

MAY 2015

It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm in our group this year, along with so many new faces – welcome and thanks to everyone.

This month's newsletter contains reports from speaker Kathryn Jolly and judge Ian Watson, as well as information about the 2015 hEAdoN Photographic Festival, our annual smorgasbord of images and ideas.

Two wonderful festivals happen in Sydney this time every year – one to give us lots of inspiration (hEAdoN) and the other to take the camera to – Vivid, which starts 22 May till 8 June. This is our individual challenge to create unique images among the thousands of other photographers happily snapping away at the light festival.

Our aim at BMPG is to improve our photography, through learning and working together. Having two different types of meetings each month, as well as Project of Passion, all helps with this. If you see an exciting exhibition or hear an interesting talk elsewhere, why not share it here in our monthly newsletter.

Another way to share information and images is via our closed Facebook page. If you would like to join this group, please let Anne Baker know – she is doing a fabulous job of managing the group and putting up ideas to share. Thanks Anne.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Monday
11th Exhibition Night:
DOORS
Judge: Harley Rustin

Monday
18th PROJECT OF PASSION
with Mentors:
Geoff Beatty & Dot Radley

Monday
25th WORKSHOP 2
- RAW conversions
- What do we see?

& NEXT MONTH - JUNE

Monday
8th Exhibition Night: **FROM ABOVE, FROM BELOW**
Judge: Judy Thistleton-Martin

Monday
15th PROJECT OF PASSION
with Mentors:
Geoff Beatty & Dot Radley

Monday
22nd GUEST SPEAKER:
Sydney Morning Herald Pro
photographer



Blue Mountains Photography Group

The Blue Mountains Photography Group aims to support our shared love of photography, by providing a forum in which to learn, develop skills, discuss images and encourage each other. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Monday nights each month at the Presbyterian Church hall, Macquarie Road, Springwood, 7.30 for 8pm. Visitors welcome.

Guest speakers:**KATHRYN JOLLY – Portraiture**

Kathryn has set up her own business in a very competitive market, working hard to learn as much as she could and find her own photographic voice. (kathrynjolly.com.au)

Being largely self-taught, Kathryn searched for ways to help improve her knowledge. As she didn't hang out with other photographers, she didn't feel intimidated by what others said. She joined some meet-up groups, listened to what was said and took the information she wanted, but after finding herself disagreeing with the speakers, started her own meet-up for beginners.



After finding her chosen area, photographing children, was so competitive, she took a stall at a wedding expo offering herself cheaply to start with. Her areas of work now include weddings, families, couples, all based around portraits. She commented that weddings are just documentaries but couples can be guided. With portraits the subjects need to be put at ease.

Light is of great importance in photography. Kathryn prefers to use natural light, but you have to work with what you have got. She uses flash for weddings or if gloomy outside, but the most important light tool is a reflector or several. They are used to add light, particularly catch lights in the eyes. Reflectors are available cheaply on line. Look for the bigger ones as they give a broader light source, and oval ones are easy to prop. They have silver, gold, white and black as well as a diffuser. The silver gives sharp, bright light, the white is softer, gold adds a warm colour so be careful, the black can add shadow by subtracting light from an area, while the diffuser gives soft shadow. Check the subject's light and also look for problems such as blotchy light or reflected colour. Subtractive lighting – having a large shaded area behind – can make everything behind the subject dark without the need for backdrops. Light is important – learn it!

We were shown many images from recent shoots Kathryn had completed. Her style is individual – “informal but beautiful; respectful and loving”. She enjoys interacting with the subjects, getting them to enjoy the experience and taking images more on the casual rather than formal style. When on a professional job, she will not take any shoot without meeting the couple beforehand so they know each other. She does a shoot plan before any job and carries two lists with her – the must get shots and the interest shots to try. Group shots have people walking and talking, jumping, interacting.

When working on portraits, always have yourself ready before the subject. Find the light and know its intensity and direction. You still need to face the light on an overcast day. Look for the background so there is nothing weird behind. Then you can ask the subject to pose. When completing a shoot, particularly family shoots, put up a whole collection of photos, maybe 50, and let them choose which ones they want.

The usual question about lenses – Kathryn uses prime lenses (full frame equivalent) 35mm, 50mm, 85mm and 100mm macro. Again, she stressed to learn our lenses and how they work.

In working to improve what we do, she suggested learning from others, but stressed to look up photographers better than you and watch their work, that way we aspire to learn and improve. A good place to get posing ideas is on pinterest – start with 5 and learn them. Meetup.com is a good place to find groups for shooting excursions. THANKS KATHRYN FOR YOUR INSPIRATION.

EXHIBITION NIGHT: BLACK & WHITE

Tips from Ian Watson as he was judging on the night:

In beginning his judging on the night, Ian started by telling us his criteria:

- Impact / WOW factor
- Image invites exploration and looking into further
- The thought behind the image, the story it tells
- The image is beyond the cliché
- Of course, there are the technical aspects of the image as well as composition and cropping
- B&W impact in the contrast, unless it is intentionally low or high key
- Tonal range used to enhance the image

During his appraisal of images, he gave the following hints:

- Use a polarizing filter on water
- Look for separation of figures from the background, either through depth of field or tonally
- Too tight cropping can cut storytelling
- To emphasise detail, use gloss or pearl paper, and matte paper for diffuse images
- Our eye can cope with large areas of black if there are areas of interest and also small bits of white, but not large areas of blown out white
- With macro images there needs to be something extra to take it past the botanical
- Don't forget to look at the background – would it be better to take a step left or right?

Thanks Ian – not only an exhibition, but a workshop in looking at images.

OUTING: MT WILSON GARDEN FESTIVAL

What a great day to head to the hills. Our intrepid bunch left home in the dark to catch the sweet light of morning for our April outing. Mt Wilson was awash with autumn colour, and we were certainly not the only group to be there with cameras – in fact, everywhere you looked there was someone with a camera! Thanks to Shirley for organising us to get there and enjoy the scenery, and hopefully we all managed to create some beautiful shots. Look forward to them being shared at exhibition nights.

SPRINGWOOD FOUNDATION DAY EXHIBITION

While our images were on display, viewers were asked to vote for their favourite image – ie People's Choice. There were 170-ish votes across a wide range of images, with the favourites being

- 1 - "Aftermath" Mandy Ferretti
- 2 - "Flow" David Jenkins
- 3 - "Hands" Robyn Cook, "Alaskan Husky" David Thomas, "Coffee Time" Ian Watson

The winner of the gift voucher was Christine Ward from Woodford.

With Ted Szafraniec away overseas at the moment, there is no Exhibition Reviewed listing this month. However, there are so many exhibitions and opportunities for us to partake of, so do get out and enjoy.

hEAd oN photo festival

This is the annual festival for the whole of the month of May. Although based in Sydney, there are exhibitions in Katoomba, Penrith, Werrington, Parramatta and Auburn, as well as other areas north and south of the city.

New this year is a festival hub, running from 2nd to 10th May only, in the Lower Town Hall. This has screenings and talks. While the festival lasts for 31 days, some exhibitions are on for shorter times, and some continue into June. The best way to find what's on and where, is to check their website at www.headon.com.au.

Some of our BMPG friends are exhibiting this year, so you may like to add them to your go-to list:

Nebuli Arts Group Show at the Incinerator Art Space, 2 Small Street, Willoughby, have two exhibitions. 14 May – 01 June: "Homage" showing individual interpretations from the monuments that societies raise in homage to iconic figures and events, to modern interpretations of historical techniques and approaches in photography. This includes Des Crawley and Susan Buchanan.

27 May – 14 June. "Unseen Sense – Conscious and Verbal States" and explores those eye pricks of a moment illuminating the unseen senses. This group includes Dawn Zandstra.

Also at this space, the **Northside Creative Photography Group** celebrate 60 years with their group show 09 May – 27 May. Not sure who is included, but Steve Mullarkey is part of this group.

Len Metcalf is part of two exhibitions – Naked Lens is on at Gallery Mercure, the Mercure Sydney, Pots Point, 17 May – 23 June; also Christine Dengate & Len Metcalf "You + Me = Love" at Ambo Ars, Shop 1/80 Enmore Rd, Newtown, 09 May – 10 June.

Blackheath has quite a few exhibitions. **Andrew Merry** is at the Hat Hill Gallery 17 May – 09 June with "Fire, Cicadas & Other Phenomena". **Peter Hill** shows "The Moody Blue" at Virgin Walls Gallery 15 May – 31 May, 251a Great Western Hwy, while the **Blue Mountains Heritage Centre** at the end of Govetts Leap Road, there are 2 group shows "Another Side", 04 May – 27 June & "In My Place" 03 May – 31 May.

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre features a group exhibition including **Ann Niddrie** and **Peter Adams**. Called "Head in the Clouds – Glimpse of an Artist" it runs 13 May – 03 June, it is a pop-up gallery in the main street of Katoomba as well as the foyer of the gallery showing creative portraits of Blue Mountains based artists.

Also in **Katoomba** is "Fractured Fairy Tales" showing at Gosh You're Gorgeous Photography Studio & Gallery, 1/187 Katoomba Street, 10 May – 28 May. This looks at some of the grim realities of childhood stories.

While up that way, Cindy Hart & Emma Rowan-Kelly have an exhibition at Wild Valley Art Park, 321 Blaxland Rd **Wentworth Falls**, 14 May – 01 June. "Dichotomy" has divergent views of our highly constructed human reality versus the vast wilderness in which we are absent.

Penrith City Library has several exhibitions by Luciano Vranich looking at street photography and at original sin. Penrith Regional Gallery also has an exhibition, though not on as expected when we visited last week.

UWS Art Gallery, Werrington North Campus Building AD, features the work of Juliana Swatko, a lecturer in photography. She works with a low tech Holga camera and film, reconstructing them into impressionistic panoramic images. 09 April – 30 June.

Kingswood TAFE, Trapezium Gallery, has 3 exhibitions running one after the other 22 May – 19 June, featuring works by student photographers.

These are the local and connected exhibitions, just some of the many showing in May. The best thing is to check their website for all you may wish to see: www.headon.com.au.

EXHIBITION THEMES:

“Doors” is one of our interesting, non-standard themes this year, offering a chance to challenge ourselves with different thinking. This doesn't just mean a collection of doors (though it could), but the chance to also look through doors to the world beyond. Judy T-M has given a list of ideas on our website, so check them out (www.bmpg.org.au - on right hand side under Latest you will find the link to definitions). She also suggests searching images on-line for more ideas.

UPCOMING THEMES:

June – From Above, From Below

July – Nature

August – In the Style of ... Dorothea Lange, Irving Penn, Freeman Patterson, Dianne Arbus – this gives us the areas of documentary, fashion, nature, impressionism and portraiture

September – Kids

Of course, every exhibition night also includes an open section for images of your own choice. Don't forget to check the website for the rules for exhibitions, such as image sizes, prints and digitals.

MACRO WORKSHOP:

Dave Glazebrook's macro session will be on Monday 3rd August. Booking essential. There are still a couple of spots available, so be quick.

LIBRARY:

Over the past few years we have been building our library of photography related books covering technical aspects, history, creativity and individual photographers. These are all available for short-term loan by members on an honour system. Please make sure you write your borrowings in the book and bring back next meeting.

If you have any particular requests for acquisitions, please let Judy Thistleton-Martin know. We have a small budget, so within reason!

MATS FOR DISPLAYING IMAGES:

Mats are being accessed and will be available on a regular basis at BMPG meetings. These will be initially free for new members and a small charge for others (around \$3-\$12).

WEEKEND AWAY:

Following previous weekends away which were very successful and much appreciated by those who attended, it is proposed we have another this week – in the Hawks Nest / Myall Lakes area on weekend of 29-30 August. This will be a chance to practice our photography, work with others, enjoy the variety of sea / landscapes, still crisp enough for morning mist. Vacancies still exist for this event – see Shirley.

Your BMPG Committee are:

President – Shirley Steel

Vice President – Robyn Cook

Secretary – Mandy Ferretti

Treasurer – Anne Baker

Public Officer – Ted Szafraniec

Member – David Jenkins

Member – Jeannie McInnes

Member – Ann Wharton

Committee Meetings held 1st Monday evening of the month.

BMPG
WE ARE:

**Blue Mountains
Photography Group**

The Secretary

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articles, information, photos
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