SNAPSHOT

Print Exhibition well received

More than 300 people attended our club's FynArts 2018 Print Exhibition in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall, and the reaction was overwhelmingly positive.

A total of 250 visitors voted for their most favourite print, but many more who attended the festival's opening concert and other concerts in the church, visited the exhibition during interval.

As last year, the votes were spread widely, with 40 of the 48 images receiving at least one vote. Members who did duty at the exhibition reported that several visitors had said they found it difficult to vote for only one print, because of the generally high quality.

The most favourite print, with 26 votes, turned out to be "Water is Kosbaar" (right) by Elizma Fourie.

Second was Misty Valleys (19, right) by Ingrid Grundlingh.

Joint third (17 votes each) were African Wildcat by Gerhard Vosloo (left) and Here I Am (above) by René Dewar.

In fifth place was Dusk on Walker Bay (13, left) by Cathy Bruce.

The exhibition was in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall from 8 to 17 June.

The 48 images exhibited will automatically be considered for our club's entry of 12 prints for the Western Cape Interclub competition later this year.

A certificate and some acceptances

Treurnicht du Toit was awarded a Certificate of Merit for this image, "In die Namib en See se Geselskap", by the Durban, Ballito and Scottburgh (DBS) Coastal Salon.

Another two of his images were accepted for exhibition by the same salon.

Elizma Fourie's audio-visual A Smile to Remember was accepted by the Garden Route AV Salon.

Two members rise to a new level

Another two club members were promoted to a higher Star level. René Dewar had collected enough points (100) and Golds (25) by June to become a four-star photographer, while Alan Davidson had enough (40 points and 10 Golds) for promotion to three-star level. René will need 200 points and 60 Golds to reach the next level, and Alan 100 points and 25 Golds, unless they collect points through acceptances and awards from salons.

Another new member

Lourens Theron, director of the well-known Hermanuis building contractors Theron Bros, has joined as a new member after attending a monthly club meeting as guest.

The month ahead

The next meeting will be in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall, as usual, on Wednesday 1 August at 19:00. Members may enter up to three images of their choice for evaluation, and one image on the Set Subject, Black and White, for discussion. The best set-subject image will be decided by voting.

Black and white photography

By Phil Hall and Chris Rutter, techtrader.com

The timeless quality of black and white photography makes it a must-try subject for any photographer.

How to see in black and white

When it comes to black-and-white imagery, being able to 'see' how your final shot will look is a key skill. It's important to understand how the color image you see through your camera's viewfinder or on the rear screen will translate into a striking monochrome image. To get the best results, you have to look beyond the colours, and instead try to visualise how a shot's shapes, textures and tones will be recorded.

The success of your black-and-white shots relies on several different factors, but the main thing to look out for is a main subject that will appear in a significantly different shade of grey to the background. Then look out for subtleties of tone and texture that will add depth to your images.

It's tempting to think that white balance doesn't matter if you're going to remove the color, but because the success of any conversion relies on successfully translating colors into attractive tones, it's important to capture an image without any colour casts.

Recognising potential shots when out in the field can take practice, so why not try converting some of your existing images to black and white to get a better feel for what will work?

Try a graphic composition

Simple shapes and a strong composition virtually guarantee striking black-and-white images. With their straight lines and dramatic angles, man-made structures are ideal for this type of shot, although for more organic shapes you can also try working with trees, rocks or foliage.

To make the most of graphic shapes, try to make your composition as simple as possible. Keep an eye out for plain backgrounds, and try shooting with the subject at an angle.

High-contrast lighting can really help to enhance graphic shapes, so make the most of strong side lighting from the sun. If you're using your own lighting, position a single light to one side of the subject.

Here, a slow shutter speed of 30 secs has made the dark sky even more dramatic

Strong, direct light creates crisp shadows, which make graphic subjects in their own right.

Try this – minimalist mono

One of the most popular ways to get simple graphic images is to use long exposures. This technique, used either after dark or with a strong ND filter, will render water and clouds as a smooth, soft blur, focusing all the attention on fixed objects in the frame.

As you'll be dealing with some pretty long exposures (in some cases 30 seconds or longer), a tripod is an essential piece of kit.

Light and shade – high and low key

Successful black and white images don't always have to contain an even mix of light and dark tones. Look for subjects that have mainly light tones to produce clean-looking 'high-key' images.

These images work best when you have a light-colored background to work with, and also soft, diffused lighting to prevent too many dark shadows spoiling the high-key effect.

Close-ups, still lifes and portraits – where you often have control over the lighting and background – make good subjects for the high-key treatment, but don't discount the possibility of shooting high-key landscapes when there's snow or mist, as these conditions are naturally dominated by lighter tones.

Alternatively, try shooting scenes made up of mainly shadows and midtones. The dark tones give a sense of mystery, making it an effective technique for intense portraits.

For successful 'low-key' images you need to make sure that little or no light falls onto your background, so only the main subject is lit.

This is usually achieved by controlling the lighting using flash or continuous lighting, such as a reading lamp, but you can achieve low-key results using daylight alone; you just need to search out areas of shadows to use.

Add essential mood and drama

Although it's relatively simple to give any image the black-and-white treatment, creating the kind of dramatic, moody black and white images you see in the portfolios of many a pro is all about choosing the right subject, getting the lighting right and making subtle but effective adjustments post-shoot.

When it comes to the right subject, you should look out for scenes that are packed with plenty of texture and detail, along with strong graphic elements.

The lighting needs to lend itself to the style of image. Dark skies are ideal, especially if they are combined with sunlight on foreground subjects to create maximum contrast. But any situation where you can capture plenty of detail in the sky and some contrast in the foreground will do; you may just have to work a little harder on your adjustments to add the atmosphere you need.

The Photoshop techniques you'll need to use on shots like this aren't difficult, using Dodge and Burn tools to selectively lighten and darken the image, as well as local contrast adjustments on Curves adjustment layers.

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Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit.