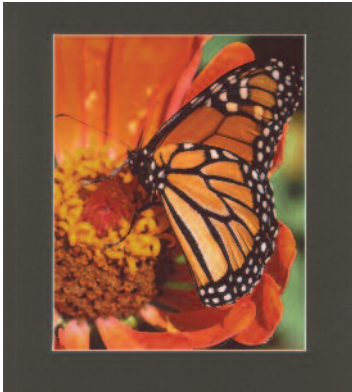


Matamata Camera Club – April 2013

Hi Matamata,

Last time I commented on your work it was a struggle. I felt that many of the images showed technical skill, but no real feeling. This time, my reaction is exactly the opposite. Creativity is king and the emphasis is on evoking an emotion or telling a story – really good to see!

PRINTS B Grade Prints



Monarch Butterfly – Tina

This is a competent picture showing the shape and textures of the creature very well. Close-up photography is one long battle with Depth of Field. Here it would have been good to have the head area sharper. **Acceptance.**



Fun in the Sun – Liz

The exhilaration wonderfully caught. Placement of the action within the frame is good with the very expressive girl on the left close to the intersection of thirds and the other face providing a counter-point. It also helps that the line of the inflatable is inclined rather than horizontal. However, I suggest cropping out the distant shoreline. It is just a distraction. The texture and tones in the foreground water are very attractive, but the bright sun has created contrast problems in the faces. It looks as if you have a good quality file, so lightening the shadows is probably possible. Eliminating the highlight burn out will be more difficult unless you have the file in RAW format. **Merit**



Morning Fisherman – Cushla

The technical stuff has been handled well, so print quality is fine. However, the right hand half is just a distraction from the real picture. I know you liked the sun in the clouds, but the left hand side on its own is much stronger. **Acceptance.**



Blue truck in front of warehouse – Cassandra

There is quality in the overall sharpness of the image and the tones and textures of the building. However, I feel the photographer has made some wrong decisions about framing and content. The combination of a very dark centre of interest and the bald sky makes for uncomfortable viewing and the red vehicle is a distraction. To my eye, cropping off the left hand side and the top through the corner of the Wool and Grain Warehouse roof makes an image that is stronger, if a little cramped. If there is any unused image to the right it could be included to give more space. I don't think this is a C Grade image, so I have marked it fairly hard. **Acceptance.**



Mother and Son – Robbo

A very engaging picture and a great expression on the son's face. Print quality is excellent apart from the distraction of the burnt out highlights. These would have been impossible to burn. Cloning offers the only solution but would have been very difficult. However, the picture is well worth sharing, even with the defects. **Merit.**

C Grade Prints

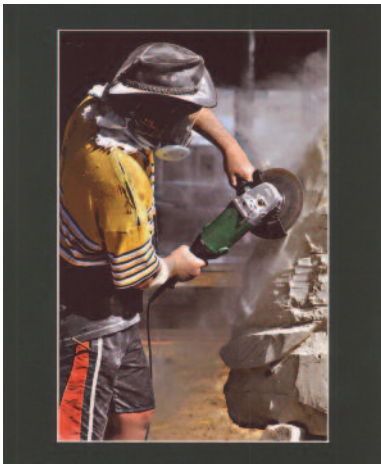
Kiwi Koru – Renee

Good colour and sharpness in the koru, but too much other material. I suggest lopping about 75mm off the left hand side. This increases the emphasis on the koru and eliminates the unsightly out of focus frond at bottom left. If your editing software allows, try using selective colour tools to darken the green of the fronds. **Acceptance.**



Symposium – Caron

I don't understand the title, but no matter. Framing and composition is spot on to tell the story of the activity. The lines in the image lead to the impact point and the lighting emphasizes that point too. The one technical failing is with the plane of focus. Multi-point autofocus tends to latch onto the closest object, resulting in a very sharp shoulder but slight blurring of the grinder and block. I can ignore this for a C grade print though – the strong aspects are way more important. **Honours.**



A Grade Prints

Washout – Tracey

A very clean sharp image. I have the feeling that all aspects of the picture have been carefully considered and applied with skill. However, I'll presume to disagree with some of the decisions. I think you've decided to print fairly dark to convey the mood of the stormy overcast day, but for my taste the result is a bit dreary. I think you could have put a bit more contrast into the surging waves and shiny steps without destroying that mood. The decision to put the buildings on the upper third line is logical, but I don't think it was optimal. It makes the buildings the focal point, but the real interest is the waves. Have a look out cutting off the sky to make the buildings the upper border. Also, it may have been possible at the taking stage to include a bit more of the curved line of steps to replace the area lost if the sky is cropped. **Merit**





Enter Light – Carl

Playing with geometry is a very enjoyable way to use photography. I like the idea here and the warm subtle tones used. Placing the centre of interest behind the “in focus” zone is an interesting decision. I think it works by adding to the enigma of a doorway to an unseen destination. However, I think the decision to place that doorway at the centre of the image is a mistake. I don’t regard the, so called, Rule of Thirds as an absolute, but you need a good reason to disregard it. I don’t think you have one here – cropping off about half the rail on the right hand side strengthens the composition to my eye. **Highly Commended.**

OPEN DIGITAL IMAGES



C Grade Digital

Almost Night Delight – Renee

I like the effort you’ve put into creating a mood with this image, and that the moon has been captured without burning it out. I don’t know if the yellow sky was recorded that way or created. However, I suggest having another look at the post-processing options and see if you like it with the sky turned to blue and overall darkening to suggest late evening. **Merit.**



Born Sleeping – Marie

Without doubt you are telling or illustrating some story or idea with this picture. I don’t know what that is, but the failing might well be mine. What I do know is that excellent technique has been applied to creating the image and the sooner you get “kicked upstairs” to a higher grade the better! **Honours**



Instruction – Caron

This is an example of very good control. Picture quality in the important parts of the image is excellent and the expressions captured totally fit the story. You have had to deal with clutter and extreme brightness in the background and I think you have done all that was possible to minimise the impact of these factors. **Honours**

B Grade Digital



Bird Family – Tina

This gets an acceptance for the degree of difficulty and interesting content, but quality is marginal. Colour is good, but there is not enough depth of field and too much motion blur. The low viewpoint makes for an awkward view of the closest bird. **Acceptance**



Brown Eyed Beauty – Cushla

This is a nice natural, informal portrait. The girl's interaction with the photography is very open and direct, and suits the full face angle. I like that the shoulders are on the diagonal and the very subdued out of focus background. **Highly Commended**



Halo, Wand, Coffee, Smartphone – Liz

An amusing snippet from an event. The title is an essential part of this image as the intent is less clear without it. The weakness is the distracting background – always a problem at parades. **Acceptance.**



Let the Dirt Fly – Robbo

A great action capture. I suspect some good post-processing has gone into retaining detail in the darker areas, but I think a little more contrast and sharpening might have been possible to make the subjects “jump out” even more. For me the greatest need is to reduce the impact of the background. The naturalness of the fields and trees takes away some of the sense of high drama. If your software and skill set allows I also suggest selecting that background and desaturating and darkening it. This is an image worth going the extra mile with. I love the lines within it which imply what the action has been from entry to (near) exit. **Honours**



Anticipated Delivery – Esther

There is a good, well constructed story in this image and the content and point of view have been well chosen. Maybe though the choices made for the plane of focus and depth of field were not ideal. You have maximized depth of field, but unfortunately the two most relevant elements are respectively in front of, and behind, the zone of sharpness. I think focusing on the loader arm and letting the rest go soft would have given more impact. **Merit.**



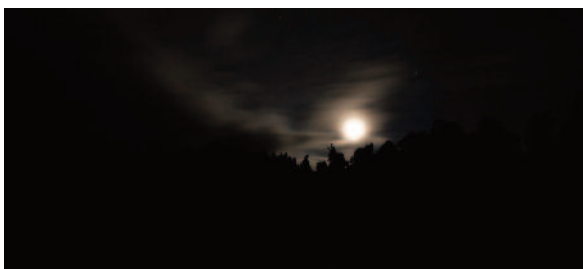
Nature's Art – Caren

A very good quality image with excellent colour. There doesn't seem to me much scope for dynamic composition with the elements available, but what you have you have used well. **Merit.**



The Wink – Geoff

This is a nice candid picture of the couple but the bright window behind them is very intrusive, as is the hand adjusting the coronet. Most of the window can be cropped out. Because the image has been cropped tightly width-wise and the interesting part is the line of the faces, I also suggest cropping the lower portion up to just below the button on the man's jacket. Combined with the window crop, the result is an almost square image that I think is more telling. **Acceptance.**



Waikaremoana – Cassandra

I like the way you've set out to capture the mood and mystery of the night. The sky area is great, but I think you have retained too much black area that contains no information. Would it have been possible to take another longer exposure, catching a bit of detail in the trees, and merging the two images? **Merit.**

A Grade Digital



A City Lights Up – Brie

There is a good sparkle to this image and I don't mind the burnt out lights. However, I think there is too much foreground with little content in it. Cropping that would bring the shoreline to the lower third position. That and cropping the part boats on the left makes the picture much more coherent. **Merit.**



Door to Nowhere – Elaine

Very good image quality and the vignette helps in creating a mood rather than just a literal record. I felt though that the right hand corner of the fence and the wedge of blue there pulled attention from door panel geometry and reduced impact. Also, rotating the image clockwise a few degrees clockwise so that the left hand edge of the door is near vertical gets rid of the slightly awkward look. **Merit.**



Fairies Do Exist – Tracey

I'll bet you had fun with this! Its fun to look at and both the premade and photographic components have been cleverly combined and arranged. I'm assuming the ball, with fairy are not your own work (but I may be wrong). Either way, the choice of setting and arrangement of the reflections has resulted in a work of art. **Honours.**



Last One Standing – Sarah

A beautifully created work. At first glance I thought the texture had been created by scratching an emulsion. Maybe some was, but I see now that much of it is photographic in origin. Overall the picture has the spirit of something hand created and that feeling is carried through by the torn edge effect of the border. Easily overlooked, but critical to the end product is that at its base is a simple but well composed photograph. I envy your imagination and judgment. **Honours.**



Vrooom – Keith

For the action being shown, there is nothing in this picture I would change. The contrast and sparkle of the wake lead to the "exclamation point" of the colorful boat and emphasize the speed and potential mayhem inherent in the activity. **Honours.**



Waipu Caves – Carl

There are lovely rich blacks and good gradation in this picture. However, as I read the image, the right hand side is providing leading lines to direct your eye to a focal point on the left hand third. When we get there though a black hole is dominating the space. Easy to say when you're not there, but I feel another flash was needed to open up that area a bit. **Merit.**

Well, that's it from me. All the best to you all.

Regards,

Terry Cockfield

