

## **A Souther Sunset HC -**

Great composition focussing the eye on the central lighthouse with leading lines of path, fence, lateral walls and clouds.

Lighting also a result of good timing. Low lateral light gives good definition of landscape elements. Warm light at beginning/end of the day is pleasing to the eye. Contrast range good with shadows and highlights well controlled.

## **Addams Family**

Very sharp detail of fascinating building, plenty of detail here. Intense blue of sky is well handled and looks natural – perhaps would benefit from a cloud or two?

Slightly weaker area: dark shadowed area in lower right corner has blocked up shadows and dominates too much of the image.

## **Alone in the Wild**

Good depth of field and the image creates a good sense of a bleak landscape. Limited detail in the sky means that there is little impact from sky especially in top right.

Possible methods of improvement: portrait format to concentrate on tree in upper half of image and leading lines in limestone pavement helping focus on tree. Lower viewpoint would help, creating strong leading lines and making trunk of tree more obvious (currently becoming lost in limestone pavement). Monochrome conversion would allow increased contrast in midtones for greater impact.

## **Anyone for a Tango**

Expertly taken image of this hare with slightly anthropomorphic pose. Shallow depth of field and low viewpoint help to concentrate the viewer's attention on the subject.

Muted colour palette of the vegetation allows the subject to become slightly more prominent whilst at the same time suggesting its natural ability to hide in an open landscape.

## **Autumn Cascade**

Good colours and central leaves sharp. Depth of field rather shallow: red stems in lower section of picture draw the eye in, but the leaves to left and right are out of focus.

Highlights to right, and upper right of picture are distracting, either darken down or change viewpoint. Having drawn the eye in to the background, the fencing becomes more evident.

## **Autumn in the Park**

Excellent composition with slightly low viewpoint and framing of the distant building by the surrounding trees. The statue of the right provides interesting foreground interest, and the outward facing bench is slightly unsettling, creating an interesting tension.

Slightly dull weather conditions have created a slightly 'flat', low-contrast image. Boosting the colour temperature of the foreground trees and foreground leaves in post processing would help improve this. Darkening the sky or oncreasing the contrast would help to emphasize the detail that is already present.

## **Autumn Walks**

Similar in many respects to previous image. Composition excellent with all lines in the image focussing the eye on the distant tower. I personally appreciate the small size of the tower as the leading lines force one to contrate on this.

The sky is much better in this image with interesting detail, but the trees on either side would benefit from a slight lightening/colour boost to emphasize the autumn colours.

## **Beach Club**

Interesting architecture and plenty of detail but there is a slight lean to the right (evident in the columns on the left of the building). Tree on the left frames the image here but lacks detail and the resulting shadow is rather dominant.

The image crates for me a feeling of absence and I feel that there needs to be a human element; at least one or two figures would help dispel this. The decorated lamppost on the right is slightly incongruous; the decoration suggests human influence, but there is nobody there...

## **Beautiful Plumage HC**

Fantastic portrait of this gannet with all the feather detail preserved, especially difficult in this white-plumaged bird. Dynamic pose with penetrating gaze on the blue eye and the dark facial markings all emphasizing the direction of the gannet's gaze.

The dark, out of focus background frames the bird well, and the light area behind the crown of the head, probably another gannet, has been toned down so it does not distract. Perhaps only improvement could be to not crop the bird's breast on the left so the subject was completely framed by the dark background.

### **Bolton Abbey**

At first glance a moonlit view of the abbey set against a starry sky, however there are too many suggestions of a composite image. Moonlight strong enough to illuminate the buildings to this degree would tend cause the stars to become less apparent and the subtle colours along the horizon (with the green suggesting the northern lights) would have been lost. Closer examination reveals light fringing around the trees on the left, and to a lesser extent around the margin of the abbey.

A good idea that could be improved by reducing the brightness of the foreground perhaps with a slightly bluer tone and improved technique where the selection of the foreground overlies the background sky. The stars are unfortunately slightly blurred also with a suggestion that the focussing has not been quite right, rather than star trailing due to a long exposure.

### **Busy Little Bee**

Good exposure with highlights just about held in the petals so that there is detail, but they are not especially distracting. The bee is basically well exposed but lightening the shadows of the face around the visible eye would help define the facial features more.

Sharpest focus (and focus is crucial in macrophotography) seems to be in the hairs just behind the near wing so a greater depth of field would help this. The area of the eye is slightly softer than the hairy body and this needs to be in sharp focus.

### **Can't You See I Am Eating?**

Another good composition, with the shape of the branch on the left counterbalancing the squirrel well. The colour of the foreground heather complements the colours of the squirrel, particularly the colours in the tail.

The background is suitably out of focus and frames the subject well but would benefit from being slightly desaturated, especially the rather strident yellow-greens behind the branch on the left.

### **Chinatown**

Fascinating, selectively desaturated image which repays close attention, revealing especially the subtle colours reflected in the pavement on the right.

Lightening the shadows would reveal some more detail in the shadows of the buildings on the right and left edges of the image. Currently there are a few too many dark areas, especially as there is some necessary sky in the top left of the scene. The scattered bright highlights do not bother me as they are an inevitable consequence of a brightly lit night scene.

### **Chrysanthemum**

A lovely, ethereal plant portrait with a luminous quality to the white petals. There is detail retained in all of the petals and the central coloured area of the flower is extremely sharp.

There has been some softening in the corners of the image which enhances the artistic effect, although in the top left corner the presence of some darker leaves creates a slightly artificial look to my eye. Compositionally, the flower is positioned slightly to the upper left of centre and is facing towards the corner – perhaps a more central positioning of the flower, or a change of viewpoint would prevent the appearance of 'looking out of the image'

### **Corner House**

Well composed architectural image where the photographer has chosen a viewpoint which shows the corner setting of this pub/restaurant. The viewpoint is also slightly raised which allows the vertical components of the building to remain parallel.

A first glance, it would seem to be an image that requires a human presence, but the rainbow in the window is an important clue; this image was recorded during lockdown is an important record of a historical event.

Technically, there seems to have been a polarising filter used, and the blue sky is a little intense. The signs on the corner of the building would also benefit from darkening slightly so that the wording can be easily read.

### **Dancing in the Moonlight**

Very imaginative idea, with two dandelion seeds positioned on a reflective black (glass?) surface. Well lit, and the positioning of the subjects within the frame is good.

The image would benefit from an increased depth of focus: the seeds of each pappus (technical term there!) are very sharp with great detail but unfortunately the 'parachutes' are somewhat softer. A smaller aperture would allow the whole of the subjects to become as sharp as the seeds – the increased exposure time would not be an issue as long as stray draughts were controlled.

## **Dartmoor Falls**

A difficult subject due to the high contrast range of the scene. This has generally been well handled by the photographer although there has been some loss of details in the reflection highlights.

The composition is well-balanced, and I find the fallen tree in the upper half of the picture an interesting focal point and strangely insectile. The balance of light and shade is generally good, although lightening the rocks on the left would help balance the difficult contrast range.

## **Empire Invasion HC**

An extremely well-constructed composite image which could be used as a movie poster. Many elements have been used in this image and one should always question whether they are photographic elements captured by the photographer. I assume that this is a mixture of models, a cosplayer, some architectural elements and some cleverly chosen objects to represent the taller buildings. The composite image has been well lit in Photoshop to complete the image.

Perhaps the lower right corner is a little empty when compared to the rest of the 'busy' image, but maybe this is where one would place the text or film title. In spite of my initial concerns about the provenance of the photographic elements, I am happy to give the photographer the benefit of the doubt and consider this to be well worthy of its placing, although more detail in the lower right would have elevated it further.

## **Fishing at First Light**

Great pose from the kingfisher, well positioned on a rather attractively decorated stick! Great side lighting from the right of the subject with a shadowed, out-of-focus background.

The bird is well proportioned within the frame and I find the composition pleasing. My one concern concerns the strength of the light which causes some of the lichen on the branch to be very bright and distracting, although this aspect could be easily be toned down. The strength of the side lighting also creates deep shadow on the left of the bird, whilst the white area under the bill has lost detail due to overexposure. Hopefully the original image is a RAW file, and most of these lighting could be resolved by revisiting post-processing.

## **Give us a Bite**

Well-observed candid image captured with great timing. Although only one of the subjects is looking directly at the camera, one suspects that the left-hand figure was aware of the photographer and 'playing to the camera'.

The exposure is good, with highlight detail well retained, although the figure on the right has a shadowed face due to the size of her hat - this would benefit from lightening slightly – there are already catchlights in her eyes. A slightly cluttered background would have benefitted from a wider aperture to throw it out of focus, but there was probably not time to change this whilst capturing a fleeting moment.

## **Goths at Whitby Abbey**

Another image where the exposure has been well controlled; both figures are dressed in dark clothing, but there is plenty of detail visible there – including a raven, perhaps stuffed? The subjects have obviously engaged with the photographer and have adopted suitable poses, rightfully showing pride in their costumes.

Perhaps the positioning of the subjects against a sharp and brightly illuminated abbey from the strong sunlight detracts from them slightly, it should be possible to blur and darken the background slightly to enable them to become more prominent.

## **Half Full of Colour 3rd**

A well illuminated and composed tabletop image. The splashes of colour, coming only from the contents of the glasses complement on another well.

Of course, the upside-down, half-filled glasses prompt the question: How was it done? Perhaps the condensation visible on the glass on the left provides a clue. However it was set-up, the image is technically proficient, with intriguing subject matter and holds one's interest well; the story is in the setup of the image. Still wondering how it was set up...

## **In Memoriam**

A bold composition, with all lines converging on the central war memorial. The image tilts slightly to the left, easily corrected by a different crop, but it would have benefitted from the photographer taking a step to the right to achieve complete symmetry of the left and right halves of the image.

The exposure is good and sharp throughout, and I suspect that a polarizer has been used to saturate the colours. Another street scene strangely devoid of people – perhaps a return to the scene at his time of the year would be useful, with the likelihood of wreaths adding to the colour of the scene.

## **Light in the Shadows**

Great detail in this close-up image of the seed head of Rosebay Willowherb. Very sharp focussing and the subtle detail in the background shows that this image seems to have been taken outdoors, not in the studio.

An attractive image of a messy subject that is difficult to portray in a tidy fashion, with perhaps the main concern being the slight over-exposure of the main mass of seed in the upper centre of the image.

## **Little Tommy**

Great portrait of this young man in period dress, the missing tooth being a bonus for the photographer... Sharp detail in all the right places – eyes, nose, mouth, right hand, clothing on left shoulder. The slightly blurred left ear is a little concerning, but probably a result of the choice of the aperture which has prevented the detail in the background wooden panels dominating the subject.

A fine portrait overall with great engagement from the subject, perhaps the vignetting is a little strong for my taste.

## **Louvre Reflection**

Fascinating reflection of the glass pyramid at the Louvre with subtle colours of sunrise/sunset(?) reflected in the glass panels of the pyramidal structure and in the still water. Sharp image and great care seems to have been taken at the capture stage, perhaps with the use of a tripod, and the apex of the pyramid has been carefully placed at the upper edge of the picture. It is therefore a shame that we have lost the reflection of the apex of the pyramid at the bottom of the picture.

A personal opinion – the black border is a little heavy for my taste. Some border is necessary as the image is viewed on a white background and there is little detail in the sky in the top left, but the width of the border serves to emphasize the shadows of the buildings on the left, which come to dominate the composition.

## **Marina Reflections**

Restful image with long exposure allowing the reflections to blur slightly. Distant side of harbour does not quite bisect the picture, but I feel that works to the photographer's advantage.

One point of concern is that the sky and reflections are almost equally bright, possibly because of graduated filtration, either at the taking stage or in post-processing. I would expect the reflections to be slightly darker – this could easily be remedied in software as if this was being done, then lightening the lighter areas of the row of buildings would increase the contrast here and give greater impact.

## **My Happy Place**

Apparently, a garden corner boldly photographed against the light. The rays from the sun spread out from the top of the image and are quite striking, whilst the composition of the line of red flowers of the Crocosmia across most of the line of the upper third of the image are balanced well by the purple lupins in the lower right which are backlit.

Unfortunately, there is very low contrast in the image and almost nothing approaching black. This is due to light leaking in front of the sun directly in front of the photographer, causing some internal reflections between the lens elements. This could have easily been remedied by sheltering the lens from the sun when taking, either with a lens hood or using a hand or card to prevent light entering the lens directly.

## **One Man and His Dog**

Striking composition caused by the line of the covered pipeline extending out towards the sea. The horizon has been excluded, so the image is bordered top and bottom by the breaking waves and the sand – an effective compositional approach.

The pipeline does rather dominate the image, although the photographer is trying to divert our attention towards the man and dog in the lower right as the title indicates, and this diagonal is not sufficient to hold the interest for too long. The exposure is good, although the image is slightly soft, perhaps a hand held exposure whilst using a long lens?

## **Over My Shoulder HC**

Striking portrait of a buzzard (probably!) on the ground amongst heather. The bird itself is very sharp around the head and neck which is important, and both foreground and background suitably blurred, with just detail in the foreground to confirm the presence of the heather. The bird looks alert and has a prominent sparkle in its eye – the epitome of a raptor.

The bird is centrally positioned and looking out of the picture. If it were slightly left of centre, the composition would be improved and it would lose the sharp, crossed grass blades in the lower left which are a little distracting. This may be possible if the image as presented is slightly cropped and a different crop is possible, otherwise I would suggest cloning out the crossed grass blades to improve an already impressive bird portrait.

## **Pelican**

Another bird portrait: the resting pelican being largely framed by the vertical tree trunks on either side. The lighting is perhaps a little flat and contrast seems to have been enhanced in post-processing. Whilst the lighting is a little dull, there is a catchlight in the bird's eye, although one has to look hard to see it as the image is a little soft.

A good pose from the bird and composition from the photographer, but the image is not as striking as the previous portrait.

### **Perky Peacock**

A male peacock captured in mid-display, with striking colours in the bird which overcome the slightly flat light. The bird is very sharp and lots of feather detail can be seen.

The picture may have benefitted from a closer approach to concentrate on the colourful body of the bird. The wide spread of the tail feathers is not as striking as the bright blue of the bird's body and currently there is a lot of foreground present which does not add to the image. This may be a bird in an enclosure which would not allow for a closer approach, so it may be worthwhile trying to crop into the centre of the picture if the resolution is sufficient to allow this.

### **Picture Out of The Sand**

Striking composition with two lines of the remains of wooden posts leading the eye diagonally across the image into the surf before the eye returns across the image. A good, well-balanced and dynamic composition with just enough detail in the sky.

The colours of the scene are bright, with the blue of the sky complementing the orange-brown of the sand. There is however a lack of detail in the surf, which is slightly over-exposed.

### **Problem Child HC**

Another striking image, showing well chosen use of props whilst taking, and then textures when composing the final composition. There is sufficient sharpness within the image, concentrated around the head of the subject, although the child's face is slightly obscured by the covering (hopefully muslin, not cling-film!).

Great pose from the subject who has worked well with the photographer to create an unsettling, yet powerful image.

### **Putting on a Show**

Good timing to capture the image and the shutter speed has succeeded in freezing the action. The image is dynamic, tells a great story of this cultural event so why didn't I rate it higher?

The colours of the background – the banner which is largely pistachio and pink – to my eye clashes with the red of the band's costumes. It is also sharp, but then it has to be, as the performers are fairly close to it. So, it leaves me wondering how the image would look as a 'popped colour' monochrome with an image that is desaturated except for the red of the performers' costumes...

### **Rajasthan Royals**

Attractive group portrait of this group of youngsters who are evidently proud of their sport which gives some hint as to why the sport is so popular in south Asia – after playing on surface like this, grass would be easy! I don't know to what extent the group were positioned/posed by the photographer, but they have formed an extremely effective triangular group.

A couple of minor improvements could perhaps enhance this image: the taller of the two standing teenagers is only just within the frame and a little more space above him would be helpful here. Also, the picture has obviously been taken towards the middle of the day – the photographer has controlled the light well, but it would help to lighten the facial shadows on many of the boys.

### **Reflections**

A fascinating image and I am not even going to speculate on how it was constructed (or is it a 'straight' image of an art installation?). The image is sharp, as shown by the wire locks on the kilner jars and seems to be correctly exposed.

One attribute of a successful image is whether it tells a story – there is certainly a story in this image, some of the people evident in the jars seem to show distress for example. However ultimately it is difficult to establish a successful narrative here without some more backstory and therefore whilst imaginative and bold, I eventually was unable to score the image in the top categories.

### **Retired**

Keeping with the 'story' theme there is a more obvious train of thought here. The two abandoned cars have obviously been here for at least one growing season, whilst there is no obvious reason for them to have been abandoned.

The photographer has taken advantage of the uniform lighting conditions with shadowless illumination to produce a subtle study of the two abandoned vehicles with great detail across the panoramic frame. The choice of viewpoint has also been well-

considered; both cars seemingly emerging from the undergrowth, whilst we can see more of the right-hand vehicle which is less covered in foliage.

### **Sea Turtles 2nd**

Beautiful study of these animals seemingly flying through their environment, which could either be a large aquarium or the sea – we have no clues to this. There is great detail in the nearest turtle which is moving well into the frame and following the direction of travel a more distant turtle becomes evident in the background. The lighting is uniform and diffuse, as one would expect in an underwater scene and the near animal itself is gratifyingly sharp.

Is this a genuine underwater capture of two animals swimming free within the ocean, or a skilful composite of the one animal taken in an aquarium setting (as I suspect it may be)? In the end, does it matter..?

### **Secret View**

Well composed image looking down The Vennel in Edinburgh (no longer a secret now!). The steepness of the passageway has allowed the photographer to keep the camera horizontal so that the verticals of the buildings and the street furniture are all parallel and upright. There is great detail throughout the image from the near walls to the castle in the distance, whilst the exposure is well balanced between the shadowed walkway and the sunlit castle. The composition of the images encourages the eye to move down the passage and then up to the castle.

Two points to enhance this image: the blue sky occupies around 25-30% of the image and would be considerably enhanced by the presence of some clouds, whilst the image would also be brought to life if one or two figures were present further down the passageway – it is after all, an urban scene.

### **Sparrowhawk Resting HC**

A second spectacular bird study from this competition following on from the earlier Buzzard (Over My Shoulder). This has improved upon that image because in addition to the soft, defocussed background, the bird is completely sharp from beak to the end of the tail.

There is a soft, warm light permeating the scene, not just the background, but also suffusing the bird. Perhaps one very minor criticism may be the composition as the tail of the bird is close to the bottom edge of the frame. If there is no scope within the original image for a different crop and moving the bird up within the frame, then cropping away so of the extraneous background at the top of the image would create a better balance.

### **Stepping Stones at Bolton Abbey 1st**

An excellent landscape thoughtfully composed. There has been careful thought given to the exposure speed, which has been long enough to smooth out the water movement in the river which both pleases the eye in the way that the ripples have formed downstream of each stepping stone and allows the reflection of the Abbey ruins to become a significant feature. At the same time, a small aperture (or focus-stacking) has been used to create front-to-back sharpness.

In terms of the composition, the bold line of the steppingstones leads the eye across the river and then curves right, taking the eye towards the Abbey. Also, the high horizon line allows the sky, which although full of interest, not to dominate the picture whilst the rushes in the lower left corner occupy what could otherwise be an awkward empty space.

### **Swaledale**

An archetypal pastoral scene which sums up Swaledale extremely well. The greens of the woods and fields, the blue sky with wispy clouds and the details of the stone barns and walls are all well captured. The composition also expertly leads the eye to follow the line of the valley and if I were tempted to use one word to sum up the image it would be 'pleasant'

What would elevate this image beyond merely 'pleasant'? Essentially the colours of the image are all either green or blue and they combine to make a restful scene and in spite of the compositional boxes all being ticked, there perhaps needs to be something for the eye to fix on, something of a different colour. The classical figure in a red jacket would be too clichéd, so perhaps a yellow piece of farm machinery would fulfil this objective?

### **Thatched Cottage**

Great cottage in a rural setting which seems to have been desaturated (not completely) to good effect. The great detail in the picture, most evident in the thatched cottage itself, have been enhanced by this desaturation to give an almost timeless effect. There is little that can be done about the presence of the cars which do not help with the creation of this illusion, but perhaps further localised desaturation of the blue in the blue car would help – currently this is a little strong and pulls the eye in.

It may also be worth cropping in from above to eliminate some of the otherwise blank sky, perhaps even (controversially) losing the chimney pot of the right-hand chimney to achieve this.

### **The Beauty of Water**

Waterfall image where a long exposure has been used to blur the water in the falls. This effect is one that is considered a 'marmite' one – you either like or hate it; fortunately it is one effect that I frequently use myself. From a personal perspective, it works best when there is some hint of detail in the rushing water, and in this image there is a little too much blurring of the water. It is worth trying different exposure times, but does eventually come down to personal preference.

This type of image also works best when there is great contrast between the blurred water and very sharp surroundings – the rocks, mosses and fallen leaves alongside the stream. Unfortunately here they are slightly blurred – perhaps by attempting to hand-hold the camera? The composition is however good, with the water flowing well through the scene.

### **The Fairly House**

Another traditional pastoral scene with good, raking sidelight coming in from the left side, there is plenty of detail in the image, so there has been a good choice of aperture. There is little to dislike here; the colour of the sky is great, perhaps polarised and there is detail in both shadows and highlights.

Perhaps the only jarring note in this typically 'country' scene is the presence of the aircraft contrail in the sky. This may have disappeared if the photographer had waited a little time either by being diffused or by being blown out of the image by high-level winds.

### **The Ladies**

Good group of cows inspecting the photographer; some might dislike the presence of the barbed wire fence, but I do not have a problem with this – it is part of farming scenery and helps to explain why the cows are standing in a line. The cow with the mouthful of grass adds a humorous note.

Unfortunately, the image is generally a little soft all over, which suggests the possibility of camera shake. Also, it would be good practice to check the edges of the image: the section of branch in the upper right and the cow's ear on the right edge could be cloned out relatively easily to improve the image.

### **The Lonely Fisherman**

The composition here is good, with the fisherman widely separated from his equipment, prompting the question – why, was the fishing better where he is standing?

Two major improvements could be made to this image. Firstly, the picture seems to lean to the right, and indeed in the top right corner, the horizon is sloping so this needs to be corrected. Secondly there is quite a low-contrast across the whole image, which suggests that this image has been taken with a long-focal length lens and the intervening atmosphere (salt spray included) would have contributed to this. Both could be easily corrected in post-processing, and a subtle increase in sharpness here would also create a much-enhanced result.

### **Towards the Old Fulling Mill**

A difficult subject which the photographer has handled well. Woodland scenes can be very confusing to look at, but here the jumble of leaves, trunks, etc have been used to lead the eye towards the building in the distance, an effect enhanced by the receding path.

At first glance the picture could be assumed to lean to the right, as evinced by the trees, but the building lines are vertical where they should be, so it can be put down to their growth. To hold the interest longer though, there seems to be a stronger central point – the composition of the image leads the eye there, but the detail of the building is not strong enough to retain interest – perhaps a figure walking away along the path would help?

### **Venice (5 Copy)**

Great image of this bridge and canal in Venice at night. The exposure has been handled well, with detail retained in the difficult highlights, such as the illuminated area under the central arch on the bridge. There is a slight convergence of the vertical architectural elements on the extreme right and left of the picture, but not enough to be a point of concern.

The potentially featureless sky has been relieved by the presence of the full moon, and it is here that I have my main concerns. It may not be composited into the image, but to my eye looks as if it has been. The moon itself seems too large – it may often appear so when low on the horizon, but when higher in the sky and juxtaposed with buildings it always seems smaller than here. The shadows also do not seem correct to me; although there is strong artificial illumination, I would still expect to see some evidence of shadows cast by the moon itself.

### **View from Brothers Water**

Strong composition, with the triangular peak, combined with the angle of the gate and its strong shadows holding the interest. A difficult photographic subject because of the high contrast caused by shooting towards the sun. A potential problem has been overcome by retaining detail in the shadows, but virtually all detail in the otherwise excellent clouds has been lost by their

overexposure. There is also some lens flare entering in from the top right which could be eliminated at the taking stage by shielding the lens.

### **View from the Eagle's Nest**

Expansive view of the Bavarian mountains from Adolf Hitler's mountain retreat. For an image taken at a potentially tricky time around the middle of the day, the exposure is reasonably good although the distant mountains are *almost* overexposed. In trying to get in most of the scene, the photographer has rather lost some of the interesting details. The foreground trees really dominate the image; there is a lake in the middle distance, but it took me several viewings of the image to notice it.

A view that would perhaps be better represented by using a long lens to pick out certain aspects of the scene to represent the whole, rather than trying to fit everything in. The heavy black border does not in this case enhance the image, a thinner border would be better.

### **Voice from Above**

I believe that I can confidently say that this is a composite image! The foreground elements (bench, children, tree and bird) have been well put together, but I am not sure that they fit well with the background. There seems to be some fringing evident around the left edge of the tree overlying the water, and it seems a little sharp-edged, lying on top of the background – some feathering of one or two pixels would help here. The lighting is suitably different in colour from the background scene and the shadows seem unnatural considering the position of the sun.

Sorry to be so negative about this - great idea, but the execution does not quite match the intent.

### **Walking into the Dawn**

A strongly composed, low-key beach scene taken directly into the sun. The strong lines of the pier provide an effective focal line along the upper section of the picture, but the photographer is directing our attention towards the walker and the dogs, judging by the title. Both the walker and the left-hand dog blend in with the sandbanks to some extent although the dog on the right can be seen to strike a dynamic pose.

The difficulty of shooting directly into the light is shown by the lens flare spots in the lower left, although they enliven an otherwise plain lower left quadrant of the image, but the deep blue colour of the scene is arresting.

### **Watching**

Initially puzzled by the title, then I noticed the gull.... Although the gull is facing away from the camera the image would be strengthened by cropping to place this nearer to the bottom edge of the image – there is a fair amount of the lower portion of the picture that does not contribute to the overall image.

The detail of the boat, quayside and excellent sky have been well captured, but I would try to lighten the shadows of the boat and quayside to lift the impact of the image.

### **Weatherbeaten**

Great, atmospheric image that conjures up the feeling of winter. The remains of the drystone wall lead the eye towards the ruined cottage framed by the two trees. The fact that the left tree slightly covers the cottage does not bother me - it suggests shelter. Great detail has been retained in the snow and the smaller landscape details such as the scattered trees on the distant hillside, whilst the clearly seen heavy clouds promise more snow to come.

In spite of the cold overall scene, a slight hint of warm is suggested by the subtle orange-brown colour of the old needles on the foreground larch trees and this is echoed in some of the colours in the nearby stone. A very evocative landscape scene. **HC**

### **Whitby Goths**

A portrait of this couple obviously engaging with the photographer, adopting a striking pose, particularly the man. The picture seems to have been taken around midday, and this has allowed the detail to be retained in the dark clothes. It would help if the resultant shadows in the man's face caused by the brim of his hat were lightened slightly.

Perhaps moving in closer and concentrating on the faces and the bodies from the hands upwards would allow the figures to become more prominent in the scene – their faces are a little small at present. It would also have the effect of losing the pale stone panels in the wall which are a little distracting.

### **Wing Lounging**

Good pun for a title, well taken image capturing the moment when the wing walking figures swivel in their harness. The positioning of the plane and smoke trail sit well in the frame and the shutter speed is spot-on; the plane is sharply detailed but there is just a hint of movement from the propeller.

Perhaps lightening the shadows under the plane and wings would allow more detail to be perceived here and lift the image further.

### **Wondered where the Colours Came From**

Well spotted image with perfect positioning from the photographer. Lowering the exposure very slightly would enhance the colour of the rainbow and help reduce the impact of the highlights in the upstairs windows and it may be sensible to crop the lower edge slightly to eliminate the distraction of the yellow signs in the downstairs windows.

A fine capture of a fleeting moment in time, humorously observed.

### **Highly Commended:**

A Souter Sunset

Beautiful Plumage

Empire Invasion

Over My Shoulder

Problem Child

Sparrowhawk Resting

**3<sup>rd</sup>:** Half Full of Colour

**2<sup>nd</sup>:** Sea Turtles

**1<sup>st</sup>:** Stepping Stones at Bolton Abbey