

**Tutor Report**

**Student Name:** Robert Burton

**Student Number:** 498099

**Course:** The Art of Photography

**Assignment Number:** 5

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*My Student responses to Klaus' Report are written in blue, as per Assignment 1,2,3 & 4*

**Learning points from this assignment:**

- **Watch for hotspots of light in the subject**
- **Experiment with Levels to bring up detail in the subject.**

**Other than the manipulation of images using software I was happy that I have completed this assignment well.**

Dear Robert,

**Huge congratulations to the submission of your final assignment and therefore successfully completing this course!**

Your images make a successful narrative series. I like the fact that the name of the boat appears in several shots, thereby making clear, even without accompanying text, that this image series follows a journey of this boat.

Your opening image, the upright oar against the water surface, is simple yet stunning and very effective.



Technically, what makes it successful is the fact that the oar stands out very sharp against the out of focus background and that it catches the light very well therefore showing a punchy colour against a greyish monochrome background. The composition works well by being slightly asymmetrical. The image sets the tone for what is to come by showing a detail that evokes the whole without actually showing it, which is a type of image I personally like very much.

The second image, 'Narrative 1', follows this idea of showing such a detail. Again the image is technically well accomplished and also well composed. I like

the blur in the front and at the back of the oars. The warm brown tone contrasts well with the colder blue tone of the surrounding.



‘Narrative 2’ introduces the *Rebel* by cropping in on its front with the name prominently visible, therefore providing a successful element to the flow of the

narrative. The image is technically well accomplished and shows sumptuous colours.



The reflection adds interest to the water surface. Even though I understand that you framed/cropped the image in order to take in the reflection, for my taste, the image could have benefitted from either a closer crop, maybe even cutting some of the top of the boat or opposite to that a larger crop showing slightly more surround.

‘Narrative 3’ is certainly a super-stunning image, technically flawless and with sumptuous colours. As you say yourself it makes quite a contrast to the other images which show the sea in a very clam state. The way you framed the Cobb Wall so it ‘wiggles’ into the shot from the front left, and the line of the horizon make a well-balanced composition.





‘Narrative 4’ now shows the boat with a team in it. The link to the previous images is nicely made through the upstanding oar and also the prominently readable name of the boat. The image also provides a partial overview of the area where the rowing happens, which is useful for the narrative,

The next image 'Narrative 5' shows a more close up shot of the team in the boat in action. The fact that you cropped the front and back of the boat works well in creating a line at a slight angle to the horizon.



‘Narrative 6’, the viewers on the sea wall, is a nice shot, working well through the fact that the people stand out against the monochrome slightly hazy background.



'Narrative 7' is a wonderful shot as the boat seems to float in the expansive sea around it with no visible horizon line. It stands out in an almost silhouetted shape and the name *Rebel* is visible again. In this clean composition, the buoys are quite a distraction; they could be erased quite easily - depending on your demands to use, or not to use, un-altered images in such a documentary. In any case, this image is one of my favourites from this submission as it has a beautiful serene atmosphere. The only flaw there is, is that the people in the boat seem to have a very slight blur, which is only visible when enlarging the image.



‘Narrative 8’ shows a close up shot of just one rower in action. Your composition is well balanced through the crop that leaves the boat in the lower third of the image and the rower slightly off centre.



The following image shows another team in the boat, this time photographed towards the land. It shows nice sumptuous colours and the boat and the team are caught crisply, freezing the motion of their efforts. I think the crop on the roof of the house(s) in the background is unfortunate and I would have chosen a slightly higher camera angle to avoid that. Alternatively the image could also work better if the background was more out of focus through a lower depth of field, or as another alternative the image could be cropped to exclude the houses. Just holding a paper over the image to crop of the houses makes this immediately into much cleaner shot.



Noted comments and overleaf I have cropped the image and reproduced. The image definitely works better as it is less fussy.



In comparison, 'Narrative 10' is already a very much cleaner composition as the way you cropped it makes an even monochrome background. The lighting mood is beautiful due to the highlights on the water and the almost silhouetted team and boat. You created a successful composition by placing the boat in the upper third of the image, leaving a large area of water surface in the front of the shot.



‘Narrative 11’ has got a similar, even more dramatic lighting atmosphere, showing the boat and team in silhouette against the highlights on the water surface. This is a stunning effect. I love how the highlights on the oars form these diagonal lines. I wish the boat was a bit lower in the composition as I find its position in the upper half of the frame a bit unbalanced. Regarding composition, when leaving more space at the bottom than at the top of a shot this is often difficult and mostly only works successfully if it appears as distinct and deliberate as in the previous image.



Noted and I will pay attention to this in future.

‘Narrative 12’ shows the *Rebel* on land being pulled along by its team. The image is a good contribution to the narrative and makes a nice end.



Whilst technically flawless, similar to image 9, this image suffers a bit from too much unwanted detail. For example the backs of the bikers give the image quite a random feeling. Also, the fact that everything right into the depth of the background is in focus, resulting from the use of a wide angle and a smaller aperture (exaggerated by the use of a camera with a smaller sensor). It is noticeable that most of your images have this large depth of field. There is nothing ‘wrong’ with it but sometimes a bit of blur adds to the visual interest of an image. Sometimes it might also be nicer to use a long focal length and crop into a detail. For example could you have somehow isolated the main man pulling the front of the boat, showing just him and the front with the boat’s name, which

is a theme of the series, possibly against a blurred background? (This is also what I meant regarding i.e. image 9 where the houses in the background are not a good contribution to the image).

My favourite images from this submission are the first two of the oars, and images 3, 7, and 10. Followed by image 11 which I would crop differently. These images are all visually beautiful and also a good contribution to the story, whereas an image like the last one is a good contribution to the story by photographically not of specific merit or interest.

Well done altogether and congratulations again to completing this and all other assignments.

Many thanks for the letter you included. I am very happy to hear that you enjoyed the course so much and it is great to see the progress you made. It has been a pleasure being your tutor and I hope you continue to practice photography – maybe even in form of another OCA course?

All the best and much fun with your camera,

Klaus

### **Learning points –**

- **Watch depth of field**
- **Explore more variations and use the telephoto more to crop into detail whilst photographing at the time of taking.**

- **Watch for distraction. I was trying to include the setting to much, concentrate on the subject in hand.**

**I have fully appreciated all the comments that my tutor Klaus has made. He has been absolutely spot on every time and putting his views in to practice has really helped me to improve my initial image capture. I am experimenting far more and I will continue to watch out for the more finite detail in compositions and the distractions. I will use more apertures on subjects to vary the opportunities available and maximise on potential. It will also help me to continue exploring my style and approach to photography.**

Klaus