

MAY 2013 RESULTS

Preamble

Thank you for the opportunity to view your work which I felt to be of a good standard throughout the grades, but I was especially impressed by the C grade images. Please remember both ratings and comments are very much a matter of opinion, although I do try to be objective in determining what is a successful image irrespective of any personal preferences. There are 15 Open images and 30 in the set subject "More than one". The viewing order is as presented to me which means the A Grades are first, but I think it is very fitting that you will see the C Grades last for reasons I hope will be obvious. I should perhaps mention that the titles in the comments are straight copy & pastes from the images presented so I accept no responsibility for the spelling!!

OPEN

A Grade

Concentration – Keith

The main focal point, the girl on the left, is beautifully sharp, and there is good separation from the background. The other figures compliment nicely drawing the viewer back to those focussed eyes. Darkness top right contributes to a successful image in which the exposure has been spot on. Well done. Honours



Lakeside Farm – Sarah

A pleasant scene with nice water quality and an interesting sky. The foreground fence with the well placed gate is the main interest, the gate being balanced by the island and its tree, top right third. The composition is just a little right heavy, and I suggest a crop from the left through the trees left skyline (which takes out one of the white highlights, and the other should be darkened), plus cloning over the bright sky coming through the tree on the right. Acceptance



Mangaweka – Tracey

An image with consistent density which conveys a very deserted feeling. You have done well to ensure the brightness of the sky does not overwhelm the lovely earthy hues of the buildings. Because letters always draw the viewer's attention, I suggest the hardware store be cropped out removing all its bright facade. Merit



The challenger – Carl

The challenger has certainly been well caught and with it being the only sharp subject and its colour, immediately draws and holds the attention. The wide format works well, but I do wonder if it would be even better if cropped from the top to the top of the Gulf sign. The information above that adds nothing to the story, and a projected image in particular must get its message across quickly. Merit





Tranquil reflections – Caren

A great opportunity not quite fully realised. Nice simple colours and good saturation, if a little lacking in punch. My suggestion is, if the quality is there pre-downsizing, to crop from the top to the crossbar on the gate on the jetty, crop from the right to just touching the grey dinghy, and then flip it horizontally. Remember, cropping is not just for getting rid of unwanted stuff, but it changes relationships and makes the focal subjects bigger. Doing this, you end up with a better composition.

Acceptance



TRY – Brie

Caught at peak action. A very good sports image really spoiled only by the referee's sponsor, Pink Bats. While from pictorial perspective it could be cropped, the other figures and lack of potential tacklers all add to the story. Good colour.

Highly Commended



Two at a time – Robbo

A competent image with appropriate depth of field to diffuse the background and good choice of shutter speed. While the two people are pretty much in line, there is not real competition between them because of the interest commanded by the lower face. Take care in using framing like this. The white tends to leach colour quality from the image itself when projected. I think that use of white borders should be used only on dark edged images to show where they are and should be very narrow. Oversize on the vertical axis.

Acceptance



Waiting in line – Liz

Well seen and good colour saturation, but too much extraneous matter for your story. I suggest a crop from the top to the point of that little outcrop of rock currently in the centre, and from the right to allow just the same space between boat and margin as you have on the left. Then flip it horizontally to place the yellow boat in the strongest place in the picture.

Acceptance



B Grade

Chrysler – Cassandra

An interesting self portrait, with good depth of field. The main interest is really in the reflections and perhaps the title should have reflected that, like "Chrysler Admirers". Technically fine, but it does have difficulty maintaining viewer interest.

Acceptance



Innocent eyes – Cushla

A charming image softly lit with good use of differential focus to separate subject from background. It's hard to get everything perfect and yet spontaneous, but the hair across the nose had me thinking my screen was scratched. Colours are natural and harmonious. Because the face is basically shaded and the background is relatively bright, a subtle vignette would be an improvement.

Honours



new beasts of Burden – Geoff

This is technically well handled and well composed, but is likely to enthuse only farmers. In a camera club competitions which are largely more pictorial, nature or PJ oriented, straight documentary images come across as technical exercises. To change this one you could preserve the red areas and make the rest monochrome, which does not change your story, but adds more of the photographer's vision.

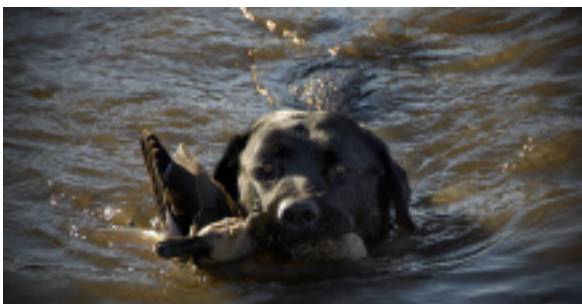
Acceptance



Toad family – Tina

A nice idea, but I do suggest it be called "Toadstool Family". A danger with triptychs is that the whole is not greater than the sum of the parts, which results in there simply being 3 images, the judgement on which defaults to the weakest. These images are well handled, but do not quite fit partly because of the differences in the brightness of the grass. I suggest it would be stronger if the horizontals are switched, to have the darker at the bottom and then the result flipped horizontally so that both lead into the vertical.

Merit



Victorious – Caron S

Focus and shutter speed have been appropriate and the whole thing works well thanks to the simplicity of colour. However, the subject is very central with unnecessary space at the sides. To correct this, I suggest a crop from the right about half way to the dog which also gets rid of unnecessary highlights, and that the highlights at the top margin be subdued.

Highly commended



C Grade

Caught-out – Helena

Very well thought out and executed. For me, this is the strongest open image in all grades, with its exciting colour and story-line. The only thing I wonder about is the extent of black on the right (about half would give better composition), but the words are too important to be sacrificed. This has a special freshness about it. Congratulations.

Honours



Rusty Patchwork – Renee

Another very well seen and photographed subject. Great care has been taken to include darkness right around the margin. Overall arrangement is very good, but the main focal point because of its brightness and placement is the white board in the window. All that was needed was to ask the subject in the previous image to write something on that board which would then have enabled it to be a focal point that retained interest. A good range of tones. Very well done. Merit

THEME

It's interesting that most of the images in the set subject are pattern shots, and that the recurring problem in them is lack of a focal point. That's not always necessary in a pattern, but certainly would have helped the viewer with most of these by giving a point from which the rest of the pattern can be enjoyed.

A Grade



51xx – Carl

Good exposure and colour, and the shot has been from a dead centre position so that there is no distortion in the grid. The immediate impact as a PI is one without relief and without focal point. However, the placement of the intersection of the wider margins on the top right third is excellent, but would likely be missed in exhibition selection, as would the subtle vignette. The last two points indicate to me that it has been taken by a skilled photographer with a good sense of composition.

Acceptance



And again – Brie

Although also well exposed, this image is less successful as there is really no interesting place for the eye to focus on. The panel format reflects the shape of the subject nicely. Turned 90 degrees anti-clockwise, the right one makes a good face, especially if the white in the mouth is divided as rabbit's teeth. Otherwise it would be very difficult to make a competition photo from this subject.

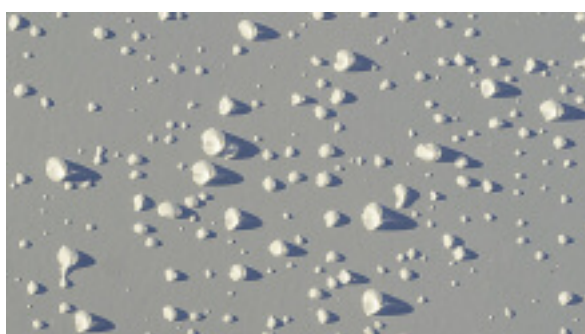
Acceptance



Birds Eye View – Keith

Interesting, and almost a worm's eye view. I have to admire the work that has gone into this. It's a little unfortunate that the background is black as the eye tends to dart from bird to bird without the benefit of any connection. A blue background and white birds might have worked better. As it stands the real focal point, the bird top right third, might have been more demanding had it had more white. Clever work though.

Acceptance



Drop – Carl

A pleasant image to look at thanks to the simplicity of colour and crispness of the drops. The shadows help to give some 3rd dimension, but where does the eye rest? It would be strengthened if those on the margin on the right, and particularly the top right were darkened or even better, cloned out.

Good technique.

Acceptance



Half a dozen – Liz

A very central composition, dominated by the central portion of the container which through sharpness and colour, dominates. I think there needed to be greater depth of field to show the texture in all 4 main eggs, and then I would have broken the top one, partly to destroy the symmetry of the composition, partly to provide a focal point, partly to create a story, and mainly for breakfast.

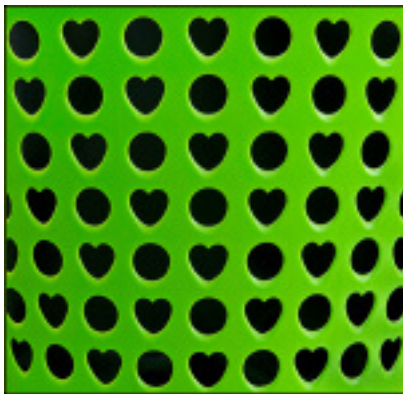
Acceptance



Hands – Elaine

Again, the need for something to dominate and hold the attention. Perhaps it is a case of too many hands spoil the picture, and while showing the number might have been a reason for taking the picture, perhaps fewer could have been easier to compose, and a dead bird in one for a focal point??? Vignette has been put to good use to help prevent the eye from merely flowing through the lines out the top of the picture.

Acceptance



Hearts & circles – Brie

I hesitate to say it again, so won't! A good technical exercise which cries out for one of the hearts to show red rather than black. Corny? Yes, it could have added story, and would have given the viewer something different within the pattern to hold the attention.

Acceptance



In time – Robbo

An interesting and well taken pattern which illustrates the title well. Here we do have some variation within the pattern in the J3, the water splash and the area of water itself. Well seen with a format which suits the subject.

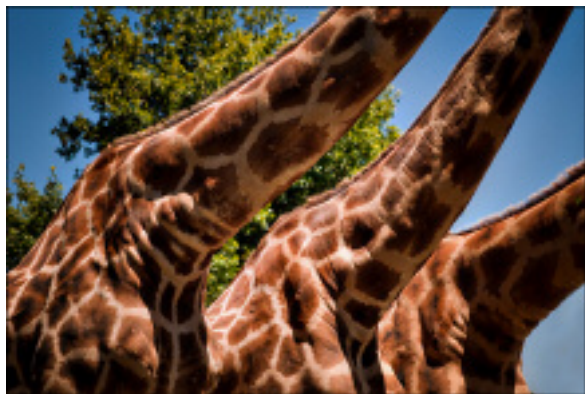
Merit



Knees and Toes – Keith

Another interesting and well seen repeating motif. The reflections on the floor give relief from the rather dense background, but I found the absence of toes on the third set of feet a focal point that becomes a distraction.

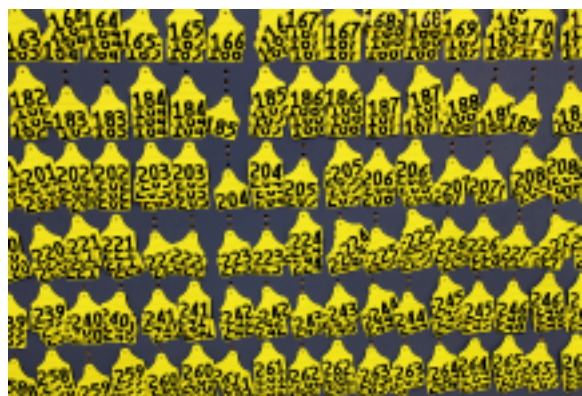
Acceptance



Necks – Sarah

Amputation seems to be in the air. Excellent exposure resulting in good colour quality, and good depth of field for the subjects although separation from the background tree would have helped. As it stands, the eye tends to follow the necks looking for heads, which distracts from the objective of showing texture, colour and pattern. This can be corrected by a horizontal flip.

Merit



Numbers_Up – Tracey

There is some relief in this pattern in the 185/204 column. The yellow/grey combination is attractive if a little startling. It is a technically strong image, but there should have been an opportunity to make more of the arrangement, especially when it came to the margins, where there was a need to better contain the eye, and placement of a focal point.

Acceptance



Peppers – Sarah

A nice combination of colours, especially the way they contrast with the mellow wood. Good sharpness throughout, and quite a pleasing arrangement. With the eye inclined to travel from left to right and tending to favour advancing colours as focal points I wonder if some of the static-ness currently evident would have been avoided with the peppers in a different order.

Honours



Piles of pallets – Caren M

While the forklift puncture top right does give some colour relief, it just isn't enough to hold the attention. A good idea, but a coke can would have been stronger, or a sprite one less corny. I know that you will all be laughing at the old crank's hang-ups by now, but I do hope that you will understand that a simple record, no matter how well done, is not enough in a competition like this.....there needs to be a story.

Acceptance



Recyclable – Tracey

Monochrome has been a good choice here to avoid the colour of the trees in the background drawing the eye through from what would have been pretty monochromatic in colour anyway. There is some randomness in the pattern which results in a blank area top right third, but without anything other than blankness it doesn't hold the composition together. The highlights through the leaves need toning down

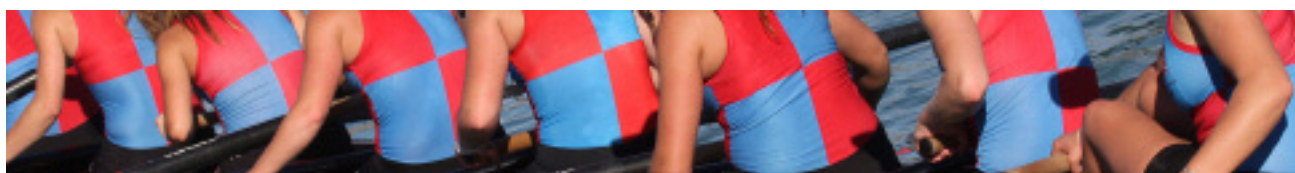
Acceptance



Soft pastels – Liz

Like so many others, this image is stronger reversed. The reason is that the eye follows the stronger lines which simply lead to receding colours out of focus. By flipping it, those receding colours become less important, and you focus on the oranges, and yellow, which you look at because of their new angle rather than travelling along them.

Highly Commended



Waiting to go – Robbo

This has been well enough handled, but does not have the interest of the other rowing one, because it does not have either the action or the visual relief of the other. Perhaps this was a case for including the heads even though the water would have been on a slope, as it would still have fulfilled the theme requirements but would have had considerably more interest. Exposure is good.

Acceptance



B Grade

A family – Tina

This is the strongest of the images in the triptych, and has been well exposed and cropped. The angle of light does not give much idea of the texture, but the colour is well rendered.

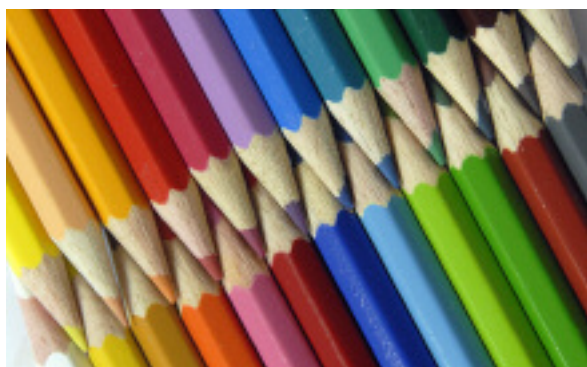
Merit



Charming – Cassandra

Technically competent, with excellent sharpness and good depth of field. The silver has been beautifully rendered. I wonder if the reflection is a good idea, as it tends to complicate the image, but that might have been done to fit the theme.

Highly commended



Colour my world – Caron S

You must be very sick of my theories at this stage, but for this one, upside down and reversed to put the reds in a stronger position. That doesn't totally work though as the slight softness in the oranges and yellows, plus the weakness of the light then top right corner come through and needs correcting. An excellent idea, generally well handled.

Merit



Foggy morning – Tina

I have some empathy with this one. The eye travels well down the fence, and the nice sense of recession is particularly evident in the tree trunks. However, it is all on a bit of a lean for no apparent good reason. The distant fog becomes the focal point, and although empty, it is small enough for that not to matter. It would benefit from reduced brightness. The white border tends to weaken this as a PI.

Merit



high rised apartment – Caren M

A good idea. The tallest apartment is the focal point and is quite well placed, but that could be improved with a crop from the left two thirds the way to the blue strapping. By doing this you strengthen the composition and remove unutilised space top left without in any way weakening the story.

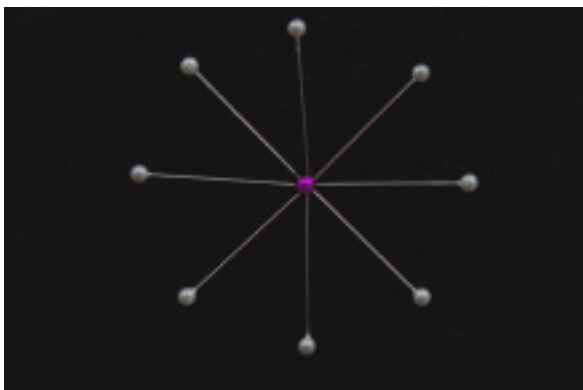
Acceptance



Lest we forget – Cassandra

This is oversize on the vertical... 1080 should be the maximum there. Satisfactorily captured, but the window and its reflection are very small in the picture area. It is really a technical exercise as far as the window is concerned....someone else's art, but the photographer has made it his/her own by including the reflection.

Acceptance



pin burst – Geoff

Tailor made for a square format. With something as symmetrical as this, interpretation can be enhanced by accentuating the symmetry, hence the suggestion of square. This really needed greater depth of field so that the white pins were sharp, but in the end I do not think there is enough of interest to hold the viewer's attention.

Acceptance



Racing wheels – Cushla

For on camera flash, the foreground wheel is nicely shown, and holds the attention, but it is so far to the left and the focus falls off so quickly, that there is little incentive to explore the rest of the photo. The whole thing is just too weighted to the left to be really successful.

Acceptance



Repeating poles – Cushla

This is so much stronger flipped, because you then have the chain to lead you into the central pole, the second loop of chain takes on more importance, and you have a nice dark tree to block the top right. In addition, the light out of focus distraction top right is less apparent, but still needs subduing.

Acceptance



Round one – Caron S

Nice simple colour, and a story. I am assuming that the empty loops relate to a round of skeet shooting, hence there being given prominence in the picture. The highlight top right is unfortunate and should be dealt with because it is a huge distraction. That can be lessened of course if the image is flipped (please don't laugh), and the composition is then stronger.

Honours

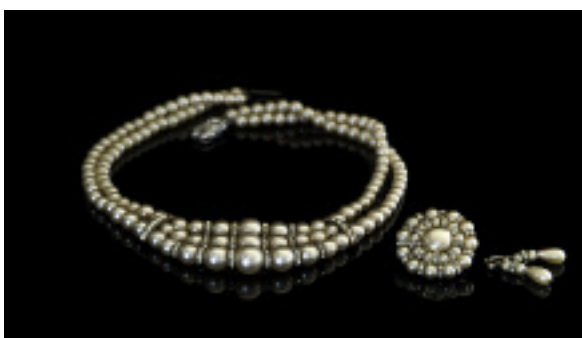


the same but different – Geoff

A nice ad for Fairview Motors in which complications of colour have been removed. Good monochrome with a full range of tones, and a nice sense of recession leading through to the firm name.

Acceptance

C Grade



my-nana-pearls – Helena

A competent work which shows the pearls in their true colours. The reflections on the black are just sufficient to add interest without confusion. While the depth of field is not great, I think this accentuates the interesting part of the necklace, the diamond area, and the brooch and ear-rings are nice and sharp. Well done.

Merit



Old time Turners – Renee

Good quality monochrome, and nice placement in the frame....not too symmetrical, but perhaps a little crop from the right would improve it. The area the wheels are standing on is relatively bright, and I suggest that at least a vignette which would quite suit the subject could improve it.

Highly commended



young-arctic-forest – Helena

What an absolutely beautiful image!! Your exposure has been dead right as there is detail both in the dark areas and in the snow. It would have been so early to burn out the sky. The two tall trees are just a little close to the margin with the feeling that the viewer's eyes are drawn Marty Feldman style to either side. This is largely corrected if it is reversed so that the taller tree totally dominates being on the right.

Honours

Thank you for showing me your images. I do hope that the comments are of some help.

John Boyd