

focus

the newsletter of the matamata camera club

Critiques November 2011.

Open Digital



C-Grade: At That Hour

Beautiful atmosphere - one can just feel the crisp, cold air - the foreground fence does act as a bit of a barrier, but it's not too heavy - I like the tree breaking through the line of hills, connecting the sky and the land - I think it would be better balanced if you cropped off about half the sky, this would make the land more dominant - watch those horizons - this one falls away steeply to the right - always keep you horizon dead level.
Merit.



C-Grade: Life In The Dark

Great lighting showing the shape and form of the petals, great exposure, great colour, great composition with the flower on the diagonal and the flower itself plumb on the conjunction of the thirds - simple background - what could it be but...
Honours



B-Grade: A Solitary Tear

A soft and gentle photograph, befitting its title - even though the eyes are shadowed, there are still subtle catchlights there - I would prefer the eyes above the centre line, as this would be better balanced, however, I'm loath to suggest a crop - maybe this is just one of those images which works best with the main eyecatch dead centre Honours.



B-Grade: Ancient Rata

This is a very strong image which is enhanced by the tall, thin format - I love the glancing light on the various out-crops of vegetation - there are masses of detail throughout and it's good and sharp - it's a pity the sky is so full of white clouds, as more blue would, I think, be better.

Highly Commended



B-Grade: Patrick

Such a contrast to the last image - whereas that was brash, this is soft - soft lighting, soft expression - pity there are no highlights in the eyes - the white lining of his hood grabs rather too much attention - the background is nicely subdued and out-of-focus - this time I don't mind that his head has been cut into although I'd still prefer the eyes to be above the centre
Merit.



B-Grade: Last Run Done

Although there is obviously some strong sunlight, it's coming almost from over the photographer's shoulder, making the image rather flat - there is an abundance of contrasts and textures in the subject which you have not made the most of - I do like the tight crop into a long, low format, but by B Grade I expect more creativity.
Entry.



B-Grade: Looking At The Rain

What can I say about this - it's just superb - I particularly like the streaks of the raindrops against that diffused background - there is a mass of texture and contrast - in any grade this would be an ...
Honours



B-Grade: The Canterbury Stockyards

This has the elements of an interesting composition – the straight lines - the diagonals - the quirky cut-outs of the no longer existing windows - the darker base to the left - but there's just something lacking - maybe the use of a polarising filter would have added some depth to the bland sky - however I do like the rigid lines and the lamp 'looking' out of the picture - a tad less exposure would also have helped. Merit.



B-Grade: Waiting For Dinner

How brave, or foolish, of you to get so up close and personal with this spider - everyone in my club knows if they get a good shot of a spider, put it in when Kay's judging, as I have great difficulty even looking at them! - in fact, while I was writing up these comments, a dirty great white tail crawled out from under the keyboard and ambled up my monitor! yes, I had to be rescued by my long-suffering husband - back to the matter in hand - I'd like just a tad more of the web showing as the spider seems to suspended in mid-air, with no visible means of support - but that is a mere detail - and detail aplenty you have here - right down to the hairy legs and dimpled tum - good exposure and excellent background. Merit.



B-Grade: Yellow Road

Finally, we have this clever little image, with just the yellows popped – the road catches the light very nicely and leads the eye through the picture in a very satisfying way – my only criticism is those patches of sky at the top - these could have very easily been cropped off – as they are, they are a distraction completely out of proportion to their size - the vehicle is very well placed within the composition, although a tiny quibble, it would be better facing into the picture OR, even better, facing the way it is, but on the left third, just about where the sign is. Highly Commended



A-Grade: Bright Your Day

How absolutely glorious - the rich, bright colours - the sharpness (where it needs to be sharp) - the diffused background - the sheer simplicity - the tight and imaginative cropping - all add up to a superb image.

Honours.



A-Grade: Family Discussions

Good composition - that is, two and one sheep, two sitting and one standing - good lighting shows the texture of the fleeces and the grass - the long, low format has eliminated any distractions and/or unnecessary space - good low viewpoint, throws the sheep against the sky - good depth of colour

Merit.



A-Grade: Flax Party

This has started off with a fabulous subject, but the treatment subsequently given to it has made for a somewhat confusing image - in some cases, less is best - the centre of the flower is positioned strongly on the lower third, leaving plenty of space for it to radiate into - I love the strong contrast of the pink and red - it's pin sharp in the centre, so sharp in fact, one can even see the ant's legs! Highly Commended.



A-Grade: Moreton Bay Fig

These are magnificent trees and are strongly placed on the thirds - they are sharp throughout and the colour is good - however, I do think, in this age of the miraculous computer, you could have subdued that bald white sky, which almost overpowers the trees - imagine the top third subdued and also the left third, now the trees frame that delightful vista in the mid distance. Highly Commended.



A-Grade: Steamin'

A lovely, punchy image - but the shadows in the foreground are too heavy and featureless - I'd like to see more of the lamp - **OR** you could crop off the bottom portion, up to halfway through the lamp - this would make it less oppressive and would eliminate most of the really black areas - I love the atmosphere created by the steam and rain. Merit

Quote: *"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson