

# **NELSON CAMERA CLUB - OPEN COMPETITION, AUGUST 2018**

Judged by Roger Thwaites, APSNZ.

Greetings Nelson Camera Club. Great to see some of you at the Seddon Shield Weekend in Reefton. It was a really relaxed weekend – catching up with old friends and enjoying the photography.

I did enjoy looking at all your competition entries, and you will be interested to know that your images (collectively) were the strongest of all the Club entries I have looked at and judged, so far this year. Great to see the print entries (I don't see a lot of prints during the course of my judging year).

“Open Subject” is a really good opportunity for your members to do something different. You are not restricted by a Set Subject, and you are only limited by your imagination – a good opportunity to be creative and artistic, and of course, there is the time-honoured classical images.

I was hoping to come over your way, and deliver the results in person, but I have a sick son in Christchurch who is about to have a serious surgical procedure, so I have to stick around.

I was going to make some general comments about your entries, but I think I will let my remarks about each of the entries, do the talking.

## **A-GRADE PROJECTED IMAGES**

01A – BENMORE AUTUMN: I felt that the Autumn colours were just a wee bit flat looking (past their best, maybe?). A very pleasant scene, worthy of ACCEPTANCE, but could be improved with a little bit of colour saturation.

02A – LET THERE BE LIGHT: That's the thought that I had, when I first looked at this image – a lot of black areas in the picture – almost overwhelmed with darkness. Maybe, you could employ some computer magic, and lift the shadows a bit more? It does have a strong point of interest with the sawn off log sticking out! Needs a little more thought about the composition, though.  
NO AWARD.

03A – CAVORTING IN THE WAVES: Great detail of the patterns of the churning waves. The back (or side) lighting, gives this image great impact, ending in the dramatic splash (on the right) with the seagull adding strongly to the interest of it. Good composition of the wave being frozen in time.

It has this touch of brilliance. Well done. HONOURS AWARD. Irene Callaghan

04A – THE TACK ROOM: A lot to look at in this image. When I first looked at it, I thought that the composition needed a good tidying up, but then I thought that all of the various items in the picture, pointed to a story (although not immediately obvious to the average viewer). The eye is then drawn to the inside of the 'Tack Room' and to what looks like a whole lot of horse-riding gear, and then back to the shoes on the table. Everything about this image (although, not dramatic) tells a story and creates viewer interest.  
ACCEPTANCE.

05A – FRACTURE: First impression is, this is a photo of a piece of art or sculpture, (or is it the 'real thing'?), with all the scratches and fractures added for effect?! I have this saying to describe some of the photography of today: "Not everything is really as it looks (and probably isn't!)". However, it is a very strong portrait of this face, and in particular, the eyes, with the rest fading away into the darkness. At "face value" it's worth a MERIT ! Graeme Skinner

06A – THE SAX PLAYER: I love the high key look of this image, and the movement of the sax. It's a most effective way of telling the story. The high key look takes nothing away from the impact of it. Very well done and created. HONOURS. Graeme Skinner

07A – THE CIDER APPLE WASHING TEAM: A well composed image which shows all of the apple washing process. The team, being amongst the shadows of the trees, does have some dappled lighting problems, but in the main, it's a very interesting image of people working, and tells a good story. MERIT. Denis LaTouche

08A – AMALFI HEIGHTS: Some interesting old looking domed buildings in the foreground, but overshadowed by the very dominant tree. This is probably a great memory of your trip to this location, but needs more work on the composition to make it more acceptable as an A-grade competition photo.  
NO AWARD.

09A – BEAUTY AND THE BEAST: Tells a strong story of the pollution of an otherwise, pristine scene. A very good title, and the tyre leans into the picture, just enough to make an environmental statement. MERIT. Rosie Ross

10A – GLOBAL WARMING: I'm not sure that this scene tells me "global warming" (could be due to a lot of other factors). The tree stump is a very strong element, with the water bouncing all around it. The image is quite

grainy and pixelated in places – maybe slightly over-processed? I think that maybe, a crop of about a quarter of the image from the top, would give it a bit of a lift. NO AWARD.

11A – THE MALL: A creative and unusual view of this scene, although it begs the question, “where is the reflection of the photographer?” All that put aside, I like the distorted reflections of the ball, which lead the eye through the mall. Interesting image. ACCEPTANCE.

12A – DENSITY FILTER: The idea of this is creative, but I think it might have worked better if the front of the train had appeared to the right of the right hand. As it is, it is all about the hands holding the camera (nice bit of sticking plaster!). Maybe, you jumped ahead of the moment? A good idea which hasn't quite succeeded. NO AWARD.

13A – EBB TIDE: The patterns and textures of the beach give this a great foreground, but then as the eye progresses, I begin to see a split into two images (about where the two small waves are breaking). I thought that the colours of the landform and the clouds at the top, looked too unnatural for the rest of the picture. (Maybe a grad filter has been used?). With more thought about technique and composition, this could make a real visual statement. NO AWARD.

14A – WHO WILL BUY MY CARVINGS? :

A nice idea for a photo, but this young lady has a fairly serious expression, and the eyes are in the shadow of her hat and are just a wee bit dark looking. The hat itself, is wonderful, with lots of colourful flowers, and that's a plus. A little bit of reflected light on the face would light up the eyes, and a wee smile would give a lift to her expression. ACCEPTANCE.

15A – DAVIDBW-1: I gather that you are trying for particular effect in this portrait image where one side of the face is in shadow, but I'm not sure that it has worked that well. The lighting has had the effect where there is a glimmer of a catch light in the left eye, but no catch-light in the right eye. Overall, the whole image seems to be slightly out-of-focus. It would seem, that there needs to be more thought about the technique used. NO AWARD.

16A – WILTED: Some really nice colours here which work well with the background. The lighting is good, but not all of the form of the flower is in sharp focus, and I think it needs to be. ACCEPTANCE.

- 17A – MY HERITAGE, WAIKAWA MARAE: A nicely posed portrait of this model, with the form of her figure closely mirroring the form of the carving, Well done. I'm not sure the position of her left arm across her body and the clasped hands, works quite so well. I think it would be a more natural pose, if the hands were unclasped. However, this is an excellent portrait which is made stronger by the use of the B & W medium. HONOURS AWARD. [Dianna Hambleton](#)
- 18A – HANGING AROUND: Mother and brother having fun inside, while older brother waits patiently on the outside. A typical scene which often occurs at school holiday time. The expression on the face of the lad on the left, says it all. An image that tells a strong story. Well seen. MERIT AWARD. [Dianna Hambleton](#)
- 19A – COMPANY AT THE LAKE: I like the pastel colours of the landscape, but it's difficult to grasp the basics of the story, as the people are all looking away from the camera (supposedly at the trees in front of them). The guy in red, is a very strong focal point, which draws the eye almost distractingly. I think that this image would have been a very nice landscape, without the people in it! ACCEPTANCE.
- 20A – THE INVITATION: A very likeable scene, which has been made stronger, by the graduated vignetting of the corners. I feel that the tree to the right of the gate, is quite a dominant element and looks a little strange where it is, tending to divide the image visually. It is otherwise, quite a pleasant little landscape image. ACCEPTANCE.
- 21A – EXIT: I thought that this was quite well done, with the ghost-like figure furtively leaving the cemetery. A very dark and mysterious scene, reminiscent of "some foul deeds being carried out in the dead of night". There's just enough detail of the graveyard, and the dark figure exiting, to determine the story. Effective, and interesting idea. MERIT AWARD. [John Olsen](#)
- 22A – ISOBEL: A delightful candid portrait. The eyes have it! The subtle little smile and the angle of the tilt of the head, along with the well-defined catch-lights in the eyes, shows this young lady's beauty, to perfection. Great pose. Excellent portrait. HONOURS AWARD. [John Olsen](#)
- 23A – A COUPLE OF COOL CATS: A nice pose of these two "cats". With a portrait like this, it is important that cat-ch lights in the eyes a clearly discernable, otherwise the eyes tend to disappear into the artwork. Here, a bit of reflected light on the eyes, would improve the catch

lights, from 'barely discernable' to 'much more obvious'. MERIT AWARD.  
Sue Newport

24A – YOUNG MR GRUMPY: The eyes are sharp, and have subtle catch-lights. Most of the lighting seems to be coming from top right, which lights up the right side nicely, but the left side of the bird doesn't show quite so well, because it is slightly shadowed. There is some flaring of the light on the head feathers, but other than that, it is quite an acceptable image of "Young Mr Grumpy". ACCEPTANCE.

25A – THAT TREE!: There are literally hundreds of images of 'that tree', out there, and this is one that I quite like. Nice colours of the sky. Just a pity that the clouds are a bit blotchy in places, and tend to diffuse some the silhouetting effect of the tree branches. A very good effort though. ACCEPTANCE.

26A – DAWN AT THE LAKE: This is another popular, and well-photographed scene. Here, the photographer has lowered the camera plane to ground level, to get a different perspective of it. The wisps of cloud across the lower parts of the mountain, adds to the interest of the image. Well done. ACCEPTANCE.

27A – INDENTATIONS: The shapes and patterns in this image, look like they have morphed from an orbweb spider. No idea what this could be but it has some very interesting patterns and colours, and is well placed within the frame. It is sometimes a good thing to include something in your image which gives the viewers a clue as to what they are looking at, otherwise it could be viewed as a whole lot of meaningless shapes. ACCEPTANCE.

28A – PADDLING HOME: A strong silhouette of the paddler against a subtle background and lovely soft pastel sky. Simple composition, but very effective balance of the elements. Tells the story well. MERIT AWARD.  
Barry Doig

29A – LUNCH BREAK IN THE SHADE: A well seen grab-shot. The oblong shapes of the blocks, leads the eye to the lass having her lunch. The adjacent lines of the shadow adds another interesting dimension, and breaks up the oblong shapes. The title could be shortened to "lunch break" and be just as effective. A very simple composition, which tells a good story. Well done. HONOURS AWARD. Gretchen du Frene

- 30A – LOOKING FOR THE MAGIC COPY: I have the feeling that the title is trying to tell me what is going on here, and try as I might, (and other than the little tot looking into the mirror), the story and meaning behind this image, escapes me. Most of the image is unsharp, and the quality of it in that respect, tends to let it down. NO AWARD.
- 31A – SPLASH: The action of the waves splashing into the rocks is well caught. I wonder whether a faster shutter speed would freeze the 'splash action' more, as the detail of the splash, seems quite soft. An interesting image with very sharp detail of the foreground rocks, which could benefit from a little more care with the technique used. (Quite a few dust spots from the camera sensor, which are obvious in the picture). ACCEPTANCE.
- 32A – Quite an abstract-looking design about this image. You have done well to photograph this little fellow while it is sitting still. The angle of the three fence strainers and the graduated background colour, all combine to make this an unusual but most interesting image. Well done. MERIT AWARD. Lisa Trusler

## **B-GRADE PROJECTED IMAGES**

- B01 – PT. HALSWELL LIGHTHOUSE: A commonly photographed part of the Wellington coastline. The colour and movement of the bubbling sea around the rocks and the walkway, gives this quite a moody appearance. Looks to be quite a wide-angle lens used, which may be why the lighthouse appears a bit warped and on a lean? However, this is a well-balanced seascape shot which creates a lot of visual interest. Well done. MERIT AWARD. Roger Ball
- B02 – CELLULAR: The green cells show quite dramatically against the blue of the background – a strong colour match which works well with this image. Lots to see within the cells – interesting and mysterious. The eye wanders a bit for a lack of a defining focal point, but it does present as strongly creative and artistic. MERIT AWARD. Roger Ball
- B03 – PINK SHELL: There is a strong image within this image, but with the shell being so centralised, it weakens the effect of it. If you took a crop of a third of the image from the left, and a quarter from the bottom, that would leave the shell and the tidal flow impressions, as a much stronger composition. A potentially good subject for a photo. ACCEPTANCE.
- B04 – MUDFLATS: This is a good record of this location, but needs something more to make a good competition photo. Try studying the scene in



strongly with the tree. However, it's well printed, with good use of the 'black and white' medium. ACCEPTANCE.

CHRISTCHURCH WINDOW CLEANER: The simplicity of this composition, and the strong focal point (window cleaner) gives this image quite a bit of impact. A little bit of judicious cropping, could make the composition better balanced, proportion-wise. By taking just over a quarter from the top, and about a third of the sky from the left side(Just a suggestion!) The metallic print, gives it a nice clean finish. Well done. MERIT AWARD. [Helen Howie](#)

BUTTERMERE REFLECTIONS: The distant hill casts a beautiful pristine reflection upon the lake, with the foreground rocks underneath the water, adding to the effect. I feel that the fence running into the water, is just too strong for this image, and acts more as a distracting influence, than being complimentary to it. And there is that single stick jutting out of the water to the left of it, which doesn't help. Maybe a different camera angle would achieve a better blend of the elements? NO AWARD.

WHITE FACED SCOPS OWL: A beautiful head shot of this bird – Great colour, great detail, and it is especially sharp around the eye area. The very black negative space to the right, is a little too imposing for this image, and by cropping 55mm from the right, gives a better, but stronger balance of the elements. Out of the many species of owls, this is one of the most handsome, and it is a very good portrait shot of it. MERIT AWARD. [Caroline Foster](#)

GOLDEN BAY: Nice colours of the beach against a stormy looking sky, and there is a faint hint of a rainbow in the distance. The straggly looking sticks in the foreground are not greatly complimentary, and being placed in the very centre of the image, it draws the eye, to the detriment of the rest of the image. A pity, as this is quite a pleasing photo. NO AWARD.

ROVER: A lot to look at here, but all of it combines well to tell a good story of the dogs waiting patiently for the farmer to appear. Mono is a good choice for this image, and the slight sepia toning, is most effective. A typical farm scene which has the most "telling" of titles. Well done. HONOURS AWARD. [John Olsen](#)

WATCHING THE SKY: Very good use of converging lines in this image. Perhaps the colour is a little flat looking here and there. The dog seems to be watching the sky, but the person with it, is more intent on looking at the sea.(a bit picky, I know!). Be careful about dust marks on the

camera sensor – a noticeable one at left, close to the margin. If the lighting was better, this would have greater impact. ACCEPTED.

FADING LIGHT: Here is an image that has so much potential, but it needs a lot more thought about it to realise that potential. I did wonder whether the 'mono' medium was right for this, thinking that colour might be more appealing. The strongest part of this image is the landform and the person standing on it, but the sloping horizon of the landform is immensely distracting. There is a lot of sky, which adds little to the impact of the image overall. Much more thought about composition and technique, needed here. NO AWARD.

ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME? A fearsome looking beast! A very strong animal shot with a neutral background. Superbly sharp around the head and horns. Perhaps a crop of 50mm from the right would reduce some of the negative space, and give a better-balanced composition? Otherwise, a great looking portrait of this animal. MERIT AWARD. [Lisa Trusler](#)

BEAUTIFUL TUI: Indeed it is! A very erect pose of the tui, among the fairly busy looking background proteas. The dark colours of the Tui stand out really well, but the out-of-focus twig(?) in the lower third of the image, is annoyingly distracting. It's unfortunate that this passes right through from one side to the other, and apart from this, it is a very acceptable image. ACCEPTANCE.

## **B-GRADE PRINTS**

WRECK OF THE JANIE SEDDON: An interestingly creative effect, with the rays of light radiating throughout the wreck. A creative idea which is very well done, with the exception of parts of the hull on the left side, (with the black smudge), which are seemingly inconsistent with the rest of the effect. However, a very good attempt at doing something creative. MERIT AWARD. [Roger Ball](#)

LAMP GARDEN: An unusual scene – certainly makes you stop and think! Very colourful. I wondered whether this would look better as a glossy print rather than matt finish, as the black tones are very flat looking. However, it's an interesting scene, and different in every respect, especially the way the light illuminates the grasses on the ground and the tree branches. A strong focal point would have been an advantage, but well done. MERIT AWARD. [Roger Ball](#)

