



# Knysna Photographic Society

<https://www.knysnaphotosoc.com/>

NEWSLETTER: November 2023

Picture of the Month

Senior



Spring – Cathy Birkett

# Junior

## Picture of the Month



Jonny Cash – Thorsten

All other high scoring images are available on the website at  
<https://www.knysnaphotosoc.com/photo-albums>

To view click on the link above

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## Our image galleries

To see all the images that scored well and to follow the links to the resources, dates and so on click on the link below

<https://www.knysnaphotosoc.com>

The Knysna Photographic Society is proudly affiliated with the  
PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA



# Message from the Chair

**November 2023**

We have held our last meeting for this calendar year. The festive season is nearly upon us. We take this opportunity to wish all our members a very happy, safe and restful year end. Safe travels for all those who are travelling. Merry Christmas to those members who celebrate Christmas.

We hope you are all re-energised and ready to capture more wonderful images in 2024.

## **New members**

There are no new members this month.

## **Junior judging initiative.**

Alan King has very kindly offered to collate all the judge's comments, on junior images, and pass these on to our junior members, after each club night.

Thank you, Alan, for doing this and we hope it is of significant value to our junior members.

## **Judges training:**

The next Judges Accreditation Programme (JAP) starts early next year, If you would like to join this programme, whether you are a judge or not, please contact Anne Hrabar.

## **How can we improve?**

Following some feedback from one of our newer members, we are planning to re-introduce our "Show and Tell" discussion after each meeting. At our January meeting, members can choose a maximum of three images, screened at that meeting, for discussion at the next meeting, assuming the authors are available and willing. This will help members get insight on how to achieve specific objectives for their own photography.

If you have any other suggestions on how we can change for the better, please let Secretary Pam know, so we can table these suggestions at our next committee meeting.

### **Club User/Interest groups**

The club operates a number of WhatsApp groups for meaningful communication, with as little spam as possible.

These groups are listed below. If you would like to join or leave any of these groups, please contact the respective group Administrator.

<b>General chat group</b>	<b>Luana Laubscher</b>	<b>082 468 9153</b>
<b>Cameracraft group</b>	<b>Doug Emanuel</b>	<b>082 654 8200</b>
<b>Post processing group</b>	<b>Peter Oosthuizen</b>	<b>082 555 0479</b>
<b>Outings group</b>	<b>Gary Hansel</b>	<b>076 243 4817</b>

Other groups will be opened from time to time, such as congress groups and the like.

See you at the Turbine Hotel on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

Doug Emanuel

# Salon Acceptances – November

## 24<sup>th</sup> PSSA Up and Coming Salon

Gary	1	
Kim	2	
Penny	4	
Terrance	5	
Alan	8	includes 1 COM.
Claudette	9	includes 2 COMs.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU ALL!!**

## FOUR NATIONS INTERNATIONAL SALON

Anne	1
Carol	1

## 18<sup>th</sup> KRUGERSDORP SALON

Alan	2	
Carol	2	
Eileen	2	
Peter	3	
Anne	4	
Cathy	4	includes 1 COM.

## 5<sup>th</sup> WESTVILLE SALON

Alan	1
Claudette	1
Eileen	1
Peter	2
Anne	4
Carol	5



## Editorial – Peter Oosthuizen

### Thoughts on Judging, the benefits of being a judge, and JAP

After a lifetime of photography, well, to be accurate, using a camera, joining a camera club was a big step. Not knowing what to expect, it was strange to see my images, my babies, up on the big screen being criticized.

“Who are these guys calling into question the focus of my 1968 Pentax Spotmatic and its Super Takumar lenses? How dare they say that the shadows lack detail, and the bright areas are burnt out! This is a personal attack, and I am being judged, not my pictures!”

I’m pretty sure that most new members and even some more experienced seniors still experience similar emotions, particularly when a great deal of time has been spent in finding the shot and nurturing it through the post processing cycle, sometimes over and over again.

After a while as a junior one realizes that there is a handicap system in place and that a 10 is not too bad and that it’s worth a gold! While a senior will only get a bronze for the same image.

Eventually, one becomes less defensive and more receptive to the comments which are, or should be, delivered in such a way that even though it may feel like “go to hell” one pays attention and looks forward to the trip.

As a result of the judges’ comments, I found myself becoming more meticulous, thinking about the fundamentals of exposure, sharpness and composition and gradually, very gradually, moving through the ranks.

When I reached three star level, Anne prevailed upon me to start ghost judging which was an education in itself. Live judging is difficult, and you have to get your thoughts focused very quickly.

In giving feedback, Anne described me as the “hanging judge” because I was always a point or two below the club judges. It was a worthwhile experience as after a while I found myself seeing the images and not just looking at them.

Ansel Adams said that there are always two people in every photograph, the photographer and the viewer which emphasizes that we are all judges of every image we see.

The present emphasis is on the “story”, which can be regarded as the effect the image has on the audience. Does it arouse emotion? Does the imagination fill in the blanks? Do landscapes tell stories. And so on.

After some training at the club, in person, by various visiting specialists, and later during Covid on Zoom. I was let loose on the members.

Despite appearing to be confident I found judging daunting and, as is the case with all things in life, I had good and bad nights. However, I do try to judge the image as presented and hopefully to provide constructive comment where possible.

Some categories are more straightforward than others and I like most of my fellow club judges have some that I prefer to others.

“Creative “ is a category that is contentious and that many judges shy away from. Our definition is quite clear in that “ The final CA image will combine the author's post processing skill and creativity, by the addition of elements from different photos resulting in an image that goes beyond the straight forward rendering of a scene.”

Many images entered in this category are of single images with unusual post processing or abstracts. Initially I hated having to express an opinion based on photographic first principles but now I find myself, like Doug, to be privileged to be called upon to evaluate them.

The first thing is to divorce the image from representational, literal photography and to see the images as the product of an artist for whom the camera is a tool, and the digital darkroom, the canvas. The product can be pleasing to the eye or not – it is art – and while some are devotees of the impressionists others remain rooted in the renaissance. It is all taste. So how to judge?

In my view, as with all categories, one should take a step back and reflect on the image. Is the story compelling, intriguing, or obscure? Is the craft – light, focus, sharpness (or lack thereof) appropriate to the image.

Why judge – a great question tritely answered by saying “ someone has to do it”.

One can't please everybody all the time and someone will inevitably feel aggrieved by their score. All I can say is that every opinion tendered with respect to my own work was in good faith – even though the judge missed the point, needs glasses, and hasn't got a clue!

Despite these shortcomings I'm grateful for the input and if I fall short, I tend to revisit the image and look at it carefully in the light of the judge's comments.

This begs the question – do we give adequate commentary when called upon to evaluate an image that represents another's efforts? Sometimes we fall short, and it is something I certainly need to work on.

#### The Judges Accreditation Programme

The PSSA website puts it like this - “Whether it is judging at your monthly meetings or at Salons, judging is one of the most important club elements, where our members gain knowledge and insight into how to improve their photography and skill, and importantly, how they get rewarded at the relevant judging forums.

As this is such a vital element, the PSSA developed the JAP program to train the judges to give consistent, fair, accurate and helpful advice to our members at the relevant judging forums and create constancy in judging throughout the regions.

This year, the first since the programme became National and not Regional, seven of our members signed up for the course. I signed on for two reasons – the first to improve my judging by being more familiar with judging various genres and, the second, to improve my own photography.

Although the commitment required is onerous, this year the first Saturday morning of the month since March, I have found the benefits to be enormous.

The first couple of sessions were devoted to understanding judging, what to say and what not to say as well as how to say it.



Subsequent sessions dealt with specific genres each of which was presented by a specialist in the field. The gist of it all is that the judge has to know the genre in order to be able to comment meaningfully and to avoid making comments that are irrelevant to the genre.

Is it worth it?

As a club judge it is my responsibility to try to look at any image and to try to go beyond the craft and to try to “get “ what the author is trying to get across and JAP has certainly helped.

Have I achieved my objectives?

As far as judging goes, I think I have broadened my horizons and am more capable of making a reasoned evaluation.

As far as the impact on my photography goes, I am not so sure. I have seen many amazing photographs across many genres, and, while I’m beginning to understand what is required, my efforts do not reflect the improvement I sought.

Would I do it again?

Without question!

We owe it to our club and fellow members to participate if we are going to be in a club environment given the Club and PSSA structures.

Our objective is improvement and knowledge. Within the structures that implies an understanding that our work will always be critiqued. Therefore, every one of our members owes it to their peers and to themselves to advance their understanding of the criteria to ensure that any “evaluation” is fair and honest.

To see what PSSA is doing on the JAP Programme go to –

<https://pssa.co.za/judging-accreditation-programme/>

There is so much available to help with understanding the process and also to give insights that will definitely help your photography.

Peter Oosthuizen

# Editor's choice

## NEVER BE AFRAID TO FAIL, NEVER SETTLE FOR GOOD ENOUGH!

By Vieri Bottazzini

Vieri Bottazzini is an Italian Fine Art landscape photographer and educator, with a personal style rooted in pure photographic craftsmanship. Passionate about the outdoors, Vieri believes in honouring the majestic power of our planet's beauty by creating his iconic images using unadulterated photography only. Through his unique black & white and subtly post-processed colour images, Vieri tells stories about the relationship between nature and mankind, exploring the concepts of time and of the surreal. Vieri's Fine Art work has been viewed millions of times on social media and featured on leading publications such as Medium Format Magazine, LEMAG, Elements-Landscape Photography Magazine, and more.

Vieri graciously gave permission to publish the following article from his Newsletter



These might sound like two contradictory statements, but in reality, they are not. Let's see how they can work together to help us make our photography better.

I have been on the road for almost three months now, photographing pretty much every day, often multiple times a day, and I have one more month before going back to our regular schedule.

Normally, I am always either somewhere out there photographing, or I am thinking about photography, or processing photos, or studying about photography and art, and so on.

But, this is the first time I am taking such a large chunk of time dedicated only to my personal work.

During these months, I faced a zillion different photographic situations, presenting a zillion different technical and artistic problems - some easier to solve, some much less so.

Sometimes, I immediately "saw" the scene in front of me transforming itself in an image; all I had to do was composing it, solving whatever technical issues it presented me with, and press the shutter.

Other times, it took me more time, more unsuccessful attempts, more photos destined to the trash, in order to solve the puzzle, be it a technical or artistic one, or both.



As bizarre as this might sound, digital photography is great in that it offers us the unique opportunity to easily fail.

Card space is almost free, and we can take as many photographs as we want, with instant feedback; we can then readjust and try again immediately, which can be a great tool to help us improve.

More, this removes the pressure of having to deliver, something which is (or was) more inherent in film photography, when you went out in the field with just a few slides - or a few rolls of film - for a few days of work, and had to wait for a long time before seeing your images.

So, take advantage of that opportunity, and don't be afraid to try and fail. Failure, or to better put it, experimenting, if treated the right way is what allows us to grow. However, the flip side of this "ease" that digital offers us, is the risk of photographing carelessly, without any depth of thought, hoping that something will come out OK out of hundreds of random images.

To prevent that - or to cure that - we need to learn to embrace that opportunity for "failure" while at the same time never settle for good enough.

For me, great, meaningful photography starts with the vision and ideas behind what we want our work to say, to look like, to express.

In turn, that all starts with studying. When studying, never settling for good enough is easy: there is always something new to learn, some other inspiring visual artist, philosopher, thinker out there that we don't know and we can find out about, some technical solutions to compositional or post-processing problems we can learn, and so on.

Then, we move to the field. When working on a scene, it's very easy to get somewhere, set our camera up and never experiment with moving around, with changing compositions, with trying different lenses, and so on. It's very easy to tell ourselves that what we see, and what we do, "is good enough", and stop ourselves from going deeper into the scene, into what the scene means to us, and how we can best portray it.

Paradoxically, the better we become at what we do, the more this risk is real.

The more our "first shot" on any given location is good, the less we are stimulated to try and find something else, something more, something better.

The more we settle for "good enough", the less opportunity we have to distill the essence of the landscape in front of us through the alembic still of our experience and vision, into the most powerful work we can create.





Then, there is what I call "artistic fatigue", and this long stretch of time on the road taught me a lot about this. It's not easy to go out there every day, multiple times a day, and be inspired all the time. It takes some sort of a zen approach, it takes the ability to clean our mind from what we have seen and done just a few hours - sometimes minutes! - before, and start anew on a new location.

More, there is never taking our abilities and our vision for granted, never thinking that "I'm good enough by now that what I do is always good enough", and settle for that.

In short, no matter how much we improve, no matter how good we became, I think the key to keep improving further is to be always ready to fail, without being afraid of it, and to never be ready to settle for good enough, always pushing ourselves to do better.



Vieri Bottazzini, *photographer*

Proud Ambassador for Phase One, H&Y Filters and NYA-EVO bags | ABIPP

- [Landscape Photography Workshops](#)

- [Portfolio & Fine Art Prints](#)

- [The Blog](#)

- <https://www.vieribottazziniworkshops.com>

To subscribe to Vieri's Newsletter: <http://eepurl.com/s1Sjb>



## January Meeting

Our January meeting will be held at the Turbine, Thesen Island on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 6:30 pm.

## Judges

Club night judges will be announced in due course before the deadline for submissions.

## Cape Photographers Congress – 2024

The congress will be held in Calitzdorp from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> May . For details click the following link

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bku\\_DUtbzNg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bku_DUtbzNg)



Washday Klein Karoo nr Calitzdorp

# Meet our members

Our club membership is growing very nicely and there are new faces at every meeting. Each month we will publish a short introduction to our members so that we can get to know each other virtually as well as in person.

This month we introduce –

## **Thorsten Siwiza**

In November 2023 Thorsten Siwiza, joined the KPS as a junior member – not to be confused with being a junior, since he just retired from the European Space Agency (ESA) and recently settled with his wife in Knysna.

Thorsten started his love for photography, immediately when he got his first camera as a teenager. Photography started for him as an expression of art, like a painting, but faster and more accurate. As prints were expensive back in the '70ies, he used slides as medium, all of which are by now digitalised. Due to time constraints travelling photography during holidays became his main focus all during his professional life. For many years he was a member of the ESTEC Photographic Club at ESA in the Netherlands and chaired the club for a few years. In the later years, as part of that club, he engaged in experimental photography and photographic outreach activities.

Motivation to join KPS is, obviously, location and then to engage with fellow minded people, continuously learning and sharing experiences. With the move to the dark side of the planet, Thorsten is interested in doing his first steps in Astrophotography ... pending required mentor!

## **Lawrence Boatwright**

My name is Lawrence Boatwright. I joined KPS in June 2023, bringing my senior status along from my previous life at Pretoria Photographic Society.

I think my interest in doing something arty photographically started when I was 10: I took a really bad, front-on picture of a cannon that I was immensely proud of! Once digital came along I was able to try my hand at most genres—weddings, portraits, landscapes, macro, concerts, and events. Photography even got me chatting with Archbishop Desmond Tutu!

Right now, I find that most of my favourite images seem to fit in the 'Altered Reality' or 'Creative' and this is where I have so much to learn. Fortunately, KPS has a strong group of people doing this type of imagery, so I look forward to learning and passing on knowledge!

## Leisure Island Festival

A number of our members exhibited prints at the Leisure Island Festival on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November.

We shared the Cearn Hall with the Knysna Art Society and the Knysna Embroidery Guild.

Although a little cramped we had a steady flow of visitors, many of whom admired our work.

Thanks to Doug for the effort, he put in (as always) for the organization and for providing the easels.

Thanks also to Carol for preparing the labels for the exhibitors

### Some images of the exhibits





