

HPS Newsletter - May, 2024

1954 to 2024
70 YEARS

Website: <https://helderbergphoto.com>

Email: helderbergphoto@gmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/helderbergphoto/

Member of PSSA: <http://www.pssa.co.za>

United Church: 28 Bright Street, Somerset West, 7130

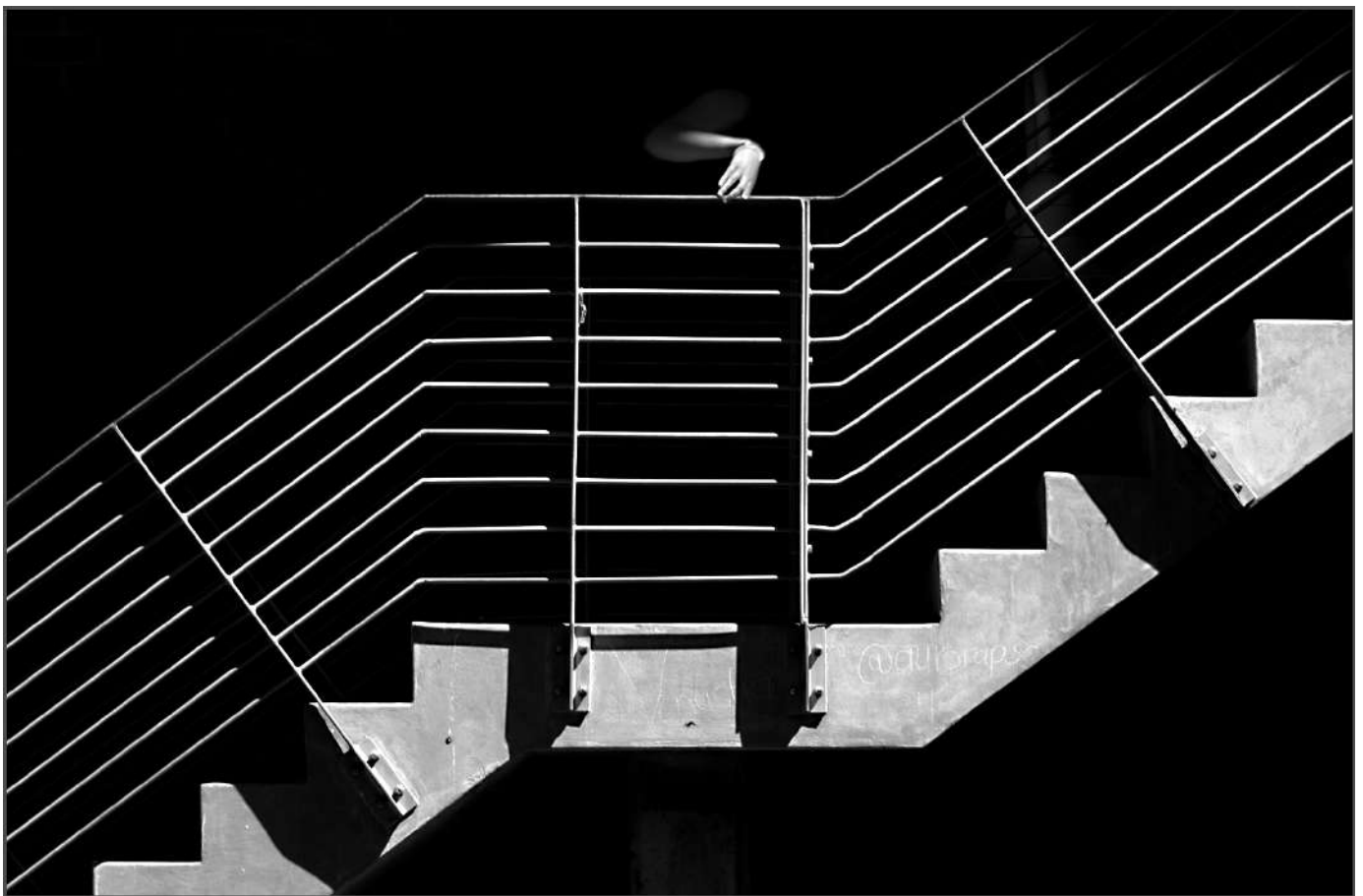
Meeting: Second Tuesday of Each Month @ 19h15

MONTHLY COMPETITION

Set Subject for Month: Intentional Camera Movement

External Judge: N/A

Internal Judges: Rachel Gemmell & Issi Potgieter



First Placed Image: Walking the Stairs

Author: Antenie Carstens

Digital, Open, 27 Points

 **Kodak Express**
Digital Solutions

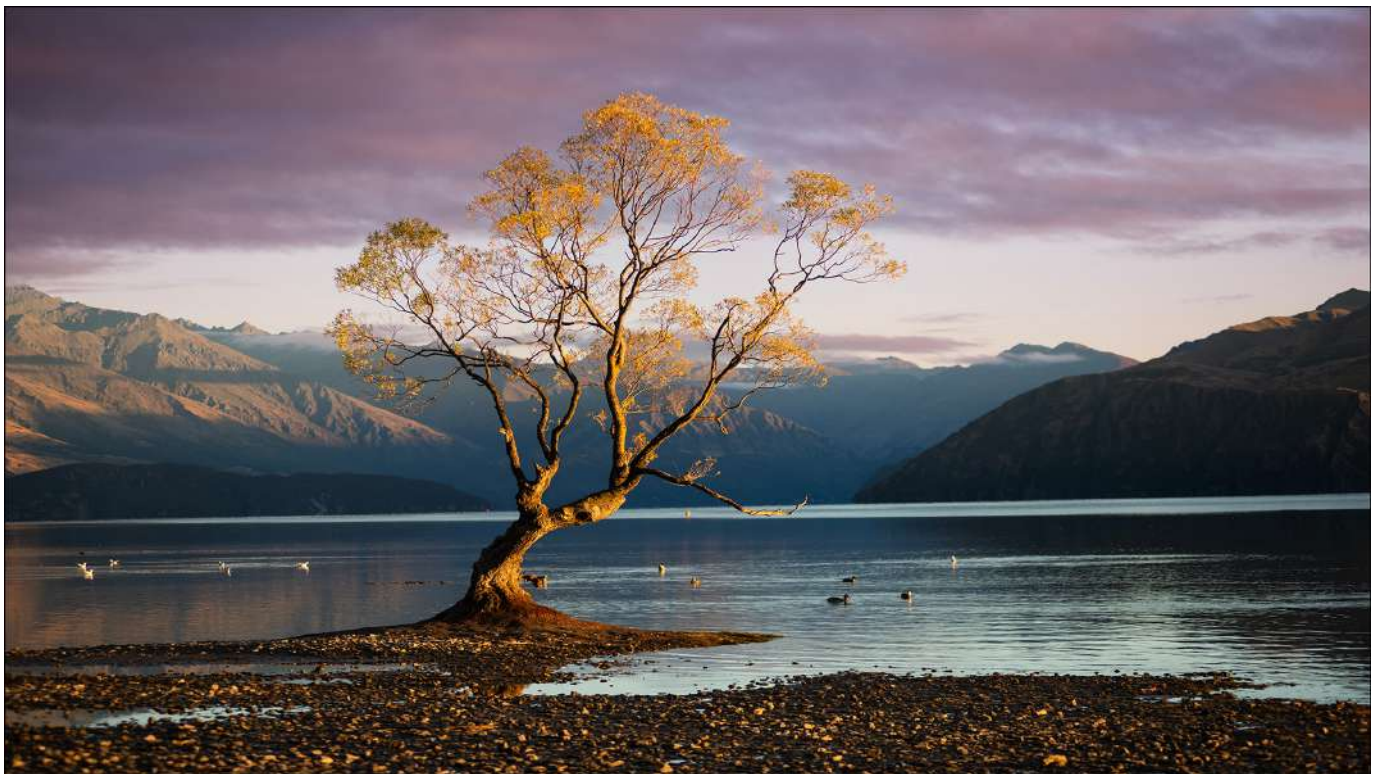
SUPERFOTO
PHOTOGRAPHIC

 **SUPERFOTO**

Somerset Mall 021 852 6737



Second Placed Image: Spray Can Cap on Leaves
Author: Peter Dewar
Digital, Set Subject, 27 Points



Third Placed Image: That Tree Whanaka
Author: Bernard Seymour Hall
Digital, Open, 27 Points

FROM THE CHAIR

Our last Club Meeting was a particularly busy one ... The Set Subject was ICM – for which we received a gratifying number of images. Rachel and Issi (our in-house JAP judges) did the honours, for which we thank them. It was good, also, to have quite a number of prints judged.

Gavin Whiteford gave us a slide show on his and Denise's visit to Vietnam recently – a wonderful experience by the looks of things. With quite a few members having been on photographic trips these last months, I hope they can be persuaded to share their experiences with us.

Antenie offered two presentations, and Peter gave us feedback on the recent Congress held in Calitzdorp. Thanks to both of you! Steve Trimby is also thanked for offering to speak on the next competition Set Subject – in this case 'Street Photography'. His practical advice on what sort of camera, and lens, to use, dovetails nicely with Peter's explanation on the subject in our Newsletter.

Once again we were able to rely on members (viz Stephen, Fiona, Michele etc.), who filled in where work needed to be done – not forgetting Bernard and Izak who helped with the drying up.

What a Class Act our Club is!

Cheers,
Nettie
20th May, 2024

[Editor]

Nettie's image of a young leopard, which did well in the open section at our last HPS meeting.

Well done Nettie!



Mom's Catch

[Editor] Many thanks go to HPS's recently graduated JAP judges, Rachel Gemmell and Issi Potgieter, who did the judging this month. In my opinion, they did an excellent job.

FUTURE SET SUBJECTS

| Month | Date | Meeting | Set Subjects | |
|-----------|------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| June | Tue 11 Jun | Competition | Street Photography | |
| July | Tue 02 Jul | B&W | Street Photography | Macro |
| July | Tue 09 Jul | Competition | Macro | |
| August | Tue 13 Aug | Competition | The Power of Perspective | |
| September | Tue 03 Sep | B&W | The Power of Perspective | Night Lights |
| September | Tue 10 Sep | Competition | Night Lights | |
| October | Tue 08 Oct | Competition | Windows | |
| November | Tue 05 Nov | B&W | Windows | Minimalism |
| November | Tue 12 Nov | Competition | Minimalism | |
| December | Tue 10 Dec | GALA Evening | Special Project Show | |

Set Subject for July - Macro

The HPS write-up for this set subject says:

"From insects to small birds, from flowers to cacti, these images make things look larger than life. Although narrow planes of focus are common, the use of focus stacking is not excluded, and is, in fact, encouraged in the case of small insects, where the details are important. On the other hand, blurred artful images are also encouraged."

The [Wikipedia definition](#) *[slightly edited]* states:

"Macro photography is extreme close-up photography, usually of very small subjects and living organisms like insects, in which the size of the subject in the photograph is greater than life-size. By the original definition, a macro photograph is one in which the size of the subject on the negative or image sensor is life-size or greater. In some senses, however, it refers to a finished photograph of a subject that is greater than life-size."

My own experience with making macro images has never been very successful. To a large extent, excellent macro work requires dedicated macro equipment, which I have always considered to be an unnecessary expense. I have owned a couple of (donated) Minolta macro lenses in the past, but they no longer work on my current equipment, and I was never too successful with them when I was able to use them in any case. Earlier on, in my 42mm Screw mount days, I used extension tubes, but that too produced images that were less than impressive. In addition, I have never been very involved with the use of flash, and this is another area that is often required for macro work.

FUTURE SET SUBJECTS (CONTINUED)

Along with the digital revolution, came the ability to do focus stacking. Here, a series of shots is taken, where the camera is moved forwards slightly between each shot, so that the focus point moves slightly backwards with each exposure. These images are then combined in software to create a composite where all of the points of interest are in sharp focus.

The image shown here was produced using a focus stack from 11 different shots. Each shot supplied sharpness in a different part of the subject's body - the first shots were focused on the front legs, then the eyes, thorax and so on up to the back part and wings.

[\(Click on Image to see the original post.\)](#)

Professional entomologists started to use this type of method for scientific studies in the early part of the century, when suitable digital software solutions became available.



Nowadays, it is possible to build digital cameras that use multiple lenses and computational photography, which can then choose multiple focus points from a single exposure. These can later be edited to provide images that are in focus throughout the frame if needs be.

Meanwhile, for the more affluent amateur photographers amongst us, there are cameras out there that are already able to take multiple focus bracketing shots; and then focus stack them in-camera. (See, for instance, this [Beginners Guide to in-Camera Focus Stacking.](#))

However, for the average current photographer, dedicated macro hardware might involve the following:

Macro Lenses – specialized lenses that allow the image as projected onto the camera sensor to be 1:1 or greater.

Extension Tubes – these move a standard lens further out from the sensor, and this results in a larger projected image. However, these have their limitations.

Macro Filters – similarly, a macro filter is an additional lens fitted as a filter on the front of your standard lens. These also have limitations.

Flashes – some form of flash light is often required to get satisfactory exposures.

FUTURE SET SUBJECTS (CONTINUED)

Flash Diffusers – these are often necessary to avoid the flash light being too stark.

Ring Flashes – these are used to cut down on shadows caused by the flash.

Light Boxes – these are often used as controlled environments to improve image quality.

Tripods – these are often required to reduce shake induced blur. However, many macro photographers prefer to rely upon lighting solutions that allow them to use fast shutter speeds, rather than using a tripod.

Focusing Rails – which are used on a tripod for shifting the camera slightly forwards (or backwards) between shots when focus stacking is envisaged.



[Click on the image above for link to it's reference.](#)

The following links provide further information of interest.

[Orms: Beginners Guide to Macro Photography](#)

[Everything You Need to Know About Macro Photography](#)

[Video: Macro Photography for Beginners](#)

So, let's see what you can do with what you have in your camera bag!

AUDIO VISUALS

70 Years of Helderberg Photographic Society

The Audio Visual Section, managed by Irmel Dunaiski, intends to produce an AV on the history of the Society, which we hope we can show at whatever celebration we are going to have.

All members are urged to delve into their archives, whether they be slides or even jumbo prints(!!!), which should be handed to, or sent to Irmel at irmel@avcreations.co.za or Nettie at nettie28@iafrica.com. Looking for photos or images does not happen instantly, and we urge you to set some time aside to look in your archives, sooner rather than later!

Please take part in this project ... it will be great fun seeing the outcome.



Browsing through my own 'HPS Members' folder brings back many memories....

- Most of all, the feeling of camaraderie, which also was echoed by cheerful laughter during our meeting on Tuesday, for example
- Many different photo challenges and their evaluations, a wonderful way to improve your own photography
- Friends we made and unfortunately friends we lost

Our AV group would like to capture your experiences in an Audio Visual as far as they go back during the 70 years for our Year-End function.

It takes time, especially to sort and group through the many images from different sources.

A perfect time to start will be our AV group outing end of July.

But we are depending on your images and maybe short recordings of incidents by 15 July!!!

Thank you,

Irmel
irmel@avcreations.co.za

AUDIO VISUALS (CONTINUED)t

[Editor] During the recent Cape Photographers Congress in Calitzdorp, we were given a presentation by Friso Woudstra covering his journey in AV. The AV's shown included some that were originally constructed in the film days, but which were later digitised.

Click on the image below to view one of Friso's works on YouTube.



OUTINGS

Cape Photographers Congress in Calitzdorp

There were 4 HPS members among the ~70 enthusiasts attending the recent Calitzdorp Congress. Peter Dewar provided a brief verbal summary at the May HPS club meeting.

Needless to say, the Congress was a great occasion, and I'm sure everyone learnt something that they knew nothing about previously.

The 2025 Cape Photographers Congress is due to take place in Struisbaai in August of that year. Further details will follow when they become available.

Image courtesy of Mari Dewar.



EDITOR'S COMMENT

Light Painting

It's a small world!

In the middle of March, PhotoPXL hosted a live [interview with John Hartman](#). John specializes in utilizing light-painting, and in particular, makes wonderful images of automobiles. After seeing all of that, I was planning to base my April Editor's Comment on light painting. However, I later moved the collected data forward to the May directory, and built my April comment around my experiments with AI instead.



Coincidentally, at the Cape Photographers' Congress in Calitzdorp towards the end of April, we were given a lecture on Automotive Photography by Sarel van Staden and Maryna Cotton. I was immediately struck by the similarity in approach between Sarel and John's works.



During a break, we got talking to Maryna. I mentioned that I'd seen some of John's work; and she informed us that they had recently met with John during a visit to the States, and had discussions concerning possible cooperation between themselves. She mentioned that, while there, they had had a friendly competition to photograph a particular vehicle. The South Africans did a better job, in less time, than John was able to achieve. This was largely due to different custom specialist lighting equipment, and different approaches in Photoshop.

Sarel and Maryna are basically car enthusiasts. They love producing fine art photographs of beautiful cars. However, to pay the bills, they have also to carry out some straight commercial photography for manufacturers' catalogues and such like. The production of the latter images sometimes includes light painting techniques borrowed from their fine-art work, which improves the attraction of their output.

They have found that, to be successful in automotive fine art photography, they have to take the initiative and approach the classic car collectors. The clients are generally not too interested. So, they instead visit the target venue and then ask the owner if they may photograph his cars. The answer is normally negative; until they show the owner print-samples of their fine art work. Thereafter, they get a foot in the door, and a cooperation often ensues.

EDITOR'S COMMENT (CONTINUED)

With the advances in CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), it is becoming more and more difficult to get straight commercial work. The arrival of AI can only make this situation worse. So, here they have to rely upon their proximity to African backgrounds, and their excellent photographic outputs to give them an edge.



OK. So, say you want to get into serious light painting of automobiles?

First, have a look at the [Digital Photography School's Beginners Guide to Light Painting](#). This will provide some of the background information. It points out that there are two different types of light painting, one that uses direct light, and another that uses reflected light. In the case of these automobile images, we are talking about the latter.

Secondly, I suggest going through John's [discussion on PhotoPXL](#).

Then, have a look at [JohnHarmanLightPainting.com](#). There is a lot of information obtainable from this website, although at times it is a bit difficult to find stuff that you know is in there somewhere. For instance, not all LED lights are created equal, so it is necessary to white balance your collection of lights. John shows you how [in this video](#).

John Hartman sells a [Video Tutorial Series](#), which, at USD 550, is probably only worth getting if you are still really serious about trying this method out.

On the other hand, Sarel and Maryna have a website called [www.carfineart.com](#). They too have tutorials and lighting equipment available for sale, and are likely to be more sympathetic towards South African enthusiasts!

Any takers out there? If so, please provide feedback at one of our monthly meetings.

ODDS & ENDS

Not More AI For Goodness Sake !



BLAST by Simon Harsent - The Locals

In the latest issue of [Better Photography Magazine](#), editor Peter Eastway interviews British advertising photographer Simon Harsent. The discussion revolves around Simon's portfolio of pub portraits, all created using [Midjourney](#) (an AI software programme of course).

Unfortunately, you cannot read the full text of the interview unless you subscribe to [Better Photography Magazine](#).

However, you can download a copy of Simon's [Blast Issue #7](#), which will provide you with all of the associated images. Once in a while, Simon releases an issue of his Blast, which tracks his personal work (rather than following his professional work as an advertising photographer).

Simon's introductory text in Blast Issue #7 starts with a large paragraph describing the history and atmosphere of The Legion, an imaginary pub in London. The paragraph was, in fact, written by the [ChatGPT](#) AI programme. Presumably, this was used as the background information that [Midjourney](#) used to visualise the unedited images.

One thing which both Peter and Simon are agreed upon, is that one cannot ignore AI. It is here to stay, and it will have a profound effect on photography. Simon is now embracing it as an alternative approach to image production.

In real life, Simon has tended to return to film photography, shooting film with large format cameras. The film is then scanned, and the digitised image edited in Photoshop.

The AI produced images deliberately display the same look of Simon's distinctive black and white style, for which art directors would hire him. He says "My history as an advertising photographer taught me the importance of the idea. The photography I did was all about interpreting an idea, and learning how to tell a story in picture from".

Of AI Simon states "I think there's a big misconception that you just type what's in your head and that's exactly what you get, but that's not correct. There's an interpretation of

ODDS & ENDS (CONTINUED)

your text and sometimes the results are nothing like what you wanted; but on other occasions Midjourney will present you with something quite surprising – and you think, that’s pretty cool.

“It’s almost like our normal picture taking process with a camera. You have an image in your mind, but then suddenly the light isn’t working as you expected and there’s no obvious explanation. Over the years as photographers, we’ve learnt to embrace these unexpected moments because sometimes they produce results of pure brilliance! And so it is with Midjourney when it presents something you didn’t necessarily pre-visualise yourself.

“Using Midjourney, I wanted the results to have my signature on them. I wanted them to look like they were photographed by me, so I’d prompt Midjourney to create images that were shot on a large format camera, that used window light and so on. In this way, using Midjourney is very much how I would approach any other photography project. However, as I had discovered earlier, the image out of Midjourney doesn’t need to be the final result.

“I did a selection of the images I wanted to work with and took them into Photoshop, converted them to black and white, then opened them in [Nik Analog Efex](#). Then I started playing with light leaks, scratches, dust marks and borders – I imagined I was using an old 4x5-inch camera that had a few problems with it!

“It’s interesting, because as a film photographer we’d run away from cameras like this in our search for some kind of perfection. Then digital arrived and perfection was easy, so now we’re looking at ways to embrace analogue imperfections – you know, bad processing, light leaks, negatives covered in dust because you processed the film in a hotel bathroom!


Peter Eastway asks "But will [AI] give people the same sense of ownership we have today? And does that sense of ownership really matter? How does Simon feel about The Locals portfolio he created with Midjourney – does he own it?"

Simon answers, “Absolutely I do! Intellectual property is a big thing. If you have an idea, then your way of realising that idea is yours.

“Could someone replicate my shots? Absolutely, but that is plagiarism because you’ve made a conscious decision to rip off one person’s work. I’m not sure using Midjourney is plagiarism, it’s more like drawing inspiration from all over the place, but it still relies on you to have the initial idea.




ODDS & ENDS (CONTINUED)



PSSA NATIONAL CONGRESS

2024
30 September - 4 October
Parys
Free State



PSSA National Congress 2024

There might be minor changes to the programme

| Time | Monday 30th | Tuesday 1st | Wednesday 2nd | Thursday 3rd | Friday 4th | Saturday 5th |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| Sunrise | 05h50 @ 93.7' | 05h49 @ 94.2' | 05h48 @ 94.6' | 05h47 @ 95.0' | 05h46 @ 95.5' | 05h45 @ 95.9' |
| Moonrise | 04h39 @ 77.8' | 05h07 @ 84.3' | 05h34 @ 90.7' | 06h01 @ 97.2' | 06h29 @ 103.3' | 06h59 @ 109.0' |
| Wa(n/x)ning Cres | 7.3% | 3.1% | New Moon | 0.0% | 1.2% | 4.1% |

| Time | Monday 30th | Tuesday 1st | Wednesday 2nd | Thursday 3rd | Friday 4th | Saturday 5th |
|----------------|-------------------------|---|--|---|--|-----------------------|
| 05h30 - 09h30 | | Sunrise, Landscape and Street Photography outings. See details of photo opportunities off site: There are farms to visit as well as many other places of interest. | | | | Free photography time |
| 09h45 to 10h15 | | Coffee / Tea | | | | |
| 10h15 to 10h30 | | Announcements | | | | |
| 10h30 to 11h25 | | Roger Lee. High-quality cell phone Photography | Andre Badenhorst Presentation on | PSSA AGM | Landscape Photography Kyle Goetsch | |
| 11h35 to 12h30 | | Francois Oosthuysen Model Photography (Willow Hall) | Conceptual Photography | Members Forum | PSSA Presentation | |
| 12h30 to 13h30 | | LUNCH | | | | |
| 13h45 to | Registration from 14h00 | Astro Photography Kyle Goetsch (Willow Hall) | Room 1: Francois Oosthuysen - Model shoot processing | Room 1: Kyle Goetsch - Astro Processing Room 2: Francois Oosthuysen - Model shoot processing | FREE TIME | |
| 15h00 | | Room 1: Charlaine Gerber Composite Photography | Room 2: Andre Badenhorst Conceptual Processing | Willow Hall: Charlaine Gerber -- Composite Photography. | FREE TIME | |
| 15h00 to 18h30 | 18h30 | Sunset, Landscape and Street Photography outings. | | | | |
| 19h00 | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Banquet 19h00 - 22h00 | |
| Sunset * | 18h10 @ 266.1' | 18h10 @ 265.6' | 18h11 @ 265.2' | 18h11 @ 264.8' | 18h12 @ 264.3' | 18h12 @ 263.9' |
| Moonset | 16h18 @ 279.1' | 17h10 @ 272.5' | 18h01 @ 265.9' | 18h52 @ 259.6' | 19h45 @ 253.5' | 20h39 @ 248.0' |
| 20h30 + | | Workshop Lightroom for beginners. (Charlaine Gerber) | Astro Photography outing with Kyle Goetsch | Workshop Photoshop for beginners. (Charlaine Gerber) | 22h00 --- Social get together at the Lapa with Lion Jay. | |

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