

Focal Plane July 2012



A few words from the APS President

Welcome all to our August edition off Focal Plane; a big thank you to Karen for keeping us on track.

Personally I struggle to believe it's already almost August, where is the year going?

Nothing new the weather, nasty weather creates so many photo opportunities. I have enjoyed getting out on the foggy mornings as I love seeing my environment in different conditions. However I kicked myself for not taking the opportunity to photograph two weather phenomena recently, those potential images are now relegated to the dodgy memory. One was the heavy rain that left many Auckland roads flooded. I was out and about in it; all I had to do was stop. The other was the heavy fog one evening; the atmosphere created by street lights and the fog was just amazing. My point is, it is one thing to have a camera with you, it's another to do something with it.

Feedback for our 'Apple' subject has been great. The task was to photograph an **Apple**, just an apple, only an apple, in some creative way. This task wasn't meant to be easy, it was meant to make you think. I hope we all learnt something from the exercise; I know I sure did, namely 'start earlier would help.' I particularly liked the following image by Trevor Lowe...



'Rain' is on the subject list for October. Here is a link that has some wonderful ideas:

<http://www.boostinspiration.com/photography/35-really-beautiful-examples-of-rain-photography/>

Help!!! Camera for Kelly? I have a friend with a young family but no means to purchase a camera to capture her daughter as she grows. Does anyone have a disused digital camera with the necessary bits that they are happy to see put to good use? Please let me know via email - aps_sandrina@xtra.co.nz

Kind regards

Sandrina

Focal Plane 2012: Question of the Quarter

The April issue of Focal Plane introduced a new feature the "**Question of the Quarter**". This was positioned as an issue to possibly raise debate and interest , seeking constructive feedback and views. In April, the Question was about the 'Pass' option available to judges. A collection of comments received from members is précised [and attributed] below:

Begrudging Acceptance or Constructive Pass?

"Considering the vagaries of judging, there is no guarantee an image passed by a judge, improved and resubmitted in a later competition, will fare any better...The entrant should be given the option of having their image passed or accepted.

I think constructive passes should apply only in exceptional cases where a novice entrant makes a

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basic mistake which spoils an otherwise honours image. In the case of more experienced entrants, they should know better and so should not have the luxury of a second bite of the cherry. For me, an acceptance is little better than a pass.....judging is a very subjective business. You win some and you lose some. Take whatever constructive criticism you can out of the process and move on.” Bryan Lay Yee

“As far as taking a pass over an acceptance in competition I am all for it. I believe that a critique that enables a person to better their skills and the way they look at their own photographs is invaluable. Most people would put an acceptance in the cupboard and forget about it rather than revisit the image armed with a perspective they hadn't had prior to competition. I would be encouraged to spend the time and take the judge's opinions and apply them to the image in the hope of discovering more within myself.” Adam Baines

“I understood a 'pass' score was another way of saying the image was not acceptable because of its imagery, technique or interpretation of the set subject. This grade can be soul destroying if one continues to get them regularly but that's the fact of life!..... consultation with one of the more able and willing senior members of the club would be beneficial.” Andrew Chong

“As the Judging Coordinator (for APS) I usually suggest to a judge that they don't pass work in the Novice grade; the Novice grade should be encouraged. However I say to feel free to pass any work in the higher grades that they feel is not up to scratch or can be resubmitted with improvements.

Now as a judge my feeling is that we should 'pass' more work but sometimes we get intimidated by the audience....the scowls from members or the negative expressions tend to be off putting. Hence we (or I) tend on the side of generosity.” Lynn Clayton

“An image can 'work' on many layers...it's new, it's asking questions, it's pulling the viewer in and leaving a memory that sits with us for a while. A judge - in a very short preview - endeavours to feel what that photographer saw, felt, explored at the time of capture. Not an easy task... As photographers we can become emotionally attached to an image because it

rouses something in our present or our past, something in our being that is pertinent only to us and may not resonate with other viewers to the same degree. We need to detach...

The judge has to make a fairly quick call - beyond elementary basics of good exposure, composition, presentation etc and give a grade and comments that will assist the photographer to further enhance and strengthen their work. At APS we are fortunate to have a diverse pool of experienced, successful, helpful, entertaining judges to call upon ... and we learn from each of them. Take what you can from each one, dismiss what you need to and always move forward.” Nicki Maude

This Quarter, the Question that I hope may generate some response is:

What has happened to our Print entries?

Anyone who has attended recent APS Competition nights will have noticed the huge drop off in print entry numbers. The reduction of total submittable images from 3 per person to 2 appears to have impacted negatively on print entries – or is this coincidental?

Digital entries are easier to organise – no print costs, no matting, not as much time pressure and [in my opinion], not as much effort. Yet, as Sandrina commented at the last meeting – once viewed, once judged, there is no opportunity for members to review those digital entries. Unless awarded Honours and securing inclusion in the website Gallery, they are gone.

Does that matter?

What do you think?

Potential Suppliers: Many members do not have the technology to create their own prints at home. There are numerous providers who accept digitally uploaded images to print including

Frogprints Ltd <http://frogprints.co.nz/>

PCL <http://www.pcl.co.nz/>

Snapfish [aka Digitalmax]
<http://www.snapfish.co.nz/snapfishnz/welcome>

The Digital Darkroom Ltd
<http://www.thedigitaldarkroom.co.nz/>

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I am sure there are others that I am not aware of. Personally I use Frogprints [who courier to my front door] and have always found their service to be great. On the rare occasion I have had an issue with a print, their responsiveness and willingness to correct that issue have been commendable. Note too that Frogprints was a Sponsor for the Auckland Regional Convention in 2010.

Yes, mat boards can be an issue. Again, if you do not want to cut your own [and there is undeniably a skill involved in doing that] members can recommend plenty of providers and if you keep your prints to standard sizes, reusing the boards is simple. Two were Convention Sponsors:

Tayle's Framing Supplies Ltd

<http://www.tayles.co.nz/>

Epsom Picture Framing

http://yellow.co.nz/y/Picture+Framing/Epsom+Picture+Framing/101541288_1287.html

No doubt other members will have favourite suppliers. Let me know so that I can include other links in the next Focal Plane.

Remember, if you have an idea, issue, point of interest that you would like to be considered for wider consideration in this 'Question of the Quarter' forum, please email the Editor.

Competition Results

North Shore Salon 2012

Congratulations to all APS members who received acknowledgement for their images at the recent North Shore Salon Competition [and apologies to anyone whose name may have been missed off this list]. A full listing of the results can be viewed here: <http://northshoresalon.co.nz/?q=Results>

Particular mention goes to **Karin Charteris** who was awarded a Gold medal in the print category 'Family of Man' for her image 'Winners and Losers'.



And to **Lynn Clayton** who was awarded a Bronze medal in the Digital Open Colour category for her image 'Forest in Snowstorm'.



In addition, Acceptances were awarded to:

Moira Blincoe

Karin Charteris

Lynn Clayton

Brian Cudby

Alison Farrar

Alan Fleischmann

Idil Gaziulusoy

Liz Hardley

Sandrina Huish

Nicki Maud

Heather Saint

Laurie Williams

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North Harbour Rotary Photo Competition

Once again, APS members have achieved commendable results in the annual North Harbour Rotary Photo Competition. Congratulations to **Liz Hardley** who won the Open category and was also named overall winner for her image 'Monkey Business.'



Neville Baily presented Liz with the imposing NHR Cup at the APS session held on 19 July.



Ex APS member **Dave Barker** won the Family category with his image 'Family Time'.



Honours Certificates were awarded to **Nicki Maud**, **Sandrina Huish**, **Liz Hardley** and **Dave Barker**.

Auckland Photo Day

Three APS members had their images included in the Top 30 in the recent Auckland Photo Day competition [held annually in conjunction with the Auckland Festival of Photography].

The images were 'Scottish Dancers' by **Bryan Lay Yee**



'Hard Run' by **Liz Hardley**



And 'A Chef Never Sleeps' by **Moira Blincoe**



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Tauranga National AV Salon

Congratulations to **Karen Lawton** who was awarded first place medals in the Theme and Novice Sections of the recent Tauranga National AV Salon. A full listing of the results can be accessed from this page: <http://taurangaphoto.org.nz/tga-av-salon.html>

Royal Photographic Society's International Print Exhibition

Liz Hardley recently had a print Acceptance awarded in the Royal Photographic Society's 155th International Print Exhibition.



'Garth' by Liz Hardley

Given that this year 2,800 prints were submitted from 747 photographers worldwide with only 123 prints awarded Acceptance, this is a significant achievement. This year was the 155th International Print Exhibition.

The Royal Photographic Society's International Print Exhibition is the longest standing exhibition of its kind in the world, showcasing a wide range of genres and styles of photography. Each year The Society invites submissions from professional, student and amateur photographers worldwide, both members and non-members. The Exhibition is selected by 5 well qualified photographers from different backgrounds and Gold, Silver and Bronze medals are awarded.

An Acceptance in The International Print Exhibition has always been coveted by professionals and amateurs alike and has helped many aspiring photographers to

launch their careers and achieve recognition. The Exhibition of selected prints tours the UK and occasionally overseas. In recent years it has been shown in China and Ukraine.

For further information check out: <http://www.rps.org/>

2012 FIAP Monochrome Biennial Competition

Three APS members have had work included in the PSNZ Portfolio entry to the 2012 FIAP Monochrome biennial competition. Congratulations to **Adam Baines**, **Brian Cudby** and **Sandrina Huish**. The PSNZ entry was placed 16th of the 39 countries that entered and this was a creditable result (our entry came in ahead of France and Australia came 38th). The winning portfolio was from Ireland, followed by England, Spain and Andorra. Each of the 39 portfolios will be glass mounted and displayed at the FIAP Biennial Congress in Singapore in August.

Upcoming Competitions

Canon Online Competitions

Round 4 - closing date 31st August 2012.

JAX Winebar 'Metropolitan Jungle'

Closing date 12th August 2012

Check out the details here:

<http://www.jaxwinebar.co.nz/#menu-item-123>

Club News

New Members

Welcome to the following new members of Auckland Photographic Society [apologies to anyone whose name I have missed]:

Joseph Anton, Maria Anton, Dharmidhu Eratne, Tony Gorham, Roger Hurley, Bob Lockwood, Crystal Luo,

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Michael Reardon, Murray Sarelius, Aaron Schiff, Satishwar Sumeet, Joan Vujcich, Michael Yang and Vincent Young.

Upcoming Competition Subjects

August: Black and White [Trophy]

September: AudioVisual

October: Rain

Upcoming Workshops

August: Timelapse Photography with Steve Thomson of Brandspank

September: to be advised

October: Human Rights Photography with Nicki Denholm

November: Wildlife Photography with Mike Danesh Meyer

Club Competition Results

Monthly competition results are now available on the APS website. They can be found in a new column under Competition Gallery.

This feature will help people who cannot be present on the evening of judging or who live overseas.

PSNZ News

Are numbers your thing?

PSNZ Council is looking for a new Treasurer, effective May 2013. The Treasurer is appointed by the Council, annually following the AGM.

Responsibilities include financial management of PSNZ which includes the recording of the income and expenditure, monthly financial reporting against budget to Council, preparation of Annual Financial Reports for the members of PSNZ, organisation of the annual audit, day to day management of cash flows and investment of surplus funds. PSNZ uses MYOB as its accounting system.

The role requires liaison with other Council members and organising committees of PSNZ events, in particular the Treasurers of the various PSNZ conventions. The Treasurer is a member of the

Finance Sub-committee. The Treasurer is paid an honorarium half yearly.

A full job description and scope of the role is available on request. Applications and resumes should be directed to PSNZ President, Shona Jaray at email shona@shonajaray.com

New sizing for digitally projected images

PSNZ Council have recently approved a proposal to formalise new sizes for digitally projected images, effective immediately. This relates to all dpis entered in all PSNZ Competitions and Salons, i.e. NATEX, Regional competitions and Salons, Inter-club competitions, Honours Board submissions and Canon Online [the latter ONLY from 1 January 2013 onwards].

The new size limits for dpis are a maximum of 1920 pixels on the horizontal side and a maximum of 1080 pixels on the vertical side.

What Clubs do in their own environment for monthly meetings is up to them and the smaller sizing can still continue.

New Zealand Camera 2013

PSNZ is calling for submissions for the 2013 edition on NZ Camera. Details of how to enter your images and

all other relevant information will be available on the PSNZ website very soon. Only 2012 financial members of PSNZ are eligible to enter. Submissions will open 13 August and close 15 September 2012.

Now is the time to search your photographic library and be ready to submit.

Member Watch

In addition to congratulating members on their competition results, Focal Plane is an ideal vehicle for members to share their photographic successes and experiences in the world beyond the Club. Share these successes, inspire others and celebrate your hard work and achievements by sending your info to the Editor for inclusion in the next Focal Plane. All info c/- karen@istari.co.nz

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The following article has been supplied by **Alistair Young** and provides a humorous take on the 'joy' of travel photography. Thanks for sharing this Alistair. I would encourage other APS members to treat Focal Plane as a vehicle for sharing photographic experiences.

How not to take photos on holiday

...or one man's travel photography mistakes

I recently had a lovely six week trip to Britain with my family and thought I would share a few thoughts with you about what not to do when you travel. You should probably bear in mind as you read this that I am a travel novice as well as a photographic one, and I do tend to have a crack and see how things turn out. Sometimes things work out fine, and well...

I have a Canon EOS550d, with two kit lenses, 18-55mm and 55-250mm. As the image sensor is an APS-C sensor, this works out as around 28mm to 400mm which on the face of it would seem like a pretty good range. Mistake number one.

Britain is old. It has a history going back a long way, and this means I was taking lots of photos of Norman churches, medieval castles, and Roman walls. There are also about 62 million people in Britain. I think I knew that, but I didn't really think about what that means. What it means is that whenever I tried to get myself into the right place for that great shot, there were 11 other people doing the same thing, or a whole bus full of tourists in the way. A wide angle lens is a really good idea.

I had to take my family with me, as they probably wouldn't talk to me again if I set off for six weeks to the other side of the world and didn't take them. This was mistake number two.

My family is ok, they tend to forgive my foibles and indulged me when I wanted to spend whole days looking around the many great museums in London, but they tended to draw the line when I wanted to sit and wait for the light to improve, or the crowds to

move on, or whatever. Taking more time to get that shot just right is all very well, but other people have their limits I suppose. Still, I have come home with a couple of thousand photos, many of which I have looked at and thought "Maybe I should have taken that from over there", or "Why didn't I take a shot of that?" or of course many over or under exposed photos which brings me to my next point.

Shooting in RAW is a must. Many of the shots I took were on very overcast days, or into the sun, or just plain poorly thought out. At least I was shooting in RAW, and have some chance of recovering details otherwise lost. The setting I did forget to change in my camera was probably one most people don't even think of, the time settings. My stupid camera didn't even realise it was on the other side of the world, and continued to use the NZ time zone, which means everything shot after lunchtime in the UK is taken on the next day. Stupid camera. Change the time zone.

I also had a great chat with a young lady from Masterton when we visited the Minack Theatre in Cornwall, (which is amazing and I missed that opportunity too). She owns the same camera I do, but had bought a super zoom type lens, something like 15-105mm, which meant she only needed the one lens. She also didn't bother carrying a tripod around and had taken some great shots.

You might be a bit careful about who sees your camera as you walk around, not because it might get stolen, (it's around your neck isn't it?) but because several hundred other tourists will decide that you're the ideal person to take pictures of their whole family in front of whatever monument you're at. I was accosted by a very friendly Korean bloke and his girlfriend at Edinburgh Castle, which seemed to give everyone else permission to give everyone else permission to get me to take photos of them too. It took about 40 minutes and included a German family, all with their own camera, and a group of young women from London on a hen's weekend. To be fair, they were probably the best shots I took on the whole trip.

We had a lovely time, caught up with family and friends and saw many aspects of the amazing history of the UK. Next time I'll get it right.

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Greyfriars House Chapel, built 1267. Canterbury, Kent.

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Remember if you have something that you feel may be of interest to your fellow Focal Plane readers, please drop an email to the Editor c/- karen@istari.co.nz

The Bit at the End [aka Editorial Musings]

The Name Game.....

Should an image stand on its own merit, without a title? And if an image does have a title, does this detract or enhance the viewer response?

Sometimes at Club, listening to titles for images being judged, I cringe. Titles that are banal, self-explanatory or quite simply inappropriate make me wonder why the author bothered naming their work.

Titles give context. They give solidity. I think it is most often true to say that a title can build a preconceived notion about an image and can impact on the perception of the image on the part of the viewer. If you agree that many images are created for aesthetic reasons, the conscious decision of the person behind the lens is to capture a temporal moment in time. In this case, audiences viewing that capture can benefit from an understanding of the context in order to appreciate the image to its fullest potential. A title can also provoke. By perhaps being at odds with an image, a title can encourage the viewer to wonder what the photographer saw when making the image, to try to get into the thought process of the author. 'Visual

impact is great but if an artist has contemplative work, it's not always about high impact but thoughtfulness'.

Having an untitled image is also a conscious decision and one which - I believe - should not be taken lightly. Absence makes a difference and creates its own statement.

This is a very generic musing that has not taken into account sub genres such as photo journalism [where a photograph without a proper caption is worthless] and - perhaps - landscape photography where the identification of a specific locale can be important. Personally I find that deciding on a title for an image makes me think more deeply about what I have tried to capture and convey. The process gives me alternative ways to think about and connect with an image - and I am a verbal person so this suits me.

From a Club perspective - and for Club members who are entering work in National and International Salons - take care with naming your images. Do not demean an image with a throw away title; take your time, consider the audience, the viewer, your intentions and name with care.

..... and thank you to Club members who gave me feedback on Losing the Muse.....

"I really enjoyed reading your reflections on losing your muse at the end."

"This leads me to my 'muse'. Picking up the camera is not a problem for me. I would shoot the opening of an envelope. But of late, I have myself sitting and staring at Lightroom unable to edit, suffering from post-production fatigue. So I have just started leaving my post-production for up to a week after the shoot. I feel this enables me to better select the images I am considering for post-production."

"I particularly liked the Bit at the End, applies to me rather."

Please let me know what you think about The Name Game.