

ENTRY LEVEL

*** 01 'Two Chimneys'**

A good angle and selection and I like the geometry of the composition. The two chimneys stand out well and have an interesting structure. The lighting is very flat though and a better sky would have made a more pleasing backdrop. The edge of the roof coming in bottom right is a little distracting – but it does help fill part of the otherwise empty space.

Second Place - Peter Smith

02 'Stack'

A 'flat on' view of this chimney, so it lacks any depth. But on the other hand, I do like the symmetry of the shape. For that reason and because the sliver of sky between the roof edge and the side of the frame is awkward, I would crop from right so that the stack is completely in the centre. Rather flat lighting though and a better sky would add interest. Also it is very tight in the frame at the top and a little extra space there would be better – if it isn't in the file, then extending the canvas slightly when processing would solve that.

03 'No Smoke, Fire in the Sky'

The lovely sky makes a good backdrop, but the chimneys themselves are not that interesting and are too small in the frame. Zooming in on the central area to make them larger would have helped – you could try enlarging the file, but I am not sure the quality is good enough to do that.

04 'Blickling Chimneys'

These chimneys are amazing, and the lighting is good but you haven't made the best of either in this image. Most of the bottom half is lawn and hedge and there is a lot of empty sky at the top. Zooming in on the chimneys so that they occupied much more of the picture would have transformed this. The picture should be more about the chimneys, not about the place.

*** 05 'Chimneys Afloat'**

Not sure what this structure is, but the title suggests it could be a boat of some kind. The white framework does dominate the image and the chimneys are contained within this. They are functional rather than objects of beauty, and are clustered closely together, but the composition does work quite well except for that white box shape at the bottom. It is very dominant and distracting and I would crop it off. Something a bit different though.

Third Place—Tony Clarke

06 'Big Chimney'

A lovely old chimney and I like the way you have zoomed in on it and thus made it stand out well. The structure looks very interesting but you were unlucky with the flat lighting – some more directional sunlight could have worked wonders and would have given more light and shade, with more emphasis to the shapes and brickwork. As it stands, the chimney could be selectively lightened in processing, which would definitely improve the image.

07 'Keep Smoking'

Repairs in hand tell the story, but the chimney itself is rather diminutive. Nevertheless, a different approach to the subject and that does add interest. Shooting against the light sky has resulted in the man being rather dark and careful processing to make him a lighter would help. Nicely composed though and zooming in has worked well.

*** 08 'Tall Chimney'**

I do like the strong upward angle from which you took this and what a difference the lighting has made. It shows the roundness and texture of the brickwork really well and the sky is a super backdrop, with the top of the chimney nicely framed in the blue area. The lower section of the image is in shadow, and that is good as it holds the image in nicely at the bottom and you have included just enough of the houses to give context. The bird flying across is a bonus Excellent!

First Place - Christine Hall

EXPERIENCED LEVEL

*** 01 'Stormy Skies'**

This is a super shot – great light and very atmospheric. My first thoughts were that this was a landscape/seascape rather than a picture of chimneys, but small as they are, the chimneys are a pivotal part of the image and that patch of smoke highlighted by the sun is the key to it all. The eye is therefore drawn strongly to the chimneys and their central placement emphasises their importance. A very interesting and not so obvious interpretation of the subject. Excellent!

First place—Graham Mee

02 'I Can See You'

I like this weathered old chimney and the light and shade in the brickwork has enhanced the textures very nicely. The cheeky gull has added interest and a touch of humour. Good use of the framing as well – not too tight but large enough so that we can enjoy the detail.

03 'Cathedral Chimneys'

Chimneys *and* windows! Combined, they make a strong pattern in this letterbox image. I do like the sky too, with those billowing clouds. This is quite a small image, and having enlarged it for more comfortable viewing, it is quite soft. But as that is probably the result of a small file size, I will discount that aspect.

04 'Kings School Chimneys'

A very interesting group of chimneys and I like the way they are distributed across the frame. The stormy sky backdrop sets everything off very nicely. It is very soft overall though, so much so that the fine detail in the chimneys is not visible and that is a shame – maybe it is a small file?

05 'Inside Looking Out'

This 'on the angle' presentation makes for a dynamic perspective and composition and I do like the way the chimneys are thrusting through the opening. I can't quite work it all out though, as the left hand chimney is *inside* the aperture and the other one is outside. But, no matter, as a design it works well and the good sky beyond finishes it off effectively. There is some colour fringing along the edge of the aperture, maybe as a result of limited file size?

06 'Row of Tudor Stacks'

I like the tight framing of this, not a bit of wasted space anywhere! The shapes and various colours and textures of the stacks are very well rendered and the suggestion of a stormy sky in the background is good too.

07 'On the Slant'

Interesting to see a monochrome - the only one in the competition I think. Tonally, there is good separation of the chimney from the background and that is reinforced by the distance being out of focus. I think the diagonal placement works well too. If anything, a little more contrast would be good, just to give the image a bit more 'punch'.

*** 08 'Windy Stack'**

Can't quite work out the angle of this, as judging by the background, this chimney seems quite low down. There is a feeling that the smoke coming out might be driven into those windows and the unpleasant pollution that would create would not be good! As for the chimney, I think this has been very well photographed, with the metal having good textures and a very tactile feel to it. The red band at the top adds a pleasing colour contrast. An imaginative and expressive approach – you can almost inhale that smoke – ugh!

Second Place—Terry Taber

09 'Anne Boleyn Chimneys'

I like the angle from which this was taken and the chimneys on the diagonal and reducing in size across the frame compose well. The colourful sky makes a lovely backdrop and sets everything off very successfully. Very pleasing.

10 'Classic Chimneys'

A well taken angle, showing the well-lit chimneys on the diagonal and there is a good feeling of light on the chimneys which shows the shapes, colours and textures of the brickwork very well. The clear blue sky makes a pleasing and supportive backdrop which sets everything off very nicely.

11 'Rochford Hospital'

A simple and 'clean' image, with the chimney standing out well against the pleasing sky. The composition works well too. But although this was a sunny day, the white chimney is flat in tone and lacks any feeling of 'roundness' to emphasise the shape. If you could have got an angle with the light coming more from the side, that would have been better, I think.

12 'Tin Mine'

These old mines are very interesting buildings and I like your composition here, with the wall curving round to lead the eye to the subject. The chimney is the main feature of the building and I like the way it is set proudly against the stormy sky. Unfortunately, the lighting is very flat, which has robbed the image of some life. This could perhaps work better in b & w, where use of tonal controls and contrast could make a big difference.

13 'Industrial Chimneys'

This works well and was taken at an ideal time before the sky got too dark. The late evening colours are lovely and the warmer colour from the lit windows makes a pleasing contrast. The red warning lights on the chimneys makes them stand out well.

14 'Red Chimneys'

I like the repeated shapes in this one and the red chimneys stand out well against the sky. The image has been severely cropped into a letter-box, but I think adding more of the roof would probably have made a better balance.

*** 15 'Britannia'**

A very striking image, where the distinctive colour of the funnels stands out well against the stormy monochromatic sky. Despite it being quite a complex structure, you chose a good angle and the composition works well. These are certainly 'chimneys' with a difference – a super image.

Third Place—Gary Faux

16 'Chimneys at Corfe Castle'

I did a double take on this when I initially opened the file, as at first glance, my eyes went straight to the castle and I thought the tall 'wall' on the right of the ruin was a chimney. But then I of course realised that it was just part of the ruin and that the chimneys from the title were in the foreground. So I do think this image is more about the castle than it is about the chimneys and that these mostly help frame the view in the background.