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DARKROOM DOOR

JOURNAL OF THE CLEVELAND PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, INC.



Borneo Frog by Dennis Wert Image of the Year Pictorial Competition PRINT

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Angeli Persons (term ending 2027)
Mick Russo (term ending 2027)
Lisa Adcock (term ending 2028)
Beverly Frazier (term ending 2028)
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Jill Zabka (term ending 2028)
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Vol 100: Issue 1 Correction

Our apologies to Barb Cerrito. Her last name was misspelled in Vol 100 Issue 1, Pg 109 of the Bloodview article. The correct spelling of her last name is Cerrito.

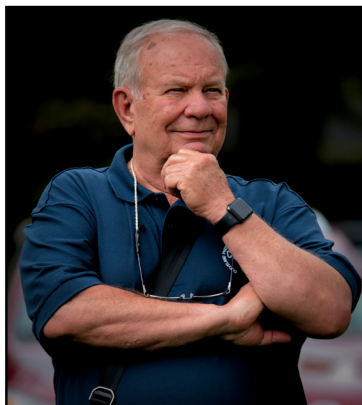
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President's Letter

by Kris Bosworth



As I write this letter, we are half-way through the calendar year and I reflect on what has happened so far at the club. Recalling our last business meeting highlights our progress. From the perspective of our volunteers, there are a couple of noteworthy changes. Catherine Kennigott has stepped up to become Competition Committee Chairman, probably the most difficult job we have. This is in addition to her running the End of Year competitions, heading up the Mentoring Program and organizing our summer picnic. I've probably left something out, but in any case, she is to be acknowledged for using her time and talent at the club.

There have been a couple of changes to our board. After many years of faithful service, Barb Pennington and Kolman Rosenberg have decided to step down and give others a chance to serve. Joe Paganini and Brad Ruebensaal were nominated and elected to those positions. Notably, Bill Keaton and Joe Vanecek agreed to serve another three-year term on the board. Finally, our officers, Jen Gaba (vice president), Belinda Prinz (secretary), Chris Goff (treasurer), and I, as president, have all agreed to serve another one-year term. We often take such things for granted, but it is crucial to our club's operation to have volunteers with experience in their roles who can move us forward.

From a financial standpoint, we are continuing to operate in the black. Also, from a financial standpoint, as well as in our competitions, AI is making a mark on our club. Last year, we noticed that our Adobe software products were hanging up as we used new AI features. The smooth functioning of the computer while using Lightroom and Photoshop is crucial in our schools. Eventually, it became necessary to replace our five-plus-year-old computer. Not only was this an unexpected expense, but it also cost almost double to replace it because the price of chips needed for all the various AI applications around the world has doubled. AI is also causing some ripples in our competitions. We have had, and most likely will continue to have, discussions over the use of AI in our competitions. When, how, where, to what

Welcome New Members!

President's Letter, continued:

extent, etc., are questions being asked in the use of AI with competition images. My hope is that we will recognize that this will be a difficult road to navigate, but in the end, we are “photographers helping photographers.” That implies that we are friends and will continue to be so. Speaking of AI, you may have heard our new theme song. I felt this was something to let people know the meeting is about to start and maybe provide a little entertainment. This song, lyrics and music, was totally AI constructed with prompts from member Justin Moose.

Finally, we should recognize what a blessing we have in CPS. Many clubs around the country, if not the world, have completely dissolved. Yet we are very successful in so many areas due to our many volunteers. As President, I am honored to help keep things that way. If I have any strength, it is in being committed to doing the best I can with what I know. But more importantly, it's people like you, who are also committed to making this club be all that it can be and who make us thrive!

*God bless,
Kris*

New Members

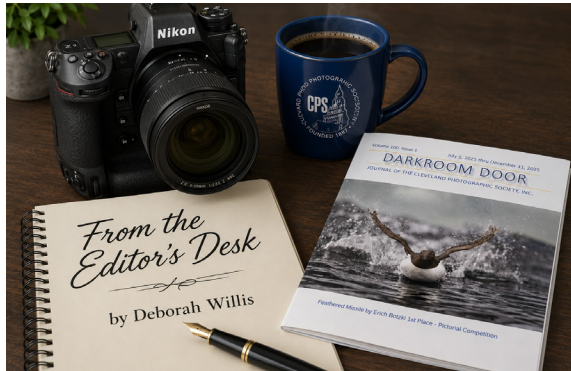
Please join us in welcoming the following forty-eight new members who joined CPS between January 1, 2026 and June 30, 2026. Please warmly welcome them when you see them at meetings and events.

Carlos Abreu
Chuck Bauck
Dan Bergrin
Bella Blyumin
Carolyn Bowman
Kellie Broz
Artem Chykalov
Kimberli Collins
Michelle DiPaulo
Cheryl Donovan
Robert Erickson
William Fitch
Shawna Foley
Lauren Georgopou
Nicholas Haas
William Heidinger

Sofia Henry
Wendy Hodina
Ken Hodina
Denise Horstman
Tori Howk
William Jones
Byron Kanoti
John Karapelou
Lori Kruszewski
Marc Laucks
Vince LaValle
Maria Lemon
Karen Mayer
James McClellan
Sean McGuinnes
Diane Morgan

Terence Nickolette
John Otterman
Tammy Owings
Jeffrey Plummer
David Robins
Matthew Rolf
Frank Serva
S. Ali Shah
Roshni Sharma
Stephen Strayer
Van Stump
Kaley Turner
Nichole Vild
David Wasielews
Thomas Winczek
Zhongqing Xiao

From the Editor's Desk



Photography continues to evolve at an incredible pace, offering exciting opportunities for photographers at every skill level. Artificial intelligence has become an increasingly valuable tool—not to replace creativity, but to enhance workflows through noise reduction, image restoration, intelligent masking and organizational features that allow photographers to spend more time creating and less time behind a computer.

At the same time, there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in film photography, as photographers embrace the slower, more intentional process and unique character that only film can provide. We are also seeing more photographers tell meaningful visual stories through documentary projects, community events and personal essays that connect viewers to the people and places around them.

No matter how technology changes, one thing remains constant: the photographer's eye. Great images still begin with curiosity, patience, thoughtful composition and the ability to recognize a moment worth preserving. Those qualities continue to define the members of the Cleveland Photographic Society.

This issue of *Darkroom Door* is especially exciting as we extend a warm and enthusiastic welcome to 48 new members who

recently joined the club. Whether you are just beginning your photographic journey or have years of experience behind the camera, we are delighted to have you as part of our growing community. We encourage you to participate in competitions,

workshops, outings and educational programs, and most importantly, to share your passion for photography with fellow members.

As always, this edition includes our annual coverage of the Society's End of Year competition, celebrating the exceptional work, creativity and accomplishments of our members throughout the past season. Congratulations to all who participated and earned recognition for their outstanding images.

One of the greatest strengths of this issue is the generous participation of several members who contributed articles drawn from their own experiences and expertise.

In "Capturing Courage," Thomas Malinchak shares his moving experience photographing the Ohio Special Olympics in Columbus, Ohio. His article reminds us that photography has the power not only to document events but also to celebrate determination, resilience and the human spirit.

John Paganini offers practical guidance in "The Art of Selection: Mastering the Lightroom Culling Workflow," providing readers with an organized and efficient approach to reviewing and selecting images in Adobe Lightroom. Whether you're managing hundreds of photographs from a single event or refining your best portfolio work,

his workflow offers valuable techniques that can improve both productivity and consistency.

For those who enjoy pushing creative boundaries, Graham B. Stead explores unconventional image-making in "Avant-Garde Photography," encouraging photographers to experiment with artistic vision, abstraction and new ways of seeing familiar subjects.

Film photography enthusiasts will especially appreciate Eric Wethington's introduction to his YouTube series, "One Body, One Lens, One Roll, One Day." His project celebrates the discipline and creativity that come from working within intentional limitations, proving that compelling photography depends far more on vision than on equipment.

On behalf of the Cleveland Photographic Society, I extend my sincere appreciation to Thomas, John, Graham and Eric for generously sharing their knowledge, experiences and passion. Their willingness to contribute strengthens our club and enriches this publication for everyone.

I hope this issue informs, inspires and motivates you to continue exploring new techniques, accepting creative challenges and sharing your work with fellow photographers. Whether your camera is digital or film, your subject is nature, portraits, architecture, sports or street photography, remember that every photograph begins with a willingness to see the world just a little differently.

Thank you for being part of the Cleveland Photographic Society. I look forward to seeing the remarkable images—and stories—you create and share in the coming year.

Happy shooting!

~ Deborah

Annual Meeting



The Cleveland Photographic Society held its Annual Meeting on April 17, 2026. Prior to the opening of the meeting, attendees were treated to a listening party of “Chasing the Light.” The song’s music and lyrics were entirely created using AI, with prompts from member Justin Moose. The club has copyrighted the song, which may become its theme song. CPS has another historic first: its first music copyright!

President Kris Bosworth provided a year-end review, highlighting activities that occurred during the 2025-2026 program year. Overall, the club continues to do well. Fiscally, the club’s assets have increased by approximately \$7,000. Membership has increased by approximately 40 members and is now at 478.

Highlights were:

Continuing unchanged:

- **Picnic.** The picnic was outstanding.
- **Cabin Fever Party.** This party is always good and will continue next year.
- **Competitions.** Our Competition year is June 1st to May 31st of the following year. The End of Year competition will be held on May 15th. (Results appear in this newsletter.)
- **Friday Night Speakers.** Speakers have been scheduled through the end of this calendar year.
- **SIG (Special Interest Groups) Meetings.** It has been a few months since a SIG meeting was held due to David Busch’s travel schedule. Mr. Busch is seeking new topics. Members are asked to send their ideas to info@clevelandphoto.org
- **Community Service.** The program becomes more active during the warm weather months.
- **Mentoring.** The program has been very successful and is always full. Currently there are seven groups with a total of 28 mentees.
- **Exhibits.** May 2026 exhibit will be at the Porter Library in Westlake, Ohio. (See images in this newsletter.)
- **Dark Room Door.** There are two issues annually. There is a new layout person.
- **Schools.** Our School of Photography now has four courses: Fundamentals of Good Photography, iPhone Photography, Lightroom Classic and Photoshop Editing. The club is seeing an increase in enrollment.

Changes:

- **Swap Meet.** Members were able to find good homes for their no longer used items. While a swap meet had not been held for a few years, the consensus was to not have this event next year. When it is done again the hours will probably be reduced to 2-3 hours.
- **Hospitality.** The committee is planning to have a Halloween Party this year.
- **Video Storage.** This has been reworked.
- **Technology.** The club had to purchase a new computer. While the current one is only five years old, it was having problems running some needed programs and needed to be replaced. The computer recommended by the club’s Technology Committee cost approximately \$4,000; however, it is anticipated that the club will not need to purchase another computer for 4-5 years.

Annual Meeting

Field Trips

Three of our larger field trips lost money for the club.

- **Mansfield Reformatory.** It may be that many members have attended this field trip multiple times. Only 35 attended the last field trip; 70 slots were available. The board decided to offer this field trip every other year in the odd-numbered years.
- **4th of July Fireworks Boat Ride.** Attendance has been low. This field trip will be offered again this year in hopes attendance will increase due to our country's 250th anniversary celebration.
- **Air Show.** Attendance has been low with 90 tickets (30 for each of the 3 days). Only the first day was a sell-out. Sales for the second and third days were in the single digits. This may be the last year for the show. This year, the club will decrease the number of tickets available for each day. With the Blue Angels performing and the 250th anniversary of our country being celebrated, the show may attract more attendees.

New

The following four new technology initiatives were the result of feedback provided by members at last year's Annual Meeting.

- **Member Websites.** Members now have the opportunity to have a link on the club's website to their photography website and Instagram pages. 25 members now have their pages posted.
- **Items of interest.** These are postings of things submitted by our members and community that may be of general interest to photographers. These postings are not endorsed by the club. Please use your own judgment before proceeding.
- **Facebook.** Our Facebook numbers have gone up from 102 to 265.
- **Instagram.** There has been increased activity. We have 435 followers.

Improvements

- **Office.** The office has been cleaned out and the lighting has been upgraded.
- **Closets.** Closets have been cleared out and every closet has a new light.
- **Library.** Members are invited to visit to see what is available. Borrowing and returning is on the honor system.
- **Awards.** Awards the club has received are now displayed in the Gathering Room. There are also new LED lights in that area.
- **Branding.** Efforts are being made so our logo is more prominently displayed in the building.

The president thanked the committees and all members who donate their skills and talents to the club. Many members volunteer in multiple capacities and have been doing so for many years. They were thanked for their hard work and dedication.

ELECTIONS

The board contains 17 members: 5 officers (four elected annually to serve one-year terms and the immediate past president), and 12 board members (elected annually to serve three-year terms). The board president is limited to two years in that position. There are no term limits for other officers. There is no limit to the number of terms a board member may serve. The slate was sent out to members on March 16, 2026. The floor was open for nominations. No Nominations were received. The secretary conducted the election. It was moved by Kris Bosworth and seconded by Mick Russo that the membership conduct a vote for the slate of officers. With a vote of 41 in favor, 0 opposed and 1 abstention, the motion passed.

The following 2026-2027 officers were elected:

President: Kris Bosworth

Vice President: Jennifer Gaba

Secretary: Belinda Prinz

Treasurer: Christine Goff



Annual Meeting

Per the chapter bylaws, the immediate past president also serves as an officer, giving the board five officers. Thus, Past President Richard Ader continues as the fifth officer.

The board has 12 members who each serve 3-year terms. There are no term limits for board members. Four board terms end each year and those positions are open for election. There is no limit to the number of terms a board member may serve. The president opened nominations from the floor for board members. There were no nominations. The president introduced the candidates. The secretary took the vote. With a vote of 42 in the affirmative, 0 votes opposed and no abstentions, the following members were unanimously elected to serve on the board for 2026-2029:

Bill Keaton
John Paganini
Brad Nelson Ruebensaal
Joe Vanecek



Bylaws amendments require a 2/3 affirmative vote for passage and, unless otherwise stated, become effective immediately. The secretary took

the vote. With a vote of 42 in the affirmative, 1 opposed, 0 abstentions, the bylaw amendments were passed.

For your reference, a summary of the bylaws amendments, written by Lisa Adcock, Board Member/Bylaws Committee Chairperson, follows and is included in this newsletter.

CPS Bylaws Update

By Lisa Adcock, Board Member/Bylaws Committee Chairman

The bylaws of the Cleveland Photographic Society are the basic rules by which our club operates. All aspects of the club are governed by these rules. While this is not artistically or technically inspiring, we could not keep our club running without them. They are the framework for everything we do and they affect every Officer, Board Member, committee, volunteer and member!

A committee was formed to review our bylaws to make sure we are in line with current federal and state laws. We also needed to make sure that our rules were clearly defined and current with present-day norms. The committee consisted of myself (Lisa Adcock), Mick Russo and Koleman Rosenberg. Belinda Prince was also instrumental in making sure we had it right. We worked closely with the Officers and Board of Directors to make sure we met all the necessary legal requirements.

First, we clarified that the Vice President shall take over the President's duties in the event of a vacancy in the office of President. {Article I Section 4}.

Second, we clarified the definition of a quorum to be a majority of the board members. A quorum is the number of board members who need to be present at a meeting to vote on any issues that require a decision by vote. A



Barbara Pennington and Kolman Rosenberg, who are ending their terms of office, were thanked for their years of service to the board.

CPS Bylaws Update

quorum is now officially defined as 9 board members. This means that whenever the board votes on anything, at least 9 board members need to be present. {Article II, Section 5}. Also in this section, we added the option of voting by email. The email voting issue was voted on by the membership separately at the Annual Meeting in April, 2026. Our Business Meetings happen bi-monthly. Occasionally, a decision needs immediate attention and cannot wait for the next board meeting. Email voting enables due process in a timely fashion.

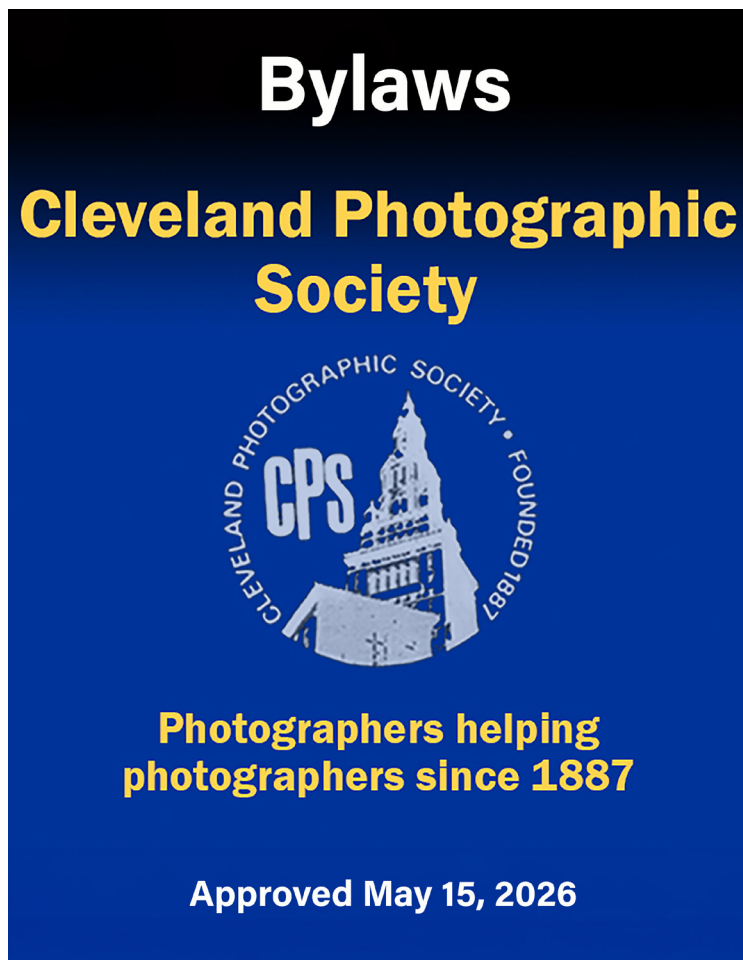
Article III is about Membership. We clarified the definition of a “couple” membership. {Article III, Section 5} We also added a waiver requirement for any minor members (under the age of 18) for participation in field trips. {Article II, Section 4}

Article IX Code of Ethics was added to reflect present-day ethical issues.

Article XII Procedures Manual was simplified and some confusing language was clarified.

All of the changes were voted on and approved by the general membership at the End of Year Competition Awards meeting on May 15, 2026.

Our bylaws are available to everyone on our website (www.clevelandphoto.org) in the Information Tab/About CPS. I encourage everyone to take a look!



End-of-Year Competition Awards



On May 15, 2026, the Cleveland Photographic Society held its Annual End-of-Year Awards Ceremony. This End-of-Year recognition event provides the club with the opportunity to recognize members who work quietly behind the scenes helping the club to run effectively and affords members a chance to re-enter some of their images from the current competition year for special awards and a chance to become the 'Photo of the Year' in individual categories. In addition to Photo of the Year, First, Second and Third place awards are bestowed in each category. Additionally, eight "Special Awards", named in honor of past CPS members who played vital roles in shaping the history of the club, are accorded in each competition category, except the "B" competition. The eight winning special category images (there are two special awards in the Pictorial Projection category), are selected based on specific criteria and are awarded a Gold Ribbon.

Unlike regular competitions, Year-End awards are determined during a closed judging session due to the large number of entries. This year 400 submissions were received and we thank our End-of Year judges Joe Applebaum, Mark Nowak and John Riviera.

In recognition of volunteerism, the President can award two "Special Awards"; The Presidents and Berthold Klein Awards.

The Community Service Coordinator also recognizes Community Service Program Volunteers. The Coordinator may also bestow the Jim Frazer Award in recognition of outstanding volunteers exceptional service to the Community Service Program.

Accumulated Points Awards

This recognition is designed to recognize consistent and quality entries. Accumulated points are automatically calculated from each member's competition entries throughout the club year. First place winners receive a medal; second and third places receive ribbons. Ties are not broken.

Points are awarded according to placement in each competition:

- 1st place: 5 points
- 2nd place: 4 points
- 3rd place: 3 points
- Honorable mention: 2 points

End-of-Year Competition Awards

Category-Based Awards

Any image entered in regular competition can be re-entered in that year's Year-End Competition. The image did not have to win in its original competition category to be eligible. Categories are the same as use for competitions – B, Black & White, Creative, Nature, People and Pictorial. Because there are more Pictorial images than in other categories, an Image of the Year is selected for both Pictorial Print and Pictorial Projection. Additionally, while Photojournalism photos are not judged during the competition year, End-of-Year awards are given in this category. Below is the complete list of winners and their winning images.

End-of-Year Competition Winners:

"B" Competition

"B" Competition –B (Beginner) is an open category encompassing photos of any subject.

Competition is designed to provide the full competition experience while retaining a more comfortable atmosphere, geared primarily as a learning experience for beginning photographers. The expectation has been that as experience is gained an individual would move up to the Regular Competitions. It was never the intent that an individual could compete year after year in B Competitions. A new student just finishing a Fundamentals class could find they are competing against someone with several years of experience. To maintain that comfortable experience for the beginner, starting with the 2024-2025 Competition season, participation in B Competitions will be limited to two years. Those who competed in B Competitions during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 seasons will be required to move up to Regular Competitions (Creative, People, Nature, B&W and Pictorial).

Accumulated points:

1st Place: Denise O'Wesney Richardson
2nd Place: Jeannie Hill
3rd Place: Melissa Fargo,
David Laurence, Maria Perme

Photo of the Year:

Melissa Fargo "Flamingo's Kiss" (shown right)



1st Place: Denise O'Wesney Richardson "Victory on the Battlefield"
2nd Place: William Meekins "Still in Ivory"
3rd Place: Barbara Good "Florence Street Artist"

Denise O'Wesney Richardson



William Meekins



Barbara Good



End-of-Year Competition Awards

Black & White Competition

Black and White Competition –Monochrome images, including single tone and sepia. Any image with a spot color is considered a Color image and is not eligible for this category.

Accumulated points:

1st Place: Jackie Sajewski

2nd Place: Susan Bestul

3rd Place: Bob Kowaleski

Competition Images:

Photo of the Year: Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk “Wild Mare” (shown right)



1st Place: David Korosec “Bodie State Park Truck”

2nd Place: Jackie Sajewski “Enjoying a Stogie”

3rd Place: Vicki Wert “Bruges Canal, Belgium”

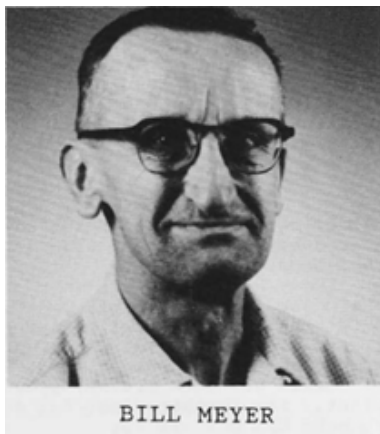
David Korosec



Jackie Sajewski



Vicki Wert



William Meyer Award for Best Scenic Nature Image in Black & White Competition:

William “Bill” Meyer wore many different hats at CPS throughout his 40 years with the club. He was President, Print Chair, School Director and Instructor. He was Co- founder of the Northeast Ohio Camera Club. He was a Master Craftsman in Black and White photography. Bill was a May Show and Jewish Community Center Show Exhibitor known for his Bromoils. a

End-of-Year Competition Awards

process for making an offset reproduction by first making a photographic print on paper with a silver bromide emulsion, wetting it, and then using it as a lithographic plate, the lighter parts of the emulsion tending to repel the oil base of the ink and the darker parts tending to hold it. He was a mentor and a photographer always willing to share his expertise. This year's William Meyer Award goes to: **David Ciborek "Love Birds"** (shown right)



Creative Competition

Creative Competition — Photos taken using special lenses, filters, lighting conditions or other creative means and photos creatively edited using digital imaging software.

Accumulated points:

1st Place: Jackie Sajewski
2nd Place: Susan Bestul
3rd Place: Kris Bosworth

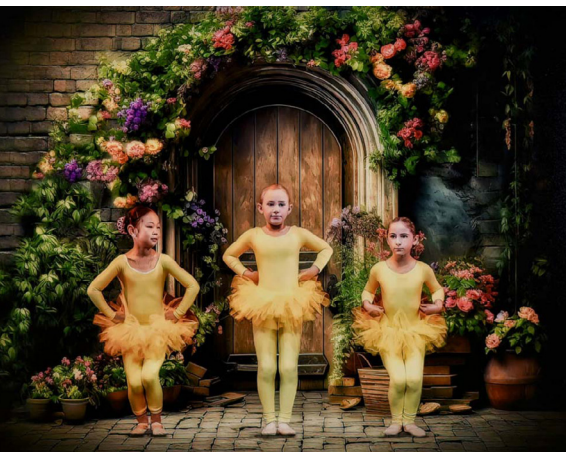
Competition Images:

Photo of the Year: Jackie Sajewski "The Ones We Remember" (shown right)



1st Place: Susan Bestul "Feel the Beat"
2nd Place: Kris Bosworth "Psychedelic Glass"
3rd Place: Wally Nell "Lightpainted Kitchen Scene"

Susan Bestul



Kris Bosworth



Wally Nell

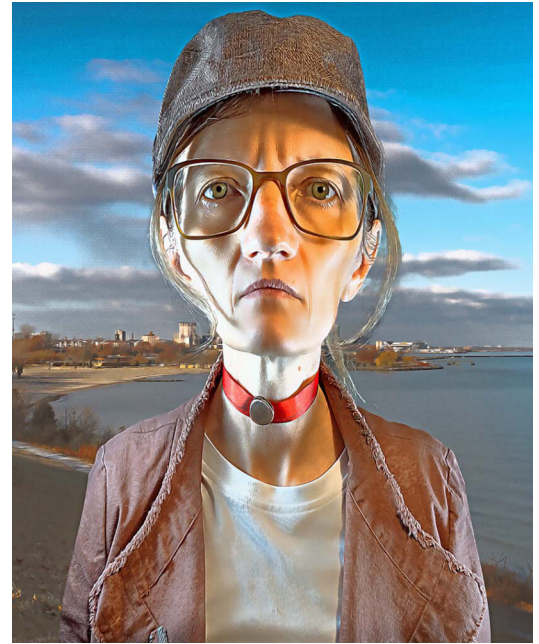


End-of-Year Competition Awards

Charlie Caseau Award for Best Creative Image Through Computer Processing:

Charles Caseau's interest in photography began in the late 1950s when he bought his first 35mm camera. He began to compete in the Cleveland camera club circuit in the late 60s and quickly became a winner. His interests spanned a gamut of subjects, from nature to all forms of pictorial. He had a particular love of creativity- getting away from typical perspectives on any subject. He used a variety of formats, from 35mm slides to large format black and white and color. He developed and printed both black & white and color images, and became involved with computer creations using Adobe programs. Many photographic clubs in the Cleveland area enjoyed his judging of competitions and welcomed his comments and suggestions. This year's Charles Caseau award goes to:

Jennifer Gaba "Self Portrait – Munch Style" (shown right)



Nature Competition

Nature Competition – Photos of animals, flowers, plants and scenes where the 'hand of man' is not evident.

Accumulated points:

1st Place: Bob Kowaleski,
Brad Ruebensaal
2nd Place: Gary Wood
3rd Place: Jackie Sajewski

Competition Images:

Photo of the Year: Bob Kowaleski "Rite of the Wild"
(shown right)



End-of-Year Competition Awards

1st Place: Dave Ciborek "Butterfly Field"

2nd Place: Melanie Plummer "Community Hub"

3rd Place: Vicki Wert "Hummingbird Clearwing Moth"

Dave Ciborek



Melanie Plummer



Vicki Wert



Ruth Morrison Award for Best Authentic Nature Image:

Ruth Morrison was President of CPS six times between 1965 and 1988. She also served as a CPS Board Member, CPS School Instructor and Nature & Pictorial Competitions Chair. As founder and teacher of the CPS School of Judging, she also found time to belong to the Northeast Ohio Camera Club (NEOCC) Council and was Head of the Council for two years. Ruth was an avid nature photographer and dogged in her insistence that any images entered in the Nature Division have no hint of the "hand of man." Ruth was generous in sharing her methods and often took new members under her wing to encourage them in the art of photography. Her award reflects her insistence on no "hand of man", including photographs taken in zoos or any artificial setting. This year's Ruth Morrison Award goes to: **Brad Ruebensaal "The Fisherman"** (shown right).



End-of-Year Competition Awards

People Competition

People Competition — Candida or portraits where people are the primary subject.

Accumulated points:

1st Place: Jackie Sajewski

2nd Place: Bill Keaton

3rd Place: Dave Ciborek



Competition Images:

Photo of the Year:

Jackie Sajewski
"A Life Well Read"

(shown left)

1st Place: Brian O'Riordan "Boulder Fixture"

2nd Place: Dan Sandy "Falen Wailing"

3rd Place: Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk "Witness"

Brian O'Riordan



Dan Sandy



Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



Charlie Cervenak

"Charlie" Award for Best image in People Competition:

Charlie Cervenak was a judge for countless competitions at CPS for 15 years or more. Although a club member for only a year before his untimely passing, in his brief tenure he became a Board Member and the driving force behind the "Basic Digital Photography Class". An avid eagle watcher, Charlie would rise every Wednesday morning at 4:00 a.m. to check the nests to

which he was assigned during the periods of mating, egg sitting and nurturing of the young eaglets. He was full of life, funny, creative and made everyone feel a part of his family with his photos and stories of his grandson, Max. This year's Charlie Cervenak Award goes to: **Dave Ciborek "Day of the Dead"** (shown right)



End-of-Year Competition Awards

Photojournalism Competition

Photojournalism Competition – Photojournalism is the process of visual storytelling using the medium of photography as your main story telling device. While a journalist will use their pen and paper to tell stories, a photojournalist will use their camera to capture the visual representation of a story. An image should tell a visual story with the photographer being aware of and attempting to capture the emotions, actions, drama and timeliness (or timelessness) of the scene. Images should not be obviously posed and NOT staged. Adding or removing elements is not permitted. These images are not judged at the time, so there are no accumulated points in this category. All photojournalism images uploaded for presentation become eligible for submission in the end-of-the-year competition, where they are judged against each other and one is chosen as Photojournalism Image of the Year to hang on the back wall.

Accumulated points:

There are no accumulated points awarded in this category.

Photojournalism Images:

Image of the Year: Brad Ruebensaal “Track & Field Winner” (shown right)

1st Place: Wally Nell “Cairo Street Kids”

2nd Place: Richard Ader “Smoke Break at a Working Fire”

3rd Place: Susan Mohorcic “Biscayne Bay 4”



Wally Nell



Richard Ader



Susan Mohorcic



End-of-Year Competition Awards

Pictorial Competition: PRINT

Pictorial Competition: PRINT – An open category encompassing photos of any subject.

Image of the Year: Dennis Wert “Borneo Frog” (graces our cover)

Accumulated Points:

1st Place: Vicki Wert

2nd Place: Brad Ruebensaal

3rd Place: Bob Kowaleski

1st Place: Dave Ciborek “Mist on Grass”

2nd Place: Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk “Perfect Perch”

3rd Place: Vicki Wert “Petal Drop”

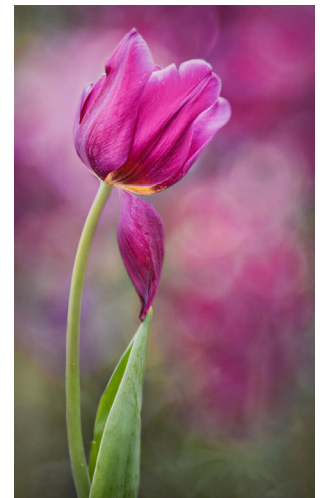
Dave Ciborek



Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



Vicki Wert



John Moddejong Award for Best Color Scenic in Pictorial Competition:

John Moddejong was the CPS School Director for 40 years. He was Color Slide Chairman from 1941-1969, Trustee on the Board for many years and Print Director in charge of traveling shows. John also gave lectures throughout the US and judged at Photographic Society of America (PSA) Salons, where he was

known as “Mr. CPS”. This year’s John Moddejong Award goes to: **Bob Kowaleski “The Field’s Turned Gold”** (shown right)



End-of-Year Competition Awards

Pictorial Competition: PROJECTION Image

Accumulated Points:

1st Place: Erich Botzki

2nd Place: Bob Kowaleski

3rd Place: Dave Korosec, Jackie Sajewski

1st Place: Jackie Sajewski "In For A Trim"

2nd Place: Erich Botzki "Feathered Missile"

3rd Place: Susan Bestul "Feet of Wonder"

**Image of the Year: Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk
"Sunset on Lake McDonald" (right)**



Jackie Sajewski



Erich Botzki



Susan Bestul

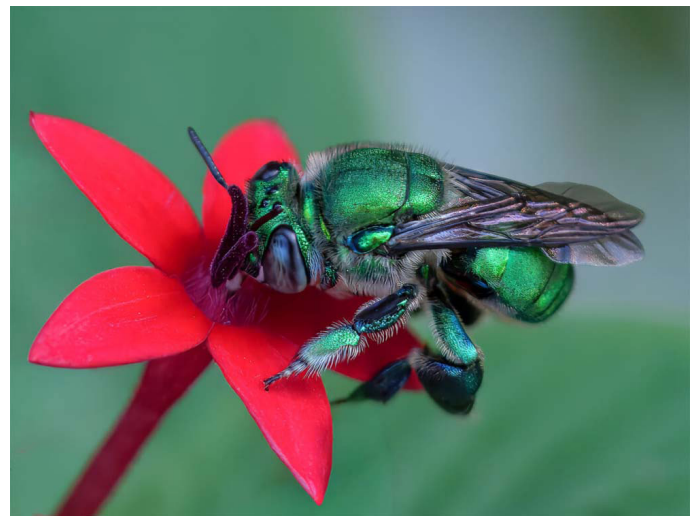


Henry Mayer Award for Best Nature Image in Projected Competition:

Henry Mayer taught an Industrial Photography class for the CPS School. He became known as "The Dean of Nature" because of his interest in nature photography. His work still graces Emerald Necklace publications and some of his prints are part of the Smithsonian's permanent collection. He was recognized as a Fellow of the Photographic Society of America (FPSA) for achievements in teaching, judging and publishing to further the art of photography. This year's Henry

Mayer Award in the Pictorial category goes to:

Gary Wood "Christmas Garden" (shown right)



End-of-Year Competition Awards



Berthold Klein Award for Best Pet or Domesticated Animal Image in Pictorial Competition:

Bert Klein was a member of CPS for almost 50 years. During that time, he served the club in almost every role imaginable: President, School Instructor, School Director for 35 years – and general ‘handyman’ who could fix almost anything. Many credit Bert with saving CPS when it

was on the verge of disbanding and helping to the club on a course to the success we enjoy today. He was a regular judge on the local camera club circuit, freely sharing his insights and keen eye for composition with the photographic community. While his knowledge of photography and camera equipment was encyclopedic, in his later years he turned almost exclusively to sharing images of his beloved pets and other animals. This year’s Bert Klein Award goes to: **Bill Keaton “Just a Man and his Camel”** (shown right)



The “Photos of the Year” and “Special Award” images will be printed, framed and hung on the wall in the Gathering Room for the remainder of the 2026-27 club program year.

Special thanks to our 2025-26 Competition Committee Chairmen:
Competition Chairman—Dan Sandy

B - Marge Brady

Black & White - Dave Ciborek

Creative - Dan Sandy and John Paganin (when Dan took over as Chairman)

Nature - Denise Meekins

People - Jackie Sajewski

Pictorial - Randy Beiter

2026-27 COMPETITION COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Competition Chairman—Catherine Kenngott

“B” – Marge Brady

Black and White – Dave Ciborek

Creative – John Paganini

End-of-Year – Catherine Kenngott

People – Jackie Sajewski

Photojournalism – Bill Keaton

Pictorial – Randy Beiter

Nature – Denise Meekins

End-of-Year Competition Awards

Photographer of the Year

Our Photographer of the Year competition recognizes the photographer who has earned the most honor points in at least three competition categories (there are 12 competitions each year). This award goes to the photographer that has the most accumulated points, competing in a minimum of 3 separate categories.

1st Place: Jackie Sajewski

2nd Place: Bob Kowaleski

3rd Place: Erich Botzki

Volunteer Awards:

Berthold Klein Award

One of CPS's major annual awards is the Bert Klein Award, which is awarded to a member whose volunteer work goes above and beyond. For almost 50 years, Berthold Klein was the epitome of the CPS volunteer. Over those years, he served as President, Board Member and School Director and was a constant presence at CPS even outside of those roles. The Bert Klein Award was created to keep his memory alive and to recognize those who follow in his footsteps in tireless volunteerism to the Club. This year's Bert Klein Award was presented to: **Catherine Kenngott**



President's Award

Each year, the President, at his or her discretion, can choose to award one or more President's Awards. These awards are designed to recognize members who provide significant service to CPS, largely in behind-the-scenes roles that too often go unnoticed by most of the membership. President, Richard Ader, recognized two members for their behind-the-scenes service to CPS with this year's President's Award was presented to: **Richard Ader**



Volunteer Awards:

The Presidents Volunteer Service Award Program was "put on pause" by Americorps on May 27, 2025. This provided the club the opportunity to modify the award to recognize all members as the criteria of volunteering a minimum of 100 hours to be recognized was removed.

Please join us in congratulating the following 8 members who have earned recognition this year:

Lauri Culp- Snapshot Editor

John Dunlavy- Darkroom Door Proofreader & Print Competition

Bonnie Lukco- Darkroom Door Proofreader

Coleen McFarland- Darkroom Door Proofreader

Dan Sandy - Competition Committee Chairman (680.75 hours)

Sarah Taylor- School Registration

Celeste Wagner- Darkroom Door Proofreader

Deborah Willis- Community Services Coordinator & Darkroom Door Editor

End-of-Year Competition Awards



(L-R) Dan Sandy, Bonnie Lukcso, Lauri Culp and Deborah Willis

These 8 MEMBERS provided a total of 947.5 VOLUNTEER HOURS.

We know there are many more members who should be recognized and hope all who volunteer for and on behalf of CPS will submit their volunteer hour so they can be recognized next year.

Community Service Volunteers

We thank and recognize the following 15 Community Service Volunteers who earned recognition this year. (The number of events each member photographed appears in parenthesis after their name):

Lee Baskey (8)

Rosemary Flanagan (17)

234.25 hours

Chris Goff (4)

Jeanie Hill (1)

Karen Kritzer (1)

Dan Lester (7)

Bonnie Lukcso (5)

Tom Malinchak (20)

193.25 hours

Coleen McFarland (4)

Jackie Meredyk (2)

Bruce Orr (28)

356 hours

Lori Palmer (1)

Mary Anne Pfrogner (4)

Kim Wasielewski (7)

Deborah Willis (6)

End-of-Year Competition Awards



(L-R) Dennis Wert, Vicki Wert, Kim Wasielewski, Bonnie Lukcso, Chris Goff, Tom Malinchak, Bruce Orr, Jackie Meredyk and Deborah Willis

THESE 15 MEMBERS PROVIDED A TOTAL OF 2,107 VOLUNTEER HOURS

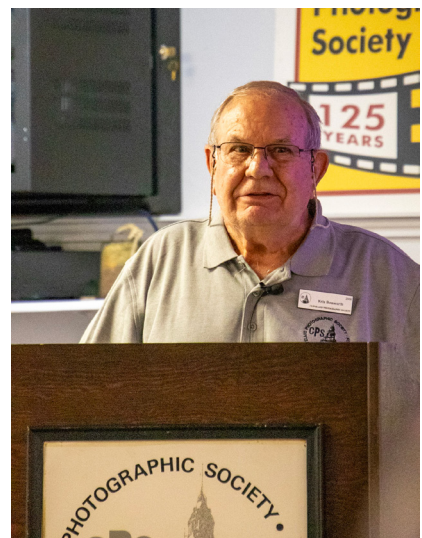
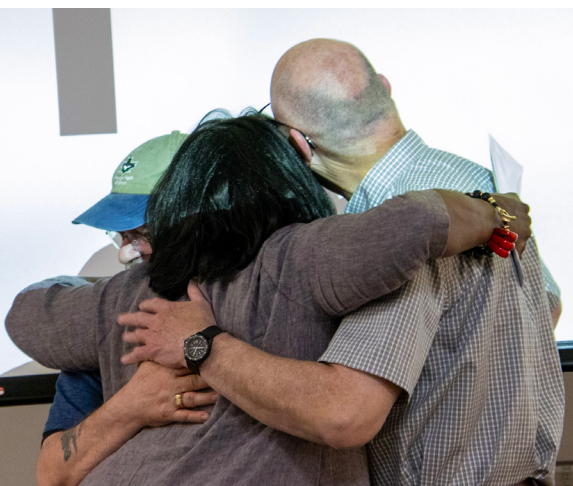
Jim Frazer Award

The Jim Frazer Award which is given to the Community Service Program Volunteer who has demonstrated outstanding commitment and contributions to our Community Service Program was not awarded this year as all members who met the criteria had previously received the award.

From our officers, board members, School of Photography volunteers, committee chairmen, committee members, Community Service Program volunteers, the members who quietly work so diligently behind the scenes to keep the club running smoothly, and of course, the beautiful images from this club year, there was much to celebrate.

End-of-Year Competition Awards

Thank you to Mike Kopkas for taking photos during our End-of-Year program.



The Avant-Garde:

Ask Not What A Photograph Can Do For You, But What You Can Bring To A Photograph

by Graham B. Stead



Figure 1

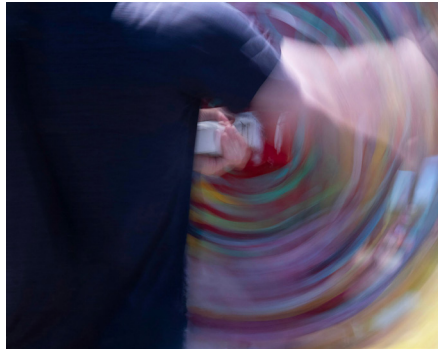


Figure 2



Figure 3

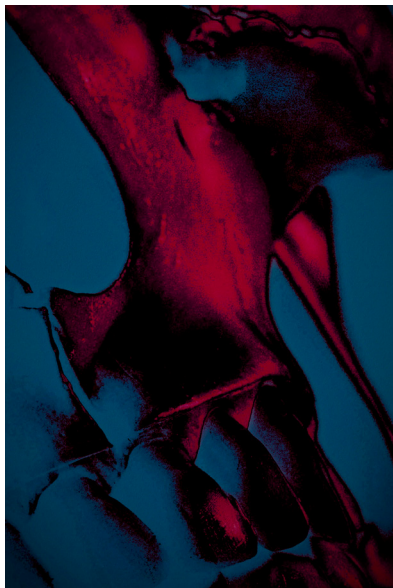


Figure 4

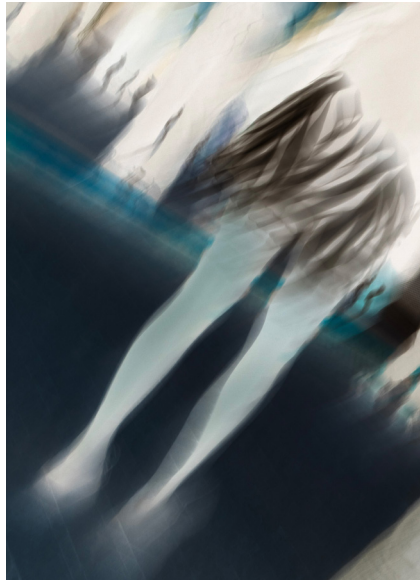


Figure 5



Figure 6

All photographs by Graham B. Stead, 2026.

The purpose of this article is to discuss avant-garde photography, its philosophies and aims. Examples of well-known avant-garde images are provided and six of the author's own images are discussed through questioning, as the author claims no interpretive finality. Derrida's terminology in relation to my photographs is explored, an exercise for readers is provided, and final reflections follow. All photographs referenced are readily available on the Web.

What is Avant-Garde Photography?

Avant-garde. The word originates from the French for advance guard and was part of military terminology from the 15th century. These were the scouts who went ahead to clear the way for the army

The Avant-Garde

to advance. Avant-guard means leading the way, advancing, trail-blazing, and innovation. It can mean various things to different people, so it cannot easily be pinned down (Cottington, 2013). Broadly speaking, the avant-garde distances itself from conventional photography and storytelling and focuses on elevating experimentation. The avant-garde is about change rather than progression, as the latter points to a linear direction toward some realizable goal. It is about rupture and refusing the current received *modus operandi* of whichever art it functions within. According to Falconer (2025, p. 30), “avant-gardism is a distinctly Western phenomenon. It’s a response to the marginal position of modern art in Western society.” One possible reason is because of art patronage declining from the mid-19th century, with artists believing that they had the freedom to break through art boundaries and create as they pleased. The avant-garde is not fixed but constantly changing. For example, Andy Warhol’s works were avant-garde in the 1960s but are now associated with Pop Art. It should be noted that there are 20th-century Russian Constructivism and Soviet avant-garde, Japanese Gutai, and Latin American art movements, among many others. Avant-garde is conceptually related to other art movements, such as Dada (e.g., Hannah Höch), Futurism (e.g., Anton Bragaglia), Surrealism (e.g., Man Ray, Dora Maar), Fluxus (e.g., Yoko Ono), Constructivism (e.g., Alexander Rodchenko) and Outsider Art (e.g., Miroslav Tichy). It is worth your while to read about these artists and their life stories. The avant-garde is a philosophy or an approach. The avant-garde can inhabit any art movement, but a photograph from any art movement does not make it avant-garde. One of the earliest avant-garde photographs was by Oscar Rejlander titled *The Two Ways of Life*. In 1857, he combined at least thirty negatives and produced what was a controversial photograph at the time, the spirit of which was in keeping with future avant-garde images.

Avant-garde photography (see Cottington, 2013; Foster, 1996) differs from conventional photography. Conventional photography is generally that which adheres to established norms and techniques (e.g., rule of thirds, exposure triangle, horizontal horizon, and tonal range). Conventional photography may focus on the decisive moment (e.g., Henri Cartier Bresson), a narrative (e.g., Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin), or achieving the technically perfect image (e.g., Ansel Adams). Incidentally, Cindy Sherman and Nan Goldin also provided avant-garde images. Conventional photography tends to align with the legible and the understandable, while avant-garde photography dislocates perceptual habits. Avant-garde photography seeks alternative ways of presenting photographs. It elevates meaning, subversion, and radical experimentation over visual beauty, perfection, and established photographic norms. It asks questions such as, what interpretations of an image are possible, why was the image taken, what does discomfort about an image say about the photograph and the viewer, what is hidden, can an image have contradictory truths and can these ever be resolved (a very Derridean deconstructive question), is there objectivity and truth in the image, and how might a viewer interpret an unrecognizable image or person? In addition, avant-garde photography may ask the following questions, how can the seemingly obvious be disrupted, how can a scene become unpredictable, how can a photograph be made uncanny or strange to unsettle certainty about the image? Can one fracture linearity, tonal balance, and symmetry in such

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a way that the viewer looks at the scene in different ways that stimulate interest? Can one get an image to challenge the viewer to second-guess and revise their perception of what they think they see in the image, rather than “does the image demonstrate technical skill?”

Picasso’s Predicament

A widely attributed Pablo Picasso quote is: “The world doesn’t make sense, so why should I paint pictures that do?” It is unknown if he actually said these words; regardless, it is a phantom trace (i.e., absence within a presence owing to its unverifiable origin). This is indicative of the avant-garde predicament. Sometimes realistic art that seemingly makes sense does not. Gustave Courbet (1819-1877) painted quotidian scenes in a realistic way but that was avant-garde, as he radically overturned the institutional requirements that paintings, for example, be of idyllic environments and religious and mythological figures. The *trompe l’oeil* (the illusion of reality) is not necessarily avant-garde, as it imitates reality. For example, while M. C. Escher’s 20th century drawings of impossible staircases are innovative, they are not avant-garde, as dismantling conventions and rupture were not part of his agenda. Abstract photography is not necessarily avant-garde. For it to be avant-garde it would need to challenge assumptions about photography. A beautiful abstract image of light, colors and textures bouncing off a building’s stainless steel and glass may be innovative but it is also comfortable. It looks attractive but does not destabilize meaning or provoke, hence it distances itself from the avant-garde. The same goes for Glitch photography. Innovation is not necessarily subversion, but subversion can be innovative.

Avant-garde photography is unconventional, disorients, and seeks to rupture. It is interested in discordant and fragmented images that challenge the viewer to think deeply about the image and indeed, life in general and their own life. It covers a broad swathe of topics that are potentially oppositional that include among many others: politics, identity, self-portrait, anti-self-portrait, the environment, memory, time, psychoanalysis, race, feminism, and gender. Much of the aforementioned are included in Miller (2020), who refers to contemporary photography, a field that sometimes includes the avant-garde. Cottington (2013, p. 1) states that the term avant-garde, has “an expectation of the very qualities of *un*-expectedness that the ‘new’ is supposed to bring, and that makes it new; which makes it something of a contradiction in terms.” In other words, if what is surprising is anticipated, then it cannot be surprising. Nevertheless, avant-garde images can be very surprising, as the expectations of viewers differ.

If a viewer says, “I know what that image is – it is obviously a pond and a garden and is the kind of image I have often seen,” then the image is less likely avant-garde as it is easily resolved, repetitive and derivative. An example of an exception is Marcel Duchamp’s 1917 readymade urinal titled *Fountain*. It was submitted to an artistic exhibition, was seen by few people, and was rejected. It is remembered through Alfred Stieglitz’s photograph of *Fountain* (Grunberg, 2021). A urinal is a well-known object but the challenge of *Fountain* was ‘this is art.’ A photographic example of incongruous juxtapositions is Karin Mack’s

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Zerstörung einer Illusion (Demolition of an Illusion) (1977) (see Schor, 2025). Nails, roasting skewers and hairpins are protruding from a woman's body. The image reflects on the roles of women. Another example, is Hanna Höch's (a Dadaist) subversive photomontage, *Schnitt mit dem Küchenmesser Dada durch die letzte Weimarer Bierbauchkulturepoche Deutschlands* (Cut With a Kitchen Knife Through The Last Weimar Beer-Belly Cultural Epoch In Germany) (1919). Placing images together that are seemingly incompatible, as is the case in Höch's photomontage, can be very interesting to avant-garde photographers. This is due to the sharp juxtaposition and underlying friction the composition provides.

Avant-garde photomontage may include images that are recognizable but the connections between images seem disparate, confusing, unsettling, inappropriate, or discordant. They may also be liberating for some, providing *vive la différence*. Well-known images may be included that have been altered in some ways to look very different to what may be expected. Surrealists are particularly adept at this. See Birgit Jürgenssen's images in Schor (2025), some of which provide recognizable objects and others not.

Kansuke Yamamoto's (Keller & Maddox, 2013) photographs are also interesting examples of incongruous juxtapositions. See his *Buddhist Temple's Birdcage* (1940), *View With A Ship Passing Through* (1940) (which is reminiscent of Lee Miller's, *Portrait of Space* (1937); she was a surrealist and avant-garde photographer and for a while worked with Man Ray), and *A Chronicle of Drifting* (1949), which is a photograph of a woman with a sail boat replacing her head. Remarkable avant-garde photographs can be found in *Provoke* (DuFour et al., 2016), which is a collection of images from the erstwhile eponymously titled politically provocative photographic magazine. There were three issues from 1968-1969. *Provoke* includes avant-garde photographs from, among others, Nobuyoshi Araki, Takuma Nakahira, and Daido Moriyama. Moriyama's *Stray Dog* (1971) is a celebrated avant-garde image. The viewer is encouraged to not stray but think about these photographs and may be immensely rewarded. Examples of current avant-garde photographers include Uta Barth, Lucas Blalock, Isa Genzken, Marten Lange, and Wolfgang Tillmans. Very interesting avant-garde photography books include Cottington (2013), DeCharme & Compagnie (2019), Falconer (2025), Leger (2014), Schor (2025), and Vermare et al. (2024). For an academic-oriented text, see Foster (1996). While not specifically naming avant-garde photography, Grundberg (2021) makes numerous references to photographs that are avant-garde. His avoidance of the term may come from his thesis of the institutional legitimation of contemporary art. Naming works as avant-garde rupture would undercut that thesis, as institutional legitimation is not avant-garde's brief. This is an example of the struggle avant-garde photography faces to have its presence acknowledged and how it can be neutralized. The absurdity of the world is fruitful ground for avant-garde photographers to cultivate, hence Picasso's predicament.

The Plain Fact Is That A Photograph Per Se Means Nothing

If a viewer asks: "Now why would that image be titled *Tree*, when it could be something else that I can-

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not quite put my finger on, and is there any way I can resolve this dilemma or do I live with its ambiguity.” Then the viewer may be on the avant-garde trail. In the latter instance the photographer is urging the viewers to look again and think about the image. One possible answer is that there is no resolution but many possibilities of interpretation. Avant-garde photography does not treat viewers as passive consumers but urges them to engage with the artwork, resist resolution of meaning and accept polysemy. This may also explain why avant-garde photographers are often hesitant to say much about their images, as it could reduce such images to a finality or a single meaning with little possibility for further image engagement. The title of an image can be important in the avant-garde, even if it is *Untitled* (see Ables, 2019). View René Magritte’s (1929) avant-garde painting, *La Trahison des images* (The Treachery of Images) under which he inscribed, “This is not a pipe.” The image and text are where the rupture occurs. Can you smoke a painting of a pipe? Is this reality or hyperreality? A painting of a pipe, titled “Pipe” would be comfortable. Magritte’s painting is not. *Le Cadeau* (The Gift) (1921) by Man Ray is a readymade sculpture and comprises a clothes iron with thumb tacks glued to the bottom of the iron. It is an excellent example of the importance of a title. A descriptive title seldom works in avant-garde photography, as it tells you where to look, it is didactical, and closes interpretation. If it is contradictory, ambiguous, or ironic it may work. A title that opens interpretation, creates tension and ambiguity, and gets the viewer to think is preferred.

Sir Thomas Beecham, the famous British conductor of the 20th century once said, “The plain fact is that music per se means nothing; it is sheer sound and the interpreter can do no more with it than his own capacities, mental and spiritual, will allow, and the same applies to the listener” (Beecham, 1943). The same applies to photography if one replaces music with a photograph, sound with an image, and listener with viewer. How does the viewer engage with the image, based on the viewer’s own capacities, mental and spiritual? What does the viewer bring to the photograph? Photography judges and critics can be insightful but never objective as their knowledge, mental, and spiritual capacities vary between each other and in relation to different photographic genres and images. And no one can transcend the world to be objective in a meaningful sense of the word, but critics can attempt to be fair. Current avant-garde photographers, such as Joan Fontcuberta, question through their images whether photography is objective or truthful.

Some may shrug their shoulders and mutter “who knows what that photograph is about,” and move on instead of taking sufficient time to contemplate the image, and perhaps be the poorer for it. Kaplan (2017) points out that on average; people view art works in museums for about 28 seconds. Avant-garde photography is challenging, and challenging photographers and photography, including itself, is its brief. It is an exercise in self-knowledge and exploring an avant-garde image is exploring oneself. One never knows what thoughts, ideas, and emotions will arise from contemplating the avant-garde.

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Some Techniques and the Search for Ideas

Avant-garde photography is not an assortment of camera techniques and well-trying software skills that one perfects to provide pleasing photographs. It does not expect viewers to ask the photographer what the image means or what camera, lens, tripod, or meta data were employed in the creation of the image. I cannot provide you with a definitive list of techniques and ideas as there isn't one and anyway this would run counter to the spirit of avant-garde photography. Anything goes, but then again, not quite. Choices are made and one has to think them through. Technical skills are not irrelevant but the idea directs the technique. Techniques are subordinate to ideas in avant-garde photography.

Avant-garde photography includes in-camera techniques, such as intentional camera movement (sometimes with ND or other creative filters) and multiple exposures, but these can also be obtained in post-processing using blending, distressed backgrounds, light leaks, blurring, liquify, dust and scratches, image inversion, and other techniques. Avant-garde images may also include muted colors, lack of sharpness and little contrast. There are many methods that avant-garde photographers use, such as solarization (e.g., Man Ray), photograms (e.g., László Moholy-Nagy), photomontage (e.g., Alexander Rodchenko), blurring (e.g., Francesca Woodman), camera-less photography (which is making a comeback; e.g., Adam Fuss) and alternative processes (e.g., cyanotypes and anotypes). There are also interesting developments in AI and the avant-garde (for example, see Cook, 2025). Useful books for alternative techniques are Humphrey (2022) and Bowker (2013). Avant-garde photography does not demand elaborate post-processing techniques, but neither are such techniques eschewed.

Where does one get such avant-garde ideas? A widely reported anecdote in this regard (see Gotthardt, 2019) is Meret Oppenheim's (1936) *Object*, which is a fur lined teacup, saucer, and spoon; an avant-garde surrealist sculpture. In 1936 while Meret was having lunch with Pablo Picasso and Dora Maar, Picasso admired Meret's fur wrapped bracelet and remarked that anything can be covered in fur. Soon thereafter, Meret went to a store and bought a teacup, saucer, and spoon and wrapped them with Chinese gazelle fur. Ideas can emanate from looking at avant-garde images, one's life experiences, speaking to avant-garde photographers, issues that concern one or society, and a variety of books and articles, such as art, philosophy, critical theory, novels, history, psychology, the Internet, YouTube, and much else. Read widely. Listening to the music of avant-garde musicians, such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, Kim Gordon, Laurie Anderson, Frank Zappa, Miles Davis, and even some of The Beatles' songs (e.g., *Revolution 9*, *I Am the Walrus*, and *Tomorrow Never Knows*) may help, as they dismantle musical structure and composition, which is analogous to what avant-garde photography does. Aleatory music techniques emphasize a spontaneous choice, and musical improvisation and/or offsetting machine noise can be treated as motion blur or accidental image scratches in photography. For avant-garde music and avant-garde photography, disassembling occurs, where the medium is stripped of conventionality revealing raw, uncharted possibilities.

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Be Careful

These are possible traps or red flags that may or may not be problematic in an avant-garde photograph, depending on the photograph. There are various image characteristics that avant-garde photographers tend to avoid, such as conventional beauty, anything that is expected such as natural or predictable colors, and common positioning of objects. Also, anything with which the eye becomes too comfortable, such as the rule of thirds when it promotes harmony. The leading line is potentially problematic. A leading line limits alternative ways of looking by urging the viewer to resist visual wandering. It tells the viewer how and what to see. It facilitates closure as once the end of a line is reached finality of the image is likely achieved. Avant-garde photography wants to leave the viewer stranded or trapped in a never-ending circle, not allowing the eye to follow the line to an ultimate revelation or a finality. This is reminiscent of Ouroboros, the snake that signifies eternity.

Decisive moments are seldom part of avant-garde photography. They are viewed as indicative of a predictable world and are a stylistic convention. Many wildlife images are available of the decisive moment, such as a big cat pouncing on its prey. We know with reasonable certainty what preceded and what followed the event. The decisive moment is an attempt to capture legibility in a split second, is resistant to treating time as fluid, and reflects a conventional narrative. Too often it is comfortable and derivative. There are exceptions, such as if the image includes irony, has an unexpected juxtaposition, or a facial expression that is in-process between two expressions. Where is the stable facial identity now? This also questions the assumption that a person's personality is visible in an image of their face. Belief in portraiture revealing the subject's soul or character is a trope, and can be traced to the Romantic Era (c. 1780-1900) where there was a turn to interiority. Such beliefs are likely a way to search for stories and meaning. In conventional photography the in process expression might be seen as missing the decisive moment and viewed as failure. An interesting avant-garde constructed decisive moment photograph is Philippe Halsman's *Dali Atomicus* (1948), in which Salvador Dali, his easel, three cats, flowing water and a chair are all suspended in the air. It shows the decisive moment but there is no legible before and after. See Palumbo (2018) for an interesting account of the proceedings. How many times was a similar image seen before 1948? There is no check list of what may be problematic in avant-garde photography. The avant-garde resists check lists, but whatever is derivative, repetitive, comfortable or conclusive, risks being problematic.

Avant-Garde Images

The images were provided without titles, so you could be free of suggestions and pointers. The titles I allocated are below even though I could have left the images without titles. A descriptive title is didactical and instructs the viewer where to look, but an ambiguous title or no title leaves interpretation to the viewer. My titles are intentionally ambiguous. The avant-garde photographs that I took are arguably

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more similar in some ways than different, as will be explained later. These images were included so that an avant-garde approach to photography may be appreciated. I suggest the images' connections to art movements. They do not cover the range of avant-garde possibilities.

Figure 1. *The Weight*



This photograph I took in 2026. Why is the title *The Weight*? Is it a dandelion, man, animal, tree, or an unknown, or all five? Why is the image avant-garde? Perhaps it focuses on something else; psychological or sociological, and not itself. Does the image resolve or does it remain open? Is it a documentary, portrait, landscape, macro, or a street photograph, or does it belong to an unknown category? Is the image ambiguous or not and does it unsettle you? Is there a burden the image is carrying or is it moving away

in some direction? What does the background say in relation to the image? Why do you think the image is darker than light? Does this contribute to the title? Does this image have Surrealist overtones that suggest the unconscious or dreams?

Figure 2. *Ouroboros*

Here is another image I took in 2026. It is called *Ouroboros* and was the result of a slow shutter speed. Ouroboros is an ancient symbol and refers to a snake continually eating its tail. It represents birth, life, and death and also eternity. Why do you think I called it *Ouroboros*? Is the title directly or indirectly referring to this image? Can you think of a better title? Should the image be less blurred and would you rather there be more clarity (i.e., a fast shutter speed) or should it be cropped? If so, why? What does the photograph refuse (i.e., what is absent or what is taken away?).



Is there stability and also instability in the image? Do you think it has Surrealistic or perhaps Futurist leanings?

Figure 3. *Musical Friction*

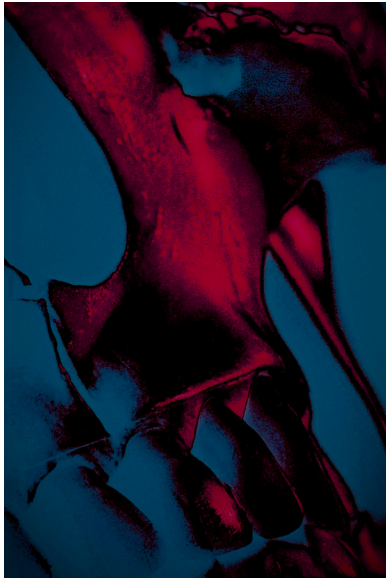


This image was taken in the Summer of 2026 and, as you may suspect, the image was a slow shutter speed. Why musical and why friction? Is friction implied in the image and could the friction be music related or not? Is there a haunting or ethereal presence to the image? Does the image encourage your eye to wander? What assumptions did you have of this image at first, and does

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the image now agree with or differ from your assumptions? Does the image suggest the art movement Futurism or something else and if so, what?

Figure 4. *Metamorphosis*



Why do you think *Metamorphosis* is the title? What do you think this image is about? Titles can be very important in the avant-garde. Not just any title will do. One that aims at getting the viewer thinking is essential. A literal title may not be the best, but it depends on the image and the photographer's intention. Sometimes a literal title can be ironic or sardonic. What does this image look like or remind you of? Do you think it resists conventional norms of photography? Why or why not? What does your answer say about your approach to photography? Is the image ambiguous and not resolvable or is it obvious in meaning? Do you think that there is a narrative in *Metamorphosis*; a beginning, middle, and end? Following Derrida (1981) a word that has a cross over it signifies present but conceptually absent. For example, the word "truth" could be under erasure, namely present but with flawed meanings. Transfer this reasoning to the image. What in the image is deficient but necessary? Is there cancellation present (i.e.,

negating what the viewer assumes should be there) in this image? Are parts of the image eroded or missing? What is an effect of red and blue on the image? Do you think this image leans toward Expressionism, Experimental Photography, or something else?

Figure 5. *Provisional*

This photograph could have been taken any year and anywhere. What traditional photographic rules are being broken in this image? If any are broken, do you think they are problematic for the purposes of this photograph or for all photographs? What could be present but provisional in this image? How do the diagonal lines contribute to your perceptions and feelings of the photograph? Do you think that this image is avant-garde? Maybe the image leaves one wondering where the person is headed? Is there a subject, and if so, is a subject blending into the background? Does this mean anything? Does your eye fix on anything in this image or does your eye move around? Do you think that the image has Impressionist (fleeting and high contrast light) and/or Expressionist (psychological and emotional response) overtones?



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Figure 6. *Do You Feel Better Now?*

Is the title appropriate and what is your interpretation of it? Would you have a different title and what would that be? I considered a few titles and if I were to replace this Tarot card with another Tarot card, a great deal about this image would change. Sometimes an avant-garde image can be enhanced or diminished considerably by the title. Does the image unsettle you or make you feel indifferent? Does the image feel haunting, evocative, or archival?

It could have been a very legible image; at least it started that way. This is an image showing incongruous juxtapositions of objects; a foundational trend in avant-garde photography. Note that I planned the objects to be there. I did not randomly place the objects on the map. Random placement would have carried a strong risk that the image would become trite. When looking at avant-garde images, always ask “why” for everything you see in the image. Does this photograph show legible objects or not? Is it desaturated and scratched and does this contribute to your interpretation of the image?

Does the image appear found and not made? Note the readymade objects. Why are they there? There is a Tarot card and such cards originated from the 15th-century Italian Renaissance. It was not merely any Tarot card selected for this image. What does this card, *The World*, refer to within the Tarot? There appears to be a pair of medical scissors, pills, and a thermometer. There are disfigurements in front of the blades – what could that signify? Was the thermometer purposely placed there and in a certain direction and if so, to what is it pointing? What does all of this mean? There is the sun, stars, and a cosmological world from the Medieval era, c. 5th to 15th century. What is that cosmological world about? Should modern medical instruments be associated with a medieval cosmology? What has been displaced and from where? (i.e., are the Tarot card and thermometer in their expected places or should they both be better situated elsewhere outside of the image?). What else might have been displaced? How does this photograph handle time? Does this image have Dadaist and Surrealist overtones?

Additional avant-garde photographs taken by Graham B. Stead can be found in:

<https://grahamstead.format/about>

Concluding Thoughts

The images ended with “Do you feel better now?” and this is a question for you the reader. Has this discussion of avant-garde photography thrown some light on it and encouraged you to look for and think more about the avant-garde? Might you incorporate it in your own photographic work? I certainly hope so. When you first saw the images, you were asked to do some work by thinking about them, before any discussion of avant-garde photography. You were then asked various questions about each image. Have

The Avant-Garde

the questions and discussion led you to re-think each image after you initially reflected on them at the beginning of this article? Did your thoughts about the images change in any way or not from your first viewing to your viewing after the discussion? If your thoughts changed, in what ways did they alter? Do you think that your thoughts about these images might change again and again?

The Avant-Garde Challenges Language

Why don't avant-garde photographers clearly explain what their images mean? Not everything can be said using language and following Derrida (1981), a French philosopher, language is unstable. Language is not a neutral medium and according to Derrida, it cannot finalize meaning. Derrida believed that the meanings of words are never fixed. To explain the meaning of a word leads to deferral in that other words need to be provided, requiring their meanings, and so on. A word cannot define itself. As the meaning of words and phrases is always in flux, avant-garde photographers employ visual media not to overcome deferral but to inhabit it. Language can provide a false stability, a seemingly definitive enactment of meaning.

For each of these avant-garde images, I resisted saying too much about them. That is why you were invited to examine the photographs before the avant-garde was discussed. It is from me, but it is about you and your perceptions. Ask what you can bring to a photograph. Has this article enabled you to change some of your perceptions of photography or the avant-garde or do you remain unmoved? Why and what does this say about your approaches to photography? I have resisted any definitive explanations of the photographs, as I do not want them to be reduced to a finality, to something that is resolved. I cannot resolve them. What they mean is about your allocation of meaning or appreciation. For you to be told what an image means is to say that there is one interpretation and *that* one makes sense. Not all interpretations of avant-garde art are equal, but at the same time there is never only one interpretation. Art is a palimpsest (i.e., bearing visible traces of earlier forms); a site of *différance*. Would you want finality when interpreting art? Are continual dialogue and re-interpretations more desirable possibilities? A definitive interpretation shuts the work down.

Derrida and the Images

Are these images united in some way? Or are they disparate? My title for the images I photographed is: "Under Erasure, *Différance*, and Trace." You may notice that the title is closely related to Jacques Derrida's (1981 oft-used terminology. *Différance* is a Derridean neologism, namely deferral of meaning. Here is my thinking. Under Erasure asks whether some of the images are present but with flawed meanings; deficient but necessary. *Metamorphosis* and *Do You Feel Better Now?* may suggest erosion in process, an ongoing occurrence. *Do You Feel Better Now?* may present an external threat, via the pair of medical scissors placed over The World where the tips of the blades are disintegrating the card. The card's disintegration has begun.

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Différance suggests temporal and spatial deferral that is continual (*Ouroboros* and *Musical Friction*) and trace may propose ethereal remnants and echoes (*Provisional* and *The Weight*). It can be argued that these images could also be in other Derridean categories and not only one. Do the images all withhold stability? Also, note that the curated title for the images is conceptual, and that images do not need to be united under a perceptual or stylistic umbrella phrase or term. Visual similarity between images was never my point in this exercise. Deconstruction as commonly used in art (e.g., dismantling, fragmentation, subverting), is not necessarily Derridean deconstruction (e.g., under erasure, trace, différance), but it can be. A knowledge of Derrida is not required to experience these images. Derrida's views are available to those who would like to make this connection, but it is not the only way to experience them. Perhaps you would curate these images differently.

An Exercise

Here is an interesting exercise to develop your avant-garde skills. Take photographs of either flowers in general or specifically roses, together with a skull in such a way that the image becomes avant-garde. This is challenging as roses have a deep history of being seductive, beautiful, relaxing and comfortable. How would you dismantle this to produce rupture in your image, and this is the important part, in a way that it is meaningful? A rose and skull image is generally a conventional one, as it is derivative. It is derivative as such an image can be traced back for centuries, from ancient Greece, to tattoo styles, to Day of the Dead, including the Grateful Dead associations it elicits. The danger here is slipping into beauty or Gothic Noir. Can an avant-garde image be produced from a skull and rose? View Georgia O'Keeffe's *Cow's Skull with Calico Roses* (1931). Note how different O'Keeffe's painting is from what is expected. The tone and color are shared and the rose is not red. It is an important avant-garde painting (sometimes placed under American Modernism), as the familiar becomes strange and destabilizing. There is rupture. Adding a skull to a rose will not easily work, unless you dedicate yourself to thinking through how to photograph them together. One has to move radically away from the sentimentality and cultural baggage a rose and a skull can provide. It is possible that what you photograph is barely a rose and skull but something that suggests them, even if fleetingly; perhaps fragmentation or a trace. Maybe there is nothing suggestive of them in the photograph, but the title recalls the image and has one thinking. If you do not have a skull to photograph, why not place a rose on a plate with two knives? That is the beginning of an avant-garde idea.

Some Issues to Consider

Questions To Ask Yourself

Some debatable issues for photographers to ask themselves are whether a photograph can only be true if it contains recognizable people or objects. Are photographers mostly passive observers concerned with what the world looks like and providing technically good images or do they actively construct meaning

The Avant-Garde

and open groundbreaking visual spaces? Should photographers move beyond the camera as a tool to record images and provide legibility, or employ it to provide critical reflection and also deferral of meaning? There are no absolute right or wrong answers here, as different approaches resolve these tensions differently. These questions should still be asked as the approaches one takes help to provide a rationale for one's photographic direction, but they also have consequences on how one's work will be judged.

Criticisms

Some might say that the avant-garde is negative, oppositional, lacking technical skill, inaccessible, elitist, and not pleasing. Such criticisms are misguided. Transgression can be viewed as serious intent. A photograph can be tranquil but also ambiguous rather than oppositional. Such works please a different audience and resist fitting into received artistic approaches. The avant-garde questions a false resolution of images. Lacking technical skill is a populist comment and ignores the conceptual and perceptual in avant-garde photography. The view that avant-garde photography is inaccessible disregards what a viewer can bring to the photograph, both "mental and spiritual" (Beecham, 1943). What a viewer brings is provisional and meanings attributed to photographs are always deferred (Derrida, 1981). Deferral leaves interpretations open and never fully resolved. Accusations of it being elitist aim at reducing avant-garde's disruptive power, and expect it to conform to established traditions. Should that succeed, avant-garde photography risks losing its reason for existence.

Avant-garde photography is about stimulating viewers before they drift into a sense of comfortable, predictable art. An aim of the avant-garde is to prevent the numbing effects of cliché (i.e., overused visual tropes) by disruption rather than tinkering at the margins. The cliché enables the viewer to draw from previously learned and shared resources that may erroneously suggest to the viewer that interpretative finality is provided. Deferral is always present, even in a cliché. Putting it plainly, the question "Did you mean this or that?" results in a meaning being supplied and the question is repeated and so on (i.e., deferral). Avant-garde photography abhors stagnation. There is more to taking photographs than is available at the first click of the shutter or as Shakespeare said in *Hamlet*, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in one's philosophy.

Is Avant-Garde Photography Good?

Avant-garde photography is liberating in that it gives one freedom to explore, experiment, and find radically new ways to engage the medium. Avant-garde practices are always at risk of turning into new rules and conventions of their own making or being appropriated by the commercial sector, which is why the avant-garde cannot settle into complacency but must advance. An important question that avant-garde photography raises is not "Is this good photography" but "Is this even photography?" "Is it even art?" Avant-garde photography pushes artistic boundaries conceptually (i.e., challenging one's ideas or theories) and perceptually (i.e., disrupting what one perceives through one's senses). That is the reason it earns its name - avant-garde.

The Avant-Garde

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Examples of Avant-Garde Photography on the Internet:

- Aperture: <https://aperture.org/editorial/how-a-group-of-young-italian-artists-redefined-avant-garde-photography/>
- PhotoAnthology: <https://photoanthology.org/influence/avant-garde>
- SouthEast Museum of Photography: <https://southeastmuseumofphotography.org/picturingtheavantgarde>

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Creative



1st Place Blue Eagle Splash by David Korosec



1st Place Central Coast Rock by David Korosec



1st Place Simply Peace by Denise Meekins



1st Place The TB Foundry by Glenn Petranek

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Creative



2nd Place Ghost of the Mountain by Erich Botzki



2nd Place Desert Wear and Tear by Wally Nell

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Creative



2nd Place Pachyderm Portrait by Dennis Wert



2nd Place Ribbons, Glass and Water by Kris Bosworth



2nd Place School Picture Day by Jessica Cohen-Kiraly



2nd Place Shared Silence
by Jackie Sajewski

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Creative



2nd Place Shoreline of Another World by Bob Kowaleski



2nd Place Into the Abyss by Jessica Cohen-Kiraly



2nd Place Mother's Love by Erich Botzki

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Creative



2nd Place Smoke and Formation by Melanie Plummer



3rd Place Live From Lakewood by Brad Ruebensaal



3rd Place Condensate by Glenn Petranek



3rd Place It's Suppertime by Bill Keaton

COMPETITION PHOTOS



3rd Place Memento Mori by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk

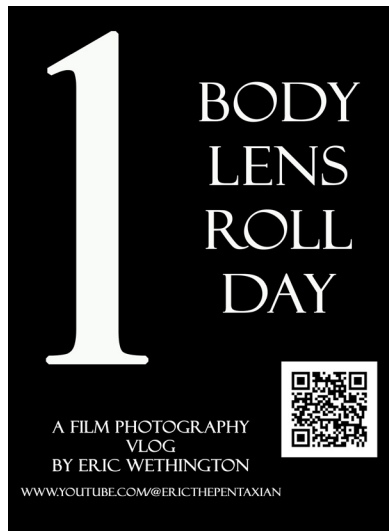
Creative



3rd Place Mirrored Solitude by Jackie Sajewski

One Body, One Lens, One Roll, One Day

By Eric Wethington



Hello, my name is Eric Wethington. I do a vlog on YouTube about film photography.

Most of you know me from participation in the Cleveland Photographic Society or my work at Dodd Camera. Here's a little bit about me and how my series began that is called "One Body, One Lens, One Roll, One Day."

I have been interested in photography for over 35 years, working in the photography industry for much of that time and becoming an internationally published creator. During my 12 years with the Cleveland Photographic Society, I've given presentations on new camera gear, sensor cleaning, firmware updates and printing your images at home.

The "One" project started about 10 years ago. At the time, my personal photography was fully vested into a Pentax digital system, shooting an average 12,000 shots a year. I happened to notice a used Pentax 645n with an 80-160mm zoom lens for a very reasonable price. I had always wanted a medium format film camera, and tried

out a Yashica-Mat EM for a summer. But I could never afford such a camera during its heyday of the 1990s.

I picked it up, but the camera sat on a shelf for a year or so.

Then I pulled out the camera, loaded it up with Ilford HP5 and



went out to Medina Square for a shoot. That day, I rediscovered something. I rediscovered my love of film photography.

As you know, film photography was declining in popularity in the industry by the 2010s. Interest in black and white film photography had reached a low point, and color film was also fading out. Kodak discontinued classic specialty films such as Kodachrome, HIE Infrared, EIR Color Infrared; and additionally consolidated the Portra, Ektar and Ektachrome lines. AGFA and Konica films were mostly, if not completely, gone. Even Fuji had discontinued or scaled back their film production.

And, as luck would have it, that's when I rediscovered my love of film photography.

When I went out to shoot that roll of HP5 in the Pentax 645n, the circumstances forced me to do a few

things that I had almost forgotten how to do.

That includes the fact I had to load the film. It took me a second of staring at the camera and thinking, "Oh yeah, I know how to do this." It was a lot like getting into the driver's seat of a manual shift car after years of driving an automatic.

After I loaded the camera, I walked around to take my 16 shots.

I realized something during that process. I realized that I enjoy the tactile feel of a mechanical shutter, the process of loading the film, the slowed pace of picking your shots rather than the machine-gun "Spray and Pray" style that some digital photographers do.

In response: I created my personal challenge. At least twice a year, I will take a film camera, a lens, a roll of film and enjoy what was once a hobby. During the COVID-19 era, I was outside almost once a week just to get out of the house. Those photography sessions sometimes were with a digital camera, but sometimes with a film camera.

I wasn't the only one picking up the older technology. I noticed that many other people were resuming photography shoots on their old cameras, sometimes those that belonged to grandparents, aunts or uncles. Many of those were film cameras.

For unrelated reasons, black and white photography had started a slow comeback a year or two earlier, but the search for new hobbies during COVID-era shutdowns gave that a boost.

Unfortunately, the variety of film selections had already diminished.

One Body, One Lens, One Roll, One Day



In addition, fewer people who were active in photography as a hobby knew how to work with film, much less how to best use the format or even how to shoot with expired film.

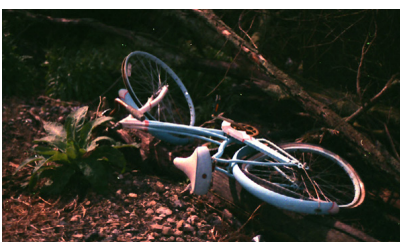
That's the niche my vlog stepped into. I recorded my first vlog episode in November 2024, using my Pentax 645n with some frozen, expired 1994 Kodak Ektar 25 film and created "One Body, One Lens, One Roll, One Day." This sparked some interest as a photography challenge to other photographers to get out their old film cameras and re-enjoy the process of film photography. I even called it a challenge for the first few episodes.

Originally, the vlog was going to be an every-other-week thing. I stepped it up to once a week, then found that twice a week was a good pace for myself. I started with random expired films that I had in the freezer. Then I slowly found other expired film lots from other photographers and online auctions. I even grabbed some fresh stock stuff (Fuji 200/400 and Kodak Max 400).

What we are seeing now in the photography industry is that new film is going on the market. Products such as Film Photography Project, Lomography, Cinestill and Doublefilm have come into play,

each with their own unique looks, and classic film companies such as Harmon Technologies (Ilford) have come up with new films such as Phoenix, and AGFA films have reintroduced their APX line of black and white films.

During each episode of my vlog, I try to describe a cool thing about the camera, lens or film I am using. Some episodes I talk about shooting expired films, the location, or even a photo technique or two. I keep the episodes short, about 5 to 15 minutes, and you can see my results at the end of each episode.



While I do not have a formal sponsor for this series, several local professional photographers have donated film to my project and even have let me borrow their own film cameras or unique lenses for a few weeks to shoot an episode on.

The most unique episode was when I borrowed another professional photographer's Mamiya C220 TLR and shot Gaevent Superchrome black and white film that expired in 1947.

During Cleveland Photographic Society's excursion to Mansfield Reformatory in early 2025, I took my film cameras and film instead of my digital gear. I modified my challenge to one roll per section. With that assignment, I shot a roll in each of the sections, such as solitary, chapel, upper cells and lower cells. That became my longest episode at around 28 minutes.

All my vlog episodes show the actual shots I took. With minor exceptions, I do no editing except a small crop or leveling due to a heavy shutter finger.

There also is an episode or two where I edited images in Photoshop (shooting Harmon Phoenix I) due to the way I scanned the image. I want to see and show these films as they are, not heavily processed or fixed to make them look better.

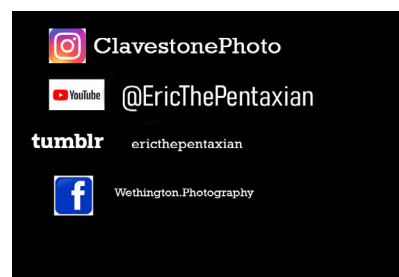
If you want to learn more about film photography, feel free to subscribe and comment on episodes you like. You can even catch me at an occasional meeting or stop in to Dodd Camera Cleveland.

There are even a few "Oops" episodes, where the film came back blank due to a misload or heat-damaged film, but hey, we're not perfect and mistakes happen, and that's OK! You learn; that's the important part of photography, digital or film, you learn. There is a meme out there I'm sure you've all seen.

A roll of 120 film with 12 exposures = 6 good shots
A roll of 35mm film with 36 exposures = 6 good shots
A 64gb memory card with 1,000 shots = 6 good shots

Slow down, enjoy the process, take pictures, learn
~Eric Wethington

YouTube Vlog: www.YouTube.com/@EricThePentaxian
Instagram: www.Instagram.com/Clavestonphoto



COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



1st Place Bruges Canal, Belgium by Vicki Wert



1st Place Tulip Study by Teri Arthur



1st Place Water and Glass by Kris Bosworth

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



2nd Place Entrance by Joe Distefano



2nd Place Geometric by Mike Kopkas



2nd Place Ghent, Belgium by Vicki Wert



2nd Place Heart of a Dandelion by
Brad Ruebensaal

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



2nd Place Henry by Susan Bestul



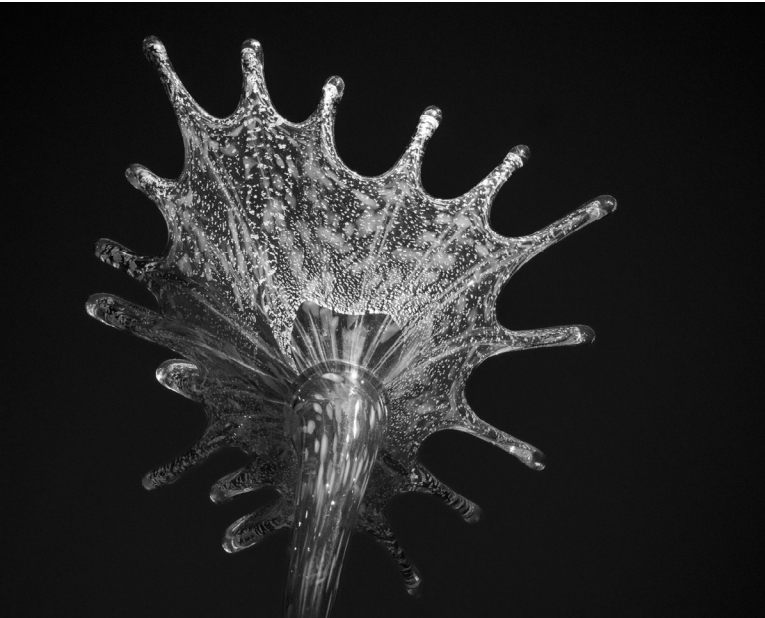
2nd Place Yerevan Beauty by Wally Nell



3rd Place Above the Fray by DJ Cassaniti

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



3rd Place Chihuly Flower by Dave Ciborek



3rd Place Geometry Homework by Jordan Tetzl



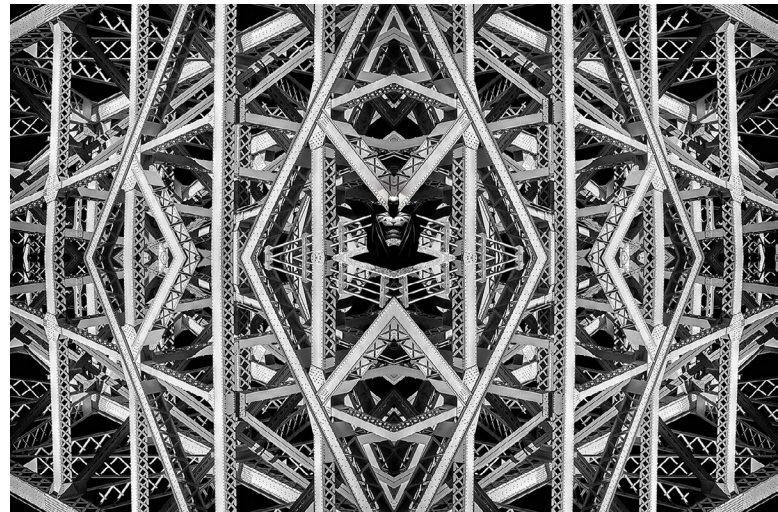
3rd Place Flint Cityscape by Gale Graves

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



3rd Place Granite and Vapor, WA by DJ Cassaniti



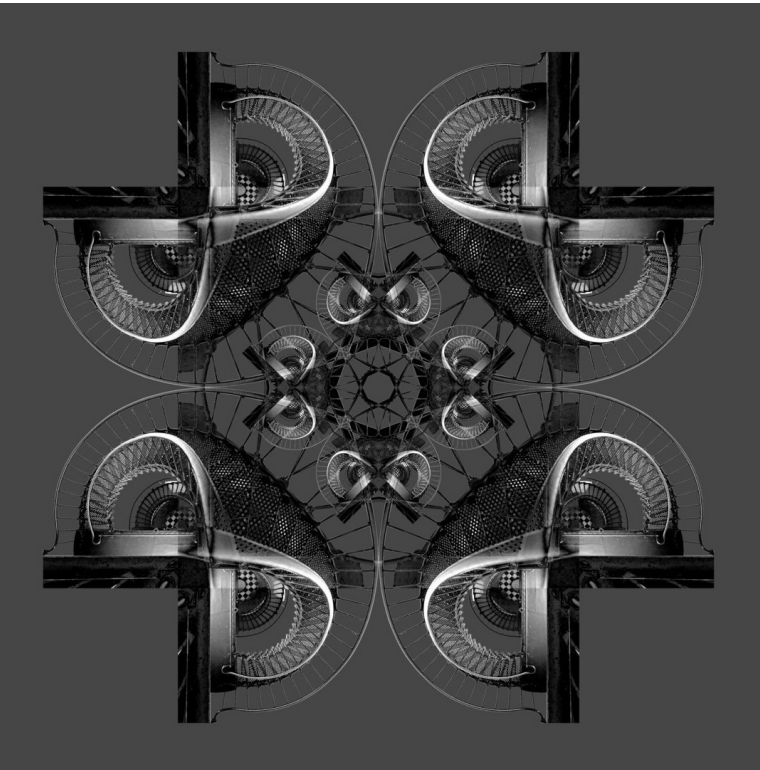
3rd Place I'm Batman by Glenn Petranek



3rd Place Homage to Weston by Melanie Plummer

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Black and White



3rd Place Lighthouse Stairs by Ron Werman



3rd Place Lily in Black and White by Marge Brady



3rd Place Low and Not Slow by Brian O’Riordan

COMPETITION PHOTOS



3rd Place Turkey Vulture Portrait by Brad Ruebensal

Black and White



3rd Place Milkweed Explosion by Bob Kowaleski

Darkroom Lightroom Workflow

By John Paganini

Whether we were using a Kodak Instamatic fifty years ago or advanced AI tools today, the heart of photography remains the same: seeing clearly, choosing carefully and sharing the images that truly matter. I recently had the opportunity to demonstrate a modern post-processing workflow to our club, the Cleveland Photographic Society, focusing on the journey from initial import to final selection. In an era where we can shoot more frames than ever before, the craft of photography often happens after the shutter is pressed.

The following guide details a workflow designed to help you spend less time managing files and more time focusing on your creative vision.

Establishing the Brain: The Catalog and Import

In Lightroom, the catalog is the “brain” of your system. It is not a simple folder of pictures; it is a database that manages your entire photographic workflow, tracking where images live, every metadata change and every edit you make. One of the core themes of an efficient system is working intentionally rather than simply reacting to photographs.

The workflow begins at the Import screen, which is your first opportunity to bring order into a shoot. Small decisions made here save significant time later:

- **Metadata Presets:** Automatically embed your copyright and contact information into every image. Under U.S. law, copyright protection is automatic the moment a photo is created, but adding metadata documents your ownership. Fill in the “Copyright Status,” “Copyright Notice,” and “Creator” fields consistently to protect your authorship wherever the image travels.
- **Normalization Presets:** Professionally, we establish a clean baseline first and build creative edits on top of it. I use a baseline preset called “Adobe Color + Lens + NR.”
 - [Adobe Color](#) standardizes how images render contrast and tone regardless of which camera they came from.
 - [Lens Corrections](#) fix distortion and chromatic aberration; in my automotive photography, for instance, this ensures wheels don’t look oval and body lines stay true.
 - [Noise Reduction \(NR\)](#) reduces grain in shadows without aggressive smoothing.
- **The Decision Rule:** If you are deciding between images, do not use “Adaptive” presets that apply subject-aware masks. Use those only when you are ready to present or deliver a final image, as they can obscure the technical baseline needed for fair comparison

Phase 1: Fast Elimination of Obvious Failures

Photo editing has a simple rule: editing is a process of elimination, not discovery. The goal of the first pass is to remove clearly unusable images so the remaining group is easier to evaluate.

To maximize speed, use Loupe View (E) to examine images one at a time. Enable Auto Advance by pressing the Caps Lock key. With this enabled, Lightroom automatically moves to the next image the moment you apply a rating or flag. Your first pass should look for:

- **Technical Failures:** Zoom to 1:1 (Z) briefly. If the subject isn’t sharp, the image usually cannot be saved
- **Compositional Failures:** Look for bad framing, distracting background elements, or horizons that cut awkwardly.
- **Human Details:** In portraits, look for closed eyes, blinking, or awkward expressions.

Press the “X” key to mark an image as Rejected. If you hesitate for more than a few seconds, the image probably isn’t strong enough anyway.

Darkroom Lightroom Workflow

Quick thought on AI and Assisted Culling

We are now entering an era where technology can assist our judgment. Lightroom's Assisted Culling tool can analyze pixel detail to determine which photos are sharp and which are soft. You can use a Soft → Sharp slider to control how strict the AI should be. While AI doesn't replace the photographer's judgment, it can dramatically accelerate the first pass by automatically flagging technical weaknesses.

Phase 2: Compare and Survey Views

Once obvious failures are gone, the decisions become increasingly subtle. This is where Lightroom's comparison tools shine.

Pro-Tips for Compare View (C): Use Compare View when you have a clear “leader” image and want to test it against challengers.

- **Select vs. Candidate:** Lightroom places your current best image on the left (Select) and the challenger on the right (Candidate).
- **The “King of the Hill” Shortcut:** If the challenger is better, press the Up Arrow (↑) to promote it to the “Select” position. If it's not, press the Right Arrow to bring in the next Candidate while keeping your leader fixed on the left.
- **Synchronized Zoom:** Click on a critical detail, like a subject's eye or a car's headlight; Lightroom will zoom into that exact spot on both images simultaneously, making sharpness differences obvious.

Pro-Tips for Survey View (N): Use Survey View when you have several strong candidates and want to narrow them down gradually.

- **Gradual Narrowing:** Select 5 or 6 similar images and enter Survey View. Hover over the weakest ones and click the small “X” in the lower-right corner of the image frame to remove them from the group.
- **First Impressions:** Survey view is excellent for evaluating “feel” - which composition or reflection stands out when seen as part of a group

Diagnosing Focus Instantly

One of the most common frustrations for photographers is the “mysterious” soft image. We often zoom in and wonder why a shot missed the mark. Lightroom has a powerful diagnostic tool that most are now aware of: Focus Point Display (Shift + F). By toggling this on in Grid View, you can see exactly where your camera's autofocus landed - and more importantly, where it failed. If the red square is sitting on the background instead of your subject's eye, you can reject the image immediately without wasting time trying to “save” it in the Develop module. Combining this with a quick tap of the “Z” key to jump to a 100% zoom on that exact focus point allows for an “automatic” sharpness inspection that feels almost like using a microscope.

The Photojournalist's “Secret Weapon”

Professional sports photographers and photojournalists often have to cull thousands of images in minutes. Their secret isn't better eyes; it's a specific rhythm enabled by the Caps Lock key. When Caps Lock is engaged, Lightroom's Auto Advance feature is activated, meaning the software automatically jumps to the next image the moment you press a rating or flag.

This allows for a “brutal” first pass of elimination where you never touch your arrow keys. Your camera might shoot at ten frames per second, so your editing shouldn't move at only one frame per second. By trusting your first impressions and moving at “editing speed” rather than “browsing speed,” you can realistically reduce a 500-image shoot to a focused set of keepers in a short time. In this first pass, aim to be decisive - most professionals eliminate 70% to 80% of their images immediately.

Darkroom Lightroom Workflow

The “Visual Microscope”: Synchronized Survey Zoom

When you are faced with three or four nearly identical frames from a burst sequence, Survey Mode (N) becomes your most valuable asset. The true “wow” moment in this workflow happens when you zoom into a critical detail - like the hood ornament on a car or the reflection in an eye- and Lightroom synchronizes the zoom across every selected image simultaneously. This allows you to inspect subtle motion blur or minute changes in expression across all candidates at once. It transforms Lightroom from a simple organizer into a precision tool, helping you choose the single best option from a group of good ones.

Removing Interface Friction

A professional workflow is as much about the environment as it is the images. To keep your workspace clean, especially when demonstrating work to others or working on a smaller laptop screen, enable Solo Mode. By right-clicking any panel header in the Develop module and selecting Solo Mode, Lightroom will automatically collapse every panel except the one you are currently using. This prevents the “long scroll” through the sidebar and keeps the interface tidy.

Finally, ensure your hardware is keeping up with your pace by enabling GPU Acceleration under Edit → Preferences → Performance. Setting this to “Use GPU for Image Processing” prevents Lightroom from feeling sluggish when you move sliders like Exposure or Texture. When your tools respond instantly and your workspace is uncluttered, you remove the friction that stands between your intent and the finished photograph.

The Culling Checklist-Three Passes to Your Best Work

Professional photo editing is a process of elimination, not discovery. Use this checklist to move quickly from hundreds of frames to your final “hero” images.

Pass 1: Technical Elimination (The “No-Brainer” Pass)

The goal here is speed- trust your first impressions and don’t overthink.

- **Focus Check:** Zoom to 1:1 (Z) briefly. If the subject isn’t sharp, it usually cannot be saved.
- **Exposure Failures:** Identify frames that are too far over or underexposed to retain detail.
- **Action:** Press the “X” key to mark as Rejected. If you hesitate for more than a few seconds, the image probably isn’t strong enough anyway.

Pass 2: Compositional Integrity

Now that the technical failures are gone, look at how the camera captured the scene.

- **Subject Placement:** Does the placement strengthen the subject or weaken it?
- **Edge Distractions:** Look at every inch of the frame for distracting elements or horizons cutting awkwardly.
- **The B&W Test:** Press “V” to convert to Black & White; if the photo only works because of color, the composition may not be strong enough.

Pass 3: Human Details (The Decisive Moment)

For portraits and events, this is often the most subtle but critical phase.

- **The “Blink” Check:** Look for closed eyes, half-blinks, or awkward mid-speech mouths.
- **Expression:** Does the expression capture the right emotion?
- **Timing:** The difference between a keeper and a reject is often just a fraction of a second.

The Final Promotion: Ranking Intent

Once you have your survivors, shift from elimination to selection.

- **Pick Flags (P):** Mark strong candidates for further review.
- **Star Ratings:** Use a consistent system to define your intent:
 - **1 Star:** Possible keeper/Work in progress.
 - **3 Stars:** Strong image for sharing.
 - **5 Stars:** Portfolio, sales, or competition quality.

Pro-Tip: Always remember that the camera records everything, but editing reveals the photograph.

Darkroom Lightroom Workflow

The Art of Elimination: A Professional Lightroom Workflow

A structured, four-phase guide to moving from a chaotic raw shoot to a final "hero" image with speed and precision.

PHASE 1: THE FOUNDATION (IMPORT)



Lightroom manages data, not just files.

The catalog records where files live and tracks every edit non-destructively; it is the organizational brain of the system.



**Automatic Metadata Application
Protect authorship in two seconds.**

Apply metadata presets during import to embed copyright status, notice, and contact info into every image automatically.



**Normalization Presets
Establish a technical baseline.**

Use the "Adobe Color + Lens + NR" preset to standardize RAW interpretation, correct lens distortion (chromatic aberration), and apply baseline noise reduction.



PHASE 2: FAST ELIMINATION (CULLING)



Editing is a process of removal, not discovery.

The first pass is designed to remove "unusable" images quickly so the remaining group is easier to evaluate; hesitation on a borderline image is a signal to reject it.



**Technical Failure Check
Remove the objective failures first.**

Use Loupe View (E) and Zoom (Z) to check for soft focus, bad framing, or human errors like closed eyes or awkward expressions.



**Speed Tools for Rapid Culling
Use "X" to mark and Caps Lock to move.**

Enabling Caps Lock (Auto Advance) moves the view to the next image instantly after you press "X" to reject or "P" to pick.



**AI-Assisted Culling
Leverage AI for technical analysis.**

Lightroom's Assisted Culling tool can analyze pixel detail to automatically flag soft images, accelerating the first pass.

PHASE 3: SUBTLE REFINEMENT (COMPARISON)



**Compare View (C)
Play "King of the Hill" with similar frames.**

Use Compare view to test a "Select" image against "Candidates"; use the Up Arrow to promote a challenger or Right Arrow to see the next challenger.



**Survey View (N)
Narrow the field gradually.**

Select multiple strong candidates and use Survey view to evaluate "feel," clicking the "X" on the weakest images until only the winner remains.

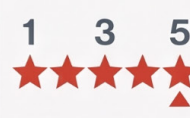


**Stacking Similar Images
Collapse the chaos.**

Group burst sequences or duplicates into Stacks (Ctrl+G) to keep the grid visually clean while preserving all frames behind the "stack representative."



PHASE 4: FINAL RANKING & DELIVERY



**Star Ratings (1-5)
Rank by intent, not just origin.**

Use a 1-3-5 system: 1 Star for "possible," 3 Stars for "strong," and 5 Stars for "portfolio or competition level."



**Intent vs. Origin
Folders represent origin; Ratings represent intent.**

Once culled, filter by 5-star ratings to create Collections, this moves the focus from where the file is to what the image represents.



**Automated Publishing
Create a "One-Click" connection to the world.**

Use Publish Services to sync Lightroom collections directly to platforms like SmugMug, eliminating the need for manual exporting and uploading.

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



1st Place Blue Eagle Splash by David Korosec



1st Place Central Coast Rock by David Korosec



1st Place Christmas Garden by Gary Wood



1st Place Following the Contours by Joe Smith

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



1st Place Jo's Dahlia by Leslie Nutt



1st Place Tulip Color Study by Teri Arthur



1st Place The Wise Owl by Erich Botzki

COMPETITION PHOTOS



2nd Place Desert Wear and Tear by Wally Nell

Pictorial



2nd Place Lightning Bug by Vicki Wert



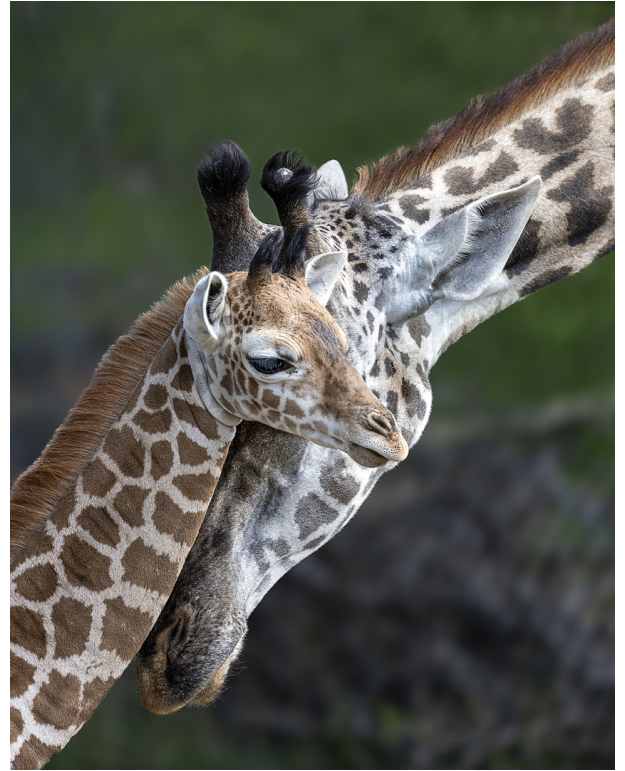
2nd Place Antelope Canyon Arizona by Kent Hill

COMPETITION PHOTOS



2nd Place Into the Abyss by Jessica Cohen-Kiraly

Pictorial



2nd Place Mother's Love by Erich Botzki



2nd Place Red Sails Greenland by Jackie Sajewski

COMPETITION PHOTOS

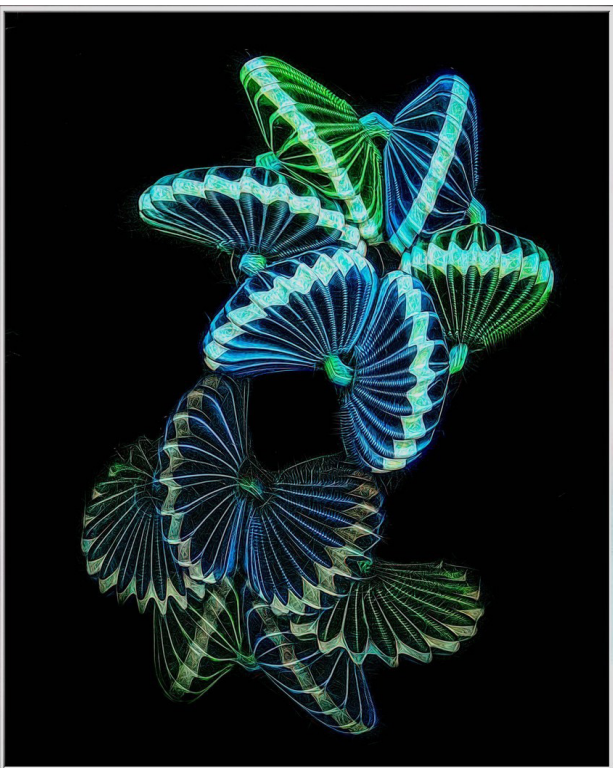
Pictorial



2nd Place Smoke and Formation
by Melanie Plummer



2nd Place School Picture Day by Jessica Cohen-Kiraly



2nd Place Twist of Fate by Marge Brady



2nd Place Shoreline of Another World by Bob Kowaleski

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



2nd Place Skull Rock Just Before Dawn by Melanie Plummer



2nd Place Zooming Through the Snow
by Erich Botzki



3rd Place Arches at Heritage by Gale Graves

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



3rd Place Rambling Brambling by Brad Ruebensaal



3rd Place Casino Royale by Brian O'Riordan

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



3rd Place Dying Flower, Early Frost by Dave Ciborek



3rd Place Eyes on the Prize by Erich Botzki



3rd Place Down the Hatch by Marge Brady

COMPETITION PHOTOS



Pictorial

3rd Place F-22 Countermeasures by David Korosec



3rd Place Happy Dance by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Pictorial



3rd Place Ready and Waiting by Jill Zabka



3rd Place Molen de Adriaan by Vicki Wert



3rd Place Ring of Kerry by Jill Zabka

COMPETITION PHOTOS



3rd Place Where the Light was Patient by Bob Kowaleski



3rd Place The Enforcer by Jackie Sajewski

Pictorial



3rd Place Tintype of Ksenija by Wally Nell



3rd Place The Cold Coast by Bill Keaton

Porter County Library Exhibit

Exhibits

The Cleveland Photographic Society maintains an active exhibition schedule, providing members with opportunities to display their work in a variety of public and private venues.

The 'Best of the Best' pictorial exhibit call for entries will open Aug 28th and close Sep 24th. This is a combined exhibit with the Beachwood Photo Group, Erie Shores, Western Reserve and Chagrin Valley at Cuyahoga Community College Eastern Campus. Each of the clubs involved will submit up to 20 images. The exhibit will run from November 12, 2026 until February 13, 2027. There are cash prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place scored by a judge.

Exhibit Schedule

- Sep 27th, 2026: Suburban Symphony Orchestra, Beachwood High School, 3:30 pm
- November 12, 2026- February 13, 2027: Best of the Best, Tri-C East Gallery

Following are the photos selected for June 2026 Westlake Porter Library exhibit.



Above the Ancients by Raymond Rundelli



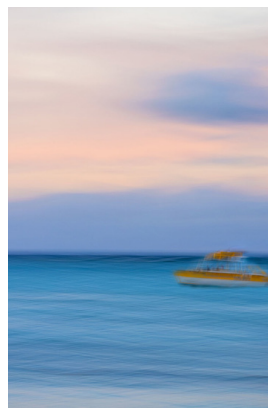
**Antelope Canyon, Arizona
by Van Stump**



Banyon Street, Boco Grande, FL by Bonnie Lukcso



Blue Ridge Mountains NC by Tish Hopkins



Boat in Turks by Omar Jeffries



Blue Bear, Denver by Graham B. Stead

Porter County Library Exhibit



Bryce Canyon National Park by Nada Fleming



Cinque Terre by Maria Perme



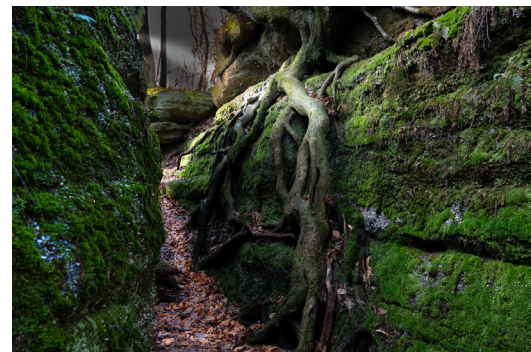
Chapel bridge, Lucerne by Christina Goff



Cordoba, Spain by Christina Goff



Dark Ages by Stephen Spencer



Enchanted Path by Gale Graves



Dookinella IRL Rainbow by James Mangan



Exhibit - Tennis Court, Fontvieille - Barry Cunningham



Fishing Beyond the Familiar by Melissa Fargo



Flowers in the Foyer
by Teri Arthur



Focus on the Journey by Erich Botzki

Porter County Library Exhibit



Guardian Of The Night by Gustavo Roldan Toci



Kinderdijk, Netherlands by Vicki Wert



Last Light by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



Luis Bridge Porto Portugal by Dennis Wert



Lookout by Mike Kopkas



Memories of Childhood by Gary Wood



Machu Picchu by Nada Fleming



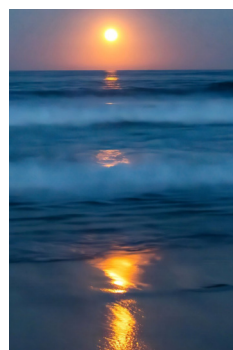
Moroccan Carpet Shop by Dave Ciborek



Moulton Barn Grand Teton NP by Dennis Wert



Prothonotary Warbler by James McDonnell



**Nauset Beach Sunrise
by Marge Brady**



Peace by Mike Lonsdale

Porter County Library Exhibit



Red Rocks Amphitheater by Graham B. Stead



Seaside Storm by Barbara Good



Sirmione, Pearl of Lake Garda by Barbara Good



Starbucks Original by Jeff Sabo



St. Boniface Bridge, Bruges by Vicki Wert



Still Open in Memory by Bob Kowaleski



Storm Clearing by Lance Mayer



Tart's Grocery by Lance Mayer



Thai Buddhist Orphans by Kent Hill



The Working Waterfront by Chris Consolati

Porter County Library Exhibit



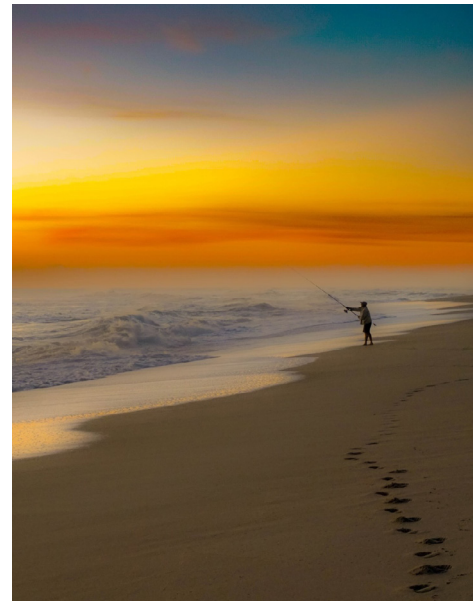
The Distant Watch by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



The Road Less Traveled by Van Stump



The Unknown by Barry Cunningham



Surf Casting on Mars by DJ Cassaniti



Winter in Hocking Hills OH by Denise Meekins



Watkins Glen State Park NY by Denise Meekins

Capturing Courage and So Much More

By Thomas Malinchak



My journey started seven short years ago, in a small clubhouse. I found my way to the Cleveland Photographic Society- people helping people, or more specifically, “Photographers helping Photographers.” Shortly thereafter, in search of giving back what so many gave to me, I joined the CPS Community Service group. After a few years of being involved in so many wonderful events for so many diverse groups, I received an email inviting some 170 photographers to come to Columbus, Ohio to cover the Ohio State Special Olympics Summer Games. I was thrilled to have been offered an opportunity to be part of something that means so much to so many.

For a photographer, every assignment tells a story. Some are about competition, others about celebration. Covering the Ohio State Special Olympics Summer Games is both—and so much more.

Long before the opening ceremonies begin, athletes, families, coaches and volunteers fill the venue with anticipation. There are nervous smiles, encouraging hugs and quiet moments of focus. Through the camera’s viewfinder, it quickly becomes clear that the story isn’t just about medals or final scores. It’s about determination, inclusion and the joy of competing.

Every event offers something unique. A sprinter explodes from the starting blocks with unwavering determination. A swimmer surfaces after a personal best performance to the cheers of teammates. Tennis doubles teams celebrate a perfectly executed play with infectious excitement. Gymnasts, bowlers and track athletes all bring the same passion, regardless of the event.

Photography at the Summer Games is about more than documenting athletic achievement. It is about preserving moments that families will treasure for years. A parent’s proud expression, a coach’s encouraging words or two competitors congratulating one another after an event often become the most memorable images of the day.

One of the greatest lessons learned behind the camera is that success takes many forms. For some athletes, victory means standing atop the podium. For others, it means crossing the finish line, overcoming personal challenges or simply competing with confidence. Every accomplishment deserves to be celebrated.

The energy throughout the Games is contagious. Volunteers work tirelessly behind the scenes. Coaches invest countless hours preparing their athletes. Spectators cheer with genuine enthusiasm for every competitor, creating an atmosphere unlike any other sporting event.

As the day comes to a close and memory cards fill with thousands of photographs, one truth remains con-



Capturing Courage and So Much More



stant: the images represent far more than athletic competition. They capture resilience, friendship, perseverance and the power of community.

For a photographer, covering the OhioState Special Olympics Summer Games is a privilege. Each click of the shutter preserves stories of courage and determination that inspire long after the final event concludes. While photographs freeze moments in time, the spirit of the athletes continues to leave a lasting impression on everyone fortunate enough to witness it.

In the end, the greatest picture isn't always the one of a gold medal celebration. Sometimes it's a high-five between teammates, an embrace between family members, or the smiles of athletes who discovered they were capable of more than they ever imagined. Those are the moments that define the Games—and the moments a photographer is honored to capture.



COMPETITION PHOTOS

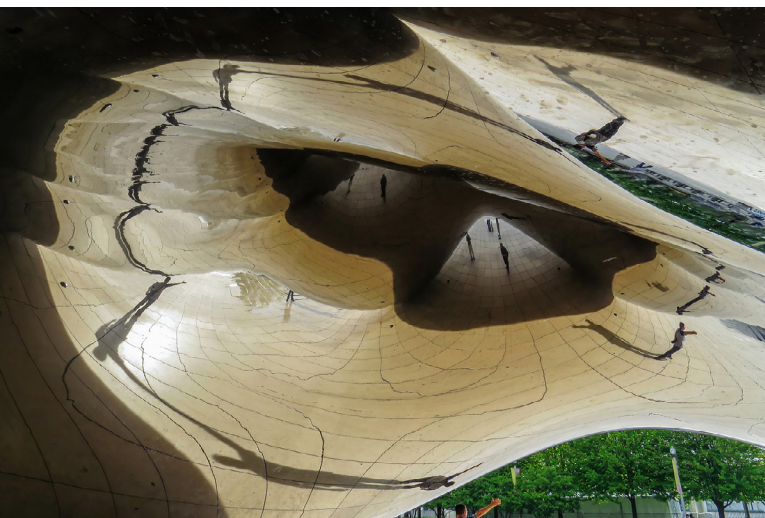
Photojournalism



100 Year Anniversary Route 66 by Bob Kowaleski



Advice from the Fairy by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



Alafia 1952 River by Gary Wood



Breaking Free After Reception by Brad Ruebensaal

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



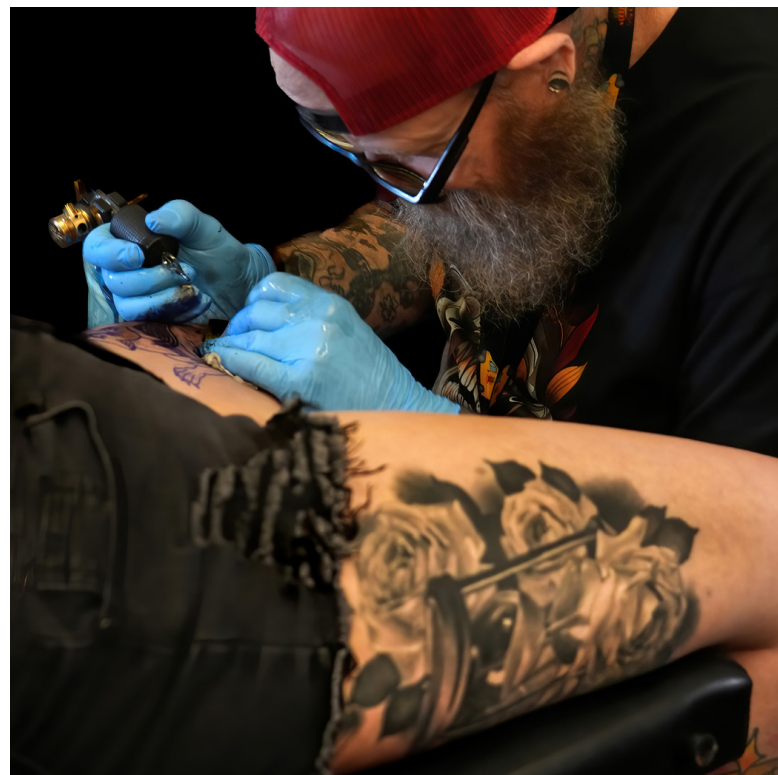
Cairo Street Kids by Wally Nell



Carving Fish by Bill Keaton



Crash by Joe Vanecek



Dad by Dave Ciborek

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



Fleeing the Reservation by Mike Lonsdale



Get Up Enrique by Jean Krusinski



Greensboro Solstice Festival by Melanie Plummer



Dog Racing by Bonnie Lukcso

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



Hindu Service by Richard Ader



Jubilation on the Square by Wally Nell



Local Artist at Work by Lance Mayer



Lady Liberty Weeps by Bill Keaton

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



Okay to Have Feelings by Lindsay Rice



On the Beam by Wally Nell



Max at Work by Dave Ciborek

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



Parade Time by Dave Ciborek



Parma Parmesan by John Paganini



Pulling Up the Net by Ann Williams



Put-in-Bay Scooter by Bonnie Lukcso

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



Speed Is Key by Jordan Tetzl



The Catch by Cynthia Smith



Soldiers and Sailors by Stephen Spencer

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Photojournalism



The Necklace by Dave Ciborek



Viva Mexico by Maria Perme



You're Safe by Kent Hill

Cabin Fever Party

After a one-week delay due to weather, the Cabin Fever party was held on January 31, 2026. This year, Kim and Mike Lonsdale stepped up to bring the party to fruition, and they did a fantastic job. Great fellowship, lots of food and as always, the ever-popular “Robbers Gift Exchange”, emceed by Richard Ader. A good time was had by all! Many thanks to the Lonsdales and their committee for putting on a great evening and Mike Kopkas for photographing the party. Below are images of some of the evening’s highlights.



COMPETITION PHOTOS

Nature



1st Place Feed Me by Mark Hanson



1st Place Snatched from the Stream by Bob Kowaleski



1st Place Snow Bird by Bob Kowaleski

COMPETITION PHOTOS

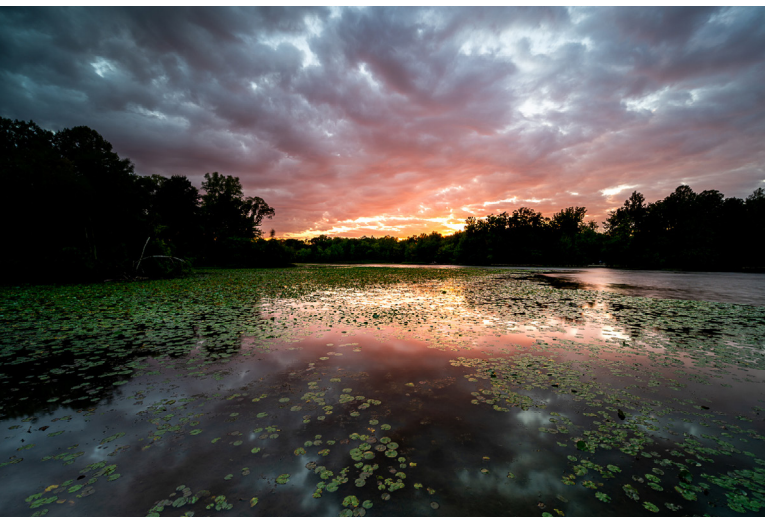
Nature



2nd Place Gt Smokys Creek by Susan Mohorcic

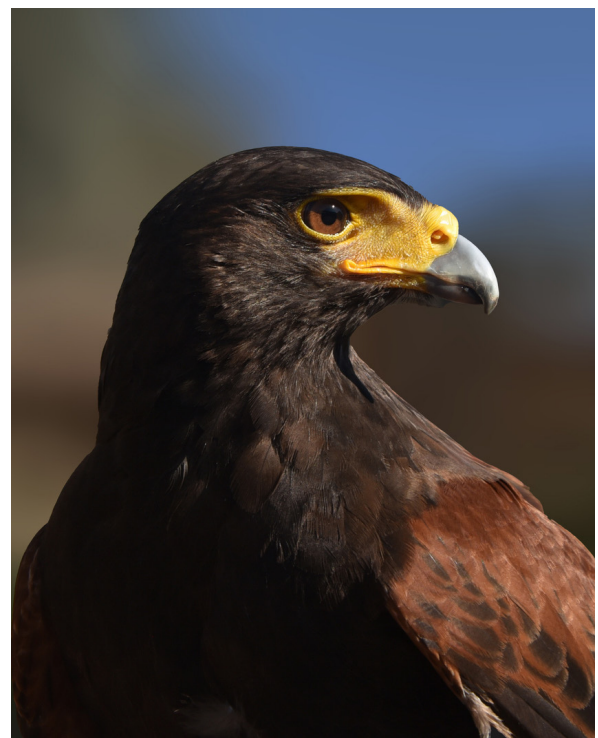


2nd Place Nothing But Crickets by Jackie Sajewski



3rd Place Mentor Marsh Sunset by Brad Ruebensaal

3rd Place Always the Hunter by Kent Hill
(right)



COMPETITION PHOTOS

Nature



3rd Place Close Encounter by Brian O'Riordan



3rd Place Golden-Hooded Tanager by Marge Brady



3rd Place Community Hub by Melanie Plummer

COMPETITION PHOTOS

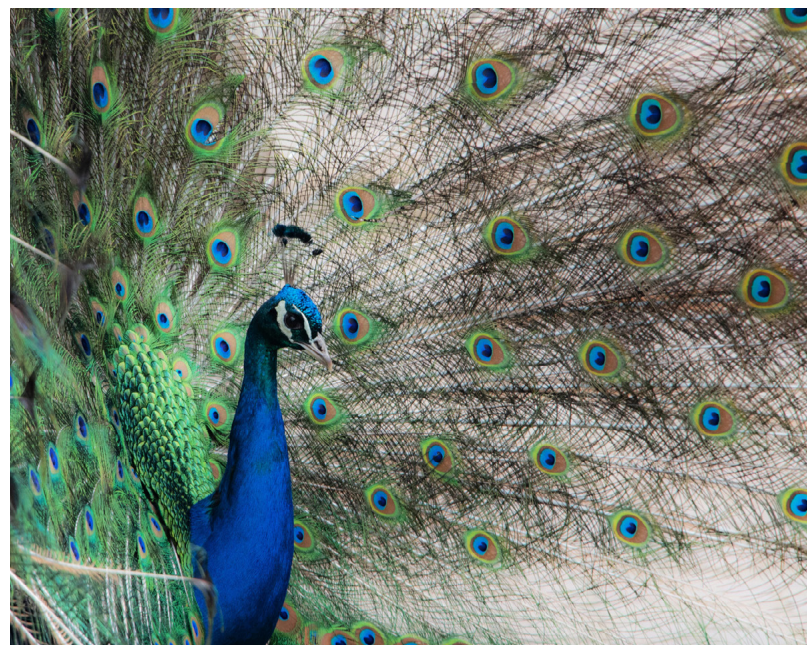
Nature



3rd Place Indri Lemur Hang On Baby by Cynthia Smith



3rd Place Memory by Leslie Nutt



3rd Place Peacock Being a Peacock by Kent Hill



3rd Place Owl by Stephen Spencer

COMPETITION PHOTOS



3rd Place Pelican Nap by Joe Smith

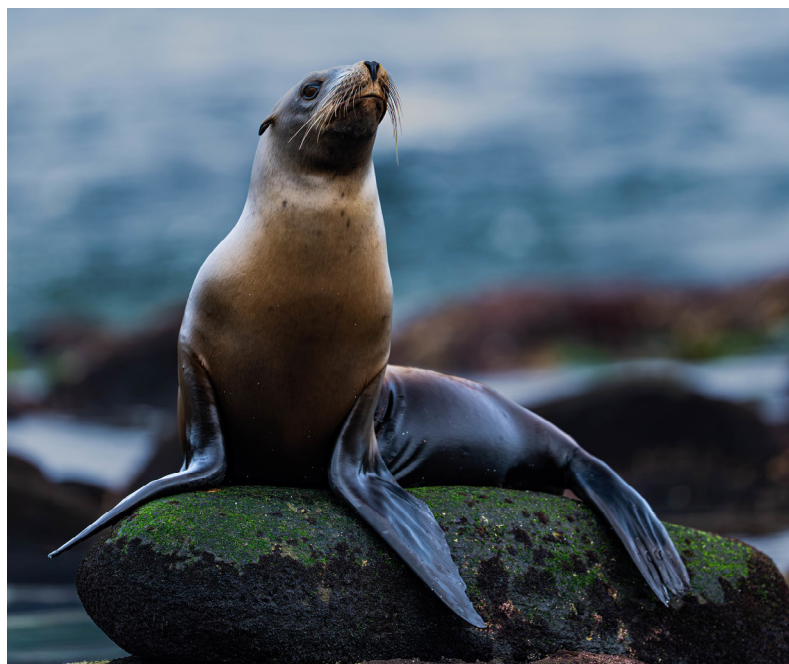


3rd Place Side Eye Snowy by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk

Nature



3rd Place Red on Green by Brad Ruebensaal



3rd Place Sea Lion Pose by Joe Smith

COMPETITION PHOTOS

Nature



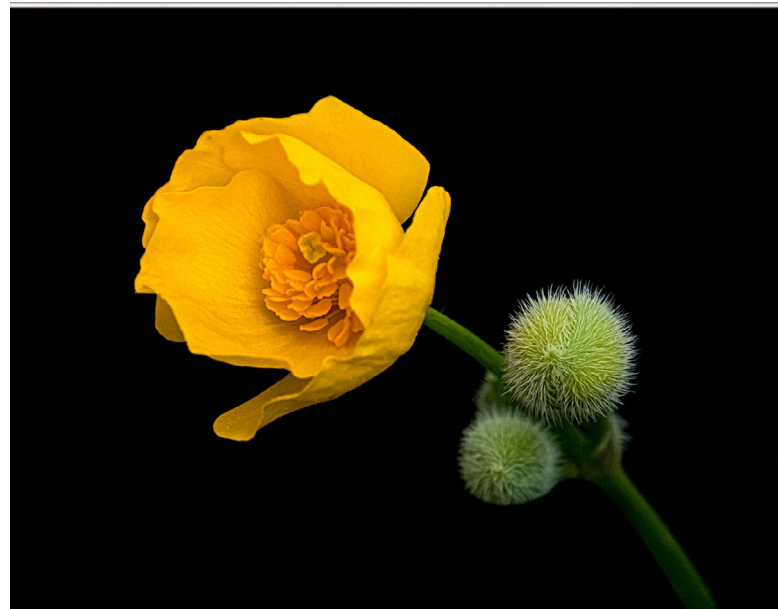
3rd Place Wild Turkey
by Jackie Boesinger-Meredyk



3rd Place Wild Horses of Wyoming by Jackie Sajewski



3rd Place Time to Weave the Nest by Erich Botzki



3rd Place Wood Poppy by Marge Brady

Summer Festival and Event Photography

Capturing the Spirit of the Season *By Deborah Willis*



Photo by Joseph on Unsplash

they provide a chance to document the stories, traditions and people that make our communities unique and the occasion special and memorable.

One of the greatest strengths of festival photography is its ability to capture diverse, authentic human moments. While performers, exhibits and attractions naturally initially draw our attention, it is often the interactions between people that create the most compelling photographs. A child's excitement on a carnival ride, friends sharing laughter at a concert or a vendor proudly displaying their handcrafted goods, these all tell meaningful stories through a single frame.



Photo by Leo Rivas on Unsplash

Summer is one of the most exciting times of the year for photographers. Once the weather conditions improve and become more predictable, we tend to want to take our gear out of hibernation and more actively seek out opportunities to photograph. Whether just enjoying the greenspace in our communities or gardens, attending family and community events, or in our travels, there are so many opportunities to capture great images.

From neighborhood festivals and cultural celebrations to county fairs, outdoor concerts, parades and fireworks, opportunities abound to capture images filled with energy, color and emotion. For photographers, these events offer much more than entertainment—



Photo by Ugur Arpaci on Unsplash

When photographing events, preparation is key. An internet search will generally allow you to find social media related to the event. You will likely find event information such as history, what the promoters see as the key components/signature activities, a general run down of the flow, attendance size and activity level. You will generally also find photos of the venue and activities taken by photographers and attendees. All of this will provide you with a lot of information to help

Summer Festival and Event Photography



Photo by We The Creators on Unsplash

story. Wide-angle photographs can establish the atmosphere and scale of an event, while medium and close-up shots reveal details and emotions. Look for colorful displays, interesting textures and candid interactions that help viewers feel as though they were present.

Many photographers find that moving beyond the obvious subjects produces the most memorable images. Instead of concentrating solely on the main stage or headline attraction, turn your lens toward the audience, volunteers, vendors, decorative elements and behind-the-scenes activities. These often-overlooked moments can reveal the true character of an event.

Composition remains important in busy settings. Use leading lines, framing elements and selective focus to guide the viewer's eye. Think tic-tac-toe and use the rule of thirds to help with some compositions. Using a shallow depth of field, can draw attention to your subject and create a sense of depth. Experiment with angles; changing your perspective can help you discover unique compositions that add interest and dynamics to your photos. Pay attention to backgrounds and watch for distractions that may compete with your subject. Taking a few steps in any direction can often change the composition of an image and eliminate dis-

you prepare. Whenever possible, arrange your schedule, especially if you are unfamiliar with the venue, so you arrive early to explore the location and identify potential shooting locations. Consider how the light will change throughout the course of the day and plan accordingly. Early morning and late afternoon often provide the most flattering natural light, while evening events provide opportunities for fabulous sunset images but may require higher ISO settings or faster lenses after sunset. Travel compact and light; a walk-around zoom lens can be helpful as the pace can be fast and it may not be convenient to change lenses.

Rather than photographing everything you see, focus on capturing a variety of images that tell a complete



Photo by Hush Naidoo Jade Photography on Unsplash

Summer Festival and Event Photography

tractions. A photographer friend often told me “your best zoom is your feet.” Patience can be rewarding; sometimes waiting a few extra moments allows people, expressions or lighting to perfectly align. Mastering composition and framing in event photography is a skill that takes practice, education and an eye for detail. Understanding the basics of composition, particularly framing, can help elevate your images and tell compelling visual stories.

Family gatherings are a natural for photography, especially when you begin your photographic journey. You get the opportunity to photograph in a variety of settings, often with a lot of activity. And, it seems, at every family event those attending know who that family member is who is going to be taking photographs. They may have new gear they want to “try out” or are just starting out and trying to get some practice. It’s always great when those photos can be shared. I cannot count how many times I have been called asking if I had photos of someone for a special photo/slide show or when I have been the person who took the last known photo of someone.

While public spaces generally allow photography, sensitivity and professionalism should always guide your interactions. Remember to always be respectful and courteous. A friendly smile or brief conversation can help establish trust and often leads to stronger portraits and candid images. When possible, offer to send a copy of the image or tell the person where it may be viewed if it will be available online. Through our community service program, I photograph many events and the most common comment I get is “all these photos are being taken, but we never get to see them.” Since the pandemic, I’ve noted many organizations have set up online galleries and Facebook pages so those who have attended the event can look at and download event images. I remind those who ask that the organization makes the decision regarding which images are made available. The coordinator of one of our largest events, One World Day, in recent years has started posting by the photographer’s name every photograph submitted.

This brings to mind another consideration. When photographing with other photographers take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions and share images. I find in those situations I am often asked about the settings I am using. It is always a learning experience for me to see what others have captured in the same environment. This has helped me better evaluate settings and consider composition and lighting variations that I might not have otherwise thought of. Within and outside of CPS I am always cognizant that we are “Photographers helping Photographers.” I especially like sharing with those who want to learn as that was, and still is, where I am in my photographic journey.

One World Day is a rather unique experience for photographers and photo enthusiasts. This 1-day event is the largest event our Community Service Program Volunteers cover. It takes place at the Cleveland Cultural Gardens, a major part of the city of Cleveland’s 254-acre Rockefeller Park, covering a 2-mile radius containing 38 established cultural gardens with 13 additional gardens in progress. The event attracts 30,000-50,000 people. Events take place throughout the day at each garden which necessitates the organization having a team of community photographers in addition to our Community Service Volunteers. For our community services events we inquire how the organization plans to use the photos so volunteers can best be matched based on their interest, skills and gear. For this event the photographs are primarily used for marketing and are required to be high resolution images. Additionally, the photographers are asked to capture large crowd shots hourly. Those crowd shots are used for marketing, funding requests and also assists the organization in doing attendance headcounts.

Summer Festival and Event Photography

Summer gatherings and festivals celebrate community, culture and shared experiences. As photographers, we have the privilege of preserving these moments for future generations. Whether you're documenting a neighborhood gathering, a cultural festival or a major city event, challenge yourself this season to look beyond the attractions and capture the human stories unfolding all around you. Photographs where we document reality and communicate stories without manipulation or staging, are the essence of photojournalism; the practice of telling stories through photographs, capturing real events and emotions with honesty and visual storytelling. Please consider sharing your images at our photojournalism nights.

If you capture that great photo and would like to share it with others for their use, Unsplash, created in 2021 and owned by Getty Images, is a website dedicated to proprietary stock photography. It is one of many sites where you can upload images, making them free within certain limits, with or without attribution, for others to use. Unsplash requires photographers to agree that they have all necessary permissions and signed releases to authorize the free use of the images they upload. In fact, all of the images used in this article are from free Unsplash with attribution. For more information on Unsplash, go to <https://unsplash.com/>

So, whatever your gear; Ray-Ban eye glasses (prohibited in some locations and countries), cellphone or camera (digital or film)- get out there and capture some great moments! The next great photograph may not be on the main stage—it may be found in the smile of a stranger, the joy of a child or a fleeting moment that tells the story of summer itself.



Photo by Hardial Aujla on Unsplash



Photo by De'Andre Bush on Unsplash

Photo by Senjuti Kundu on Unsplash (right)



Summer Festival and Event Photography



Photo by Walter Martin on Unsplash



Photo by Ally Griffin on Unsplash

Photographers in Action



Bruce Orr at Alzheimer Gala by Dennis Glazer



Tom Malinchak at Special Olympics by Jacky Grimm

COMPETITION PHOTOS

B



1st Place 27 Victory on the Battlefield by
Denise O'Wesney Richardson



1st Place Going Up by Denise O'Wesney Richardson



2nd Place Florence Street Artist by Barbara Good



2nd Place Enlightened Tree by David Laurence

COMPETITION PHOTOS

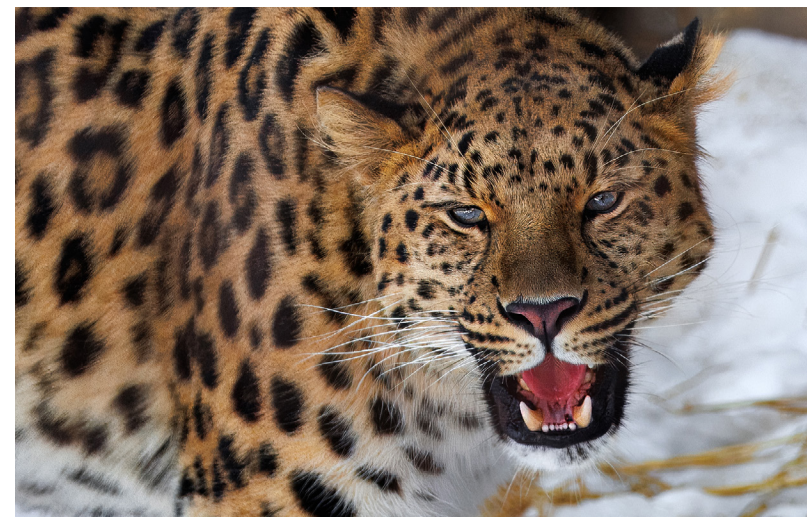
B



2nd Place Vitamin C by Jeannie Hill



2nd Place West Side Market by Kenneth Hodina



2nd Place The Call by Melissa Fargo



2nd Place Quiet Contemplation by Tim Kurash

COMPETITION PHOTOS

B



2nd Place White Ibis in Flight
by Denise O'Wesney Richardson



3rd Place Freighter Buffalo by David Laurence



3rd Place Heinen's by Denise O'Wesney Richardson



3rd Place Bumblebee on Spotted Knapweed
by William Meekins

COMPETITION PHOTOS



3rd Place Retaken by Nature
by Tim Kurash



3rd Place March Through Ice by Faezeh Sodagari



3rd Place Still in Ivory by William Meekins



3rd Place Soft Motion by Melissa Fargo

COMPETITION PHOTOS

B



3rd Place The Ol' Pure Station by Kenneth Hodina



3rd Place Tinkers Water Fall by David Laurence



3rd Place Wrinkle of Time by William Meekins



3rd Place Zoo Bridge by Ann Williams

Field Trips

The Cleveland Photographic Society's Field Trip Committee Chairman, Kim Wasielewski, coordinates a variety of field trips every year. Field trips support and encourage members and our school of photography students to practice what they are learning, connect with other members for continued learning and informal mentoring, and provides opportunities to take photographs in locations they might not otherwise have access to.

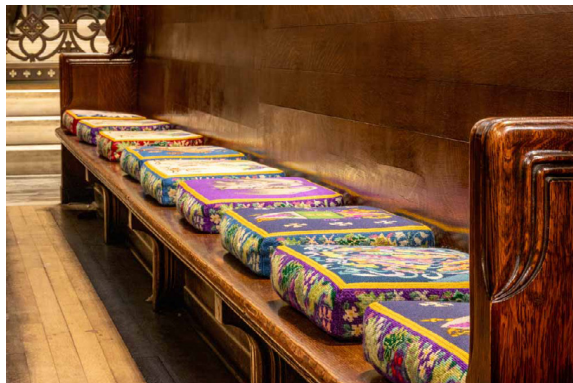
CPS members and our School of Photography students are invited to submit up to 5 of their favorite photos from each field trip to be displayed in the Field Trip Gallery on the Gallery page of the club's website. When emailing photos, please title each image with your name and a number (i.e., Kim Wasielewski-1) as this will be the caption under the image on the gallery page. Images can be emailed to info@clevelandphoto.org any time after the field trip.

In this issue, we are sharing photos from the following field trips:

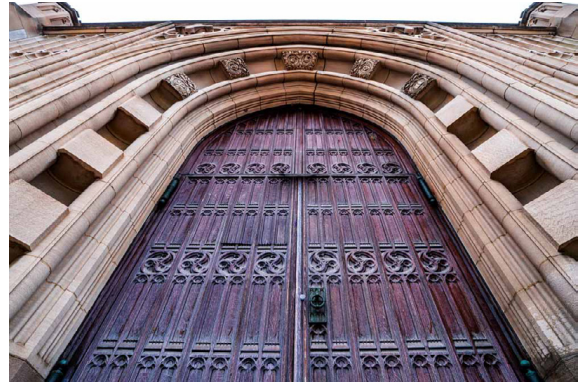
- Trinity Cathedral (02/21/2026)
- Santa Day (05/16/2026)
- David Leach Research Station/Holden Arboretum (05/17/2026)
- Headlands Beach (06/13/2026)

If you have an idea for, or can lead a field trip to a special place, please send the following information: location, name and contact information for the location's contact person, location website and topic to our Field Trip Committee Chairman, Kim Wasielewski, at angelyogadiva@sbcglobal.net.

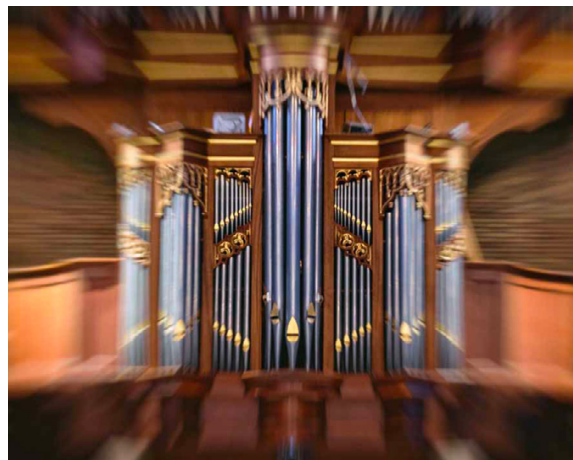
Trinity Cathedral



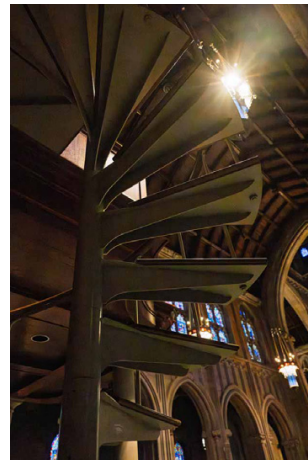
Chris Consolati



Faezeh Sodagari



Graham B. Stead



Kim Wasielewski

Field Trips

Trinity Cathedral

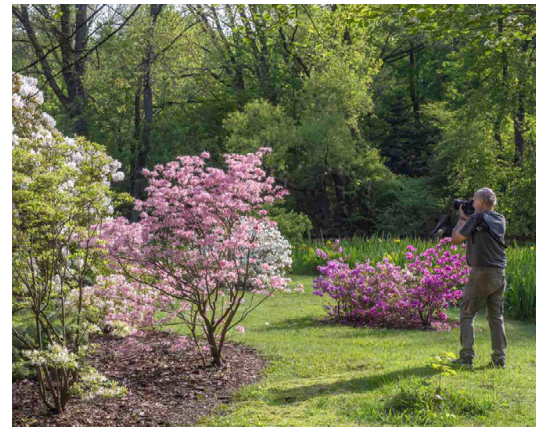


Stephen Spencer

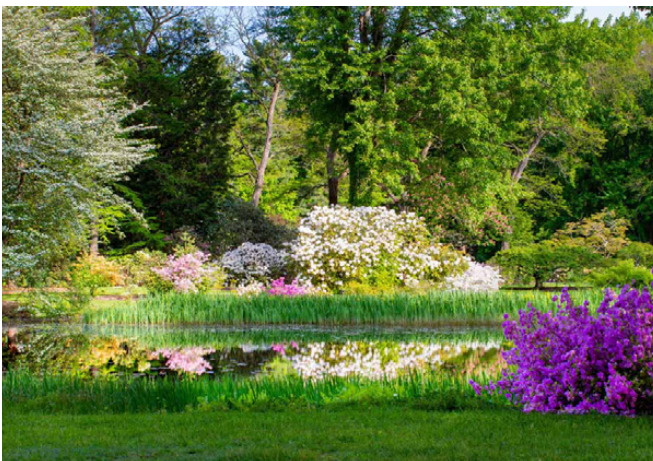
David Leach Research Station/Holden Arboreum



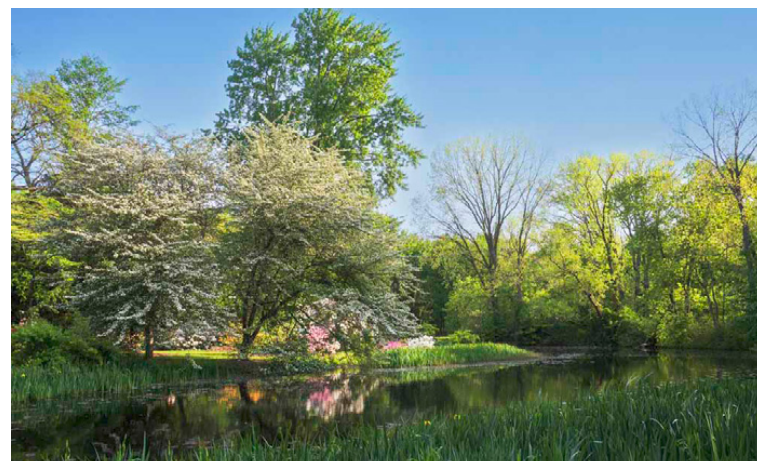
Barbara Good



Belinda Prinz



Chris Consolati



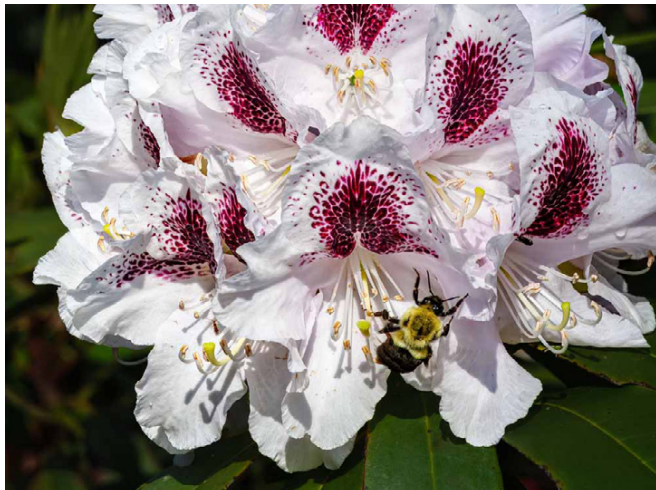
Belinda Prinz

Field Trips

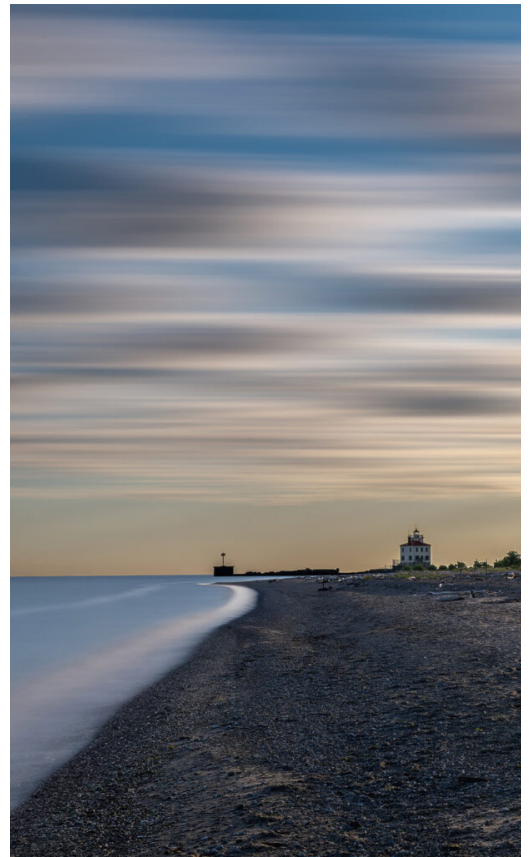
Headlands Beach



Brad Rubensaal

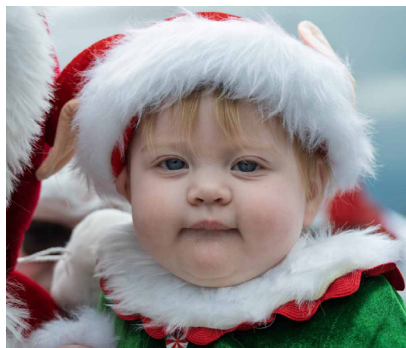


Gary Wood



Brad Rubensaal

Santa Day



Kim Wasielewski

Member Spotlight

Teri Smith

Birds & Blooms Magazine Grand Prize Winner

Congratulations to Teri Smith for being the Grand Prize Winner in the 2025 Birds & Blooms Magazine photo contest! Her image of juvenile barred owls was 1 of thousands of images submitted. It was selected as 1 of the 16 semi-finalists by the editors and then went through 2 rounds of voting by readers and fans.

The story behind the owls, as Teri wrote: “Two young barred owls are sharing a grooming moment. One was fostered into an existing nest through a local nature center. Their bond shows the success of animal rehabilitation and the beauty of connection in nature.”



Congratulations again to Teri for being recognized for her outstanding work!

Bob Kowaleski and Mike Lonsdale

Carolyn J. Center for Artful Living Art Show

Bob Kowaleski and Mike Lonsdale had their work titled “Nature Through the Lens” exhibited at The Carolyn J. Farrell Center for Artful Living in Westlake, Ohio in February.



Natalie Souza

Natalie Souza was the feature artist for March in the Annex Gallery at Stella's Art Gallery in Willoughby OH. It's called "Impressions of Cleveland and around". As a member of CPS, Natalie has participated in several CPS exhibits, as well as being a mentor in our Mentoring Program.



In a Snapshot

2026-2027 Competition Details

In order to provide members an opportunity to both show their work and obtain feedback to assist them in becoming better photographers, the Cleveland Photographic Society is proud to hold twelve competitions a year in a wide range of categories. Some of the competitions are for prints and some are digital submissions (projection). The deadline for the print image submission is usually the day of the competition. This year the deadline for the projection competition is usually 12 days before the competition. CPS members and our School of Photography students are encouraged to participate in competitions, which are juried by independent judges to ensure objectivity.

There is a box in the clubhouse's "Gathering Room" if you wish to drop off a print early (before the night of the competition). All digital images for projection competitions are submitted through ShutterScore <https://competition.clevelandphoto.org/>

For complete rules, as well as tips and pointers, visit <https://www.clevelandphoto.org/programs/competitions/> or our website.

Competition Night Volunteers Wanted

We are looking to update the competition volunteer list with people interested in the competition process. Whether you are a seasoned volunteer or new to the process, we want you!

The jobs needed are:

For PRINT Competitions:

- Copystand Work
- Sign-in Table
- Scoring Table in the Judges' Room
- Print Handlers in the Judging Room
- Print Handlers during the Presentation

For PROJECTION Competitions:

- People to read the judges' comments
- Person to read the final scores

If interested in helping out, please contact Catherine Kenngott, Competition Committee Chairman, at catkenn-go1@gmail.com.

Photo Pick-up

For those who entered print photographs into the End of Year Competition, please pick your images up at the clubhouse during regular clubhouse hours.

Upcoming Field Trips

Below is a list of some of the upcoming field trips. Some may be members only; separate emails will be sent with sign-up information. If you would like to confirm whether a field trip is member-only, the link provided with the announcement email will take you to the website calendar, which will provide the details of the field trip.

Cleveland National Air Show - Members Only

Labor Day Weekend, September 5-7

Emails will be sent with how/when to register or see website

Back to the Wild - Members Only

Sunday, September 20 at 12:00 noon

Details to follow

If you attend a field trip, please consider submitting up to 5 of your photos to be displayed in the club's online Field Trip Gallery. Title your photos with your name and number (i.e., Kim Wasielewski-1). This will be used as the caption under the picture on our website. Photos can be emailed to info@clevelandphoto.org any time after the field trip.

Have an idea for a field trip, or can you lead a field trip to a favorite/special place? Send the following informa-

In a Snapshot

tion: contact info at site, website, topic and location to Kim Wasielewski at angelyogadiva@sbcglobal.net and she will try and make it happen.

View Other Members' Photographs and List Your Website or Instagram Page

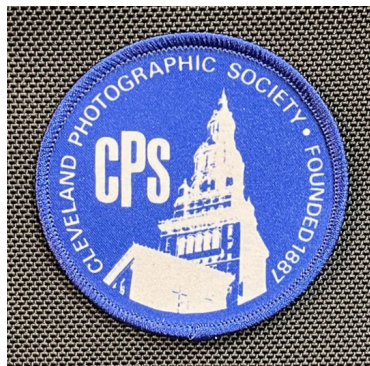
If you have a website or Instagram page with your photos, we invite you to list your website or Instagram page with us. If you would like your site listed, send your website or Instagram address to info@clevelandphoto.org and we will list it. When you hover over the 'Membership' tab on our website, you will find a section called 'Member Websites'. Here you will find links to other members' websites or Instagram pages that you can click on and view.

New Clubhouse Hours with a Bonus!!!

The first night of our new clubhouse hours was very successful. We had many more people than normal for a photojournalism night. Our resident photography expert, author and leader of our SIG meetings, David Busch, was present. He is offering that when he is available, i.e., not in another country, he will come to the club early to make himself available to answer questions. This is like having a walking photographic encyclopedia to personally answer your questions in person. Please consider joining us Fridays at 6:30 PM for Busch inquiries, snacks/popcorn, prizes and more.

New Apparel is Here!

A limited supply of new apparel is now available at the clubhouse. More will be ordered as we see what is most popular. The price list is on the refrigerator. The payment box is on top of the refrigerator. Checks are accepted. We have added a new patch that is stick-on, with an industrial-strength adhesive. The price is \$5.00/patch. Several members have been testing them over the past few months, putting them on camera bags and backpacks. Some have taken them on international trips with no issues.



CPS Apparel Sale!!!

We are on the last leg of clearing our inventory of apparel, including baseball caps, hooded sweatshirts, T-shirts, and polo shirts. The new merchandise, like everything else, will show a considerable price increase. Come to the clubhouse and get some bargain-priced merch before it's all gone!

Call for School Instructors

We are currently looking for instructors for both our Lightroom Classic School and our Fundamentals of Good Photography School. If interested, visit our Volunteer page <https://www.clevelandphoto.org/volunteer/> for more information about each school.



Looking for You - Speakers Wanted!

We are looking for speakers for the 2027-2028 Club year, giving you plenty of time to get prepared. Share your passion, expertise and perspective of your photographic journey and help inspire other photographers.

Remember, our club motto is:
Photographers Helping Photographers

Community Service

Tom Malinchak opened his article, “Capturing Courage and So Much More,” in this issue of our *Darkroom Door* sharing “My journey started seven short years ago, in a small clubhouse. I found my way to the Cleveland Photographic Society- people helping people, or more specifically, “Photographers helping Photographers.” Shortly thereafter, in search of giving back what so many gave to me, I joined the CPS Community Service group.”

This is the route that brings many of our members to volunteer with our Community Service Program. When signing up to be a part of the program members frequently state they received so much from their club membership, be it our School of Photography, formal and informal Mentoring Program, Field Trips or Friday evening hands-on programs, that they want to give back.

Our Community Service Program gives member volunteers the opportunity to give back in a meaningful way while enhancing their skills through photographing local nonprofit organization’s special events. Photographing in different environments, working with diverse populations, connecting with other photographers, meeting and learning about the persons involved with many local nonprofit organizations, in addition to the feeling of giving back, are just some of the benefits of participation in our Community Services Program. As Tom demonstrates in his article, at the end of the day, for the photographer, it is not as much about capturing the requested photos of an event as it is witnessing and capturing those “Meaningful Hallmark Movie Moments.”

Here are some of our volunteer’s favorite photos:



**American Lung Association
Flight for Air Tom Malinchak**



**American Lung Association Flight for Air
Lori Palmer**



**American Lung Association Flight for Air
Bruce Orr**



**American Lung Association Flight for Air
Mary Anne Pfrogner**



**American Lung Association Golf
Tournament
Tom Malinchak**



**Armed Forces Day
Tom Malinchak**



**Big Day of Play
Tom Malinchak**

Community Service



Canopy Child Advocacy Center
Bruce Orr



Challenger Baseball
Dan Lester



Cornerstone of Hope Gala
Bruce Orr



Cornerstone of Hope Gala
Rosemary Flanagan



Downs Syndrome Association of NorthEast Ohio
Mary Anne Pfrogner



Gates Mills Players
Bruce Orr



Gates Mills Players
Bruce Orr



Gates Mills Players
Coleen McFarland



Gates Mills Players
Rosemary Flanagan

Community Service



HBCU Freshman Send Off Mary Anne Pfrogner



Homeless Stand Down
Thomas Malinchak



Joseph and Calab Leadership
Bruce Orr



Joseph and Calab Leadership
Lee Baskey



Leading Ladies
Bruce Orr



Leading Ladies
Rosemary Flanagan



Ohio Special Olympics Columbus
Tom Malinchak

Community Service



Special Olympics
Bruce Orr



Special Olympics
Bruce Orr



Special Olympics
Jacky Grimm



Special Olympics
Tom Malinchak



Special Olympics Polar Plunge
Bruce Orr



Special Olympics Polar Plunge
Tom Malinchak



Special Olympics Polar Plunge
Tom Malinchak



Special Olympics Winter Games
Tom Malinchak



St Sebastian Gala
Bruce Orr

Community Service



St Sebastian International Festival
Rosemary Flanagan



St Sebastian International Festival
Bruce Orr



Vision Walk
Bruce Orr



WAGS Mac 'n Cheese Throwdown
Bruce Orr



WAGS Mac 'n Cheese Throwdown
Kim Wasielewski



OUR MISSION:
The mission of the
Cleveland Photographic
Society, Inc.
is to promote and advance
the understanding, passion
and joy of photography by
providing opportunities for
education,
skill development,
picture taking, competition,
critique and fellowship.

CLUB HEADQUARTERS
9543 Broadview Road
Broadview Heights, OH 44147
www.clevelandphoto.org

THE CLEVELAND PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, INC.

CPS has operated continuously since 1887, making us one of the oldest camera clubs in North America. The organization currently has over 800 members and is one of the few anywhere to have its own permanent clubroom. The objectives of the society are to promote and advance the understanding, passion and joy of photography by providing opportunities for education, skill development, picture taking, competition, critique, and fellowship. We meet almost every Friday evening and our meetings are always open to visitors and guests—we invite you to visit us! Our clubroom is located on the City of Broadview Heights campus. The clubroom opens at 7:00 p.m. In addition to live Friday meetings, we will be live streaming these meetings on our YouTube channel where members can view in real time or at their convenience. To view a meeting, go to Youtube and search for ClevePhotographic. If you click the subscribe button you will receive a notification when new videos are available for viewing.

CPS is a founding member of the Photographic Society of America (PSA).

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CPS Competitions

CPS holds competitions throughout the club year as a part of our regular Friday evening meeting schedule. Only members and current students can enter images in competition, but all are invited to attend on competition evenings. Current competition categories are Creative, Nature, People and Black & White, and every competition also contains the opportunity to submit images in the Pictorial (Open) category. Competitions are split between printed images and those which are digitally projected. In addition, the Club maintains a 'B' series of competitions for students and newer members and also offers a series of Photojournalism nights, designed to focus on the image as a visual story with only minimal digital editing.

CPS Membership

Annual dues:

Individual Membership (One member) \$60

Couples Membership (A couple in the same household) \$90

Family Membership (A couple and children in the same household) \$125

Junior Membership (One member under 18) \$40

Distance Membership (One member living more than 100 miles from the club) \$40

Join through our website: <https://www.clevelandphoto.org/join-cps/>

Join us and enjoy all the benefits of being a part of one of the most dynamic, active, and friendliest camera clubs in the U.S. Photographic education and fellowship are our primary tenets and a part of all we offer. No matter your skill level or photographic interest, you'll find lots of activities that will enhance your skills—and you'll have FUN along the way!

Club Calendar

The complete and updated Club Calendar can be obtained at
<https://www.clevelandphoto.org/calendar/>