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Kiwi takes out Grand Prize in Australasian photography competition Sony celebrates best photography talent in 2020 Sony Alpha Awards



Grand Prize Winner of the 2020 Sony Alpha Awards, Oscar Hetherington of Otago, New Zealand Titled, "Back Wash", the image was shot using the Alpha 7 III camera and FE 28-70mm F3.5-5.6 OSS lens

Auckland, 2 July 2020: Today marks the fifth annual [Sony Alpha Awards](#), celebrating Australian and New Zealand photographers of all skill levels and the spectacular imagery, captured on Sony Alpha cameras and lenses. The Alpha Awards aspire to drive creativity, reward professionals and enthusiasts alike, and showcase the greatest photography work.

Over 3,000 stunning images were submitted from professional and amateur photographers for the chance to be recognised for their talents.

Oscar Hetherington from Wanaka in New Zealand took out the Grand Prize for his emotive Seascape image, titled *"Back Wash"*, and will receive Sony camera gear up to the value of \$10,000. Oscar continues New Zealand's legacy of dominating the Alpha Awards, being the fourth consecutive Kiwi to win the Grand Prize out of the five years the competition has run. In addition to Oscar's success, 2020 saw Kiwis taking out almost half the individual categories. Each category winner receives up to \$2,000 worth of Sony gear.

The winners across each category were carefully selected by 26 judges who are all acclaimed for their body of work and experience across the 12 categories. Additionally, Scott Gray, CEO of the World Photography Organisation, judged the overall Grand Prize winner. Based on the judge's selections Sony will give away \$30,000 worth of Sony camera gear.

Scott Gray, CEO of the World Photography Organisation commented, *“I was incredibly honoured to be asked to judge the overall winner in this year’s Sony Alpha Awards. Each category has a strong judging panel that selected the finalists for that category and I was mindful to select an image that respected their judgements as well as looking for something that truly stood out as a strong and independent image. It is incredibly challenging selecting a single winning image that sees one comparing astrophotography with portrait, but I was looking for something that upheld the diversity of the awards but also reflected in the creativity of the photographers participating as well as the beauty of the medium itself.*

It is very difficult to capture a single image which is engaging, elegant and timeless which is why I chose Oscar Hetherington’s “Back Wash”. The sea is a vast, breath-taking, intimidating and constantly changing force that is difficult to compartmentalise into a single image and I believe this image goes a long way in achieving that; it is both breath-taking and calm. A wonderful angle and really succinct frame; it is an image that will stand the test of time and one would ever tire of looking at it.”

The winners for the 2020 Sony Alpha Awards include:

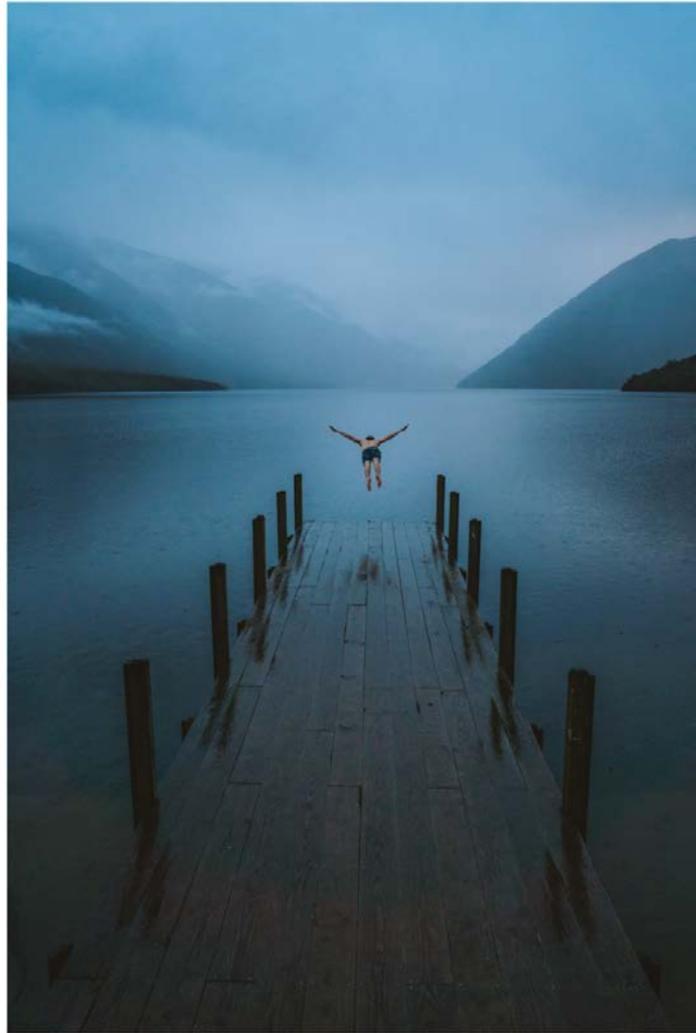
- **Grand Prize:** Oscar Hetherington, NZ
- **Astrophotography:** Laurie Winter, NZ
- **City/Street:** David Symonds, AU
- **Compact Camera:** Gary White, AU
- **Creative:** Grant Galbraith, AU,
- **Editorial:** Ilan Wittenberg, NZ
- **Landscape:** Jesse Little, AU
- **Nature:** Simon Runting, NZ
- **Portrait:** Judi Thies, AU
- **Sport:** Scott Barbour, AU
- **Seascape:** Karl Dalyell, AU
- **Wedding:** Benjamin Lane, NZ
- **Youth:** Alex Marshall, NZ

Jun Yoon, Head of Sony Digital Imaging ANZ commented, *“We are thrilled to be marking the fifth year of our Sony Alpha Awards competition, and honoured to be able to showcase the amazing work of our winners. Every year we are blown away with the high calibre of work that the Sony photography community produce, and 2020 has been no exception.*

With this year’s competition welcoming entries from new categories including Compact Camera and Creative, we are excited to recognise and celebrate the talents and passions of all our Sony camera users, no matter their gear of choice. We can’t wait to see what next year has in store.

As always, the Sony Alpha Awards saw an incredible range of work for the Youth category, which invites young creatives (aged between 11-18 years old) to showcase their talents by submitting a photo in line with this year’s theme (“Evolution”) via Instagram. We look forward to seeing our young Australian and New Zealand community continue on their photography journey.”

Each year the youth competition sees an overwhelming response across Australia and New Zealand, with two finalists and overall winner chosen by Australia’s Digital Imaging Ambassador and Travel Photographer, [Tyson Mayr](#). We are pleased to confirm this year’s youth winner is, Alex Marshall from Blenheim, New Zealand.



*Youth Category Prize Winner of the 2020 Sony Alpha Awards, Alex Marshall
Titled, "A Celebration of Solitude", the image was shot using the Alpha 6400 SEL1670Z lens*

Tyson comments, *"It's an honour to be a part of the Sony Alpha Awards and celebrate young, aspiring photographers. It's never an easy task choosing the two finalists.*

The theme for the final challenge was Solitude and while both images were incredible, I chose Alex Marshall's image as the winner. His use of leading lines and overall composition drew my eye immediately to the subject, who perfectly encapsulated the theme. Staring at his image, I actually felt as though I was out there by myself, with not a person in sight. Both photographers have blown me away this year, the images they have provided, especially given the competition time constraints for the final challenge, are some of the highest quality images I have seen yet and I can't wait to follow these young photographers careers."

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Notes to Editors

Please see online photo gallery [here](#) for the full list of winners and runner ups.

2020 Sony Alpha Awards - Prize and Category Summary

Prizes:

- Grand Prize: Sony digital imaging gear to the value of AUD \$10,000

- Category Prize Winners: Sony digital imaging gear to the value of AUD \$2,000
- Youth Finalist Prize: Includes Sony camera and lens kit, to the value of AUD \$3600
- Youth Category Prize: Sony digital imaging gear to the value of AUD \$2,000

Categories:

Astrophotography: A photograph that prominently features the night sky.

- Composite images that do not alter the explicit content of the image are allowed (i.e. exposure blending, colour compositing, dark frame subtraction).
- Pure starfield images may be submitted, but judging will be based on aesthetic and pictorial criteria; advanced astronomy work may not be highly awarded.

City / Street: This category covers any image that documents life in an urban centre. Both people and places will be considered.

Compact Camera: A category to celebrate photos captured on Sony fixed-lens cameras. The Compact Camera category has a theme of "Discovery" in 2020, for entrants to interpret as they wish, across all genres. This is a new category for 2020.

Creative: A category which rewards originality, experimentation and imagination, Creative is for photo- composite images. Any number of photos can be used and edited together to form an image of a subject, object, environment, idea, or concept. All elements used in the composite must be captured by the submitting photographer, and should the submission reach the final round of judging, entrants will be required to submit the original layered file and/or contributing images. This is a new category for 2020.

Editorial: Submitted images should be drawn from a body of work, commissioned or otherwise. Subject matter can range from commercial work to photo reportage documenting current affairs, newsworthy events, etc. For an image which reaches the final stage of judging, the photographer will be required to submit the full body of work for context. This is a returning category for 2020.

Landscape: A photo of a place and/or thing. Photo compositing in this category for technical purposes will not be penalised. Photographs that qualify for consideration in Astrophotography or Seascape are unlikely to receive an award in this category.

Nature: A photo of the natural living world. Animals, plants, fungi - if it's alive, it counts. Domesticated animals and animals in clearly artificial settings or captivity are unlikely to be awarded.

Portrait: A photo of a person who is aware of the photographer and participating in the creation of the photo. Judging in this category will reward photos that reveal more than just the surface of the subject. Candid photography is not considered in this category.

Seascape: A landscape photograph that prominently features the sea.

Sports: A photo of a sport being played, or related to the culture of a sport.

Wedding: Photography documenting a wedding. Documentary work related to a wedding will also be considered.

Youth: The theme for the preliminary 2020 Youth competition was Evolution, and was run via Instagram. For the final challenge between the two finalists, the theme was Solitude; the images displayed for the Youth category are from this final challenge. For full details, visit the [Youth Competition page](#).

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