

NEWSLETTER



PSSA affiliated
camera club

Judging and Learning

Landscape photography
under a cloudless sky

Emil Schulthess –
Adventurer photographer

Judging Photographic Art

GCC News



February 2025

Almost touching distance

Image: Shelagh Ryan

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The year 2025 is galloping along nicely. In fact, some would say too fast. Photographically, GCC is doing well. This month's Show and Tell majored on the judging of the Photographic Art category – read all about it. The star group has gained a younger brother, the blue hour group, which had their first outing in Mosselbay – sadly without the moon due to cloud cover. The ballet-on-the-beach outing was a success, and the Judging & Learning competition was well supported by entries. Trix has taken over the AV group and the first meeting was well attended, and the programme for the year is taking shape.

We had our loadshedding challenge for the first time in many months. Just as we were getting used to having power all the time. And the budget speech was postponed for the first time I can remember. It just goes to show that nothing in the world is running smoothly, is permanent – we live in interesting,

sometimes challenging times. More reason to cherish the steady circle of friendships in the GCC ecosystem.

In thinking about landscape photography, we are always looking for nice clouds, understandably so. But we often find ourselves in landscapes where clouds are scarce, and what then? An Internet article on this subject gained my interest, and I fished out some of my landscape images without any clouds. We cannot organize the weather, although we would like to, so we need to make the most of our photographic opportunities, even on a day without any clouds. I was pleasantly surprised at the nice images I had in my files, images without clouds. Maybe a challenge for a future theme.

The photographer, Emil Schulthess, featured in this newsletter has been someone whose photography I have savoured over the years. He pioneered many

landscape photography techniques we see as commonplace today, whereas in his day it was revolutionary.

The Theme “Wish you were here” was quite a challenge. The scores were generally on the low side. This although all of us take many of these images daily on our cell-phones and send them immediately to friends and family. It just goes to show that those and what the judges were looking for are not the same thing – the judges were looking for quite a bit more than the incidental shot. Mood was the imperative. Nevertheless, that is what the Theme is all about: Getting us out of our self-imposed little photography boxes.

Like always, keep on enjoying your photography, create happiness around you, and look after yourself.

Martin, February 2025

GCC COMMITTEE FOR 2025

If you have any issues regarding the running or programme of GCC, please contact one of the Committee members to get the issue resolved.

 <p>Chairperson Ben Schoeman was elected Chairperson and continues to serve as the custodian of the sound system. Cell: 082 466 3983</p>	 <p>Vice Chair George Morrison was elected as Vice Chairperson for 2025. Cell: 082 777 4287</p>	 <p>Treasurer Riana Pienaar was newly elected to the Committee in 2025. Cell: 082 459 2827</p>	 <p>PRO Daleen Engelbrecht continues as the PRO and arranging our monthly outings. Cell: 083 440 6953</p>
 <p>Secretary Martin Kellermann, confirmed as Secretary and Editor of the monthly Newsletter. Cell: 083 632 4885</p>	 <p>Member Schalk Engelbrecht supports Scott Ormerod who looks after our Photovault presence. Cell: 083 250 2998</p>	 <p>Member Joggie van Staden. Cell: 079 500 5529</p>	 <p>Member Paul Rixom, who is also the PSSA Director for our region. Cell: 072 525 0016</p>
 <p>Member Gertie Joubert, welcoming committee and looking after the Show & Tell meetings. Cell: 083 501 0575</p>	 <p>Member Jaco Joubert, welcoming committee and looking after the Show & Tell meetings. Cell: 073 395 9199</p>	 <p>Member Lorraine Blackwell acts as Judges Co-ordinator. Cell: 083 417 9794</p>	 <p>Tech Support Scott Ormerod (non-member) runs the GCC Photovault system and projection at meetings. Cell: 072 934 0363</p>

JUDGING AND LEARNING

For the **Judging and Learning** event, GCC senior and junior photographer members may enter two images in the categories Open, Nature or Photographic Art and one additional image for the Theme. The number of entries each month range between 95 and 130.

To get the audience involved in the judging, the best Open, Nature and Photographic Art images for the junior members (1-star, 2-star and 3-star) as well as those of the seniors (4-star, 5-star and Master) are chosen by the audience during the actual meeting from the images with high scores.

All the entries and their comments are circulated to the membership after the competition as a PDF presentation. Here only the winners and some of the higher scoring images, typically those that scored 36 or higher, are published. Enjoy them.

OPEN SECTION

The best Junior OPEN image



"Dark lake Pelican" – Laetitia Chandler

The best Senior OPEN image



"Showroom ready" – Rob Glenister

High scoring OPEN images



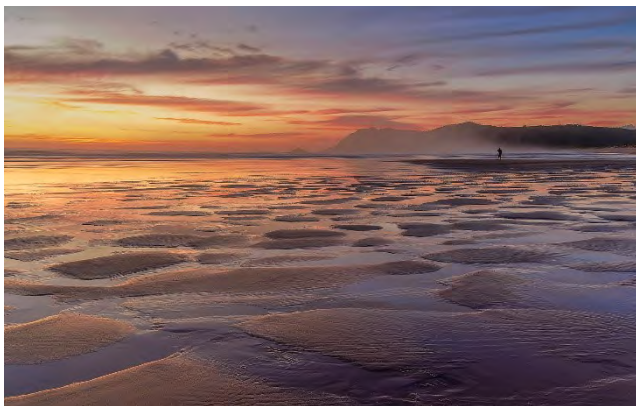
"Katya fc 26" – Schalk Engelbrecht



"Bia in UV" – Martin Kellermann



"Moon bathing" – Daleen Engelbrecht



"Lonely photographer" – Alan King



"Flame Lily 5" – Gerald Nicholson



"Zebras drinking" – Nellian Bekker

High scoring OPEN images



“Dahlia Lake Ontario” – Anton la Grange



“Zafiri” – Reneé van Zyl



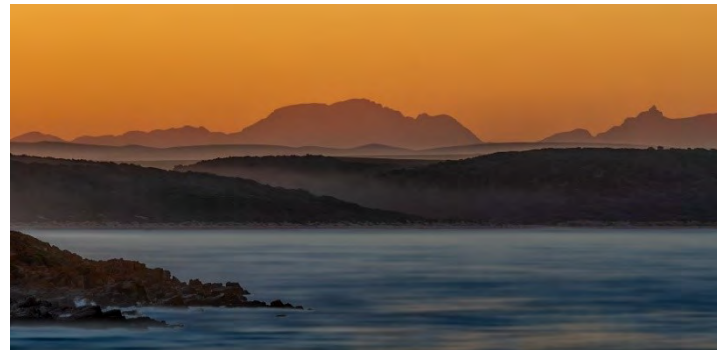
“Steam punk time” – Paul Rixom



“Just gliding along” – Alan King



“The temptation of St Anthony by Dali” – Lorraine Blackwell



“Laat winter middag” – Amanda Whiteman



“Pursell’s Jumping Spider” – Martin Kellermann

The best Junior NATURE image



“Perfect beauty” – Johan Retief

The best Senior NATURE image

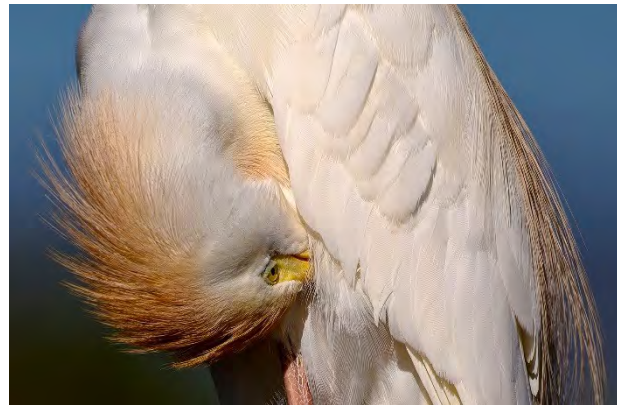


“Laying eggs” – Trix Jonker

High scoring NATURE images



“Harige wese” – Anton la Grange



“Stryk vere reg” – Amanda Whiteman



“I am Queen” – Nellian Bekker



“Kelkiewyn in vlug” – Marianna Erasmus



“Drooling” – Elaine van der Toorn

The best Senior PHOTOGRAPHIC ART image



“Big race to the end” – Evelyn Gibson

NOTE: There were no junior member entries in the Photographic Art category, hence no best image for the month.

High scoring PHOTOGRAPHIC ART images



"Purple Iris" – Kim Roberts



"The warrior" – Luana Laubscher



"The world is her oyster" – Luana Laubscher



"Guided by light" – Scott Ormerod

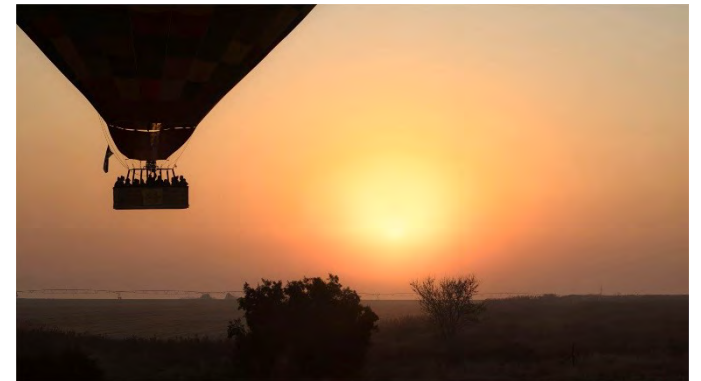
THEME: WISH YOU WERE HERE

Best THEME image

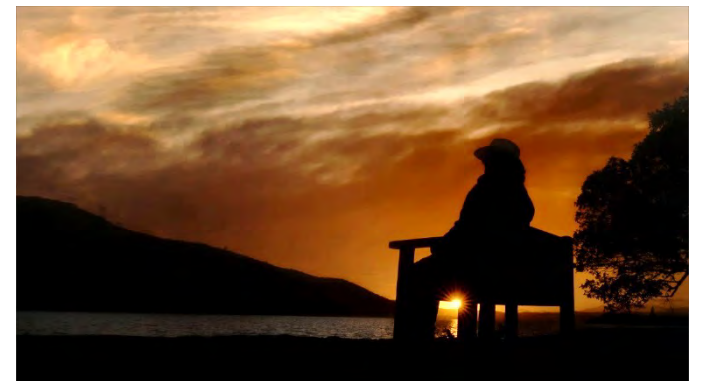


"Missing our times together" – Lynette Neethling

High scoring THEME images



"Come fly with me" – Alan King



"You missed out tonight" – Trix Jonker

High scoring THEME images



“Day in Antarctica” – Johan Retief



“Antarctic mountains” – Schalk Engelbrecht



“Rain bow girl” – Lorraine Blackwell

Many of us “believe”, and it is only a belief, that we need to have clouds in our landscapes otherwise the sky is bland, uninteresting, does not add anything to the top part of the image, i.e. renders the image less than great. No wonder the sky replacement tool works overtime in post-processing. Some of it is fine, but much of it looks artificial, because it is artificial.

But then again, we often find ourselves in a brilliant landscape, which we would love to photograph. There are no clouds however, and there will be none for the foreseeable future either, especially if you find yourself in the Karoo or Namib or Richtersveld. Clouds are very rare in these places, and everybody knows it. Hence cloud replacement here often looks as phony as a twelve Rand note. Now what?

Here is a novel thought: Why not embrace a cloudless sky, make a conscious effort to include it in our composition? We need to get over our preconceived idea that a landscape image MUST have clouds.

To do this well we must be prepared. We should consciously explore possibilities of a cloudless sky in our images on days when we have nothing else to do. Then, when we get to a once-in-a-lifetime landscape and there are no clouds around, we have some experience in getting the most out of that landscape. And here are some possibilities.



The harshness of the central Namibian landscape is emphasised by the cloudless sky – Nikon D800, Nikkor 24-70mm/f2,8

MAKE THE SKY AN IMPORTANT DETAIL

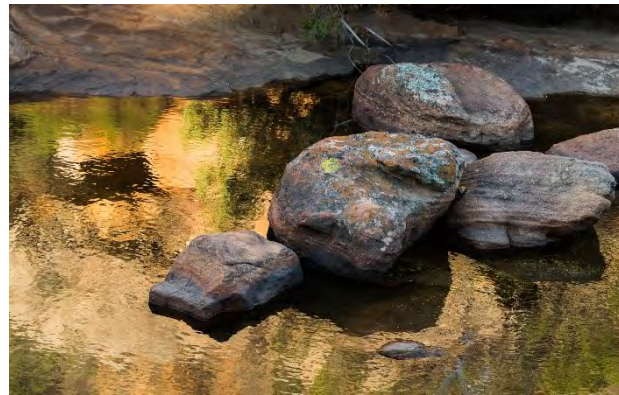
The old saying if you cannot fight them join them is very true for a blue sky. Therefore, make the blue sky an essential part of the composition. If you need inspiration in this regard, consider the concept of negative space as used in the fine arts environment. Artists use negative space to craft balance, proportion,

and visual drama in their compositions. Create a strong statement with a blue sky as empty space in the image.

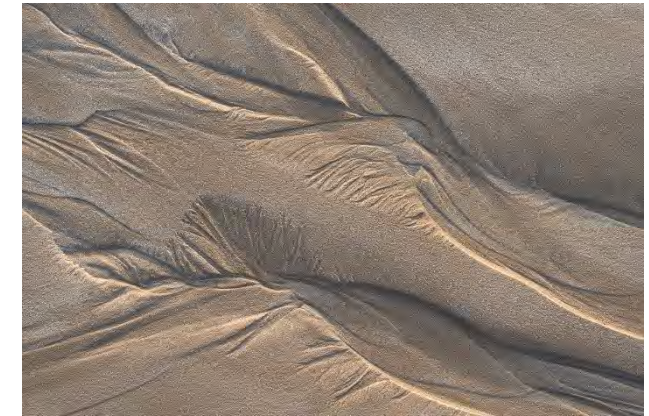
We can think about the colour of an empty sky, a rich azure blue if intensified with a polarizing filter, and use it to balance the opposite warm yellow-brown colours of the landscape. Or, use a large expanse of



Landscape without sky, Kokerboomkloof, Richtersveld
Nikon D800, Nikkor 70-200mm/f4



Close-up landscape with rocks, Gifberg.
Nikon Z7, Nikkor S 24-70mm/f4



Lines and patterns in the sand, Natures Valley.
Nikon Z7, Nikkor S 24-120mm/f4

blue to create tension in the image by having it dominate the smaller landscape elements below.

DISPENSE WITH THE SKY

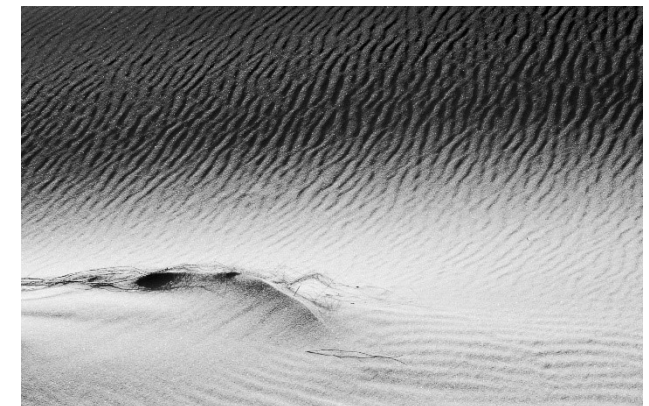
The next option is to dispense with the sky. If it does not add to the image, cut it out! This means that you need to find a composition that includes much more of the foreground if you are shooting with a wide-angle lens. A dominant feature in the foreground can work wonders to create the illusion of depth in your image.

The other possibility is to look for a composition with a telephoto lens. It allows you to pick out a smaller segment of the landscape, without having to include unwanted details like a cloudless sky that may take away from the image.

A third possibility is what has become known as an intimate landscape. Look at the detail in the landscape right in front of you, or below your feet. Get closer, bend down on your knees or sit down, even lie down. Create a close-up landscape without any of the sky but with captivating patterns, texture, and lines.

CONSIDER BLACK AND WHITE

A blue sky often means harsh sunlight that produces strong shadows. In many images this is the death knell for a great image in colour. The contrast range is also often outside the technical capability of our camera sensor and we lose detail in the shadows. Why not convert the image to black and white and use the dark shadows as a part of the composition?



Patterns in the sand, Westcoast National Park.
B&W conversion, Nikon D80, Nikkor 24-70mm/f2.8

If you cannot hide it, render it so prominent that everybody believes this is the way it should be!

Combined with the previous thought of dispensing with the sky, it can lead to dramatic images. You

should not think of the landscape as a depiction of reality, as a photo of the subject. Rather think of what you have in front of your camera in terms of lines, shapes, and textures, making full use of the shadows to create them.

SHOOT BEFORE SUNRISE OR AFTER SUNSET

The golden hour, i.e. the hour after sunrise or before sunset, is the time for great photography because the light is soft and has a warm tint. That is very true. But the hour before sunrise or after sunset is just as great, and sometime even better. And with the sensitivity of modern cameras there is no technical restriction on making use of this fabulous light.

Having a cloudless sky is often even better than one with clouds. The shadows are soft, the quality of the light is special and the range of pastel colours of the sky created by the earth's shadow on its own atmosphere on the horizon is beautiful to behold. This time of day does not last long, maybe ten to fifteen minutes. It can lead to great images, images that you cannot get any other day when there are clouds around.

LOOK FOR THE MOON

A cloudless sky is a great time to extend your after-sunset photography by experimenting with the art of including the moon. Obviously, this can only come about when the moon is nice and bright, i.e. full, or



Gariep River, Richtersveld, early morning before sunrise – Nikon D800, Nikkor 24-70mm/f2,8

nearly full. Including the moon in your images during the day is also possible, but getting the moon standing out against the bright daylight sky is a challenge.

The difficulty to solve in including the moon in your night landscape photography is to get detail in both

the moon and the landscape. Firstly, this is easier to accomplish if the moon is a little higher in the sky to adequately illuminate the landscape. Secondly, the moon surface is much brighter than the landscape, therefore all detail of it will be blown out if you expose the landscape correctly. Hence, you will have

to blend two exposures, one to retain the detail in the moon, and the other for the detail in the landscape if you wish to retain detail of the moon's surface.

You can even take the moon with a telephoto lens to augment the wide-angle lens landscape image. Remember the size of the moon on the sensor is roughly the focal length of the lens divided by 100. A 35mm lens will render the moon only 0,35mm, i.e. very small and insignificant in your image, whereas a 400mm lens will give you at least a moon of 4mm diameter compared to the 24mm height of a full frame sensor.

It is very good if you take them at the same time, and make sure you place the larger image of the moon in its correct place in the image, otherwise the shadows in the landscape will look unnatural.

It is also much more satisfying if you use your own image of the full moon, rather than downloading it from the Internet.

CONCLUSION

I trust that you are inspired to try your hand at landscape photography when there is only a blue sky without any clouds. Do not pack your camera away, there is always something to photograph.



Full moon composite, Kokerboomkloof, Richtersveld. Landscape: Nikon D800, Nikkor 24-70mm/f2,8
Moon: Nikon D500, Nikkor 200-400mm/f4

INSPIRED BY

This article was inspired by the article “*Landscape Photography on a Cloudless Day*” by Spencer Cox published on the *photographylife.com* website, and is gratefully acknowledged.



Midnight Sun, Hekkingen, Norway, June 1950 – A composite of images taken every hour over a period of 24 hours of the midnight sun created a sensation when it was published.

Emil Schulthess was an influential post-war Swiss photographer, globetrotter, and equipment enthusiast. He was an adventurer, always a scientist, but also an artist obsessed by the sun.

EARLY YEARS

Emil Schulthess was born in Zürich, Switzerland in 1913 where his father was a gardener. After completing school, he spent four years as an apprentice doing graphic design from 1928 to 1932. Thereafter he became an intern in the photography classes of the well-known Swiss photography educator Hans Finsler.

Then followed a few years working as a freelance graphic designer until 1937, mainly for the tourist industry. During this time, he visited Paris a few times, where he strengthened his photography which was becoming increasingly important in advertising.

In 1937 Schulthess gave up his freelance business and joined the printing and publishing house Conzett & Huber in Zürich as a corporate graphic designer. When the publishing house founded the *DU* magazine in 1940, Schulthess took over its graphic design, and soon also became its picture editor. In this capacity he had to develop ideas for picture essays for the photographers to pursue. Inevitably, this led to the situation where he set himself photographic tasks for the publishing house.

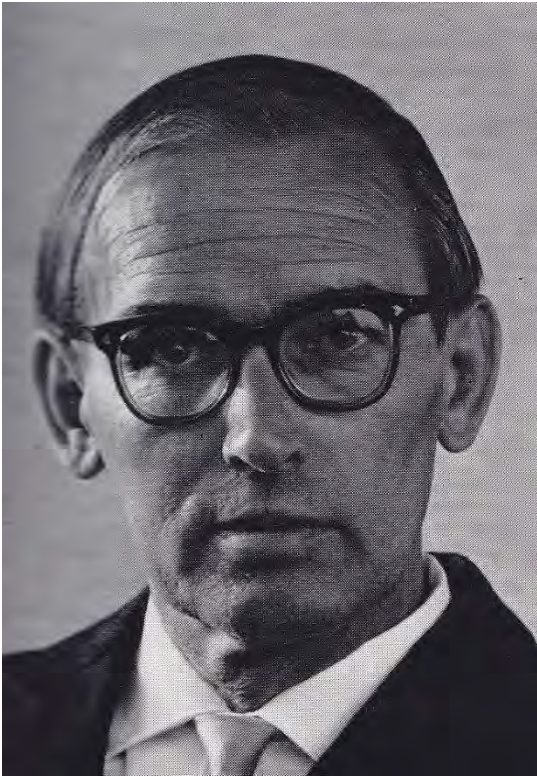
PHOTOGRAPHY YEARS AT “DU”

EUROPE. Just after the war, he accompanied Werner Bischof, another well-known Swiss photographer on a journey through several war-torn European countries. The story “*Europa im Aufbau*” was published in the May 1946 *DU* edition.

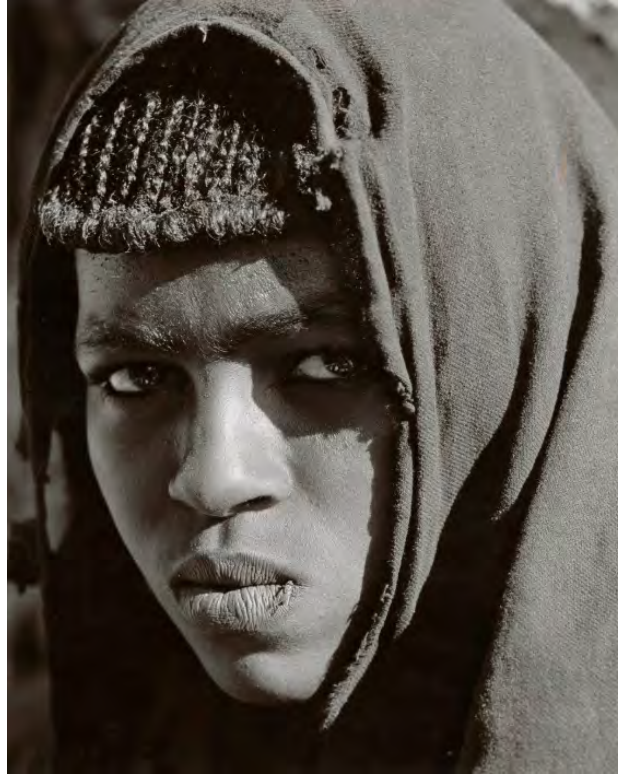
USA. In 1953 he embarked on a six-month visit to the USA on assignment from *DU* together with the

writer Hans Ulrich Meier. They travelled 27 000km by car from New York to the Pacific, and back via the Gulf of Mexico. Their story was put together in the offices of *DU* in New York with Schulthess in attendance. It was enough for five special editions of *DU* in 1954/55. The story and photos were afterwards published as his first book “*Photos einer Reise durch die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika*” in 1955. The 7 500 printed copies were quickly sold out.

AFRICA. A year later, Schulthess and the journalist Otto Lehmann crossed the African continent from Tunis to South Africa in a station wagon. Here Schulthess photographed a ring-shaped eclipse of the sun in the Sahara. Thereafter he focussed on the fauna and flora of Africa, and on the traditional lifestyle of its people. Schulthess explained later: “*We were looking for that other Africa, the Africa that is being pushed into the background, hour by hour, day by*



Emil Schulthess in 1964



Hamite girl in the Hun oasis, Libya, 1955



Byrd traverse party, sun halo, Antarctica, 1958

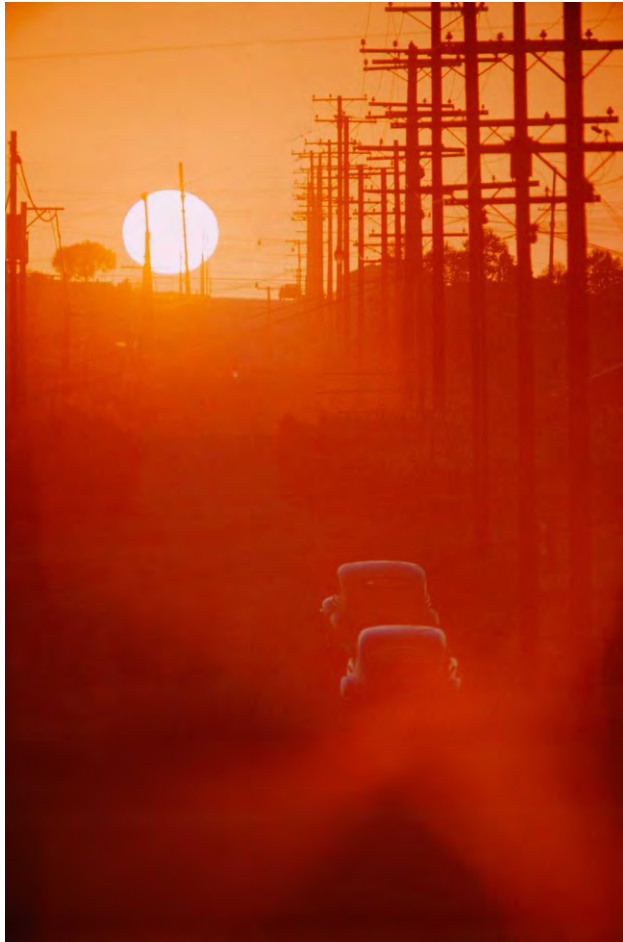
day, as a result of 'development'. This book is dedicated to that Africa, which is why it does not contain the great achievements of the 'white man', his cities, his industrial sites, his particular world."

The story and photos were sufficient for four *DU* special publications, and were later published as two books on Africa. The increased print of 35 000 copies disappeared just as fast from the book store shelves as his USA book.

FREE-LANCING

ANTARCTICA. In 1957 Schulthess resigned from Conzett & Huber, and became a free-lance photographer. The next year the New York agency Black Star enabled him to participate in the US Navy expedition "Deep Freeze IV" to Antarctica, where he spent seven months during 1958/59. He documented life at the research station and participated in the first crossing of Mary Byrd Land.

Christmas 1958 he wrote to his family: "*Various celestial phenomena, so-called 'halos', made me almost dizzy with excitement – moreover, I just never tired of observing or photographing the infinitely varied shapes on the surface of the snow, and fell from one ecstatic state to another as I lay on the ground for hours with terribly cold hands but a happy*



Sunrise, Sepulveda Blvd, Los Angeles, 1953

heart, as I was able to eavesdrop on the most precious things of Mother Nature."

The illustrated book "Antarctica" appeared in 1960 and reached a circulation of 32 000 copies in eleven



Potemkin stairs, Odessa (Ukraine), 1968

languages. This publication, as well as "Amazonas" published in 1962 created quite a stir, as their extremely wide format showcased his images superbly.

CHINA. In the 1960s Schulthess travelled twice to China. In communist China he was interested in photographing modern life, unlike his approach in Africa

a few years earlier. He captured images of industrial sites, scientific establishments, mass rallies organized by the state, as well as life in the rural areas where people were still living in poverty. In this he exasperated his guides, who obviously wanted him to portray only the positive side of the country.

In China Schulthess covered a total of 15 000km by train, 4 000km by plane and 1 300 by boat. The resulting book "China", was published in 1966 with a print of 50 000 copies.

SOVIET UNION. For ever the adventurer, Schulthess travelled seven times to the Soviet Union between 1967 and 1970. He really wanted to get his own impression of this vast country that was fast becoming the "enemy" of the West. Although it was often extremely difficult to gain permission to photograph, he prevailed. All in all, he took about 8 000 photographs from the extreme West to Siberia, from the Polar Circle to Central Asia. He travelled mostly by private car with Oleg Kalentschuk, a Russian journalist, as his companion.

His book *Soviet Union* was published in 1971 with a print of 52 000 copies. The book rapidly became a best seller, and the critics heaped high praise on it because it kept clear of the many clichés that abounded in Western minds regarding the Soviet Union. Schulthess portrayed both the good and the bad of this state-run country.

SWISSAIR CALENDER. Schulthess was the art director of the Swissair calendar for a very long time, from 1951 until 1990. The calendar of the airline always showed aerial photographs, and its consistent design over the years led to its high recognition worldwide. Its initial print of 25 000 copies rose to 300 000 copies by the 1990s.

SUN, MOON AND STARS. Schulthess had a special affinity for the sun and the night sky, and often photographed them wherever he was. In these he made use of the fisheye lens which enabled him to depict the whole expanse of the sky in a single shot. During the preparation for his trips, he would pick ideal spots for sun photographs and would do everything possible to realise them.

For Schulthess it was important to document natural phenomenon. He later wrote *“I always feel committed to the documentary, to truthfulness to nature. I deliberately commit myself to the ‘document’ when it serves to round off what has been stated – even at the risk of the statement having no particular artistic or aesthetic merit. I believe that, basically, we can never outdo nature – it will always have the edge on us and be our model, despite all our highly developed technology.”*

Emil Schulthess died in Zürich in 1996.

PHOTOGRAPHIC STYLE

Schulthess was a technically sophisticated photographer. His images were formally concise and



The Great Wall, China, 1964/65

technically perfect. In his time, he showed the world images never seen before, often taken with equipment he constructed himself.

The 24-exposure series of the midnight sun created in 1950 was the first of these and brought Schulthess world-wide renown. It depicted the S-shaped course of the sun not setting at Hekkingen in northern Norway over a period of 24 hours. He photographed the sun every hour and made a composite of the 24

images whilst retaining the depiction of the landscape. He gained the US Camera Award in 1951 for this image named “Mitternachtssonne” – see the image on the first page header of this article.

On his trip through Africa, he captured a unique image of an annular solar eclipse in the Sahara in 1955. Other unusual images of the sun’s orbit were made at the equator in 1956 and at the South Pole in 1958. We need to remember the state of photographic



Emperor Penguin, Antarctica, 1959

technology of that time to really appreciate what he achieved. With today's sophisticated technologies some of these have become commonplace.

For the 1970 World Exhibition in Osaka, Japan, Schulthess created a 360° panorama of the Alps for the Swiss pavilion. He constructed the equipment, and took the photograph from Dufourspitze, the highest mountain in Switzerland. Later, in cooperation with Hermann Schlüter, a German industrial photographer, and the photo technology company "Seitz Phototechnik" they developed a remote-controlled rotating camera, with which 360° panoramas could be taken. This was used hanging underneath a helicopter for his two-meter-long panorama "Matterhorn" made in 1974. In 1982 several "all round photos" made with this equipment was published in the book "Swiss Panorama".



Fata morgana, Chad, 1955

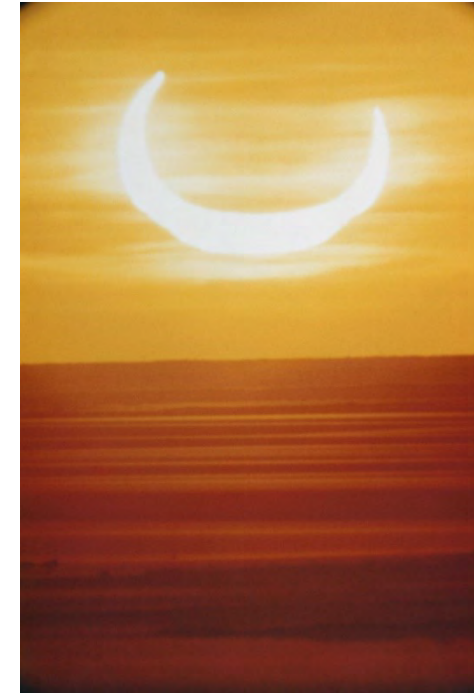
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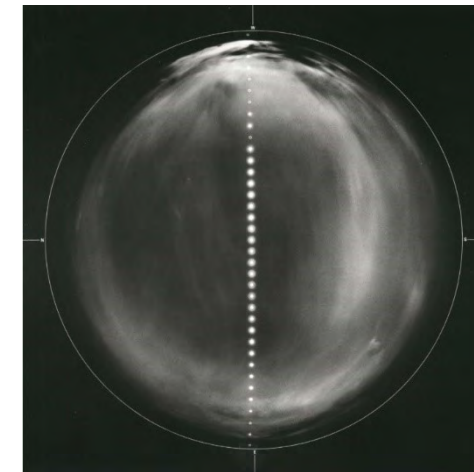
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Annular solar eclipse, Tekro, Chad, 1955



Path of the sun at the equator
Lake George, Uganda, 1956

Multiple exposure image with fish eye lens



Above: Silinghot Elementary School, Inner Mongolia, 1964/65



Above: 1st October Parade, Beijing 1964



Left: Midnight, frozen Ross Sea, 1958

SHOW & TELL: JUDGING PHOTOGRAPHIC ART

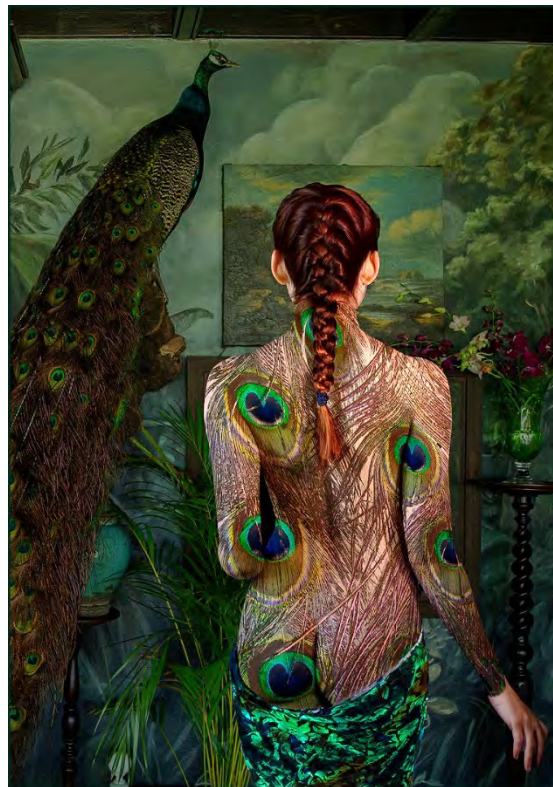
Four of GCC's senior photographers (Daleen Engelbrecht, Luana Laubscher, Olga Schoeman and Scott Ormerod) who do a lot of Art Photography and are also judges gave presentations at this month's Show and Tell evening on their approach to judging the Photographic Art category. It was arranged to be an information session for the judges, but was equally informative for the general membership.

Although their presentations differed in many respects, just like art, there were also many commonalities. All four demonstrated their approach by looking at a variety of photographic art images, some their own, as well as those of others. They scored the images and invited the audience on occasion to do likewise.

The foursome kindly made their presentations available for distribution to all the GCC members.

Daleen

Daleen presented a very organized way in which she approaches judging of Photographic Art. Her schematic approach includes **Impact** (5 points), **Message** (4 points), **Composition** (3 points), **Skill** (2 points)



"Peacock girl" – Daleen Engelbrecht

and **Originality** (1 point). She emphasized that *Impact* is your own personal emotional response. It may include happy responses like humour, joy, empathy, but also negative responses like repulsion, anger, and confusion, or more neutral ones like intrigue or admiration.

The story or the *message* in the image should be discernible, even though it could be on a variety of levels depending on the elements that have been



"A forest nymph" – Scott Ormerod

included in the image. *Composition* is an important part of any image, and there are many guidelines that have not lost any of their significance just because you are looking at photographic art. *Skill* has to do with how well the processing techniques have been handled, and the *originality* of the image speaks for itself.

Daleen also pleaded that you should not judge yourself as a judge too harshly, as we are all still learning, amateurs doing photography for fun. Nevertheless, you should trust your own feelings and opinion, but in judging you should encourage rather than discourage. And if you have not indulged in photographic art, do so – you will learn a lot by doing it. You can start by emulating artists of yesteryear.

Luana

Luana started by making it clear that you are looking at an artistic expression, not a depiction of reality. Very similar to Daleen she considers **Intent**, **Content**, **Story**, **Emotion**, **Imagination**, **Aesthetics**, **Design**, and **Colour** without allocating specific points to each one. She emphasized you should look at what is in the image, not at what is wrong with it – and don't



"Pigeon Pied Piper" – Luana Laubscher

remake the image. The story and emotion of the image are important; its elements should grab your attention and contribute to its success, and they should form a cohesive whole. Its colour palette is important, as is its perspective.

On the technical side, high-end editing skills should add value. Fully understand the various filters available in post-processing apps like neural filters, paint filters, Adamski or Twirl effects. Recognize them and evaluate if their use is creating something of value, or are they just used as a gimmick.



"Sisters from Hades" – Olga Schoeman

Be honest in stating your interpretation and your opinion, and try to explain concisely why the image makes you feel in a certain way. Is there something that is just off? Or are you overwhelmed by its complexity? Is the composition well executed? Importantly however, as a judge, you must leave your likes and dislikes at home.

Luana places a high premium on continuous learning, seeing what the master artists like Picasso, Monet, Man Ray and our own photographic art mavens like Charlene Gerber and Martin Barber are doing. Get to know the various relevant art genres like surrealism, cubism, and the like. Art shows, photographic exhibitions, books, and the Internet are your friends. And finally, recognize the effect colours have on our psyche, and determine whether the

image colours resonate with the story it is trying to convey.

Olga

Olga started with looking at photographic art in two broad categories, namely absolute abstracts, or complex composites. Get to know art and literature on psychology, mythology, philosophy, dream symbols, numerology, and colour values to name a few. It will help you evaluate photographic art. Elements that should inform your judging include **balance**, **colour**, **contrast**, **emphasis**, **focus**, **form**, **lines**, **shapes**, **space**, **texture**, **value**, and **dimensionality**, i.e. classic compositional guiding principles.

Olga also emphasized that you should not think "like" or "dislike". Rather allocate adjectives like *uneasy*, *not pleasing*, *flat* on the negative side, or *stable*, *good*, *harmonious* and *depth* on the positive side to the elements of the image, leading to a holistic evaluation.

Olga concluded by majoring on the surrealism concept, i.e. the image does not need to depict reality, can be irrational by nature. Said she: "*Ja, my koppie raas lekker. Dis gesellig daar.*"

Scott

Scott uses his own approach in creating photographic art images as the basis for judging others. His most important factor is **Impact** – how does it

make him feel as a viewer. Next is the **story** the photographer is trying to convey – is it believable? Thirdly, Scott considers whether the image is **unique**. Lastly, he assesses the **techniques** used to enhance the image and elevate its overall effect.

Scott is not averse to mention elements that could be improved upon, or where technique should be enhanced. He also stressed that the words “*I don’t like*” have no place in judging photographic art. One should always be appreciative of the effort that went into creating an image, even if it still needs to be worked on to elevate it to a higher level.

Summary of commonalities

1. Impact on and emotional response of the viewer are important factors;
2. The narrative, and the cohesiveness of elements used in constructing it, must be discernible;
3. Successful composition, including good use of colour, must be evident;
4. Technical skills supporting the overall construct are important, but their use must not be gimmicky; and
5. The image should be unique.

Remember you are looking at “*art*”, not at a depiction of “*reality*”. Be honest in your interpretation and opinion, but keep away from the words “like” or “dislike”. Finally, keep on learning from the masters, current and those of yesteryear. It will help you to better understand and evaluate photographic art.

Comparison of the four approaches

Daleen	Luana	Olga	Scott
		Absolute abstracts	
		Complex composites	
Impact	Emotion	Impact	Impact
Message	Story	Narrative	Story
	Content		
	Intent		
Originality	Imagination		Uniqueness
Composition	Design	Composition	
	Colour	Colour	
	Aesthetic	Texture, shapes, lines	
		Balance	
		Three dimensionality	
Skill			Technique

NOTE: Grouped in respect of commonalities in approach.

Photographic Art guidance note in the GCC Members Guide.

An image with original photographs as basis on which a range of artistic work and processes that use digital technology as the creative element have been performed (in camera or in post-processing) to create a new and original work of art. In cases of collage and similar visual imagery no outside work other than that of the photographer is allowed. Likewise, using neural or other software filters without any further work is not acceptable, the final creative expression must be that of the photographer.

BALLET ON THE BEACH OUTING



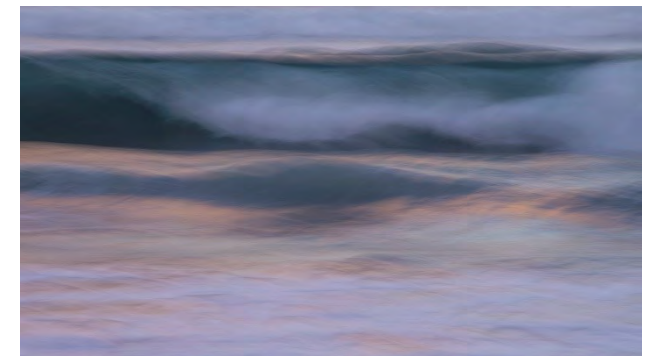
The 15th of February dawned bright and sunny in anticipation of the Ballet shoot. Suiderkruis beach offers a large sandy beach, free of distractions and large enough to accommodate the dog walkers, fishermen and even a crowd of 15 photographers and 5 beautiful ballerinas.

Upon arrival, there were some clouds building, promising a very interesting sky. Elvinia and her Girls were ready to roll. As there were fewer photographers than on previous occasions, it was not necessary to set up shooting stations and so, Daleen gave us carte blanche as to who we photographed and how we wanted to “direct”.

This gave each photographer an opportunity to think of what story to tell, how they wanted to present it, and engage with the Ballerinas in a more interactive way. Having just presented for the Photographic Art session, my mind was still in Art mode and I had many ideas in my head which were itching to be



Luana Laubscher



used. The photographers too were getting into interesting poses. There were 2 costume changes, so this gave a lot of variety.

A huge thank you to Daleen for organizing and of course to Elvinia and especially to her ballerinas (Lydia, Karma, Cuemi, Richelle and Yohke) who posed, jumped, ran, braved the sea - all without a single complaint and with the grace and poise of true ballerinas.

After 2 hours of intense shooting, and with the light fading, the ballerina shoot came to an end. And that’s when the sunset/blue hour came into being. Some of us stayed on, and enjoyed the pinks and the blues that the environment provided. Some creative landscape techniques were attempted after which we all went home. Tired, but happy.

THEMES FOR 2025

GENERAL: All the Themes can be entered as colour or monochrome except for the Monochrome Portrait in September. There are no restrictions on manipulation in any of the themes.

Please take more than a moment to read the guidance notes carefully and apply them consistently. In 2024 we had quite a few Theme images that were disallowed because they transgressed the guidance notes big time. This stressed the judges and led to unhappiness in the member whose image was marked down. I am sure we can get it right in 2025 if all of us take a little care.

JANUARY: At the market

The market can be a very rewarding place to take images of the interaction between people, sellers and buyers. Even the interaction between people and the merchandise on display is fine, or an action by a person in the market place. The important point to remember is that the image must be taken in a market, images inside a shop or similar are not acceptable. Street photography style probably has the best chance of earning high marks.

FEBRUARY: Wish you were here

The image must clearly show an event or a place you are experiencing that caused you to send the photo to your mates, family, or friends, inviting them to be there with you to share your “wow” experience or

moment. Typical of cell-phone images that are sent all over the place by the billions every day. But this one must be special, have mood and/or impact to gain high marks.

MARCH: Motion & emotion

Emotions are reactions that we experience in response to events or situations. Typical emotions are joy, sadness, anger, fear, trust, disgust, surprise, even anticipation. Motion is the change of position of an object with respect to time. A moving vehicle, a book falling off a table, water flowing from a tap, rattling windows, are just a few examples of things exhibiting motion – there are endless examples. In this image the motion of an object must elicit emotion, e.g. a person’s reaction to the thing that is moving. The strength of the interplay between the “motion” and the “emotion” will determine the impact the image has.

APRIL: Rim light

Rim light highlights the edges of your subject by having a light source behind it, aimed toward the camera. This can be used to create images with either a rim-lit subject against a dark background or a well-lit subject with emphasized edges. This lighting highlights the contours of a subject and can create a dramatic or mysterious effect. It can add depth and make the subject stand out. It works best if the edges are interesting, thereby adding to the impact of the image.

MAY: Old building in the landscape

Landscape photography at its best with the added feature of an old building as a strong centre of interest is what this theme is about. An old building on its own, without the landscape is not adequate, the landscape must also feature prominently. High level composition, gorgeous light, sumptuous clouds, attractive lines taking you into and keeping you in the image are elements that will gain you high marks.

JUNE: Macro or close-up patterns in nature

Nature is awash with patterns. The image needs to be a close-up or macro photograph, highlighting the world of the small. Patterns often showcase repetition and texture, even abstract renditions of the same. Exquisite sharpness over the entire frame and clever lighting technique to highlight the patterns are imperatives.

JULY: Shadow

In Dante’s Inferno, prisoners lit by a fire burning on their one side create their shadows on the opposite wall that become their reality of the world. For this theme, the shadow needs to be of similar significance compared to what creates the shadow. It needs to take centre stage; it cannot be a tame shadow of what causes it. Imagination in creating the image will go a long way to a “wow” moment.

AUGUST: Wide angle

Wide angle photography, on the one hand, is about depicting wide vistas on the little square of the camera sensor. On the other hand, using the propensity of the wide angle, especially super wide-angle lens, to enhance any subject in the foreground compared to the background that recedes very rapidly, can lead to an image with high impact if done well – otherwise known as foreshortening. The choice is yours, but the latter approach probably has a better chance to impress.

NOTE 1: If you don't have a super wide-angle lens, stitching five or six portrait orientation images taken with a normal lens can also do it. See the September 2024 GCC Newsletter for examples.

NOTE 2: The August 2024 GCC Newsletter contains two articles on super wide-angle photography.

SEPTEMBER: Monochrome portrait

A portrait can be anything from a full-length portrait to a head shot, maybe even just part of a head, but not only an eye or a mouth or an ear. You must be able to identify the person. The image must be monochrome, any additional colour will lead to its disqualification. It may be toned blue for a colder rendering or sepia for a warmer feel, but split toning is not allowed. In split toning highlights are toned one colour and shadows another to create specific effects, but such images will be disallowed.

OCTOBER: Blue hour

The blue hour is the period of twilight when the sun is still or already below the horizon, and the remaining light takes on a blue shade bathing the subject matter in soft, velvety light. It takes place 20 to 45 minutes before sunrise or after sunset, depending on the location and time of year. The blue hour sets a tranquil mood with its soft lighting; hence your image should depict this clearly. The subject matter is your choice, but landscapes, cityscapes, buildings, monuments, bridges, maybe even portraiture come to mind. Including artificial light sources as a contrasting yellowish colour may add impact to the overall blue of the image.

GEORGE CAMERA CLUB PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME 2025

NOTE: Please take note of the latest changes to the programme as communicated from time to time in the WhatsApp groups.

MONTH	DATE	ACTIVITY	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	THEME	
MARCH	Sat	15	Obie Oberholzer presentation at 12h00 to 16h00	Art Theatre – contact Paul Rixom for info 076 525 0016	Motion & Emotion
	Sat	15	Audio Visual meeting		
	Sun	16	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	25	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
	Sat	29	GCC Outing	Vleesbaai / Fransmanshoek	
APRIL	Tues	8	Show & Tell Meeting – Member image discussion	Alan, Fabiola, Rob, Nellian, Chris, Peter vd Byl	Rim Light
	Sun	13	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	22	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
MAY	Sat	3	GCC Outing	BLUE HOUR at THE TOLLHOUSE – with pancakes & coffee	Old building in the landscape
	Tues	13	Show & Tell Meeting – Member image discussion	Johan Retief, Joggie, Ian, Olga, Paul, Gerhard Dreyer	
	Thu	15	GCC Committee Meeting 5pm		
	Sun	18	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	27	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
JUNE	Sat	7	GCC Outing	TO BE ADVISED	Macro or close-up patterns in nature
	Tues	10	Show & Tell Meeting	TO BE ADVISED	
	Sun	15	Photovault deadline		
	Sat	21	Audio Visual meeting		
	Tues	24	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
JULY			SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (30 June to 21 July)		Shadow
	Sun	13	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	22	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
AUG			PSSA CONGRESS STRUISBAAI 11-15 AUGUST		Wide angle
	Tues	12	Show & Tell Meeting	TO BE ADVISED	
	Thu	21	GCC Committee Meeting 5pm		
	Sun	17	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	26	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
		28	SANDDRIF 28/8 to 4/9 – do your own booking	EARLY BOOKING ABSOLUTE ESSENTIAL	

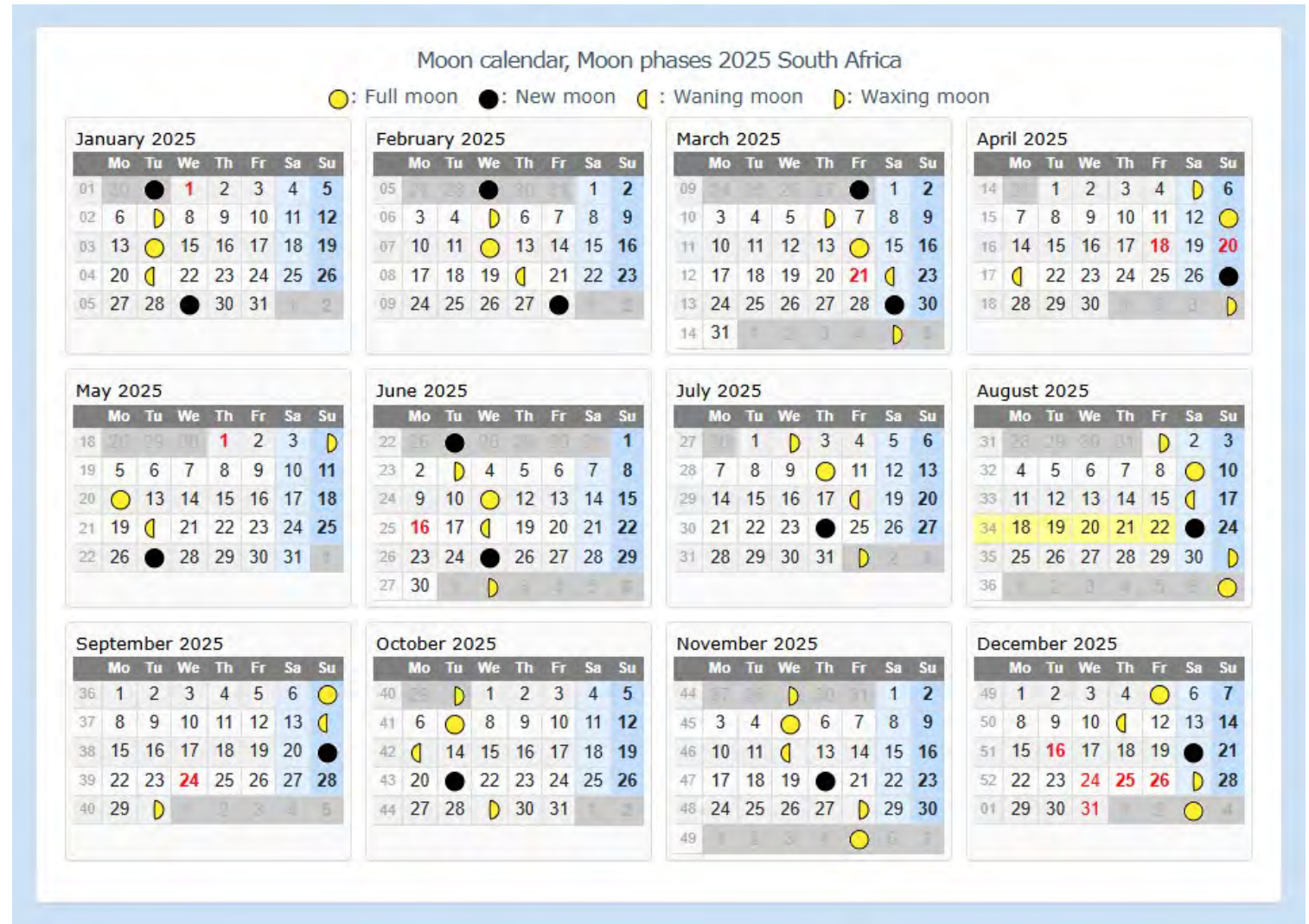
MONTH	DATE	ACTIVITY	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	THEME	
SEPT	Tues	9	Show & Tell Meeting	TO BE ADVISED	Monochrome portrait
	Sat	13	Audio Visual meeting		
	Sun	14	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	23	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
OCT	Sat	11	GCC Outing		Blue hour
	Tues	14	Show & Tell Meeting	TO BE ADVISED	
	Sun	19	Photovault deadline		
	Tues	28	Judging & Learning Meeting 6p.m. for 6:30p.m.	Emmaus	
	Wed	30	End-of-the-Year competition Photovault entry deadline		
NOV	Sat	15	Audio Visual End-of-the-Year function		
	Fri	21	Annual General Meeting and the End-of-the-Year function		
	Thu	27	GCC Committee Meeting 5pm		

STAR PHOTOGRAPHY

Dark moon days are optimal for Milky Way photography. Actual outings are weather dependant. Full moon photography has its own charm. On the right is the calendar for the moon phases in South Africa for 2025.

Please consult latest communications on WhatsApp groups for GCC star photography outings. If part of the GCC group, the number of photographers allowed on an evening is strictly limited, therefore you must arrange with Ben Schoeman (082 466 3983) beforehand if you are interested.

On the other hand, there is nothing stopping you from doing your own thing on star photography. However, always be mindful of the safety situation at your planned destination. Most of the time it is safer to be part of a group.



SALON RESULTS

We have the results of only one salon since our previous newsletter. Not all the members listed compete in salons under the GCC banner, but they are all members of GCC, hence we wish to commend them nevertheless. Congratulations to all who gained acceptances in the most recent salon.

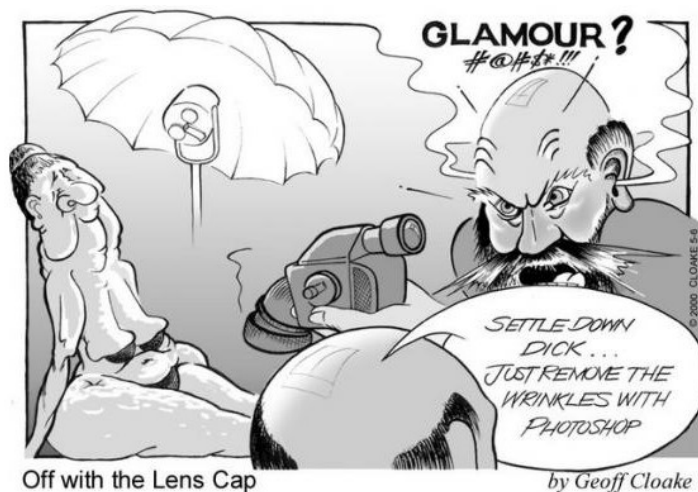
4TH Bethal National Salon

Peter Betts – 1 acceptance

Rob Glenister – 2 acceptances

Elaine van der Toorn – 5 acceptances

Amanda Whiteman – 4 acceptances



PUBLISHING DETAILS

This newsletter is published by the George Camera Club. Whereas every care is taken to ensure that the information contained in it is correct, GCC cannot be held responsible for any unintentional errors. The views expressed by authors in articles are that of the author, and may not reflect the view of GCC. Should you wish to use articles in the newsletter in another publication, please contact the Editor.

Editor: Martin Kellermann

E-mail: georgecameraclub@gmail.com

Cell phone: 083 632 4885