

# PERSPECTIVE

AMBER CAMERA CLUB

SEPTEMBER 2025



*The Rocks*  
*Matt Jackson*





# CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

We had a fun Portraiture Workshop on the 26 July using a range of models, oldies like us, a beautiful young woman and Jenny Kruger's grandchildren. This workshop was at the request of a senior club member which indicates that the committee does listen to members wishes! We used mainly natural light from windows but next year we should aim to use flash and studio lights. Many of us are quite ignorant using artificial light but next year I hope to involve members who are more experienced in studio photography. (You know who you are!)

We also arranged Street Photography on a weekday and a weekend to accommodate those who still work. The municipality has done an excellent job in building stalls and lockup storerooms for street vendors on the road leading down to the Howick Falls. The vendors are very happy to have their photos taken and there are good opportunities here. Put your camera on a tripod and use a slow speed to blur the falling water of the Falls. Something new is the rows of "Love you forever" locks attached to the safety railings with the keys thrown into the gorge. If you are lucky a tourist bus comes by, and we had a school from Underberg. There is a new museum depicting Howick history, much of it dealing with the Concentration Camp of the Anglo Boer war, certainly a sad time. There are no more drunken parties on the village green as no cars are allowed and you walk through a security gate enroute to the Howick Falls.

I advise photographers to station themselves at the pedestrian crossing at the bridge, next to the monument. You can practise your panning technique on the vehicles and there is steady stream of interesting sights. (I will not tell you—go and see for yourself!).

The more adventurous can walk up towards the taxi rank going into a whole new world. Nobody appears to object to you taking pictures, but you can also use your cellphone or maybe hold your camera on your hip, with a wide-angle lens. Snap people without them knowing.

After you are tired you can have tea at Hopewells. And we tried the new tearoom off the old agricultural building, pleasantly under the trees and next to the Museum.

At the request of a 4-star worker, we organised a workshop on "How to prepare your photos for Club and Salons". The question was whether to crop a small bird or leave in its environment. It was decided that it depends on what you wish to achieve. But for club and salons where impact is important, then rather crop and zoom in. Most members are using RAW but some simple programs don't allow you to select the subject to work on it. Or just select the background and manipulate it.

To address these issues, there will be an Affinity Photo workshop on Sunday 31 August at 09:00. Di Hampson and Brian Groenewalt will try to convince us that Affinity Photo is as good as Photoshop. Di is prepared to meet those who cannot attend, individually to explain the program. Because Affinity Photo is relatively cheap in comparison to Photoshop, I suspect that this group will grow especially if people in the group help each other. I have been using photoshop for about 30 years so it will be a big step to ditch it.

I therefore propose to shortly start a Photoshop group doing essentially what Di will be doing with Affinity Photo. There is huge photographic knowledge in the club with Photoshop and Lightroom and I feel that we can all learn from each other. I most certainly trail far behind many other photographers, but I am hoping to pull in experienced users to help new members quickly get to a high standard and not take 30 years to do it!

One can gain a lot of satisfaction helping others and I frankly do not care if they then become better than me, SO THAT IS THE PLAN FOLKS!!

On a different note:

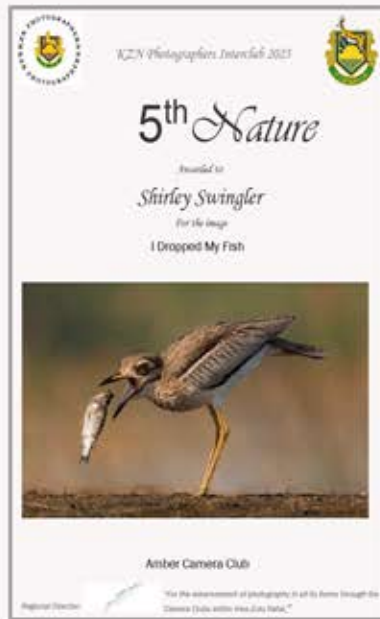
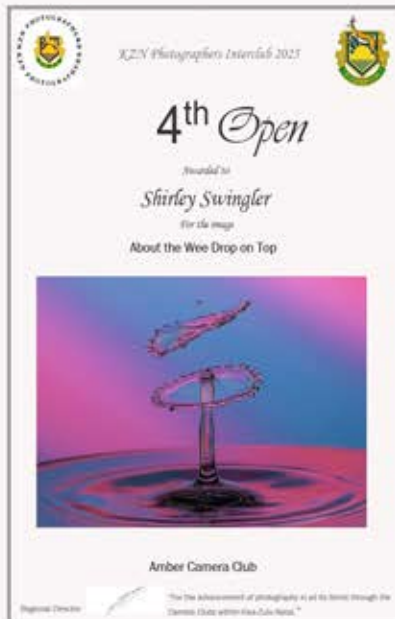
1. We need a new Newsletter Editor. We cannot allow the newsletter to die after having had one ever since the start of the club! I have tasked Rose Douglas to find someone who has an artistic bent, does not like dealing with people but enjoys a job well done. And nobody will tell you what to do—You will be your own man or woman!
2. We need an outing organiser to work with Di Hampson who comes up with lots of ideas. Dave Mullin is the dedicated outing organiser for Antrim club, a system that clearly works. The ideal person is someone who always comes on outings. Hey, you can organise stuff that you like!!!
3. The Shirley and Chris Swingler have pointed out to me that there is a section on the PSSA Website called "Recently Published". Just scroll down on the home page and you find it. There is information about who is doing well on the Impala Trophy and wow do you see some great pictures.



Happy Snapping  
Mark Preston-Whyte



# CONGRATULATIONS SHIRLEY SWINGLER



Shirley placed 9th out of 644  
PSSA members in the 2025  
Impala Trophy.



TAFklub Silver Medal - Nature - No Birds -  
Freddy - Shirley Swingler - Amber Camera Club

# **WELCOME**

## **PROMOTIONS**

**Congratulations to:  
Andy Rice 4 Star to 5 Star**

### **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.



The Amber Camera Club is proudly affiliated with the

**Photographic  
Society of South Africa**

[www.pssa.co.za](http://www.pssa.co.za)

# 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: Mark Preston-Whyte 082 564 0729

Secretary: Sue Grills 073 571 4971

Competition Steward: Jenny Kruger 082 871 1782

Treasurer: Biddy Jung 072 259 3809

Membership: Helga Holst 076 816 6454

Editor: Rose Douglas 076 402 6020

Tea: Gill Ainslie 083 789 2642/Penny Shaw 082 564 3144

E-mail: [ambercameraclub@gmail.com](mailto:ambercameraclub@gmail.com)



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# **AUGUST CLUB COMPETITION**

## **This month's JUDGES**

**Vivian Murray - Boksburg Camera Club**

**Theo van der Merwe - Boksburg Camera Club**



**Judges' Choice  
Junior**

**Durban wall artist  
Iain Kerr**



**Judges' Choice  
Senior**

**The Rocks - Matt Jackson**

# **AUGUST CLUB COMPETITION**

**SET SUBJECT - OLD (PEOPLE, THINGS, ANIMALS)**



**Judges' Choice  
Junior**

**Happy car guard  
Iain Kerr**

**Judges' Choice  
Senior**



**Bygone era  
Christine Theron**

# **2025 CLUB COMPETITIONS**

## **SET SUBJECTS**

**JANUARY - MIST/FOG closes 1ST JANUARY**

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

**MARCH - NATURALLY FRAMED closes 1st March**

**APRIL - LOOKING DOWN closes 1st April**

**MAY - REFLECTIONS closes 1st May**

**JUNE - SERENITY closes 1st June**

**JULY - EYES CLOSES 1st July**

**AUGUST - OLD (PEOPLE, THINGS, ANIMALS) CLOSES 1st August**

**SEPTEMBER - PET PORTRAIT closes 1st September**

**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 2025/2026

## Calendar for year ending June 2026

No	Club	Salon Name	Closing Date
1	Amber Camera Club	Amber Camera Club 2nd International AV Salon	2025/07/01
2	Witzenberg Photographic Society	5th Witzenberg Photographic Society Digital Print Salon 2025	2025/07/05
3	Edenvale Photographic Club	9th Danube Summer Circuit 2025	2025/07/15
4	Edenvale Photographic Club	8th Edenvale National Digital Salon, 75th Anniversary	2025/07/19
5	National Photographic Club (NPC)	30th Birthday Celebration Salon NPC	2025/08/02
6	PSSA Up and Coming	28th PSSA UP and COMING National Salon 2025	2025/08/09
7	Sandton Photographic Society	Sandton 10th National Digital Salon	2025/08/16
8	Durban Camera Club	3rd Durban Camera Club Digital Salon	2025/08/30
9	PSSA Salon	6th PSSA YOUTH National Salon 2025	2025/09/06
10	Witzenberg PS, CTPS, Swartland FK	Western Cape Print Circuit (Three Regions)	2025/09/06
11	Bloemfontein Camera Club	Bloemfontein CC Salon 2025	2025/09/13
12	Camera Club of Johannesburg	Camera Club of Johannesburg 90th Anniversary	2025/09/27
13	Kroonstad Fotoklub	2nd Kroonstad Fotoklub Life in Monochrome PDI Salon	2025/10/11
14	Rustenburg Photographic Society	7th Rustenburg National Digital Salon	2025/10/25
15	F Stop Photographic Society	2nd F Stop	2025/11/08
16	Vanderbijlparkse Fotografiese Vereniging	7th Vanderbijlparkse Fotografiese Vereniging National Digital Salon	2025/11/15
17	Brandpunt Fotoklub	7de Brandpunt Fotoklub Nasionale Salon	2026/01/10
18	Bethal Fotografieklub	5th Bethal PDI Salon	2026/01/17
19	Swartland Fotografieklub	10th Swartland PDI and Print Salon	2026/01/31
20	Highway Camera Club	2nd Highway Salon	2026/02/07
21	Ermelo Fotoklub	Ermelo Fotoklub 5th National Digital Salon	2026/02/21
22	AFO Fotografieklub	14th National AFO Salon 2026	2026/03/07
23	PSSA Up and Coming	29th PSSA UP and COMING National Salon 2025	2026/03/14
24	South African Visual Arts Society (SAVAS)	SAVAS 4th Digital Salon 2025	2026/03/21
25	PSSA Salon	PSSA International Salon of Photography 2026	2026/03/28
26	Worcester Fotografieklub	Worcester FK 2de Nasionale Salon	2026/04/04
27	Boksburg Camera Club	8th Boksburg National Digital Salon - PDI	2026/04/11
28	Hibiscus Coast Photographic Society	7th HCPS National Digital Salon	2026/04/18
29	Tafelberg Fotografie Klub	TAF Klub Print & PDI Salon 2026	2026/05/02
30	Kosmos Fotografie Klub	4th Kosmos Fotografie Klub Salon	2026/05/16
31	Magalies Foto Fun Club	10 th MFFC DPI Salon	2026/05/30
32	Scottburgh Camera Club	SCC 1ST NATIONAL DIGITAL SALON	2026/06/13
33	Northern Gauteng Region	3rd SANParks Honorary Rangers Pretoria Region PDI Salon 2025	2026/06/27

# 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 - Closes Mid March  
April - Delicate flower - Closes Mid April  
May - Artistic Hands - Closes Mid May  
June - Frozen - Closes Mid June  
July - Sport - Closes Mid July  
August - Pathways in Forests - Closes Mid August  
September - Lost in Time - Closes Mid September  
October - Natures Power

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



# ACC North VS ACC South

*(The serious friendly interclub event)*

## CATEGORIES

- a) **Scapes** (Colour or Mono) – All types - Land, Sea, City, Astral, etc. *Digital manipulation allowed.*
- b) **Nature** - (Colour or Mono) includes Wildlife, subset of Nature. ***No Digital manipulation allowed***  
  
(Rules as per current PSA/FIAP/RPS/PSSA standards)
- c) **Creative** (Colour or Mono). *Digital manipulation allowed.*
- d) **Open Mono or Colour.** *Digital manipulation allowed.*

## TIMELINE

1. Event opens on 1 June
2. Member's Image submissions to club for selection close on November 30 2025
3. Club selection of images and uploading to Photovaultonline by 31 Jan 2026
4. PVO Image & Scoresheet links sent to both Judges for download @ earliest time after closure
5. Judging completed by end Feb 2026

## RULES for ENTRIES

1. Standard sized for PVO - 1920 x 1080px, 2Mb
2. No time limitations on date of Image capture
3. 10 Images per Category from each club – ie 40 in total
4. Max 2 Images in any Category allowed from one author
5. No AI generated Images or parts thereof allowed in any category as per PSSA/NIPA rules
6. All components of an Image must be the author's own work.

## JUDGING

1. One qualified independent Judge to be nominated by each club
2. Images to be scored out of 15 points
3. Top three Images in each Category to be selected by the Judges – ie 12 Images
4. Top three Images Overall to be selected from the 12 Images above for Best in Comp
5. Images that score 26 or higher to be awarded COM/HM's

# THE MAMBA CHALLENGE

**2025**



**Full editing / creativity allowed. Colour or Mono.**

**All elements must be the photographers own work**

**Date Limitation: Photos must be dates from 1 June 2025**



**"EYES"**





# WINTER WONDERLAND

Winter wonderland photography involves capturing the beauty and atmosphere of winter scenes, often featuring snow, ice, and festive elements. Key aspects include managing exposure in snowy conditions, utilizing colour and light for dramatic effects, and incorporating elements like people or negative space to add interest and scale.

Tips for Winter Wonderland Photography:

- **Exposure:**  
Snow reflects a lot of light, which can lead to underexposed images. Use positive exposure compensation or check your histogram to ensure proper exposure.
- **White Balance:**  
Cool white balance can enhance the feeling of coldness in your photos. Experiment with different white balance settings to find what works best for your scene.
- **Colour:**  
Use bright colours like red or orange to add contrast and visual interest to your snowy scenes.
- **Composition:**  
Incorporate elements like people, trees, or negative space to create a sense of scale and depth.
- **Lighting:**  
The "blue hour" (shortly after sunset or before sunrise) can offer beautiful, soft light for winter landscapes.
- **Mood:**  
Consider the mood you want to convey. Do you want to emphasize the beauty, the cold, or the festive atmosphere?
- **Safety:**  
Be mindful of the conditions and dress appropriately. Be aware of slippery surfaces and potential hazards when photographing outdoors.
- **Festive Elements:**  
Winter wonderlands often include Christmas markets, ice skating rinks, and other festive attractions that can be incorporated into your photography.

# TUTORIALS

## WE CARRY ON FROM LAST MONTH..

### 4) MOOD

The term Mood is a nebulous generalization for the overall feeling that a picture provokes. As difficult as it is to explain, it is even more challenging to consistently capture mood in a picture. Content, colour, lighting, key and contrast all play a part in altering the mood in the final image.

We capture mood by carefully considering: -

Subject choice

Key

Colour of Light

Quality of Light

Light direction

Contrast

Mood is all about emotion. It's about matching subjects to sentiment. Mood is ultimately driven by the photographer's inner feelings and attitude. As silly as it sounds, often we are unable to describe the reason for liking or disliking an image. It just feels right, or, wrong. This feeling is usually driven by mood.

If strong colour is used in an image and at the same time it strikes a sympathetic chord in the viewer, it can be the very essence of the picture.

### THE MAGIC OF COLOUR

If you are confident and make good use of it, colour can by far be the most powerful element in the photograph. It can be immediately striking or delicate and subtle. We respond to colour in a complex way that goes beyond a simple visual response.

Colour affects our life.

Colour is physical – We see it.

Colour communicates – we receive information from the language of colour.

Colour is emotional – It evokes our feelings.

### Defining colour

So-called "white light" is made up of 3 primary colours: - Red, Green and Blue. When these are combined (added together) in various proportions, they produce virtually all other colours of the spectrum. Red, Green and Blue are therefore called additive primaries.

Besides these 3 additives primary colours, there are the 3 subtractive primaries, also called secondary colours – that are formed by mixing any 2 of the 3 primaries. These are Magenta, Yellow and Cyan.



# TUTORIALS

Following on from this, mixing an additive primary colour with a specific subtractive primary will also give white light. The specific subtractive primary referred to above is known as the complimentary colour of the additive primary.

The colour chart shows that: -

Red is complimentary to Cyan

Blue is complimentary to Yellow

Green is complimentary to Magenta.

2 colours are considered to be complimentary when added together produce white light. For example, if you combine the subtractive primary of magenta (red/Blue) with the additive primary green (its complimentary colour) the result is white light.

Therefore, white light is the result of mixing either 2 complimentary colours OR 3 additives primary colours. (It is obviously easier to work with 2 instead of 3 colours).

So, what has this to do with photography? Surely you really have no control over the colour content of the subject and have to use it as you find it?

Obviously, this is not so. You can have, or exercise, complete colour control over the subject matter being photographed. You achieve this with the judicious use of filters and/or artificial light plus your understanding of the psychology of colour and the various hues as described hereunder. The opposing relationship between complimentary colours extends to aesthetics because these colours are also the most likely to clash when used together, in fashion, for example.

## **The Qualities of Colours**

The quality of colour is defined in terms of hue, brilliance and saturation.

**Hue** (technically the correct name for colour)

This is the prime quality of a colour and is that which gives colour to its uniqueness. A photographer can influence a hue by using a different colour of light. For example, by waiting for the orange colour cast of sunsets instead of the white light of the midday sun. Or by using a coloured filter over the lens. However, remember it is only possible to change the overall hue, not that of the individual objects.

## **Brilliance or Value**

This is the brightness or darkness of colour. White and black are the extremes of this scale. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish brilliance from saturation, but it may help to remember that in varieties of brilliance, the hue remains pure and unadulterated. The actual range of lightness and darkness differs between hues and this causes difficulties in matching the brilliance where the photographer demands it. For example, Yellow can only vary between a medium tone and very light. There is no such thing as, pure dark yellow. Red becomes pink when very light and so loses its main quality. Blue, however covers the whole range. Orange

# TUTORIALS

does not have pure dark versions because of its closeness to yellow. Greens can be quite dark or light because of its closeness to blue.

## **Saturation or Brightness**

Saturation is a variation in the purity of the hue. At one end of the scale are the pure, intense colours of the colour circle. As they become less saturated (eg by overexposing), they become greyer, less colourful and dirtier looking. Colours also become unsaturated when they are mixed with white, grey, or their opposite colours on the wheel. Where saturated colours are mixed with White or black, the resultant colours are called TINTS (of white) and SHADES (of black) For example, pink is a tint of red and white. Burgundy is a shade of red and black.

Although this is of no immediate practical concern to the photographer, it has a direct bearing on his material. Photographic subjects are things found rather than built by photographers and it is unadulterated or broken colours that are found in nature. Greys, browns and dull colours predominate and it is for this reason that the occasional pure "brilliant" colour is prized and made the centre of interest in the image.

Modern colour films are available in varying degrees of saturation. Some are made to accentuate colours like Kodak VS and Fuji Velvia. Others are made to give neutral colour results. These are choices the photographer needs to make before shooting. There is not a single camera setting for all occasions.

## **The Psychology of colour**

To quote Johannes Itten, a famous teacher of the art of colour, "colours have a mystical capacity for spiritual expression, without being tied to objects". In other words, you can make colour the reason and the subject of a picture.

Monet called colour "The Inner Force".

The language it speaks is directly related to the culture and society wherein we spent our formative years. It is an interesting fact that colours do mean different things to different cultures. For example, White is considered a sad colour in China. One can only imagine what they think when they are shown photographs of a western bride dressed in white!

Colour works on 3 levels. Sometimes we respond to all 3 at once, at other times just to 1 or 2. These are: -

### **Visual**

This is the immediate obvious level. We identify the colour without further information being received.

### **Expressive**

This is the emotional level, evolving sensations that are often subjective and non-visual. For example, anger, heat.



# TUTORIALS

## Symbolic

This is the cultural level where certain colours and combinations are associated with things we or society have been conditioned to accept.

Studying and understanding the powerful message that colour sends out, and using it correctly, will help you to create powerful images to evoke responses from the viewer. Understanding the personality of each of the primary colours (red, blue and green) and the secondary and tertiary colours formed from them, lays the foundation for exploiting the wide range of colour relationship in photography.

Now for a more detailed study of selected colour.

## BLUE

Blue recedes visually, being much quieter and less active than Red. Of the 3 primary colours, it is the darkest and has its greatest strength when deep. It has a transparency that contrasts well with red's opacity.

### Visually

It has a hue that many have difficulty in identifying because of the wide range of brilliance and saturation. Therefore, identifying a pure, true blue is difficult. Indeed, the hunt for a "true blue" hue is an ongoing and fascinating exercise conducted by colour scientists. Such a hue was introduced to the industry at the beginning of 2004 but received a response! Nonetheless, it is the easiest of true colours to find photographically simply because of its predominance in nature.

### Expressively

Blue, above all, is cool. Used in any scene, it produces the sensation that the actual temperature is lower than it is. It causes your brain to release tranquilizing hormones, calming the nerves, relaxing the mind, which makes it an excellent colour for, say, a dentist's office. It also causes people to think that the food tastes bad, so try putting a blue globe in your fridge if you are dieting.

### Symbolically

Blue has associations of intangibility and passivity, suggesting a withdrawn, reflective mood: the "moody blues", "feeling blue", etc. the primary symbolism of blue derives from 2 most widespread occurrences in nature, the sky and water.

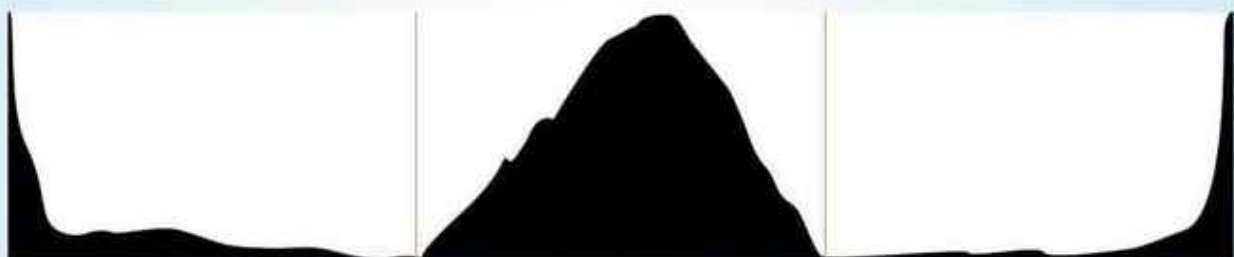
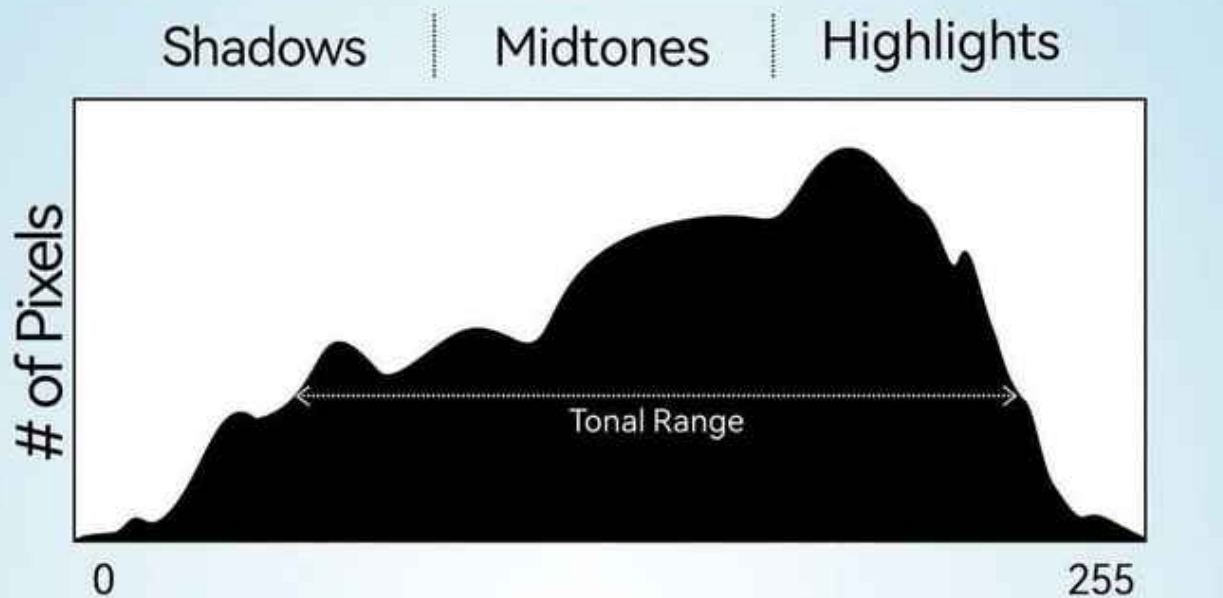
## RED

### Visually

It is one of the most insistent, powerful colours and immediately attracts attention. When set against cooler colours, green in particular, red advances towards the viewer. It has considerable kinetic energy that produces strong vibration effects against other colours. Red is fairly abundant in nature, for example, flowers, sunsets, burning embers etc. It is also popular as a paint finish on buildings, display signs and so forth.

# A LITTLE SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

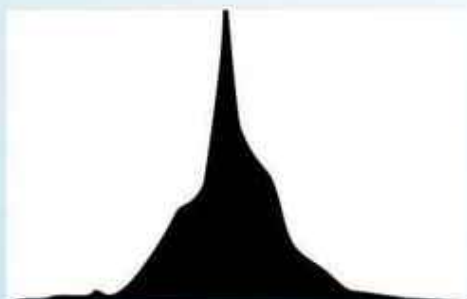
## HOW TO READ HISTOGRAM



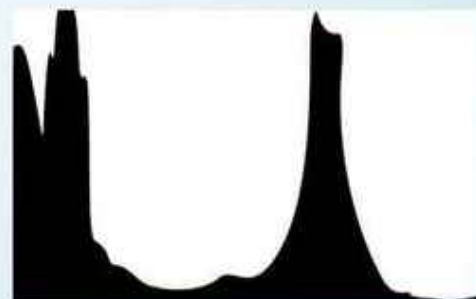
Underexposed

Properly exposed

Overexposed



Low Contrast



High Contrast



# USING FOCAL POINTS IN PHOTOGRAPHY

## Using Focal Points in Photography

Next time you take your digital camera out and line it up for a shot pause before you press the shutter button and ask yourself:

**“What is the Focal Point in this Picture?”**

Some other ways to ask the same question might include – What is the central point of interest? What will draw the eye of the viewers of this picture? What in this image will make it stand out from others? What is my subject?

The reason a focal point is important is that when you look at an image your eye will generally need a ‘resting place’ or something of interest to really hold it. Without it you’ll find people will simply glance at your shots and then move on to the next one.

Once you’ve identified a point of interest or focal point you then should ask yourself how you can enhance it.

## 6 Techniques to Enhance the Focal Point in an Image

A focal point can be virtually anything ranging from a person, to a building, to a mountain, to a flower etc. Obviously the more interesting the focal point the better – but there are other things you can do to enhance its power including but certainly not limited to:

- **Position** – Place it in a prominent position – you might want to start with the rule of thirds for some ideas.
- **Focus** – Learn to use Depth of Field to blur out other aspects in front or behind your focal point.
- **Blur** – If you really want to get tricky you might want to play with slower shutter speeds if your main subject is still and things around it are moving.
- **Size** – making your focal point large is not the only way to make it prominent – but it definitely can help.
- **Colour** – using contrasting colours can also be a way of setting your point of interest apart from its surroundings.
- **Shape** – similarly contrasting shapes and textures can make a subject stand out – especially patterns that are repeated around a subject.

Keep in mind that a combination of above elements can work well together.

Lastly – don’t confuse the viewer with too many competing focal points which might overwhelm the main focal point. Secondary points of interest can be helpful to lead the eye but too many strong ones will just clutter and confuse.

# MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY - 10 TIPS

## Tip 1:

Shoot During the Golden Hours for the Best Light Macro photography is all about the light.

Because amazing light makes for amazing photos.

And the best light out there? Golden-hour light.

You see, the golden hours are the two hours just after sunrise and the two hours just before sunset. During this time, the sun is low in the sky—and it casts a soft, golden glow over the landscape. And that golden glow is perfect for macro photography. It'll make your photos look gorgeous. So, get out during the golden hours. That's when you'll capture some amazing macro photos.



## Tip 2:

For a More Subtle Look, Shoot on Cloudy Days The golden hours are amazing for macro photography. They practically guarantee you stunning photos.

But what if the weather doesn't cooperate? Can you still take beautiful macro photos? While not all types of light are good for macro photography, here's another great option: Cloudy light.

You see, clouds diffuse the light. They make it softer. More subtle. Cloudy light isn't quite as great as golden-hour light. But it's still pretty nice.

In fact, one of the great things about cloudy light is how it enhances colours. The soft light makes colours appear more saturated—and this is fantastic for macro flower photography, in particular.

## Tip 3:

Include a Standout Subject in the Frame.

Composition refers to the arrangement of elements in a photo. And if you want truly impressive macro photos, you've got to compose your shots carefully. One of the first rules of macro composition? Include a main subject. You see, the main subject is what anchors your photo. It's what draws the viewer in, and keeps them interested.

So, here's what you do: Once you've found a scene to photograph, ask yourself:

What is it that draws me to this area? Maybe it's a beautiful flower. Maybe it's a stunning leaf. Maybe it's an interesting insect. Whatever it is... That's your main subject.

And you should do everything that you can to emphasize that subject. Make it large within the frame. Make sure it's sharp. If you can, remove anything that might take away from the main subject. For instance, keep stray leaves and branches out of the background. Emphasize your main subject, and your shot will be powerful. And speaking of emphasizing the subject...



# MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY - 10 TIPS

## **Tip 4:**

Include a Non-Distracting Background to Draw Attention to the Subject It might seem a bit strange... But in macro photography, the background is just as important as the main subject.

Here's why: The background is what makes your main subject stand out. A distracting background will distract the viewer, and will ruin the whole photo. In fact, the best backgrounds enhance the main subject. They complement the subject in some way—by offering a smooth texture, or a beautiful wash of colour. How do you create a beautiful background? First, find an area behind your subject that doesn't stand out. Something that's fairly even and generally uniform in colour. For instance, I often like to use leafy trees in my backgrounds, because the green makes for a nice wash of colour.

Second, you maximize the distance between your subject and the background. That is, you want there to be a lot of space between the focal point of your image and the background. This is because you want the blurriest background possible. And the farther your background, the blurrier it will be. Finally, you use a wide aperture—something in the f/2.8 to f/5.6 range. The wider the aperture, the stronger the background blur. And the stronger the background blur, the better the background will look!

## **Tip 5:**

Position Your Main Subject Using the Rule of Thirds The rule of thirds is a basic composition principle in photography. It states that the main elements of your photo should be positioned a third of the way into the frame. That is, the main elements of your photo should sit along these gridlines:

So, whenever possible, you should do this with your macro photography. Don't position your subject randomly in the frame, and don't position your subject in the dead centre of the image.

Instead, place your subject along a rule of thirds gridline. If you can put your subject at the intersection of two gridlines (called 'power points') you can make the composition even better.



## **Tip 6:**

Use Leading Lines to Draw Attention to the Subject.

Here's another composition principle. It states that, in order to emphasize your main subject, you should use leading lines. (Leading lines are lines that direct the eye around the frame.) Specifically, you should find lines within your scene—and use them to direct the viewer toward the main subject. A leading line can be anything: a tree branch, a flower petal, a flower stem, etc. The important thing is that it points toward your main subject.

# MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY - 10 TIPS

So, here's what I recommend: Once you've found a main subject and a nice background, look around the scene. Do you see anything remotely line-like?

If so, try and incorporate it within the composition! A leading line or two can go a long way.

## **Tip 7:** Get as Close as Possible for More Creative Macro Images.

Macro photography involves getting close. And the closer you get... The more interesting your photos will become.

In fact, close macro photos show the world in a whole new way—which can be really, really captivating. So, I suggest trying out all of the lenses that you have. See which focuses closest. (Note: You don't need a dedicated macro lens for this. Plenty of lenses focus close enough for good macro images.) Once you've found a close-focusing lens, I recommend shooting at several levels.

Here's what I mean: First, take a photo of your subject from a distance away. Try to capture the subject as a whole—so that the viewer gets a sense of the subject and a bit of its environment. Then get closer. Take a photo that shows your subject without any surroundings. Use elements of the subject as composition features. For instance, I used the petals in this flower to direct the viewer through the frame: Third, take an abstract photo of your subject. This involves going even closer—and using individual elements of your subject as the focal point.

## **Tip 8:**

Experiment With as Many Angles as Possible One way to capture original macro photos is to get closer and shoot abstracts.

But another way to capture original macro photos.....is to find interesting angles.

It's easy to approach your subject and take a snapshot from above. But macro photography is about seeing beyond the surface. So, here's what I recommend:

Start by approaching your subject from standing height. Take a photo or two. And then? Change things up. Get down on a level with your subject. Take a few shots this way—they'll turn out much more intimate. Then get even lower. Take some shots while lying flat against the ground. Show a completely new side of your subject.

Hopefully, you get the idea. The point is to try different things. There's no one best angle.

## **Tip 9:**

Don't Get Stuck Shooting the Same Subject One of the great things about macro photography is that you can always find new shots even within the same subject. Because you can always get closer, you can always try new angles, you can even try creative techniques. That said, you don't want to shoot the same subject all the time. Too much of the same subject may send you into a creative rut, where you start taking the same type of photo over and over again.



# MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY - 10 TIPS

## Tip 10:

Add a Touch of Post-Processing to Enhance Your Image.

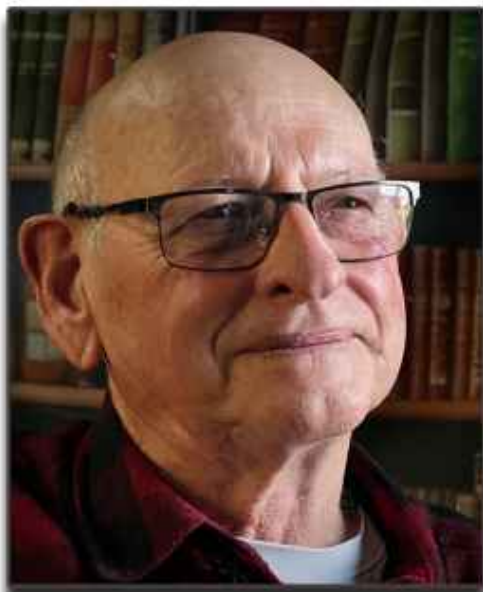
I recommend using a slight bit of editing—simply to enhance aspects of your photo that already exist. I make two edits pretty regularly, and I suggest that you do, too. First, I boost the contrast a bit. This helps macro photos pop off the page more, and it amplifies detail.

Second, I increase the vibrance or saturation a small amount. This enhances the colours of the image—without making them look unnatural. So do a bit of editing. But be careful. Because it's easy to overedit, and completely lose touch with the original image.



# PORTRAIT WORKSHOP

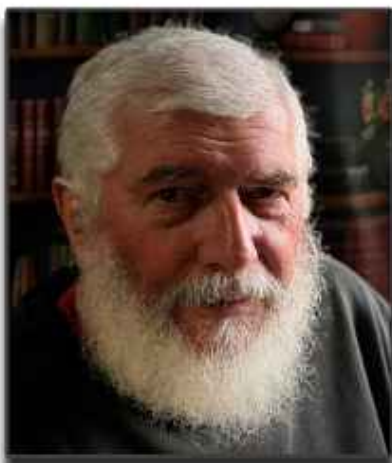
Some of the images taken by our members at the workshop.  
Great fun was had by all.





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Some of the images taken by our members at the workshop.  
Great fun was had by all.



**LET'S NOT FORGET!!**

**MONTHLY MEETING - 16th September @1830**

Our speaker - Francois Roux

He will be speaking on salon and AI Rules

**MIDLANDS MEANDER COMPETITION**

Closing date Mid September

Lost in time

**MONTHLY COMPETITION**

Closing date 1st September

**SET SUBJECT: Pet Portraits**

**MAMBA CHALLENGE**

Closing date 31st October

**EYES**

**ACC NORTH VS ACC SOUTH**

Closing date 30th November

