

Something about myself

I'm neurotic about photography.... perhaps that's because I'm dyslexic and visual by nature. From my early teens I knew that I interpreted my environment and solved every day life through visual recognition. What your brain tells you though is not necessarily what you're looking at. For example, on a real stormy day the clouds might be described as grey or black stormy clouds, but move your blue colour adjustment in post-production and see what happens.... But we don't describe the clouds as blue do we.

For a long time now I have viewed and tried to understand the pictures in front of me, in real life or pictorially. It is with humility and pleasure I welcomed the opportunity to evaluate you images.

Evaluation Brief

In providing feedback for these images, I have endeavoured to describe my reaction and emotional response, rather than a pure description of photographic technique. I find that my connection to images varied.

In some instances I had an immediate response and in others it was harder to find.

Whanganui Camera Club

End of year DPI Competition

Evaluator: Ian Purden

Title	Result	Feedback
A Grade		
A Sense of Foreboding	Acceptance	<p>I enjoyed the light playing on the back wall, particularly where its luminosity reveals the richness of the orange stone. A tricky lighting situation seems to have been reasonably well handled by retaining most of the definition in the white areas but lost in the blacks.</p> <p>Whilst I have tried hard to put myself in the place of the author's shoes, I find I am unable to make the connection to a 'sense of foreboding.' I feel this image is about modern architecture, which can be stark and bland in many instances. But I do not get the feeling that something 'bad' will happen at any moment which is what the title implies.</p> <p>As it stands it lacks a point of interest and I find that my eyes wander around until they are drawn out of the image by the brighter colour [white] at the top right.</p>
After the first snow	Merit	It looks cold, not a cloud in the sky. A clever placement of the moon behind a tree allowing the photographer to photograph directly into the trees creating

		strong shadow patterns in the lower third of the image. Good exposure and depth of field as we can see snow on the hills in the background.
Bleak House	Highly Commended	With rain or low cloud in the background this old house certainly looks bleak. The condition of the house and size of the Poplar trees adds to the story. The image is well balance with the house in the bottom third and sufficient room at the top of the Poplars allowing them breathing space.
Bubblelicious	Highly Commended	This image is about circles and colours. The green bokeh background is in harmony with the reflective colours of the 4 joined bubbles. The perfectly cylindrical spheres and mixture of the colours makes this a great Bubblelicious experience.
Cape Gooseberry Study	Honours	A delicately prepared image, I always think the Cape Gooseberry is just waiting to be photographed. I like the way the seed pods have been arranged on the diagonal from bottom left increasing in numbers to top right, the scattered seeds around the pods also adds to the story. Good control of lighting from the top left corner to the bottom right completing a well balanced image.
Chiefs , and Proud of It	Acceptance	A die-hard Chiefs fan here, well seen and captured in a challenging lighting environment. The fan looking towards the camera and the amused expression from the lady on the right, while adding to the story is distracting from the main focal point, as they are more exposed compared to our proud chiefs fan. Recomposing to a square format would have helped eliminate the distractions yet left enough of the environment to tell us where he is.
Double Falls	Merit	The slow shutter speed has created a thin veil of water over the rocks of the main waterfall on the left hand side complemented by a smaller volume on the right of the image with the disappearing wisp of cloud adding to the story. For a bright sunny day these rocks are under exposed with a loss of detail in the mid tones and blacks with some over exposure where the main waterfall lands. Compositionally the image is well constructed.
Duckling	Merit	Lovely image of a duckling pin sharp with a clear crisp eye and waiting to be fed with good depth of field control. The red shoes and blue jeans are competing for attention and are distracting from the focal point... the duckling. Because these are the only dominant blues and reds in the image

		they are easily muted in post-production by reducing the saturation of those colours without losing context.
Inspirational Clothes Rack	Acceptance	This appears to be a good record image or art work. We are often advised against photographing “someone else’s art” unless we create something different and is not merely a representation of the said art. Compositionally the image suits the title with the clothes rack adding to the colourful background with some soul inspirational word for the viewer.
Modern photo-shoot	Merit	No sign of a DSLR camera here. The exposure from behind has given enough light for the viewer to see what this photographer is doing with his hands, with sufficient light from perhaps a projection screen in front to partially expose his face. This image would have held more interest if the viewer could have seen either what he was photographing or more of the facial expressions on the photographer’s face. The square format suits the image.
Routeburn track	Highly Commended	A classic scene of the Routeburn track, with the track just in view in the right hand corner leading us through to the centre of the image and down the valley. The colouring and mid-tone exposure and control of the depth of field have all added to this excellent Kiwi scene. There is a large amount of clipping of the whites within the clouds, which has prevented this image from receiving a higher evaluation.
Silvereye with winter treat	Honours	This simple winter treat hanging from a branch dominates this scene but gives perspective to the size of the Silvereye consuming its treat. The bokeh background and use of negative space combined with the square format all add together to make this a well-composed image.
Sunset Just Captured	Acceptance	The diagonal of the brick wall, set against the blue sky is striking. The round orb of the setting sun placed on a strong focal point of the image is an effective counterpoint to the straight lines. The confusion of crisscrossing and out of focus winter branches distracts from what would otherwise be a convincing abstract.
The Bouncer	Highly Commended	Well done for accepting the challenge of shooting in low light. There is just enough overhead lighting to highlight the bouncer without over-compensating the highlights. The size, placement and expressive look across the hallway all help his dynamic positioning in the image. The blue and

		especially the white lighting have all been handled well to complete the story line.
Tongariro Winter Crossing	Acceptance	A challenging environment not only for the walkers but also for the photographer to get the white balance right for photographing snow. Composition and placement of the walkers is good although white-out or low cloud conditions may contribute to the lack of detail in most of the image.
Venice in the rain	Acceptance	The black and white treatment has worked well to neutralise any distracting colours and fits well within the grey rainy day. The passengers who are going to take a boat ride today whatever the weather, lack detail as they shelter as best they can. The under exposed moored boat in the bottom right hand corner is in complete contrast to the buildings in the top third of the image which is well exposed and balanced with the steeple slightly off centre with room to breath at the top of the image This together with the boat design gives us a good sense of place.
Vigil	Honours	<p>A creative image which has been formed from many parts I suspect. The Knight in armour stands with his head bowed and resting on his sword whilst his shield appears to be slung over his shoulder. He appears to be in mourning. Possibly he is the last survivor of the battle which ensued earlier. The author leaves the viewer to decide.</p> <p>I feel the image conveys emotions. These can be received in various ways; battle weary, loss of faith, death all around but still standing up for his faith etc. Is he courageous, is he fatigued, is he praying for divine intervention? We may never know the answers to these question. But the author has cleverly, [in my opinion] created a thought provoking image.</p> <p>I suggest darkening the lighter areas of the sky to deepen the strength of gloom and deter viewers from leaving the image in that direction. The post-production techniques used here have been well demonstrated and executed resulting in a surreal image.</p>
OVER ALL WINNER A GRADE	VIGIL	I've always appreciated an image that allows the viewer to interpret an image in different ways as this image has done successfully. The digital age has made this far more accessible to us photographers.
B Grade		

Barn	Merit	This barn has seen better days and I'm not sure if any stock would stay in the yard. The black & white treatment has worked well. The barn and yards are sharp with enough variation in the greys and blacks to give the viewer a feel for the texture of the aged wood. The image is let down by some over exposure in the clouds, but the cloud cover itself has helped in creating shadows on the hills in the background which keeps our focus on the barn.
Blue Berries in Winter	Acceptance	The scene looks cold with fog or low cloud and snow on the tree leaves. The image is held back by the blurred foreground treatment of the blueberries, which is in stark contrast to the trees, which show no sign of movement. I'm taken on a journey along the snow-white path straight to the pin sharp pink house nestled between the two trees, which holds my attention.
Feeding the family	Acceptance	A demanding time for any parent, it's clear what the story is here and is well titled. The swans eye and head is clear and sharp. Exposure has been well handled especially for the ducklings. There is some loss of tonality in the blacks in the feathers of the swan
Firewheels by the River	Merit	Great example of a fire wheel, it demands my attention and the trees by the river give the viewer a sense of location. The blue colour is distracting and the image would have scored higher if the photographer had de-saturated the blues in post-production and enabled the trees to look more natural.
London's calling	Acceptance	A thought provoking image of an iconic location. Good use of a slow shutter speed to smooth out the river which helps capture the reflections from the buildings across the river. The aperture has been adjusted to create a star burst effect. The image is let down by the light on the right hand side. It is over exposed and pulls the viewers attention away from the rest of the image. Using a remote shutter release would have helped elevate the camera movement on the right hand. It is especially noticeable on the right side of the image with the left side of the bridge sharp compared to the right side tower. The panoramic presentation suits this image.
Magnolia one	Acceptance	The white magnolia is exposed well on the dark background, there is some distraction in the top left corner which can be de-saturated or change the luminosity within the reds and yellow which is available in most post-production software.

Masdevallia Orchid	Highly Commended	Technically a well present image of a Masdevallia Orchid, the black background together with the heavy vignette has enhanced the pink colouring of the flowers. Although there is discolouring of some leaves the slight increase in saturation overall has created a complementary contrast between the green leaves and the flowers themselves.
Preparing Dinner	Honours	Excellent example of Macro photography, enhanced by the panoramic cropping of the image. The head and eyes are sharp, where all the action is with a soft grey bokeh in the background. Good control of depth of field and nicely exposed strands of the web, which allows the viewer to see where the spider lives, and dinner is kept.
Rain Break	Highly Commended	It's definitely raining in this environmental portrait. The sepia tone treatment and slower shutter speed together with the clasped hands and thoughtful expression work well to tell the story here. This image would have scored more had the clipping in the whites not been as dominating.
Scenic	Acceptance	Good well-balanced composition with the main interest of the passenger boat slightly off centre in the bottom third of the image. The image is well exposed with the Eiffel Tower showing where this image was taken but lacks a strong story line.
Simplicity	Honours	A strong and simplistic relationship between the green leaves and yellow orchid on a black background in a portrait format. I would hang this on my wall.
Swirling colour	Merit	We can tell these swirling colours are fun by the expression of enjoyment on the girl's face. There is some tension at the bottom and top between the swirling colours and the edge of the frame. I like the separation of the swirling colour, which is a point of difference with this type of image.
The Couple	Acceptance	Weddings are great fun and these types of images are challenging to say the least. The main focus is on the couple on the top of the hill. Post-production treatment has created an unrealistic skin tone with some chromatic aberration around the couple. The muted background keeps our focus on the couple. Recomposing the image to a square format on the bottom third of the image may have had the desired effect and made the post-production simpler.

Waxeyes drinking	Merit	Clearly these two waxeyes know a good thing when they see it. There is good separation between the waxeyes and they are well exposed. The eyes are sharp and clear. While all the elements of the story work well together the bowl and the drip feeder dominate the scene. The depth of field and bokeh has been well handled
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OVERAL WINNER
B GRADE

SIMPLICITY A well titled and composed image.