



OHA PHOTOGRAPHY JUDGING GUIDELINE

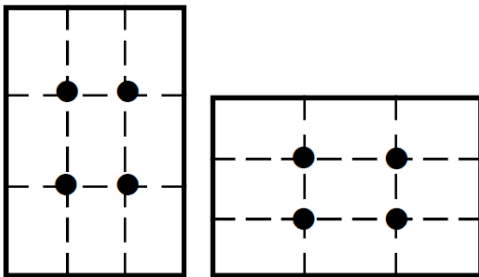
As OHA Certified Judges in Floral Design and Horticulture, we are sometimes asked to also judge photography classes as part of a flower show. To help, the OHA Judging Committee has released these guidelines that are available from the OHA website Shows tab under Useful Guides for Judges & Competitors.

SCALE of POINTS:

Composition	35
The arrangement of the centre of interest and all other elements in the photo	
Artistic Merit	25
An original artistic concept in the choice and organization of all of the components of the photo	
Impact	10
Creativity.....	10
Other aspects.....	05
Technical Merit	25
The technical aspects include:	
Colour	05
Lighting	05
Other aspects.....	15
Presentation	15
Compliance with schedule requirements and quality of production. Deductions for non-compliance should be proportional to the degree of non-compliance	

COMPOSITION

- Is the image intentionally level? Some compositions are meant to be skewed.
- Is there good subject placement?
- Is the background uncomplicated, not busy with distractions or cluttered?
- Is the photo balanced, whether symmetrical or asymmetrical?
- Were the primary and secondary subjects placed correctly?
- Are there harmonious proportions and good rhythm of colours?
- Are there any unwanted, unnecessary, or distracting elements present?
- Were accessories used properly?
- Were special effects used properly?
- Was the rule of thirds used, or was there a good reason not to? It is generally considered that it is best to place the main subject off center, but there is a case to be made for having the subject in the center when symmetry is a primary aspect of the photo.



Rule of Thirds:

The intersection of imaginary lines (at one third intervals) are pleasing points of interest.

ARTISTIC MERIT: IMPACT

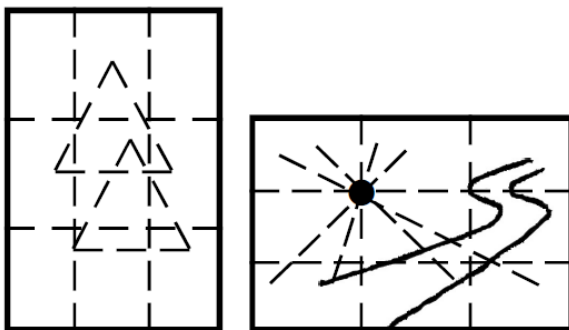
- What was your first reaction and impression of the photo?
- What catches the eye and holds your attention?
- Is the image evocative e.g. cause the viewer to feel the coolness of a foggy morning, the visceral excitement of a panned race car, the grandeur of a mountain scene, the vastness of the ocean, the desperation of a child, the beauty of a soaring eagle, etc.?
- Does the photo have a WOW factor?
- Does the photo cause the viewer to use the imagination because of an unusual point of view, use of unorthodox processing, or have an unconventional composition that works?

ARTISTIC MERIT: CREATIVITY

- Is there a unique style and imagination used?
- Was the correct format used? Most novice photographers tend to always shoot with their camera held horizontally, producing pictures in the landscape format. Sometimes it is better to hold the camera vertically and shoot in the portrait format. The format should complement the form. When positioning your camera, match the orientation of the frame to the orientation of the subject.
- If the image breaks with tradition, does this enhance the image?

ARTISTIC MERIT: OTHER ASPECTS

- Is there a strong focal point or center of interest? Is the placement of the main subject contributing to the overall image?
- Does the main subject pop out at you or do you have to look around the photo to find it?
- Is there a proper proportion of the subject to other material?
- Was the viewpoint from which the photo was taken the best one?
- Is there a good use of positive and negative space?
- Does it tell a story, convey an emotion?
- Do the lines give you the appropriate feeling? A line in an image may be an object, like a road or the stem of a plant, or it may be the boundary between two different colours or tones in an image. Vertical lines are uplifting, strong and powerful. Diagonal lines imply motion, action or change and are dynamic. Curved lines are slow and meandering and can appear melancholy or hopeful depending on the direction of the curve. Horizontal lines are steady and calm and imply tranquility or stability. Whatever statement you make, the position of the main line should reinforce the subject and give appropriate feeling.



Leading Lines: Leading Lines should produce visual unity and depth, both horizontally and vertically, illustrating movement or direction, guiding your eye to the point of interest.

TECHNICAL MERIT: COLOUR

- Are patterns, shapes, colours, and shades complementary?
- Are colours pleasant and harmonious?
- Are the colours bright, properly saturated?
- Was there proper use of soft, subdued or even monochrome colours?
- Do the colours enhance the image?
- Were contrasting colours used to bring attention to the subject?
- Do colours add emotion of the image?
- Was the deliberate use of incorrect colour used to enhance the image?
- Are colours accurate when they need to be?

TECHNICAL MERIT: LIGHTING

- Is the photo over or under exposed?
- Does the light enhance the picture, are shadows harsh, are there shadows on the subject that should not be there, does the light look imposed, is side lighting or back lighting effective, were the light conditions too extreme?
- Was proper framing of the subject by light or background used?
- Was the best light used to enhance the subject or the mood? Light is the raw material of any image and may be reduced to colour or hue (red, blue, green, yellow, etc.) and tone (light or dark, or contrast). They establish the time of day or convey a mood. Colour and tone can express emotion. Light tones tend to lift the spirits while dark tones are perceived as moody. Red is a colour of passion while blue can be a colour of calm or sadness. Use colour and tone to reflect the mood you are trying to convey. The easiest and least expensive way to handle light is to see how and when light affects the subjects we wish to photograph. When using natural light, most photographers come to appreciate the low angled light of the early morning and evening. This low angled light gives us side light creating a sense of texture and is warm or to the red end of the spectrum, which most of us find appealing. However, if we are to photograph in deep shade, such as the forest floor, the light of full sun can help to shorten exposure times, which is useful for hand-held camera positions. Days that are overcast will be an even light and reduce the contrast that happens between highlight and shadow. Colours can be seen as more saturated on such days. Observe your subject through various times of the day and on different days.

TECHNICAL MERIT: OTHER ASPECTS

- Is this movement shown properly? Action shots may reflect movement.
- Is good depth of field used or is the background distracting? Backgrounds and

foregrounds need to complement the photo. Blurred backgrounds are effective if they are out of focus, bringing out the subject in the photo or hiding a distracting element.

- Is the photo free of dust, dirt, stains, scratches, spotting, streaks, or water damage? The photo should be faulted for any of these defects.
- Is high gloss photo finishing used? High gloss photos should be scored higher as matte finish and sprays diminish the quality of the print.
- If there are leading lines, do they lead the eye to the focal point? Are they creating interest?
- Are there unintentional light flares?
- Does the photo have balance?
- Are the patterns, shapes and colours complementary to the image?
- Is the exposure correct? There should be no blown out highlights or blackened shadows, unless they are intentional and add to the dynamics of the photo.
- Could multiple photo images that are to tell a story be done better? Consider the overall impression of the entry, whether all photos should have similar proportion or be dissimilar intentionally so that placement and balance complement the entry.
- Is there an absence of merging objects coming into picture?
- Is the subject in focus?
- Is the focal point sharp? If not, does it add to the strength of the photo? Keep in mind that an image may have been conceived and executed to be totally un-sharp and still be a superior image.
- Did you judge the photo in its entirety and not as individual parts?

PRESENTATION

- Is the photo unmounted, mounted (placed on top), matted (place beneath a matt), framed or hanging properly, as per the schedule?
- Were good cropping techniques used?
- Was the best format of horizontal or vertical used?
- Is the photo relevant to the category called for and does it fit the title or caption?
- Does the photo fit the category of either colour or black and white?
- Does the photo fit the category as to whether digital enhancements may be used or not?
- Is the correct number of photos used as called for in the schedule for groupings?
- Is the size of the mount in correlation to the size of the photo or photos?
- Are the borders appropriate and of harmonious colour to enhance the photo? Photos with overly large borders and/or inappropriate colours should be faulted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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REFERENCE SOURCES

Alberta Horticultural Association. 2007. Judging and Exhibiting Standards for Horticultural Shows. Photography pp. 134-138.

Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies. 2020. Homecraft Judging Standards. Edition 1. Photography p. 40.