

focus

the newsletter of the matamata camera club

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Critiques October 2012.

Theme Digital – On The Street

Street photography is certainly an interesting and challenging genre, as your definition outlines it as:
“a type of documentary photography that features subjects in candid situations within public places”.

Street Photography is also about: **‘seeing and reacting, almost bypassing thought altogether’;**
‘Think too hard and it is gone’; Street photography is ‘spontaneous photography’.

There are wonderful examples of excellent ‘Street Photography’ in our newspapers every day.



B-Grade: A Bargain!

This photo tells an interesting story where the photographer has candidly captured the interest of a camera buyer at a market or house sale. We can almost hear the questions he is asking himself as he checks out the camera's features. His interesting hat is so placed you can't see his eyes but that adds to the drama of the scene.

Highly Commended



B-Grade: A Colourful Character

Here is a great example of 'documentary photography' and 'seeing and reacting'. Very often when you wander with a camera it is surprising what you may come across, perhaps an interesting artist! Maybe you have little time to change camera settings or give much thought to the composition of the scene. In this instance the photographer has successfully captured the quiet scene of the artist at work. Highly Commended



B-Grade: Big Boys Toys

There is something fascinating about steam locos; they seem to be alive – maybe it's the warm hissing steam or perhaps it's the yearning we have for days gone by. It is obvious these men are intrigued by how it works and their wish to check out the detail of the restoration. The photographer has successfully captured these moments and with tight cropping the photographer directs the viewer to the men's faces and the hissing steam. Highly Commended



B-Grade: Cro Shop

This certainly is a photo on a street but only just a shop front; it is not one of 'spontaneous Photography' needed to create interest. It needs some candid features next to the shop to create that interest, perhaps a fisherman trying out a new fishing rod, casting the line outside the shop door, or maybe children 'rowing' that boat down the footpath!! Acceptance



B-Grade: Fun Ride

These children are really having fun seeing the smiles of joy on their faces. It is not easy to successfully capture such an image but the photographer has captured this moment. Unfortunately the composition is not as strong as it might be; the children on each side of the frame are very low down and towards the edges of the frame. The Coke bottle is very dominant and is a distraction to this fun photo.

Acceptance



B-Grade: Girls In Park

A pleasant photo of three girls enjoying their time together in the park. This is a very pleasant photo but passive in what it conveys to the viewer. If we could see what the girl on the right might be doing, would add to the drama – is she picking her nose? One girl is using her cell phone; could we wait to see her facial reactions when she uses it? Her face just might light up if she talks to her boyfriend! What is the third girl seeing on her shoe? Spontaneous reactions would be interesting.

As an aside, it is interesting that whenever we see a group of young people, one is likely to be using a cell phone!

Acceptance



B-Grade: Golden Arch

The photographer has been creative here removing the colour from the photo and leaving the colour in the distant arches! The real interest in this photo though is the actions of the boys on the bike ramp. I am sure there will be some drama there with likely spills and crashes; one only needs to wait and watch! This will be the 'seeing and reacting' needed by the successful Street Photographer.

Acceptance



B-Grade: It's Only My Lunch In Here

Intriguing street scenes like this are rare indeed for the photographer to capture, but a great joy when you do!

When they do occur one needs to 'grab 'n shoot' and hope you have the correct settings on the camera! This photo has all the necessary ingredients for a great Street photograph; mystery, authority, and intrigue. I hope the boy had nothing wayward in his bag. Well done.

Honours



B-Grade: Just Checking It Out

I am not sure just what these guys are checking out!! If we could see that, then the photo would have more impact and relevance to the viewer. They really appear to be just relaxing or maybe lounging after a bike ride. The photo needs some spontaneity or action to interest the viewer some more.

Acceptance



B-Grade: Mr Mayor

The photographer has captured this simple image yet it is an image that tells a story of the Mayor's journey in the parade as he waves to the crowd. There is an interesting colourful background that doesn't distract. The photo is well cropped but perhaps a seeing a little more of the fascinating old Ford might have added more interest to the photo.

Merit



B-Grade: New Plymouth Buskers

The composition of this photo draws the viewer immediately to the female vocalist and the obvious interaction by the male musician adds to this interest. There are no distracting elements in this well cropped image and the dynamic angles of the two guitars and microphone add to the dynamics in the photo.
Merit



B-Grade: Old Timers

The monochrome effect creates the 'old time' effect that matches the age of the car and the two casual veterans. They are obviously looking at something quite interesting in the distance and it would add considerable impact to this image if we could share that as well.
Acceptance



B-Grade: Public Hairdresser

This photo is very well handled with good composition and tight cropping, however, there is little in it for the viewer to respond to as a Street photograph. The photographer has given a lot of thought to the composition of the photo but there is little compelling or interesting story in the photo to interest the viewer or evoke a response. It needs to have some spontaneity.
Merit



B-Grade: Red Bus

London is a fascinating city to visit and this photo captures four recognisable icons of that exciting place – the red London bus, a London taxi, Houses of Parliament and of course Big Ben. This is a wonderful travel photo capturing these icons but the photo lacks the impact and story necessary for it to be a ‘candid situation within public places’ for it to be an interesting street scene to the viewer.
Acceptance



B-Grade: Time Out

This is a fascinating ‘street photograph’ capturing the subject’s quiet moment having a ‘smoke’. The subject is interestingly placed in the left of the frame that creates some tension with the viewer as the subject looks out of the frame. The image is well cropped giving it immediacy and the background is uncluttered without any distraction for the viewer.
Merit



B-Grade: Two's Company

This is a delightful photo of these two likely tourists? There must be some interesting action or activity they are looking at; perhaps it would be helpful for the viewer to see that as well which would give added interest and purpose to the photo. Otherwise it is a very pleasant portrait.

Acceptance



A-Grade: Ad Man

An interesting photo advertising the 'white lady' whatever or whoever she might be!! Presumably, the point of interest here is the man's face; however, it lacks detail and appears to be under exposed. As a documentary photo it doesn't convey or tell a story.

Acceptance



A-Grade: Goldie

Photographed through a café window, it may have been beneficial to select more carefully the photographer's position for capturing the Goldie. The Goldie is the point of interest, but there are a number of distractions in the overall scene that distracts greatly from it. The taped square on the window draws the eye from the prominence of the young man, and the young lady with the milk shake is more dominant than the Goldie in the photo that is purpose of the photo. Acceptance



A-Grade: Grocery Day

The photographer has reacted to this grocery story as the couple approached from the Supermarket in this interesting close up 'Street Shot'. The shopping bags convey where they have been and the wife is possibly thinking what she will now serve for dinner tonight. Highly Commended



A-Grade: Hill Billie Rocker

A good 'documentary close up' of the musicians playing guitar at this event. There is a 'link' between the two guitar players and the quirky hat adds to the interest. The low angle of the shot has eliminated any distractions in the background and creates an interesting point of view.

Merit



A-Grade: I Can Fix It

Well I hope he can before the van rolls back and he falls flat on his face! This interesting photo has all the ingredients of good 'Street Photography'. It is certainly spontaneous; the photographer has captured this moment of insecurity and a concerned wife eagerly watching by.

Well seen.

Honours



A-Grade: Kyoto Station

This is a busy photo and it is not obvious which part is the photographer's point of interest. The darkness and lack of detail in the foreground of the scene doesn't help the viewer to understand the photographer's intent.

Acceptance



A-Grade: Painter Man

A very simple but striking image with impact and is a great example of Street Photography. Again, this photographer has seen the shot, and grabbed it just before the painter covered the last few metres, then it would have then been too late. The simplicity of the photo is its strength, two strong bright colours, no distracting intrusions, the interest created by the shadow and the tight crop of the final image makes it.

Highly Commended



A-Grade: Parades End

What a busy scene! It looks to have been quite a fun day but I think the photographer has taken this shot in haste! Unfortunately the tree branches in the centre are over exposed, the camera has been tilted when taking the shot so there are no vertical lampposts, and also the camera has been moved to give a blurred photo!

Acceptance



A-Grade: Rugby Fan

This certainly is a 'grab' shot, but it is not apparent how or why he is a rugby fan! The photo doesn't tell a story to the viewer that is appropriate or obvious from the title; it is suitably cropped with the background nicely out of focus.

Acceptance



A-Grade: Special Event

This is a good example of an interesting candid situation where the two quirky attired men bring the viewer into the image by pointing their fingers to the attention grabbing sign. This is a spontaneous moment with a story and some intrigue.

Merit



A-Grade: Street Parade

Perhaps this is a grab shot, but the photo doesn't tell a story or strongly convey its relevance to the title or the subject to the viewer. The aperture selected has produced an image with a blurred background, but that background might have action or significance to link with this parader to produce an interesting 'Street photograph', it would help then to see some of the background to make that link.

Acceptance

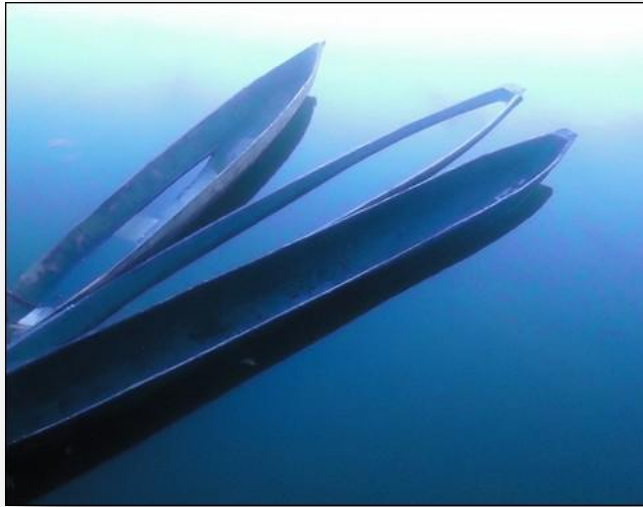


A-Grade: Street Fashion

A very pleasant photo of the young lady. She appears to be dressed as an interesting Indian character and there may be more relevance for her in the photo if we could see the background. This might make her street fashion more relevant to the viewer. It may not of course; however as it is a portrait taken in isolation it does require some link or relevance to the event to give it greater interest and impact.

Acceptance

Open Digital



B-Grade: Boats In The Early Morning Mist

Simplicity of a scene can be the strength of the photograph and this photo illustrates that extremely well. By placing the boats at this interesting angle and emerging from the left of the frame, the viewer's eyes are gently lead into the scene and on into the mist; this is the appeal of this delightful photo. The single colour toning of the scene adds mystery and drama to the image. Highly commended



B-Grade: Happy Boy

He has a very interesting face with the added beauty of his freckles. The image has two dominant areas of two different colours, blue and green in the background which tends to attract the viewer's eye. The strong sunlight has burnt out his left shoulder area so it would be helpful to place the boy in a position where this didn't occur. The boy's cap looks very interesting especially with it being 'cocked' on the angle that most boys wear them! So perhaps include more of the cap, it might add more interest to the picture. Acceptance



B-Grade: In The Pink

This is a simple yet enjoyable photo of a typical garden scene. The photographer has selected the camera settings with good judgement to create a pleasant and strong image. The flower of interest is well positioned in the frame and the eye is gradually taken further into the garden to the out of focus petals. There are no distractions in the background yet it creates a simple yet effective backdrop to the photo. Highly commended



B-Grade: On The Ropes

An interesting photo of activity on a pleasure boat on such a beautiful day. The feature of the photo is “being on the ropes” where the crew member is controlling the sail winch. This point of interest though is positioned very low in the right hand corner of the frame and it competes with the curiosity expressed on the passenger’s face! Perhaps to give more impact to “on the ropes” the picture could be cropped to show only that area. Acceptance



B-Grade: Orange Flower

The photographer has created a simple yet strong image by suitably placing the Orange flower on the ‘third’ and has the background suitably out of focus to create more impact. Perhaps though, the photo would have greater impact if the Orange flower was placed without a similar coloured flower directly behind it. Merit



B-Grade: Our Civil Ensign

The Ensign is a flag we rarely see, so to view it in a nautical environment is certainly interesting. The photo has been taken on a very sunny day; to highlight the flag against the background the clouds have been over exposed so all detail in them has been lost, which is a disappointment. Clouds add a lot of interest to a photograph, also perhaps if the flag wasn't cropped so tightly in the frame it may create more interest in it. Acceptance



B-Grade: The New Zealand Flag

Here the use of monochrome has effectively added drama and 'age' to give that wartime 'feel' to the photograph. Also, the photographer has effectively used shading to focus the eye towards the NZ flag behind the two soldiers. The photo has been cropped effectively to strengthen the scene. Merit



B-Grade: The View

Perhaps this is the view of the beautiful area around Lake Wanaka with the autumn coloured trees on the lake's edge and the grandeur of the mountains as the backdrop. The photographer has captured this beauty by nicely framing the photo with the trees and boulders in the foreground.

Unfortunately though, it appears that the water might drain from the lake! The angle of the photo suggests that the Lake's edge is sloping down to the right. If you correct this, the photo has heaps more impact.

Acceptance



A-Grade: Ballerinas

This is a delightful indoor photo capturing the grace of the two ballerinas. It is very challenging to capture the features and detail of an indoor scene like this, but the photographer has certainly done so extremely well. The lighting on the dancers is subtle yet restrained and the features of the curtains and the grain and reflections on the floorboards are subtle. Well done.

Honours



A-Grade: Lord Of The Pens

This fellow has eyes that are quite mesmerising and being prominent in the frame and close to the camera, he creates that effective drama. The photographer has tightly cropped the image to give prominence to the “Lord” with the other two lesser ‘beings’ nicely out of focus.

Merit



A-Grade: Perfect Night

Night photography creates another dimension to our photographic opportunities and it is not always easy to successfully capture them. This photographer has captured the Auckland skyline very well with the Skytower positioned as the prominent feature in the frame. The image is tightly cropped to enhance the features of the scene and the coloured reflections on the water add some drama and interest to the photo.

Highly commended



A-Grade: Tokoroa Street Scene

A nicely composed photo of the setting sun using the sun to backlight the trees. However, the shadow area in the frame is approx 1/3 of the photo and it has many interesting features but they are difficult to see. Maybe it would have been preferable to find another position that didn't have these distractions and yet gave more prominence to the delightful backlit trees.

Acceptance



A-Grade: What Lies Beyond

Yes indeed what lies beyond!!

Unfortunately the picture of what appears to be a jumbled mass of tree trunks and branches really don't lead the eye into the beyond where the interest should be. The picture is nicely exposed in the pleasant low light conditions.

Acceptance

Quote: "Art is the right hand of Nature. The latter has only given us being, the former has made us men."
 – *Friedrich Schiller*