It could be sharper.
38	399	<b>Prom pano</b>		This image has some richly coloured and nicely shaped rocks set amid tea-tree scrub and a blue sky. Its main issue is the foreground which is so pale. Never have the lightest part of an image at the bottom, nor at the edge of an image. Darken it with a graduated filter. Mid-tone contrast always helps landscapes. This shot would work better not as a panorama, in my opinion.
39	361	<b>Protea</b>	C	Both the flower and the vase are pin sharp. Such vivid colours. Any of the reds/oranges and any of the blues complement but here both are so luminous. With a crop like this make sure it is centre, with the same amount of space on the left and the right, also top and bottom then put it in a square mode accurately. It is nearly square here.
40	487	<b>Rainbow Lorikeet</b>		The Lorikeet's head is sharp, with a catchlight in its eye and space in front of its beak. However, the body sharpness falls away quite quickly below its head so I added mid tone contrast as a pseudo sharpener. I also went into the red colour pallet and pulled back the saturation for the reds, just a tiny bit, to stop them rivalling the beautiful bird.
41	361	<b>Red Poppy Bud</b>	C	Gorgeous. Luminous, simple, stark against the black background. Try another presentation: a square crop with some of the stem chopped off.
42	399	<b>Red trio</b>	C	Three is always compositionally an excellent number, vivid against the black background. The colour is gorgeous. With pink, red, yellow or white flowers they often don't look sharp when they are because the camera finds it hard to show a red edge against another red edge. Here a big dose of mid tone contrast worked or, the way the professionals do it, is to convert the colour to LAB where you can play with the luminosity layer independently of the colour layers so convert from sRGB to LAB, change the luminosity, then change back to sRGB.
43	431	<b>Reflection perfection</b>		This is so very nearly a perfect shot. It is beautifully sharp and well lit. There is foreground interest and framing on the right. However. the one factor that detracts from it is that the line shoreline in the distance make for visual clutter



			behind the moored boat. Could have blurred that shoreline? It would take a lot of work to de-emphasise it in photoshop. Don't forget what is in your background when taking shots.
44	869	<b>Screw creek Inverloch</b>	This has all the compositional elements for a good shot but it is a little flat. It needs some oomph. I would use my usual 3 condiments, drop highlights, increase shadows and mid tone contrast plus in this case, a graduated filter from the top to make the sky stormy. So, a darker sky and the condiments would give it a real lift, in my opinion.
45	431	<b>Soft kitty warm kitty</b>	What a dear little animal. This would work well centred in a central crop. You have shot with a flash (see the square catchlights in its eye) and flashed front on which makes it two dimensional. If at all possible, remove the flash from the camera and hold it up and to the side.

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46	876	<b>Splish splash</b>		The seagull's head is sharp and it is looking towards the camera. You have captured it in its setting and I feel that perhaps some of the surrounding water could be cropped out. The rule with negative space is that if it detracts from the subject crop it out. Here I think it needs to go.
47	875	<b>Stump Astro</b>	C	This is a dramatic shot with a great capture of the night sky. The lighting is excellent, it is sharp and well exposed. There is wonderful texture in that front stump. However, I think the stump and its offside dominate the image too much. It would have worked better taken from further back to make it smaller in the frame.
48	325	<b>triplet</b>		Three vivid flowers displayed as a V shape. And three is always a good number compositionally. You have blurred the background to stop it intruding but I feel the three flowers are too far apart. That being so, shoot just one.

<b>49</b>	326	<b>Trot on</b>	A beautiful capture of this horse and its rider and carriage, sharp, well exposed and with room for the horse to move into. However, the horizon is very crooked. Why did you take it on a tilt? For effect? I would prefer it straight.
<b>50</b>	326	<b>Up and over</b>	A beautiful action shot with a strong vignette. The strong vignette keeps your eye focused on the horse and rider, but it is very strong. That means the vignette itself rivals the horse and rider so normally use a subtler one. There is motion blur throughout so a faster shutter speed would have been better.
<b>51</b>	862	<b>Walpa Gorge NT</b>	I think this is a very difficult gorge to get a good shot of, as here the bare walls tend to dominate and the empty blue patch of sky does not really justify itself as being the subject. The small figure certainly gives you scale but to my eye the interest is all in the foreground. The rest of the image steals the impact away from that foreground. I would as a first step try taking it from further back. Take a look at how others have shot it on google to get ideas as to what to do with this sort of structure. I wonder if stepping more to the right would have minimised shooting into the light.
<b>52</b>	866	<b>Wasp stalking water</b>	It is a terrific wasp but I think the other elements are too dispersed. I would crop just to the wasp.