

Thoughts of a Judge.....

By Gordon Roberts CPAGB

I have been judging for 30 years for the CACC and I am as you know also Programme Secretary for the Club. My job is to book speakers and judges.

Some judges are better than others, it's a fact. Some competitions are easier to judge than others. When faced with over 110 images in an evening it is too many. The most I have done is 99 and at the end of the evening I felt like a wet rag, and you know you probably haven't done justice to them all because of the time constraint. If you have 110 images that is less than 1 minute to see it, assess it and talk about it. It's too much to ask.

Judging prints is the easier section. You can see them all together and so it is easier to assess, but with dpi's you have to carry them in your head and as you start to score you have to remember which ones deserve a good mark, what that mark is and how it relates to the others to come – "all on the hoof".

I get it wrong at times. Gaynor and I will discuss images from a competition I have judged and she will say "why did you give image A 20? it was too much" or "why did you not like image B? I thought it was good".

You get differences in judging all the way up from Club Competitions to International Salons. I am sure Mike, Martin, and I know Gaynor and I have had the same image in different exhibitions and a 12 out of 20 in one might get 8 out of 20 in another! That's how it goes I am afraid. By the way, after looking at the top scores on our website I have to say that some people have got more marks than I would have given. A number were not sharp when in a closeup and macro event they should be, and one was not a close up either. So if you feel robbed by having a low score, there some of you that should be delighted at what you scored, as in my opinion, they should have scored less. But that is *my* opinion and that is what judging is all about.

Do not let it put you off - please do enter your work.

We have two battles coming up with local clubs soon. The judge at Abingdon has written a paper on Judging, here is a link <http://www.wallingford-photographic-club.org.uk/competition-advice.html>. Please read it and think about how it applies to the judges we have had, and those to come. Please go to these Battles and see the work of other clubs, and listen to the Judges. Our last print competition is being judged by Chris Palmer, who is an International judge. He does know what he is about. Enter a print and see if your opinion is the same as his. If not ask yourself why not?

At these three events form an opinion of each image and see if it is in line with that of the judge, remember you only have minutes to do this, just like the judge. Give it a mark before the judge does, and see if you are within one mark of the judges score. By doing this you will learn to assess images and see how to improve your own. Talk to other members and see if they agree with you or not.

Please do not be put off by any judge. If they like your work that's a bonus, if they don't then they could just be wrong.

Gordon Roberts CPAGB, March 2014