

COMPOSITION

by Mark Halpin

When completing a composition, clutter should be eliminated, and well-chosen details used instead.

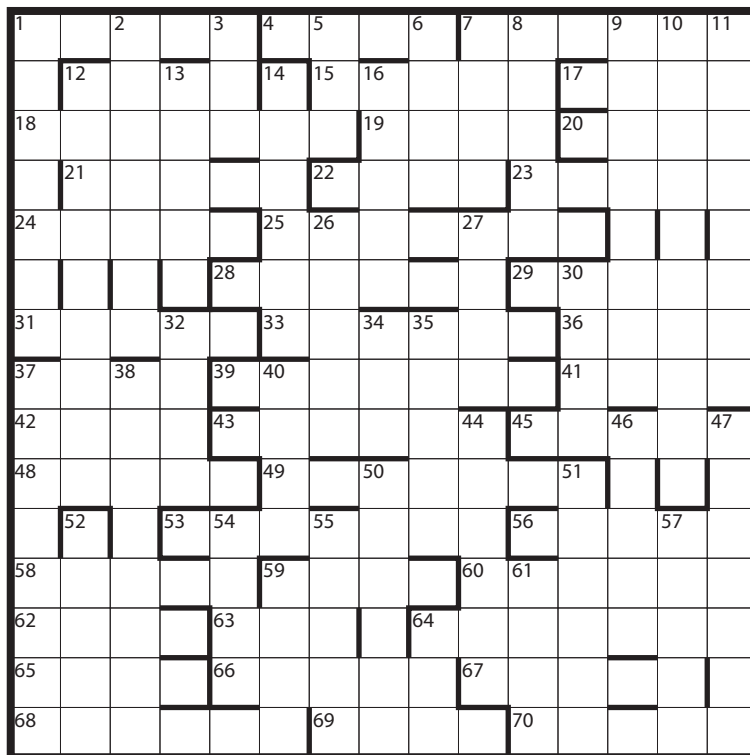
Some Across entries will be one letter too long for the grid squares allotted, and will extend one space into the entry either before or after. Letters thus overlapping will not match. This is clutter, so in each case both letters should be eliminated, and a different letter (a "well-chosen detail") should be used in that space instead. These details will complete certain elements of your composition.

To help determine what those details should be, the initial letters of the clues for the over-long entries will describe, read in clue order, the nature of the composition.

When properly entered, the new letters, read from the top of the grid down, will form an appropriate exclamation, the final answer to this puzzle.

ACROSS

- Macaroni shapes (those ultimately used with mixing bowls)
- Scheherazade, essentially, is divine queen
- Screenwriter Paul's *Highlander* concoction
- Out of harm's way in outskirts of New Mexico capital
- Inflexible heads of state too readily invoke "Communist Threat"
- Noisily net seabird
- States adopting Republican slogans
- Marine killer retiring, beginning to get high?
- Fat Irish writer losing pound
- Lyric I clean describing eavesdropper?
- First-rate revolutionary in pain
- Baseball team getting no second chances
- Ostentatiously display mutation
- Lavishly declaiming, cast describes dessert
- Improperly schedule mime - it's careless
- Analyst reworked segment for broadcast
- Be quiet, Brownie's on ledge
- No longer green, on reflection, Irani leaves doc
- Misplaced shoe and stocking
- Empty talk about country
- Like some step-siblings, oddly up to ears in need
- Oklahoma spot for Western feast
- Orange peel ingredient with a tang
- Rowdy fracas engulfing fleet's innermost vessels
- Deep pink, lilac, or alabaster swatch
- Some European residents (but Slavs, primarily)!
- Young people moving Ecstasy after all? Humbug!
- Worries for Caesar revolved around routine nonsense
- Nation having one, two central states
- Lady's minor shortcoming: checking into support group
- Extremely damp, empty
- Organize rental involving new lighting element
- A terrible review: "Good grief!"
- Rejected paramour embracing quatrain composer
- The Last of the Mohicans* edition taken out for display
- No prison!
- Notable actress losing energy from sore throat
- Egyptian locale almost never up front showing burial marker
- Driest mobilized march
- Gaelic poem once begun
- "Karen" on *Will & Grace* is pedestrian



DOWN

- Bribery brought up in past lovers' tell-alls (7)
- Tailor brocade with pattern of stripes (3 4)
- "Craven"? Darn! Take that back! (3)
- Curve in several directions (3)
- Showing deliberate impudence for principal (4)
- English county annulling earliest charter (4)
- A scam taking in real nut (5)
- Beginning to garner free press in a certain field (8)
- Transcribing is done in an Asian language (10)
- Seaweeds tangled, swayed back and forth (8)
- Orderly in hip spa: he's relaxed (9)
- Utter transport for ethereal girl (5)
- Drowning imp saved by snorkel piece (6)
- Shhhhhh! Hole in one looms between tees (5)
- Teri's swimming in the Danube (5)
- One male model (4)
- Cosby's TV son used in teen drama, almost (4)
- Behold Mr. White's notorious partner in crime (4)
- Call Ireland for a while (3)
- Commoner and spouse, losing face, boarding train (5)
- Rogue goes past brutal police forces (8)
- Tim gets lost at edge of forest, right after German fellow (8)
- Salt's stains (4)
- Excellent basketball teams showing no charge in full court (2 4)
- Hounds endlessly wanting water the most (5)
- Hero-worshiper's name used by one being followed (7)
- Bantu's kerchief detail: bull elephant (6)
- Necessarily involve getting in late, unfortunately (6)
- Unsuitable paint mixed (5)
- Robin shows no desire for some pet chow (4)
- The Yankees' Joe recently ran quickly, scoring run (5)
- Papas nearly wind up in rage (5)
- Completely check companion (4)
- Doctor can answer a bunch of jocks (4)
- Prosperous periods for delivery company (3)

If you're new to cryptic crosswords and would like tips for solving clues, contact the author at markhalpin3@gmail.com