JUDGING/COMMENTARY PROCESS - HPS

Overview:
Four Judges will be used for competitions. Where possible a visiting judge will be assisted by 3 HPS members. Where a visiting judge is not available 4 HPS members will act as judges.
Submitted images are all previewed during a quick run thru. After the run through, the images are individually viewed, scored and commented upon The images are presented anonymously, with just the title given when the image is projected for judging. NOTE: Judges score every image, but only the visiting judge comments on the image. Where there is no visiting judge each of the HPS judges will take turns to comment on the images.
Each competition is run the same.

Judging and Scoring:
 For each category, the judges have a quick review of each image to be scored.
Once this review is complete, the actual judging will start.
Each of the four judges will judge each image based on the **"Elements of Photography"** and assign a score of five (5) Below Average to ten (10) Outstanding, to the image. (For more detail, see section on Image Scoring below). The final score for each image is the sum of the three (3) highest scores, with the lowest score being removed.
Individual images will receive a final score between fifteen (15) and thirty (30).
In the event that the maker of image being judged is one of the judges, that judge will abstain from voting and an average score of the remaining three judges will be used for the score.

Image Commentary (Regular Category images only):
 After each image is scored, the visiting judges (or where there is no visiting judge the HPS judges comment by rote) comments on the image for all Regular Category submissions. The image commentary is primarily a teaching tool, a way to provide feedback on the maker's image. Image commentary is not designed to find something wrong, It is designed to see something right, and to also see things that may be improved upon. It is not designed to correct what is wrong, but to suggest what may be done to improve in the future.
The judge offers comment on the image in support of the score they have given the image.
They try to be objective and specific in their comments, but they recognize they are always offering a personal opinion. They are aware, that even though they may not like the subject matter of an image, that personal bias should not affect how they score and critique the image.
It is suggested that judges:
- Start their comments with To Me, In My opinion, I feel, I see, I think…
- And use words like May, Might, Consider…
- And avoid words like Always, Never, Must, Should…

In the end, the maker must always be left with the impression that the image commentary is only a suggestion and it is their choice to use or not use.

Image disqualification
Images may be disqualified for any of the following reasons:
- Image previously submitted
- Image is considered not to be in Good Taste.

Image Scoring:

Each judge scores the image from five (5) to ten (10) based on how well the image captures the assigned topic and incorporates the following "Elements of Photography".

Each judge awards a score as follows:

- **5 or less for photographs that are very below average**
- **6 to photographs that are below average**
- **7 to photographs average**
- **8 to photographs above average**
- **9 to photographs that are very above average**
- **10 to photographs that are outstanding with Impact and no flaws**

See Image Score Detail table below with more detail descriptions for how to award these scores.

Image Score Detail

"5" Very Below Average:	"6" Below Average:
• Not relevant to the category • Out of focus (unless intentionally) • Over- or under-exposed • Snapshot type of picture • Little impact or imagination	• Technically correct in many aspects (focus, exposure, etc) • Good colour for the subject and background • Little impact or imagination • Relevant to the category
7" Average:	**"8" Above Average:**
• Technically correct in most aspects • Good presentation • Good composition • Good pictorial treatment • Tells a story • Relevant to the category	• Technically correct in most aspects • Good presentation • Good composition • Good pictorial treatment • Tells a story or creates a mood • High impact to the viewer • Relevant to the category
"9" Very Above Average:	**"10" Outstanding:**
• Technically correct in all respects • Outstanding composition • Tells a complete story or creates a mood • High impact to the viewer on first sight • Exemplifies the category"9" Very Above Average: • Technically correct in all respects • Outstanding composition • Tells a complete story or creates a mood • High impact to the viewer on first sight • Exemplifies the category	• "Knocks your socks off" • No Flaws or Room For Improvements

Elements of Photography

For the person who may feel they would not know what to say in analyzing a photograph, here is how easy it is. Simply memorize the elements and when confronted with an image, begin going over them in your mind one at a time and apply them to the image. Nearly every image will exhibit or not a majority of the elements. It is up to you how you use the elements; the important thing is to use them.

- *Impact: Does the image evoke an emotion no matter how subtle?*
- *Story: Does the image tell a story of some kind?*
- *Composition: How are the subjects in the frame arranged?*
- *Interest area: What, if anything, in the image is of interest to you or not, or is missing?*
- *Creativity: Does the image convey a different point of view, use aperture or shutter speed in an unusual way, show something you have not seen before or something familiar done in a creative way?*
- *Colour: How do you see the colour being used in the image or not being used?*
- *Light: How has the light been used in the image? Light should enhance an image, not detract from it.*
- *Technical: Focus, depth of field, exposure (ISO, aperture, shutter speed), camera handling, white balance, noise – technically done well or not?*
- *Presentation: Is the image clean without spots or other issues?*

Remember, any of these elements may be seen in various ways by different judges. Any element may be well done, not well done, or missing altogether. Where the particular element fits in these categories will be up to you, and others will not necessarily agree with you. There is no consensus on the application of the elements. Makers, however, expect the judge to discuss them.

The Elements Expanded

Impact is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder, horror or any other emotion. There can be impact in any of these emotions. Impact may also be found in any or all of the elements of a fine photograph. Photographers may be impacted by a fine composition or something finely focused.

Just because you do not feel any of the above responses to an image does not mean that is has no impact. This just means it may not have any impact for you. Impact is only one of the elements of a fine photograph; so do not put too much weight on the impact element. The quality or lack thereof, of all elements should figure into image impact.

Bias may be one reason, and the worst of all reasons, to think an image has no impact. If you do not like cats, recognize this fact and do not think that a picture of a cat has no impact just because it is an image of a cat. Your perceived lack of impact may be true; it does not have impact in your mind. This may be your problem and not the maker's. There must be other reasons; look into it a bit deeper. Once you get past a bias, the true impact may reveal itself.

An important fact about impact is that it is just one of the elements of a fine photograph. You might not want to put too much emphasis on impact positively or negatively.

Technical excellence is the image quality as it is presented for viewing. Retouching, dirty sensor spot removal, proper removal or inclusion of distracting elements, proper or improper use of a vignette, removal of a distracting background, sharpness, exposure, depth of field, presentation, and correct colour are some items that speak to the qualities of the image. Technical excellence encompasses all the things you have learned about photography that have to do with visual excellence of the image presentation. It may not be emotional in any way and the viewer must understand the concepts as well as the methods for creating a technically excellent image.

Composition is important to the design of an image, bringing all of the visual elements together in concert. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to create a meaning from the image. Effective composition can be pleasing or disturbing, depending on the intent of the image maker, or your perception. You will not know what the maker's intent was, so you must create the meaning for yourself before you can discuss composition. All images have some form of composition whether it is good or bad. Rules are meant to be broken and your perception of composition may very well see beyond them.

Interest Area is the point, or points, on the image where the viewers want to stop as they view the image. These are called fixation points. There can be primary and

many secondary interest areas. There may be no mandate that an image must have a single centre of interest. Occasionally, there will be no specific centre of interest at all when the entire scene collectively serves as the centre of interest. Interest areas serve to keep the viewer's mind from wandering and create pleasant fixation points.

<u>Creativity is the original</u>, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker and the viewer. It may be a new or creative way you feel the maker has presented a tried and true subject or an imaginative presentation of a very new subject. In either case the creativity will manifest itself in your mind as something a bit different.

<u>Colour harmony supplies structure</u> to an image. An image where tones work together, effectively supporting the image, can enhance its emotional appeal. Colour harmony is not always comfortable and may supply a very unstructured image and may be used to evoke diverse feelings for effect. Colour may very well be used to enhance composition by balancing the image much like a scale. Dark colours may appear heavy and bright colours conversely may appear light. This apparent distribution of colour balance may not have much to do with colour manipulation in a computer, but more to do with the visual equilibrium of the colour parts within the frame.
You may consider black and white. Tonality may take the place of colour and serve the image in a similar way. Colour tonality is also a part of colour harmony.

<u>Light The use</u> and control of light refers to how dimension, shape and roundness are defined in an image. Whether the light applied to an image is manmade or natural, proper use of it should enhance an image in every way including, but not limited to, colour, highlight and shadow, exposure, distractions, and as mentioned, dimension or the impression of the depth.

<u>Presentation affects</u> an image by giving it a finished look. The stroke around the image used, should support and enhance the image, not distract from it. Making sure there is not any Sensor Dust showing on the image.

<u>Story Storytelling</u> refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination in the viewer. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story in an image. Therefore, there may be an argument that the viewer, as well as the maker, has a responsibility in the process. The maker has a profound responsibility to present an image that correctly fulfils as many elements as possible. The viewer may need to create a meaning for the image if it is not obvious. A vivid imagination may be one of the most powerful tools in reading a photograph. It is not necessarily the maker's responsibility to present you with something you recognize.
These guidelines were modelled on the Simsbury Camera Club, USA