

# JUDGES REPORT

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2026 May – Theme - Long Exposure

Judge - Stephen Labaschagne - Bribie Island

Image Title	Comments	Score
City Lights	The photo is very busy with lots to look at. The reflection in the water is nicely blurred by the slow shutter speed. The bright white light on the left can be cropped out; this will focus the attention more on the center of the image and remove the out of focus building and the single blue light reflection will be very prominent. Due to the slow shutter speed, movement in the boats are inevitable. The focus seems to be on the bigger white boat just to the right. It is a bit soft due to the movement but acceptably sharp. Maybe make the image slightly darker to dim some of the bright lights but take care not to crush the blacks when doing so.	6
Waterfall at Night	The flow of water creates a smooth curtain of water with a small color reflection in it. The greens and browns complement each other, and the saturation of both colors are not overdone. Unfortunately, the image is over exposed, and I can't find any part of the image that is in focus.	4
Milky Way Over Railway Bridge	Well seen, the bridge with the Milky way in the sky. Unfortunately, the bridge is in focus, and the Milky way is out of focus. It is very difficult to get both in focus in one image, especially if you are close to the foreground subject. The solution is to first expose and focus on the foreground and take your photo. Then expose and focus on the background and take another photo, now blend these two images together in post processing. This way you will not only have a well-defined, low noise sharp foreground, but also a perfect Milky way	4
Townsville City Early Evening	A different time of day/night to photograph, around blue hour with just a hint of light and color in the sky but still dark enough to do longer exposures and get city lights still on. I am struggling to find a point of interest in the image and my eyes keep going round not finding something that is well enough in focus or interesting enough to settle on. For me the photo is the red sky with the red roofs on the left of the image. By concentrating on the left of the image, including the light on the left and using the red roofs and starburst lights as a line of repetitive shapes and color your eyes are lead you to the	5

	background and the big building in the back becomes your focal point.	
Light Painting	The yellow lights contrast perfectly against the blue and pink background and sky. The shape of the lights is intriguing. There are a few bright spots below the shapes and can be toned down just a bit. The shapes made by the light is more in a portrait orientation and the image is presented in the landscape orientation. This leaves us with a lot of empty space either side of the light shape. Try a portrait crop, you can still maintain the colorful sky but have more focus and attention on the light shapes.	7
The Milky Way Over the Trees	The night sky is captured well with some visible colors in the milky way. The black trees act as a basis and give you some sense of where you are. There are a few of the branches moving in the wind and creates a slight blur effect and I think it's perfectly okay. Experiment in post processing. Brighten the image slightly and then darken the blacks a small amount to bring out the color of the Milky way even more. Focus is slightly soft in the stars but still sharp enough for me.	7
One Becomes a Crowd	Very simple, yet very effective. The use of two colors makes the difference in the image, one color gives you just one dimension, the second color adds the second dimension, and the reflection adds a 1/3 <sup>rd</sup> dimension, very well done. In focus, well exposed and well thought out. Personally, I won't use a red border, I prefer a very small white border to only show the edge of the image. Colored borders tend to compete with the image and don't always compliment the image. It is a personal choice, and I will not penalize you for using the border in the way you did here.	8
One Wild Weed Turns into Three	It took me a while to figure out what is happening in the image. The ghostly image in the back shows the movement over time with the three weeds in focus and stationery. The reflection is slightly darker, and you don't see the movement as you do in the main image. The purple is very bright with the touches of green. I am not sure of the color conversion used. Purple is a very overpowering color and by adding a thick border of the same color you created scenario where your eyes keep on moving to the border instead of the content inside the border.	5
Bridge by Night	A different view and edit of the bridge. The monochrome conversion was done well, and the overall composition works good, leading lines taking us all the way to the back and the reflections make for very good shapes in the image. The starburst lights on top of the bridge add to the image and overall, a very good monochrome image. I know that you can only get the reflections from the water if the water is blurred with a long exposure. I need something extra in the image to indicate the longer exposure.	7

Starbright	By shining a small amount of light on the grasses breaks the dark mass in the foreground and add to the image. The Milky way is clearly visible and in focus. The sky is on the blue side, by changing the white balance more towards the yellow, the core of the Milky way will be enhanced. Try reducing the highlights to make the lights on the horizon slightly less visible and drop the blacks slightly as well. See if this works for you. A well seen and taken photo.	6
City Skyline	The colors of the city skyline in Brisbane are always good place for an image. The vibrant and multi color buildings with the river lends it towards a slow shutter speed night photo. Some of the lights are a bit overpowering and bright and does grab your attention, specifically the bright white light on top of the one building. It is not easy to deal with these conditions in one image. Try doing an HDR, take 3 images, one under exposed, one correctly exposed and one over exposed, blend them together in your post processing software and you will get the best of both worlds, reduced highlights and shadow areas with details. The buildings are nice and straight so no leaning to one side. When cropping look at the edges of your image. On the right-hand side a small amount of a building is included, better to crop it out, same with the top, try not to clip parts of the structure. The focus is on the building in the front left and slightly soft on the rest of the buildings. The colors are good and the composition works well	6
Elizabeth Tower	The streaking lights of the cars going by tells us that it is a long exposure image. They are a bit bright, and we lose them in the bigger picture due to the size of the tower. The tower stands out against the sky, and the green light is a color contrast to the rest of the colors in the image with the purple adding another dimension. The arrow road sign in the bottom is a small but very important part of the image the red and white lights shows the movement, the only stationary item is the sign and it's purple. For me the sign and the moving lights is the photo.	7
Almost a Halo	Well captured image, the halo is slightly bright, but not much that you can do about it. The sparks flying form a dome of fire around the person a light the surrounding area. Focus is on the subject and a small crop from the bottom to reduce the out of focus areas will enhance the image. The big rock in front of the person is also soft and almost blocking the person. If he was standing on this rock, it would have removed the block, or you moved slightly left to change the angle to reduce the bright lights on the back shore. Try making the image slightly darker to reduce some of the bright areas on the rocks. A good long exposure.	6

Reach For the Sky	Blue hour image with the oranges and reds in the rising sun and with the lights still on in the buildings and on the bridge. The movement in the sky and water tells us that a longer exposure was used for the image. The purple lights contrast very well with the yellow and white building lights and sky. A small amount of contrast can be beneficial as well as a drop in whites. There is no distortion in the buildings and a very well taken photo.	7
Light Balls on the Pier	Very good image. The three balls of yellow light are perfectly placed and then your eyes follow the railings past the two ghostly figures, and your eyes stop on the red and blue roof. The two red warning signs add to the image and there is nothing I would change in this image. Very well thought out and photographed.	9
Sparkling Lights on the Beach	The repetition of the circles of fire is well done. The first couple of circles on the left is slightly lower than the rest and step up to the same height as the rest within a few rotations. This breaks the pattern slightly and adds to the image, the sparks flying are all sharp and well exposed. The rock in the foreground is important, without it, there is no sense of scale or location, being dark is correct as it balances the light created by the fire circles. Very good image and well edited	8
Cascade	Very nice cascading waterfall. We have the rocks Infront forming a base and we then follow the water up several levels till it disappear. The contrast in the image was just too much for your camera to handle. The bright rocks in the front overpower the image and your eyes always return to them. The water flow is nicely blurred with the slower shutter speed and is more towards grey than white. There are a few places where the darks are clipped with no details visible. This type of image works better when taken in overcast conditions to avoid the extreme contrast. By reducing the foreground, the bright rocks will also be less and not taking attention away from the waterfall. Have you tried the image in color?	4
Strand Pier Under a Full Moon	Well seen and photographed. The monochrome conversion is done well and due to the longer exposure ghostly figures are created on the pier and the light on the water breaks the dark and is bonus in the image. The full moon is captured very well and it's easy to overexpose so well done for not doing so. Focus is sharp throughout as well. Try adding a slight lift in brightness and then offset it with a small amount of contrast. This will make the sky darker and the lights and moon slightly brighter without overexposing them. Also consider cropping some of the sky to give a slightly closer view and reducing the white glow at the top.	9
Fun on the Ferris Wheel	Nothing shows movement like a Ferris Wheel. Your shutter speed is long enough to get the perfect circles of lights with no	8

	blocks of black is perfect. The flags are flying in the wind the lights on the building form nice star bursts and the two people showings some movement also add to the slow shutter speed effect. Focus is nice and sharp, Depth of field is enough, and the exposure is well handled, the center of the wheel is bright, but here I think it works.	
Raining Fire	A different way of doing the sparkling fire, not only do you have the dome, but also a circle in the middle as well as the sparks bouncing off the ground with a very good reflection of what looks like water. Focus and exposure is well done. Really good image	8

### Image of the Month

Image Title	Reason for Placing
Light Balls on the Pier	The use of contrasting color, shapes and lines work well together. The two people walking away look like ghosts and it just fit the image. The impact of the image is immediate, it tells a story and the lighting is handled perfectly. <b>(Cecily Jones)</b>