
















Whangarei Camera Club - Inter Club 2021





<p>Persephone (Winner)</p> 	<p>10 What an eloquent portrait of the Goddess of Spring Growth. The strength of the narrative with the flowers merging into and away from the face, reminiscent of historical armour, is clever and lends itself to the dynamic of soft beauty warring with God-like strength. Facing up into the light, cloaked in flowers, some of which look like feathers, reinforcing that ethnic soulful connection with the earth is evocative. The pencil drawing quality of the image is graceful and the delicacy suits the subject matter. This soft warm exquisite tonal range wraps everything in a well-seen and executed complex piece of communication. If anything could improve this, it would be slightly more definition in the chin.</p>
<p>Day at the Beach (Runner Up)</p> 	<p>10 This is a gentle image that could easily be overlooked, but spending time with it brings out its ingenious mood and impact. The double exposure element is elegant and elusive. This historical homage to the old Masters has the emotive flavour of Degas and Monet in the painterly feel and muted colours. The subject matter lends itself to this nostalgic reminiscing with the seagulls and their reflections, the cropped trees, and hazy undefined outlines of the people. The eye travels in a spiral following the surf and distant figures to the figure in the water, up and round to the seagulls, and back down the tracks in front of the foreground figure. It works exceptionally well, taking us back to a bygone era in such a subtle and charming way.</p>
<p>Remembering my Awa</p> 	<p>10 An elegant and graceful portrait well thought out, with a strong storyline enhanced by the title, The lighting on the girl's face is delicate, the tonal range exquisite. Her downward gaze and the softness of the handling emphasize the inwardness of memory, and the flowing lines of the river moving softly through her down the image towards the right corner bouncing from the frame back into her face. She is masterfully framed on both sides by the river foliage, and the use of the overlay is strategic. There is strength in the opaqueness of her face contrasting with the transparency of the river. The use of slow camera speed to give the river a mist-like gentle memory quality is clever.</p>
<p>In Search of Somewhere Else</p>	<p>9.5 This is a lyrical soothing ode to album covers, dusky soulful music, and longing for country and places somewhere else. The composition is strong with the</p>





	<p>graphic nature of the frets on the guitar mirroring the vertical lines from his clothing and the repetition of the pylons calling us onward. The pylons speeding past have connotations of driving for miles toward a destination. The mountains are highlighted in his heart area and the body of his guitar, the instrument he uses to express himself, and his longing. The eyes are strong and looking out into the distance, with just enough catchment in them to keep them alive and dynamic. The clouds, road, and guitar all pull us on this journey while the face is a quiet strong resting place. The colour palette and theatrical contrast also lend to an album cover. This is the song.</p>
<p><i>Moon over the Sea</i></p> 	<p>9.5 This is a soothing lyrical portrait of the moon, the branches of the tree cradling it gently while the ocean gives it a subtle mysterious context. Beautifully composed with the triangle of the softly focussed tree leading us to the crisp, delicate alluring moon, and the horizontal lines of the clouds creating interest in the sky. The handling of the light is delicate and ethereal, the glowing moon perfectly exposed for us with all of it's detail. The tonal range is superb and the shading around the top of the frame and left edges of the moon gives it a dynamic graphite pencil quality. This image would benefit from the same darkened shading along the bottom edge to contain it.</p>
<p><i>Depression</i></p> 	<p>9.25 Beautiful. Simple. Powerful. Emotive. There is a paradox between the subject wanting to hide in the darkness behind his hand and at the same time be in the light. There is switching over from right to left which suggests movement in an otherwise static image, an in and out between hand and face, good and evil, light and dark. The use of black and white emphasizes the graphic nature, the harshness, and despair. And yet there is light on the left side of the face and less of the hand covering it suggesting he wants to break free and face the light, but his eyes are still closed, he is still hiding. The composition is clever with the palm mirroring the nose and the finger joint creases mirroring his frown lines. The quietness of the pose suggests an inner turmoil. This is powerful storytelling, and the image quality needs attention detail. The black line from nose to wrist is distracting and the background lends nothing to the image. The vignetting is obvious.</p>
<p><i>Sailing Hi</i></p>	<p>9.25 Storytelling well done. It is a magical fantasy world of clouds and dreams and sailing ships. The clouds have a cotton wool softness and the simple colour palette is natural and clean. There is lovely bleeding</p>





		<p>of colour into the sails. The composition is deliberate with the ship leaping out of the bottom left up through the clouds with plenty of room to move into. The people in the bow are well seen in a little pocket of clarity, however, the white canvas just behind them is bright and distracting, and could easily be toned down.</p>
<p><i>Gate and Palings</i></p> 	<p>9</p>	<p>This is a deceptively simple image and needs time to sit with and appreciate the details and intricacies. The textures, leading lines, and symmetry all work exceedingly well together. The juxtaposition of the dark gate, mossy palings, and mysterious foggy interior all lead to superior storytelling. The gate is a strong part of the image and cropped in such a way that it creates a frame within the image, in the shape of triangles of stability and power. Gates are a solid barrier holding things in or out. A mystical magical mist is beyond the gate, creating dreams and intrigue. We are drawn into the mists and the freedom beyond the gate. This image is beautifully framed and seen, balancing out the dark and light elements, highlighting the natural textures of the moss, and holding our interest throughout, as we explore the depths. It could be improved by making sure the strong graphic lines of the gate were perpendicular/square to the frame.</p>
<p><i>Abandonment</i></p> 	<p>8.75</p>	<p>This is a well thought out cleverly designed portrait of a boat. The dual exposures of the boat give us the whole picture and also a personal glimpse into the life of this well-loved vessel. The clever use of the close-up of the boat to double as a landscape of trees and possibly a building on the horizon gives us a sense of utopia and destination. The use of leading lines and the foreground triangle, keep our interest moving around the image. The natural subtle colour palette is believable, earthy and rich, and gives a sense of history and 'old' times. To enhance this image, the artist could consider cropping off the bottom of the image, making it a panorama leaving just enough of the shadow in the water to frame the bottom edge. This would strengthen the 'thirds' and enhance the rustic quality of the rest of the image.</p>
<p><i>Elusive Spirits</i></p>	<p>8.75</p>	<p>There are some portraits that show what we look like and others who say who we are. This is one of the latter. There is a beautiful use of Black and White and clever composition with the raised arms framing the head. The dramatic lighting causes the face to jump out of the image. Storytelling at its best: This boy is a gentle soul, but when unleashed he has this incredible power within him that jumps out into the</p>

	<p>light. And behind him is his other self, gently applauding his warrior spirit, relying on it. The tonal range in this image is exquisite, the skin tones perfect, and the dramatic lighting appropriate to the story.</p>
<p>Dreams</p> 	<p>8.25 There is a beautiful intrigue here, holding us, asking questions. Who is the dream and who is the dreamer? The strength and solidness of the woman in the cloak, the rich colour palette, and the contrast between her and the softness of the girl, suggest that she is the dreamer. Is she dreaming of her lost youth, or is she mourning the lost youth of her people, their turning away from the traditions of their ancestors? Is she calling her mokopuna or has she lost her? Or is the girl dreaming of her ancestors and their strength and courage, are they more real than reality? The girl is still and calm and the photographer has captured the light beautifully. Compositionally, the scale difference between the two subjects with the larger girl positioned below the smaller woman is jarring and could be improved by making the girl smaller or placing her slightly above the older woman. Be a little more careful of burning and holding around the woman.</p>
<p>Storm Brewing</p> 	<p>8.25 Great use of the aerial of the ocean and the lighthouse to illustrate the narrative. You can feel the storm and the swirling rain and wind. The strong blue-green palette lends itself to storm, although the purple hues toward the top of the image are discordant. The 'waves' crashing against the base of the lighthouse is clever and the cloud wave is a perfect little imperfection that stops the image from becoming boring. The crisp quality and high tonal value of the surf at the bottom has the taste of an electrical storm and enhances the storyline. Clever images to bring together in a composite.</p>
<p>Illusion</p> 	<p>8 This is such a simple image, but it has a depth and tranquil quality to it that is rewarding. The colour palette is minimalist and vibrant and it works. The illusion of movement adds interest and the composition is calming and clean. The background has a slight colour cast on the left which could be corrected.</p>
<p>Apple of my Eye</p>	<p>7.75 This is a lovely piece of storytelling, and quite literal, I thought, but then was drawn to question whether the photographer (reflected in the eye) or the owner of the eye is the apple (the one you love the most)? The eye</p>

	<p>is old and wrinkled, the apple crisp and young, filled with stars and magic. The colour palette is earthy, delicious, and autumnal which works well with the still-life quality of the subject matter. There are some white 'dust spots' on the face which could have been tidied up.</p>
<p>Longing</p> 	<p>7.5 Original storytelling and a juxtaposition from the norm of captive horse wanting to be free. Here we have a seemingly free horse longing to be with his human, longing to be on an adventure, longing to be loved and connected. The two images work well together to tell their story. The visual emptiness within the lineal outline of the horse left longing, with the movement and connection and adventure happening outside him is a strong narrative. The negative space is used well. The image could be improved by lightening it to make the highlights pop and to give less of the gloomy grey monotone which detracts.</p>
<p>Horse Boy</p> 	<p>7.5 This reflects a harmonious connection between the boy and his horse. The horse on the beach is captured very well with a depth of field and perfect focus showing the delightful expression and attention that he has. The horse fading into the background and his other self is clever. The second image is not as well-thought-out. The composition is awkward with the heads so close together. If the close-up boy on the horse was moved towards the right to balance the image, he could also form part of the landscape horizon for added interest.</p>
<p>Dreaming of the Stars</p> 	<p>7.5 This has a gentle peaceful dreaming softness, and the use of the Rembrandt-like single light source from above adds to the believability of the starlight. The composition is well composed with the 'milky way' framing her jawline, and the reflection in the water defining her clothing and drawing the eye back up to the girl's face. Natural triangles formed by the clouds and horizon lead us back into the face as well.</p>
<p>Thoughts</p> 	<p>7 This is a lovely gentle scene, and clever use of thirds, although the trunks being darkened halfway down could be handled better. The title 'Thoughts' is confusing because it is the same girl, same expression, same dress, which would make sense if she is mourning a twin. If the narrative is talking about the thoughts that one has and the spirit is a manifestation of another self, it would be stronger if the girls had differing or opposing expressions. It is an</p>

		effective use of the natural luminous lighting causing the girl to glow and stand out in the image.
<p>Winter Leaves</p> 	7	There are beautiful elements in the fractured light and colours in the negative space, the colour palette is harmonious and complementary, and the composition is strong. The darker branches within the leaf could be held back to enhance the delicacy of the image. The lines of the branches are haphazard and distracting. Searching for more delicate leaves and fewer branches might work well here. The placement of the shadow of the leaf creating the negative space is dynamic.
<p>Face of Havana</p> 	6.75	The standout element here is the storytelling - a man and his city, both enhancing each other's life and history. The blending of the buildings into his beard and coat is complex, and the sepia colour blending into the strong black and white graphic lines is harmonious. There are beautiful details, but overall the image is let down by the heavy burning of the background and the resulting halo around the face, and the bright spot at the back of his neck.
<p>John's Happy Place</p> 	6.5	This is a calm delightful portrait of a man and his dream. He has a lovely inner joy that radiates. He has his overalls and gloves that suggest he works on the trains in the background, and he is resting and reminiscing for a moment. The light on his face is handled gently and the placement of his face in the highlights between the carriage and water tower is smart. The track creeping into his left shoulder is a beautiful detail, and the crossing of the track on his right shoulder is strong and anchors his body in place. Unfortunately, there is a sameness in the rest of the image which loses the eye. If there were more contrast in the background giving it some interest, and the carriage/tower was given similar weight to the face it would enliven and enhance the experience for the viewer.
<p>Fish on the Rocks</p> 	6.5	This is a fun piece with a play on fossilized fish, the rocks resembling a drop in the ocean, and the concentric ripples spreading out from the center. The pastel colour palette showing in the tails reflects this playfulness. Descriptive storytelling. This could be improved by photographing the stones in shadow, early morning or late evening. If there were less contrast the lines would not be so distracting and more of the delightful details in the fish would show through.

<p>Metropolitan River</p> 	<p>6.5 Awesome concept and ambiguous enough to create questions. Is the river taking back the environment, or is nature slowly receding for this nondescript wishy-washy future of feeling enclosed and restricted? The images lend themselves to the storytelling. The building has a low ceiling, and no liveliness or heart. Nature is cleverly creeping in along the leading lines, and the bank is a full stop, holding the image together and turning us back in for another look. The muddy subdued colours and the evenness of the handling, while perhaps strengthening the narrative, detracts from the image. Where should we focus? Contrast may help.</p>
<p>The Bones Beneath</p> 	<p>6.25 This is an interesting use of double exposure to illustrate the bones in the face and just falls short in the execution. The face is strong and the bones need to be stronger in order to compete. It would work better if the lighting on the face were more even so the delicate bones were more evident. Although the detail in the beard is intricate and enjoyable, the nose and eyes are dark and muddy. This may have been deliberate to suggest the holes in the skull but could be handled with delicacy. The vignetting is obvious.</p>
<p>Prayer for Victory</p> 	<p>6 A lovely symbolic piece, and well seen with the double exposure lending itself to the words jumping almost three-dimensionally out of the page. The contrast of the words "A Prayer for Victory", plays with the literal contrast of the words 'prayer' and 'victory'. The image is let down by the overall greyness, and the fragmented page. If the paper was bought back to a creamy white and the page framed as a whole, as though the cross were resting on the bible, this would be a stronger image. More weight given to the cross, better lighting, and work on strengthening the outline, without losing the power of the words, would improve this promising image.</p>
<p>Jack and the Giant Sheep</p> 	<p>5.5 Great sense of humour. A wonderful subject but the opportunity is missed in the details. The photographer is shooting out of the image, not at the sheep, which begs the question "what is outside the frame, when there seems to be a giant close by that he is oblivious to?" The composition would work better if the image were cropped at the edge of the green grass and the image shot from a lower angle to have the photographer look as if he were standing on a level with the horizon edge, shooting the whole sheep. The green of the grass is distracting.</p>
<p>Old Ford Car</p>	<p>5.5 Inside Outside of this Loved Old Car is a compelling storyline, and the handling of the tonal range is</p>

	<p>expertly done and quietly pleasing, but the impact has been muted by the busy-ness of the elements chosen and the tight cropping. There is so much confusion with lines cutting through each other in a chaotic disharmonious way. It is not clear where to look and there is nowhere to rest the eye. Experiment with different images, keeping close attention on leading lines, and providing contrasting areas of calm to rest in.</p>
<p><i>Timeless Tekapo</i></p> 	<p>5.25 The concept is challenging and more experimentation with the subjects could lead to a better outcome. The use of the windows to accent the dog's elbow and hip is clever. The church is grey with a limited tonal range which lessens its interest and the dog is too dark by comparison. It is a literal interpretation, but lifeless. Using more contrast may create more appeal, and if the statue were cutting through the church outline into the sky the resulting shapes may be more engaging.</p>
<p><i>Ethereal</i></p> 	<p>5 This is a great concept and worth exploring further, but the opportunity was missed with heavy handling and awkward composition. Keep looking up and capturing the trees and branches and leaves and trying different compositions. A lighter exposure would give more interest and delicate nature to the blacks. Look for a full tonal range and some highlights. The unfocussed blobs left of center that could be birds are distracting. Definitely worth pursuing this way of seeing.</p>
<p><i>Mother and Son</i></p> 	<p>5 There is a beautiful connection between the mother and son here, and an energy that is delightful, but the harsh lighting of full daylight does not lend to the emotion, and the flat handling of the image detracts. This is definitely worth exploring. If the photos are taken earlier or later in the day to make use of a softer and nurturing light, the textures in the ocean would not be as grating, and the expression in the faces more easily captured. In processing, there is the option to choose the amount of transparency, and having parts of the mother and son more and less opaque, particularly faces, would help in making a stronger image. Remember to burn in the sand in the bottom edge to hold the image together.</p>