

Good evening Nelson Camera Club. Thank you for the opportunity to see your work, which I have thoroughly enjoyed. I seem to have a few images to review this month, so please forgive me for not doing an audio, but I am sure that whoever reads the comments will sound much better than I would anyway. In reviewing images these days, I first do the comments without thinking of ratings, and in that way, with the projected images particularly, am perhaps a little less reactive to impact. Hopefully this gives those with a subtle message a more even chance. Anyway, well done everyone, and please just remember that it is just one person's opinion.

#### B GRADE PROJECTED IMAGES

Screening order	Comp. No.	Title	Comments	Rating
1	6	Golden Sands	An interesting idea with nice colours, but it really does need to be very sharp. Perhaps a title like "Golden Strands" would be more fitting. I like the general arrangement and the way the picture darkens to the right. Perhaps a slight trim from the left to exclude the rock cut by the margin would be helpful.	NA
2	2	Sunrise Mercury Bay	This does convey the feeling of a calm morning, with little movement in the foreground water. However, there is camera movement which has resulted in an overall softness, something to be avoided when rocks are involved. The slowness of the shutter speed has resulted a band of blur, almost like a fog bank almost right across the centre. The exposure is good, but I'd suggest it is a stronger image if the foreground is cropped almost to the dark rock on the right. This gives better proportions and eliminates the moon reflection which is distracting and the rather unnatural light on the foreground rocks.	NA
3	5	Tree Crab	A good idea and well seen, but the subject does need to be sharp. While the ochre colour on the stump is probably important to the idea I do wonder if you would have been better in monochrome, and the light in that area topped as it is with darkness is to my mind just too artificial.	NA
4	1	Homeward Bound	A well exposed pattern in which I particularly like the light coming in under the vines on the left adding an extra and interesting stripe. I am not sure why this has been presented as though it's a print, but that is a negative because the interesting part of the image is smaller on the screen and the lightness of the matt tends to degrade the quality of the colour. I don't think the signature on the bottom left, and also evident on the bottom right is allowable under the rules. The composition is so square on that it is quite static, and although the tractor is quite well placed, because the vines are on a hill and the road is flat, the tractor has become curiously two dimensional. It's good that the vines finish at the top of the picture, but in my opinion the whole thing would have been much stronger had it included more of the bottom rows so that the road was pushed up to the top third.	A
5	3	All quiet on the rugby field	This has a lovely quality to it. The subdued colours, atmosphere and general serenity of the scene give it a special mood. It's unfortunate that the top vapour trail is so prominent, because it adds nothing to the story. I think that if you are wanting to pursue the rugby story you probably need to crop down almost to the top of the posts and then from the left at the point the vapour trail then enters the frame. This puts the posts in a stronger position. Alternatively there is a story without the posts which would help to decentralise the sun. Good exposure and depth of field.	A

6	4	Spoonbills	A simple and harmonious colour palette. Exposure has been good with minimal burn-out on the spoonbills' backs. While I quite like the arrangement and the inclusion of the reeds top left, that does leave the top right a little empty and there is a little confusion the way the 3 birds on the right overlap. Accordingly, I suggest that it might be stronger if you crop to include only the 3 birds on the left, and since it is treated as an open subject, title it along the lines of "Backchat"	M
7	9	Lighthouse at sunrise	A truly impressive lighthouse with the shape sharply silhouetted as it is highlighting its elegance at the base. While the author might not like it, I would prefer to see the building decentralised and balanced by that spectacular cloud top right. To that end I suggest a crop from the left almost halfway to the tower, and a trim from the bottom of at least half the black foreground as that adds nothing to the picture. It is very heavily saturated, but I like it.	M
8	8	Growler Hut	Take care with titles. I assume this is either the Growler Stream or a creek in the vicinity of the Growler Hut. Oversize, but I note the rules say "should be" re size rather than "must be". Nicely arranged, good depth of field, and an ideal shutter speed to give movement to the water, but not much to the tussocks. Altogether, a very satisfying and complete image wherein the eye is taken through to the peaks which are nicely balanced by the foreground water on the left. Although the sky is quite light, that does add to the sense of recession.	H
9	7	Lotus	The textures and translucence of the petals are beautifully portrayed and further enhanced by the contrast of pink against green. It is nice and sharp where it needs to be. I suggest that it could be strengthened with a crop from the top to remove the distracting V of background, and also from the bottom to get rid of the bright area at the base. Competently taken.	H

#### A GRADE PROJECTED IMAGES

Screening order	Comp. No.	Title	Comments	Rating
1	2	Aoraki	An unusual angle which means that the title in this case is important because the image then takes on more significance for the viewer. Since Mt Cook and Mt Tasman are the subjects, I suggest they be given more importance in the picture area by cropping half of the sky, and half way to Mt Cook from the left. I like the way the gap on the right in the clouds then helps to counterbalance the weight of the mountains. It's a shame the lighting is so flat, and as the colour isn't very exciting I wonder if it would have more impact in monochrome.	NA
2	4	Beach	Good depth of field and good exposure with the side lighting giving modelling to the footprints in the sand. However, after being led down the slipway, there is no real dominant feature on which to rest the eye, with the possible exception of the black boat, the mast of which cuts the horizon. Negatives are that the horizon is not straight, and the white boats either side to me tend to be too distracting. It rather gives the impression of being a beach too busy for a beachgoer to want to be, and perhaps that was the author's intention.	NA

3	5	Blue	Yes, the great blue yonder. In many ways it carries its message of vastness and man's insignificance well, and for that reason I would be hesitant to say the yachts should be more evident. There appear to be artefacts in the sky which is a pity because in spite of the reservations already expressed I think that a crop to below the cloud and a commensurate amount from the right might have made for a more interesting image without destroying the original intention. If this was done, in post-production it should be possible to protect the yachts and diffuse the blue so that pixelation disappears.	NA
4	10	Golden Light Castle Point	There is a lovely contrast between the gold of the lighting and the dark of the sky. I am not ignoring the inclusion of the rainbow and know what I am about to suggest will not go down well with the author, but I believe the picture is on the left with the fence, path and fence shadows. Accordingly I suggest that it be cropped from the right to the saddle between the peak and the rock, with 2/3rds of the sky off and perhaps a little off the foreground. Unfortunately, the softness of focus does not really allow for this to be done successfully. You have recognised pictorial lighting, given it the right exposure, but then given a title that indicates a recording rather than the capturing of the feeling you must have had when you made it. A white border would lift this.	NA
5	14	Lakeside	Lakeside is well exposed and a worthy subject. It is unfortunate that the trunk on the left is not quite in focus, but otherwise the arrangement is quite good with the bright trunks on the right being the focal area. I suggest that the blue sky introduces an unnecessary variation in the colour and could be better cropped out with a crop also to take some of the weight out of the left trunk. I also suggest the skinny bright trunk and its reflection be darkened to be less distracting. Often in these situations the real colour quality is in the reflection and that might be where the best pictures are.	NA
6	16	Mind the Barbs	Good arrangement both in respect of the barbs and the bird's placement against the light area of the background. It's a shame that most of the body is not sharp and some is burnt out because this does spoil what is otherwise a well filled frame.	NA
7	17	My Flying Wings	An interesting idea and lit to achieve the effect. Invariably when people are included we look at the face even though that is not the intention of the author, and unfortunately the model doesn't look very pleased about her wings. The head is nicely sharp though.	NA
8	22	Over Arthur's pass	Although the lighting is from the side and gives some interest on the right, the hills on the left are very flatly lit. The result is that almost all left of centre adds very little to the picture, which is a shame. You having struck a fairly bland sky has also not helped. Good use of the wires and posts to create the effect of scale and distance, and the exposure is good.	NA
9	23	Phantom Billstickers	The arrangement of having the eye drawn through to a bright poster in a largely monochrome environment works quite well, but I am rather wrestling with the purpose of the image which really seems to be part of a bigger story,	NA

especially as all the photographs are by the same person, but presumably of someone else's images. Well handled, but, in my view, not able to strongly compete against images photographed for competition.

10	25	Taking It Easy	Nice model and the monochrome has been well handled, but I felt that there is little communication with the photographer, and the awkwardness of the pose further accentuated that. Had she had her face turned up more or the photograph been taken from where she is looking to, the result would be different. You could consider cropping the white upright on the left to tighten the arrangement up.	NA
11	26	Tear Drop	A good arrangement and nice colour, but it is burnt out at the focal point which detracts. You could consider a crop from the top, either a small one to remove the little bit of petal in the top corner, or even further down to get rid of the shine on the petal on the left.	NA
12	27	The Crown Range	The photograph is from the Crown Range, not really of it. This is a very impressive vista, but to some extent has not been done justice because of the wideness of the angle included. You have been unfortunate in striking bright lighting which has resulted in the clouds being burnt out, and, because of the angle, flatness in the landscape.	NA
13	29	Three of a Kind	A nice composition and you have done well to put it in a square format. While the blues of sails and sky work well, I feel that there is insufficient story here to hold the viewers' attention for long.	NA
14	32	Winter Storm	The wave with its offshore breeze has been well caught. The green translucence in the wave crest is a little at odds with the background which is virtually blue toned monochrome. I suggest that it could be improved by levelling the horizon and then cropping from the top to remove any residual cloud highlight centre top. The high-lit ridges, being a little burnt out, could be darkened down a little.	NA
15	1	About-To-Drop-In	Very well caught and pin sharp with good separation from the background in both focus and colour. My only slight reservation is that the interest is mainly in the board rather than the rider because of the angle at which he has been caught. Very well done.	A
16	3	Beach time	This gives a great feeling of togetherness and fun in remoteness, and it is certainly enhanced by the treatment. The high-lit surf removes any concern about the horizon bisecting the picture, and the tree and figures nicely bridge the eye to the clouds. The driftwood balances the composition.	A
17	7	Crystal Ball Fairies at The	Well executed and monochrome has been a good choice to ensure colours do not become a distraction to the whole story. However, I do have to confess I do not comprehend what the story is and consequently rather look on it as something of a technical exercise, a clever one. The frame is well filled, there is a good range of tones and the use of the white border is essential to the completion of the picture.	A
18	8	bottom of	A very interesting and well titled image. I like the extent of the differential focus which is just spoiled by the leaves	A

		the garden	that are in sharp focus. They, together with the path are unnecessary distractions and add nothing to the story. I suggest that you crop the path off and also from the right to the centre of the right trunk, plus perhaps a little off the top to make the fairies bigger in the total picture area and better place them within the cropped image. Great imagination and well carried out.	
19	9	Game Face	Very well caught, with all but the player on the right directing the viewer to the "game face". The angled attitudes of the various players gives an impression of action. Altogether a well exposed, satisfying image without and extraneous distractions.	A
20	11	A Hard-Start	Great interpretation, even though the start is shaking the building as well. I particularly like the rectangles top right and the only suggestion I have is to get rid of the meat and milk sign on the left because words invariably distract if they are not part of the story. Well exposed.	A
21	12	Into the Light	Nicely exposed and a good simple palette. You have done well to avoid any distracting or burnt out highlights. I wonder if this would be stronger cropped to a vertical format and with a white border. Good work.	A
22	24	Silence is Golden	A creative take on what would be a record shot day. It delivers its story well with colour, scale and design. I did wonder if the little intrusion of gold leaves on the left would be better excluded or better with more included, but concluded that they were probably necessary for balance. Good work under ordinary conditions.	A
23	28	The Station Master	The stationmaster has a nice easy pose and has been well exposed. Unfortunately, the brightness of the burnt out background draws the eye past him and spoils the effect. It is not something that can be corrected with a vignette or easily with post production masks, and I can only suggest you be conscious of the problem on a future occasion.	A
24	6	Cat In A Hammock	This will receive so many oohhs from the viewers, and it is indeed a very endearing picture. Very skilled use of colour which allows the subject to stand out beautifully. I like the central composition with the kitten peeking through the smile of the hammock. It's just a shame that it appears the focus on the face is just beyond the eyes, and I do rather wonder about the two catch-lights.	M
25	15	Lead The Way	Although we see only the backs of the birds we can pick up on the emotion of their mass departure, and eyes are kept in the frame thank to the general feeling on a wheel to the left, completed by the very right bird. It is good that they are able to stand out against the low cloud. Frame well filled and exposure good. The only suggestion I can make is to remove or darken the bright area horizon right which currently draws the eye away from the arc of the flight direction.	M
26	19	Dawn-on-the-Ganges	What an interesting and painting like picture. I like the composition. The boat is quite perfectly placed, especially with the splash of light on its stern. I don't know what has been done to it post production, but it largely works. I just have a couple of reservation, mainly around the pennant and its pole which are surrounded with a darkness,	

almost halo-like, and the way the pole takes on the colour of the shirt behind as it enters the boat. Similarly, some of the birds, so important to fill that otherwise blank area, have a little darkness around them. The sky to the left of the pennant is also a little suspect with some banding evident. However, I still think it is very successful.

M

27 20 netscape

Although this is very contrived, the effect is very pleasing, especially on initial impact. It's when you start to look beyond the initial impression and wonder why what appear to be bright clouds top right are not reflected in the water, and when you note that the foreground net has been scrubbed away when it reaches the bollard, to enable the bollard and background water to be accentuated and be the undoubted focal areas. Even taking those factors into account, I believe that it is good creative work and commend the author for the effort involved.

M

28 30 Tree House

This reminds me to do some overdue pruning. Monochrome has been a good choice. The tallest tree fern is the focal point because of its dominance, and for me the interest in the façade tend to fade as I move through. I believe the image is much stronger with a horizontal flip so that you more easily view the building before reaching the focal point, and from there interest is maintained with the lack of wall and the eye is nicely contained by the darkness of bush and cloud. A good range of tones.

M

29 31 What's Out There

A quite menacing image. The water immediately takes the eye, and within the window, the focus goes to the rocks. Although the major source of light is from the window as evidenced by the light on hand, arm & shoulder, there is a shadow from within of the hooded figure. One thing to watch in this type of work is the halos created when montaging and here we have one on the left of the figure and also around the window panes. This has been carefully thought out and quite well executed.

M

30 13 Kaikoura Sunrise

Beautifully taken with rocks nice and solid as they should be contrasting with the mist effect of the water. Simple arrangement, lovely light on the worn rocks and almost monochrome palette complete the picture. Well done.

H

31 18 New Brighton Dawn

A very successful abstract. Simple colour and elements. The arrangement is good with the eye being drawn along the pier and its reflection to that area of brightness on the top right third. That in turn is balanced on the left by the dark sharp pile. Good work.

H

32 21 Next Stop New York

Extremely well seen and photographed to perfection in terms of the exposure and the attitude of the figures. The disappearing feet will always be a talking point in this image, and while I am uncertain of their part in the story, I think they are an important part of the composition, and add a layer to the story that your imagination can wrestle with. Congratulations.

H

#### B GRADE PRINTS

Screening	Comp.	Title	Comments	Rating
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order	No.	Title	Comments	Rating
1	2	Water paints the	The grey matt reinforces what you are wishing to convey, but it really does need some darker tones to add impact in my opinion. While it is mounted for the sand to be relatively level, I suggest you adjust it so that the water horizon appears level, and this will give a more dynamic slope to both sand and mountains. I realise that the curves of different tones are the area you want the viewer to enjoy, but a focal point might have been a good option from which to explore the "painting".	A
2	1	Catching up at the light festival	Congratulations on a fresh approach for which I have given credit in the rating. The title explanation is helpful although they don't seem to be doing too much catching up. A difficulty is that the eye is drawn through the centre thanks to the bright colours. I recommend you print it the other way round so that the viewer looks into under the hat peak, and the top right corner is then much stronger and better retains the eye. Hold the print up to a mirror.	M
3	3	Little boys dream	I somewhat hesitantly suggest that a slightly greater depth of field might have been better, hesitantly because dreams are fuzzy. An excellent range of tones. The boy is the main subject and is sharp, but from this angle does not have quite the interest of the shearer, hence my comment about the depth of field. It has been a good idea to darken down the window on the right, and you have matted in just the right place. Perhaps just a little more subtle toning down of the window by the boy's head would be in order also, and getting rid of the 3 highlights at the end window which catch the eye. Good work.	M
4	4	Time for a rest	The gull is beautifully caught in an elegant position which reflects the curve of the chain. Good colour saturation and depth of field. Congratulations.	H

#### A GRADE PRINTS

Screening order	Comp. No.	Title	Comments	Rating
1	2	Butter Would'nt Melt	A lovely subject well photographed in terms of exposure and focus. I just found the background a little distracting in both colour, which doesn't work very well with the grey, and the fold which tends to draw the eye. A grey background could have then made the most of the eye, skin and fur colourings.	NA
2	5	Intertwined	Very thought provoking and it's good to see people being creative. I think I understand what the photographer is intending, but in my opinion it doesn't quite hold the intrigue that it could have. The print has a very narrow tonal range, especially with its green tones, and the eye doesn't settle or explore in the way it could. The brightness of the white matt doesn't help. As it stands, I would reverse it, then make more of the leaves which would be on the right by brightening them, and make less of that bright curved bough. I wondered about the change of tone when	NA

branches and trunks overlapped, but concluded that as an artwork, it really doesn't matter.

3	7	Okarito Sundown	Interesting foreground silhouettes, although it is intriguing that against their blackness there is detail in the timber lead in. A great sunset, but to my eye a little exaggerated, especially in the red hues. Nice composition and proportions, with a subtle vignette and very pretty water pattern. Water can be so important in sunsets.	NA
4	12	Shine A light on Me	Frame well filled and a competent rendition of the window although perhaps it could do with a little more saturation. Even with a creative title, it is very difficult to succeed in a camera club competition with the reproduction of other art, even when there is some element of interpretation by selective cropping.	NA
5	16	Twinkle, twinkle	Very creative. It is something that you would have complete control over. While the composition is quite well balanced, I felt that the vertical halving is a little unfortunate even though the dark on the right does balance the red on the left, but the result is quite static. Imagine the light and dark boundary being more on the diagonal with the red on the top right third. I think you have a good idea and it just needs a little tweak to make it more dynamic.	NA
6	1	Abandoned	The subject is well placed in the frame and that wonderful sky completes the picture. All colours work together nicely, but somehow the print just lacks that little bit of impact. I wonder if in taking it a viewpoint just a few inches lower to allow the subject to break the horizon line would have been beneficial.	A
7	3	Calm Anchorage	And it does exude calmness thanks to the quite static but beautifully balanced arrangement. The central yacht points us to the land to the left, but we are also drawn to the repeat motif of the boat on boat on the right, angled the same way as the yacht, and then there is that little bit of Boulder Bank on the right. It is all topped off with darkening of the clouds top right which retain the eye within the frame. Because of the size restrictions, the matt undervalues the print, and as presentation is important, I believe that for competition you would be better to have a smaller print with an appropriately proportioned matt.	A
8	8	Pedal Power	The cyclist is well placed in the frame and there is excellent interpretation of the movement of a not very smooth track. Colour and exposure are good, and it's nice to see the definition on the arm which conveys the tenseness required to control the bike. A print which does not require size to convey either quality or message.	A
9	9	Poppy garden	Excellent sharpness and colour quality in the focal point area, and great softness and colours elsewhere. The arrangement is nicely balanced, but, to me, the angle of the left poppy and its placement tend to close off the composition at that point making it difficult for the eye to travel to the right. A good option would have been to have had the sharp one on the right and the blur on the left, but it is a very colourful and competent creation.	A
10	13	St Bathans	Lovely colour and excellent sharpness, but it is unusual to see such a wide angle interpretation of the Blue Lake. The exposure is excellent with detail in both highlight and shadows. Good use of foreground and tantalising	A

formations in the distance. Thought could be given to a small crop from the right to make more of the main focal point. Great sky and reflection.

11	14	The Homestead	A wonderful subject displayed with an interesting and contrasting sky. It has been competently taken and processed with subtle vignette. However, although the lean arising from the wide angle lens gives some interpretation, I find it too exaggerated and suggest that it should be straightened a little.	A
12	15	The Lonely Grave	A special subject very well taken with the frame filled to perfection. However, I do feel that the green is far too vibrant and artificial looking to either be convincing or to reinforce the feeling of loneliness. Nice texture on the slab and the inscription shows up clearly adding interest.	A
13	4	Front Approaching	A lovely mood and contrasting colour in the water. This is well composed, but at the risk of suggesting you step into outer space, it would have been nice to avoid the grasses poking from the bottom margin. Alternatively, giving them a base might have been an option. I thought the lightness where sky meets land above the path was a pity as it does hint at work having been done, but overall, as a nice an image as I have seen of this spot.	M
14	11	Pug In The City	A good arrangement portraying a rather sad dog. The projected image does not do the print justice, but the arrangement being so balanced by the rather heavy end of the seat comes across as a little static. Technically this is of a very high standard.	M
15	6	Jordan	There is an air of defiance, rebellion and sulkiness about this model, which, when combined with the hint of religion in the stained glass window, tells a real story. Normally I would be concerned about the way the window draws the eye past and distracts, but here it seems to be very much part of the story. Excellent tonal range and nice modelling in the face. This is a portrayal that grew on me. Well done. It's interesting to have two very similar images in the one competition. Often they compete against each other.	H
16	10	Pug In The City 2	Of the two, I prefer the pug in rather contemplative mood in this one. The extent of open area in front of his gaze is entirely appropriate. While the brightness in the background in the projected image is rather overpowering, it is dead right in the print which is very attractive as a high key image.	H

Thanks you and good night.