

Kodak Professional Gold Awards

The Photographer's Mail is proud to present the top-10 photographers from the Kodak Professional Gold Awards (the first is on the cover), recognizing excellence in New Zealand's professional portrait and wedding photographers.



Wendy and Chris Photography (www.wendyandchris.co.nz)

Wendy Wiley

Auckland photographer Wendy Wiley captured this stunning shot of bride Debbie Geddes for a Love Your Dress shoot following her wedding to groom Damion.

“The Love Your Dress shoot meant Damion could have a suit on rather than his kilt that he got married in, and Debbie kept her hair down,” the photographer says.

Wiley added the balloon to inject a contrasting element to the picture without going the typical flowers route.



Silverlight Photography (www.facebook.com/silverlightphotography.co.nz)

Sarah Hare

Sarah Hare, on Auckland's North Shore, set out to create an emotive portrait of a young boy on the cusp of becoming a man, whose tribe has faced the destruction of their pride.

“As a young brave turning warrior he now faces his future with bold defiance in reverence of his heritage.”

The image was shot with a Nikon D700 and 50mm f/1.4 lens.



Paul Michaels Photography (www.paulmichaels.co.nz)

Paul Burden

Wellington's Paul Burden was the only photographer in the top 10 to have multiple images earn the highest award. He says having a couple suggest a new venue for their wedding shoot is a lot of fun, as it gives him the opportunity to visit a fresh location to plan out creative new shots like this one.

“Te Papa museum turned out to be such a cool venue for pictures, and this shot of the bride and groom dancing at the marae turned out exactly as I'd planned it.”



Martin Bentley Photography (www.martinbentleyphotography.co.nz)

Martin Bentley-Smith

Hawke's Bay wedding photographer Martin Bentley-Smith shot this luscious bride and groom image in Auckland's grand old railway station. Spying a shaft of light coming through the window, he positioned the couple, exposed for the highlights, and lay on the floor to capture the reflection. "This beautiful light was only there for a brief moment, as within minutes of capturing this image the sun came out from behind the clouds and flooded the room with light," he explains.



Mel Waite Photography (www.melsfotos.com)

Melissa Waite

At a client's house for a family portrait shoot, the Wellington-based wedding and portrait photographer unexpectedly managed to capture this delightful pet portrait of Kirby the family dog.

He was to be kept outside until he was ready to be added to the family portrait at the last minute, but when he sat outside the dog door whimpering and looking forlorn, the photographer seized the opportunity.

"It was so clear that he just wanted to be inside with everybody, I couldn't resist capturing it, and honestly this shot captures his personality better than anything else I got on the day," admits Waite.



Paul Michaels Photography (www.paulmichaels.co.nz)

Paul Burden

Wellington wedding and portrait photographer Paul Burden captured this distinctive bride and groom shot on a blustery day at Island Bay beach. He says it's always lovely when people want to include their adored pets in their special day, but it can present challenges for the photographer. "We had just seconds to get this picture before the dog ran off and the couple retreated from the Wellington weather."

Clare Gordon

Hamilton wedding and portrait photographer Clare Gordon had to contend with an extremely bright, sunny day in creating this successful image, seeking shelter from the harsh sun. “I was looking for an area of soft, diffused light that reflected the delicateness of the girl and provided an ethereal mood to the capture,” she says. The beautiful light combined with the subject’s contemplative pose provided Gordon with the emotional connection with the viewer she set out to establish.



Clare Gordon Photography (www.claregordonphotography.com)



Alice Doig Photography (www.alicedoigphotography.co.nz)

Alice Doig

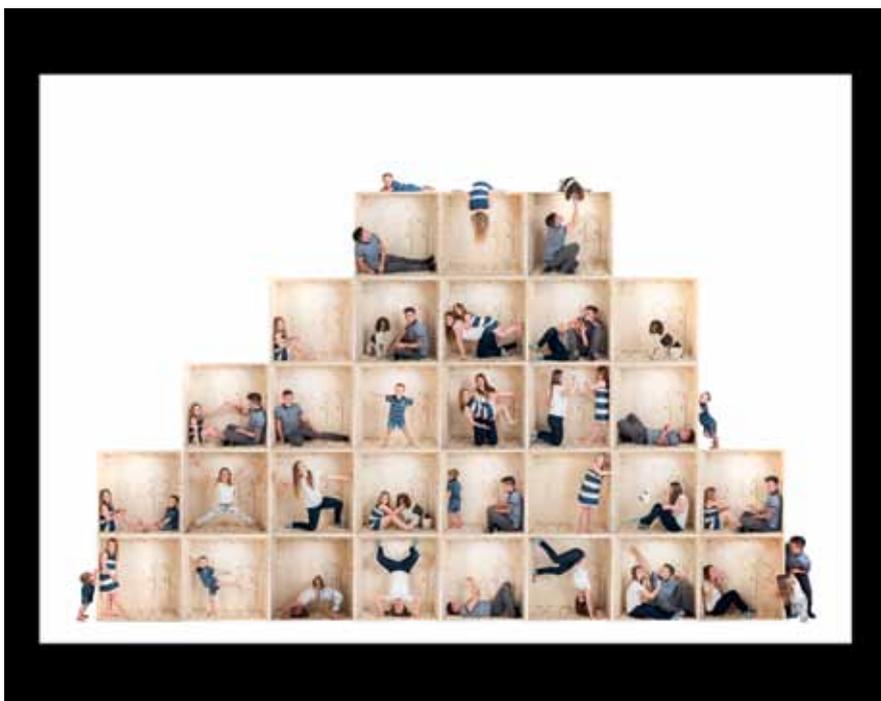
Based on Auckland’s Waiheke Island, portrait and wedding photographer Alice Doig created this image in a retro-styled cafe after the young couple’s plans for a beach-based pregnancy shoot was spoiled by a bad forecast. “I chose the spot on the red couch because of the full-length glass door next to it, which provided lovely side lighting,” Doig explains. This was her third year entering the awards, where she added three golds to her tally.

Haran Sivathasan

Shooting a family portrait session, Wellington photographer Haran Sivathasan managed to capture this spirited portrait of young Carl during a quiet moment. “Carl was full of energy on the day, typical of any four-year-old,” says the photographer. “After running around and falling over a couple of times, he sat on a rock for a quick break.” Mindfulness was key; as Sivathasan saw a cheeky smile appearing on the boy’s face, he quickly captured the candid moment.



Haran Photography (www.haran.co.nz)



Tasman Photography (www.tasmanphotography.co.nz)

James Winch

Taking his cue from the intro for *The Brady Bunch* television series, Nelson photographer James Winch pushed the grid idea further to create a montage using a series of square images shot with a 50mm lens. “The hard things with this type of photo is to visualize ahead of time what the end photo may look like so you can get interaction between the family.” He says he found the format a fun way to express the family’s unique personality and deliver a portrait with a difference.