



Hedda Morrison Portfolio Competition 2007

Our May competition night was devoted to the judging of the Hedda Morrison Portfolio Competition for 2007, this year's judge being the well-known local professional photographer David Reid.

Because of a large number of portfolios on show only one per person was displayed on the night – though folk who'd entered more were able to show and talk about them on the subsequent meeting night.

But there were plenty of pictures on display, and more than a few portfolios of high standard. David Reid had had the pictures for some time before the night, so his comments were not the first thoughts on seeing the pictures, making "immediate impact" less important in the total evaluation. His commentary on the pictures was both pointed and discursive, and included some nice anecdotes, and reminiscences, and thoughts on photography and its practice.

Winner of this year's HM was Marion Milliken, with a fine set of images (reproduced here in small size) from her journeys in Spain,

and printed with suitably low-key colour in contrast with the vibrant oversaturated acrylic primary colours that some photographers apply to every subject, suitable or not.

Highly Commended were portfolios by Julie Garran and Ian Copland – Julie for a set of pictures of birds, Ian for an architectural detail series.

Despite fears by some of a midnight finish the night ended at a reasonable time. Next year's Hedda will limit entries to one portfolio per person.

RG



Marion Milliken receiving the Hedda Morrison Portfolio award from judge David Reid, with her winning pictures in the background.

ACTIVITIES REPORT 2007

Coming Events:

JUNE

Tuesday 12 June:
(Venue – Photo Access)
Members' image presentations.

1. A display of images taken by members who enjoyed the recent helicopter flights over Canberra and the surrounding region.
2. An invitation to members to bring images of old or recent work. Share your latest overseas trip or bring along unsuccessful comp entries for further discussion. Don't just wait for others to supply work. Contact: Jim Mason on 6258 5343 (home), 6249 9104 (work) or e-mail jim.mason@ga.gov.au to book into a segment.

Tuesday 19 June:
(Venue – Photo Access).
Digital darkroom Photoshop techniques plus
Part 2 of the digital Overseas International Exhibition.

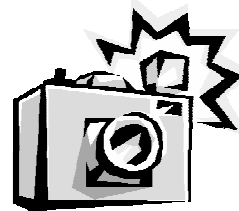
Recent Activities Reports:

MAY

Tuesday 8 May: (Venue – Photo Access).
Members' image night.
Members who entered more than a single portfolio in the Hedda Morrison Trophy competition in early May were invited to show their unseen second entry for discussion and comment. This was followed by a projected image display of an overseas international exhibition from a disk supplied by Brian Rope.

Tuesday 15 May: Restaurant night at the 'The Jewel of India'.

Eighteen members and guests enjoyed the pleasant company and cuisine at this prestigious restaurant in Manuka.



1st AUSTRALIAN DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDS 2007 - ENTRIES CLOSE 17 JUNE.

This is a national competition currently being organised by the Electronic Digital Imaging Division within the Australian Photographic Society. The showcasing of accepted entries will be presented at the Southern Cross Club (Woden) on the 18 August 2007 and APSCON'2007 at Albury in October. Enter via the following web link: www.adpa.org.au.

Jim Mason



Competition Results—

**Hedda Morrison Portfolio Award
2007**

Winner—Marion Milliken

Highly Commended—

**Ian Copland
Julie Garran**



Photos reproduced here are from Marion Milliken's Hedda portfolio—the fifth image is in the header on page 1.

Competition Leaders

A Monochrome

1. Rod Nazer (27)
2. Judy Parker (21)
3. Brian Jones (13)

A Colour Prints

1. Ross Gould (24)
2. Julie Garran (21)
3. Steven Shaw (18)

A Projected Images

1. Tony Brown (18)
2. Ian Copland (12)
3. Julie Garran (11)

B Prints

1. David Boughey (21)
2. Mario Sanguinetti (16)
3. Andree Lawree (13)

B Projected Images

1. Fararmarz Shakibaei (21)
2. David Boughey (17)
3. Joccoaa Phillips (8)



Photoshop and the Quest for Truth

The old adage that “the camera doesn’t lie” is not likely to be entirely believed by photographers, who know the camera presents a selective version of reality (less a matter of ‘lying’ than giving a partial view). But digital imaging and the use of Photoshop have made available a huge range of new and plausible means of altering photographs after they’re taken – and are far more effective and much easier to use than the old-fashioned retouching of the past.

This of course is celebrated by some for its “creative possibilities” – but it also raises issues for documentary photography, and in particular for news photographs. Several stories have recently emerged from the United States about problems of altered news photographs. When is a photo legitimately altered, and when is it “doctored” to be misleading or an outright falsification? This is a difficult area, and the responses to photographers who have modified their photos has varied.

The big story in April this year was about a long-time photographer for the Toledo Blade, an Ohio newspaper, who was found to have digitally altered a news photo, and after investigation by the paper’s editors, found to have altered in some way nearly 10% of the photographs he’d submitted during 2007.

The alterations varied – the picture that started the ruckus was of a group of athletes in group prayer in memory of five of their team-mates who’d been killed in a bus crash. Notice in the two versions shown here that the legs of someone standing behind the banner on the right have been removed from the published version.

The photographer’s alterations were described as including “erasing people, tree limbs, utility poles, electrical wires, electrical outlets, and other background elements from photographs. In other cases, he added ele-

ments such as tree branches and shrubbery.”

In discussion of the matter on local television, we get the following quote:

*On Toledo’s 13 ABC Action News, reporter **Jennifer Jarrell** asked Blade assistant managing editor of administration Luann Sharp, “The changes may seem minor, but where does it stop?” Sharp responded, “It has to be zero tolerance. If you can alter one small piece of a photo, can you alter a medium size piece? You just can’t alter at all.” In her 6 p.m. newscast report, Jarrell cited the NPPA Code of Ethics, the portion that states photographers can’t alter a photograph “in any way that deceives the public.”*

That story is quite different from several others -

*[In 2006] Reuters made headlines when a freelancer in Lebanon covering the 2006 war with Israel transmitted two doctored photographs that made it past editors and onto the picture network. Lebanese photographer **Adnan Hajj** was fired by Reuters in the aftermath of their investigation, and his images removed from their archives.*

*At about the same time, **el Nuevo Herald** doctored two images to create one fake photo to illustrate an anti-Castro story, without telling their readers the manipulated picture was a “montage.” Editors at the Miami paper took heat in the press for their ethical lapse, but as far as the public knows no one was disciplined for the fakery.*

*In 2003, **Brian Walski** was fired from the Los Angeles Times for combining two separate images from the war in Iraq into one picture that was published in the Times and other newspapers. He was fired when the fakery was discovered, noticed first by an astute reader.*

A local example occurred a few years ago, when the Brisbane Courier-Mail published a heavily doctored version of a portrait photo of the late historian Manning Clark, as part of a series of articles attacking Clark for his alleged Soviet sympathies (long after both Clark and the Soviet Union had died). This had every indication of a deliberate editorial choice by the newspaper. Some of us thought the original photograph was far too benign – indeed friendly to Clark – to support the attacking articles, which no doubt lay behind the decision to impose major manipulations on it.

The issue of “truth in reporting” is of course important, indeed vital, in a free society that desires to stay that way. So where do we draw the line? Obviously the Lebanon, Castro and Manning Clark examples are unacceptable. But is the photographer who removes untidy items from the background of pictures equally guilty? In a zero-tolerance regime, yes. Because of the difficulty of drawing a line – this is acceptable, that is not – we may have to live with a “zero-tolerance” regime imposed on news photographers. So be careful how you colour-balance your photos (or Fred’s green shirt will look too blue) – be careful how you dodge and burn – and expose carefully and print a long tonal scale, or details visible at the time might disappear into shadows or blown highlights.

Yes, it’s too easy to satirise the “zero-tolerance” regime – but what is the alternative? So far no-one seems to have found a sensible alternative that ignores trivia while rejecting significant falsification. How do we decide on what “deceives the public” ? - as mentioned in the quote above, from the APPA Code of Ethics (brought in in 1991, at the beginning of the digital age).

Ross Gould

Corrections



The photo above of the Bluffton University baseball team that appeared on page A-1 March 31 and on toledoblade.com was digitally altered and should not have been published.

The photographer digitally

removed the legs of a person standing behind the number 19 banner. The photograph that should have been published is below.

The photographer said he altered the photo for his personal

files only and inadvertently transmitted the wrong picture for publication.

The Blade’s policy is to never alter photographs, and the newspaper regrets the incident and apologizes to readers.



A story on Page 1 yesterday about CedarCreek Church’s billboards incorrectly stated the year of the church’s founding. It was founded in 1995.

THE BLADE

Blade ombudsman Jack Lessenberry wants to respond to reader questions about fairness and accuracy in the way this

newspaper covers the news.

Call 1-888-746-8610 or e-mail OMBLADE@aol.com anytime, day or night.

Competition Topics for 2007

Murray Foote

We are, I think, fortunate to have an excellent range of competition topics for this year:

2007

- Feb Open
- Mar Open + People in Motion
- Apr Open + Unreal
- May Hedda Morrison Trophy (Prints) -
A Theme of Your Choice
- June Open + Patterns in Nature
- July Open + Play of Light
- Aug Digital City Trophy (Projected
Images) - Sequence
- Sep Open + The Passing of Time
- Oct Open + Abstract
- Nov Open + Voting

2008

- Feb Open
- Mar Open + Abandoned



**The Canberra
Photographic
Society Inc.**

Changes to the Competition Rules

The following motions were passed at the AGM:

Maximum of 4 entries overall:

* Each person may enter no more than 4 entries in total across all categories in monthly competitions (other than portfolio competitions) and in the Image of the Year Competitions

* No change to the current rule that there may be no more than 2 entries in each category (Monochrome prints, Colour Prints, B Grade Prints, Projected Images etc)

Maximum of 1 Portfolio in Digital City Competition:

* Each person may only enter one portfolio in the portfolio competitions (Hedda and Digital City)

* Note: Persons may still enter two portfolios in the Hedda Morrison Competition this year but if so the Judge will be instructed to rank the two portfolios. If there are significant numbers of entries, second portfolios will only be displayed if they received an award.

No More Slides in Projected Image Competitions:

* Slide entries are no longer permitted in the Projected Image Competition

These changes have taken effect starting from the April 2007 Competition.

Extract of rules for Digital images in the Projected Image Competition:

Images are eligible where they have been taken within the previous two years or have been substantially manipulated within the previous two years.

All digital images must be e-mailed 7 days prior to the competition to: competitions@canberra-photographic.org.au.

All e-mails will be acknowledged by return e-mail within 48 hours of receipt. If you do not receive confirmation of receipt within 48 hours you need to contact the Projected Image Comp Coordinator (Steven Shaw Ph 0413 606 783) or the Competition Director (Murray Foote Ph 6257 1752) no later than 5 days prior to the competition.

Each digital image must comply with the following:

JPEG format
Max size - 1MB
Maximum dimensions - 1024 horizontal
x768 vertical pixels
Colour space - sRGB

Failure to comply with these rules may result in disqualification of the entry.

Murray Foote
Competition Director



Julie Garran and Ian Copland receive their "highly commended" awards from judge David Reid.

Nikon and Canon – Backup Issues

At the last CPS competition night, when the Hedda Morrison portfolios were shown, our visiting judge remarked on the lack of adequate support by Maxwell/Nikon Australia for Nikon cameras when a fault occurs. I added comments on this related to my own experience. A suggested solution was the usual “buy a Canon”, but, sadly, that doesn’t solve the issue, because I’ve seen Canon Australia show the same lack of support..

I own both Nikon and Canon equipment so I’m not feeling biased toward one rather than the other company. Each does some things better than the other, some things less well, and both have a pretty full range of pro gear on offer.

To begin with Canon. Last year (2006) when I was at the Australian Gymnastic Championships in Sydney, as a photographer, a fellow shooter, a professional from Adelaide, had his month-old Canon 1D IIN die. Ok, this can happen to any camera. He drove over to Canon in Sydney to put it in for repair. “How long?” he asked. “A few weeks”, they said – “our technician [singular!] is away on a course.” “!!!!”, said the photographer – “can I have a loan camera as I’m a member of Canon Professional Services”. “No – we don’t have any we can lend.” Pro support, anyone?

My own Canon 30D was bought in October last year. It’s been back to Canon because the AF was consistently wrong “out of the box” with Canon lenses – thankfully, they got the recalibration right (it took three weeks – neither great nor dreadful) so it now focuses accurately even with a 135 f/2 L lens wide open (as it should).

Nikon. Back in the film days, a fault with a Nikon was in my lengthy experience a rare event – fortunately, because Maxwell’s, in those days the agents for Nikon in Australia, had a reputation for poor to dreadful backup service.

Because of my involvement in photographing gymnastics I bought a Nikon D2H at the end of 2003. Big mistake. It handled beautifully, was

lightning fast on frame rate and AF, and worked like an F5 with an imaging chip instead of film. That is, when it worked. The D2H turned out to be probably the most unreliable camera Nikon has ever produced, based on multiple internet discussions. Again, there are people who have faultless examples. But mine was like too many of that model – developing problems in metering, white balance, and eventually a shutter failure.

Maxwell’s were not good. On one occasion the camera was with them for 7-8 weeks before a quote was given, and it took weeks more until it returned. Another time the camera was returned from fixing the metering, and when I used it later that day I found it still had the original problem. Eventually I had a rebuilt D2H that seemed to work well, but by then I’d had enough and sold it, with its history known – probably the new owner will have a fault-free camera.

As an aside, the D2Hs – the later version of the D2H – appears to have had none of the common problems of its predecessor. By the time it came out however Canon had trumped Nikon with the 1D II (and later N) which did all the same things but with 8 instead of 4 Megapixels, so the D2Hs sold poorly (a mix of its predecessor’s bad reputation and its smaller pixel count at the same price as the Canon).

These days, Maxwell’s has gone from Nikonland – we have Nikon Australia instead. Are they better? I don’t yet know – my D200 hasn’t gone in to them for repair. But I can only hope that the support companies for both Nikon and Canon improve on their past efforts for the sake of their customers.

Ross Gould