

focus

the newsletter of the matamata camera club

www.matamatacameraclub.org

Critiques March 2012.

From the Judge

Good evening Matamata Camera Club.

Thank you for asking me to judge your March 2012 competition – I am honoured to do so.

Before I start, I will explain that it is always important to remember that there is a subjective element to judging and my comments represent my view. In saying that, I hope that you find the critique helpful. In evaluating your images I initially look for a story - what does the image communicate to me. I look at composition and at technical competence.

I hope that my comments have been helpful. I do emphasise that it is my opinion and that there is a very significant subjective component. I am sorry that I am unable to come to your club meeting in person this time – but I do hope to visit in July and will be in touch nearer the time.

Shona Jaray.

Theme Digital – Typography



C-Grade: Balancing Act

Nicely exposed capture of very old spring scales. You have captured the texture of the well-worn metal very well. It is worthwhile with old items like this working the image well by taking exposures from a number of angles and experimenting with different crops and framing. I am not sure that this wouldn't benefit from a much tighter crop. The image appears to have a slightly green cast. Experiment with white balance both in camera and in post processing.

Accepted



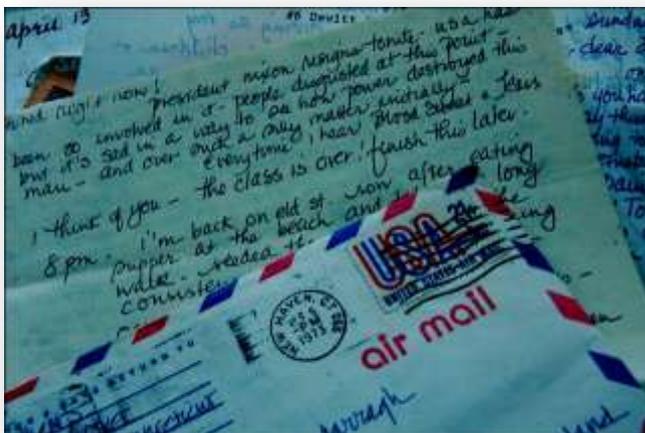
C-Grade: Delicious

Nice use of depth of field and well exposed. I like the fact that the cup is on a slight angle. The “Coffee Supreme” logo is not sharp – it looks to me as though it has suffered a bit from camera shake. I also think that it has been cropped too tightly in terms of composition – the ellipse of the rim is broken which I find a little inharmonious. However it is a great concept – and worth working on. Merit



C-Grade: Duck

Well seen quirky “OSH” type notice. The text is in nice sharp focus and the sign is well exposed. The scene itself has a very wide dynamic range – i.e. the archway with the sign is in relatively low light and the surfaces are somewhat dark, whilst through the archway the scene is brightly lit and white. Our eyes cope with this adequately but cameras do not. The large very bright area is for me a bit distracting as my eye goes straight from the sign, through to the large area of white which dominates and has lost some of its detail. There are a couple of ways you could try to deal with it. HDR is one way but you could also try visiting at a different time of day when there was not direct light on the area through the arch. Good concept and a good attempt at a difficult lighting situation Accepted



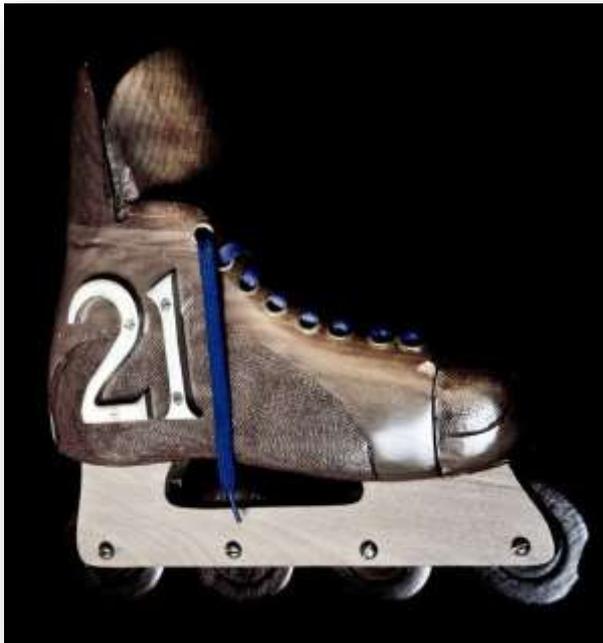
C-Grade: Letters From America

Fascinating piece of history. Excellent visualisation with a very definite story. Placement of items within the frame has been done so that there is some mystery. You could consider adding a very light/gentle vignette. Well done Honours



B-Grade: Two Brothers Join

Nicely rendered in black and white. Good composition with interesting foreground to create some tension with the signage. A subtle, creative vignette could be considered to keep the eyes on the image. I like the triangles created top right and bottom left – well done. Highly Commended.



B-Grade: 21st Key

Nicely lit providing some mystery to the shapes, great composition and cropping – the squareish format really suits it. A very pleasing variety of textures and shapes keep my eye moving and then it returns to the “21”. Well done Honours.



B-Grade: Arawa Street Bro

Good view point to get the juxtaposition of words. Good use of depth of field to highlight your subject.

The car entering from the left provides a good tension which moves the eye back and forth. If it were my image I might consider cropping from the right to take out almost all the pole, and down from the top to rest just on top of the blue area.

Accepted.



B-Grade: Breaking The Rules

You have managed a nice balance in the placement of the words and the car. You have achieved good exposure for the top half of the image. There is however a large band of very blocked up shadow across the bottom of the image. Experiment with different framing and different viewpoints to minimise this. The image is not quite straight and exhibits a small degree of perspective distortion which is relatively easily dealt with in post processing.

Accepted



B-Grade: Café Astoria

Nicely framed with a good counter balance between the sign and the people sitting. It would have been nice if you had managed to capture a bit more of a "scene" in terms of the people to give the image a real point of interest.

Astoria is a very happening place. Perhaps engage with a group of people sitting. The dark band across the top is a wee bit oppressive but you have achieved good exposure.

Accepted



B-Grade: Colourful Curves

Well exposed painted wooden letters making a fun design. The lighting is somewhat flat. Experimentation with side lighting might produce some interesting shadows. A bit of creative vignetting might help to keep the eye from wandering out of the image. Accepted.



B-Grade: Deadly 5

Well seen and a fun interpretation. Good exposure with detail being kept in the darker areas. Nicely composed and although the number plate is more or less bang in the middle – this works, and I don't think it would work if it were anywhere else. My only real criticism is that once my eye comes to rest on the white butterfly – it stops and there is nothing to keep it moving around. Highly Commended



B-Grade: For The Record

Good composition with overlapping LP covers. Well focussed. Although there is no lost detail I feel that the image is a little over exposed giving a lack of contrast, not helped by the fact that the lighting is flat. Think about experimenting with lighting from different angles. Accepted.



B-Grade: Helps The Medicine Go Down

In terms of composition I like the way you have one of the raw sugars sticking out well beyond the others. However I would have liked to have seen the entire top rim of the container. You are on the right track – just experiment a bit with positioning of your main subject and with the angle.
Accepted.



B-Grade: Mountain

Good composition and exposure. My eyes tend to settle on the can then move off from time to time to see if there is something else to see amongst the greenery. Unfortunately there isn't.
Accepted.



B-Grade: My Library

Nice composition with books at different angles and side lit. I would be tempted to try cropping slightly from the right to take out the front edge of the book case. Some mystery has been created by having some of the titles wholly or partially obscured. Merit.



B-Grade: Number 262

Dramatic and eye catching colour scheme for a little plane. Unfortunately this image is over exposed with large areas of cloud having no detail and the top of the white numbers also lacking detail. Given that it is often very difficult to balance exposure on bright sunny days – I wonder what you have cropped out – whether it might have been better to crop out most of the sky. In situations like this bracketing exposure can be useful. Accepted.



B-Grade: Oars

Nice use of lines and shapes. You have managed to retain excellent detail on the dark items, unfortunately at the expense of the highlights – the background area is very overexposed as a result of exposing the image into a very bright light. Try picking a different time of day if you are unable to pick a different location/backdrop. Accepted.



B-Grade: Parking Yes!

I really like the lighting here which give a lovely softness to the image. You have managed to make a very ordinary sign look a little bit beautiful. It is well exposed and composed with central positioning of the main subject being appropriate Honours.



B-Grade: Second Hand

The various layers of colour and the texture provided by the state of disrepair provide interest and help to keep the eye moving. This image would be significantly helped by being straight! I would also consider adding a creative vignette to help focus the eye on the subject Accepted.



B-Grade: Sign On A Van

The colourful nature of this image certainly makes an impact. Exposure and focus is good. I do wonder what you have cropped out and feel that the image somehow lacks context. It is only the colourful lettering – which is after all someone else's art. It's a great start, but I feel that it would be helped if it were not in such splendid isolation. Accepted.



B-Grade: Time To Give Up

The front vehicle is tack sharp and there is good use of depth of field. Nicely exposed. In terms of the framing, I feel that the main subject is too tightly cropped and I would like to have seen most if not all of the rest of the lead vehicle. I don't feel that it would matter if in doing this you had to crop a bit of the following vehicle as this is only providing context.

Accepted.



B-Grade: Tow Away

Good viewpoint to make use of converging lines, well exposed with sharp focus. I would consider adding a slightly darker creative vignette to focus the eye on the main subject and stop the eye trailing off out of the image. If you decide this would enhance your image do take care to make it subtle.

Merit.



B-Grade: Watch Out For the Glass

Nice textures on the log. Good composition with placement of the sign and good exposure. To me the image looks a little pixelated. I am not sure whether it is that you have cropped in with insufficient pixels or if you had done a lot of post processing in the jpeg format.

Accepted.



B-Grade: Wendies

Complementary colours are always an attraction but this image is let down by quite significant under exposure making the colours dull and reducing contrast. You need to watch when you use filters or a lens hood that you are not getting vignetting in the corners – vignetting which is not of the creative kind! This image could easily be worked on in post processing to give a more pleasing result
Accepted.



B-Grade: White On Black

Very good control over exposure capturing all the detail in both the black and the white. The placement of the lettering at the bottom of the frame gives it a somewhat weighted down appearance. I would consider having a bit more space underneath, perhaps placing the lettering on the “third” line. Whilst the blue sky at the top gives some context to the image, I do find it a little distracting
Accepted.



A-Grade: Caution

The well lit yellow sign is certainly very eye catching. I do keep peering into the distance to see what is further ahead but find I can't see an awful lot. I feel if the area behind the sign were marginally lighter it would pull my eye along the tracks and then back to the sign which is nicely dominant. Good composition Merit.



A-Grade: Cola

Good exposure and use of shallow depth of field to show really interesting textures. Your choice of monochrome rather than colour is a good one. Very creatively made image. Honours.



A-Grade: Ford

Very nicely presented and you have captured some marvellous textures and colours. The light conditions look fairly harsh and I would like to have seen a little more creativity at this level. Merit.



A-Grade: Mister Donut

A very wide dynamic range in this scene and you have captured it well. I like the inclusion of the people dining on the first floor and the fact that their faces are looking out. I would consider cropping it to a square format thus removing the tree from the left and the blue and white signs from the right. I would also straighten "Mister Donut" Accepted.



A-Grade: Red Barn Go Right

You have captured some really lovely textures here and the image is nice and sharp throughout. The square format looks good. I do find the very dark band across the top and part way down the left a little bit oppressive and I wonder if you gave this area a wee bit more light it might bring a lot more life to the image. Very graphic and I do generally like the treatment. Highly Commended.



A-Grade: Rural Air

Well seen with good composition. No doubt would fail current aviation safety standards! I do like the colour treatment – which may of course not be due to the photographer – but the old building has a colour scheme entirely in tune with the landscape. I wonder if it is worth cropping off some of the sky – to just above the top of the pole. I also think it is slightly under exposed - around a third of a stop would make it really come alive.

Highly Commended.



A-Grade: Tea

A shop window with an interesting quote – I know it well and often stop to look! I like the way the image shows the inside of the window and the reflections of nearby buildings. The 2 intrusions on the right bother me a little – light coloured incomplete teapots. I wonder if it would have been better to widen your image to get these items fully in the frame – or to burn them in in post processing. The image is a good observation of what the photographer has seen – but nothing more.

Accepted.

Open Digital

Both the open Digital and the open Prints were critiqued by Geoff Beals who supplied an audio commentary for us.



C-Grade: Burgundy Tipped

Merit



C-Grade: Dubai Blues

Highly Commended



C-Grade: P This Way
Merit



C-Grade: To_Infinity_&_Beyond
Honours



B-Grade: Blue Spring
Merit



B-Grade: Can I Pass Him
Accepted



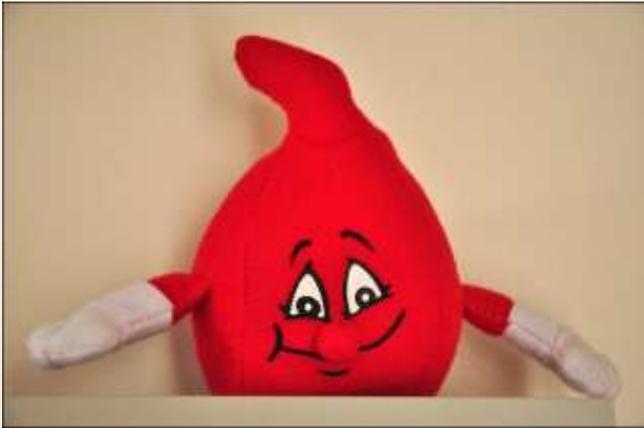
B-Grade: Fishing Oar Not
Honours



B-Grade: Flaps Down
Highly Commended



B-Grade: Grapehouse
Merit



B-Grade: Humpty Dumpty
Accepted



B-Grade: Me Me Me!
Accepted



B-Grade: Push Off
Merit



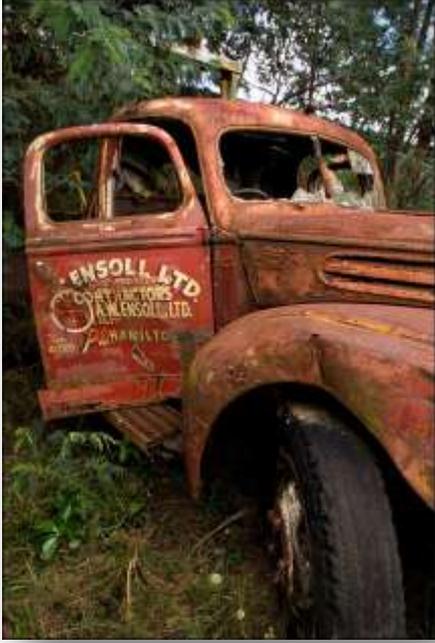
B-Grade: Rowers
Merit



B-Grade: Toadstools
Highly Commended



**A-Grade: Before The Floodgates
Open**
Merit



A-Grade: Better Days
Accepted

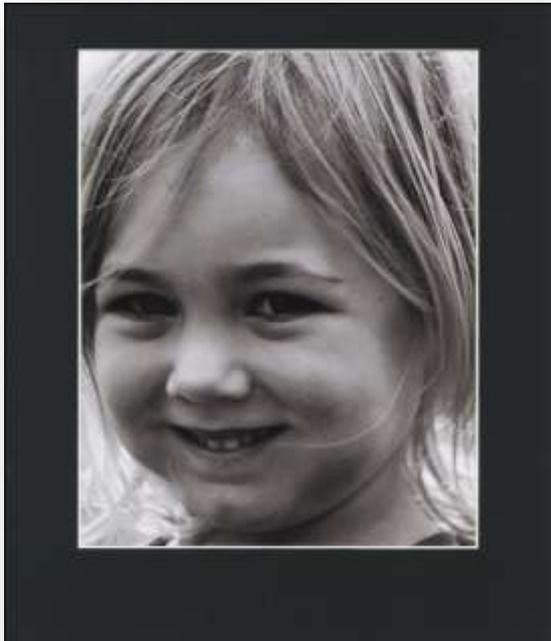


A-Grade: Ratana
Honours

Open Prints



C-Grade: Ghost Chips
Honours.



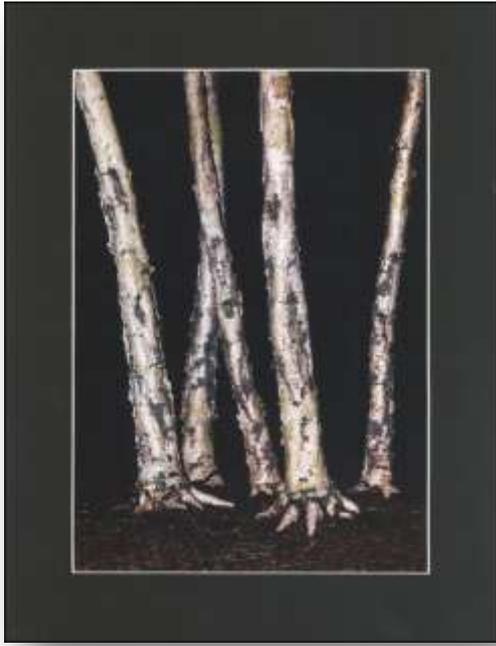
B-Grade: Cute 5 Year old
Merit.



B-Grade: Please
Highly Commended.



B-Grade: Something's Missing
Merit.



A-Grade: Chicken Leg Tree Trunks
Merit.



A-Grade: Untitled
Highly Commended.

Quote: “An idea is a point of departure and no more. As soon as you elaborate it, it becomes transformed by thought.”
– *Pablo Picasso*