

**MEDIA RELEASE June 19 2012**

Don’t Worry, Be Happy captures Nikon Auckland Photo Day

**Auckland, New Zealand (June 2012)** – The Nikon Auckland Photo Day 2012 competition winners have been announced.

With the record number of entries in the competition’s nine year history, this year’s winner is Lee Copas from Franklin District. His standout black and white portrait *Don’t Worry, Be Happy* captures the laidback nature of a Maori gentleman revelling in the festivities at the anti-nuclear peace celebrations in Aotea Square.

Lee Copas said of his winning entry, “I didn’t plan to be in Aotea Square. I was wandering back to my car when I encountered this good-natured gentleman whom I felt blended in perfectly with the peaceful celebrations taking place there. I’m particularly attracted to street photography because it affords me the chance to capture people in their most natural, relaxed state.”

In the judges’ eyes, “The winning photograph embraces a perfect mix of spontaneity, warmth, and technical beauty. It communicates a genuine rapport with the subject whose charm and personality shine from all angles.”

This year’s judges were Ken Newell, Product Manager at Nikon and photographers Kellie Blizard from APN New Zealand and Chris Trail, FNZIPP.

Second prize went to Takapuna resident, Karen Larsen whose dreamy photograph *A Day in Bed* depicts an elderly inconnu enjoying a lazy Saturday morning.

Third prize was awarded to Angela Taft of Torbay for her iconic image *Chasing the Birds* capturing a toddler and his innocent encounter with a flock of seagulls.

Commenting on the overall entries, the judges were impressed by “the high calibre of photographers across all ages and experiences and the range of moods and expressions.”

“It is amazing to see such a broad spectrum of life in Auckland across one day from a multitude of photographers’ styles and viewpoints in this diverse city. This year we received over 1500 entries - our greatest number of photos ever. The quality and originality of the images gets better every year. ” says Auckland Festival of Photography spokesperson Elaine Smith.

Nikon Auckland Photo Day was held on Saturday 9 June. It is a public competition that is part of the Auckland Festival of Photography. The contest encourages Aucklanders of all ages to get involved in taking a photo that reflects Auckland through their imaginative eyes.

As part of his winning prize, Mr Copas will receive a brand new Nikon D7000 Kit with 18-105 lens that takes stunning photographs as well as offering D-Movie for recording and editing HD movies.

The top 30 winners and runners up can be viewed at [www.photographyfestival.org.nz](http://www.photographyfestival.org.nz) this week.

For more information, please contact:

Alistair Kwun

Media Manager - Auckland Festival of Photography

media.photofestival@xtra.co.nz , +64 21 774 789

Auckland Festival of Photography 2012 is funded by ASB Community Trust, **Auckland Council and Creative New Zealand.**

**Sponsored by Nikon and Lowepro and MAXX.**

**Cultural and Community funders: Lion Foundation, SKYCITY Community Trust Auckland, Creative Communities regional, Creative Communities North/Rodney, Creative Communities South/Franklin, COGS Waitakere, Papakura/Franklin, Auckland City and Manukau, The Trusts and Asia:NZ.**

**Media Partner: D Photo**