

**Nelson Camera Club**  
**August comp (A-grade Digital)**

26 images

Title	Comments	Result
Amish Farm Life	I really enjoyed immersing myself in this pleasant country scene. The lighting has been nicely diffused into a hazy air, which has helped separate the main subject with it's bright contrasting colours against the softer background. Nice framing and depth-of-field allow me to enjoy the subject and context without feeling cramped, and I enjoyed the honest colour tones and processing.	honours
Angel	The lighting in this image has helped create some lovely shape in the model's face, with great focus on her face and hair. Perhaps a bit of fill might help separate her shoulder, and more importantly her hair) from dropping into blocked blacks behind her. The main struggle for me is in the story - the coarse rope wound around her neck seems at odds with her posture, which seems happy and relaxed. The additional texture works well and created a touch extra interest for me	accepted
Colour me in	(image is outside competition sizing 3405x3405px) This is a lovely concept for a macro image, I enjoy the randomness of heights and colours of the pencils that form a circular shape within the square frame. The cluster of pencils is 'mostly sharp' - my eye doesn't really find anything to grab on to - either being more selective with the focus, or ensuring that the entire subject is sharp throughout would help me spend longer in the image. Around the subject, the white background appears to have some odd dark splodges throughout - perhaps a little curves and contrast adjustments could help drop these away, and also help bring the vibrant colours to life a little more.	not accepted
Curvature	For me this is a beautifully challenging and well-conceived image - the curves of the barrel creating an almost 3D-version of the portrait-versus-candlestick optical illusion - reinforced with the small hint of barrel edge bottom right and the tense crop through the jawline. A highly emotive image with lovely textural and tonal detail.	honours
Dovedale hill race	This image of a running event shows the pain and effort clearly on the competitor's face. I feel that compositionally there may have been other options that would fill the frame a little better: Using a longer lens could bring the spaces around the main subject closer together, or simply cropping in close on the main subject (I know he's running - I don't need to see his legs and feet) allows me to experience his pain, with the two distant runners as context. As presented there's a lot of empty road between the runners that breaks the story.	not accepted
Fence Line	My eye is initially drawn to the hillside in the centre of the image, with the sharp horizon contrasted against the clouds, then I come down to the fence line and foreground flax, and back left along the fence. Because of the contrast and visual weight of the hills, I don't find the fence to be a key element of the image, more a block preventing me moving in. Either a much shallower depth of field, or perhaps isolating the fence against a simpler background would help give it more prominence.	not accepted

Hokitika Sunset	Beautiful tones in the sky create a lovely backdrop to the iconic Hokitika driftwood sign. Including the tourists has created more interest for me. With the beachline sloping up to the left, my eye tries to read the sign backwards; I feel that straightening the beach (square-on to the sign) simplifies the driftwood, allowing me to read it naturally, which then frees me up to engage with the silhouetted characters	accepted
I Spy	An interesting abstract creation, I like the symmetry and flow of colours and shapes around the central heart. There are remnants of the arcs peeking through the burned-in areas, and some softer edges on the main 'petals' distracts my eye away from enjoying the shapes. The simple white border is a nice finishing touch	not accepted
Karima	There is a lovely expression on this young lady's face. Having some light catching the back of her hair has illuminated that very nicely, but a little has spilled onto her face, creating a bright highlight. There's a little blur in the image too - possibly from camera-shake - making her eyes and face not as sharp as I would expect. The depth of field works well, but I think finding a background with fewer bright highlights would really strengthen this portrait.	not accepted
Light in the dark	This is a very dramatic monochrome image of this small church building - I like the mood that this treatment has created, a shelter from the surrounding bleak, dark world. The perfect symmetry and full-frontal view helps strengthen the contrast between the church and the natural chaos of the trees. I would have loved to see slightly less encroachment of the lower branch on the right, by perhaps shooting lower and using lens-corrections to restore the verticals	merit
On its way	A well seen little interaction here as the stream flows over a small step. As-presented, I find the diagonal line of the small weir dominates the composition. The area of interest for me is the interaction between the stone, the line of leaves and the motion of the water as it flows past, re-framing to include just these elements I feel would present a stronger story. Take care with shutter speeds in these situations - the motion of the flowing water is very nice, and the leaves are still nicely sharp, but the bubbles at the foot of the step have minor motion blur which I find detracts from feeling of flow.	not accepted
Pink Gerbera	nicely composed to fill the frame comfortably, I like the processing and the complementary border works well. There is a slight blue glow behind the stem of the flower which I find a little distracting, but elsewhere this very subtle glow helps make the flower almost jump out of the screen. The soft lighting and excellent depth of field through the entire flowerhead works very nicely. The natural symmetry is broken by a single petal bottom centre; does this detract, or add to the authenticity? (You'll have to choose for yourselves)	merit

Road to no where	A broken road with no beginning and no end! A well-seen view and a great title; my eye travels down the road, through the open countryside, to the expanse of sea. There's a slight edge of bush on the bottom right that pulls my eye a little, however this could be easily removed or cropped out. The overcast sky has created a fairly flat light across the pastures - I think some harder, low-angled light would have created a lot more depth and really brought this scene to life.	accepted
Royal Spoonbill	A very well exposed shot of this spoonbill, mid-step, with a stream of droplets from its bill and a catch-light in the eye - great hallmarks of a classic nature shot. The image appears to be quite noisy, possibly from a tight crop from a larger image, which is reducing the apparent sharpness of the bird - perhaps using the enhance feature in Lightroom, Topaz sharpen or similar could help improve this. On my screen I feel that the colours are a little overly warm, creating a muddier colouration in the water - a minor adjustment to the white balance may help. I like the composition, with sufficient space around the bird and a simple background.	accepted
South Coast Seascape	The shutter speed of this ICM image has created a nice balance of soft blur and dynamic motion of this wave as it breaks. The composition works nicely to lead my eye in from the left, and travel along the wave, then I am drawn back to the start by the foreground lines, creating a circular motion that mimics the flow of the waves. I find the gritty grain detracts from the wave motion, and smoothing this little, and feathering the vignette on the left and right edges would further enhance this image for me.	accepted
Stoke	The long, letterbox-format of this image helps show me the expanse of the bay and distant hills. Due to the distance, the hills have lost some contrast and texture in the hazy air. A large portion of the image is made up of the flat, grassy foreshore, and this doesn't contain anything that holds my eye - including a foreground feature to support the distant hills would help hold me in the image for longer.	not accepted
Suspension	The depth of field used really makes this leaf and droplets stand out against a simple background. My eye goes straight to the droplets in the centre of the image, then follows the line of the leaf down to the tip, which is quite dark compared to the central area. I feel the tip of the leaf deserves a little more prominence in the image - then my eye could move between this and the main cluster of drops more freely.	accepted
Swirl	I found this abstract swirl an enjoyable image. I enjoyed the colour palette, with the hint of green at the centre for some variety. My eye went straight to the middle, then explored the different shapes and swirls left and right, but always directed back to the centre by the converging lines. The border works well for me, large and interesting enough to be part of the whole, without overly dominating.	merit

The Red Lady	(Image is outside competition sizing; 1080x1620px) The make-up and concept of this image works well, with the complementary colours of the shawl and her lipstick. The hard lighting (possibly from an on-camera flash) has lit her eyes nicely, but can be quite unflattering on skin texture, flattens any contouring of her face and creates hard shadow areas, e.g. small triangle beside her chin. Perhaps a more diffuse light source, such as a soft-box, might help. I enjoyed the use of the shawl to frame her face, and her engaging expression is really nice.	not accepted
The Transformer	An instantly captivating and entertaining image - I love the 'war of the worlds' look of this leaning steel behemoth as it strides down the jetty. The simple background gives context, without competing for attention, the lines in the upper level clouds all help frame and emphasise the subject. The low viewpoint creates an even more imposing view of the beast, though I was a tad distracted by the distortion of the small building - perhaps a bit of lens correction would fix this? Nicely seen, clean and simple.	honours
Totaranui Dawn	I like the weighting of this image, the shapes and layers created work very nicely: the angled beach in the foreground, leading to the boat ramp, the headland behind which slopes nicely down to the sunrise, and then the lovely arc of clouds mimicking the line of the hillside frames the sunrise and neatly curves back to the foreground beach to complete the journey. There's some minor haloming through the trees top-left, but the exposure has been very well handled, the slower shutter speed makes for a calming feeling and the small-aperture sunburst is a very nice touch.	merit
Tui	I like the dynamic pose of this tui, suggesting impending flight - the moment just before take-off. The bird has been nicely captured side-on, so it's acceptably sharp from beak to tail with lovely colouration. The background has a lot of distracting elements which pull my eye off the main hero, but its a nice capture of a native bird in the wild. Shooting on an overcast day has worked really well to show the feather colours and avoid high contrasty areas.	accepted
Tussock Morning	The golden light on the tussock makes a lovely colour palette for this image. My eye is led in from the bottom left, along the diagonal line of the tussocks to the dead flower heads on the upper right, then they continue along the same line and out of the image. Finding an anchor, or foreground subject, to hold my attention would keep me in the image - a place to explore from and come back to. Oblique lines like this can be tough to create balanced, flowing landscapes, but the lighting and depth of field are great.	not accepted
Twisted Tones	These abstract 'kaleidoscope' images are vibrant and colourful, but for me the technique is starting to overwhelm the photography. I want to find something in here to explore, more than just the colours and symmetry, that would make this an individual piece of art and elevate it above the technical process - perhaps as a triptych or similar?	not accepted

Waiiau Ferry bridge	This spectacular gorge is certainly eye-catching, and the architecture of the bridge makes an interesting counterpoint to the natural rock. Everything in this image is reasonably sharp, and rather brightly lit. Softer or more angled lighting, and use of depth of field could help make the main subject (for me, the bridge) stand out against its surroundings. Including the jetboat helps add a point of interest, though I am wondering why it's been placed so precisely on the bridge's shadow, rather than (for example) using the bridge and the shadow to frame it slightly further downstream? I might also consider re-framing the shot to reduce the large portion of foreground river, which occupies almost a third of the image, and removing the edge of the water tank on the far right.	not accepted
Yellowhammer - Hurukowhai	Simple colour palette, a nice sharp bird with a lovely catch light in it's eye. The angled wire isn't too dominant, and makes a nice contrast with the soft background, I like the nature-versus-manmade element. I would suggest cropping the right-hand edge just a tad to remove the shadowed section of wire, and perhaps consider cloning out the strand of cobweb bottom right - not acceptable in a nature comp, but absolutely fine in Open	merit