

Each judge awards a score of zero to nine (0 to 9) to a photograph.

**Below average: “0” to “4”**

- Out of focus (unless intentionally)
- Over- or under-exposed
- No obvious subject, poor composition
- Not relevant to the theme (if entered in a “theme” category)
- Poorly presented to the viewer (print/mount)
- Little impact or imagination

**Average: “5” to “6”**

- Technically correct (focus, exposure, etc.)
- Differentiated subject and background, considered composition
- Relevant to the theme (if entered in a “theme” category)
- Adequately presented to the viewer (print/mount)
- Little impact or imagination

**Above average: “7” to “8”**

- Technically correct (focus, exposure, etc.)
- Composition & lighting clearly thought out
- Demonstrates a pictorial treatment - tells a story or creates a mood
- Thoughtful presentation (print, paper, mount, crop size etc.)
- Exemplifies the theme (if entered in a “theme” category)
- Noticeable impact to the viewer

**Outstanding: “9”**

- Technically correct in all respects
- Outstanding composition & lighting
- Tells a complete story or creates a mood for the viewer
- Excellent presentation, considering all aspects
- Exemplifies the theme (if entered in a “theme” category)
- High impact to the viewer

**Why no ten (10)?**

Nothing is ever perfect would be the argument against awarding a ten.  
Requires an image of lasting impact.