

# PERSPECTIVE

AMBER CAMERA CLUB

FEBRUARY 2025



ABOUT THE WEE DROP ON TOP  
BY  
SHIRLEY SWINGLER



# FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hi Everyone,

Summer is well under way and after having been in Kruger the last couple of weeks, I am still trying to adjust to getting up a little later and going to bed a little later as well. Gate opening times at Kruger for December and January, as many of you know, are 4.30 so you need to get up at least 4.00am to get out early to catch the best light. Not always the easiest thing to do. The only real solution is going to bed early, I mean, at about 8:00 to get in a good few hours of sleep.

That is also not easy when you are trying to solve the worlds problem one drink at a time. Anyhow Kruger was, as always, great. The first few days were very wet but what we did notice was that the animals seem to prefer the colder and wetter conditions to the hot and dusty drier conditions. We also ticked off a few Summer migrant bird species so that was great.

Now, back to reality and after the last committee meeting, I am feeling very optimistic for the future year at hand. We have quite a few things planned and if the support is great, yes, I mean great, we will endeavor to make more exciting things happen.

Our next meeting will kick off with the necessary AGM. This normally only takes up about 15-20 minutes of our time after which we will have Leon VD Merwe giving us a talk on Photography, as well as taking photos from a helicopter, not that many of us will ever have the opportunity. (I can picture myself in a small plane flying to an elite lodge in the Delta, taking photos out the window of al the animals below.) Haha, not likely to happen, but I can dream cant I?

Don't forget to enter the monthly comp. as well as our very own ACC salon which closes in February. Then there is also the MMA which closes mid Feb.

Until the next meeting,

Take care

**Happy Snapping,**

*Rose*



# ABOUT THE CLUB

Amber Camera Club was established in 2011 by a group of passionate photographers. It has grown from strength to strength in the time it has been running thanks to a hard-working committee.

We welcome photographers of all ages and all levels to join our club in the hopes of helping them grow and creating an environment for likeminded people to meet and socialize.

There is a meeting every month - on the 3rd Tuesday of the month in the evening at the Amber Valley Auditorium at 6:30pm. Everyone and anyone are welcome to join. We also host an outing on the Saturday following the meeting to practice some photography.

If you would like to find out more information – please contact us on [ambercameraclub@gmail.com](mailto:ambercameraclub@gmail.com) or contact one of our dedicated committee members, details, of which, are below.

Chairperson: Jenny Kruger 082 871 1782

Competition Steward: Alex Gargan 076 836 7605

Secretary: Sue Grills 073 571 4971

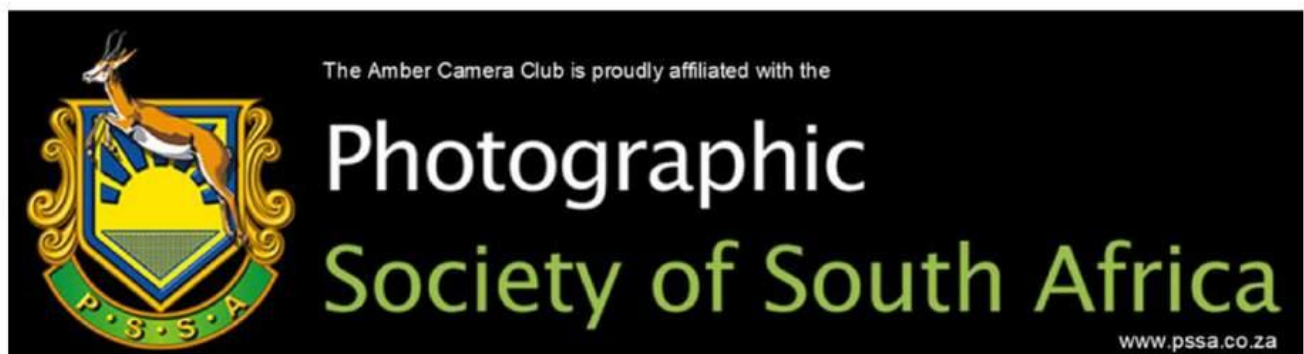
Treasurer: Penny Shaw 082 564 3144

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Editor: Rose Douglas 076 402 6020

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# WELCOME

A very warm welcome to two  
new members this month:-

Nicky Kidgell  
Leon van der Merwe

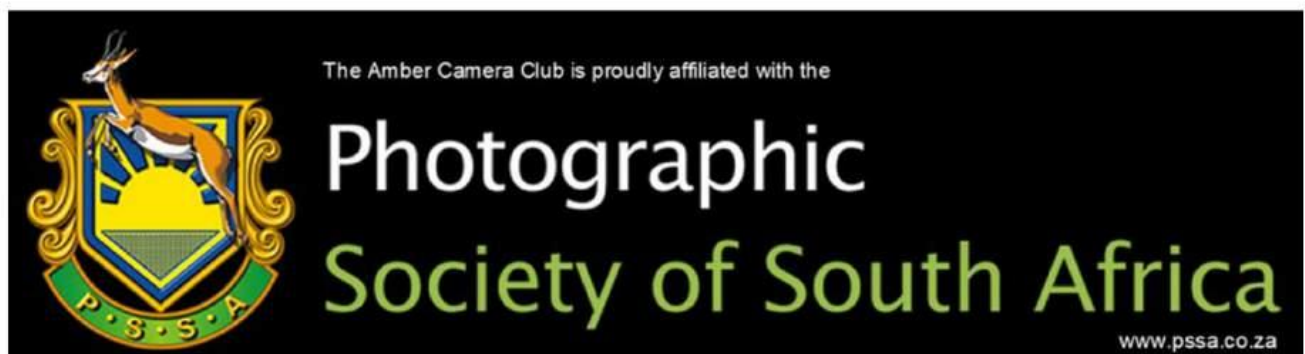
## MEMBERS WEBSITES/VLOGS/ BLOGS/UTUBE CHANNELS

Paul Bartho: [www.bartho.blog](http://www.bartho.blog)

Mark Preston-Whyte: [www.markpw6.wixsite.com/website-copy](http://www.markpw6.wixsite.com/website-copy)

Rose Douglas: U-Tube channel — Rose Douglas Explore Africa

IF YOU WOULD LIKE YOUR OWN SITE LISTED, PLEASE SEND YOUR DETAILS TO THE EDITOR.





# JANUARY CLUB COMPETITION

This month's JUDGE

CONRAD KELSEY - WESTVILLE CAMERA CLUB

**Judges Choice Junior**  
English Robin by Julie Johnston



**Judges Choice Senior**  
About the Wee Drop on Top by Shirley Swingler



# **JANUARY CLUB COMPETITION**

**SET SUBJECT - MIST/FOG**

**Judges Choice Junior**

**Horses in the Mist by Matt Jackson**



**Judges Choice Senior**

**Early morning Leopard by Rose Douglas**



# 2025 CLUB COMPETITIONS

## SET SUBJECTS

JANUARY - MIST/FOG closes 1ST JANUARY

**FEBRUARY - SMOKIN' HOT closes 1st February**

MARCH - NATURALLY FRAMED

APRIL - LOOKING DOWN

MAY - REFLECTIONS

JUNE - SERENITY

JULY - EYES

AUGUST - OLD (PEOPLE, THINGS, ANIMALS)

SEPTEMBER - PET PORTRAIT

OCTOBER - WINTER WONDERLAND

JANUARY 26 - MOUNTAINS

At least 1 of your 4 entries should be entered in our Set Subject for this month, the balance may be entered in this category or across any of the remaining 5 categories on PhotoVault. If you are unable to enter anything in the set subject, you forfeit that image and enter only 3 in other categories.

NOTE: Remember to size correctly: at least one of the image dimensions must be exactly 1920px wide or 1080px high and sized up to 2Mb



# SALON CALENDAR 2025

## Calendar for year ending June 2025

No	Club	Salon Name	Closing Date
1	Nelspruit Photographic Society	Nelspruit Salon	06/07/2024
2	Edenvale Photographic Club	8th Danube Summer Circuit 2024	15/07/2024
3	Benoni Camera Club	3rd Benoni Camera Club Digital Salon	20/07/2024
4	Witzenberg Photographic Society	4th Witzenberg Photographic Society National Salon 2024	03/08/2024
5	Durban Camera Club	2nd Durban Camera Club DigitalSalon	17/08/2024
6	PSSA Youth	5th PSSA YOUTH National Salon 2024	24/08/2024
7	Centurion Camera Club	8th Centurion Camera Club Digital Salon	31/08/2024
8	AV Makers South Africa	AV Makers National AV Salon 2024	08/09/2024
9	Randburg Photo Club	6th Randburg National Digital Salon	14/09/2024
10	Hibiscus Coast Photographic Society	6th HCPS National Digital Salon -2025	28/09/2024
11	Tygerberq Photographic Society	9tn Tygerberg Digital Salon	12/10/2024
12	PSSA Up and Coming	PSSA 26th Up and Coming	19/10/2024
13	Krugersdorp Kamera Klub Camera Club	Krugersdorp Camera Club 19th National Digital Salon	26/10/2024
14	Springs Photographic Club	3rd SPC National Digital Salon	09/11/2024
15	Bethal Camera Club	4th Bethal National Salon	11/01/2025
16	Western Cape Photographic Forum	WCPF Salon for Projected Images	25/01/2025
17	AFO Fotografieklub	13th National AFO salon 2A25	08/02/2025
18	Amber Camera Club	ACC 3rd Digital Salon	22/02/2025
19	PSSA International Salon	PSSA National Salon of Photography 2025	08/03/2025
20	Bosveld Fotografieklub	8th Bosveld Fotografieklub Salon	15/03/2025
21	Hillcrest Camera Club	1ST Hillcrest Camera Club Digital Salon	22/03/2025
22	Paarl Photographic Club	7th Paarl National Salon of Photography	05/04/2025
23	Magalies Foto Fun Club	9th MFFC DPI Salon 2025	19/04/2025
24	Southern Suburbs Camera Club	SSCC 8th National PDI Salon	03/05/2025
25	Port Elizabeth Camera Club	PECC National Salon	17/05/2025
26	Kriel Foto Club	3rd Kriel Foto Club Salon	31/05/2025
27	Ballito Photo Club	1ST Ballito Photo Club National Salon	07/06/2025
28	Tafelberg Fotografie Klub	TAF 14th Print & PDI Salon	14/06/2025
29	PSSA Up and Coming	PSSA 27th Up and Coming	21/06/2025



# MIDLANDS MEANDER CATEGORIES

**Please note that we have changed the submission dates  
to allow more time to enter.  
2025**

January - Inside the Shop - Closes MID January

February - Working Outside - Closes MID February

March - Kids in Action

April - Delicate flower

May - Artistic Hands

June - Frozen

July - Sport

August - Pathways in Forests

September - Lost in Time

October - Natures Power

Remember 3 entries per month and the same  
guidelines  
apply with regards to sizing.

# NATURALLY FRAMED

Natural framing is a photography technique that uses natural elements in the scene to create a frame around the main subject of the photo. The goal is to draw the viewer's eye to the subject and add depth, context, and interest to the image.

## I've Been Framed!

Using a natural frame can dramatically improve your compositions, and it's a technique that I use quite often in my photography. While 'working a scene' I will try a variety of compositional techniques. I don't usually start by using a natural frame, but there are many cases where adding that frame improves the overall look that I'm trying to capture. Here is a case in point;

It was a beautiful June morning with a bit of mist hanging in the air. I took the short drive from my home to a meadow with an old barn in it, thinking this would be the perfect location. It certainly had potential. For my first shot I created a simple composition - grasses in the foreground, the barn in the distance and the early morning sun illuminating the mist hanging over the field. I looked at the LCD, and was far from impressed with the shot. How could I make the scene before me more interesting?



I looked over my right shoulder, saw some large trees and thought, maybe I could use those trees to improve the composition. I took a quick walk to the edge of the forested hillside, found some branches that were nicely arching overhead and recomposed.

Click! Now this image I liked! And it's in large part due to the natural frame.



# NATURALLY FRAMED

## Why Use Natural Framing?

**Isolate Your Main Subject** – Use a natural frame to focus attention on your main subject. I believe that a simple composition is often the best type of composition. Although adding the overhead branches adds more subject matter, it actually simplifies the scene when compared to the first shot. Adding the frame forces your eye to go where I want it to - the barn.

**Increase Depth and Add Dimension** - Every photograph is a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional world. Including a frame can increase the appearance of depth in your images. This draws the viewer into the photo where hopefully they will spend more time exploring the image.

The old farmhouse in the photo below. I bent down and used part of the gate to frame the shot. To me, this was a far more interesting image. I added a great deal more depth to the shot, and, in a way, the frame became the more important subject.



**Types of Frames** If you can see through it, around it, or past it, it can be used as a frame. The key is to ensure that your frame adds to the image, rather than detracts from it. It shouldn't just be an afterthought. The frame needs to be a key component that makes the overall composition more interesting.

- **Natural Frames** - trees, branches, tall grasses, flowers, rocky structures, waves, ice formations
- **Architectural Frames** - arches, bridges, windows, doors, fences, buildings, and other man-made structures
- **Light and Shadow Frames** - high contrast areas between light and shadow, for example bright sunlight illuminating a spot on the floor or within a forest scene

A natural frame can be an effective way to improve your composition. It can help draw more attention to your main subject and add greater depth to your photograph. I always experiment when I am thinking about using a natural frame and ask myself some key questions. Where will I place the frame? Will a partial frame do the trick or should I surround my subject completely? Should the frame be in sharp focus or blurry? And most importantly, does the frame improve the image or take away from it? Framing works, when done well.



# TUTORIALS

To start the year I am going to be doing an indepth study on Composition in Photography.  
This will be a 2 part study covering 10 pages of everything you need to know about

## COMPOSITION IN PHOTOGRAPHY

### Composition in Photography: A Complete (and Modern) Guide

#### **What is composition in photography?**

Composition in photography refers to the position of elements inside the frame and how they interact with each other.

Ultimately, composition is about the visual structure of your image.

#### **Why is composition important?**

The composition of your photograph impacts the way it's perceived by others. When you choose what to fit inside the frame and what you leave out, where to position each element and so on, you're capturing a scene with your unique vision.

That's why it's important to carefully compose your photos!

#### **Basic techniques and concepts for composition in photography**

We are instinctively attracted to images with a good composition.

Why?

Because we find them harmonious or interesting!

However, we are *not* as naturally skilled at creating stunning compositions.

That's why photographers have developed basic compositional guidelines and concepts that can quickly improve photo compositions – without requiring years of experience.

Starting with:

#### **The rule of thirds**

You've probably heard about the rule of thirds – or at the very least, you've seen it. That's because most cameras, including the one on your smartphone, have a rule of thirds grid overlay.

The rule of thirds grid is formed by four lines – two vertical and two horizontal – placed at an equal distance from each other and the photo edges (so the frame is divided into thirds).

Like this:





# TUTORIALS

But what actually is the rule of thirds?

It's a guideline stating that you should position compositional elements along your gridlines – and that the focal point of your composition should sit at one of the gridline intersection points.

You can follow this rule in both portrait and landscape orientation, and it works for all types of photography. For example, if you are doing a full-body portrait, you should often place the subject toward one of the gridlines and *not* in the centre.

And when you're photographing a landscape, you should put the horizon toward the top or bottom third of the image and never in the middle.

Note that the rule of thirds is a guideline, not a true *rule*. Once you've mastered it, I recommend trying to violate it with other concepts – such as symmetry, or with even more complex techniques such as the golden ratio (discussed below).

## Leading lines

Leading lines direct the viewer through the image, like this:



When you read a text in English, you automatically start at the top left. Then you continue toward the right until the end of the line.

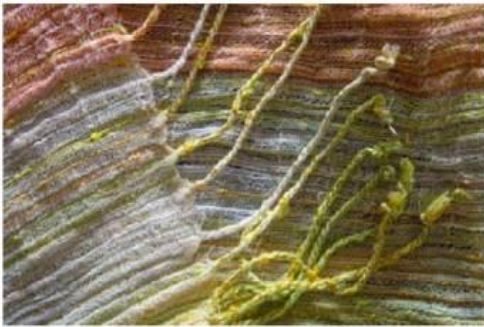
The same thing happens in photography. When we see an image, we also “read” it. Your eye goes from one element to the next – in order to view details and understand the story that's being told.

That's where the leading lines come into play: They guide the eye through the image.

Leading lines can be present or implied, and they can be straight or curved. For example, a leading line can be a curvy road getting lost in the mountains. This will compel viewers to follow the road, pulling them into the image.

# TUTORIALS

## Texture



Texture is often overlooked as an element of the composition. You can use it to create contrast between two elements – one that is smooth and one that is rough, for example.

You can also use texture to create interesting shapes and leading lines, or to add interest to an otherwise dull subject.

To work with textures, you need to consider the type and direction of the light. A hard light that comes from the side will emphasize the texture. A soft light coming from the front flattens the surface.

## Color



Colour is a key consideration for composition in photography. There are so many colour harmonies that you have endless possibilities!

You can use complementary colours to create contrast and make your subject stand out. And you can bring together apparently unrelated elements that are united via a colour scheme.

A good way to learn and understand colour palettes is Adobe Colour. You can use this tool even if you don't have an Adobe subscription.

Simply select a colour wheel with different colour harmony rules, such as monochromatic, complementary, etc. You can also upload a photograph to extract the colour scheme or gradient

# TUTORIALS

## Shape



As photographers, we're used to thinking of ways to add depth to a two-dimensional surface.

Because of that, it's easy to overlook the importance of shapes. Yet when you're composing your images, you can use shapes to establish a careful arrangement.

Think of a cake being photographed from the top; that's a circle. If you cut out a slice, then you're adding a triangle to the composition.

Every shape gives a different feel to our photographs. For example, squares convey stability, while circles make you think of movement and energy.

That's why posing a group for a corporate portrait usually means forming squares or rectangles, whereas family portraits are often posed in triangles or dynamic shapes.

A good way to practice shape-based composition is by using shadows or shooting silhouettes. That way, you take out any three-dimensionality and focus only on the shape of objects.

## Symmetry

Symmetry is defined as something that is exactly the same on both sides, such as a mountain peak or a tree trunk. And it can work *great* in art – as long as you use it carefully.

Note that, in art, a scene is rarely 100 percent symmetrical. Instead, you'll end up with scenes that are *almost* symmetrical and are well-balanced on both sides.

Like this lake photo:





# TUTORIALS

The trees and water aren't perfectly symmetrical, but they're close, and the overall scene has a feeling of balance.

Take a portrait as another example. If you photograph a face perfectly centered in the frame, your image will be symmetric. It won't matter if the subject has a birthmark on one of their cheeks, or that one of their eyes is slightly lower than the other – the symmetry will dominate.

One of the reasons we find symmetry so appealing is because we often find it in nature. And psychologically speaking, symmetry offers a sense of order that makes us feel at ease.

(A great way to play with symmetry in your photography is by shooting reflections or patterns!)

## Contrast



Another important concept that can enhance your composition is contrast.

Since we are talking about photography, the first thing that comes to mind is contrasting light, such as low key photography. Here, you capture a very dark image where only a small detail is highlighted (which makes for a highly *dramatic* result).

However, tonal contrast is not the only type of contrast you can use to improve your compositions. You can also use colour contrast (as discussed earlier), juxtaposition, and conceptual contrast (which pairs opposite ideas or aesthetics).

## Advanced composition in photography

Once you've mastered the basics of composition, it's time to challenge yourself and move on to more advanced techniques.

Here are some of the most popular tools to consider:

### The rule of space

The rule of space tells you to leave space in front of the subject, especially if it's a moving subject. The idea is that the viewer needs enough room to imagine the subject carrying on the action that it's performing.

**More to follow next month.**



# THIS N THAT

Every day there is something new in the world of AI. Here is something I read recently with regards to Photography.

How an individual creates an image for their own use, and what source material is coopted for image creation, is entirely at the individual's discretion. But, when an image is submitted alongside the images of others into a competition or exhibition, then each participant needs to be assured that the other participants are using only their own original work.

Images must be entirely the work of the Photographer. In composite images, all component images must meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any other source including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks and clipart are not permitted.

There is a distinction between the image content, which is controlled by the General Conditions, and image processing and presentation which is at the photographer's discretion. Processing can utilise techniques such as selection, noise reduction, calculated textures, montage, HDR, focus stacking and many others. Presentation may include keylines, print paper types, print mounting and others.

**Image Automation** There are now many image processing methods available in camera, or in processing software or in plug-ins for such software, which have been refined or trained by their developers using the characteristics of many images. The list of methods is extremely long with examples such as face-detection focussing, raw conversion, monochrome conversion, noise reduction, focus stacking, HDR, panorama stitching and many more.

To the extent that these processes are applied only to the photographer's original image, or to all the photographer's original images in a composite, then they comply with the PSSA General Conditions.

**Image Generation** Banks of individual textures and skies have been available for some time and there are software systems which will overlay an imported texture or substitute a sky. Increasingly there are image generator systems which draw on, or have been developed or trained on, content from large image banks to create new images, via a user prompt or specification. Any importation, whether manual or automated, of all or part of a single image or of a generated image which includes or has been developed from the work of others, means that the resulting image content is not entirely the work of the photographer. The resulting image then does not comply with the PSSA General Conditions and is not permitted where those conditions apply.

**Compliance** It is appreciated that the individual photographer may not be fully aware of exactly how individual processing functions act, whether in-camera or in post-processing, However, the club would expect photographers to be aware of when a significant addition has been made to an image which was not part of an original work by the photographer.

# **LET'S NOT FORGET!!**

**MONTHLY MEETING - 18th February**

**AGM - Please make an effort to attend**

Our speaker will be Leon vd Merwe  
on Photography, Nature & Wildlife  
from a Helicopter

**MIDLANDS MEANDER COMPETITION**

Closing date Mid February

**Working Outside**

**MONTHLY COMPETITION**

Closing date 1st February

**Set Subject: Smokin' Hot**

