

KCC Photo Group

Subject Guidance Notes for the 2023-2024 Season

Some general points to remember: The judge will probably have seen hundreds of images like your submissions – unless they are different enough to hold his/her attention. Also, the judge will be looking for any distractions for which points could be deducted, such as intrusive bright or dark features, particularly on the edges of an image. And the longer the judge spends with your image, the more likely is a high score. When you think you have finished processing an image, remember to check for distractions and deal with them before submitting it.

The Letter “S”: Your image simply needs to convey the letter “S” to the judge. It can be an object that begins with an “S”, Or it might be something shaped like an “S”. You have a huge choice with this one, so use your imagination.

Derelict/Decay/Rust: Three possible themes in one here: “derelict” should convey neglect, and maybe sadness at the state the place or thing is now in. Buildings would be good subjects for this. “Decay” is often when something that was alive (e.g. fruit, plant, tree, etc.) shows signs of rotting. Decomposing and deterioration of any object can also fit for this. And “rust” is metal that has suffered corrosion. Iron oxide is the fancy name for rust, but any metal object that has corroded or tarnished would work here. Peeling paint also works well with judges. But remember – as well as showing dereliction, decay or rust your image should also be good enough to impress the judge as a photograph in its own right.

Intimate Landscape: For this you need to ignore the “Big Picture”! Your image should be a small part of what you might normally record in a landscape image. You will need to be close up to your object, or use a telephoto or long zoom lens. You maybe should not include the sky, as this could detract the judge’s attention from what you’re trying to show him/her. On the other hand you could show a very small, isolated bit of sky as a key element, or leading the viewer’s eye into the main image. It might just work! Composition becomes all-important in this genre, so you can probably forget the Rule of Thirds which is commonly used in good landscape images. Instead, you should consider textures, lines and shapes, which will dominate the image and are all more important here.

Motion: Your image needs to convey movement of the subject. You can use a short shutter speed to freeze the motion, while somehow retaining the idea of movement; or a longer shutter speed to emphasise that the subject is indeed moving. Panning, with a medium shutter speed can blur things like car or bike wheels and backgrounds while (hopefully) retaining sharpness of the main subject. In-camera movement, or even post-processing “movement” could also be considered.

Still Life: <https://www.adobe.com/uk/creativecloud/photography/discover/still-life-photography.html>

You don’t even need to subscribe to Adobe to see this very useful guide! It contains all you need to know and offers lots of good tips.

Architecture: All buildings, both old and new, were designed by architects, so for this competition you are going to shoot a building or buildings, or just parts of them. The judge will be looking beyond straight shots for something different – a different viewpoint, or a challenging approach to cause him/her to think “wow! that’s unusual!”.