

Graham Harris – Photographic Retrospective

25 February 2020

Early Years

I was first introduced to photography by my father Alan Harris who took slide images with a Kodak camera of our family and the places we lived in NSW. Periodically we would hold slide nights which was an enjoyable way to look back at our family and where we had lived. Several years ago I digitised all those slides.

My parents bought me my first camera (a Kodak Instamatic 104 camera which used the 126 film cartridge) sometime in the late 1960s (this camera was released in July 1965). I still have the photos I took with this camera – landscapes at Coffs Harbour whilst on holiday. I used this camera until I was 21 when my uncle Bill gave me my first SLR – a Praktica MTL3.

I was at university at the time and my photographs were focussed on sporting events and people I knew. I moved to Queensland in 1981 to work with the Department of Primary Industries. While working with the DPI I was provided with two Pentax K1000 cameras which I used to take black and white photographs and slide photographs for work. These were mostly focussed on crops being grown by farmers, and associated pests and diseases. Julie and I married in 1983 and my private photography focussed on our three children – Nathaniel, Jessica and Luke – and on the places we lived – Inglewood, Monto, Biloela and Toowoomba.

Toowoomba Photographic Society

I attended my first Toowoomba Photographic Society meeting in 2004 and have been a member since then. I entered his first TPS Aggregate Competition that year and have been entering images since then – initially as slides and then as digital images following the purchase of a Nikon 5700 Coolpix camera for work. My interest in nature and landscape photography took off during my Churchill Fellowship trip to the USA and Israel in 2005. Following this trip I purchased my first digital SLR – the Konica Minolta Dynax 5D in November 2005 (just before Sony purchased Konica Minolta).

I upgraded my camera to the Sony A550 in January 2010 – this is still my primary camera.

I participated as a B grade competitor from April 2004 until the end of the 2009-10 competition year. I have been entering as an A Grade competitor since the start of the 2010-11 competition year. It is interesting to reflect on the performance of my images over that time (see the following graphs).

National and International Competitions

I entered my first National competition – the 19th Sutherland Shire National in 2007. Here I gained my first acceptance with the image “Radiant” – a water lily photographed in a dam at my parents block at Gympie. I got the competitive bug then and entered further National competitions, and my first International, the Maitland International Salon in January 2009 where the slide “Radiant” once more received an acceptance.

Initially, I focused on National competitions (entering a total of 18) but soon started focusing on international competitions (having entered 168 to date). Entering these competitions has been challenging but enjoyable. The greatest benefit has been the receipt of the catalogues produced by the competitions entered where you can see the best images from the competition, and at times are fortunate enough to have one of yours published as well. To date I have 120 titles which have received acceptances in these competitions – 54 in Open Colour, 40 in Nature, 19 in Open Monochrome and 7 in Photo Travel sections. The proportion of acceptances received for images submitted to competition vary significantly.

I have put together a slideshow of the 35 top images that have had a success rate of more than 20% - that is, they have been successful in more than 20% of the competitions entered.

Photographic Honours

Not long after receiving my first acceptances I became aware of the Australian Photographic Society Honours scheme. Photographic Honours are achieved through the receipt of sufficient acceptances across a significant number of titles in competitions that have been accredited with particular photographic organisations. Honours achieved to date are:

Year	Honours	Detail	Organisation
2012	LAPS	Licentiateship	APS
2014	AAPS	Associateship	APS
2015	AFIAP	Artiste FIAP	FIAP
2018	QPSA	ROPA Qualified Distinction	PSA
2018	GPU-CR1	Crown1 Distinction	GPU
2019	FAPS	Fellowship	APS
2019	GPU-CR2	Crown 2 Distinction	GPU

APS = Australian Photographic Society

FIAP = Federation Internationale de l'Art Photographique

GPU = Global Photographic Union

PSA = Photographic Society of America

Currently I am focused on gaining the next level of honours with each of these organisations. I am focused on entering International competitions which are accredited with FIAP, PSA and GPU. In this way each acceptance gained goes towards each of the distinctions offered from these organisations. I primarily target open colour, open monochrome, nature and travel photography categories in each of the competitions I enter.

Post-Processing

I generally use limited post-processing of my images. I'll demonstrate my usual post-processing with some of my most successful images:

- Terns comparing catch
- The young master
- Steer wrangling
- Female Satin Bowerbird