

A grade entries

Always the bridesmaid

This image tells a good story and the muted colour palette suits the subject matter. It's no doubt a personal thing but the bits of plastic and pink (old insulation batts?) are a bit out of context and detract from the story so I'd have rearranged the scene a little to get them out of frame. But that's a minor quibble. **Merit**

Approaching Storm

There was good potential in this image and location-wise I'm thinking of the beach near Pohara but I may be wrong. I'm not convinced about the sepia treatment though as it flattens the image and then draws the eye to the burnt out waters edge. **Not awarded**

Artists palette

I liked this image. Its simple and its strongly graphic. Perhaps too strong a vignette as there's interesting detail a bit beyond the bright parts that would potentially add more interest. **Merit**

Begonia 3

Stunning. Loved it. Its nice and glossy but whereas you often see too much specular highlights in such images, here they've been handled well. The square format suits the subject and the shape reminds me of a puppet. Well done. **Honours**

Brybeira Range to Lake Wakatipu

This image really piqued my professional interest with the different colour rocks. Initially I thought it was a play of light but I see its real. Good colours although there is some burn out of the snow/ice. I'm presuming its taken out of a plane window as there's a bit of reflection just above the island in the lake which becomes distracting once you see it. It's something I'm always concious of as I've been doing a lot of photographing out of helicopters since I've moved to Gisborne and I tend to fly with the door off so that I can sit half out of the chopper to remove distractions. Anyway, nicely seen and a good mountain scape with the red rocks adding interest. **Merit**

Cold Start

The image really made me think. Ordinarily I'm not sold on the idea of having lots of foreground vegetation as its often very blurred and distracting. Overall its been handled well here, however, and you dealt with the depth of focus really well. There's still that one bit of blurry twiggs in the middle foreground though and that is distracting. The branches on the right end up adding to the balance

although I think a simpler image cropping out the right would here the down tree that's presently right in the middle of the frame. **Accepted**

Especially Posed

I like the square treatment here and I don't mind the monochrome treatment although I'm wondering why as the kereru is such an attractively coloured bird. Its nice and sharp which is great and I don't mind the business of the vegetation that its perched on although the bit of now grey greenery just to the left of the bird is a bit distracting. **Accepted**

Flower Power

These types of images have lots of potential and at first seeing this looked very interesting but for it to work very successfully there needed to be a good transition between the before and after states whereas here we have some lines around the centre of the flower which reduce the harmony of the image. I like the background and feel its been handled well abd the muted colours suit the image. **Not awarded**

Gog and Magog

These two tors are a typical sight on the schist country of Central Otago. Thers a strong light from the right but the shadows have been handled well overall. I don't mind the background but I feel that the foreground has let you down somewhat. The tors are a little bit unsharp. **Accepted (just)**

Good Night to Mt Cook

I can see the potential here but I don't think it was fully realised. I may have been spoiled as I grew up admiring the surrealistically realistic alpine imagery of Yoshikazu Shirakawa who I was lucky enough to meet many years ago. This has been a long winded way of saying that the image is dominated by the shadows that make up 2/3ds of the image and Mt Cook itself have come lost. **Not awarded**

Hanging out at Mapua Wharf.jpg

It's a long time since I've seen a "real" double exposure and this one works quite well although I think a crop in of the sky would focus the attention on the double action a lot more. Nicely muted colours and excluding the sky a strongly graphic image. I'd be curious to see what it looks like cropped and printed on canvas. **Merit**

Having a Bad day in the Rain

This is a nice story telling image and you can sense the degree of peevishness the bird is feeling. Good colour but not quite sharp which is a shame. **Accepted**

Home from school through Queens Gardens.

Conceptually and colour palette-wise a similar image to Hanging out on Mapua Wharf and I'm guessing the same photographer and same camera. I'd have liked to have seen the full pavers on the right as having them chopped off detracts from the image. Keep up the interesting work but I'd suggest not putting too such simialr images in the same competition. Vary it up a bit. **Accepted**

Hugo Boss

This I liked, a simple story but told well. Vignette and sepia tones work well. Simple and effective. **Honours**

Humble Bumble

This has been nicely caught and the bee is nice and sharp. Good colour but the blurry foreground bits are simewhat distracting. On the otherhand the background has a nice Bokeh. I could perhaps suggest a bit of a crop but this has been well done overall. **Merit**

Iced Lily

I really liked this creative shot of this lily. Its an unusual treatment but is works well. It's a minor quibble but the image might be improved if the little black triable at top left was "pulled" out of frame in Photoshop using the warp tool (assuming you have access to PS). Would look good on the wall as a framed print. **A very good merit**

Infinite & Perpetual

I love an existential title that somehow really fits the subject. This reminds me of the sea state you get on bluewater sailing trips when your going through a severe squall. I love the muted colours and the small amount of breaking wave adds just the right amount of drama to bring out the image. Lovely image, when is the exhibition? **Honours**

Ivy on the beach

Now I really want to know what Lambie is called!!! Sweet image of Ivy who has been nicely put into the frame. The low angled light has been handled well as this can in some cases result in distracting shadow on the righthand side. Let down by being a bit soft. **Accepted**

Kereru

Great shot of this Kereru with the bird nicely frames on the branch. Background is a bit distracting with a bit less depth of focus needed. I was initially wondering whether or not the saturation had been pushed but on reflection I think you've caught the blueness on the back of the bird perfectly.

Merit

Monarch

Monarchs are a favourite subject of mine particularly because of the colour and how difficult they are to capture really well. This is a different treatment with the white background making one think of all those insects in museum drawers with pins sticking out of them. I'm guessing that you are trying for a graphic image but it hasn't really worked for me. It needs to be tack sharp and the little artefacts around the edges and below the specimen are rather distracting. **Not awarded**

Monarch caterpillar

Overall nicely caught and I like the seed (or whatever it is) falling out. Good colour but slightly soft. Be careful of your backgrounds as this one is a bit of a distraction. These things don't move that fast so you may have had time to deal to that. As it will be hanging out on that plant, try an artificial background...I often use a black screen in these situations. **Accepted**

New Zealand Scaup - Ohau Canal

Good colour on this scaup and the colour of the water focusses the eye in on the subject. The right of the bird is in shadow but otherwise the colour is good and its reasonably sharp. Scaups are reasonably chill around people so there was good opportunity to explore this subject further.

Accepted

NZ Kea

Nice colour and reasonably sharp with good feather detail as shown but some pixellation sneaking in when you look closely. I like the birds pose but I do wonder about the background. It makes for a strongly graphic image where all the attention is on the bird but that also means the little distractions like the slight pixelation become more to the fore. I'm guessing you'd like to see this on a wall and if some a canvas print might offset that pixellation. **Merit**

Past redemption

Oh I dunno. A new engine, new tires, a lick of paint and off you go!! Seriously though this is a nicely seen image of an old truck in a field. You do see a lot of these coming through as there's a lot of it about but that's just an aside. Nice and sharp and good colours. I like the sheet hanging off the back...make me think that someone was trying to give it a clean but gave up. I reckon there's a good shot if you go back and work on some full frontal shots of the grill. **A good Accepted**

Red-eyed Tree Frog

Nice well seen nature shot. Sharp and well saturated colour with a nicely muted background. There's some colour noise in that background but I'm cool with that. Possibly could do with a bit less of a crop on the left. **Honours**

Reflection

This is nice. A different take on the Moeraki Boulders and it works for me. Liked the square format. **Honours**

The Faraway Hills

A nice lot of recession planes in this image and a muted palette. Perhaps it was a frosty morning but my gut feel is that a bit more saturation would make the image pop as the cliché goes. **Accepted**

The Girl from Cairo

Nicely seen and this is a nice portrait of this young girl. Its cropped a bit to tight on the left for my preference and very slightly soft but that's OK. While I understand that the cracking texture layer adds to the feeling of age to the wall I feel that having it right in the foreground so you see it in the subject doesn't work for me. **Accepted**

B Grade entries

Apple

This is a nicely composed shot of this apple. The background is nicely muted and the vignette works well. I would perhaps just of pushed the exposure slightly to brighten up the subject where it counts. The square format works for me. **accepted**

Crowned Crane, South Africa

A great nature shot and well done for showing a bird in south africa. You see a lot of Elephants and lions (not tigers luckily) but never any of the birds of Africa which can be magnificent so brownie points for that, not that you need them as this is a nearly technically perfect image. **Honours**

Meercat sentinal

Isn't it amazing that such a vicious little animal can always look so cute. One of the classic poses and I like the way the claws are intertwined and the curl of the tail. Background well handled. **A good Merit**

SHAG PORTRAIT

A very sharp image of this Little Shag and I actually like the different treatment where all of the black has merged with the background leaving just the face and the beak. Nicely handled. **Merit**

Veterans

I think you captured this image well and it presents well but I am always a little troubled by the fact that its someone elses artwork that you are presenting and to make this work well you need to add something of yourself to the image and I'm not sure that has occurred here. **Accepted.**

Wakapuaka morning

Nicely seen and captured landscape and the foreground boulder works well. There's quite an expanse of water and that acts to separate the image in two. The solution is to get down a bit so that the bould merges with the background a little more, ie where the boulder appears to be closer to the sky reflection on the top end of the pond. **Accepted.**