



Shoalhaven Photographic Club Inc.

Blah Blah Newsletter

Your 2021-2022 Committee

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Assessment Night: Old/ Abandoned/Neglected

On a cold and windy night we sat snug and warm inside the auditorium at UoW to enjoy some fine company and appreciate each others photographic efforts. I was pleasantly surprised to see a strong turnout, despite losing audience numbers to the annual modern-day gladiatorial contest, in which monosyllabic men in blue or maroon tribal outfits, wreak destruction upon each other and the victorious assume tacit approval from the public for a period of vainglorious, substance-fuelled, antisocial behaviour until the next contest. Still, what harm in enjoying a bit of the good old biff!

Our judge, Murray Foote drove over from Canberra with his wife Jules to provide his expertise and advice. Given the unpleasant weather and the deteriorating state of Main Road 92, this was very much appreciated. Matt and Philomena very kindly invited Murray and Jules to stay the night at their home once again which would certainly have been instrumental in securing Murray's services.

I was looking forward to Murray's comments as he had judged for us last year and, I thought, did a fine job. On the occasion he also brought along a portfolio of his very impressive work in a variety of different genres.

Murray has been pursuing photography for over thirty years and for much of that time, has been involved with the Canberra Photographic Society, including at different times as President,



Vice-President and Competition Director. In 1987 Murray was sent around Australia taking photographs of lighthouses for a history of Australian lighthouses, *From Dusk Till Dawn*. This was published in 1988 and contains about ninety of his images. Most of the images were taken on large format (5x4" film size) and some on 35mm (mainly fisheyes inside the lighthouses). The image above is from a 1937 Rollieflex twin-lens reflex. There are many others in the blog.

He is an official photographer for Thredbo, Sydney and Narooma Blues Festivals and had exhibitions of live music images at Mogo in 2009 and 2010 at the time of the Narooma/ Bateman's Bay Blues Festival. There are many links to live music images under the Blues tab in this blog. Here is a link to his website where you can view his work <https://murrayfoote.com/about/>

Before assessing the first image Murray told us a little about his style and method. He is a keen user of Capture One - a highly regarded image processing software from the makers of Phase One cameras and, if I recall correctly, comes out of Denmark. They claim to have the best RAW processing capability of all the software. The best bit, provided you are a Fujifilm or Sony user is that they offer a completely free version specifically for those cameras, otherwise it's the full price and Capture One are now on a subscription model like Lightroom and Photoshop. I have tried it in the past but as I get older I find it harder to move away Lightroom and Photoshop, particularly with the kind of processing I am doing at the moment.

Now on with the evening's activities. What a great set subject this was. So much so that the open sections were outnumbered significantly and there was not a single image in the open monochrome category and with the numbers down courtesy of the football game, there was plenty of time for Murray to discuss his thoughts regarding every image. I think it's possible to distil his comments into a couple of main points.

Firstly, one should try to make the subject stand out from the rest of the image. Contrast is what we are talking about. This does not mean cranking the contrast slider all the way to the right but making your subject appear different to the background. Subtlety is essential. Broadly speaking, you can achieve contrast between the subject and background through several different approaches, for example:

- In-camera, when taking the shot by:
 - Choosing a narrow depth of field so that your subject will be in focus against a more or less blurry background.
 - Making sure your subject is not directly in front of a confusing background object like a head-shaped tree for example, especially when they are both mid-grey.
- In post processing by:
 - choosing different temperatures between subject and background e.g. warm subject against a cool background
 - contrasting luminance (brightness): a light coloured or light grey subject against a dark coloured or dark grey background or vice versa
 - using various software tools to blur the background. Use the mask feature to select your subject. Invert the mask to select the background then use the clarity, texture and detail sliders to make your subject stand out.

The second point emphasised by Murray was in regard to maintaining an awareness of the borders of your image:

- Take care to avoid having bits of your subject poking out of the edge of your frame. Crop, if necessary to eliminate some unimportant object or parts thereof.

- Also look out for bright areas up against the edges, and particularly in the corners of your image. They will capture the viewer's eye and lead it straight out of the image before it has had a chance to linger over the bit you want the viewer's eye to stay and enjoy.

Almost all judges, at camera club level, will notice and emphasis these details so that if you want to increase your chances of gaining a merit or credit it will be worth paying attention to these points.

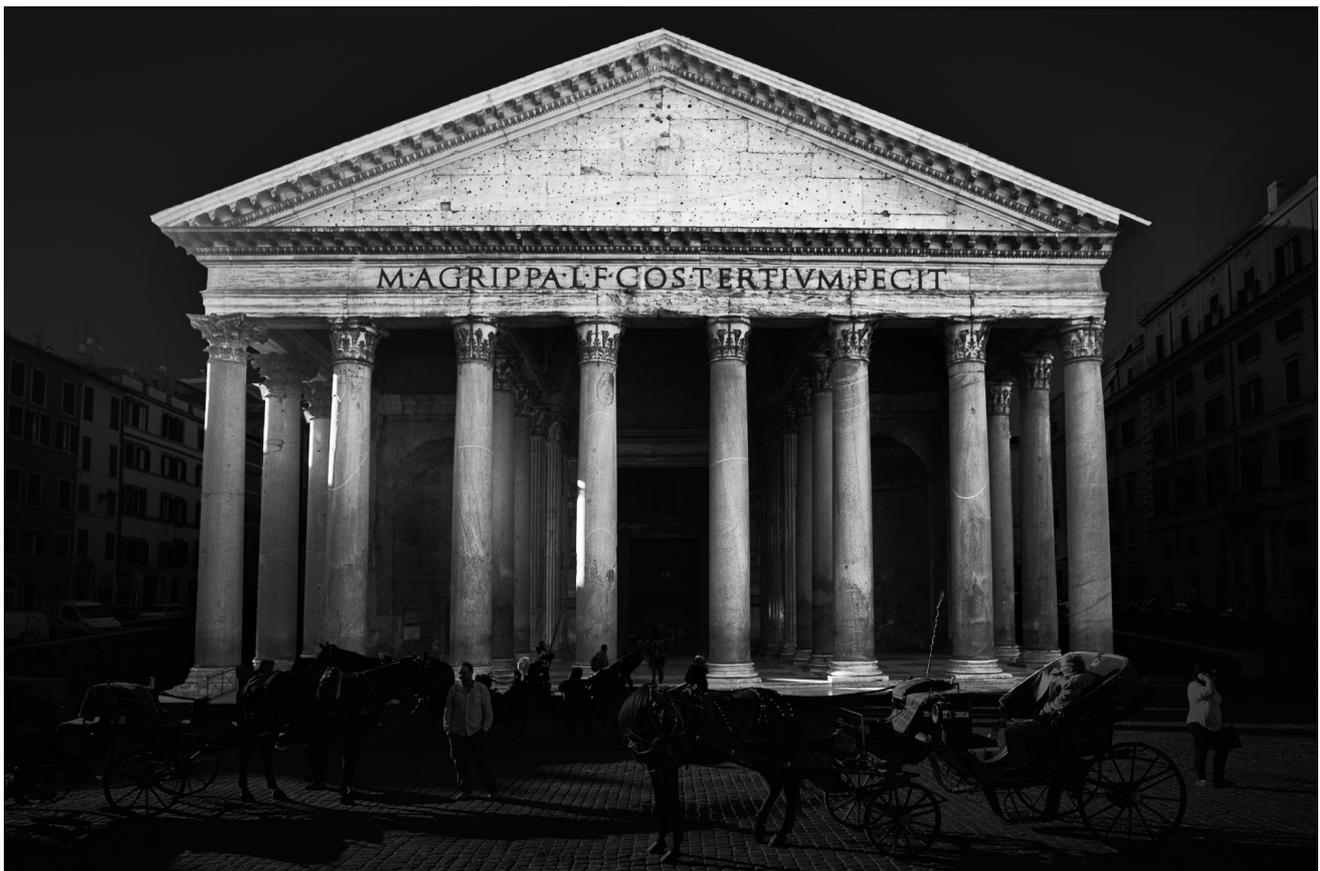
I'd also like to point you in the direction of an interesting discussion on composition. It's available as an e-book and cost about \$7. You can read it on the free Kindle or Kobo apps. Here is a link to check it out:

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com.au/Simple-Secret-Better-Painting-ebook/dp/B005GLBHNW>

Kobo: <https://www.kobo.com/au/en/ebook/the-simple-secret-to-better-painting-3>

Photograph of the Month

It was a close run thing between Bruce's 'fine art' interpretation of the 2000 year old Pantheon in Rome and Peter's bird feeding. Peter's birds are always hard to beat! In fact Murray wanted to choose both but when told he could not, eventually opted for the Pantheon image.



In case you are interested, below is the original raw file. It was taken in morning light on a Leica rangefinder (M240) with 21mm prime lens at f4, ISO 200 and shutter speed of 1/350 sec. I had carried the camera in a backpack on a bicycle ride from Barcelona to Rome in the footsteps of Hannibal. In the edited version I have corrected the perspective before converting to monochrome and then manipulating the

light to make the already impressive Pantheon stand out even more from the background. By the way, the inscription reads “ I, Marcus Agrippa, third consul, built this”.



People's Choice was awarded to Pauline Kitto for her close up image of a decaying railway carriage. The photo was taken at Goulburn Railway Museum back in March. Pauline said "the peeled back roofing material is what caught my eye. The paintwork on the carriage was very faded so I thought I'd try increasing the saturation. I was concerned I had overdone it, but it certainly seems to have paid off. I also sharpened the image and flipped it as I felt it flowed better from the bottom left corner. It was taken around midday f8, 1/400sec, 100 ISO.

I distinctly remember one judge recently suggesting images be flipped to see whether a better composition resulted. Well done Pauline for heeding that advice. With the focus so clearly on the decay process rather than the object no-one knew it was a railway carriage until we were told. Great job.

Next Workshop Meeting: 22nd June. "Light Painting" at Bombo quarry with Gerry Blacklock.

You will have already received advice about this because of the need to plan early. At this late stage, there may be a postponement. We are waiting for Matt to discuss with Gerry to see if that is feasible. I will keep you posted. Whether it goes ahead as planned or is held at a later date I think it promises to be a great evening.

Next Assessment: Long Exposure

An image made using a long exposure with a camera mounted on a tripod or steadied by some other means. Arbitrarily, long exposure is anything longer than about 1 second...but it's up to you. Sometimes even just one second might be longer than you need to convey a sense of movement or time elapsing. Remember, moving objects in a long exposure will be blurred, but that might be the effect you are after.

Photographic Day Trips:

A great way to meet your fellow club members and to see and take photos of places you may never otherwise get to visit. What's not to like?

With the Berry Celtic Festival and Vivid done and dusted Denis has a major photo trek to the Lithgow area in June. Once again, please check the "Club News" page on the website for further details <http://www.shoalphoto.org/club-news.php>. You will also find a link on this page to the club's Facebook site with more up to date info regarding activities and events.

With Denis' permission I have repeated some advice from an earlier email below:

In general you may join the group at a local meeting point, prior to the designated time of departure (carpooling available) or at the destination.

A typical day will consist of the main attraction in the morning, followed by lunch; a great way to meet your fellow club members (generally at a reasonably safe Covid location or park), and then on to other attractions in the afternoon.

You are welcome to attend part or all of the day's activities. All we ask is that you advise me of your intentions so that we are not caught waiting around for no reason..

A cork board with current events will be at the entrance to the meeting room each night and you may add your name on the left side of the sheets if you wish to attend one of the events or let me know by phone or email. This board also has details of the clubs remaining excursions for the year to:

- The Warrumbungles in August / September, and
- Mayfields Gardens in October (making up for the last 2 years).

Overnight accommodation, where required, will be at caravan parks that have powered sites and cabins. These trips are arranged around weekends for members who are unable to attend for the full duration due to work or other commitments.

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call Denis on 0428 215 250. Likewise if you are not receiving emails from Denis re these trips and you wish to be included (or have misplaced them) please email him at denis@denis-cale.com.au.

Finally, here's a little treat from Philomena:

'Beauty and decay': a stroll through one Parisian neighbourhood – in pictures

https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2022/jun/07/beauty-and-decay-a-stroll-through-one-parisian-neighbourhood-in-pictures?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

and some simple tutorial videos from Adobe:

What is lens aperture?

<https://www.adobe.com/au/creativecloud/photography/discover/aperture.html?trackingid=G85SYMLN&mv=email>

What is focal length and how to use it?

<https://pages.adobe.com/photoshop/en/quick-actions/?context.guid=7ae3c095-3f7d-4125-af96-4f0d43d1108e?trackingid=88X75MB5&mv=email&context.init=false>

Basic guide to understanding shutter speed

<https://www.adobe.com/au/creativecloud/photography/discover/shutter-speed.html?trackingid=YFRVGFYg&mv=email>

Enjoy!