

CAPE CAMERA

July/August 2020



Official Newsletter

CAPE TOWN PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

CAPE CAMERA

WHAT'S INSIDE

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On the cover

The front cover image *Lake Turkana boy herder* by Roger Trythall was one of the high-scoring images in our August Competition.

"I had been told about Lake Turkana by friends who lived in Kenya some years ago, but it was the prospectus of Oryx Tours and the team leader Kirsten Frost (with whom I had previously visited Ethiopia) that caught my attention. The annual migration of thousands of flamingos to Lake Turkana, the world's largest alkaline lake with the striking colour of Jade, was going to be one of the highlights of the trip. Unfortunately, during the time of our visit they were not in the area, except on the last day when a flock landed some distance from our camp.

We visited a few villages that consisted of a scattering of huts made from mud and local vegetation. We photographed the indigenous people who were herders of goats or camels and chatted with the elders in their tribal outfits, when we spotted this young man just on the outskirts of the village on a small hillock. His headdress made an interesting composition against a beautiful sun set, and it took him only a few moments to understand that we wanted him to show off his attractive feather plume. The camera I used for the shot was an Olympus E.M.I Mark II with a dedicated 75 mm f 1.8 lens - Aperture f/10, Shutter speed 1/8000 sec, ISO 200," explained Roger.

News from the Council

I hope you are all well and have escaped the virus up until now. I do know of two of our Council members that had contracted it but fortunately only suffered a very light attack of it, and are both now fine.

Hopefully you all agree that our competition evenings and Education and Development evenings have gone very well using Zoom. Thanks are due to Lesley Parolis and to Kim Stevens, the organisers. The presentation in July by Villiers Steyn on the common mistakes we make whilst photographing wild animals, was balanced by Desiree Pelsers's presentation in August on how to take very much smaller wild animals, like bugs and spiders! Both talks were fascinating and professionally presented over Zoom. I am happy to have seen that members of other photographic clubs also participated.

We have been approached by the Kirkcaldy Photographic club in Scotland to have an interclub challenge with them. Each club will submit a number of images, to be judged by an outside judge over a Zoom meeting, at a date to be determined towards the end of the year. That should be interesting! Talking of competitions, we have entered all three of the PSSA's annual competitions this year – the first comprised an interclub competition of junior and senior images, the second comprised our website, and the last is for club magazines. Here's holding thumbs we do well against all the other clubs throughout South Africa.

During some rainy lockdown days my attention has been drawn to our Facebook page. The first time I did so Kim had posted information about a talk entitled 'The art of Landscape Photography'. In it Martin Kluge interviews Martin Osner and Hougard Malan on their views on Landscape photography. It is well worth the fifty or so minutes to watch it. If you search for 'the art of Landscape Photography' on YouTube about twelve titles will come up, then just look for the one with Martin's name and you will have it.

The second time I looked, I found reference to 'Travel with auf-pad.com'. This turns out to be our very own member, Dieter Butow, who has produced something like twelve YouTube videos, five on South America, one on Antarctica, and the rest on trips through most countries in Africa. Dieter came to us as a speaker

for one of our E&D evenings, and ended up joining CTPS. I have not watched all his videos yet, but I can thoroughly recommend you watch the South American videos, starting from when his party kitted out their Land Cruisers in Cape Town, shipped them to Montevideo, and then headed up through Uruguay, and into the rest of South America. Be sure to watch their photography around the Iguaza Falls in their second episode.

A frightening event happened a few weeks ago when Ken Woods was driving around the Strandfontein Sewage ponds, taking pictures of birds, when two men approached his car with a gun pointed at him. He lost all his camera equipment. This must serve as a warning to us all. Our cameras may be taken from us almost anywhere. We need to go out in groups, and this is where our club outings can play their part. Now that Covid-19 is freeing up a bit, we intend organizing monthly outings once again. Our first outing is our postponed Cederberg outing, and thus far we have 22 people heading out to the mountains on the 11th of October. See my separate article in this issue on this outing.

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Monday 14th of September. It will be a Zoom meeting. Most of your Council members are willing to serve again for another year, but if anyone else would like to stand for Council, please would you make contact with me. Council is trying to get their minds around how to hold our end-of-year function, which by necessity, will be different from anything in the past. This is not easy, given the unknown lockdown we may, or may not, be in at that time. St Stephens Church Hall remains closed to us for the time being. What fun!

Richard Goldschmidt
President



Letter to the Editor

I am sure I speak for many members when I say that we have become accustomed to the high standards provided by CTPS - Well done! This is why I feel bold enough to speak out about the latest initiative to use Zoom Sessions to stay in contact and up to date with the latest educational information and the monthly offerings from the competition scene.

This medium is proving so successful that I personally would prefer this to be the permanent way forward. I can watch it live (preferred) or at my leisure (sometimes a necessity). I don't have to wiggle for a better view of the screen, don't have to drink lukewarm instant coffee or drive 40 km to attend a meeting (which I will, if I have to).

I can eat a decent dinner at my leisure and enjoy a good glass of wine. Via WhatsApp, I can interact with anyone I choose to

without being disruptive or hurting anybody's feelings, and I can express my opinion of a judge's opinion without offending said judge (because I respect his input and effort), if I do not agree with his assessment or scores.

In addition, we get a more diversified selection of judges and E & D presenters. It also has to be more cost effective and could free funds for many more social (informal) interactions, if personal interaction is deemed important/desirable. Of course it is!

The only part which is difficult to solve are the prints, for which I don't have a solution, sadly, as I regard them to be the foundation of photography.

I encourage the committee to give some thought to aspects of my opinion"

Peter Turnbull

News Items

Latest results from Salons

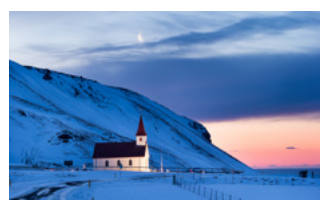
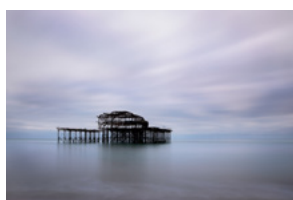
National Salons

4th Westville CC National Salon

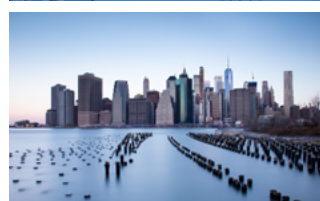
Dieter Bütow achieved a Certificate of Merit for his image *Skeleton Coast Dune* and an additional 4 Acceptances; Jeanette du Toit and Sonja Grünbauer got 5 Acceptances each; and Chris Coetzee, Nicol du Toit and Theo Potgieter got 2 Acceptances each.



3rd Pietersburg FS Salon



Kim Stevens achieved an amazing 3 Certificates of Merit for her images *Brighton Pier*, *Guiding light* and *Manhattan* and an additional 10 Acceptances; Jeanette du Toit got 7 Acceptances; Chris Coetzee 5 Acceptances; Dieter Bütow 4 Acceptances; and Nicol du Toit, Sonja Grünbauer, Trudi du Toit and Peter Turnbull 2 Acceptances each.



15th Krugersdorp Anniversary Salon

Kim Steven received a Certificate of Merit for her image *Old posts* and an additional 5 Acceptances; Dieter Bütow got 5 Acceptances; and Sonja Grünbauer and Chris Coetzee 4 Acceptances each.



1st Bethal National Salon

Dieter Bütow achieved a Certificate of Merit for his image *Spitzkoppe Arch* and an addition 2 Acceptances; Kim Stevens got 8 Acceptances; Theo Potgieter 3 Acceptances; and Nicol du Toit 2 Acceptances.



Congratulation to all the deserving winners
You make us proud!

CTPS is Western Cape's top performer in the 2020 PSSA Competition

The PSSA competition year ended in June, and when the junior and senior club competition points were combined, CTPS was the top performer in the Western Cape, followed by Creative Camera Club, Worcester, Hermanus and Paarl. Countrywide, CTPS achieved 6th place (Senior) and 5th place (Junior). Of the 62 clubs that participated in the senior and the 63 clubs in the junior competition, an impressive 40% were from the Western Cape.

Performance of the 10 Western Cape clubs:

Senior competition	Total	PSSA#	WC#	#Entry
Cape Town Photographic Soc	407	6	1	12
Hermanus Photographic Club	398	8	2	12
Creative Camera Club	385	10	3	12
Worcester Photo Club	376	11	4	12
Paarl Photographic Club	337	21	5	10
Helderberg Photographic Soc	299	32	6	9
Fishhoek Photographic Soc	264	42	7	8
Swartland Fotografeklub	264	43	8	8
Tafelberg Fotografeklub	228	50	9	7

Junior competition	Total	PSSA#	WC#	#Entry
Creative Camera Club	395	3	1	12
Cape Town Photographic Soc	394	5	2	12
Worcester Photo Club	364	9	3	12
Paarl Photographic Club	341	16	4	10
Hermanus Photographic Club	321	25	5	10
Fishhoek Photographic Soc	271	33	6	8
Swartland Fotografeklub	249	41	7	8
Tafelberg Fotografeklub	229	46	8	7
West Coast Photographic Soc.	35	59	9	1

Total combined points	Total	WC#
Cape Town Photographic Soc	801	1
Creative Camera Club	780	2
Worcester Photo Club	740	3
Hermanus Photographic Society	719	4
Paarl Photographic Club	678	5

Latest news from the AV group

- going virtual , upgrading software & AV outings

There has been very little activity since the initial lockdown back in March, with only four members actually producing AVs. However, Robert Maginley is busy organising a workshop via Zoom, as well as holding an official AV meeting - planned for September. Full details will be sent out a week before in a snapshot, but please note that it will be on a Thursday evening and not on a Wednesday evening (our usual spot). It is hoped that we can get some input from members as to what they would like to see at AV meetings in the future.

The other good news is what all Mac owners have been waiting for - a beta copy of PTE Studio 10 will be available as from the 24th August and all initial tests have been successful. In addition and because of the update of Photoshop this year, it is now also much easier to get good cut-outs. Also PTE are offering upgrades from 8 & 9 to Studio 10.6 at very reasonable prices. For more information please check out their website <https://www.wnsoft.com/en/pte-av-studio>; and for those that are interested, Robert can make various tutorials available - all you have to do is drop him a line.

"We will also be organising an AV photo shot later on towards the end of September. This particular month offers some great opportunities for AV making, with an emphasis on the West Coast and the flower season, which is supposed to be particularly good this year. Also remember that the CTPS is organising a trip to the Cederberg during October, which will provide some

fantastic opportunities to accumulate images for interesting AVs.

"Ken Woods is organising a PTE workshop which will be on Zoom and is aimed at the members who would like to get into AV making as well as being a refresher course for older AV makers.

"For those of you that would like to show off their AVs, they can be posted on YouTube, the only thing is one must be careful of the music, YouTube has a Music Library from which royalty free music is available. If you upload, please let me know and I will send it out to all our members. I have actually uploaded two the latest one 'Lockdown 2020' can be found at <https://youtu.be/UQaqys0oJLs>

"There are also some International AV Zoom meetings being hosted by AVMakersSA where everybody is invited. Take this opportunity to chat to various people from all over the world. For more details check out the AVMakersSA website. Also check out Audio Visual Makers International on YouTube for new ideas.

"The Royal Photographic Society will be hosting an International AV Retrospective on 26th & 27th September. It is free but you will have to pre-register. Full details are available on the website www.rps.org or look at the post on CTPS Facebook page," reports Robert Maginley.

CTPS members to form support group on Salons entries

On 29th June 2020, Nicol du Toit held a Zoom session to explain about the benefits of entering salons, getting acceptances, achieving diamond ratings and becoming part of the prestigious Impala log. As a result of the many questions asked, Nicol suggested to form a regular working/discussion group which could meet every month (via Zoom) to assist member in entering salons, discuss acceptances or non-acceptances, review winners and images that received Certificates of Merit - all to help to improve individual photographic standard. It could also include requests to have specific images critiqued that have done well or badly or images they would like to enter.

Some 17 members indicated their interest in joining this group and after discussion with Lesley Parolis, it was decided to book such sessions for the 4th Wednesday evening of a month. That is now in process, except for the 1st meeting, which will take place on the 9th September. In October meeting will be on the 4th Wednesday.

Nicol explained the reason for starting an interest group that would focus on increasing our club's participation in national

and international salon: "Our CTPS has a very proud legacy of being the first photographic club in South Africa (among many other Firsts), but we are not doing as well we should when it comes to salons entries. In the previous salon year, we were placed second in the Western Cape with 541 salon acceptances compared to the 1068 of Tygerberg; and in South Africa we were ranked only number 25 - far behind much smaller clubs. I would like to see CTPS taking its rightful place and fighting it out with the top clubs in the country.

"The first meeting will be an open discussion on what each of us wants to get out of such a group and how we want to go about it. So come with ideas and also please think about how you can assist in making the group viable. A few people also asked me to show my workflow as far as salons are concerned. So I'll do a quick presentation on that.

"A day or so before the meeting, Lesley will arrange for a Zoom link to be sent out to the whole of CTPS membership, in case anybody else is interested to join, or just want to come and have a look at what we are doing," explains Nicol.

Western Cape Photographic News – July 2020

by PSSA director & WCPF chairman Nicol du Toit

Latest from the Western Cape Photographic Forum

The Forum postponed its April meeting due to the Covid-19 lockdown, but at the end of June we had a Zoom meeting for our AGM. In accordance with the constitution this had to be held within six months of the year end of 2019.

At the meeting, I was persuaded to be re-elected as chairman and Francois du Bois as treasurer. Trudi du Toit did not make herself available for a second term as secretary and was replaced by Jane Bursey, secretary of Creative Camera Club and treasurer of Fish Hoek.

The third meeting of the year was scheduled for the end of July and we again decided to do it in the form of a Zoom meeting - with the popularity of this format with the clubs we thought it would be good to try it for the forum as well.

One of the more important decisions coming out of the meeting was that we will go ahead with this year's Interclub competition and function, but in a virtual format. We won't require clubs to submit prints and rather double up on the PDI entries for this year. More information about entering the competition, including projected costs, will be circulated to the clubs soon.

The criteria for the Communication Award for the hard-working newsletter, website and social media editors have also been circulated to clubs. The idea is to reward these valuable workers who not only keep members informed and engaged with club activities, but attract new members by promoting the club to a wider audience. The criteria for judging were formulated after extensive consultation by a panel of veteran journalists/communicators, and is aimed at establishing the benchmark for best practice in communication. Clubs have until August 8th to comment and thereafter the invitations to enter will be sent out.

Delegates were also reminded to nominate people for the PSSA national director positions by 29th July; enter the PSSA national magazine, website and Interclub competitions by 1st August; and also nominate people for the Western Cape Golden Apple award for the unselfish providers of a service to photography, clubs or the region by end of August.

Important new Impala Trophy rules

Hot off the press are the new rules for the new year's Impala Trophy rules, starting July 2020.

There are a few important changes:

Firstly, the points scored on international salon awards are now also double that of national salons. Previously only the acceptances counted double.

Secondly, the judging credits received for international salons will be changed from 4 to 8 points per PDI and print category. Previously it was the same as for national salons.

These new rules must still be published on the website and when it is done, please make sure that you acquaint yourself with it.

Why PhotovaultOnline was due for upgrade

Johann van der Walt, owner of PhotovaultOnline.com, notified us that this service will not be available from 30 August 2020 until 2 September 2020. Clubs therefore had to plan their activities so that members do not need to use it during that period.

According to Johann, PhotovaultOnline had been running with very little down time for the past 10 years, in fact, it was only down twice and in only one instance was it down for more than 24 hours. However, in March this year one of the members made him aware of a problem that users experienced with PhotovaultOnline and Firefox browsers.

After investigation it was found that the problem was the underlying network protocol stack of the server on which PhotovaultOnline is hosted. As a result, the server needed to be migrated to a new platform, the database to be upgraded to a later version and the software changed to upgrade the server. The latter was a mammoth task as PhotovaultOnline consists of more than 200,000 lines of code! This process started in April and it was hoped to be completed by the end of August 2020.

Upcoming Salons 2020

We want to encourage all our members to enter Salons, particularly those (and there are quite a few) which still need a few Salon acceptances to qualify them for the next higher grade in their photographic journey.

26 September 2020	PSSA Up and Coming Competition (18th)
03 October 2020	8th Swartland Intl (View brochure)
11 October 2020	International-circuit Camera Obscura 2020 (View brochure)
17 October 2020	1st Eden Photographic Society Salon (View brochure)
31 October 2020	2nd SAVAS National
07 November 2020	Midlens 1st Nature National (View brochure)

Refer to the [PSSA website](#) for full list of Salons for the year ending June 2020.

Refer to PSSA website for list of [International Salons](#).

Latest E & D News

Another two months of inspirational E & D sessions via Zoom are behind us with a further two exciting presentations in the pipe line - organised by our talented Kim Stevens, who cannot be stopped searching South Africa and further afield to find those special photographic experts that will make our Covid- and anxiety-filled times more bearable and interesting.

Mistakes even the pros make with Villiers Steyn (15th July)



In his 30-minute presentation, he pointed to the most common mistakes amateurs and even professional wildlife photographers make while on safari, and made suggestions and gave examples of how to avoid them.

"I grew up in Pretoria and have been taking photos ever since I can remember. I was our high school photographer when photographing everything from sports events and socials to stage shows and class photos. My camera never left my side in the seven years after school when I completed my Masters Degree in Nature Conservation, focussing on leopard movement patterns and densities in Botswana's majestic Northern Tuli Game Reserve. It was in the Mashatu Game Reserve, where I was based and constantly sur-

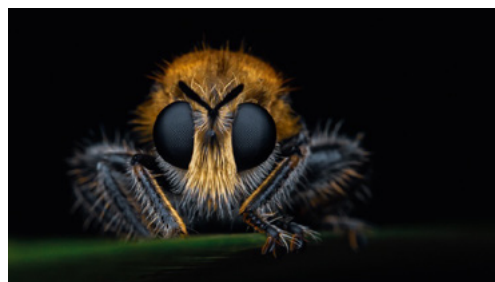
rounded by wild animals, where my love for wildlife photography blossomed.

"After completing my studies in 2008, I started my own photography business, Vision Photography, and embarked on another exciting seven-year journey, this time as a freelance travel writer. I published over a 100 articles on Africa's wildest and most beautiful game reserves and national parks, focussing on South Africa and its neighbours. With the backing of South Africa's top travel publications, Getaway, go!, DriveOut and Country Life, I was able to experience and photograph the best this extraordinary region has to offer.

"My love for people and teaching made adding photographic safari guide to my repertoire in 2010 a natural evolution for me as photographer. There are few things as fulfilling as sharing a great sighting with my guests, and even more so when I'm able to help them capture those memories through the lens of a camera," concludes Villiers.

For more information go to www.visionphotography.co.za

Exploring the invisible with Desiré Pelser (19th August 2020)



Watching her presentation, there was no doubt that photographing the six- and eight-legged creatures we share our world with is her pas-

sion and joy! Nobody could have introduced us better to the magic of macro photography than Desiré – even people who suffer from Arachnophobia were able to watch with interest.

"My day job is working as an editor and as a communication developer and designer for a number of environmental and human rights organisations. About seven years ago, I managed to save up enough to buy my very first entry-level DSLR camera – and a whole new world of artistic expression opened up to me.

"Just over two years ago, I discovered the magic world of macro photography – almost as a fix for my yearning for the African bush and the wild creatures that still live there. Soon I realised that I had a "micro" safari right on my doorstep, and a whole new world of intricate detail and exquisite beauty opened up to me. I fell in love with bugs and spiders!"

For more information: des@earthandoceans.co.za

Remaining monthly themes for 2020

Month	Set Subject	Competition Date	Entry date
October	Environmental portraits	7 October 2020	30 September 2020
November	Square format	4 November 2020	28 October 2020
December	Story telling triptych	2 December 2020	25 November 2020

Please refer to our [website](#) for details for more information on competitions. Please note that these dates are subject to change.

Forthcoming E & D presentations

16th September - Richard Martin



Martin is a very creative and inspiring photography teacher, specialising in travel and abstract photography. He is a long-time contributor to Photo Life magazine and pursues photography as a medium of visual expression. He is best known for his unique vision with a personal style characterized by a strong sense of composition, colour, and the use of light. His work combines an architectural love of geometry, pattern and texture with a painter's sensitivity to colour, light, and composition.

Richard inspires participants with his photography and visual design workshops, tours, and seminars around the world.

"My photography is a celebration of the visual world. It originates straight from the heart, honest and direct. Inspired by colour, texture and light, I make photographs to express feelings surrounding my experiences, searching for visual equivalents to those feelings," he explains.

For more information: <http://www.richardmartinphoto.com>

21st October - James Kerwin



James is a British photographer living in Tbilisi in Georgia who will be presenting his speciality subject 'Abandoned Architecture'.

"I have loved photography ever since purchasing my first 'real' camera in 2010 – it quickly became an all-consuming passion, occupying large amounts of my daily thoughts. The camera leads me to places I otherwise would probably never see.

"After four years shooting a variety of genres such as weddings and events I stumbled across architecture photography in late 2013, and I have been shooting inside abandoned spaces and buildings ever since.

"In 2014, I began shooting my first abandoned building series 'Decadence', and six years on I have now built up a large portfolio taken in some of the most striking locations in Europe and beyond.

"I present talks to British and Irish photo clubs and look forward to my very first presentation to a South African photographic society," explains James.

For more information: www.jameskerwin.uk



All photographs by Richard Goldschmidt

Escaping from six months of Lock-Down

CTPS Outing to Cederberg planned for October 2020

by Richard Goldschmidt

Before Covid-19 hit our shores earlier this year we announced plans of an outing to be held during July in the Cederberg. This obviously was put on hold, but has now been revived to take place during October. I wrote to all those who originally indicated that they would be joining in and received back their replies - and as a result I have now made the accommodation bookings. There may be more members who wish to join us now, but unfortunately all of the cottages are booked. However, as we are heading into the warmer weather of summer, the farm offers campsites with individual ablution facilities. If you are interested in joining the 22 of us (but using the camping route), I invite you

to contact me at your earliest opportunity, to see how you can be accommodated. There may even be some cancellations in future?

Our plans are to leave Cape Town on Sunday morning the 11th of October and checking in to the cottages at the Cederberg Park, Kromrivier Farm in the Southern Cederberg that afternoon. We will spend the afternoon photographing around the farm vicinity, and given fine weather, perhaps have a communal braai for supper. There still may be remnants of wild flowers? The next morning we will head out to explore the Stadsaal Rocks and then on to Matjiesrivier farm for photography. After lunch the plan is to go and partake in wine tasting at Dwarsrivier farm, followed by a flat walk to the amazing rock formations in the vicinity of Lot se Vrou, ending with a sunset down the valley.

That night we will have a communal dinner in the Kromrivier restaurant and then tackle some star trail photos. The next morning, Tuesday the 13th, we would have to check out by 10am, but if individual families wish to stay on longer, they are welcome to extend their booking. The rest of us would slowly depart for Cape Town, taking our time and looking for photographic opportunities on the way home.

For further details, please look at their website: <https://cederbergpark.com>

So, for anyone else interested, please email me at richard@goldschmidt.co.za



New members

Eric Decloedt

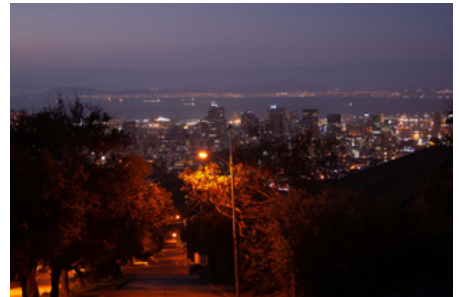


My real interest in photography started in 2005 when I got a DSLR as a gift from my father. However, I packed my DSLR away for a while when I got into iPhone photography because I was just blown away by the quality packed into a cell phone and how quick and easy it was to capture interesting moments as we have it with us almost permanently.

After I attended a photography course given by Martin Osner this year, the bug bit me all over again. I enjoyed it so much that I enrolled for a second course! During weekends, I love to slip out early when my household is still fast asleep to capture those magical moments and to return with pictures that mean something to me, and bring home take-away cappuccinos for the sleepy heads.

For me, photographic images capture the visual 'ordinary' in a very special way that evokes emotion and thought, as it highlights the gift of vision. During this COVID-19 pandemic, I really appreciated how taking photographs could remove me from reality – at least for a while – as I work in the medical field and we have been very stretched.

Currently I enjoy capturing city scenes because of the energy that radiates from the city's movement and lights. When I first captured light movement using an open shutter, it felt like I was an artist. As I develop my skills I hope to grow into a macro, portrait and nature photographer. My reason for joining CTPS is to learn new skills and artistic approaches to taking images, and I also hope to engage in a mentorship with some of the more experienced photographers in the club.



Michael Pace



My love for photography has a long history that goes back to Canada and the age of film - over 40 years ago. Originally, I dabbled with a Zeiss Super Ikonta 331 - a very special camera which I still have (and should bring out occasionally to give it a cuddle), but my dream camera of the day was a Canon A1, which I couldn't afford, and so I lived with a Minolta X700 for a long time.

I was encouraged to take pictures by my then girlfriend who had a penchant for flashy dressing and loved being photographed. But seriously, one day I was out and about with my camera when my friend, who just happened to

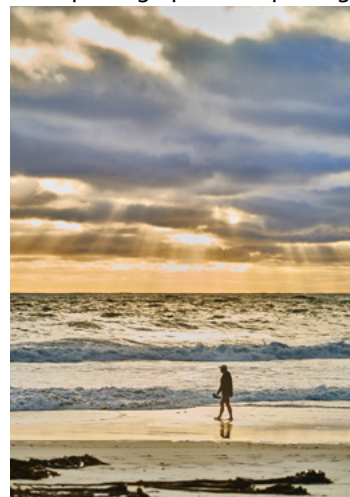
be a professional, told me to hold his dog and pose; the photo was significantly better than anything I had ever done. It was then that I realised that photography was much more than just snapping away – not unlike good wine that is much better when one appreciates the art that goes into making it.

My interests are varied as my photographs would attest. I love street photography because of the stories and humour it offers, landscape because of the challenges to portray what my mind sees, natural light portraiture, and sports/ballet photography, which is difficult but great fun. I would also love to learn macro which appears to be very difficult but also a challenge.

I have had many wonderful times with my camera which would never have happened without it. Purely because of my camera I photographed ballet rehearsals, music concerts and I am regularly asked to photograph underprivileged children of the in-

formal settlements to help sell their talents. I am an amateur so the price is right as I have never charged for any of my images.

By joining CTPS, I am hoping to get inspired, pushed to perform and kicked out of my comfort zone.



A member's profile

Nicol & Trudi du Toit

Both Nicol and Trudi have been making contributions and waves, ruffling feathers and speaking their minds in various photographic and other organisations – from club, to regional, to national level. Below is how Trudi described their journey together over the past 50 years.



Best of friends and constant companions at university

When I met Nicol he was wearing shorts, knee-high socks, a jacket and tie and an unboiled egg in each pocket. I was wearing a church dress, stockings, and high-heel shoes. It was a swelteringly hot day in January 1970 and our attire was prescribed by the seniors responsible for the initiation of the first years at the University of Stellenbosch. He was 19, I was 17 and we both weighed about half of what we do now.

We were "paired" as partners for the annual first year fruit festival (Vrugtefees). Thus began a 50-year relationship.

Following our first date a few weeks later, he introduced me to the delights of the university's photographic club darkroom (to develop film, of course) and I introduced him to the Socratic method of questioning everything, as taught by the (in)famous political science professor Hans Degenaar.

Our student years are documented by albums full of black and white photographs – proof that the darkroom was put to proper use. Nicol enjoyed using the tripod and time-delays to take photos of us, our friends, families and pets. That was after we both went through the usual Box camera phases at school. With the exception that he was introduced to the science of photography by his eldest brother and mentor at a young age, and an

enlarger he built himself got pride of place in future darkrooms.

The need for an extra bathroom as darkroom set the tone for our future house-hunting as Nicol's climb up the corporate ladder resulted in numerous transfers. And the sometimes vigorous, always stimulating, debates characterised our relationships for the next fifty years – with ourselves and others.

As with most people building a career, Nicol's interest in photography had its ebbs and flows. Early on chess somewhat usurped photography to become a favourite pastime – playing as well as joining club organisations and eventually as board member of the SA Chess Federation. This gave him the opportunity to force a draw from Viktor Korshnoi, considered by some the best Russian grandmaster ever, in a multi-player speed-game during a South African visit by several international grandmasters organised by the federation.

After graduating with a B.Com and briefly working in the accounts department of Rembrandt in Paarl, Nicol joined Deloitte's as an article clerk early in 1975. In the transition period we got married and he gleefully told a snooty aunt who enquired at the wedding "and what do you do, young man?" that he was "jobless".

Then commenced about ten years of balancing hard work with extra-mural studies. A B.Compt Hons through UNISA, passing the chartered accountants' board exam assisted by classes at UCT, and an MBA from UCT kept him occupied all hours of the day and sometimes nights.

We did buy a TV-set to keep me occupied.



Nicol took this image of Charlize Theron when she did the official draw for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.



David Beckham was one of the soccer stars Nicol captured during their visits around the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

After qualifying as CA in 1980, Nicol moved across to general management by joining the Safmarine/Rennies group, which he deemed to be much more interesting and challenging. Inter-company transfers required us to move between Durban and Cape Town twice - the second time in Durban he acquired valuable negotiating skills as operations manager for SA Steve-dores during interactions with the Steve-dore union members. Some interactions were more friendly than others.

The last three moves coincided with me becoming pregnant, but in the early 1990's he was appointed CEO of the logistics company Saftainer and we were thankfully allowed to remain in Cape Town for the next seven years. We only have three children.

Part of Nicol's duties included keeping clients happy and the Rennies company lodge in Mashatu Game Reserve suited this purpose perfectly. Jerry, the game guide assigned to the lodge, educated us about elephant behaviour and also in

stilled in us something of his deep respect and love for these animals. This also gave Nicol the chance to expand the ticks on his bird lists as Jerry could identify a juvenile with the naked eye that others battled to spot with binoculars.

No longer studying, he became an active member of the Cape Piscatorial Society and the Cape Bird Club (he is still today).

By 1997 Nicol was growing restless in his job as head of Saftainer and when changes in the group structure indicated another transfer – this time to Johannesburg – he decided to use his mid-life crisis to change his job, instead of his car or wife. His lifelong ambition was to own his own business and he was considering various options, including buying an accountancy practice, when he saw an advert for a sports business magazine called *Sports Trader*.

Aha, he thought: I love sport and I can buy this magazine for Trudi to do all the work, since she has been a journalist all her working life.

Wishful thinking!

Sports Trader initially kept both of us busy 12 – 15 hours a day: Nicol with selling advertising to a growing base of suppliers who wanted to promote their products to retailers via the magazine, arm-wrestling with SARS and other bureaucrats, keeping the books balanced and looking after everything on the business side. I was responsible for writing and editing editorial features,



The Nike shoe on the cover of *Sports Trader* of September 2000 was photographed with Nicol's first digital camera: a 3MB Sony Cybershot

doing advertising design and editorial layout. We expanded the scope of *Sports Trader* considerably to include outdoor and lifestyle fashion as well as a fishing supplement and directories.

When the Department of Sport and Recreation wanted to launch a magazine for clubs and schools, *Your Sport*, they approached us to conceptualise and publish it, which we did until it was discontinued a few years later under a new director general.

Nicol also took a lot of product shots for adverts and editorial use and we knew the digital age had

arrived when the Nike marketing team stood drooling over the exceptional sharpness of the shoe he photographed for a cover with his Sony Cybershot. With a full 3MB pixels!



Nicol captured Sepp Blatter and PSL chair Irvin Khosa around the ironic My Game is Fair Play banner during one of the many press conferences before the 2010 World Cup.

The magazines offered us the opportunity to cover the four-year run-up to the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the endless press conferences with the then soccer hierarchy, including Sepp Blatter, before the FBI nabbed most of them for corruption. We were also commissioned to publish a catalogue of the 2010 World Cup FIFA-licensed products.

Sports Trader also gave us the opportunity to attend overseas trade shows and other events, meet many international and all local brand owners – and becoming friends with many – and get accreditation to cover the Two Oceans Marathon, rugby tests, cricket tests, the Federer-Nadal tennis match and many other prominent sporting events.

We also got to interview and photograph some famous sports people sponsored by our advertisers. Nicol was, for example, commissioned to do photoshoots with West Indian cricketer Shiv Chanderpaul for Gray-Nicolls and Jacques Kallis for his sponsors Slazenger and Lazer.



Trudi interviewed and photographed Goldie Hawn for *Sarie* magazine during a visit by the filmstar to promote *Private Benjamin*.

As *Sports Trader's* advertising income grew through the strong client relationships Nicol established, we were able to employ more people. This (sometimes) offered us the opportunity to enjoy other activities.

Thus, after our daughter who was studying cinematography at AFDA took him to an AV meeting of CTPS, Nicol decided to join the society in 2011. Like all other activities he participates in, he embraced all that the society offered in full: entering competitions to reach salon status in

record time (eight months), receiving the PSSA medal for the most salon acceptances in CTPS, organising the 2015 Anniversary Salon, followed by an international salon for CTPS and, naturally, looking after the finances by serving on council as treasurer. He also served as CTPS president and vice-president (twice).

I was always a dabbler in photography, but Nicol converted me into a serious hobbyist with a birthday gift of a Canon DSLR on a trip to the Okavango in 2013.

In my working years as a reporter at *Die Burger* in the early 1970s and later at magazines, I was oblivious to the great opportunities offered to learn from some of the big name press photographers like Juhan Kuus, Jean du Plessis, Paul Alberts, Dave Dodds, Cloete Breytenbach, etc. I worked with. Strange as it may sound, but in those days the reporter actually dictated which photos had to be taken, requested which photographer should accompany him/her on an assignment and then selected the photos to be used with the article.

Indeed!

When I joined *Sarie* as a writer in the late 1970's, the fashion editor had just resigned. Because I dressed weirdly in second-hand clothes the editor thought I would be the ideal replacement. I hated every minute, especially the boredom of sitting around for hours while make-up and hair was done and then having to hold the reflector boards in positions that threatened to make my arms fall off.

My job as entertainment editor slightly compensated for this as I could see most movies a week or two before release to the general public and hob-nobbing with the likes of film stars like Goldie Hawn, George Hamilton and Peter Gallagher.

Fashion did, however, provide the perk of a few overseas trips, paid for by clothing and other sponsors. Nicol had bought a Canon AE1 camera with one of his first salaries and he graciously lent me the camera for these trips, eliciting some grumbling from the accompanying photographers about reporters with

better cameras than what they had.

After Nicol's first transfer to Durban at the end of the 1970s, I joined Rooi Rose – then the women's magazine with the highest circulation in the country – as deputy editor in charge of features and content. This included commissioning and selecting photographs that best suited the articles.

After the birth of our daughter Carin, I started freelancing for any publications that would buy the stories. If the publication commissioned me, I could engage a professional photographer to take the photographs, but when I covered a story "on spec" Nicol often had to do duty as photographer, or I had to do it myself. Sometimes with disastrous results – but occasionally not bad.

While covering the IFP vs UDF/ANC violence in Natal for Vrye Weekblad in the early 1990s, some incredibly brave township photographers would literally risk their lives to photograph the horrific attacks, but never got any recognition, because they provided the rolls of film anonymously and to name them would have meant a death sentence.

With Nicol's salary to provide for us (hardly anybody can make a living from freelance work!) I had the wonderful freedom to continue stirring pots and upsetting the establishment that at varsity earned me the dubious honour of featuring in a newspaper cover pic of a woman's march protesting a proposal to prevent female students from voting in the SRC elections. (Yip! Discrimination was alive and well in 1972).

In the 1980's my activism was channelled through various organisations – for example, I chaired the Women's Bureau committee 'Women & Childbirth' and the Democratic Party's Natal Women's Forum (fore-runner of the DA) and served on the founding committee of the DP in KwaZulu Natal. I also served on the committee and edited the newsletter for the National Childbirth Education and Parenting Association, advising women on their rights during pregnancy and early motherhood.

I was therefore fully aware of the pitfalls of serving in committees run by passionate volunteers when I became a de facto CTPS committee member after I agreed to take over the editorship of *Cape Camera* when John Spence resigned due to family reasons at the end of 2013. This editorship coincided with the society's 125 year celebrations in 2015, which culminated in the book, *Celebrating 125 Years*, which I researched, edited and designed with the assistance of various club members, notably Pat Scott, Joy Wellbeloved and Antenie Carstens. Due to the workload of the book, I gratefully handed the reins as *Cape Camera* editor to Anna Engelhardt, who has done a superb job.

I erroneously thought the job of PR would entail less work ... but, although a lot of work, the competition I ran to find a new logo for the society was exciting.



Stellenbosch protests. Die Burger covered the women's protest march against the suggestion that women should not be allowed to vote for the SRC elections. Trudi is marching left front / was soaked when the male students retaliated with water bombs and fire hoses.



In 2016 Nicol was asked by Johan Kloppers to serve on the committee that organised the PSSA congress in Langebaan and he also completed the two-year JAP course. During these interactions with members from other clubs, the idea of a "forum" where clubs in the region could come together to share ideas and mutual problems, was born.

The following year (2017) a steering committee, chaired by Nicol, was formed, which made recommendations about how such a club forum would operate and to write a constitution for what would



Wild Horses at Aus: Trudi started entering images in CTPS competitions after her first entry, Wild Horses at Aus got a score of 27.

become the Western Cape Photographic Forum (WCPF). I was roped in to produce the minutes.

At the first AGM of the WCPF in April 2018 Nicol was elected chairman and I as the secretary – provided that our terms were limited and that representatives from the clubs should thereafter step in to run the forum, as its aim is to benefit clubs. When our first two-year term expired at this year's AGM, I persuaded Jane Bursey of Creative Camera Club to take over as secretary, but Nicol was persuaded to stay on for another term as nobody was prepared to take over as chairman from him.

Nicol was also elected PSSA Regional Director in 2017 after Johan Kloppers decided to call it a day (and a half). Since then he has been visiting clubs in the region and reported on Western Cape and PSSA activities in our blog, *Western Cape Photographic News*, with a monthly newsletter providing links.

He was also given the strategic task of formulating a Communications Strategy for PSSA after Hein Waschefort resigned as Image editor in 2018. Nicol formed a communications committee consisting of various board members and included me after I agreed to compile, edit and publish one edition of *Image* (January 2019) to give the board time to appoint a new editor. After extensive consultations and careful consideration of costs, a communication plan was formulated and accepted by the PSSA board. It must still be implemented.

It was Nicol's turn as Western Cape PSSA director to organise the Cape Photographers' congress in 2019. This organisation consists of the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Garden Route and the purpose is for the Regional Director of one of the areas to organise an annual congress on a rotational basis. The

Montagu Congress, held at the end of April 2019, was a lot of jolly hard work, but great fun, well supported by CTPS, the club with the most representatives. Club members Kim Stevens and Steff Hughes also served on the organising committee.

At the Interclub meeting last year Nicol and I were jointly awarded the Golden Apple award for service to photography in the Western Cape. A truly humbling experience.

After 23 exciting years, COVID-19 sadly decimated our industry and brought *Sports Trader* to a halt ... with the upside that we now have more time for photographic activities.

A member's travelogue



Passionate about the Kgalagadi

by Peter Turnbull LPSSA

"Peter, you have been to the Kgalagadi many times, would you be willing to write a travelogue for the readers of *Cape Camera*, recounting your trips to this park and the reasons for its attraction to so many people and particularly photographers?" This request came from Anna Engelhardt, editor of said *Cape Camera*. "Hmm, sure" I responded, "I'll give it a shot". I did and then presented the fruits of a couple of days of literary effort. "That was very well written", was her polite response, "and very informative", she continued, "but where is the passion" came the coup de grace. Anna was one hundred percent on the mark. The product of my literary effort was clinical, boring and the passion that the Kgalagadi evokes in me was definitely missing. I apologised and gave it another go, so

My love and fascination with the Kalahari was triggered by two events – the discovery of a book and a large male lion. *Cry of the Kalahari* was written by Mark and Delia Owens and described in captivating details what it was like to live in the African wilderness with all its trials, tribulations and adventures while doing research for their scientific theses in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana. Delia was researching lions and Mark brown hyenas. My infatuation with wildlife, and in particular the cats, started with my first encounter with a big male lion in the Chobe Game reserve – an experience that still sends goose bumps down my spine all these years later.

While Mark and Delia's Kalahari is situated in Botswana - a part where I have also spent many hours, my portion of the Kalahari and the one I know best is what has come to be called the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park - an amalgamation of the former Kalahari Gemsbok Park of South Africa and the Gemsbok National Park of Botswana. It is a place of huge contrast with incredible beauty and serenity and at the same time is packed with drama, raw starkness and barren emptiness. It is a place that can be lush wet or bone dry, searing hot or freezing cold, cruel or tender in its presentation of death and survival - but it is never boring.

If frequent visits are what will satisfy your hunger for wildlife photographic opportunities, this park is way more easily accessible from Cape Town than Central Botswana. I use the word 'opportunities' because, as we all know, nothing is ever guaranteed when out trying to photograph wild animals in their natural habitat. However, there can be hardly any better place in the whole of Southern Africa than this Park to photograph lions, cheetahs and perhaps leopards. The black maned Kalahari male lions found here are truly magnificent and without a doubt there are no other more imposing cats on the whole of the African continent – at least for me.

You will need to be committed - no lazy sleep-ins allowed. If you are serious about capturing the spirit of the park on camera, you will have to be at the front of the queue when the gates open. The Kgalagadi Park is different to other parks in that a lot of driving is required to realise photographic opportunities. It is not advisable to pick a spot and stay put, as you might in other parks. It can work but mostly not. Leave the camp as soon as the gate opens, travel at between 30 and 40 km/hour – keep eyes peeled and look for tracks in the road as cats prefer this terrain over the veld or river beds because the going is easier here. Note the direction in which they are traveling. Be especially vigilant when the track suddenly disappears as they may be resting under a tree nearby. Also be aware of the antelopes' behaviour as you can be sure that they know where the danger lies and will provide a good pointer to any predator.

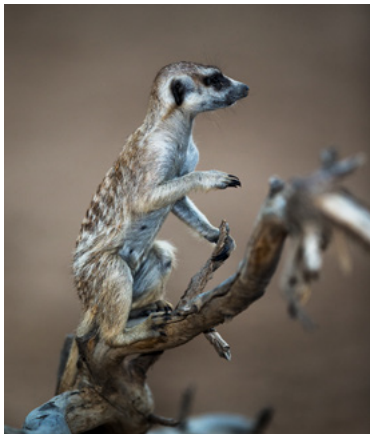


The Kalahari is a hot place and cats are notoriously lazy. There are exceptions of course but the cats sleep near their night time kill. They will move to drink water only while the temperature is bearable and then move to a shady spot where the light could be poor, or even worse, they are over the dune to find peace and more shade. In short, you need to find them before or during their first move. Apart from the joy of a sighting, don't bank on good photographic opportunities four hours after sunrise or until three hours before sunset. Personally, I have stopped even trying to photograph in the afternoons during summer. The cats will stay put until after you have had to go back to camp. Again there are exceptions, but few. Winter is better insofar as cats do not move until the sun warms up the day and

because in winter the temperature stays cool longer, generally you will have a better chance of finding them.

Of course antelopes and other animals are available for modelling duty the whole day. You just need to choose your light and your opportunity. The dramatic cloud formations and landscapes also offer wonderful photographic opportunities, particularly during the early morning and late afternoons. Night sky and thunderstorm photography is also an exciting option to keep photographically active.

I have had many memorable moments in the Kgalagadi and I cannot recount all of them in the space allotted here, but there are these amazing memories. I particularly recall staking out a small group of lions consisting of three females, two cubs and a big black-maned male at Kousant, a waterhole north of Nossob when a small jackal, probably a teenager or a female, became too inquisitive and made the fatal error of getting too close to one of the females. A flash of a massive paw, claws extended, a yelp from the unfortunate jackal as a claw hooked the hapless jackal's skin and it was over in the blink of an eye. But this was not the end of it, each adult lion then took turns in exacting ritual retribution on the lifeless bundle of jackal fur and the audible and distinct sounds of breaking bones, terminating with the chilling sound of the crushing of a little skull, reverberated in the stillness of the bush. Life and death within a flash - too quick even for images except for those burned into my brain.



Then there are the hours spent watching a springbok giving birth to a baby. There is life here as well as tragedy in equal measure otherwise the balance of nature is disrupted. The struggle to survive is as real for the prey as for the predator. There are no favourites in the circle of life. The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is ten times larger than the Kruger National Park. It can be kind to you on your first trip, as it was

to me, or not. Don't give up. It takes time to get to know the lay of the land and just when you think you do, it throws you a curve ball. Catch the ball and the rewards will be amazing. It is definitely the place to photograph lion and cheetah - leopards too, but they require a lot of luck to find.

For those interested in more practical and hands-on information please read on ...

The Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park is a politically inspired amalgamation of the Kalahari Gemsbok Park in South Africa and the Gemsbok National Park in Botswana. I say 'political' because there were never any physical barriers between the two parks and the road to Unions End, on the Namibian border, wanders along the Nossob River forming the theoretical border, crossing into adjacent countries as the terrain dictates. There are only little concrete beacons in the Nossob river bed, demarcating the actual border, at about one kilometer intervals. On these beacons are the initials RSA visible from the Botswanan side and RBW visible from the South African side. After formalisation as a Transfrontier Park, visitors are allowed free access to accommodation facilities, without going through cross-border formalities, when entering into the Park from the county of their

choice, irrespective of in which country the accommodation is situated. However, game drives across the border are still not allowed unless overnighting in that country. Visitors are required to leave the park from the country of entry unless having gone through the normal immigration/emigration formalities at the Twee Rivieren Welcome Centre. Admittedly, these formalities are reasonably relaxed. A visitor overnighting twice in the park in South African facilities may exit into Namibia at Mata Mata after having completed emigration formalities at the Twee Rivieren Welcome Centre.

The Park Welcome Centre and entrance gate is at Tweerivieren, 1065 km from Cape Town, depending on the suburb from which you are travelling, and a further 175 km to Nossob or 120 km to Mata Mata. Permits and entry formalities are completed at the current modernised and efficient Welcome, just outside the Park gate.

A typical expedition, for me, would start by leaving home at 04h00 in the morning, and if your vehicle is moderately powerful, one could get to any destination within the Park before closing time on the same day. If your wheels are a Land Rover Defender, as mine often is, then this is still possible but it is also very tiring and difficult. Considering this and the compulsory Wimpy stops at Klawer and Upington and perhaps Pick 'n Pay in Upington, stopovers in either or both Calvinia or Keimoes would be easier but this uses up one or two days of precious holiday time. Returning home is almost always a one day trip, sometimes arriving home around midnight or later, depending on the photographic opportunities on my way out of the Park. I am always happy to be forced to dally.



There are no parts better than other parts of the Park, but generally the southern region is better in summer for birds-of-prey than the northern regions. All regions are good for carnivores and herbivores. Having said good, it has become my personal experience that the current, albeit until recently, high visitor density seems to have driven the carnivores away from the roads and just out of optimal photographing range. I anticipate that the current break in that situation, brought about by Covid-19 will go a long way in bringing them back. How long will

that last, I cannot say but I can say that getting a booking in the winter months of next year is already almost impossible. Do not despair, if you are a committed wildlife photographer, or even want to be, the hot summer months can be very productive, if also very hot and wet.

Tweervieren is probably the only rest camp, camping or in cottages, where accommodation may be found. Do not dismiss the potential of this area. All the carnivores are regularly spotted within the 'golden hour' driving distance of the Tweervieren rest camp and there are more convenience facilities here than in any other camp. There are refreshing swimming pools at Tweervieren, Mata Mata, Kalahari Tented camp (2km from Mata Mata) and at Nossob. Perhaps there are others of which I am not aware.

At this stage it is necessary to point out to readers that access around the park is strictly limited to two main roads, Nossob River Road and Auob River Road, and two inter-linking roads, Kielie Krankie Road and Dune Street. There are also some tracks but only for overnight guests. A 4x4 is not necessary for the South African section but their elevated ride height has its benefits.



The Mabuasehube/Kaa areas are with more roads, but accessible only in 4 x vehicles! Offroad driving is strictly prohibited!

The South African facilities are largely secure against predators. In contrast the Botswana side offers only wild camping and nightly visits in the campsite from predators are common. Luxury Lodge accommodation is also available at Rooiputs and Polentswa but is very pricey in comparison to the accommodation offered by SANparks. Camping on the Botswana side is reasonably priced and available along the Nossob river at Rooiputs and Polentswa where the SANpark game routes are very close. There are also further campsites 150 km away at Mabuasehube which can be reached from Nossob along a very sandy 4x4 only track and in the Kaa area about 90 km away from the Grootkolk area along a similar 4x4 only track. There are no reliable animal watering points in these areas but in summer, if the rains have been good, the salt pans can be filled with water and large flocks of flamingos can be seen - if you are in luck. Good predator sightings and photographic opportunities are possible.

What does set the various accommodation options apart is the availability of morning and evening light at water holes. This means that travelling vaguely north, the morning light is best on the left side of the road and afternoon light is best on the right hand side. Tweervieren offers morning light along the Nossob River all the way up to Melkvlei and late afternoon light along the Auob River for as far as you can get back before gate closing time. Kielie Krankie and Urukuruus offer both morning and late afternoon options but more importantly, accommodation is limited and in Cottages only. They are far enough away from the larger rest camps so that visitors staying here will have exclusive access in the morning and evening, than will visitors having to drive 50 km to and from their other camps.

Mata Mata and Kalahari Tented Camps generally provide access to good morning light water holes. Nossob offers access to both north and south but mainly for evening light, Cubitje Quap waterhole offering morning and afternoon opportunities. Bitterpan and Gharagap offer mainly wilderness experiences but there is always the possibility of good photographic opportunities. The ranger based at Bitterpan constructed a bird drinking dam next to his cottage only to find that a leopard and local hyenas also paid very frequent nightly visits. There is also limited accommodation in cottages at Grootkolk where stories of a resident leopard are told around the camp fire. This campsite also provides photographic exclusivity due to its distance from Nossob.

Additional information and maps of the Park are available on the Internet by visiting https://www.sanparks.org/docs/parks_kgalagadi/tourism/Kgalagadi_map.pdf



All photographs by Peter Turnbull

Winning images from July

Set subject: Bridges

The July competition was judged remotely by John Coumbias of Edenvale Photographic Society. John preferred not to participate in the live Zoom session and instead decided to send in his written comments and scores to Lesley - who read them out during the competition evening. This was not as satisfactory as having a judge present in person, and will not be repeated, reports LESLEY PAROLIS.

The CTPS entries into the **PSSA monthly** competition for May were *Lovelocks* by Kim Stevens (Senior Entry) and *May I present the Lily* by Shaun Fautley (Junior Entry)

Below are the winners in the various categories together with the judge's comments.

Set Subject



Joint Winner PDI - Set (Intermediate) *History of Bridges Mauritius* by Antonio Chavry (25). A very interesting image with the three well-defined bridges showcasing the different style of bridges spanning a river.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Intermediate) *Old Bridge Venice* by Antonio Chavry (25). A clean image with lovely soft colours and beautiful reflections.



Joint Winner PDI - Set (Intermediate) *Sadly no trains yet* by Judelle Drake (25). An image with strong leading lines and lovely colours. The slow shutter speed adds a quiet feeling to the scene.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Advanced) *Laos Nam Khan River* by Roger Trythall (26). A beautiful landscape image with soft colours that add to the feeling of peace and tranquillity.



Winner PDI - Set (Master) *Love locks* by Kim Stevens (27). A powerful image with excellent leading lines and a great story behind it. The conversion to black and white adds to the sombre mood of the scene.



Joint Winner PDI - Set (Advanced) *The Iconic Brooklyn Bridge* by Mireille Landman (26). A beautiful image that has been well balanced with the skyscrapers. The horizontal line of the bridge is sufficiently below the centre so as not to cut the image in half.

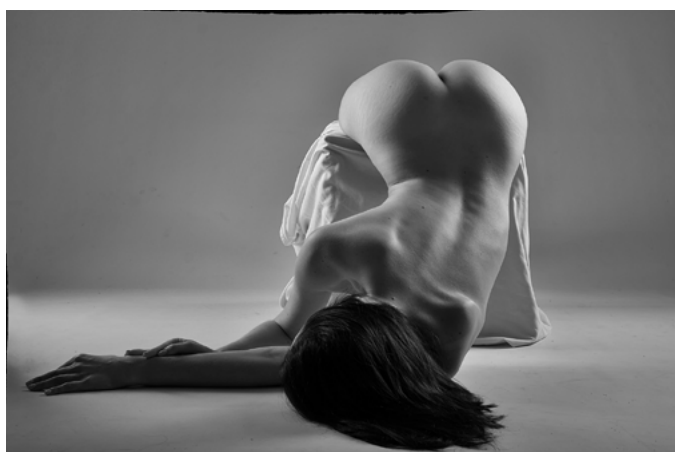
Open Subject



Winner PDI – Open (Beginner) *Weaver in reeds* by Walter Berndorfer (23). An attractive image with the focal point well to the left of centre. There is enough blurriness in background to highlight the subject but also allows an indication of its environment.



Winner PDI – Open (Intermediate) *May I present the Lily* by Shaun Fautley (25). A beautiful and well exposed image of the lily which is complimented by the uniform dark background. It is pin-sharp and well-placed.



Winner PDI – Open (Advanced) *Hang over* by Crighton Klassen (27). Although this is a very unusual pose of a nude model, it works well particularly together with the title. The conversion to black and white also adds to the image, however, the sensor spots need to be attended to.



Winner PDI – Open (Master) *The air we breathe* by David Barnes (28). This is a particularly well-conceived and very creative image with a great story behind it.

Other high-scoring images from our **July** **competition**

(24 & above)



Winter in Venice by Anna Engelhardt (26)



Dead Tree Sunrise by Dave Gordon (26)



Pyramid Lake Jasper by Lambe Parolis (26)



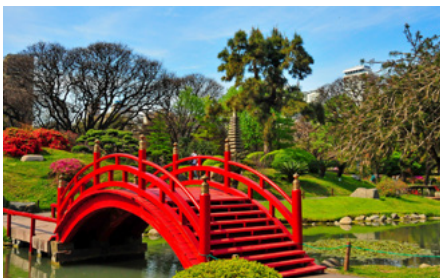
Lemonade by Theo Potgieter (26)



Butter would not melt
by Peter Turnbull (26)



Gooseberry pod by Theo Potgieter (26)



Japanese Garden Bridge
by Judelle Drake (24)



Engaged by Dave Gordon (26)



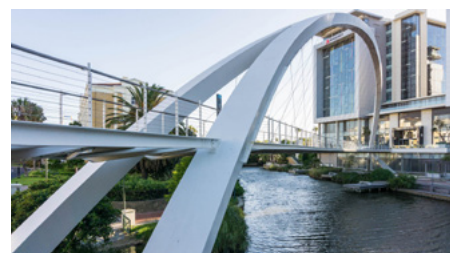
Crossing over by Pat Scott (24)



Gallop over the bridge by Nicol du Toit (24)



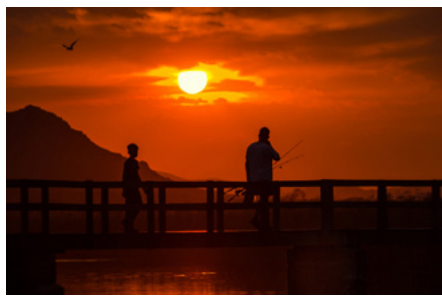
Veereier in vlug by Neels Beyers (26)



A bridge to the Marriot
by Kishore Seegobin (24)



The crossing by Sonja Grünbauer (24)



Going Fishing by Bill Kennedy (24)



Bridge at Stouthead
by Richard Goldschmidt (26)



Inspired by Rembrandt
by Anna Engelhardt (26)



House in the middle by Jacoba van Zyl (26)



The Iconic Bridge Refracted
by Mireille Landman (24)



On the lookout by Pat Scott (25)



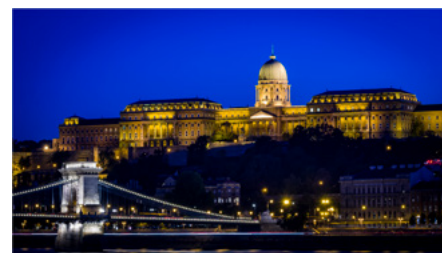
Bridge over the river Keur
by Vivien Harpur (24)



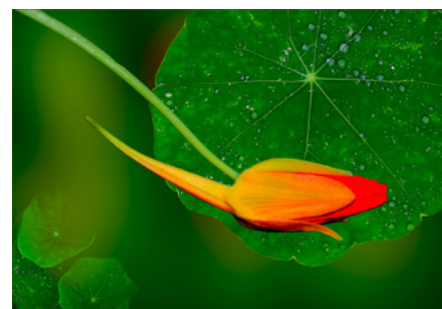
Dekota Bridge on a frosty morning
by Mireille Landman (24)



St Mauritius Church Zermatt
by Lambe Parolis (25)



Castle Hill and Chain Bridge
by Theo Potgieter (24)



Flower Power by Sonja Grünbauer (25)



The crossing by Sonja Grünbauer (24)



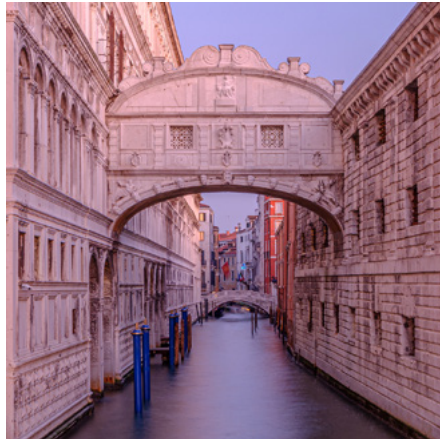
Playing ball in the mist
by Jean Bradshaw (24)



Simonsberg in mis by Neels Beyers (25)



Haemanthus the Paint Brush
by Jeanette du Toit (25)



The Bridge of Sighs Venice
by Lesley Parolis (25)



Innocent by Marianna Meyer (25)



Spanning the Seine by Kim Stevens (25)



Lone Ranger by Crighton Klassen (24)



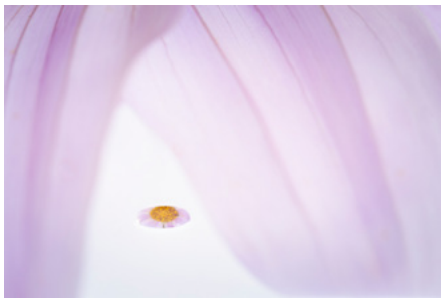
Goukamma beach by Steff Hughes (27)



Kromrivier Crossing by Brian Hallock (25)



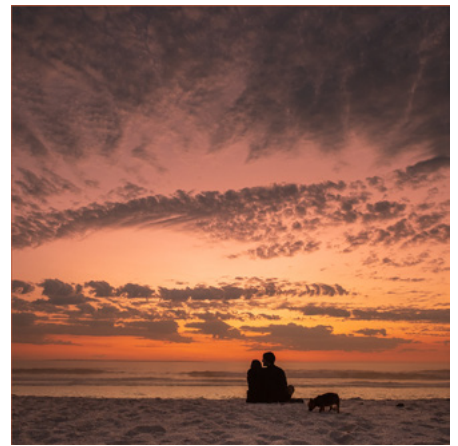
Zebra Dawn by Peter Turnbull (24)



Between the Petals by Jean Bradshaw (24)



Pedestrian crossing by Joan Ward (25)



Romantic sunset by Steff Hughes (24)



Bridge by Neels Beyers (26)



Ponte dell'Accademia
by Lesley Parolis (25)



Sossus Dune Compilation by Jeanette du Toit (27)



Dumbo district by Kim Stevens (26)

Winning images from August

Set subject: Bad Weather

Our August competition was judged by Francois Roux, PSSA President and member of Vereeniging Photographic Society, and again run very successfully via Zoom video. His comments were insightful with excellent feedback to photographers on how to improve their images. As usual the meeting was recorded and the video made available to all members for downloading.

Photovault has undergone a renewal at the end of August as the platform on which it runs was outdated and no longer supported by the various internet browsers. It will be unavailable for about a week. The administrator, Johann van der Walt, promises us some new features such as "drag and drop" for uploading files, among others, reports LESLEY PAROLIS.

The CTPS entries into the **PSSA monthly** competition for August *Brave or stupid fisherman* by Pat Scott (Senior Entry) and *Loneliness* by Gaetan Manuel (Junior Entry)

Below are the winners in the various categories together with the judge's comments.

Set Subject



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Salon) *Brave or stupid fisherman* by Pat Scott (26). A very strong photograph that captures all the drama of the situation. Excellent details in the clouds, the breaking wave and the pier structure, with enough space left in the very foreground to show part of the sea inside the harbour.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Salon) *Malmesbury Rain clouds* by Richard Goldschmidt (26). An excellent image with just a little strip of light on the canola field that makes it a strong focal point and something that is essential to a good landscape photograph. The horizon is well-placed because this image is mostly about the clouds. The processing of the image has also been well handled with neither area competing with each other.



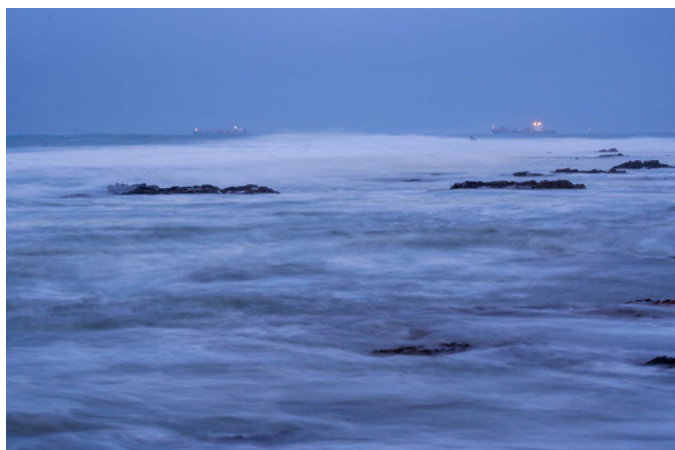
Joint Winner PDI – Set (Intermediate) *Don't attempt the mountain walk today* by Vivien Harpur (24). The layers of mountain ranges are most attractive and so is the conversion to black and white with its different tonal ranges. It takes the viewer into the depth of the image. Although there is no focal point in the image, perhaps a slight crop on the right would improve the composition.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Intermediate) *Mist Rolling in* by Judelle Drake (24). Very strong composition in the way the photographer has captured the rocky area in front and taking it to the top of the pinnacle which is covered in mist. Well exposed with lots of details in the foreground.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Intermediate) *Facing the snowstorm* by Kishore Seegobin (24). A well-captured moody scene that depicts well the wintry condition. The tree which is in sharp focus balances the wooded area on the left hand side of the image. The line on the left takes the eye into the image. Would, however, suggest bringing out some details in the middle of the image to add some more depth to it.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Beginner) *Battling the Cape of Storms* by Eric Decloedt (22). Nice use of slow shutter speed that gives the stormy effect in the water. Good exposure in rather low-light conditions with just enough highlights visible in the two boats in the background. To improve the image it needs to be cropped in on top and on the left hand side.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Intermediate) *Pouring Down* by Kishore Seegobin (24). A strong image that depicts a bad weather condition very well. The people with the umbrellas on either side of the street are well-placed to balance the scene. The shutter speed is also well chosen to capture the falling rain. However, by reducing the brightness in the upper part of the image would have added to the overall score of it.



Winner PDI – Set (Advanced) *Upcoming Storm* by Dieter Bütow (26). A very dramatic images and the way it was captured and processed gives an almost three-dimensional affect. The white edge of the incoming wave provides a good leading line into the image and to the horizon with bursting clouds and the heavy sky.



Joint Winner PDI – Set (Beginner) *Storm in Cape Town* by Walter Berndorfler (22). It is well exposed and the crashing wave is the focal point of the image. However, the large dark foreground does not really add to the image. Also the tree at the bottom edge should have been cropped out.



Joint Winner PDI - Open (Beginner) *Karoo Prinia* by Walter Berndorfler (24). Nice light on the little bird that is captured while singing. The light in and around the eye is well captured and the out-of-focus flower on the right adds to the attractiveness of the image and highlights the environment in which it can be found.

Open Subject



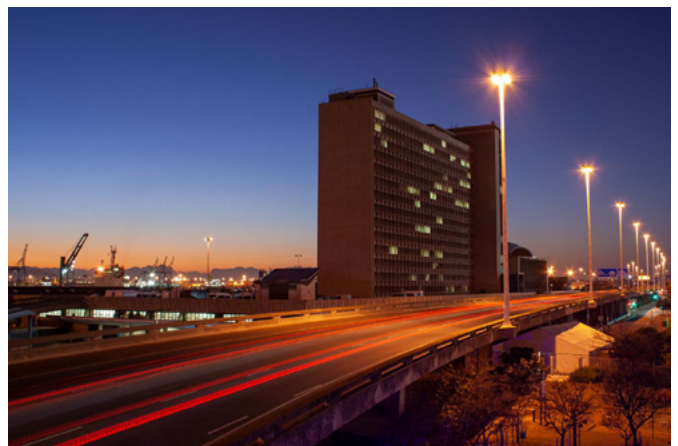
Joint Winner PDI - Open (Master) *Tubular Red Flower with Yellow Stamen* by Jeanette du Toit (26). A very strong and beautiful image with the lighting being handled extremely well. Excellent details in the stamen as well as at the top and the bottom of the flower. The attractive water droplets enhance the rest of the flower together with the dark background.



Joint Winner PDI - Open (Master) *Board sailing action* by Nicol du Toit (26). The action is very well captured, and because of its high shutter speed is pin sharp. The nice diagonals add to the images and so does the light that is caught on the board and in the wave splash. Good depth of field with the second sailor slightly out of focus and even more so towards the ship on the horizon. The warm colours in the sky add to a very attractive image.



Winner PDI – Open (Intermediate) *Loneliness* by Gaetan Manuel (26). An excellent image where the rocks in the front take the eye straight to the tree and the beautiful sky above. In this case, the placing the tree in the middle works very well. Beautiful colours and very good sharpness from the foreground to the horizon.



Joint Winner PDI - Open (Beginner) *Leaving Cape Town* by Eric Decloedt (24). The slow shutter speed created the attractive light trails of the vehicles which leads the eyes from the left all the way through the image. The positioning of the large building is very close to the middle and a slight move to the right or left would have improved the composition of the image. A slight crop on the left would also have worked.



Winner PDI – Open (Advanced) *Capped Caldron* by Crighton Klassen (25). A very slow shutter speed was chosen to show the movement of the water. The surroundings of the caldron are sharp and the lighter parts draw the eye to the beautiful colours of the sunset on the horizon. The colours, the details and the processing make for a beautiful image.

Other high-scoring images from our **August competition**

(24 & above)



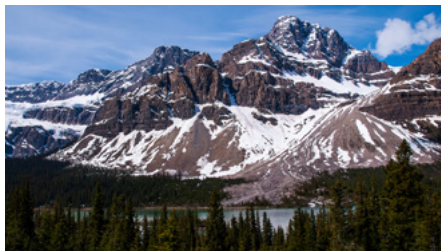
Storm over Golden Gate by Dieter Butow (24)



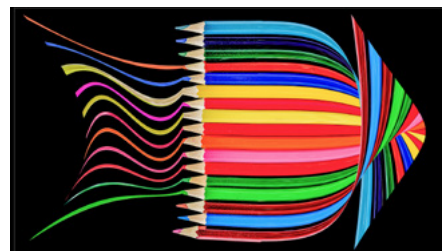
Rains are coming by Dieter Butow (24)



Arniston Wave Cut platforms
by Lambe Parolis (24)



Canadian Rockies Landscape
by Lambe Parolis (24)



Magic Fish by Theo Potgieter (24)



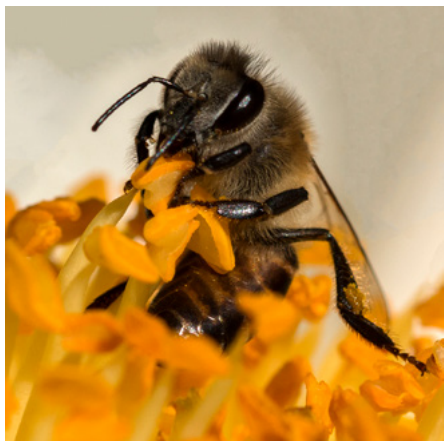
Stormy Kalk Bay by Jacoba Van Zyl (24)



Playful Baby Elephants
by Jeanette du Toit (24)



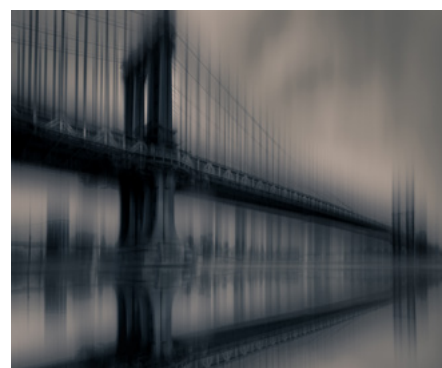
Sossus Sand Waves
by Jeanette du Toit (24)



Buzz off I was here first
by Jonathan Mark Burchell (24)



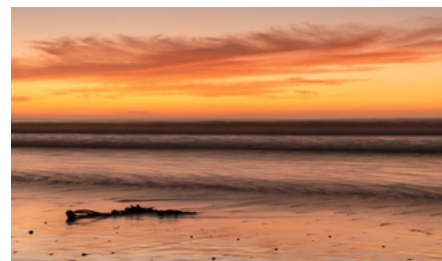
Morning dew by Jenny Morkel (24)



Suspension by Kim Stevens (24)



Sun Showers by Kim Stevens (24)



West coast sunset by Lesley Parolis (24)



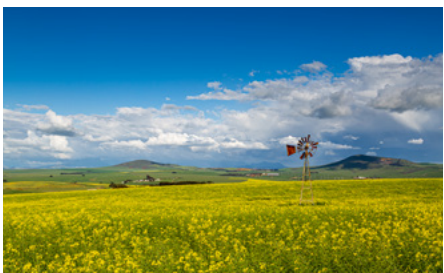
Night windows by Marianna Meyer (24)



Lake Turkana boy herder
by Roger Trythall (24)



Theewater dam by Neels Beyers (24)



Windpump in the canola
by Nicol du Toit (24)



Canola Clouds
by Richard Goldschmidt (24)



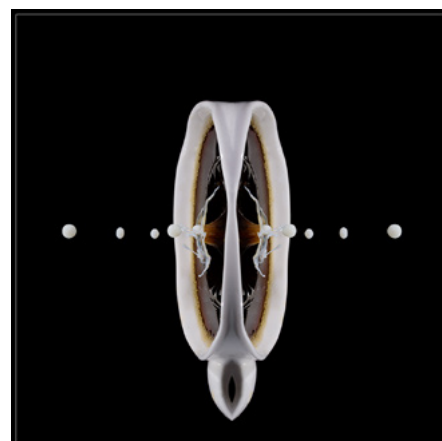
Antarctica Drake Passage
by Roger Trythall (24)



Ever Vigilant by Peter Turnbull (24)



Trunk Call by Peter Turnbull (24)



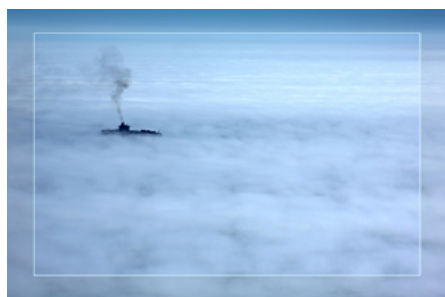
Milk Drops by Theo Potgieter (24)



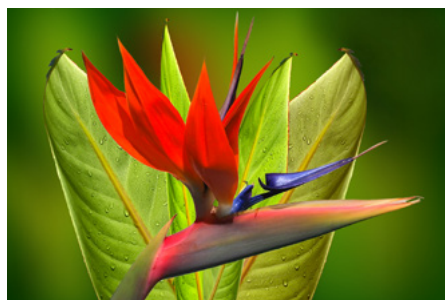
The last rays by Steff Hughes (24)



Leading into the sunset
by Steff Hughes (24)



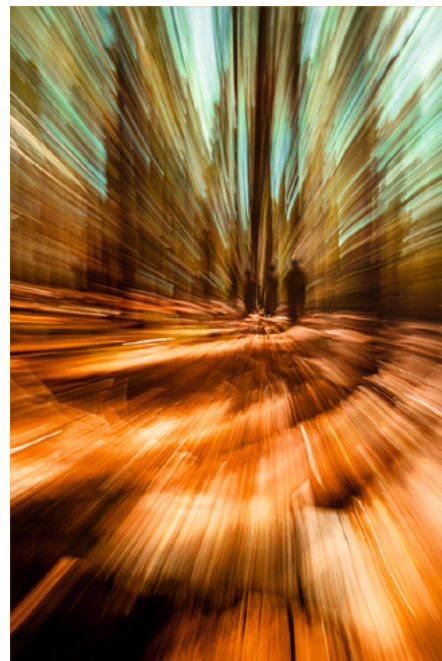
Dare to navigate by Sonja Grünbauer (24)



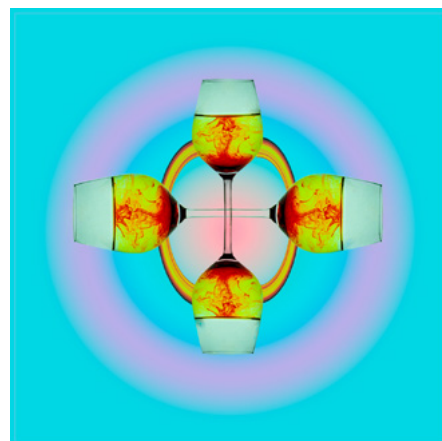
Simplicity by Sonja Grünbauer (24)



A shoulder to lean on by Vivien Harpur (24)



My anxiety by Steff Hughes (24)



Magic Potion by Theo Potgieter (24)



De Hoop dune late afternoon
by Lambe Parolis (24)

Salute to George Hallett, the chameleon storyteller

1942-2020

by Trudi du Toit

George Hallett's photographs touched people across the world where his work form part of permanent collections and feature in books, many of them he edited and designed himself. Yet, despite numerous prestigious photographic awards and commissions from the ANC, he lived and died modestly – clearly not a passenger on the gravy train.



Birds in Signal Street is one of Hallett's striking black and white images of the colourful Bo-Kaap, captured in 1996 after he again settled in Cape Town.

When 77-year old George Hallett died on July 1 this year after a long illness, he left us with a rich legacy – sadly for him not in worldly goods, but certainly in exceptional images that tell the stories of ordinary people from across the world, as well as of writers, musicians, artists and one of the most famous South Africans, Nelson Mandela. Plus a significant cache of memories of a raconteur who was often the soul of the party, always an inspiring teacher, book editor and designer and a talented street photographer who would blend so well with his surroundings that people often did not realise they were being photographed.

IMAGES OF CHANGE



Images of change features Hallett's images recording the return of Nelson Mandela in the early 1990's, with text by Pallo Jordan. The cover image tells the story of that stormy pre-election period: while Madiba is discussing the violence that almost derailed the election with then president FW de Klerk, a domestic worker in the background is going about her daily job at a Johannesburg guest house.

Even though he was invited into the inner circle of the ANC when they commissioned him to introduce Madiba to the world via photos in the run up to the 1994 elections, Hallett clearly never boarded the gravy train.

Nor did his fame translate into wealth. Even if it came in the form of an award like the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French Ministry of Culture in 2016, two Hasselblad awards for contributions to photography in Sweden and France, two World Press Photo awards, one a Golden Eye, nearly 30 exhibitions across the world, works included in 20-odd collections in galleries and museums in Amsterdam, Oslo, New York, UK cities and of course, Cape Town, and contributions to numerous books.



Dumile Feni (artist) and Louis Moholo (jazz drummer) are amongst the many South Africans Hallett photographed in London in 1971.

To help pay his medical bills his daughter, Maymoena, sold some handprints of his images. Yet, generous like her father, she very kindly gave Cape Camera permission to use his images to illustrate this article.

When Hallett agreed to lead an outing of CTPS members to the Bo-Kaap in 2013, he didn't own a car and Nicol du Toit collected him from his modest home in Claremont, where he lived after he returned to Cape Town in 1995 until his death this year.

Some club members might also have met him in 2009 when he was a speaker at the PSSA Congress in Hermanus. They would have been struck by what Maymoena describes as "his light, his laughter, his boisterous personality, his outrageous jokes and being the life and soul of many a party," she wrote on Facebook.

Friends also describe him as a "born performer and raconteur". He was "a chameleon who knew how to blend in with the background, and observe his photographic subjects' burdens and most vulnerable states," Neelika Jayawardane wrote in a perceptive article in Mail & Guardian. "One would not necessarily realise that the slim, lanky, man with a small camera, standing unobtrusively in a crowd, had taken photographs that broke through the reserve of seasoned charmers and politicians."



Westminster Restaurant District Six, 1968, a handprint, was part of Hallett's first exhibition in Cape Town before he left for overseas.

His good friend, photographer and founder of the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Rashid Lombard, agrees that "he was that silent observer photographing people with dignity and elegance." In an interview with Quinton Mtshali he explained that Hallett could blend in as street photographer because he always carrying a point-and-shoot camera.

"You bury your ego, and that's what I wanted," former minister Pallo Jordan explained why he selected Hallett to photograph Nelson Mandela, reports Hallett's biographer Hunter Kolon. As a lecturer Hallett showed students how to turn the mundane into the spectacular, said photographer Gary van Wyk on social media. He was a student of photography at the Peninsula University of Technology in 2003 and "George introduced us to documentary photography and turned my world right side up. He shared photographs he had made at Red Cross Children's Hospital with his Leica M6 and a 35mm lens, I was completely blown away by how he made something so simple look like the most beautiful thing."



George Hallett, always the performer, "conducts" an outing of CTPS members to the Bo-Kaap in 2013. Photo by Nicol du Toit.

Having grown up on the Cape flats in the 1940's and '50's, Hallett was used to make do with little money as a child living with his grandparents in Hout Bay, and later his mother in Athlone. According to Jayawardane he was notoriously economical with his film and he only took one or two frames of a subject. "Yet each portrait that Hallett took is extraordinary — be they of those history has now marked as villain or hero; or the countless South African exiles in Europe with whom he forged close bonds, and whose loneliness, hardships and pain were invisible to a larger public."

It has been well-documented how as a school boy Hallett would be fascinated by how the camera captured the scenes in the Saturday night movies in the school hall, instead of the plot or movie stars like his friends. "I became the camera," he told photographer Paul Weinberg who interviewed him for the exhibition and book project *Then and Now* in 2007. David Goldblatt, Guy Tillim, and Gisèle Wulfsohn were among the eight South African photographers featured in the project. Hallett also told John Edwin Mason in a rare interview in 2014 "I didn't become the characters; I was the observer. Eventually when I became a photographer those powers of observing held me in good stead because when you do documentary photography you don't direct the photography. You're supposed to stand back and observe—or go forward or sideways—but you've got to photograph the reality in front of you."

Yet, his choice of photography as career was somewhat coincidental. A friend, Clarence Coulson, worked at Mr Halim's Photographic Studio in Hanover Street, District Six, and he became a tad miffed with Hallett's critical comments about "wrong lighting or angle" or "too much flash" – with the inevitable response that if he (Hallett) knew so much about photography why isn't he taking pictures himself?



Jann Turner meeting Eugene de Kock was one of the most enigmatic images from Hallett's coverage of the Truth and Reconciliation hearings in 1997. Her father, academic Rick Turner, was murdered by one of the hit squads commanded by De Kock, yet she developed sympathy for him after the remorse he expressed during her numerous visits while he was in jail.

The penny dropped and young George approached Mr Halim for a job. He was sent out on the streets with a Rangefinder camera, warned not to change any settings, and convince people to have their photos taken in bright sunlight for 40p each. But, a gangster he encountered in a bar, asked for a moody picture with smoke curling from his cigarette, just like Humphrey Bogart.

Hallett changed the camera settings, cultivated a steady Bogeywannabee gangster clientele, and became a photographer. He was self-taught, except for doing a photography correspondence course offered by the City and Guilds, London, in 1962 – which must have been a challenge in the pre-internet days. At South Peninsula High he was fortunate to be taught by novelist Richard Rive, who introduced his students to non-education-department-sanctioned South African writers and poets, including the local writer James Matthews.

In 1966 District Six was declared a white area and the residence were told that they had to move to the Cape Flats. Matthews, and a mutual friend artist and printmaker Peter Clarke, encouraged Hallett to begin photographing life in District Six before the demolition started. His photographs, documenting the vibrant community, are today some of the few remaining his-

torical reminders of the area. They were exhibited at the Artists' Gallery in Cape Town in 1970 – the same year that the last bulldozers moved in – and over the years in various other exhibitions in Cape Towns and across the world.

Despite doing some freelance work for Drum magazine, Hallett



Peter Clarke, artist and printmaker, encouraged Hallett to capture life in District Six before it was demolished.

became frustrated with the reluctance of local newspapers to employ him because he was coloured and the struggle to make ends meet. After he was stabbed on the Cape Flats, he decided to move to London. There, his portfolio soon secured him a job as a photographer for the Times Higher Education Supplement.

There were several South African poets, musicians and writers living in London and one of them introduced Hallett to James Currey, who was the editor of the Heinemann African Writers Series. During a jolly lunch fuelled by a lot of beer and cottage pie, Hallett was offered a job as book cover designer when he falsely claimed that he had experience in the field. His first cover design of a photo collage to create an African mask, so impressed Currey that he was employed as designer, book editor and photographer by Heinemann for the next twelve years. According to Lombard, with whom Hallett collaborated on five books on the Jazz festival as photo editor, "George had a special eye as an editor."

After his death, several of his exile friends shared tales on social media about Hallett's generosity – he offered many of them accommodation in London and Paris, he cooked them meals and took their portraits to send to their families at Christmas.

A year after arriving in London, Hallett was exhibiting with the artists Gerard Sekoto and Louis Maurice in Paris and Amsterdam. His District Six work was also shown in a solo exhibition in Amsterdam. In between designing books, he taught photography at the Central London Polytechnic.

In 1974 Hallett visited a German friend, Lilli, in the South of France – they fell in love, married, had children and settled on a farm in the small town of Boule d'Amont close to the Pyrenees, from where Hallett would commute to London to do his book designs.

According to his biographer he eventually found this idyllic lifestyle a bit boring and in 1980 the family briefly returned to Cape Town so that he could be close to his dying father. His marriage to a white woman from Europe, however, created problems in Apartheid South Africa and after his father's death they moved



Pleading with Debt Collector tells another poignant story from District Six in 1968.

to Harare, where he taught photojournalism.

Accused by the authorities of teaching the Zimbabwean students more politics than photography, he gladly accepted the position of "artist in residence" and teacher at the University of Illinois in the US. He got the opportunity to travel and meet minority communities, whom he photographed, and exhibited his photos at five other US universities.

Sadly, his marriage didn't survive this nomadic existence and after his American tenure, Hallett moved to Amsterdam where he had several exhibitions, taught photography to young Turkish and Moroccan women, and photographed Islamic refugees. In 1990, when the then Natal province was engulfed in violence between the IFP and UDF/ANC, a French news agency commissioned him to cover this ... the slaughter he witnessed affected him so profoundly that he returned to France after a few months.



Poet and novelist Sipho Sepalma.

A few years later, he was back in South Africa, on his most famous commission ever: introducing Nelson Mandela to the world after his image was banned for 27 years. Hallett's images "not only changed peoples' perceptions of the ANC leader, but they helped to change the world's perceptions of South Africa," wrote his biographer, Kolon. "They helped to 're-fashion reflections about the 'new' nation' that aided the world in understanding what was going on during this complex and chaotic time in the nation's history."

One of these images, of apron-clad ladies running open-armed

towards Mandela, with his back to the camera, he titled *First Encounter*. The women's joy personified the joy of a nation, sick of violence, hoping for a new beginning. "That picture with the women running towards Mandela — this was the first time they had actually seen him close up and it was an incredible experience, because for the first time I saw the whole country, and the joy and the hope that people had", Hallett told Weinberg in the *Then and Now* video.



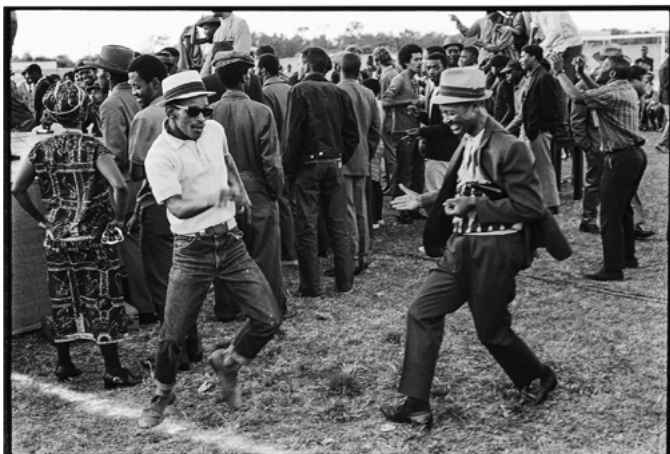
First Encounter, among the favourite images of Hallett's daughter Maymoena, excellently illustrates Hallett's approach to telling a photographic story by focusing on the joy of the ordinary people, while the back view of Madiba is enough to explain the source of their pleasure.

After the 1994 election Hallett returned to Paris, but the following year he moved back to settle in Cape Town. Two years later he was again commissioned to be one of the official photographers of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Listening to the harrowing stories affected him profoundly.

"I spent a few nights with George listening to loud jazz and lots to drink to calm his anger," recounts Lombard, who was also photographing the TRC hearings. "I understood the feelings. Music was [our] therapy. Yet he went ahead and captured the most sensitive portrait of Eugene de Kock and Jann Turner, daughter of activist Rick Turner, who was assassinated by de Kock's hit-squad."

His work for the TRC contributed to another assignment for the Nobel Peace Centre in Oslo, which included a travelling exhibition, *Strengths and Convictions: The life and times of the South African Nobel Peace laureates Albert Luthuli, Desmond Tutu, FW de Klerk and Nelson Mandela*.

For the next two decades Cape Town remained his base, from where he continued exhibiting internationally, designing and editing books, teaching photography and introducing people to the Bo-Kaap and other scenic Cape Town venues.



Recreating Memories: Dancers 1967 is another often-seen Hallett image.

A friend, former Cape Times editor Ryland Fisher, says he was one of the best photographers in the world: "One of my favourite exhibitions of George was when he had an exhibition at Bo Kaap museum and it featured pictures taken in the Bo Kaap and surrounds. Some beautiful pictures...and they were all in black and white. So imagine the colourful Bo Kaap houses being pictures in black and white...and he pulled it off magnificently".



Shoe Shine Fantasy, 1983, illustrates a wicked sense of humour.



The Wedding again tells a whole story by focusing on an intimate moment.

"George was driven by a clear consciousness of the power of creative expression. I believe this made him one of the most sensitive people I met in my life. I know the common expression of being a fly on the wall, but for me this is nowhere near describing how George would be present in the space without being intrusive. For me, he was more like the oxygen we breathe to sustain our lives."

— Musician and poet Eugene Skeef



(from left) *Ghost of Magritte* by Hanli Smit, *Untitled* by Lien Botha and *Roadside Baobab* by Marlene Neumann

Going beyond club photography

Can we, should we and what then?

by Antenie Carstens (FPSSA, FPSSA-AV, SPSSA, ARPS)

It is safe to say that an artist who uses the medium of photography, most probably will not belong to a photographic club, national or international photographic organisation such as the Photographic Society of South Africa (PSSA) or the Photographic Society of America (PSA) although there is a chance that the latter may accommodate the true photographic artist as well. In the case of the Royal Photographic Society, it is most probable the status of this organisation which will attract the true photographic artist as well and not only the ordinarily amateur photographer.

It must also be noted that a very high honour such as a Honorary Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society was bestowed to well-known photographic artists in the past, for example Rineke Dijkstra and others, which is not the case in South Africa for photographic artists, at least none as far as I know. In the field of photojournalism however, PSSA awarded well-known local photographers such as Alfred Kumalo and Peter Magubane with an honorary Fellowship, but other than that no photographic artist, not even a photographer such as David Goldblatt. We need to ask why not? Why does our own organisation not acknowledge their contributions to photography as an artist?

Are clubs and judges inhibiting artistic expressions?

In our South African case, it is doubtful if we will ever see the professional photographic artist joining PSSA. We have seen some of them at congresses indeed, photographers such as Marlene Neumann, Martin Osner, Lien Botha and Mikhael Subotzky. But they will not be interested in joining an organisation such as PSSA or a local club for that matter. The question is why do we not attract those artists who use the same photographic medium as our club members? Does it mean that the photographic clubs are doing something wrong, or do these artists see clubs at a very different level and if so why? Are the clubs too restrictive in the representation of 'photographic art'? Are the clubs less creative and actually suppressing all creativity?

Often our photographic organisations invite these artists to our conferences as lecturers at congresses and we love their work and presentation, but when they have left, all new ideas are gone with them. In my case, I always admired the work of Barbara Kruger since I saw her work, and that is the reason why I started to apply some of her techniques, obviously with my own interpretation and use for it. I found it striking and it is used for bringing the message across much stronger. The question is who is going to stop her or judge her for doing that? Her work is exhibited in major art galleries around the world; and she is not the only photographic artists, as you may be aware. Other well-known artists whose work are worth looking at include Stephen Shore, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Jeff Wall, David Moore, Anna

Linderstam, Cindy Sherman, Nan Goldin, Gregory Crewdson, Ellen Jantzen and Erlend Mørk - just to name a few. But dare to submit work in clubs with similar themes or styles and look what happens. The question is why is this kind of photography generally not successful?

Now we also need to look at photographic honours within our own club and national organisation to add fuel to my view. Most of our clubs are familiar with the PSSA system of honours whereby an honour of Licentiate, Associate and Fellow can be bestowed on the member who applies for it by means of a 'panel' of work, and if successful, the award is made and the successful candidate can use the letters LPSSA, APSSA and FPS-SA behind his or her name, a great honour indeed or is it? The question is what type of photography do we see mostly from applicants who apply for honours or submit images for competition at our clubs for the purpose of promotion and climbing the ladder of achievement?

Should our guidelines be less rigid and encourage more creative freedom?

Within the clubs, which normally are affiliated to the national organisation like the PSSA, there is a set of accepted guidelines to enable the photographer to 'grow' in status and to be 'promoted' to higher ranks by means of a grading system which can be a star system or levels such as beginner, intermediate and advanced. There is nothing wrong with this approach, but do we see any photographic work of any artistic style with this approach at all? One of the problems which discourage the development of a style, seems to me, is the 'one-image-only' mentality, whereby a member is judged and promoted only by means of the successes of single images, whether at club, salon or PSSA honours level.

The honours applications are specifically biased towards single images and although the panel is supposed to be a coherent panel, the panel cannot be judged within the context it is presented, as no statement of intent is required. This means that an excellent panel as a body of work may fail due to the fact that the context cannot be explained to the judges as in the

case of the Royal Photographic Society applications where the success of a body of work is heavily dependent on the statement of intent, which is used as a benchmark to decide if the images reflect the statement of intent. In this case, the chance that an artistic panel can pass is a lot greater comparing to the same panel in South Africa for example.

We need to keep in mind that most, if not all, mission and vision statements of clubs and national photographic organisations such as our own PSSA, states clearly that the aim is to promote the Art and Science of photography. If this is indeed the case, why is photography within these organisations not judged as art, but rather seen as mostly a technical exercise at the time of judging?

To establish if this is indeed the case, one needs to take inventory and analyse a typical (i) club competition, (ii) a salon and (iii) the PSSA honours results to see if there is indeed a trend. I have set myself the task of doing a general and 'unscientific' exercise to see what percentage of work submitted for these competitions are indeed of an artistic nature. I expected it to be very low and it is indeed the case. The question is why? Is it merely a case of members not being interested or are they discouraged by our judges who often cannot 'see' or 'identify' these unique designs, stories and concepts and thereby disheartening members to further explore the medium of art photography?

Just a brief note about my procedure which I have used to calculate the percentages: First of all I have used a recent club competition entries in the Open category, secondly the Open sections of a salon of the colour and monochrome sections and thirdly the successful PSSA honours panels publication of 2019. It is common knowledge that the open category allows any image to be submitted if there is not a specific category provision, and if for instance a wildlife image is submitted in the open category despite the fact that there is a wildlife specific category, then it must be assumed that the image is manipulated in some way that is not allowed in the wildlife category. The open section in clubs and salons may therefore contain a mixture of wildlife images as well. As there is never a category for visual art for example, we will also find these images intermixed in the open category, which means they need to face fierce competition with abstract, pictorial, landscape, wildlife, nature and other images.

So for the analysis of the three levels, club, salon and honours, I've tried to classify the images into categories which can mostly be clearly identified. But I must add that in some instances there could be overlaps that an image could also be classified in another section, leaving a 'gray' area, still the majority of clearly identifiable categories is possible despite the possible overlaps with other. In this case the potential difference in percentages would not really make a significant difference.

When we inspect the 'ranking' column, we can clearly see the overall popular photographic genres of clubs, salons and honours panels. Furthermore it is clear that even in the Open category, wildlife is generally the highest percentage, followed by pictorial and landscape and nature. The percentage of artistic photography is the highest (as these were competition entries of CTPS) generally in club competitions, but again these are numbers in terms of CTPS and it would be interesting to see what the percentage would be for other clubs. It is clear that any artistic entries are very low on the list, not only as entries but also for acceptances as I will explain later with one case study.

How did we lose Freeman Patterson's teachings?

Before I present to you a few images for discussion, may I remind readers that a strong movement as a result of the desert workshops presented by the Canadian photographer and lecturer, Freeman Patterson in the 80's, resulted in a new awareness for more artistic expression by means of the photographic medium.

Numbers are percentages of the total number of the entries of each category.

	PSSA Honours	Salon Open Colour	Salon Open Mono	Club (CTPS) Competition	RANK
Wildlife	33	17	23	5	1
Pictorial	8	20	22	15	2
Landscape/ Seascape/Cityscape	13	4	10	18	3
Nature	5	14	8	12	4
Altered reality/ composite/abstract	4	12	6	5	6
Sport/Action	10	5	6	5	6
Portraits	12	5	1	2	7
Close-up/macro	4	7	6	3	13
Artistic	2	1	3	13	9
Stilllife	2	10	6	0	10
People/Journalism	1	4	4	5	11
Architecture	2	1	4	3	12
Documentary	4	0	1	2	13
	100	100	100	100	

Freeman also presented lectures at the annual PSSA congresses in the 80's, 90's and in 2006. What followed was a renewed interest in a 'different' approach to photography and rather by 'rejecting' the 'new' approach, a clear message was sent to PSSA to be more open for diversity. The result was the establishment of the Visual Art division in PSSA in the late 90's which was 'officially' recognised by PSSA in 2000.

It would be good to remind members of this 'new' approach which was not met with open arms by many traditional members, and it took a lot of work to prove that there is a place for more artistic photographic work in clubs and PSSA. The main drivers and promoters for the Visual Art division, were Marike Bruwer, Izak van Niekerk, Nicole Palmer, Michael Flemming, Paddy Howes, JJ van Heerden, Wicus Leeuwner and myself, all from the Western Cape and a few members from Gauteng, i.e. Huck Orbin, Rothea Olivier, Geoff and Brenda Ortlepp and others. So with great fanfare the following quote comes from the editorial of PSSA magazine, IMAGE, January/February 2000:

'One of the biggest accomplishments of PSSA last year was the successful launching of the Visual Arts Division. Antenie Carstens had the vision of having a division where members could take any number of photographs and share them with others without the fear of a set of predefined rules being implemented to coerce them along a path they did not wish to follow. The fruit of his and a few others work was the successful presentation of this style of photography at the PSSA congress held at Velddrif in October (1999).'

In my capacity as chairman of the Visual Arts Division, my response to PSSA was published in the Jan/Feb 2000 issue of IMAGE and reads as follows:

'I think that the huge interest and many applications received for honours, as well as the number of successes, prove that there is a healthy interest in the division. This is the good news, but the bad news is the attitude of some members (and this is true from the general members right through to the more senior officials) towards this division. The (honours) statistics for the Visual Art division also tell a story. Of the total 24 applications, 15 were successful (62%) ranging from Commercial colour prints, colour slides, monochrome prints, colour self-printed panels and audio-visuals. This is significant because the full spectrum was covered i.e. at

least one entry in each of these categories.'

It is also worth noting the report by the late Barrie Wilkins, the chairman of PSSA honours and award division at that time, who wrote: 'The introduction of Visual Arts into our Society has met with compliments and criticism - from thanks for 'at least listening to other side of the story' to 'why do we need them'. We cannot please everybody, all the time, but we can be open to new ideas and different ways of seeing. Visual Arts is nothing new, the so called 'free photographers' have been around for a long time. However, as many of them will testify, to obtain honours in pictorial photography was becoming almost impossibility, unless one followed the tried and tested rules.'

The problem with photography of an artistic kind was well illustrated by means of a letter to the editor by the late Marike Bruwer, published in IMAGE of January/February 2000 (p35):

'I have entered every salon for the past two years, visual Arts is NOT accepted in ordinary salons. I can send you my result sheets. None of my 'Visual Arts photography' got acceptances in salons, with the exception of one in the border International last year'. In the Kodak super circuit, I got a score of 6 for all my visual arts slides. And this was all submitted in the Contemporary section. (In those days images were judged out of a total of 15, i.e. 5 per judge, so acceptance levels were usually by 10, 11 or 12 depending on the standard of the salon, a 6 score being extremely low). The only section where one can submit them is the contemporary with all the digital images, which in my mind should be separated from Visual Arts altogether, and in saying that, I do definitely do not say that digital can't be Visual Arts, and vice versa.'

Huck Orban hits the nail on the head with his view of Visual Art photography in IMAGE, April, 2000, (p10):

'Another reason for the intolerance we see towards free photography is the lack of standards by which it can be judged. Imagine a panel of judges being presented with an abstract picture lacking a centre of interest. It's also unsharp and without apparent theme or composition. It's given a low score simply because it presents them with a dilemma. Sometimes it gets a high score, because they won't accede to the dilemma. The problem here is knowledge or the lack of it. If clubs spend less time competing, and rather got their members (and other experts) to talk on subjects like the history of art, contemporary photographic trends and the like, they would widen their scope and reinforce their knowledge. Instead of going FOR the picture, they could go for knowledge ABOUT the picture. Once they acquire the knowledge, appreciation for pictures with a difference comes naturally. There is a photographic world outside of clubs and PSSA and we are getting left behind'.

Lastly a quote by our former CTPS president, Roy Johannesson, on the Visual Art issue (IMAGE, July, 2000, p30):

'Photography is a Visual Art form. Art is defined as 'imaginative creation' in painting, architecture sculpture music and poetry. Is it not time that 'photography' be added to that definition? Maybe even digital! Evaluating a work of photographic art requires the viewer to be emotionally reactive, either negatively or positively. To say 'I don't relate to the visual' is therefore negative, and must therefore be challenged'. It sometimes requires an understanding of the visual arts far beyond the photographic techniques employed to capture the image portrayed. Has the time not arrived for the complete scrapping of the established method at evaluating the photographic visual art form?'

From the above quotes, it is clear that we are lacking something, even in the year 2020!

Should we rethink our judging criteria when being presented with images that don't fit the traditional box?

Let me demonstrate with a few examples the need for a different approach to judging visual art In South Africa: The image *Contrary* by Stephen Burgstahler (member of Tygerberg Photo-

graphic Society) is worth a proper analysis in terms of the national and international success. This image was submitted to eight local South African salons with only two acceptances, but the overseas results tell a different story. This very strong graphic image, which was well thought out and of excellent quality, with a conversion to black and white, got 17 acceptances from different overseas salons as well as the recipient of two Certificates of Merit. The statistics are supporting my view that artistic images are not fully appreciated in South Africa and the question is why not?



Contrary by Stephen Burgstahler

Images have different meanings and good judges should be able to 'see' various aspects of images and comment accordingly. Some have good lines, others good design, some others paradoxes, metaphors and symbolic meaning such as *Final Destiny* by Jan Marais (Paarl Photographic Society) which is a powerful image as a result of the composition and light as well as the monochrome presentation. Another symbolic meaning could be that the 'shadows' are merely the 'faceless onlookers' onto the reality of the solid cross, which is the only real object in the image. From the composition it is clear that the photographer gave it good thought before deciding on his final position in relation to the objects in the image so that lighter objects are in front of the darker parts and darker objects against the lighter parts. The division on the right hand side is also noticeable, dividing the image into 1/3 and 2/3's. Yet, the judge could not see it nor comment about the excellent characteristics of the image. The possible 'problem' with the image is either the subject matter (about life issues and the end of it) or the unconventional composition, which creates tension in the image.



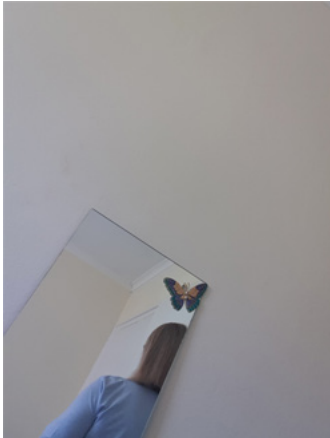
Closer to home we have the excellent artistic image *Fishing hut remnants off Pellestrina island* by Leslie Parolis, illustrating a good understanding of minimalism. Again a monochromatic image and a very simple composition with the objects basically floating in space. Another 'close to home' image is the artisti-



Fishing hut remnants off Pellestrina island by Lesley Parolis

cally done graphic image *Shadow of Nadal* by Nicol du Toit. Although both have completely different approaches, they have the same impact in terms of visual art. The question would be how judges at salons and honours level will rate them - probably not good.

To make matters worse the image *Seen from another angle* by Marguerite Waite, a member of Helderberg Photographic Society, received the following comment from the judges. 'Here is one of the pictures I don't understand. It's from another angle - makes it a little bit different, I don't know enough about pictures like this to be able to judge, so I'll just leave it at that. I am sorry I cannot offer a better opinion on that one. Hopefully the scoring will give some idea about how other people think about it, but it is one of those that I am not able to comment on any further'. Unfortunately, the other judges present did not comment, so it was not possible to hear what they thought of the image and no help or further discussion was offered as a way to clarify any uncertainty.



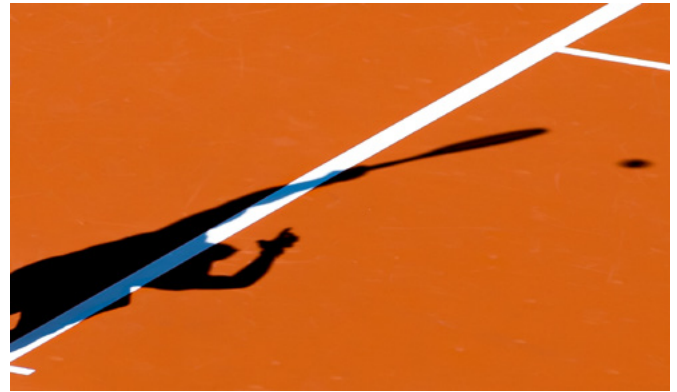
Seen from another angle by Marguerite Waite

art and exhibition world. We need to ask questions and debate images in order to learn and improve understanding.

Are we sacrificing creativity for pleasing the judges?

What is often clear from judges' comments is the fact that it is really a difficult task to analyse when there is not enough background and that the photographic clubs and members most often choose the easy way out by submitting images which are familiar, well known and less daring or exploratory of nature. Therefore, creativity is often pushed aside for the sake of promotion using the ladder to climb the ranks. I repeat again, that there is nothing wrong with this approach, but do we really grow in our art or are we just satisfying the judges with all too familiar submissions without challenging them?

It is also worth mentioning that often there is a cross pollination between different artists where learning could be from, and



Shadow of Nadal by Nicol du Toit

to, in other words, the learning process reaches out to both sides. For example, Rene Magritte was in regular contact with Man Ray (Emmanuel Radnitsky) which, I suppose would have an influence on each other's artwork. The same can be said of Alfred Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keeffe. Even today we may find photographers who find inspiration from other artists. I find inspiration from the work of Barbara Kruger for some reason as well as other well-known photo artists, while Hanli Smit who won the runner up image for the Marike Bruwer trophy in 2014, found inspiration from the work of Magritte to produce her image *Ghost of Magritte*.

My view of these images is that they simply cannot successfully compete and come do justice in the open categories. That is why PSSA created the Visual Art division in the late 90's, to offer a platform where appropriate judges can evaluate these images. But what about clubs who should 'feed' the PSSA environment and put pressure onto the honours division to appoint judges that can handle these challenging and unfamiliar images to do them justice?

Conclusion

So can we try to answer the questions I have stated in the title of this article, (1) can we, (2) should we and (3) what then? Well the answer to the first question is a NO, simply because there is no provision and no (or perhaps less than a handful) competent judges with background knowledge and passion to widen his/her horizon to judge according to fresh ideas and with knowledge of the outside art world.

The answer to the second question is a personal issue that each one of us needs to be honest with. What would YOU want to achieve with our personal photography? Do you want to develop a personal style and make personal statements about the different aspects of life or just to explore the artistic qualities of different aspects of design by using the medium of photography? My response would be a YES!

The third answer will probably emanate from question two, because if the answer is NO, then 'stay as you are' will be satisfying and you may be happy with your affiliation to a camera club or society. On the other hand, if the answer is YES, then there is only one way and that is you need to leave the club scene and follow your own path and there are members who are actually leaving the club scene as well as PSSA at this very moment.

The ideal situation however, should be to facilitate both of these approaches in our clubs and society environment. But, as we have seen from above, that is not possible, at least not yet and not enough. The final question is, how long must we wait for that acknowledgement? A step forward which was taken as far back as the year 2000, within PSSA, has fallen away or has been forgotten again, due to our, mostly South African lack of understanding the broader photographic medium within our clubs and national society.