

# Photographic Panels

What is a Panel ?

Normally, prints or digital images should total between three and five, laid out at the authors discretion. Four can be used, but beware the equal number!

Artistically, even numbers do not always work !

A Panel that includes your “best ever” photo is unlikely to succeed .... unless you have a few of them! One very good image will not “cancel out” the “lesser” images and the Panel will look distorted. Three Gold Medal winners, unless they meet the criteria (see below) will not achieve the same success when used as a Panel.

A viewer of a Panel, should see it as one cohesive “picture.” The eye should not be thrown by one image being “stronger” than the others, either by content, colour, contrast or indeed quality!

What are the guidelines ?

1. All the images should show a similar tone and tonal range.
2. If there is a horizon on all the images, these should “join up” so that the viewer is not looking up and down.
3. The subject matter should be similar.

4. The image (s) on the left side of the Panel should take the eye towards the centre. As should the image (s) on the right. It could be argued that the central image should be the strongest ... perhaps so, but not so strong that the viewer “only sees” the central picture and not the others !
5. A Panel can tell a story by “reading” left to right.
6. Digital Panels are often difficult to lay out. Try to be imaginative and providing you do not use more than five images in total, you can use an image as a background (perhaps desaturated so as not to overpower the images in the foreground). If you do not wish to use a black or white background, use a colour that is sympathetic to the images (tonal range).
7. In the case of prints, the mounts should be all the same colour and format. I have seen however, a square central mount between to rectangular mounts. It gelled !

And finally ..... look to break the “Rules,” but do it with good reason - even if the judge does not see things your way. Are you producing images that make you happy, or the judge “happy?” Sometimes everybody is happy !

Please contact me on 07770 555148 if you want to discuss anything.

Bob Bracher