

November CPS competition “Open” with member voting for “images of the night”

The November competition was "open" only, with no set subject, and with member voting for "picture of the night" in various categories.

Judge for the November competition was Bob Miller who lectures in photography at the University of Canberra. He has an extensive background as a photographic practitioner, with a particular involvement in archaeological photography in recent years.

For Bob Miller the technical side is important as well as the "seen" picture. He accepted photographers using either analogue or digital means to produce their photographs. Combine all that with aesthetics in composition, and Western or Eastern presentations of space. Eventually it comes down to communication with others. Does the picture grab the viewer passing by? This appeared to be a more complex version of the usual view about pictures needing "impact".

Bob's commentary was detailed on the use of space in the photos on show, and he remarked on technical qualities, but sometimes rated a picture highly despite some technical deficiencies. He did not like some manipulated images which he thought were overdone in their processing. In monochrome, he remarked on the need to keep enough tonal separation to avoid sooty or smudged tonality. He noted that he'd looked at pictures both from a distance and close, to see if they work from both perspectives.

On only a few occasions did he comment on the overall feeling of a picture, on the type and quality of meaning it appeared to communicate.

There were a few technical tips offered as well. The use of "vibrance" control in Photoshop to improve colours without killing skin tone. The need to choose printing papers that match the subject matter, whether mottled, glossy or whatever.

Again we had a commentary that gave much food for thought. Bob Miller was another of the helpful judges because of the ideas he canvassed and the points he discussed about various pictures.

RG



Bob Miller judging at the November competition

Google will analyse “one trillion” online images

“We’re seeing... a hundred billion images being captured and made available online every year,” is the amazing statement made by R. J. Pittman, Google’s Director of Product Management for Consumer Search Properties. “There are over 750 million camera-phone-equipped mobile phones . . . sold every year, and over 100 million digital cameras . . . sold every year . . . and these numbers continue to accelerate. We envision in the not too distant future, a corpus of over a trillion images online.” (If we divided up those trillion images equally, given the current world population of 6.8 billion plus, every man, woman, child, and infant on earth would get 147 photos.) “So for Google, we see a big opportunity to organize the world’s images. And frankly because there are so many of them, it’s a big challenge, and . . . could be a really big value to our users in the future.”

Pittman goes on to say that Google already searches the Internet for all available images, and indexes them using several techniques. One uses the text that accompanies an image on its Web site, but of course that text may not describe the image very well. “So we have to use other techniques to improve the accuracy and improve the quality of really deciphering what that image is about. And the frontier that’s most interesting and exciting to us in that arena is image processing, computer vision, and visual search . . . that is, actually understanding something about the pixels in the picture, and being able to make closer approximations and estimations of actually what’s in the picture, to help us provide a better search experience when people are looking for something very specific. . . . some of the examples . . . include things like facial recognition, being able to label a picture with you and all of your friends, and then use that as your training picture, to then tell the image search engine to go and find all of the pictures that have yourself and your . . . friends . . . so that it can automatically group your pictures according to who’s in them. This is a hugely powerful feature . . . to be able to actually identify who’s in [the pictures] makes it really easy to sort and find and share images.”

Beyond facial recognition, already built into many digital cameras, Google’s researchers would like to be able to do scene analysis. That is, in addition to recognizing people and faces, they’d like to be able to identify the objects in a picture —say, the Eiffel Tower, the Sydney Opera House, or whatever. For locations that aren’t as well-known as the Eiffel Tower and Sydney Opera House, it will be useful that many photos are already being geo-tagged with GPS location data, either in-camera or afterward.

Photographers’ Rights

The best summary of “photographers’ rights” for Australia, with some State-by-State notes, and information on various other countries, is still the website run by Andrew Nemeth, called 4020 NSW Photo Rights. It covers a lot more than specifically NSW legal issues regarding photography.

So if you have worries about your right to do street photography, whether police can confiscate your camera or order photos deleted, whether you can be part of the great tradition of beach photography, or when copyright issues do and do not apply under Australian law - it’s all here, with plenty of references, other web sites linked, etc.

You’ll find it at:

<http://www.4020.net/words/photorights.php>



Floriade 20, by Brian Rope

Competition	Person	Total
A Grade	Steven Shaw	263
	Judy Parker	248.5
	Dave Bassett	245
	Julie Garran	233.5
	Brian Jones	231
	Brian Rope	208
	Ross Gould	150.5
	Rod Nazer	149.5
	Russell Hunt	144
	Richard Marris	126.5
B Grade	Tate Needham	191
	Alan Pendergast	61.5
	Phil McFadden	56
	Jill Crisp	55
	Frances Turner	51
	Ray Polglaze	45
	Jococoa Phillips	40

The Leader Board at the end of 2008

STILL WANTED—A NEW NAME for “The Cassette”.

CPS members are invited to suggest a new title for this journal, as a feeling has developed that the film-related title currently used might be in need of modernising. Suggestions welcome—please send to the Editor, Ross Gould, at rgou4576@bigpond.net.au

The suggestions will be run past the CPS Committee, and then a list provided to members, to express their preferences and views.

Photographs Wanted for Reproduction in The Cassette

Have some of your photographs received a 4 or 5 score from the judge in the CPS monthly competition? If so, we'd like to reproduce a small version of it in The Cassette.

Digital versions in jpg format can be emailed to the Editor at rgou4576@bigpond.net.au.

Files should be no larger than the size for our projected images competition—that is, 1024 x 768 pixels. Sizes down to half of that (512 x 384) are sufficient for Cassette use.

Issues for Photographers - "Children in Art"

In recent weeks the Australia Council for the Arts has published a draft of Protocols for working with children in art, and the Arts Law Centre of Australia has published a set of fact sheets "to highlight possible legal issues arising in your work with children as an artist" - there is one of these fact sheets for each state and territory, as well as an overview (Federal Law) version. Here I will mainly comment on some aspects of the Australia Council's Draft Protocols.

The protocols suggested by the Australia Council will be revised, particularly as there have already been indications by various commentators that some of the suggested protocols are unworkable, or excessive. We shall have to see what the final version, due out soon, will suggest - suggest, because these will not have the force of law. They are however likely to be treated as the "expected standard" for visual artists, whether photographers, painters, sculptors, or workers in other media. Indeed the protocols state they are meant to apply to "written text" as well.

The protocols deal with issues of nudity, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, as a major issue. Yes, folks, it's back in the public controversy arena - when is "nude not rude"? - for some of course the answer is never; for others, nudity is not inevitably about sex. However the protocols are defined in relation to laws relating to sexuality to a large degree.

One of the surprising - and in my view excessive - suggestions in the protocols is that "contemporary" images are defined as *images or depictions created in the previous 25 years*.

This means, of course that pictures made in say 1988 fall within the definition if the person shown was under 18 years old at the time.

any contemporary images of anyone under the age of 18, will need to have a written declaration from the artist that they followed the relevant laws and regulations of the state they worked in when creating the work. The artist's declaration would also need to confirm that the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child gave permission for distribution of the image.

If the distributing artist or organisation cannot get an artist's declaration, they will need to get permission from the parent(s) or guardian(s) – or from the 'child' if they have since turned 18 – to use the image.

If the work was created with Australia Council funding granted after 1 January 2009, the artist would need to declare that these protocols were followed and the permissions and consents required were obtained.

Where the material includes contemporary images of

anyone under the age of 18 depicted fully or partly naked, application must be made to the Classification Board prior to distribution of the material and any requirements they impose must be followed. Images of infants less than one year old are excluded from this requirement.

This means that if you made pictures of someone twenty or twenty five years ago - who might now be aged in their 30s or early 40s - it will be treated as a "contemporary" image of childhood and subject to the protocols. It is an extreme example of retrospectivity. Fortunately, it does not - at least yet - appear that such a requirement will be given the weight of legal enforcement.

The particular age limit for "children" - of 18 - raises other issues. To quote:

In line with the age limits defined within the National Classification Code, the Australia Council has defined public depictions of anyone under the age of 18 to be depictions of a child.

This raises very strange possibilities. For example, a 17 year old can legally choose to have a sexual relationship with another person (the age of consent being 16, and for some partners 17) but if portrayed nude in what is decided to be "a sexual situation", the portrayer can be accused of creating "child pornography" rather than "pornography" (some forms of the latter are legal). This appears to follow from the use of the law in some Australian jurisdictions, notably Victoria in recent years, of treating people as "children" in some contexts but not others. This is a difficult area, and we may have to wait for clarification - perhaps via a test case or two - before what appear to be legal anomalies are resolved.

The "written depictions" protocols are interesting:

Written depictions

The age definitions of a child are not uniform across the states and territories. However, most have child pornography laws that include prohibitions of text depicting a child in an indecent sexual context or manner. Publishers of text depictions of a child should refer to the Arts Law fact sheets for their state or territory and may wish to seek legal advice.

After reading that, I wondered if Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet should be banned as child porn, as the lovers are under today's age of consent, and are certainly at times portrayed "in a sexual context". This possibility suggests were getting into very silly possibilities if the law is to be enforced in a clueless way (as we have seen happen in the past).

A point that could be made re this protocol is that there is a confusion involved in the statement of "indecent sexual context" - under current law, there appear to be no possibilities of acceptable "sexual context" for those classified as "children". So "indecent" is not required, and is in fact misleading in this context - it's a separate concept. And note that this applies equally to seven year olds and seventeen year olds.

The Australia Council draft protocols can be found at: www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/news_items/draft_children_in_art_protocols_released

And the Arts Law Centre's legal summaries are at: www.artslaw.com.au/LegalInformation/ChildrenCreativeProcessAust.asp

Incidentally, the Arts-Law Centre's legal summaries raised a new issue - that of "employment". It would appear from their reading of current laws that artists can't "employ" persons described as "children" to be nude or semi-nude models. To quote:

In NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia, there are prohibitions against the employment of children while they are nude and, in some cases, portrayed in a sexual context.

David Marr, in the Sydney Morning Herald (14 November 2008) noticed this prohibition and sought comment on it. It "came as rather a shock to Tamara Winikoff of the National Association for the Visual Arts. "Artists have worked on the presumption that parental permission was sufficient," she told the *Herald*. "But it turns out there are more constraints than they thought existed." To her knowledge, no member of the association has been investigated or prosecuted for breaching these laws. "I have never heard of any such thing."

The Uni of NSW academic Professor Catharine Lumby has remarked that one of the difficulties in discussing these matters is the indiscriminate use of the term "child" - as clearly what is age-suitable for one level of development is not for another - sixteen can (and should) deal with life issues that would be wrong for age six. The law tends to compound this problem. "Child" in a legal context usually means under the age of 18, not under the age of 16, despite a common distinction between "child" (up to age 12) and "young person" (under 18 and post-child age) in various jurisdictions.

In relation to portrayals in art, film, or other media, it is not always clear whether 16 or 18 is meant in particu-

lar issues - certainly 18 applies for anything that could be construed as "in a sexual context" or "pornographic", though both descriptions are heavily subject to interpretation, and are not clearly defined in legislation. This leaves open the question of "children" aged 16 or 17 being nude or semi-nude models in non-sexual contexts, and in non-pornographic representations (the traditional "artist's model"). The matter has become an ill-defined minefield, and, as the Arts-Law Centre advises,

The broad scope of the provisions relating to child pornography mean that artists using or depicting children in their work should be very careful where sexual connotations or themes of violence or abuse are involved. The extent to which an artwork shows a child 'in a sexual context' or as a victim of cruelty is a subjective assessment on which opinions may vary widely. It is not a defence to point to consent either by the child or the child's parents. Indeed, a parent who permits a child to be used for pornographic purposes is also guilty of an offence. The fact that the child depicted in a work was not actually the victim of any abuse or cruelty also appears to be irrelevant.

Addendum

These matters have come to a head because of the Henson affair earlier this year. David Marr has now published a book on that, well worth reading because it provides information that didn't make it into newspaper reports, and looks at the various issues fairly and without hysteria. You'll find the book at your local bookshop.

Purely “for the record”

Under changes to our competition rules at an AGM or SGM, this year the recognition of results in the various competition sub-sections was abolished.

Although we sensibly retained divisions—between colour and monochrome in A Grade, and Projected Images continued to be another division—for both A and B Grades, recognition of the winners in each category, until this year a normal part of the competition, was eliminated.

So the following lists are merely a way of indicating who did well in various parts of the competition. They carry no awards or certificates this time.

A Grade

Colour

Dave Bassett 145.5
Steven Shaw 140.5
Judy Parker 127

A Grade

Monochrome

Ross Gould 116
Judy Parker 80.5
Steven Shaw 76.5

A Grade

Projected Images

Brian Rope 91
Dave Bassett 89.5
Brian Jones 80

B Grade

Prints

Tate Needham 176
Phil McFadden 56
Ray Polglaze 45

B Grade

Projected Images

Jocooa Phillips 35
Russell Hunt 33
Alan Pendergast 27

It's clear that the favourite area for competition in A Grade was Colour Prints, and in B Grade, Prints (colour or B/W).

November 2008 Competition results

Competition	Person	Total
A Grade	Julie Garran	38.5
	Steven Shaw	36.5
	Dave Bassett	33
	Marion Millikan	32.5
	Richard Marris	32.5
	Mario Sanguinetti	32
	Graeme Watson	29
	Judy Parker	29
	Brian Jones	27
	Rod Nazer	25
	Russell Hunt	24
	Ross Gould	19
	Brian Rope	18.5
	Murray Foote	18
Margaret Leggoe	17	
Andree Lawrey	11	
B Grade	Tate Needham	35
	Thomas Bush	34.5
	Ray Polglaze	24
	Phil McFadden	20



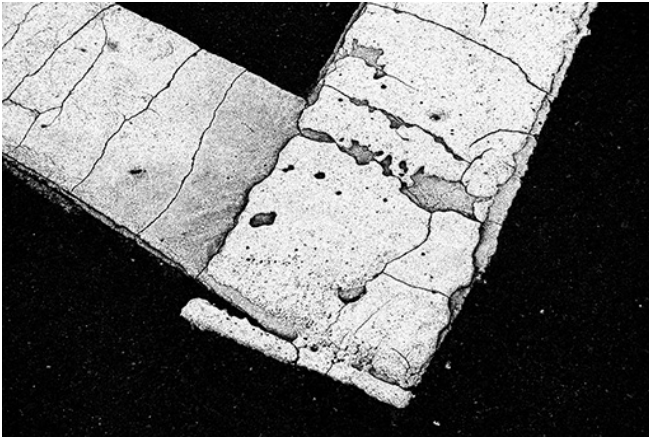
Heads, NGA, by Brian Jones



Evening buses, by Judy Parker



Photo by Mario SAnguinetti



Road Markings, by Judy Parker



Hovering Gulls, by Judy Parker



Photo by Mario SAnguinetti

**National Gallery of Victoria
Ian Potter Centre (Federation Square)**

No standing only dancing

Photographs by Rennie Ellis

31 October 08 – 22 February 09

Galleries 15 & 16, Level 3

Admission free

Photographer Rennie Ellis was renowned for his candid documentary images of contemporary Australian life. He was best known for his photographs of social events, such as music festivals, fashion parades or nightclubs. But his oeuvre also encompassed the grittier side of life.

During his career he photographed life on the streets, sometimes showing the darker aspects of society such as his *Kings Cross* series. Ultimately, Ellis' vision of the world was celebratory; his photographs in this exhibition document the richness and diversity of contemporary life from the 1970s and 1980s.

Please be advised that some artwork in this exhibition contains graphic material that may not be suitable for all audiences.

CPS Editor's Note:

An informative article from *The Age* newspaper, published the year after Ellis's death, is available online at:

www.theage.com.au/news/Arts/Redefining-Rennie/2004/12/11/1102625580170.html



Rennie Ellis

Australia 1940–2003

Hippie, Kings Cross (1970–71)

from the *Kings Cross* series 1971

gelatin silver photograph

25.7 x 17.3 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, 2005

© Rennie Ellis Photographic Archive

State Library of New South Wales

Home Truths

The difficulty of documenting society through a single image has always challenged photographers. The exhibition *Home Truths* presents the photo-interview as a means of accurately recording social issues. The words that accompany each image provide a context that reduces the risk of our misinterpreting the photograph.

Ruth Maddison's images and stories from the township of Eden, together with Hayley Hillis and Pippa Wischer's recording of caravan dwellers throughout the state, give us a rare insight into the practice of photographing and interviewing individuals to capture the stories of lives of ordinary Australians.

Open: 18 August 2008 – 7 December 2008

Picture Gallery, State Library of NSW

Admission: Free