

Barry Camera Club Annual Awards 2020

Class 1 Hansen Cup Best Monochrome Landscape/Seascape

1st Reflections In The Mist – Roy Carr

Simplistic content presented in a minimalistic but very captivating manner. Mood is evident, even in the stillness of solitude, complimented with the compelling mystique of the misty atmosphere.

The interesting effect of the water reflection of the tree (which is often the case) is the greater contrast achieved compared to the subject matter that is being reflected. Square format is ideal for the content and composition presented.

2nd Hawthorn In The Beacons – Roy Carr

Classic composition consisting of the foreground tree and stone wall, complimented with the lead-in pathway with its teasing dappled shadows. The viewer is invited to enjoy and explore the journey towards the mountainous backdrop, draped with cloud detail and casting shadows from the fence.

The light on the Hawthorn tree creates dimensional depth and textural detail, injecting life into the scene.

3rd Under The Pier – Pat Hollis

Very deliberate in terms of framing, emphasising the enormity and strength of the concrete structures, with texture and etched graphic detail. Pleasing foreground shapes of weathered stones add interest, smoothly honed by the lapping water.

Good perspective taking you through the structure, journeying the differing effects of light and dark, complimented by the geometric influence of vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines.

HC Bent Shadows - Frank Learner

Very good example of 'letterbox' opportunities. Great seeing eye to pick out the shadow pattern. Full range of greys, from lighter tones through to darker tones.

Would suggest cropping out all of the last gun (which is already partly cropped).

Summary

A nice range of monochrome work, exhibiting tonal qualities of the various shades and range of greys, from the very lights to the very darks. This also applies to all images not selected in the top three above.

It was also very pleasing to see a range of various image sizes and formats, in addition to the traditional portrait and landscape formats. On another day, with a different judge, I'm sure you would get a different result. That is the joy of photography.

Class 2

T.J. Lewis Cup

Best Monochrome Portrait

1st

Marj – Roy Carr

Endearing capture of kindness, wisdom and joy. The very natural pose exemplifies the enjoyment within the smiling charm and warmth that the face radiates.

The depth of field is very sensitive, and therefore complimentary and truthful to the lady's facial expression, capturing a lifetime of wisdom and stories, I've no doubt.

In many ways, the background captures the depth of the stories, contrasting from the more lighter and pleasing times, to the darker, more sinister times. Great capture of the smile and eyes.

2nd

Brian At Work – Pat Hollis

Beautiful light on the face, emphasising the detail in the hair and beard. The capture of a moment in time (forget how candid or staged the image might be, it doesn't matter) tells a powerful story, whatever that story may be.

The contrast of the image is a strong and impactful element and certainly works. The fact that much of the dark apparel is black, is nevertheless complimented by the shadow detail in the crumpled sleeve.

The tight crop of the subject does very much focus the viewer to concentrate on the person. Great contemplative concentration well captured.

3rd

Sisters – Roy Carr

Sublimely spontaneous capture of two elderly (but forever young) ladies in a moment of shared pleasure. Amusing delight in the one sister, perhaps coupled with just a little apprehension with the other sister.

The differing facial expressions, albeit that there is no eye contact between them, tells of the powerful connection between the two.

They say a picture tells a thousand words, therefore, it would be fascinating to share just a little of the story.

Summary

Within the genre of portrait photography (particularly regarding people), I am always looking for a story, also, something that makes me smile. You don't get a second chance with first impressions, and for certain, when initially viewing two of the above images, they both made me smile immediately. What more do you need to say.

All images in this section do tell a story, also, as indicated in the Page 1 summary, on another day, with another judge..... No HC due to lower number of entry images.

1st Light On The Word – Roy Carr

A great title in these somewhat darkened days that we find ourselves in (illuminated somewhat by the pleasures of digital technology). I digress.....

The darkness of the image portrays a very powerful story, a story of light and of hope going forward. The aged, weathered timber, supporting a Bible of sorts, intensifies that story.

Irrespective of one's belief, the biblical proverb 'Every wise woman builds her house', coupled with the picture of 'Mount of Olives' in the Old City of Jerusalem, must give us all hope and some comfort. A simple but very powerful image.

2nd A Different Cardiff Bay View – Pat Hollis

Great tonal qualities throughout, from the light Norwegian Church to the darkness of the white topped mooring bollard.

The very dominant foreground grasses create much natural interest of tones, texture and shape, providing a great foil to the background of man-made elements.

Great composition, emphasising the strength and beauty that only nature can provide.

3rd Prickly Swirl – Frank Learner

Perhaps technical aspects of over exposure are evident in the light areas; however, this is compensated for by the creativity and emotion within the 'Catherine' wheel effect of the image.

The radial effect is mesmerising, providing a 'static movement' (hope this is not seen as a contradiction), allowing the viewer to journey through and around the spinning wheel motion.

Added interest also in the out of focus background, very appropriate with the mono treatment.

Summary

Once again, a very wide and interesting range of miscellaneous monochrome images, with a mixture of shapes, forms, architectural and landscape pleasures.

It is very evident in the three categories (Class 1, 2 and 3) regarding the strength and depth of the Monochrome and/or Black & White workers within the club. It has been a pleasure in viewing, critiquing and deciding the awards rating. I am deliberately avoiding the use of the word 'winners' as this implies losers. For me, you are all winners, with some fortunate to be placed in the top three in each class. No HC due to lower number of entry images.

1st Thatched Windmill – Kathy Edwards

Perfectly composed composition with the location of Windmill just off centre in the frame, providing a pleasing equilibrium. The position of the three Windmill vanes against the sky backdrop is just perfect, with the forth vane creating beautiful shadow detail on the structure of the building.

The pastel sky effect compliments the serenity and classical ambiance of a bygone age, the ideal setting for a Dutch Artist to create a masterpiece.

2nd Our Heritage Coast – Kathy Edwards

Lovely elevated viewpoint to capture the seascape vista of this incredible coastline. The foreground textural delight and shore patterns of rocks and water lead you gently into the less rocky sand patterns and beyond.

The light on the rock strata creating a golden warmth is complimented by the white water patterns of the ebbing sea, all cloaked with pleasing cloud formations in the sky. Nicely composed and proportioned within the portrait format, capturing the reality of the natural colour palette throughout.

3rd Glencoe Light – Roy Carr

Autumnal foreground colours blend beautifully into the sparse vegetation on the foremost mountain peak, complimented by the silvery shimmer of water beneath.

Wonderful gradation and recession of the mountain range beyond, all cloaked with the delicate shrouded light and its beautiful soundless movement.

HC Cold Mountain – Roy Carr

The desolation and bleakness of the scene projects the feeling of loneliness as you journey into the unknown. The coldness of the location is exaggerated by the bluish tinge of the icy sporadic lacing of snow, creating nature's continual decoration process.

It is interesting to compare the infancy of the foreground heaped pile of stones (almost certainly man made) with the naturally majestic maturity of the mountain top. The limited colour palette contributes to the solemnity and grimness of location.

Summary

A more challenging selection of images in this particular class, comprising of quantity, quality and variety. Although (as pointed out) it is not the colour as such that is being judged, but the images that are in the colour category.

It is the colour content, complimented by the blend and balance of tonal hues, particularly in landscape photography, which provides such diversity and variation. These attributes are all in abundance in the selection of images submitted.

1st Becky – Pat Hollis

A beautiful female model, captured with much sensitivity and respectful connection. Although it is very probably a staged situation, the pose is both suggestive and natural, exemplified with powerful but tender eye contact.

The blueness in the eyes is intensified by the captivating catchlights, also the delicacy of the teasing diagonal influence. Facial tonality adds even more charm to what is a totally charming image.

The darkened background adds intensity to the look, feel, emotion and truthfulness of a superb portrait study of female innocence, purity and beauty.

2nd Eve – Pat Hollis

A great story telling portrait, capturing the concentration of the artist plying her skills on the canvassed easel. The detail in the artists face is sensitively capturing the thought process required, totally isolated in her world.

Lovely tonal range throughout, with the warmth of the mellowed easel radiated onto the artists face. The crop works superbly, also the focal point which is deliberately but importantly discarding the artists tools.

3rd Poppy – Roy Carr

Lovely capture of the side-on view of Poppy. Excellent depth of field, rendering the background out of focus, but detailed and controlled sharpness on Poppy's head. The framing of the image also is sympathetic regarding the pose of the animal.

The use of light renders reality to the colour palette, also providing a catchlight in the eye, also a very healthy looking nose, all vitally important in the genre of animal photography.

Summary

Another interesting and varied selection of portrait images, notwithstanding the mixture of people, birds and animals. However, I do wonder if portrait themes could or should be categorised, maybe into different sections.

Personally, I do find it difficult comparing the portraits of adult people with younger people, intermixed with babies, animals and birds etc. The comparison becomes more complicated when you are trying to detach the endearing elements of very young children with the aged wisdom of the most elderly. Perhaps some food for thought.

No HC due to the lower number of entry images.

Class 9 Dan Evans Trophy Miscellaneous Colour

1st Peacock Poise- Kathy Edwards

The Proudness of the Peacock in its fullest glory, perfectly framed and posing with assured elegance and majesty (not sure if it's a King or a Prince), perhaps looking to seduce a willing Peahen into courtship.

Beautiful iridescent blues, complimented by the luminous greens, with the supporting copper browns just delicately blending into the vivid eyespots with a measured and pleasing harmonisation.

2nd Squashed – Roy Carr

The lovely warm tones of the textured wall blend effortlessly with the different species of the Cucurbitaceous family, including pumpkins, squashes and gourds. The different shapes, sizes and variety, stored and stacked in the manner shown, transform the splendid writing bureau into a utilitarian storage unit.

A very busy and 'squashed' scene, but with much curiosity as you wander through the assortment of fruit, some waiting to further ripen. Subtle shadow detail provides additional interest.

3rd Twisting In The Mist – Roy Carr

The very gnarly, twisted and knotty branches defies reason and purpose. However, in an acutely angled land and woodland environment, it is a photographer's delight.

The predominance of the velvety moss covered trunk and branches, also the lingering, almost stagnant mist, creates a lovely combination. These elements, coupled with the ridiculous angle of the land, offer a challenging opportunity for a different type of image. Although as judges, we are discouraged to consider the difficulty factor, there has to be some recognition when there is a successful outcome, as in this image.

HC Potted Bluebells – Pat Hollis

The artistic application of a limited but pleasing depth of field has created a painterly effect of the bluebells. There is sufficient detail to marvel at nature, both in terms of colour and shape.

However, I would perhaps consider cropping out the terracotta base of the image.

Summary

Once more, a very nice selection of interesting images, but, not all of them can be elevated to the top of the class. Of the ones that have just missed out, it is worthy of mention that the Arches View from Caerphilly Castle (Pat Hollis) was very inventive, also the S'n'owt Happening (Frank Learner) image very amusing. On another day, who knows.....

In terms of Best Overall winners, I feel obliged that the following selection must include the winning images from the top three in the various classes. I would have much preferred to nominate my 'favourite' image, which would not necessarily include those images that won their respective classes.

The above observation/suggestion would then provide an opportunity (maybe) for a broader range of images to gain some recognition, as opposed to the same photographer winning more than one award. Indeed, the same photographer might be winner in all classes in any event. Just a thought.

Class 10 **Richard Hopkins Trophy** **Best Overall Monochrome**

Reflections in the Mist – Roy Carr

Class 11 **Randall Cox Trophy** **Best Overall Colour**

Thatched Windmill – Kathy Edwards

Class 12 **Projected Image of the Year 2020**

Becky – Pat Hollis

Final Summing Up

Although the judging of the Barry CC Annual Awards (at very short notice due to unforeseen circumstances), was both challenging and time consuming, it has been my pleasure. It is always a broadening experience to view the work of other photographers, also, another way of learning.

Generally, I have not made specific reference to the technical competences evident in the images. It is a given that the technicalities are not an issue. My critique is very much focussed on the emotional story telling content, coupled with pleasing elements based on both the objective and subjective content, the latter of course being a very personal response.

As stated earlier, there are no losers from my perspective, all images are winners, it just happens that some have been fortunate to be classified in accordance with your instructions.

One again, many thanks for the opportunity, I trust the above critiques and placings meet with a generally overall approval.

Please stay safe, well and positive in these difficult times.

Best Regards,

Les Loosemore

22-05-2020