



Knysna Photographic Society

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

NEWSLETTER: August 2023

Pictures of the Month

Senior

This month there was a four-way tie for picture of the month between our stalwarts, Anne, Cathy, Leoni and Luana. Very well done to you all in setting such a high standard.



Reach for the stars – Anne Hrabar



Ahead of the curve -Cathy Birkett



Starlight Star bright – Luana Laubscher



Sideways – Leoni Hattingh

Junior



Vanilla and cinnamon- Maureen vd Heever

New Format for the Newsletter

As our new website has been launched and contains Senior and Junior galleries, the club calendar, useful links, salon entry details and much more, the Newsletter has been shortened to avoid duplication.

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



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Message from the Chair

August 2023

Welcome to our new member:

We welcome new member Holly Cairns.

It's good to have you all with us Holly, and we wish you a long, happy and stimulating time at KPS.

AGM and Prizegiving.

Our AGM and annual prize-giving was successfully held on 24th August. Thank you to all those who attended this pleasant and sociable event.

Special thanks to those committee members who did all the work, behind, the scenes, to deliver a successful event.

Congratulations to all our prize winners, some of whom were also taken by surprise.

Our new committee

The AGM ushers in our new committee, comprising the following members.

Pam Brighton Eileen Covarr Sonia Elliott Doug Emanuel Anne Hrabar

Alan King Peter Oosthuizen Carol Phillips Maureen vd Heever

Our roles and responsibilities will be determined at our first committee meeting, early September.

Annual Subscriptions

Most of our members have now paid their annual subs. Thank you!

Web page rejuvenation,

Our new web page was officially launched at our recent AGM.

Please visit Knysnaphotosoc.com, to view. Amongst many other things, our new website is designed to be a useful tool for our members. Please embrace this concept and use it to the full.

Special thanks to Maureen and her team for the effort that went into this project and for bringing it to a successful conclusion.

Club Night venue

Please keep an eye on WhatsApp, our webpage and other communications to confirm the date and place for club nights. We have not yet settled back into a routine.

Doug Emanuel

Salon Acceptances - August

KRIEL DIGITAL SALON – MAY

(Results were published late)

Carol 1

Cathy 1

Pam 1

1ST HIGHWAY SALON JULY

Carol 1

Pam 1

Sonia 1

Eileen 1

Cathy 3

Alan 3

PSSA JUNIOR PICTURE OF THE MONTH

Maureen came 10th shared with 7 photographers out of 48 entries.



Annual General Meeting And Prizegiving

The AGM was held at the Knysna Golf Club on the 24th August and was relatively well attended with 20 members present. Given the cold weather and the uncertainty whether the N2 would be blocked at Nekkies this is a reasonable turnout.



The attendees – who took the pictures?



Our Prize Winners

The major awards winners were -

KPS Photographer of the Year

Junior Sharon Long

Senior Carol Phillips

Brian Mullin award Pam Brighton

KPS Award for Photographic Excellence (Pieter Mare)

Cathy Birkett

Image of the year

Junior Claudette Gericke

Runner up Maureen van den Heever

Senior Carol Phillips

Runner up Pieter Mare

Well done to all of you and very well deserved.

From Alan King

Salons – observations through the eyes of a Noob

I joined the Knysna Photographic Society at the start of 2023 with the intention of meeting other people interested in photography, learning from seasoned and expert photographers, and finally exposing my images to peer review by people other than friends and family. They are obliged to go “ooh aah” of course. This peer review follows two principal paths: regular club meetings and participation in the PSSA (Photographic Society of South Africa) Salons. The process involves a panel of judges assessing and scoring the images you submit through the club or salons.

1. Scoring and judging – KPS and PSSA

The judging and scoring system appears to have been standardised for PSSA and affiliated clubs. Judging panels comprise three judges who each rate the image using standard criteria () and assign a score out of a maximum of 15 points. The scores are tallied to give a total score out of a maximum of 45 points (3x15). Different objectives for club versus PSSA determine what happens after this.

1.1. KPS advancement

For club advancement images, the total score is divided by 3 to obtain an average score that is used to award a rating for the image. At KPS the awards range from Bronze through Silver to Gold and finally a Certificate of Merit¹. In order to progress from junior to senior members, a minimum number of Gold and/or COM awards need to be accumulated. To encourage new members (1-, 2- or 3-Star members) they receive Golds and COMs at a lower score than the seniors. For the senior members (mostly 5 Star and above) a score of 12 qualifies as a Gold and 13 as a COM. In contrast, a 3-Star junior qualifies for a Gold with a score of 10. The advantage of this is that the images continue to be assessed using the same criteria, but that juniors are not disadvantaged by their lack of experience.

The KPS judges score sheets reflect the individual judges scores, the total combined tallies and the final scores for each image submitted.

1.2. PSSA salons

One of the requirements for advancement at KPS is a minimum number of salon acceptances. There is an additional motivation for entering salons, which is to see whether “my images are good enough.” What does that mean? Will my image receive a high enough score from the PSSA judging panel to be accepted for publishing at the Salon?

Based on the 7 salons I have entered this year, it seems to me that most salons have 6 categories of images (e.g. Open Colour, Landscapes, Wildlife – No Birds Colour etc). Most of these are standard but there is generally at least one category that is a little out of the ordinary as well. Based on my sample, the average number of acceptances per category is approximately 170 (ranging from 150 – 220). 10% of these receive COMs (15-22 per category).

¹ COM derives from the French patronage of supporting the arts. To be able to exhibit your work on a salon, you had to obtain the approval of the judges. Today it is still the same in photography that all entries received are evaluated by the jury and only those found acceptable will be exhibited (receive a COM).

The acceptances are based on the total score i.e., the 3 judges' scores tallied together out of 45. Only once all the images have been scored is the acceptance score determined as the score above which 20% of the images occur – in other words the top quintile. In the seven salons I have entered so far, this quintile score (acceptance level) ranges from 32 to 35, with 33 being the most common by far. It's important to realise that the acceptance level is not pre-set as a bar to be crossed but follows from the scores awarded to the images viewed by the judges. This means it depends on the quality of the images entered to the salon as well as the quality of judging. It also means that the same image may be judged differently at different salons and be accepted at one but not another salon!

Images are judged on the same criteria as at club level BUT there is far less time available for judging so inevitably the initial impact must be a bigger factor in the judges' assessment of an image. It is almost a given that the image will be properly captured and processed. Whereas at KPS the judges have at least a couple of minutes to assess an image, at PSSA they have literally seconds given the number of images to be judged.

If we take 200 acceptances as an average per category, then 1000 images will have been entered for that category. Most judges are not professional judges so will be doing this in their spare time. Assuming that judging session lasts say 4 hours (480 minutes) then the judges will need to score an image at least once every 30 seconds, which includes presenting and recording the scores. There simply isn't the same amount of time to scrutinise the various aspects of an image as judges do at club meetings (to the benefit of the members).

2. Why bother

I have entered 114 images into 7 salons so far this year and received 15 acceptances including 2 COMs) so far, ranging from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5 acceptances. Given the not insignificant cost and the low chances of success why do I bother?

Remember I stated that learning was one of the reasons I joined KPS. Well, this is one way I learn. I'm working on the presumption that the various judging panels have collective knowledge of what makes a good photograph, even if their preferences differ from mine. So, I try to use the results of each salon as a guide to what I enter for the next ones. Now this doesn't always work because as I said earlier, the same image may be scored very differently from one salon to the next! I have had an image that was accepted (+1 above the acceptance score) and then not accepted at a different salon (-5) giving a spread of 6 points.

Secondly, I am working on the presumption that an image I think is good will also be accepted. Should I change the way I take images simply to improve my acceptance rate? Or should I stick to what I like? I'm doing a bit of both because I realise that while a lot of my images appeal to family and friends, and may be technically good, they are not striking chords with the reviewers. They are not making an impact. My landscapes are good examples of this – I love sunsets but the salon judges definitely do not like them as much as I do – so I am going to have to up my game.

Conversely my monochromes are making an impact – half my acceptances have come from monochromes. I don't know why so this is another area I will have to work on to understand just what it is that says "hello" to the judges.

It helps to have a thick skin too – to cope with that feeling of expectation when salon results are published and you haven't been very successful.

3. Conclusions

- Peer review is an important part of improvement – feedback is golden.
 - There are two review systems available – KPS and PSSA.
 - They use the same judging and scoring criteria.
 - KPS scores are used for advancement from Junior to Senior.
 - PSSA scoring is used to determine whether an image lies in the top 20% of entries and can be Accepted by the salon.
 - PSSA results can be an effective way to determine where you need to focus to improve your photography.
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Judges

September Martin Kellerman, remote judge from George Club, Pam Brighton and Gill Maskell.

October Sonia Elliott, Doug Emanuel and Anne Hrabar