

Cat	Title	SCORE	AWARD	Firstname	Lastname	Comment
MC	Coiled	11	Gold	Toni	Harley	This is a really nice image which meets the challenge specifications well. It is really pin sharp on the primary subject. I just wonder if you could somehow have removed the other stems in the background. I don't know what lens you were using other than 35 mm focal length but I am sure that you have the option of an aperture wider than f/6.3 to reduce the depth of field even more if you wanted to do so.
MC	Cycad Cone Mono	10	Gold	Aimee	Hendriksz	The mono conversion has been well done although unfortunately the darkest tones are completely lost so the blacks are not going to change. There is a lot of digital noise and I think that the image may be slightly over sharpened. I see that a phone was used so control is sometimes difficult. All that said, you have nailed the challenge requirements very well and so are scoring a 10.
MC	Eggs Homegrown.	11	Gold	Minky	Goodbrand	This is a beautiful image which we may have seen before. But I wonder why you used f/22 which then required an exposure time of 8 seconds. maybe it was to get enough depth of field but you could have increased the aperture to say f/14 or f/16 which would have reduced the risk of lens diffraction. But the image is good, and meets the challenge well.
MC	Geometric bark	9	Silver	Lesley	Marchant	This is another good shape and texture image. The blacks are slightly washed out but that does not matter too much in this image. You chose sensible settings but that minus 0.7 exposure might have caused the blacks to go. Perhaps if you had not used that and instead controlled the post processing with some form of contrast tool to reduce the brighter areas it might have come out a bit better. f/5.6 was skirting the danger zone for lack of depth of field but almost all the image is sharp. The one-sided lighting has resulted in the edges of the tree trunk being a bit dark.
MC	New Beginnings	8	Silver	Marc	Gordon	This picture would seem to meet the requirements of the challenge but it would have been better placed in a different place. It tells the story linked to the title but the story is more important than the shapes and textures which are required for this challenge. I do like the warm and cool colours and the hint of yellow in the bokeh is a good counter to the yellow flower in the foreground. Your exif data shows good exposure choices but unfortunately the whole image is soft.
MC	Nuts Bolts	9	Silver	Minky	Goodbrand	I feel that I have seen this image before in a different category where a B/W conversion was suggested. Although Photo Vault should prevent this if the same name is used it is possible to re-enter an image if a different name is given to it. Of course it could just be another frame from a series of shots with the same setup. It meets the requirements of the challenge but is something of a confusing jumble - perhaps there are just too many pieces in the picture. If you had taken just a few and assembled them into some or other geometric shape it might have been better. Or taken the whole lot and somehow assembled them into a shape or pattern. The highlights are a bit blown which could easily be fixed in post.
MC	Potential Wishes	10	Gold	Marc	Gordon	This is a great picture for the challenge because it conveys an overall impression of cuddly softness and that comes from the texture. Thus, although it is entirely soft in terms of focus I am scoring it quite high but not on technical criteria. I am probably at fault for this. By way of guidance, the whites are slightly blown out but a simple nudge of the highlights slider fixes this. I suggest that you try flipping the image horizontally. We read left to right and having the eye come in and then move across might be better than having it hit the primary feature and then be left with empty space behind it.

MC	Roped	11	Gold	Toni	Harley	This is great for this challenge and it meets the requirements very well. I guess it was taken in a very shady place since your exif data suggests that you were really scrabbling for light. Wide aperture (f/4), slow shutter (1/60) and high ISO (1600). If you had gone to f/5.6 for better depth of field you would have had to slow the shutter even more. Maybe your hands are steadier than mine but I would have had to go to a monopod or tripod. Those can be a bit of a nuisance but they do slow you down but which actually helps you to become a more thoughtful photographer. I have scored you quite high but a greater depth of field would have given a better score.
MC	Stoned	9	Silver	Lesley	Marchant	Whata lovely old stone wall with the moss growing in the joints. These are supported by the green amygdalae in the basalt rock. There are plenty of shapes and textures but unfortunately only a relatively narrow strip down the centre is in focus. I realise that a scene like this is bound to be beyond the capabilities of most lenses. My hyperfocal calculator suggests that you were not far from achieving a greater depth of field but Perhaps standing a little further away would have helped and you could still have cropped it to shape with sharp emphasis on the right hand edge.
MC	JHB Airport at midnight	11	Gold	Sandra	Comrie	What a lonely place to be at that time of day(10 pm)! Your use of leading lines for shapes is really good and the floor and windows add a bit of texture as well. There are very small amounts of extreme tonal washout (black and white) but in that sterile environment it doesn't matter. Well done.
MC	The Pier	9	Silver	Sandra	Comrie	You have handled the exposure really well here with the none of the black/white extremes being blown out. Unfortunately the shapes and textures are weak because of your standing position. While you may not have been able to move around on the pier very much, some more separation between the features would have better emphasised their shapes and also possibly eliminated some of that empty top right quarter of the frame. Focus falls off rapidly and by the time the second R2D2 column is reached, there is already loss of definition.
MC	Mesh	8	Silver	Joan	Lindegger	This was an interesting find for this challenge. I am not sure about the string at the lower edge but some may say that adds more shape. The shadows are a bit washed out but a quick fix with the appropriate slider helps that a bit. Much of the top edge of the netting is out of focus and that has let you down. Raising your aperture to perhaps f/8 would have given you some leeway to improve that.
MC	Red circles	10	Gold	Joan	Lindegger	I am assuming from the exif data that this picture is from the same person who had the image of netting. While the focus is better here the use of a smaller aperture would have helped you bring out the texture really nicely. Gentle use of the contrast slider also helps there.
MC	Shapely falls	13	Merit	Gustav	de Wet	This image suits the challenge requirements perfectly well. It is striking and we all know exactly where it came from. I guess that it was taken from some distance away since it appears slightly soft but that is probably a cropping artifact and not an original focusing fault. The shutter speed of 1/5000 ensured that there is detail in the water spray. The dark blacks may not be everybody's taste and they could easily be lifted. This could easily be printed and put up on a wall although I would be inclined to leave the border out.
MC	Woven waves	10	Gold	Gustav	de Wet	I looked at this image for some time trying to decide whether I liked the bird or not. As a bird watcher I did like it but as a photo judge I am not so sure. The bird immediately becomes the focal point of the image but it takes your attention off to a far corner of the frame. While it is a shape, it is strong, and the textures which fill most of the frame become secondary. That is a pity. Adding some contrast makes a huge difference as it brings the eye back to the larger space of the image. I am not sure why a black border was included.

MC	Chalk it Up	10	Gold	Meleney	Naik	There is no shortage of shapes and textures here and plenty of colour as well. The exposure is well handled. You used f/16 which should have given you plenty of depth of field but much of the image appears soft. I have chosen to attribute this to the soft nature of the subject and have not penalised you accordingly.
MC	Fern to be	9	Silver	Jan	Lens	This fern bud looks to be a real tangle but it will sort itself out eventually. The key part of the image is tack sharp at the front but most other parts are soft. This is surprising at f/13 so perhaps a focusing problem is indicated. Did you use autofocus? It can sometimes let you down. For a static subject like this it can be helpful to use live view, zoom in slightly, and then focus manually. Obviously that does not help for moving subjects. The background is overly conspicuous and so separation is not good. It would have helped if you could have darkened that area somewhat so that it does not form a distraction. Beware of specular highlights.
MC	fig that out	9	Silver	Liest	Couperthwaite	That red pulp looks delicious. This image meets the requirements of the challenge to a large extent but the peripheral areas rather let it down. The (little) fibre hanging over the left hand edge is a distraction and once seen, cannot be unseen. The bright light on the right hand side is another attention grabber and then bits of the background and the bottom right corner start to become apparent.
MC	Flutter	14	Merit	wynand	lens	This picture sort of saturates the challenge requirements but could do well in many other genres as well. There are shapes and textures everywhere and to anyone who has seen a flock of pigeons fly off it seems to capture the very essence of the sighting. Exposure is good and one has to look hard see if there is colour or not. Well well done.
MC	Petals On Wood	10	Gold	Meleney	Naik	I cannot figure out how this was done but it does meet requirements. The image is certainly sharp and exposure is well handled. Very small areas have lost the shadows but that is not an issue here. I am personally not a fan of the old dictum that strong elements should be present in groups of odd numbers. If true then perhaps just one flower placed to balance the wood knot in the top left corner would have been enough.
MC	Ready to bloom	9	Silver	Jan	Lens	This is an image of many parts which are unfortunately rather discordant. The unfolding petals have plenty of shapes and textures but only some of it is sharp. In fact the sharpest part of the image is the leaf in the bottom left corner. Over exposed highlights are a distraction which can easily be reduced. The other bright green pieces are overly powerful and the out of focus stem in the background could also be darkened. While all of these things have shapes they draw attention away from what should be the main part of the story.
MC	side table and plants	11	Gold	JOAN	JUNG	This is a very easy image to look at and is razor sharp where it needs to be. The mix of warm and cool colours is pleasing. In regard to the requirements of the challenge, the shapes and subtle textures in the red ironwork are what struck me the most and fixed your score.
MC	Split	9	Silver	wynand	lens	A very cool image with almost no warm tones in it. I might imagine that you spent some time in thinking about how much of the blue at the bottom to leave in or to crop out. I am not sure about it. However, my feeling is that this is an image in two halves which rather compete with one other. Although the left half has more detail in it I think that the right half on its own would be enough to meet the challenge. Play around with a tighter crop and see what else you might find.
MC	sweet lemon	8	Silver	Liest	Couperthwaite	I can almost taste that lemon but am only allowed to assess the image on photographic criteria. The image appears to be very soft although that probably comes from the subject. As a result the shapes and textures which are there do not show well. I have prepared a revised version which brings the textures out a bit more.

MC	the three stones	12	Gold	JOAN	JUNG	Beautifully exposed and an image that certainly matches the challenge criteria. The three stones are tack sharp and are undoubtedly the stars of the show. I would have like to see a little more depth of the field to include more of the sand and especially so toward the lower left. Perhaps a slightly higher f stop because you had lots of wiggle room in the ISO and shutter speed. But, all in all, well done. You must have a very steady hand to have raked the sand so beautifully. Just a pity that you moved the bottom stone a tiny bit after placing it, but that had no effect on the score.
MC	Prickly pear	9	Silver	Heidi	Taylor	Well spotted for this challenge. The central three fruits, along with the fly, are sharp but unfortunately the left hand pair are definitely not so, and the right hand one is a bit suspect as well. Exposure is good although there are large areas of completely washed out black. In this image those are not a serious fault. At five star level you are really under the microscope and so the out-of-focus light patches on both left and right are distractions, and should have received a bit more attention.
MC	Urchin	8	Silver	Heidi	Taylor	If ever there was an animal suited to this challenge the humble sea urchin has to be it. The B/W conversion is well done with none of the highlights being blown. Unfortunately the top left and bottom right corners are so far out of focus that they become objectionable. I would suggest that more of the principal urchin should be in focus and perhaps more of the bottom left urchin as well. It might have helped to move your subjects around a bit. You used a 100mm lens and I wonder if it was a macro lens. If so it may have tempted you to moving in too close and so lost much of the focus in the image.
MC	Autumn Leaves - 4335	13	Merit	Terry	Burne	This is a wonderful warm image and the focus across the front leaf is tack sharp. But I have to wonder if the softness of the back leaf was deliberate with use of f/3.5 or was there some other reason? In my view both leaves are equally important. Composition is excellent with even the empty space being a contributory factor. The yellow patch in the top left corner is understandable but is, to me, a bit of a distraction. However, I guess that having it there, in that spot, was probably a deliberate choice. The blemishes near the top and bottom of the yellow leaf could have been cleaned out a bit.
MC	Shrieking Lesson Done And Dusted	9	Silver	Maxi	Holder	Whilst this is a pleasant image, and the bug is in focus, a lot of the growth on the tree is not in focus. I also don't feel that there is enough emphasis on the topic of 'Shapes and Textures'
MC	Overflow shapes and textures	13	Merit	Rob	Hart	Another Midmar image - I wonder when we will see the likes of this again. The B/W conversion on this image has been beautifully done and is really striking. There is a slight halo along the crest of the water. It is not conspicuous but could be addressed post processing. The symmetry is perfect. This is another one to print large and hang on a wall.
MC	Rusty roof shapes and patterned textures	8	Silver	Rob	Hart	There are shapes and textures in abundance but unfortunately much of the image is out of focus. The three roof vents and the leaves behind them seem sharp but the roof sheeting is a jumble. The author used f/10 but I guess that the focus points didn't cover the roof sheeting.
MC	Mosaic of Africa	DQ	DQ	Leon	Heyes	DQ. Taken prior to the 1st November 2024.
MC	Peacock Textures	DQ	DQ	Leon	Heyes	DQ. Taken prior to the 1st November 2024.