

Pantanal

354mm, f/11, 1/3200, ISO-5000, Sony a9



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Interesting moment and creatures (the bird and the fish)

Composition

I would probably crop a little less.

Technical Quality

I think you could have gotten a better shot without going to f/11 and ISO-5000, but the 2x TC forced you up there even though it doesn't look like you were using the extra "reach" in this shot. Also, probably didn't need the 1/3200 shutter at 354mm, but that varies with the individual.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The bird is a little dark, but when I tried to pull up the shadows, it revealed a lot of purple fringing around the edges of the bird and a green cast on most of the bird. These are probably processing artifacts. If you shot this in RAW format, you could probably bring out some more detail from the original, and possibly avoid the fringing.

Oak Alley Plantation

33mm, f/20, 1/30, ISO-200, Canon 5DS



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

I love this kind of “perspective” shot. Beautiful place. Makes me think **Forest Gump** 😊

Composition

The perfect way to shoot it, I think. I can't tell if the sky is over-exposed or just overcast. If you had a more interesting sky, it would have been nice to shoot a little wider/higher to get more/all of the trees and more sky.

Technical Quality

I seldom shoot with an aperture smaller than f/14-16. With your camera, diffraction begins to affect the image at f/11, and it would be diffraction limited at f/20, which mean you aren't realizing the full resolution of your sensor. Like all camera settings, you are always making compromises and trade-offs. This article is a pretty good summary of what diffraction is and how it affects your images ... [Diffraction Limited Photography: Pixel Size, Aperture and Airy Disks](#)

cambridgeincolour.com

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

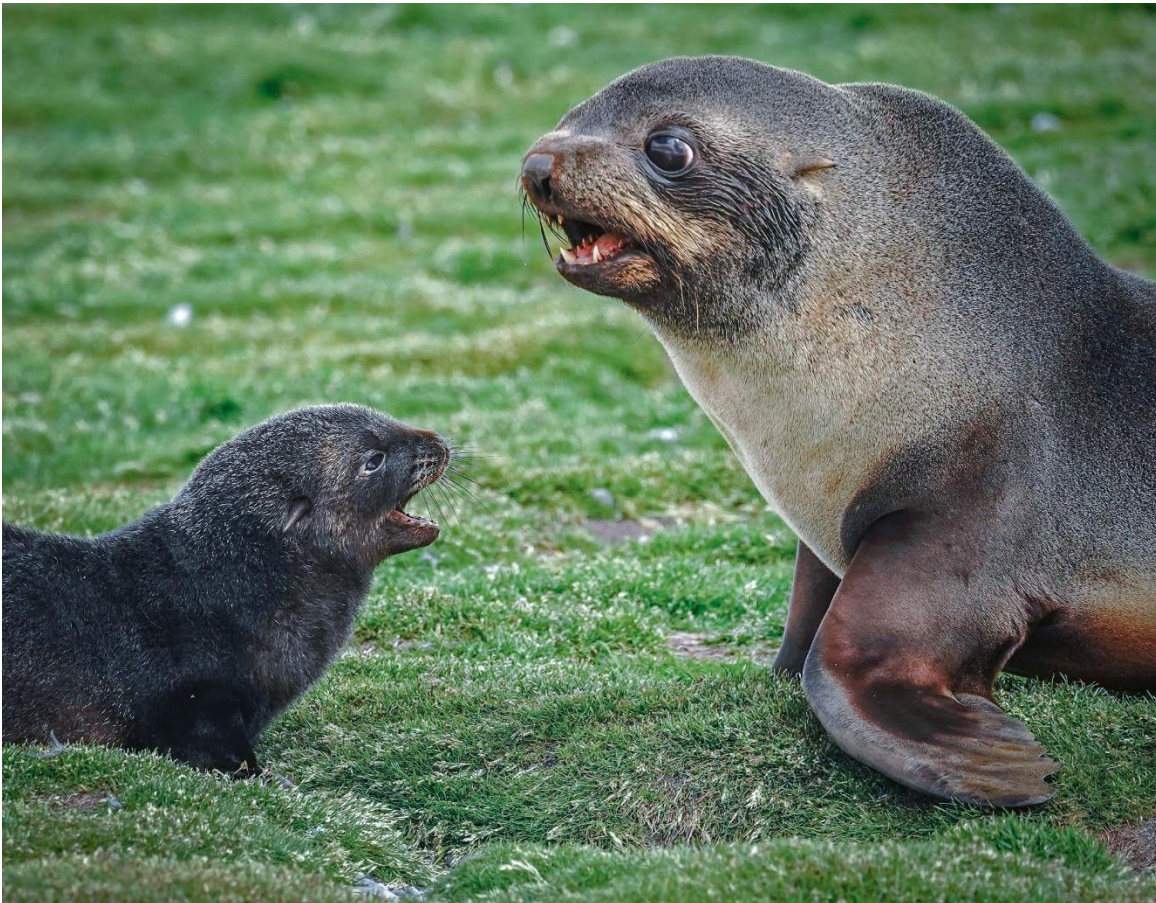
All good except for the white sky. If the sky wasn't really white as it appears in the image, it would have been nice to expose for the sky (underexpose the rest of the image) and fix it in post. Or, use exposure bracketing to take multiple shots and blend them together in post. I wouldn't actually recommend a sky replacement, but I tried it just to help visualize what it might have looked like. Kind of a toss-up, to be honest.

About half-way down the brick walkway, there starts to be a red edge that I suspect might be a processing artifact. I would remove that. I also might try to reveal a little more detail in the shadows in the tree. Just things to think about!

Beautiful image, none-the-less!

Family Disagreement

329mm, f/8, 1/1250, ISO-1250, Sony a7III



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Hard to go wrong with mama and baby anything.

Composition

Crop seems a little tight if you had more image to work with. Sometimes, you get what you get and have to work with it.

Technical Quality

Your settings seem about right for the scene/subjects. I would have shot a little wider unless there was something out there you were trying to avoid.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The image has a sort of yellow, old-film cast to it. I would work on the white balance/tone a little. If you are using software that allows you to process subject and background separately, that would give you more flexibility.

The seals are a little underexposed. I think you could boost the shadows and brighten their overall exposure.

An Explosion of Wings

200mm (300mm), f/6.3, 1/2000, ISO-1800, Nikon D500



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

If you know me, you know I am a sucker for this type of composite. I like this technique for illustrating the bird's movement.

Composition

The crop is a little tight, but sometimes when you're making this type of composite, you don't have a lot of background to work with especially above and below. The new Generative AI features in Photoshop can sometimes generate more background for you that looks pretty good. AND, unfortunately, wide images like this don't work very well for social media, so ...

Also, I am always torn when I see the faux matte drop shadow around an image. It looks nice, but we have so few pixels to work with in social media. It's a tough call.

There is a "rule of thumb" that says you should always use an odd number of images for this type of composite ... something to do with having a "center subject" ... something to consider.

Technical Quality

Settings look about right for the content and equipment. Good job!

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Unfortunately, your subject was in the shadows and your background was mostly in the sun. Early morning in that corner 😊 If you are using Lightroom or any other software that allows you to select/process your subject separately, it's time to start figuring out how that works. I was able to select the birds separately and brighten their exposure. I also warmed up their white balance to make it look like they were in the sun instead of in the shadows. It's almost magic!

Fun at the State Fair

No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Cute snapshot.

Composition

Crop seems a little tight, but I don't know if the location would have allowed you to be any wider.

Technical Quality

Seems about right.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The faces are about all you have to work with. I would brighten the faces a bit and warm up the white balance. The woman on the left has a bit of *red eye* you could easily fix. I always like to give people nice white teeth 😊 FUN!!

Parade

100mm, f/5.6, 1/640, ISO-500, Sony a7RIII



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Cute shot. Gotta love baby elephants. And the Cattle Egrets are a great bonus touch! Too bad the back two adults' heads were on the *wrong side*. You were probably "trapped" in a safari vehicle, but it would have been nice to get to the other side. Oh well 😊

Composition

Nice. The left edge feels a little tight, but that's just me.

Technical Quality

Settings look about right for the subject and equipment.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Exposure and focus are good. Looks like an overcast day, so the light/color is a bit flat. I would play around with Vibrance, Texture, Clarity, etc. to punch it up a bit a give it a little more depth. Nice shot!!

Fog

3.99mm (28mm), f/1.8, 1/676, ISO-20, Apple iPhone SE



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Ethereal ...

Composition

Framing looks good, but the pine limb in the upper-right corner doesn't really match the mood of the shot. I would probably remove it and maybe simulate a light source coming from that corner.

Technical Quality

Not really a *technical quality* kind of image. Phones usually do a pretty good job of picking reasonable settings.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

White balance for this kind of shot usually trends toward the cool/blue end of the spectrum, so I might experiment with Color Temp and/or Color Grading to exaggerate the blue hues. Also, the negative end of the Dehaze slider in Lightroom lets you exaggerate the fog. Just play around 'til you find the mood that feels right.

A Study in Contrast

3.99mm (28mm), f/1.8, 1/162, ISO-20, Apple iPhone SE



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Taking the title of your entry literally, I didn't really **feel**, and wasn't really sure, what contrast you were referring to.

Composition

There is nothing really wrong with the framing of the image, but I tried cropping down from the top to vertically center the flower. Just trying to give you things to consider.

Technical Quality

Fine

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

I tried to imagine all the different ways this could be a "study in contrast" ... nature vs man-made, light vs dark, vibrant color vs stark white. So, I took out all the color from the background and pumped up the brightness/texture to the max. Again, just giving you things to think about.

Meteors and Milk Way

No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

I haven't done much Astrophotography, so I can only offer a rather superficial reaction to your photo.

Composition

The stars are obviously more dense around the Milky Way and the center of the image. I would be tempted to crop to 8 x 10 and remove most of the light pollution on the left side and a lot of the foreground rocks at the bottom. This would focus more on the Milk Way and the reflection which seem to be the "hero elements" of the image.

Technical Quality

I assume this is a combination of many shots, but it would be so nice if you could somehow capture/show more reflection of the sky. Oh well ... 😊

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The overall image seemed a little dark ... on my screen at least. Nice image!!

ICM Growing Intensity

??mm, f/??, 1/??, ISO-800, Canon T7



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

I never know what to say about “abstract” photography. It looks cool, but I don’t know what it is.

Composition

I like the progression of the pattern from left to right ... the growing intensity part, I suppose.

Technical Quality

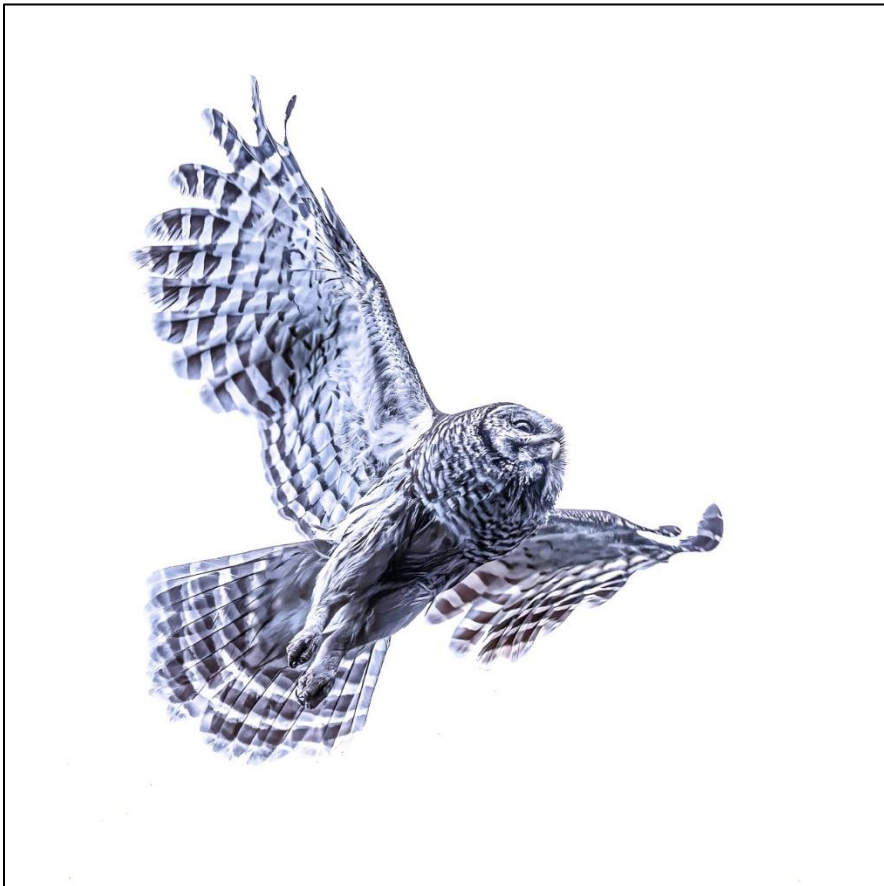
I’ll assume you created what you set out to create.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Assuming you wanted to capture bright streaks of color on dark background ... spot on 😊

Barred Owl in Flight

238mm, f/8, 1/2000, ISO-1250, Canon R5



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Nice looking Barred Owl and a nice wing/flight position.

Composition

I wouldn't put the owl so close to the top edge.

Technical Quality

Settings are appropriate for this subject, but I don't find that f/8 does much for you with this type of shot, and I usually opt for just letting in more light if you lens supports that.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Focus and exposure look good.

Looking at You

445mm, f/6.3, 1/1000, ISO-10,000, Sony a7IV



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

It really is amazing that you can get this quality of shot at ISO-10,000. Cameras and software have come a long way! Good job!!

Composition

Putting the subject to one side is a standard approach, but it seems a little too close to the left edge. Maybe bring it in a little. I usually put the bird's left eye on the left rule-of-thirds line.

Technical Quality

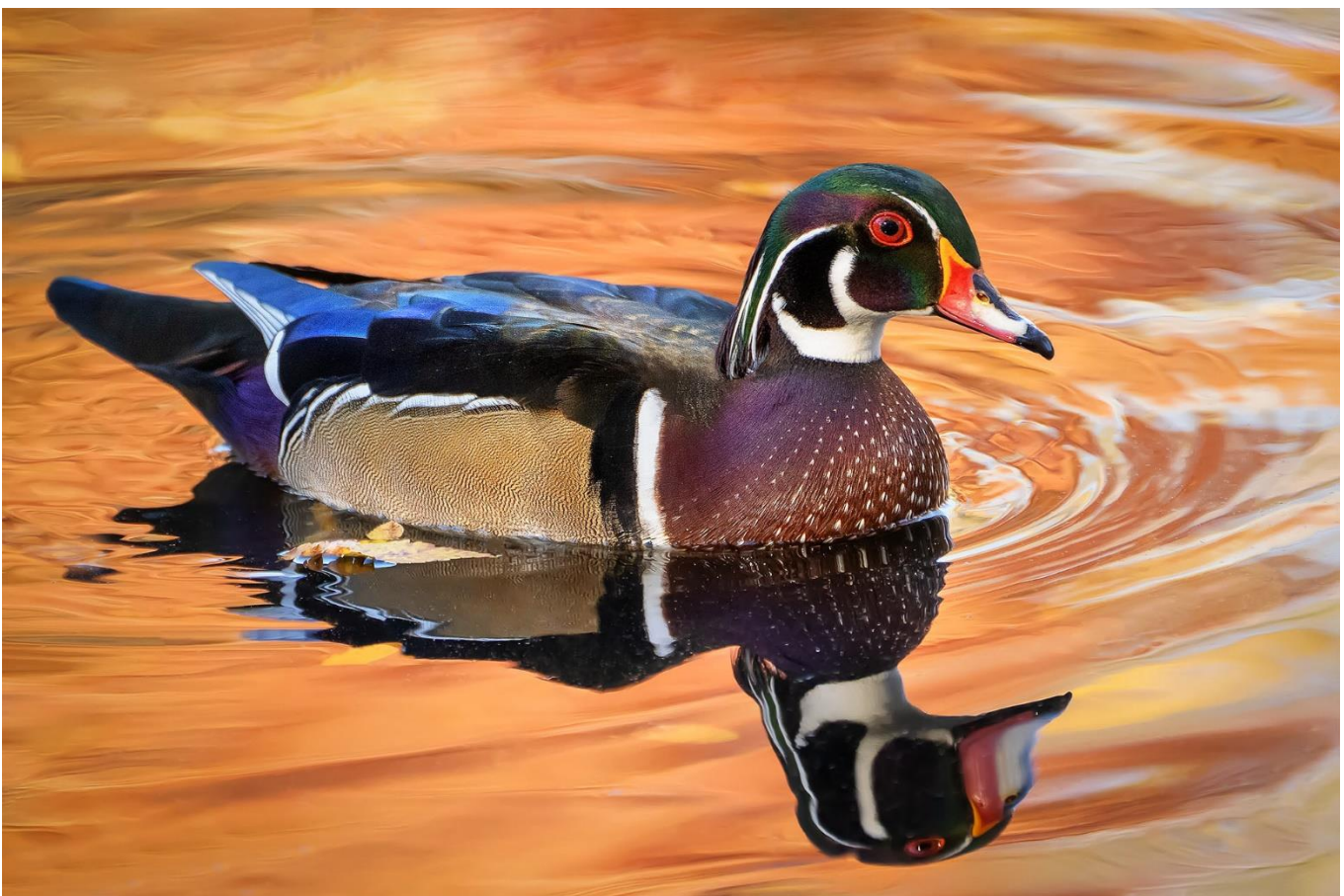
I am guessing it was pretty dark and that f/6.3 was your widest aperture. I would have probably taken a safety shot at 1/1000 and then gradually lowered the shutter speed (and ISO) to see how low I could go and still get a sharp shot. I often get sharp shots at 600mm and 1/100. Even with the latest cameras and software, ISO-10,000 isn't where you want to be if you can avoid it. Good handholding technique is an important photography skill!

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The owl is a little dark and the face/eyes are in shadows. My standard starting point for this type of shot is Shadows +100, Highlights -100. Then, re-adjust your overall exposure using your histogram. Next, verify you have a good White point and Black point for the image. For owls, I almost always use a Radial Gradient (or brush) to lighten the face/eyes. I also always add a subtle dark vignette to almost all wildlife photo (except blue sky photos). If you want to add a little sharpening to the owl, use a Subject Mask and the Texture slider. Texture makes feathers/fur look better than standard sharpening.

Coat of Many Colors

400mm, f/5.6, 1/500, ISO-3200, Sony A1



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Male Wood Ducks have got to be in the top 5 best wildlife subjects. Add smooth water, a reflection and good light and you are *golden* ... literally!!

Composition

I am always reminding myself that context is important and that I should crop a little *looser*. You might consider that here.

Technical Quality

Seeing your ISO-3200 setting, maybe the light wasn't quite as good as I have initially assumed. BUT, it worked out.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Everything looks good in this image. For smooth-water images like this, I often finish by using a healing brush to remove any blemishes on the water ... bits of debris, reflections of random objects/light that don't *fit*, etc. ... it enhances the smoothness.

Big Arch, Big Sky

28mm, f/11, 1/320, ISO-100, Canon 5DIII



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Beautiful scene. Reminded me of the view from Lighthouse Trail at Palo Duro Canyon.

Composition

Good balance of colorful cliffs, interesting clouds, vibrant blue sky.

Technical Quality

Classic settings for this shot.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

If you are using Lightroom or other software that allows you to mask different areas, I would warm up the Color Temp for the rocks and brush and bump up the Texture. For the clouds, I would add a little Clarity for drama. Great shot!

A Quick Bite to Eat
No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Right place, right time, and prepared to take the shot.

Composition

Crop and framing are good. Of course, you wish the bird had been angled toward you instead of away from you, but you made the most of it.

Technical Quality

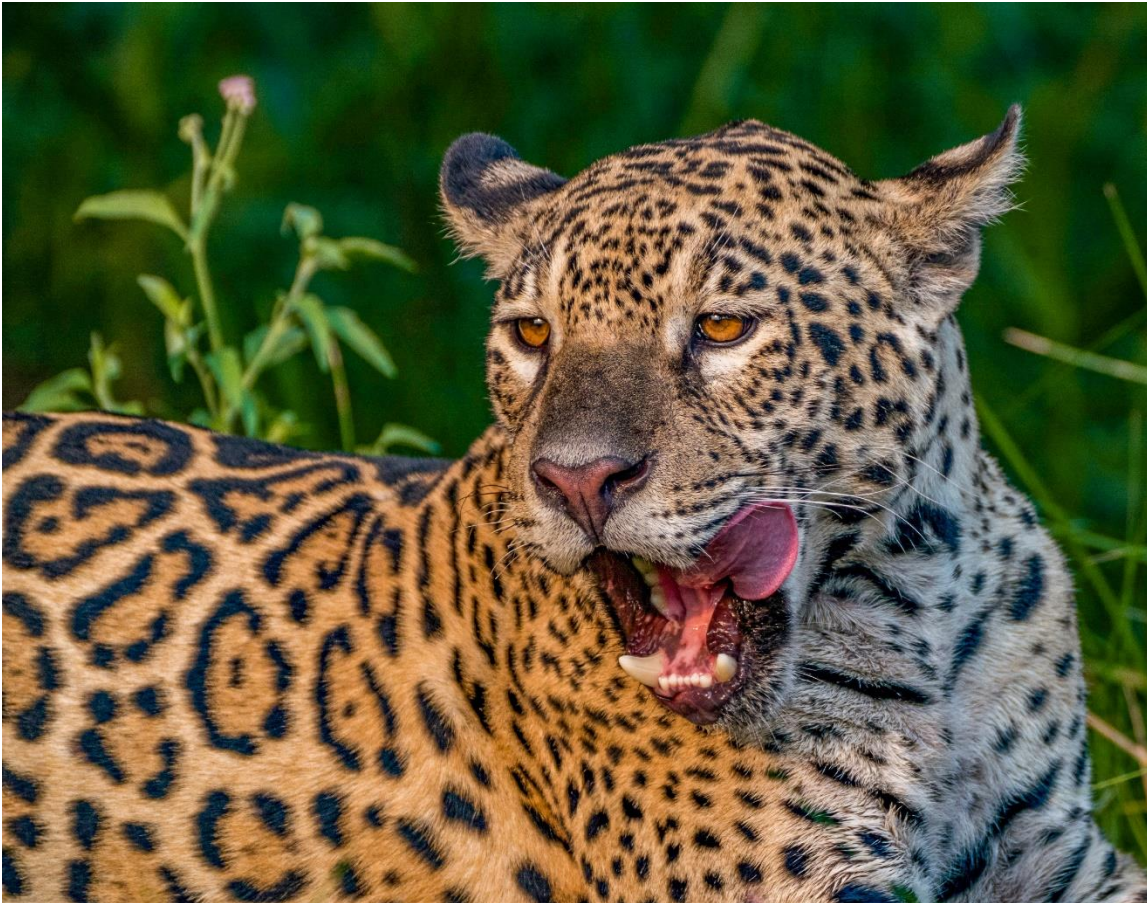
Your file doesn't contain camera/settings data, but the shot tells me they were good.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Looks good. I always consider warming up the Color Temp on a shot like this, and a subtle, dark vignette is usually a good finishing touch.

Handsom Jaguar

400mm, f/11, 1/500, ISO-1600, Sony a9



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Such a beautiful animal. Technically native to Texas, but just barely. Great shot!!

Composition

Would be nice to see the whole cat, but close-up is good to. Decision, decisions 😊

Technical Quality

I typically wouldn't stop down to f/11 for this shot, but you seemed to have had plenty of light, and the other settings are pretty good, so I'll stop typing now 😊

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The color and exposure look pretty good, but I would try bringing up the shadows. There is some green foliage lurking in the background that you might, or might not, want to see. I would brighten the cat just a bit and be sure to set a proper White Point and Black Point. Getting the Black Point right can really make the colors POP!!

Harrier & Mustang on Approach

300mm (450mm), f/13, 1/160, ISO-100, Nikon D500



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

My first thought was *cute* ... maybe *too cute*. With AI everywhere these days, I have been trying to define for myself at what level of manipulation an image is no longer really a photograph and has become something else altogether ... a computer generated image, a digital illustration or something like that. It's a very confusing and fraught time in photography.

My second thought was, *why not two harriers on approach ... a jump jet and a bird* 😊

Composition

If the bird was close enough to the camera to look this size in comparison to the plane, there is no way they would both be in focus. If they were both on the same focal plan, the bird would be smaller than the Airforce Insignia. Sorry for being so literal, but ...

Technical Quality

I assume the EXIF data in the file were for the Mustang shot. I doubt you shot the BIF at 1/160. As submitted, there is a thin white line along the bottom edge?

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Okay ... all that said, the two subjects look good. Nice motion blur on the prop, nice stare from the bird.

Ready to Roll

5.7mm, (41mm), f/1.5, 1/200, ISO-40, iPhone 13 Pro Max



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Phone cameras have gotten so good these days. Nice “real life” photo ... a man represented by his gear!

Composition

The framing/crop are kind of tight, but they probably had to be.

Technical Quality

Looks good, except I would align the image with the metal trim strip along the right edge.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

All good, but I would pull up the shadows a bit. There are some nice details in the shadows below the coat and elsewhere.

Good job!!

Roots of a Storm

No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

What a great subject and sky! Great shot!

Composition

Of course, I can't be sure, but I think I would like to see more on the right side, especially toward the top of the image.

Technical Quality

Everything looks good!

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Black and white seems like a good choice for this image ... works well for the tree/roots and for the sky. I always like to open up the shadows and reveal as much detail as possible. Focus looks good throughout.

Cloudy Morning in the Marsh

No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Interesting nature study.

Composition

I like the framing of the scene. The shot seems to be leaning left a bit. I would align/straighten it on the far bank of the "island."

Technical Quality

The shot seems technically sound.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Focus and exposure are good. The shot as submitted appears a little hazy. I would try bringing down blacks/shadows to make most of the image appear to be in silhouette.

Trimmed in Purple

100mm, f/20, 1/100, ISO-250, Canon R6



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

What a beautiful flower and image. Excellent photo!!

Composition

Perfect.

Technical Quality

I never recommend apertures smaller than about $f/16$. At $f/20$ your camera is diffraction limited. Probably doesn't matter for your image, but something to be aware of. I think I would have rather shot at ISO-100 with a slightly wider aperture (maybe $f/10$). Like all camera settings, you are always making compromises and trade-offs. This article is a pretty good summary of what diffraction is and how it affects your images ... [Diffraction Limited Photography: Pixel Size, Aperture and Airy Disks \(cambridgeincolour.com\)](#)

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Everything looks great. The background colors are so nice, I might brighten the whole image just a little to bring out the background. I think this image would benefit from a subtle dark vignette.

Making a Point

27mm, f/4, 1/100, ISO-1250, Canon 90D



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

That wagging finger and the face make the shot!

Composition

Both the top and bottom edges seem to be cropped a little tight.

Technical Quality

Settings look about right to me.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Overall, the exposure, focus, color are good. Just a little bit of flash or other light source on the face would have been nice, but probably impossible for this type of candid shot. In any case, you need to brighten the face in some way. The new Select People option in Lightroom lets you do this in a very targeted way. Short of that, a Radial Gradient or Brush tool should do the trick.

Semi Complete

??mm, f/??, 1/??, ISO-100, Canon T7



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

I can't decide what is semi-complete ... the circle, the subdivision?

Composition

From what I can see, the crop seem a little tight, but maybe that's part of being semi-complete.

Technical Quality

Looks good!

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Exposure, focus look good. I like high contrast and sharpness in black and white images, but I don't usually use the Contrast and Sharpen control to achieve it. I prefer using the Texture slider in Lightroom to increase edge sharpness, and I usually adjust Whites and Blacks to get the desired contrast.

Fishing ... Alaskan Style

560mm, f/4, 1/1600, ISO-1250, Sony A1



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Great shot! BUT, where's the fish 😊

Composition

So good! Maybe cropped a little tight at the bottom, but that just me.

Technical Quality

Settings look right for this shot! Sometimes, 560mm is too much for bears. I have several shots where I wish I hadn't used the teleconverter for bears. The 400/2.8 is such a beautiful lens all by itself.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

I find that almost every shot I see isn't realizing the maximum color, detail, contrast the camera is capable of. I begin processing almost every wildlife photo by setting Shadows +100 and Highlights -100. Then, I adjust exposure for just short of maximum brightness while watching the histogram. Then, I set White/Black points to ensure max contrast. For sharpness in wildlife photos, I depend on the Texture slider in Lightroom, not the normal Sharpness control.

Rainy Day in Dresden

95mm, f/7.1, 1/30, ISO-100, Canon R



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Such a simple, excellent image. I like it sooooo much!!

Composition

I am curious about seeing a little more of the right side of the image, but the geometry of the crop is hard to argue with.

Technical Quality

Perfect!

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

The subtle colors of this *almost black & white* image are just right. The almost imperceptible motion blur in some of the legs/feet confirms the reality of scene. Such a great photo!!

Climbing in Cottonwood Canyon
15mm, f/5, 1/100, ISO-100, Canon 5DIII



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Interesting perspective. How do you get in and out of that hole 😊

Composition

I like the framing and the fish-eye lens is great for this shot. I am curious about where the opening at the upper-right corner goes. If you could open up that corner without losing the climber at the bottom, that might be interesting. Just a thought.

Technical Quality

Surprised you were able to shoot this at ISO-100. The image looks good top to bottom.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Overall exposure, focus, lighting are good. I am not crazy about the blue cast on the curve of rocks around the lower half of the image. I would use a selective mask to reduce/remove that.

X's and O's

600mm, f/6.3, 1/2000, ISO-400, Canon R5



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

I assume the idea is that everyday items, like fence and razor wire, create shapes like Xs and Os, but it seems it needs to be more abstract and less obvious what the objects are. Maybe shoot these objects at night with light on only the wire and fence. Maybe choose an angle (at the corner of the fence) so that the objects are overlaid (razor wire in front of or behind the fence). Or maybe shoot out of focus or with ICM (Intentional Camera Movement) to make the image less obvious and more abstract.

Composition

I would think shooting very close-up and/or at extreme angles might enhance what you are trying to convey. I am unsure what the dove has to do with your Xs and Os.

Technical Quality

Technical quality is usually judged based on traditional photography norms ... sharp focus, well lit and exposed subject. I assume you want to do something non-traditional.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

All are good 😊 Keep shooting and refining what you want to create.

Herero Seamstress-Namibia

No EXIF Data



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Very interesting scene. The traditional dress and headdress reflect the Herero culture (I had to look it up).

Composition

The crop is pretty tight. I have to wonder if the surrounding area/objects might have provided more examples of Herero culture and tradition.

Technical Quality

Your submitted file doesn't contain any camera/settings data, but it appears you tried to blur the background in post processing. I don't know if you did this with an app/filter or manually, but there is a telltale blue halo all around the edges of the dress and headdress. Also, there are several random background areas that are not as blurred as the rest. I circled these in red.

There are lots of YouTube tutorials on how to add background blur in post processing and make it look more like the real thing while avoiding the halo effect that often occurs.

And as I said in *Composition*, there might have been things in the background and surrounding area that would have enhanced the shot.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Overall, the lighting, focus, exposure are good. I would treat this as a portrait and look for ways to enhance the woman's face ... skin, lips, teeth, eyes, etc. The new People Mask features in Lightroom make this pretty easy to do, and again, there are lots of tutorials available to show you how it's done.

Fancy Feathered Poppy

??mm, f/??, 1/640, ISO-640, Canon R6



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Beautiful flower. I am curious about the background and how you created the “water spots” ... very nice!

Composition

I like it!

Technical Quality

The camera/settings info in your file is not complete, so I don't know what aperture you used, but I think you need a little more depth-of-field. The whole flower doesn't necessarily need to be in focus, but it would be nice if the center part (the not-red part) of the flower was all in focus.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

All good. I hesitate to suggest anything because you seem to have been very deliberate about the mood of the image. Good job!!

Solitude

560mm, f/4, 1/640, ISO-640, Sony A1



Assignment Relevance

Open

Interest, Impact, Creativity

Low-angle shots on water just always look good. And if it's a Red-Necked Grebe, even better!!

Composition

I like the idea of putting the bird toward the lower-right corner, but I think it's a little too tight as submitted. I would give it just a little more *breathing room*.

Technical Quality

Settings seem just right for the scene and equipment.

Color, Lighting, Exposure, Focus

Good looking image. I always like a subtle dark vignette for this type of image.