

Star	TITLE	SCORE	AWARD	First	Last	COMMENT
1S	Did you wash your hair today	12	Gold	Nyasha	Godoka	This moment of intimacy has been well captured and has a good storytelling component. That the eyes are closed on both people lends itself well to the overall appeal. The exposure has been handled well and the conversion to monochrome works to make the couple stand out against the very busy background. A slightly tighter crop on the left would aid the composition and eliminate even more of the background and focus on the subjects.
1S	Granpas little girl	10	Gold	Nyasha	Godoka	An endearing moment between two generations which includes the juxtaposition of old and new as portrayed in the hands and skin textures. The emotive impact and connection between both subjects is evident, well done. The overall exposure on the image is particularly bright, rendering the entire background without detail and as such, the light overwhelms the image. This is merely a matter of practise and selecting the correct aperture when presented with bright sunlight scenes so that the author controls the light. I would have loved the little girls white dress to draw my eye into her but it is seemingly lost due to the overall amount of bright whites within the image. I hope the author captured a few images of this scene, as babies are always so busy, and perhaps has a shot where her hand is not covering her mouth so that the viewer can see even more of her. The author could add a tad more contrast to the mono conversion for additional "pop" as it is a little greyscale as presented. As a junior worker, the author has a good eye for storytelling, keep it up.
4S	a casual pose	11	Gold	JOAN	JUNG	What a fantastic, muscular model to use for this super, low key monochrome rendering. The side lighting works well and there is good interplay between the light and shadow areas which has highlighted the gentlemans form very well indeed. A hair light on very low power would have added separation of the subject from the background as his hair is lost as presented. The necklace adds an interesting, additional element to your image and also allows for some white to come through in the monochrome conversion, giving my eyes a place to rest once I have fully appreciated his fine form. I am certain he absolutely loves this image! By means of improvement, and because I am viewing the image on an iMac 27" screen, pay close attention to post processing brush work as is evident around the head and left arm as this has a negative impact on your image. One last improvement for the author to consider is the composition. The author has presented the image in an almost 1:1 ratio with a lot of negative space that adds no additional context to the scene. In addition, the "V-cut" of the abdominal muscles are right on the edge of the border and are quite distracting to me by virtue of the fact, and not just because I am a lady, that my eye is trying to "fill in the lines" further down. So either the author needs to crop a little higher to exclude them (a real pity) or... be daring and intentional and crop a tad lower so that your composition is even stronger. The author could try a 4:5 ratio and see what they think? Please try these improvements and enter this image into a salon and I am sure it will get the acceptance it deserves

4S	Dawn Melanie	11	Gold	Meleney	Naik	A pleasing, joyous and candid image where the natural light has been handled advantageously. The styling is interesting and the headpiece doesn't compete with the simplistic blouse. Whilst the light spill across the subjects face is a tad bright, it is not unflattering. The monochrome conversion is fair and suited to the subject matter. By means of improvement, the author could look at the composition of the image. The models eyes are looking to the left and over her shoulder, so that is where more space is required and not as presented on the right hand side. The bokeh on the top of the frame is very bright within the dark shadows of the foliage and pulls the viewers eye from the beautiful subject matter so rather tone it down or remove completely. A little dodge and burn in post processing to define the subjects face better would be advantageous.
4S	Day Dreaming	9	Silver	wynand	lens	I can understand why the author took this image as the young lady is quite beautiful. The backlighting is particularly appealing and lovely shining through her hair. There are a few things that are not adding to the value of the image. The background wall/ fence structure is not straight and the pole close to the models face has a hard edge line which is very distracting. In addition, it has been darkened down too far to be natural when one looks at the bright light on the model. An image always needs to make sense to the viewers eye. Yes, darken backgrounds down but try keep it authentic. Whilst we do not take the title into consideration at salons, at club the author names images to give some context to the story they are trying to tell. In this case it is titled, "Day Dreaming" and yet the model had direct eye engagement with the author and looks a little annoyed? This may be by virtue of her eyes that are all the way into the corners? Had she been focussed ahead of her, to the left of the image the message would be stronger in my opinion.
4S	Hard life	11	Gold	Jan	Lens	This image has strong eye engagement and good tonal range for a monochrome conversion. There is enough detail in the background to add context to the mans environment and add a little more to the storytelling aspect. The author has rendered the image as gritty and the variety of textures in the scene - the wooly hat, the rough skin detail and the wiry, white beard details all add to a pleasing image. To score even higher, I would have liked to see a little more of the gentlemans face on the right hand side and slightly more of the hat. There is a "fuzzy" area on the the left of the mans jacket that needs a little attention. Overall, a good monochrome portrait

4S	Homeless on the street2	9	Silver	Jan	Lens	<p>It is said that a good portrait photographer doesn't just take a photo, but they are able to capture the persons soul or essence. Only by virtue of the title, "Homeless on the street" was I aware of the mans circumstances as he looks gentle and kind. Well done to the author for depicting this in your portrait. I spent considerable time looking at this image and appreciating the gentlemans smile, eyes and facial features. He is indeed a good candidate for monochrome portraiture as his dark skin and white hair are a good starting point combination. The author has a good, base image but there are a few post processing matters that could be addressed to elevate the image to a higher score. There is a lot of noise and this could be that a high ISO was used to capture the image. The eyes need more light for the viewer to engage best with this character and the overall contrast is too high. The author could consider removing the very white spot under the gentlemans nose as my eye goes there immediately. If the author has a few images of this gent, please revisit them and select an image where you are able to open up your composition a little. I can see that the gentleman has a piece of hair, or a curl in the centre of his forehead. This may be characteristic and it would be good to see more of the hair on the top of his head as well as the bottom of his beard. Please try these improvements and see if you find any of them beneficial</p>
4S	Nonchalance	9	Silver	Meleney	Naik	<p>The author has taken the time to create a styled portrait with good attention to fine details. The model is a good fit for the clothing and I enjoy the way the square cut of her fringe is balanced by the high neck chocker jewellery and the high neckline of the dress itself. Perhaps I would have only had the one period piece chocker necklace as my eye does spend a little too much time on the other two necklaces instead of on her striking face but that is a personal choice. The criss-cross lacing of the dress is also an added element of interest and complemtns the chocker necklace too so well done on a super styling effort! A few points for the author to consider going forward. Be very careful when using background select in post processing. The left edge of the models neck and the right cheek are very fuzzy and this is most unfortunate. The lighting is very even across the models face and there is little shadow detail which in turn renders the models features as flat and formless. She is leaning away from the photographer which looks uncomfortable and apprehensive. Could she have been seated in a position in the garden that wasnt quite as busy as the trees and lines in the background are very distracting and my eye goes to the brightest area, the white "patch" on the right hand side which is not what we want to focus on.</p>

4S	Rage	13	Merit	wynand	lens	This low key image differs from the usual chocolate box offering as the model expresses extreme emotion. The fall of light appears to be natural across the top of her head, on the cheekbones and the right shoulder. This has been well handled and does add form to the woman. The repetition of the floral theme is strong and plays a good supportive role in the image. Additional dodge and burn across the flowers at the bottom and the subjects face would enhance this image as would selective lifting of the shadows on the hair so that the viewer sees a little more definition as it is blending into the background a little too much. A fine attempt, well done
4S	shankie	12	Gold	JOAN	JUNG	A strong and engaging portrait of this elegant lady where the lighting has been carefully considered and placed. The monochrome conversion is good and the composition sound. By means of improvement, the author would elevate the image by a little more refinement in post-processing. Using the spot heal or remove tool brushes, clean up the lint as seen on the right shoulder and down the jacket. The jacket is oversized for this lady and as such consider using the liquify filter to nudge in the jacket arm and bit more and remove some of the crinkles too as this will be more flattering to her form. To avoid enlarged pupils, one needs to have extra light in the setup. Sometimes a small table lamp will suffice but this depends entirely on the overall ambient light and what the author is wanting to achieve. In monochrome it is not as evident as it is in colour imagery. Finally, the author has elected to shoot the subject against a very black, tenebristic background which introduces a spotlight effect on the subject and also renders the clothing merging into the depth of the image. By means of improvement, a little separation between the background and the lady would be fortuitous and this is easily achieved in post processing if you were to add a layer beneath your subject and introduce a spot of light that you could use for edge definition on the left or right hand side. Just a suggestion - try it and see if you are in agreement?
4S	Show of Strength	10	Gold	Mags	Vosloo	The pose and the composition make this image compelling. The triangle form of the arms on a diagonal, always translates well as a visual element and brings a sense of dynamic into the picture. The lighting has been well-handled to emphasise the muscular toning and excellent physique of this gentleman. That the author has composed the image including a little of the mans jeans adds a good base/ anchor point to the scene. A little more light across the top of the head would have added detail to the hair which is lost against the black background but this can be lifted in post-processing. Whilst I believe the graininess and noise contributes to this image, unfortunately the image is not in focus. As a starting point, set your shutter speed to be at least the reciprocal of your focal length of your lens for handheld images. Unless the author is exceptionally stable (and hasn't had copious cups of coffee ahead of the shoot) when shooting unsupported, the images will not be in sharp focus and this is a real pity. I hope there are other shots in this series where the images are more crisp as you have a fine eye. Keep it up!

4S	Togetherness	12	Gold	Mags	Vosloo	This is a lovely family image and a good idea to convert to monochrome too. The overall exposure is a little bright with evidence of a hotspot along the little girls white top and on the mothers bright eye. Reading the image it appears to be a one-light setup with the light coming in from the left hand side. This does render shadows across the parts of the Mom and Dads faces where the light gets trapped on the little babys face as she is positioned in front of her parents. African skin is also very reflective and introduces hot spots across the forehead and nose areas with ease. One needs to manage this on the day and in post processing edit afterwards too. A slight change of placement and a large, soft octabox would even out the lighting but even so, as presented I believe the author has presented an image that this family will treasure and that is what it is about
5S0	Forever friends	11	Gold	Heidi	Taylor	A happy and youthful image of these two friends spending leisurely time together. As it was shot on location with bright water as the background and little light on the ladies, the result is very even toned across the faces with clipped whites and black areas devoid of detail. The connection and eye engagement as well as their lovely smiles captures the moment and makes for a pleasing candid image
5S0	Musician	11	Gold	Heidi	Taylor	A particularly joyous capture of this musician doing what he loves - creating music with the unusual instrument we can just see on the edge of the frame. The impact is in the gentlemans gesture which is profound and engaging. As it is likely the author had no control over the environment the image was shot in, they could drop the overly bright whites which are overexposed and pull my eye from the mans face and this will strengthen the image considerably
5S1	Moonlighting	11	Gold	Maxi	Holder	A calm, sepia portrait rendering of the jackal which depicts fine fur detail and a dominant profile view with the ears up. The eye is sharp and impactful. The author could consider adding a little more texture and clarity to the image. It appears as though a white vignette was added and this lends itself to the softness of the portrait and balances with the area just under the ear that has rendered a little more out of focus which I enjoy. Thank you
5S1	Sidwell	11	Gold	Maxi	Holder	The author has presented a strong profile of this gentleman. The image is a strong candidate for a monochrome conversion and this has been handled fairly well. The expression on the mans face is intriguing - he looks deep in thought. The clothing and fabric hat are very bright and the hat especially has trapped the sunlight from reaching the mans facial features. This isnt necessarily a bad thing but the result is that the face is flat and somewhat even toned and thus needs a little extra TLC in post processing to really define the mans features better. Try a little dodge and burn to bring more form into the mans face and pull down the exposure and highlights selectively on the clothing.

5S3	Black Swan	12	Gold	Ronelle	van den Heever	An interesting capture of the Black swan, usually we avoid shooting down onto subjects but in this instance I love the vantage point and the curious gaze of the bird. The composition is strong and there is interest throughout the image along with good focus on the eye and on the head feather of the swan. I enjoy the movement in the water too as it makes for a dynamic image, well done
5S3	Cape Vulture Mono	12	Gold	Ronelle	van den Heever	Up close and personal works in this image along with the good feather detail and the vultures gesture too. The background has been nicely handled and there are no elements competing for attention. By way of improvement, the negative space on the left does not add any additional value to the image so I would crop at least 25% of it away and rather keep the viewers eye completely engaged with the bird. The visible eye is sharp and even though a little dark, there are a few small catchlights to depict life. I enjoy the fall-off of focus and transition from the birds neck to the light and airy plumage behind. The author could tone down the highlights on the birds back as this is the brightest part of the image and does lead my eye away from the focal point somewhat
5S3	Guinea Stare	12	Gold	Des	van Tonder	A bird that presents well in both colour as well as monochrome photography. The author has presented a pleasing, profile portrait with good fine feather detail and focus where we need to see it, on the eye. I appreciate the intentional negative space that gives the bird space to look into. There is a little visible noise in the background which the author could manage in software but it is not negatively impacting my enjoyment of the image
5S3	Woman	10	Gold	Des	van Tonder	I can see what the author was trying to achieve with this image. The lady has been slightly offset to the right of the composition which is more interesting than a central placement. The focus is nicely on the eyes and the skin edit is authentic and charming for a lady of this age, well done on not rendering her too soft and unnatural looking. The model could have tilted her chin down slightly for a more flattering look. What is unfortunately bringing the image down is the large areas of completely over-exposed white fabric that has lost all detail. This sadly overpowers the beauty of this lady. I hope the author will be able to work with this lady again and experiment with the studio lights to better balance the exposure whilst capturing even more detail in the fabric
5S4	Airshow distractions	9	Silver	Rob	Hart	This young lady does not look all that happy that you have interrupted her leisure time and yet, the storytelling value of the image is almost more about generational attitude and the importance of cellphones to the youth rather than an airshow. Extensive brushwork is evident and this needs a lot more refinement to be successful especially around the hair area and arms and fingers. In addition, there is a lot of dead space above the young ladies head that does not have any information and thus does not add to the image. The author can consider a 1:1 crop as this will eliminate this area completely

5S4	Happily back on earth	10	Gold	Rob	Hart	This gent certainly does look pleased with himself! I can see that the light conditions were harsh and for the most part the author has made a good attempt to control the exposure across the mans facial features. Whilst the rope and parachute area is very bright, these elements add to the storytelling so the author can return the image to Lightroom or Camera raw and pull down the highlights and exposure a little more to keep the focus on the man. In addition adding a tad more contrast and doing a little more post processing could elevate the greyscale rendering to blacks with more impact
6S1	Cant Wait	13	Merit	Leon	Heyes	What a beautiful dog and a fine portrait too. All the boxes have been nicely checked. Ears up; catchlights in the eyes, fantastic fur detail, a super monochrome conversion and a wet, healthy nose too. I just want to reach out and touch this beauty. This image is most deserving of its com - well done...however, why stop there? I have seen very similar images be awarded medals in national salons so how does the author elevate this image even more? Its the lacklustre wall background that is bright and has a little texture too that doesn't support this portrait well. The author could consider doing a subject selection in post processing and adding a different background and perhaps even a texture on top of that... as long as you keep the dog the hero this image is a fine pet portrait, very well done!
6S1	The Thinker	14	Merit	Leon	Heyes	After being "teased" by previous images of this model, finally the winner emerges! Why this image you ask? The pose emphasises the gentlemans physique perfectly. The light has been sculpted to fall exactly where we want to see it and it has created mood and drama. I would have liked to see part of the gents other hand that is hidden away and seemingly cut off at the wrist, but I haven't penalised the image. The author could consider toning down the shiny line across the ear. I believe this image will do very well in a salon, please do enter it