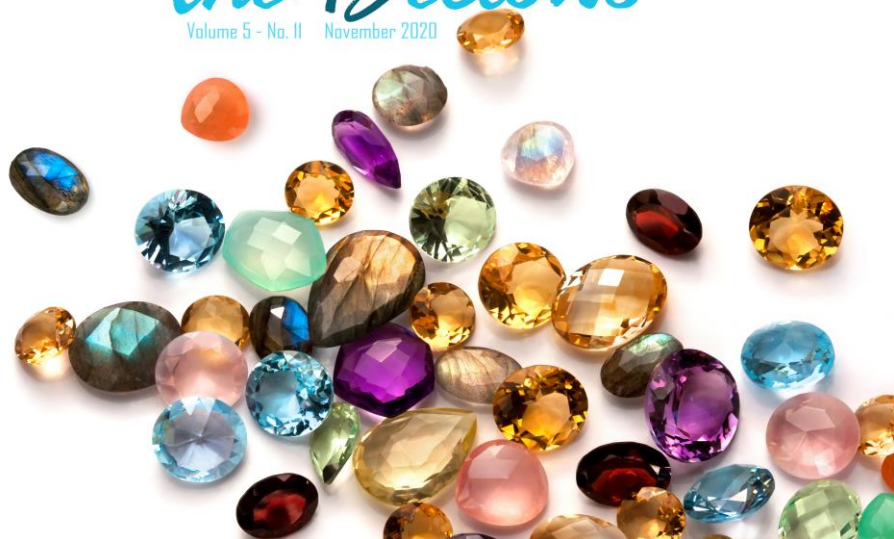
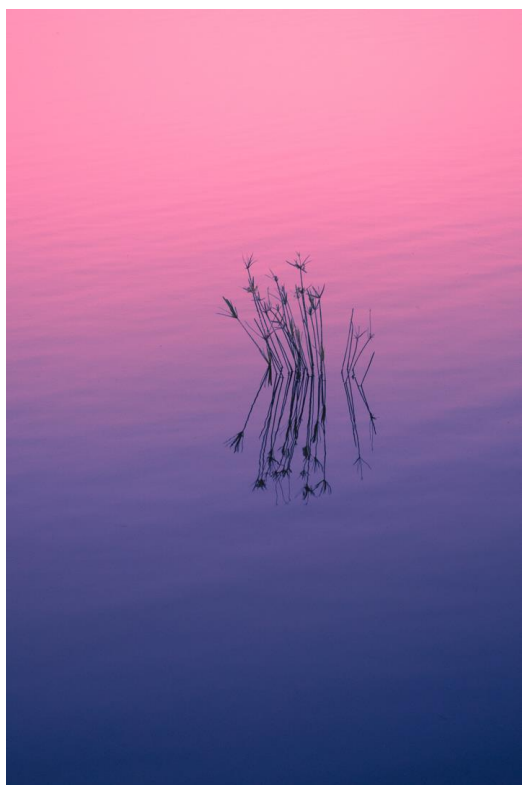


# The Bellows

Volume 5 - No. 11 November 2020



TOPAZ, a semi-precious stone that symbolizes friendship and is found in many colours. Its original orange-yellow version is the traditional birthstone for November. The Blue Topaz is a stone of peacefulness, calming to the emotions.



OVERALL WINNING IMAGE

OCTOBER 2020

***"Pink Sunset"***

By Marius Bothma

## IN THIS ISSUE

\*\*\***BREAKING NEWS**\*\*\*

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\*\* **NEW** \*\* LEVEL UP – p 18



I think that most of us will shake our heads when we look back at these past 12 months. There was absolutely no way we could possibly have predicted the events that have so radically changed the world as we know it. From exciting and challenging New Year's Resolutions to a complete and total lockdown mirroring the house arrest of virtually the entire planet, to slowly being allowed out and about again but with masks being the latest necessary fashion accessory. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our world in so many ways, and the psychological effects of this will only fully be understood in time to come.

However, as always, if we look for it – we can certainly find the silver lining in all of this. Many of us got to work from home, we are forced to spend time with our families, we had no option but to confront ourselves – our

needs, wants, priorities – and re-evaluate them. We had to find new ways of doing things, we were forced to innovate and make huge changes in our daily lives. We also had to find new ways of staying in touch with family and friends, with our clients and our vendors. We had to adapt.

One of the adaptations we made at TPS was the embracing of technology and hosting our meetings online. This innovation opened doors for many of us, particularly those who live far away and are hesitant to travel back and forth – especially at night. The Zoom platform allowed us to finally have Josie Norfolk and Robert Johnson present at club events several times a month. Rob Minter was able to attend loads of events as he didn't have to travel all the way from Somerset West each time. Our members from Malmesbury and Mooreesburg are also able to join in comfortably.

This technology has also allowed us to introduce an additional learning platform each month, the Image Review night – a great initiative that has allowed for real learning amongst us. The questions going forward is how do we continue to integrate events so that everyone may attend and benefit? That will be a priority in the discussion at our committee Strategy Meeting in December.

And yet, despite the lockdown challenges, we have so much to celebrate:

**Salons:** Tygerberg Photographic Society has once again dominated the salon rankings in the Western Cape this last salon calendar year. Nationally, we ended 5<sup>th</sup> in the country, which is an incredible achievement indeed! Many of our members have also raked in medals, COM's and special mentions both nationally and internationally over the

last salon year. Quite a few members also reached a few milestones on the PSSA Honours List.

<b>Honours:</b>	Sonja Grunbauer	LPSSA
	Stephen Burgstahler	APSSA, FIAP, QPSA
	Mariana Visser	DPSSA
	Lynne Kruger-Haye	DPSSA
	Neels Beyers	EPSSA(Mille)

**Education:** With the lockdown restrictions in place, getting going on the education side took a little bit of work, and during the last few months we have had great presentations by Stephen Burgstahler on both local and international salon participation, which I think will certainly play a role in our bid for a spot in the top 3 on the national ladder. Once again, making use of the Zoom platform here has allowed us to continue offering our members valuable learning events.

With lockdown easing to Level One from late September, the excitement is on to host real outings and workshops, with our first post-lockdown outing taking place in Kirstenbosch early in October. Stephen and his team have great ideas in the pipeline.

The Judging Accreditation Programme kicks off again on the first Saturday of February in 2021, and already I have several TPS members on the list of candidates. The next 2-year cycle promises to be even better than the last.

For those of you that may have noticed a little video doing the rounds on our WhatsApp and Email channels yesterday, showcasing #LEVEL.UP programme, I invite you to consider participating in this unprecedented programme where we take club photography to the next level! We will be discussing this in greater detail in our meeting following the AGM.

**With Gratitude:** With the pressures of various kinds over the last few months, I want to thank Rob Minter, Andre Stipp and Joe Inns for their assistance on the committee, and the valuable contribution made by each of them. Huge gratitude also goes to Alida Heine for taking over the editing of the newsletter from Rob, and to Stephen Burgstahler who stepped in to take over from Andre and Joe. David Barnes has been shadowing Martin Kleingeld on Photovault and will assist with that in the new year. Martin also has been minding the housekeeping portfolio and for that we are deeply grateful.

To Michael and Ohna, my heartfelt gratitude for your support - and patience – in managing our admin and our finances.

In 2 days time, we face the annual Western Cape Interclub Competition, and the result of months of hard work behind the scenes by Martin Kleingeld and the selection committee will see our very best efforts put to the test. I would like to thank Robert Johnson, Clifford Wyeth, Bennie Vivier, Frans du Bois, Stephen Burgstahler, Ohna Nel, Michael West, David Barnes and Alida Heine for assisting me with this process.

### **Looking ahead to 2021:**

The newly appointed committee will meet on Wednesday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020, for a Strategic Planning Session to prepare our way forward for the next year. The outcome of this meeting will be presented to everyone in the start of the new year.

We have had our salon request approved, and TPS will host a salon in the beginning of May 2021. Frans du Bois will manage this on our behalf.

The committee has also decided to introduce an award in honour of the late Christo la Grange, which will honour the member who has gone over and above in terms of assistance and behind-the-scenes work that is invaluable to the smooth running and efficiency of the club. This award summarises the nature and contribution of the dynamic la Grange duo of Christo and Marleen, who have selflessly given of their time and effort over many years, to make TPS the outstanding club it is. Christo has left a huge hole in our hearts, and we thank Marleen for stepping in and taking over some of his duties.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Year-End function, and to celebrating your successes with you.

On behalf of the committee and myself, I thank you again for your courage and commitment during this unbelievable year and wish you everything of the best for 2021.

Dare greatly.....

*Lynne* 

PS. Please feel free to contact Ohna Nel to view or discuss the annual Financial Report.



Hello Fellow Photographers!

November has arrived - days are longer and warmer, and all of us are thinking of December holidays. Isn't it just wonderful to be able to use photography to fill so many gaps – expressing ourselves by means of your own unique interpretation of something that you see and experience differently than anyone else at that very moment.

As November is TOPAZ month, May I wish each and everyone a sparkling hip-hop happy November and many great shots!

In my search for interesting and relevant content for our Newsletter, combined with my search for answers to my own questions about the whole photography journey and where it is taking us, I came across interesting answers that I liked very much. I would like to share my interpretation with you:

Millions of photos are taken every day and shared to the world on social media. And I wonder what the point is of it all – because most of these are taken, shared and enjoyed (and abused) by a younger generation – a generation that were born with high-end sophisticated tech devices in their cradles, in their mother's hands whilst being nursed – inevitably the flow and growth of technology and instant gratification is already imprinted in their brains before they can hold something for themselves in their innocent plump little hands. How is it possible for us as an older generation (forgive me) to still be able to make a difference in terms of photography? The answer to this is complex, as complex as humanity itself, because we are mentally crafted by a millennia of systems to live in the mold. The mold is there to control the population to a certain extent - the mold that consists of rules and laws which bestow shame upon those who don't sit tight in that mold, even if just briefly so. Secretly every inhabitant of the mold wishes to break the rule, to feel what it feels like, to see something else, experience something else.

And so it is with us as photographers, artists, creators. To break out of the mold is to see differently and it is up to us to share what we have created on the outside of the mold. Whether it is a flower that we photograph, a landscape or a shy girl in a studio, it is up to us to find what is the secret beyond the boundaries of the mold, and this is where we will make the difference, and find something that counts!

I quote *Missy Mwac*: "It is *your* job to create images that silence fears. Images that prove those fears unfounded. Images that shout louder than the lies our insecurities whisper. Images that say: "You are perfect." "You are beautiful." "You are deserving of attention."

**Your gift, dear photographers, may not save lives. But never doubt its importance.**

*Take care and have fun!*

Aida Heine



## ALL ABOUT OCTOBER



Here Lynne Kruger Haye accepts the trophy for TPS.

### WESTERN CAPE INTERCLUB COMPETITION 2020

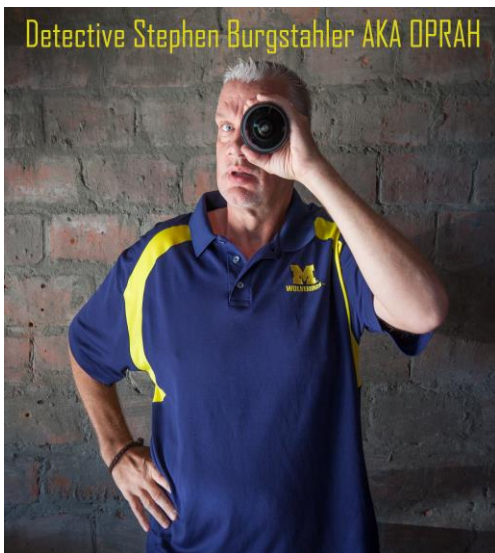
This year, Tygerberg Photographic Society regained the Interclub trophy which we had to relinquish to CTPS last year. In second place were CTPS jointly with Hermanus Photographic Society.

This just shows how stiff the competition was in this year's annual event, apart from the second place draw, five other clubs were just within two points from each other, namely Fish Hoek in 4<sup>th</sup> place and Tafelberg in 5<sup>th</sup> position. WELL DONE TYGER TOGS!!

### CLUB COMPETITION:

Our monthly club evening was hosted via Zoom on Wednesday 28th October with 32 members logged in. The set subject was MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY for which 30 images were entered. For the open category we had 95 entries - quite a bit more than the entries for September. 20 Members joined the meeting. All members of TPS have received a link to the recording via e-mail the next morning. To view the meeting just click on .....To view the overall Scorecard - [CLICK HERE](#)

For October we had a judging panel of three judges. Here they are:



We thank the three judges for doing a splendid job and giving fair scores throughout.

.... All about October cntd....

Congratulations to the category winners, being:

Overall winning image/Open Category winner – Pink sunset by Marius Bothma

Open Category Runner up – Reaching out by Carolyn Kewley

Set subject Winning image – Oyster Mushroom by Bennie Vivier

Set Subject Runner-Up – Pink Bubble Explosion by Desmond Labuschagne

**\*\*TO VIEW THESE IMAGES –  
PLEASE VISIT THE GALLERY ON  
PAGE 9\*\***



To view all the results [CLICK HERE](#)

Only the set subject section was recorded – to see it [CLICK HERE](#)

IMAGE REVIEW EVENING: (to view the recording [CLICK HERE](#))

As the Image Review evening is still a new addition to club activities to get used to it was remarkable that more members felt comfortable to participate in the discussion – and this time – with the judges present! 18 Members logged in. It is another great way of learning by simply discussing. This proves to be a great initiative where members can ask their questions about the judging and why an image has scored .....emm, for instance – *so low*.....

A number of images from Club Competition were shown and discussed with the judge's comments in mind. A few points that deserve to be pointed out are:

- When cutting out images and blending it with other backgrounds and or textures, be sure that the cutting out is perfect – if it is not cut out with precision it will show and ruin all your hard work!
- For club competitions TITLES MATTER!! It is crucial that you carry the message across with your title, as sometimes the viewer, and in the case of club competitions, judged – can misinterpret your image or fail to get the message all together. So make sure you have a fitting title and understand your audience/judges.
- In the case of scapes, make sure your foreground is not too busy, and make sure of a good anchor point.
- Often we get a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to photograph something really special. Most of the time there is not much time to first check settings, as the brief moment in time for the shot is just that – you have to take the shot. In may instances the object may be too dark and we lift the shadows just a tad too little to bring out the subject and the jaw-dropping scene, but then we pay the price of discoloration and unsightly blotches and sometimes halos around our subjects. Be careful of this as it can ruin your special image.
- When shooting sunsets you have all the control that you can ask for – use bracketing and make sure that you don't destroy a fabulous scene by trying to fix underexposed parts later. For more about this - [click here](#).

- Ugh, and the devil itself! Sensor spots! Do make sure that that your lens and sensor is spotless, and in post, check again and clean up. You can have a wonderful photo with great colours, great composition and appeal, but boy oh boy, if there are sensor spots on your image you're in trouble!
- Check your histogram for over-exposure. More about this [click here!](#)
- When you do extreme close-ups/macro always bear in mind where the human eye wants to rest – normally in the centre. If your centre is not tack sharp your eye wanders and does not know what it is looking for or what it is meant to see. In studio you have so much control, rather use the stacking method to ensure enough of your image is sharp, and that the sharp area sits in the right spot. For more about photo stacking, go here - [The perfect A-Z in photo stacking](#)
- When photographing Photo Journalism or Street/Travel shots, make sure to include something about the immediate environment to help tell the story and to give the viewer a view into the life of your subject matter.

## OCTOBER 2020 SALON RESULTS

TPS Members are glowing – In September we had 45 acceptances and two medals on the international front. October came along and our members brought home no less than 69 acceptances, 1 COM's and 1 Medal!

SALON ACCEPTANCES OCTOBER 2020							
AFO, ISO2020, PHOTO NATURE, PORTUGAL, FUSION 2020, 7TH HONG KONG, ASANSOL, ZAGREB, CONCURS 111, SUMMER SEA SUN, CONTEST MONTEVERDI, ONE PHOTO, PHOTOGENIUS, LOFOTEN, SINGAPORE INTL SALON AND SWARTLAND INTL SALON							
	SOUTH AFRICAN SALONS				INTERNATIONAL SALONS		
TPS Club Member	Acceptances	COM	Medal First	Runner up	Acceptances	COM	Medal
David Barnes	3						
Neels Beyers	3				7		
Stephen Burgstahler	4						
Alida Heine	1	1			5		
Rob Minter	2						
Marleen la Grange	9				4		
Josie Norfolk	1						
Derrick Smit	4				15		
Leney Stipp	6				3		
Johan van Wyk	4						
Coert Venter	1				7		
Mariana Visser	1				17	1	
Bennie Vivier	6	1					
Clifford Wyeth	1				4		
Johan Viljoen					3		1
Francois du Bois	4						
Ben ter Huurne	2						
Erwin Kruger-Haye					4		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>2</b>			<b>69</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>

FROM MARLEEN LA GRANGE'S PEN.....

**Wow:** Johan Viljoen on his first participation received a runner up medal in Open Colour Prints and 3 more acceptances in prints and PDI's.

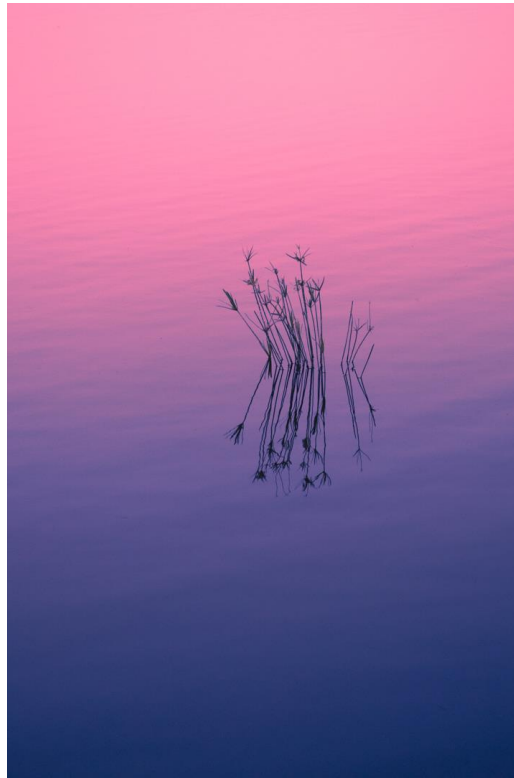
Mariana Visser did exceptionally well in the Swartland Intl Salon- 1 COM in open Colour Print plus 5 more acceptances in prints and 3 more acceptances in PDI's.

It is a pity that so few members participated in Swartland Intl Salon. A few of us were judging and could not enter.



## GALLERY

OVERALL WINNING IMAGE OCTOBER CLUB COMPETITION: *Pink Sunset* by Marius Bothma



Runner up – Open  
Category

*Reaching out*

By Carolyn Kewley



WINNING IMAGE – Set Subject (Macro)

*Oyster mushroom* by Bennie Viviers



Runner-Up for Set Subject

*Pink Bubble Explosion*

By Desmond Labuschagne

## IMAGES SHINING BRIGHT AT SALONS

### THIS IS THE BIG DADDY OF IMAGES IN THIS EDITION

It certainly deserves special recognition. All the medal winners of every salon for the last salon calendar year are put into a pool and the images were judged and an overall winner selected for that category.

This won the Open Monochrome division – PSSA GOLD!

“AFTER DINNER COFFEE” - by David Barnes







*ICE QUEEN* - By Mariana Visser

Mariana entered this image for three salons, all three times it was awarded a COM, and the last one was a PRINT at the Swartland International Salon.



*GIRAFFE SUNSET*

By Bennie Viviers

Received a COM at the AFO Digital Salon 2020

*SHE OFFERS YOU  
THE MOON*

by Alida Heine

COM at the AFO  
Digital Salon 2020



*ON THE MISTY BEACH*

By Johan Viljoen

FIRST PLACE MEDALIST

Swartland International  
Salon



## MEET JOHAN VILJOEN



### *Ed's note:*

Since I started working with The Bellows, even before I took it over, I noted the name Johan Viljoen popping up frequently. For three consecutive months he was the BEST BEGINNER.

Johan joined TPS only last year and recently entered his photos for the first time to an International Salon. The result - a Medal for first place!!! I am sure we are going to hear this name much more in the future!

I was curious, and discovered a gem.....

---

### *HERE IS JOHAN'S STORY:*

As for many of us, my first photographs were created inside a Kodak Instamatic - with the flashcube that spun around and could only flash four times with a detonated explosion or was it a short circuit? Then it was the 110 with the long upright row of single-use explodable flashes. I grew up in the Elands River valley of High Noon near Villiersdorp but it was only at Stellenbosch at the student newspaper "Die Matie" that my photography was triggered with that very first picture published - black and white.

A couple of years later in the army my old Ricoh camera saved me. Released from the prison cells (die Kas) of an army base after my firearm was lost, the commander then needed this unit photographer to take pictures of him at the military ball ...(no comment, but grateful)

While on working holiday in Israel and England, slides as a photography medium crept deep into my heart. Those were the days when you could buy the slide film with development and frames included, followed by the wait in anticipation for the little box to be delivered to look at your slides. And of course, every push of the button was meticulously planned. It was a Nikon 401x and my favorite slide film was the Kodachrome 64. Slow yes, but phenomenal quality and colour range.

At that time already, journalism went hand in hand with my picture-making, with various freelance stories and news photographs. One night at Wembley I had to photograph a dog race. (Flash prohibited). I used a 1600 ISO film and the grain was almost bigger than the dogs ...

Back in SA in 1995 I started a full-time job in journalism. It was in the days at a town newspaper when we bought 35mm film rolls in bulk and then filled the 35mm canisters in the darkroom (or inside a black bag with sleeves for your arms). Just enough frames - 6 or 12, because we had a strict budget. I would only be allowed three frames per sporting event for the weekend's sporting action with a manual focus camera. You then planned very carefully and made sure you had the photo when that button was pressed. And it wasn't just line out or scrumhalf photographs.

(Must say my 70-200mm F2.8 manual focus Sigma lens - green in colour - was a beaut on my Minolta Dynax 7000i.) The film was developed on the Monday morning and only one photo per occasion was printed for the paper. Yes, there were some national awards for town newspaper Sports Photographer and Sports Writer of the Year too, but remember this was in a time before digital and auto focus. So those photographs really look like nothing today.

When I took the plunge to digital, Canon (10D) was simply a cheaper option and since then I use Canon. Hand in hand with journalism, my photographic approach has evolved into rather capturing than setting up. Paparazzi are considered negative in many circles, but this is not always the case. Rather capture something natural with a longer lens (a positive steal photo). There have been news events, court reports of known criminals too and death threats and even bodyguards to look after my family, but mostly the intention was not to expose anyone but just to capture the real story. A long lens does have its disadvantages too. It for example compresses, but at least ensures a more natural result.

I enjoy sports photography (it took a very long time to get some reasonable netball pictures though). With digital, the frames run almost like that in a movie and one wonders if this is still real photography ...

I also love nature pictures and some scapes. For years I thought I made landscape photographs thinking I could get away without a tripod. Really. You're just bluffing yourself. But with journalism and especially with a village newspaper, you can't focus on one genre. You have to shoot and capture almost everything. So this is where I am. Set up and studio and portraits are much lower on the list. And in the meanwhile the stack of hard drives just keeps growing ... In Malmesbury I was part of the revival of the Swartland Photography Club about 11 years ago and have since been really enriched with all the knowledge and experience that club photographers (also those at TPS) share.

The whole club and salon world, to me, is a world on its own. Even though I sometimes wonder about the concept of art and personal preference and someone who scores others' art, it is the model we work with and the positives of learning and growing is far greater and enough to swing the scale to hang out in this environment.

When the walls start pushing and the internet and social media start screaming, then I aim for petrol therapy. I take my bag and my tripod (an old little Manfrotto I bought in London in 1994) and go shooting on the back roads ... spend some time with my photo therapist, currently an old Canon 1Ds Mark III. Hours and hours of being me on planet photo.

I believe everyone of us has an ongoing need for recognition and thrives on it. So give as much of it as possible and pat each other on the back as much as possible. It costs you nothing.

I was asked to share a few of my favourite images and chose these:

...meet Johan Viljoen contd....



This was taken with a small bridge camera. I had to go pretty low to make the little plant look big. But I like the minimalist nature of the photo.

Who will forget the euphoria of the 1995 victory. It was still on film and the technical quality therefore a bit low, but I love the story it tells.



I find hands intriguing and the heart shape formed by these little hands tells a story of a thousand words you can build from all those letters

Although black horses are difficult to capture I enjoy photographing the *FRIESIAN* black beauties at agricultural shows.

This was taken on an overcast day which helped a lot



## SHINING STARS OF TPS – OCTOBER 2020

DAVID BARNES - PSSA GOLD MEDAL MEDALIST  
IN MONOCHROME PRINT CATEGORY



MARLEEN LA GRANGE

Topping the  
leaderboard in FIRST  
position of the PSSA  
Impala ratings for the  
Western Cape.

Marleen held this  
position in 2016,  
2017, 2018 and now  
again in 2020.

BEST BEGINNER – SHARON NOWACKI-OLSEN

NO STAR ADVANCEMENTS IN OCTOBER 2020

## BUSY BEHIND THE SCENES

We all know that there are people working behind the scenes to keep things on track, and to make sure that information is readily available on websites. Our club has a very quiet invisible man keeping TPS's website alive and well. Here is a peep into the secret world behind the scenes – [written by Jonathan Volmink](#):

"Monthly I do general maintenance and keep the site up and running making sure that all software packages are up to date. Other technical things like the mail forwarders, website hosting and security certificates also need checking from time to time. The site's main purpose is to showcase the work of the club to people outside of the club as well as to share important information efficiently. The focus is therefore on the content and keeping the site simple and easy to use.

Each month I add the category winning images to the relevant gallery and to the scrolling header banner. I update

....Busy behind the scenes contd...

the front page with the Chairman's message from The Bellows as well as adding the winning images and star advancements. When The Bellows is ready it is added to the site so that it can be downloaded. When new documents like the Membership Application Form or the TPS Constitution are amended these need to be added too. The start of each year is usually very busy because most of the documentation needs to be updated for the new year.



A Lil' something about Jonathan, the person:

"I was born and raised in Paarl and moved to Johannesburg for a few years. I returned to the sunny Cape in 2011, got married and now have 2 beautiful but extremely busy kids. I have worked in the insurance industry for a number of years in the Data and Analytics field so my background is technical, but not necessarily programming or web design related".

"I have been a member of TPS for a number of years and even had a short stint on the committee. I don't really get a chance to do much photography or attend club gatherings right now but enjoys being part of this club. While there is a healthy sense of competition there is always someone willing to share some useful information and guide you in the right direction".

NEW AND EXCITING -- WOW!!



THIS IS THE COOLEST OF COOL INITIATIVES!

TO FIND OUT MORE

[CLICK HERE](#)




## WHAT IS HAPPENING IN NOVEMBER

If November seems bland and uninteresting with December and all the holiday preparations going on, you have it wrong! Check this out!

For the November Club competition the set subject is “MY BEST PHOTO” – what a superb opportunity for you to enter your absolute favourite of the year!

### IMPORTANT DATES FOR NOVEMBER 2020

DATE	DESCRIPTION
Sat 07/11/2020	<p>Wijnland Auto Museum - We have special permission to stay past normal operating hours on the day.</p> <p><b>Sunset</b> will be at <b>19:20</b>.    <b>Entrance fee: R100 (Cash)</b></p> <p>We will meet at <b>15:00</b> for coffee at the Bamboo Garden Restaurant (Cape Garden Center - 54 Tarentaal Rd, Joostenberg Vlakte, Cape Town, 7570).</p> <p>Reservations have been made so please RSVP on the WhatsApp group.</p>
TU 12/11/2020 	<p>EDUCATION NIGHT via ZOOM– with Nicole Palmer</p> <p>Title: Expressive Images (Finding the extraordinary in the ordinary)</p> <p>Adding Emotions to pictures - When do you reach the essence of the subject?</p> <p>The artistic interpretation of a subject (camera techniques for expression)</p> <p>Observe, observe, observe</p>
FRI 20/11/2020	Entries for Club Competition closes – Set subject: “YOUR FAVOURITE PHOTO”
WED 25/11/2020	<p>CLUB COMPETITION EVENING – again via Zoom - link to follow closer to the date</p> <p>JUDGE: PHILIP DE LANGE</p>
THU 26/11/2020	Image Review Evening
SUN 29/11/2020	<p>YEAR END FUNCTION – THE LAPA AT INTAKA ISLAND, CENTURY CITY</p> <p><b>** AN INVITATION WILL BE SENT TO EVERYONE BEFORE WEDNESDAY 04/11/2020</b></p>

## UPCOMING SALONS FOR NOVEMBER 2020

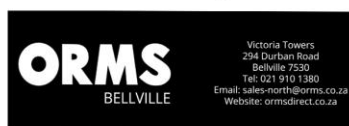
CLOSING DATE	SALON
07 November 2020	Midlens 1 <sup>st</sup> Nature National Salon <a href="#">ENTER HERE</a>
14 November 2020	6 <sup>th</sup> Centurion National Salon <a href="#">ENTER HERE</a>
22 November 2020	Cross Continental Circuit 2020 <a href="#">ENTER HERE</a>



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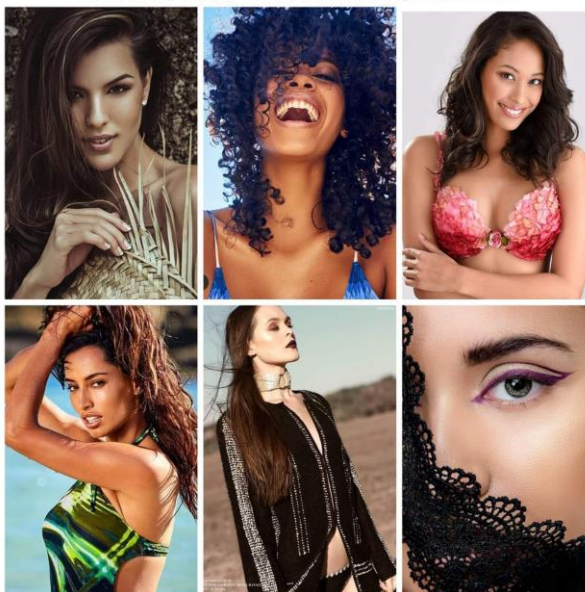
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IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE!!

## \*\* SPECIAL FEATURE - MINIMALISM EXPLAINED

Minimalism is all the rage right now. Spend any time reading blogs, flipping through cookery books or design magazines and virtually all you see are neat straight lines, uncluttered desks, and seas of overexposed whites. We can attribute this to all sorts of factors. For instance, modern web design is all about a light, clean look with lots of negative or 'white' space, so similarly themed photos fit perfectly with this style – ditto on Instagram, where, when reduced to a thumbnail, a neat, minimal image leaps out compared to a busy, intricate layered shot.

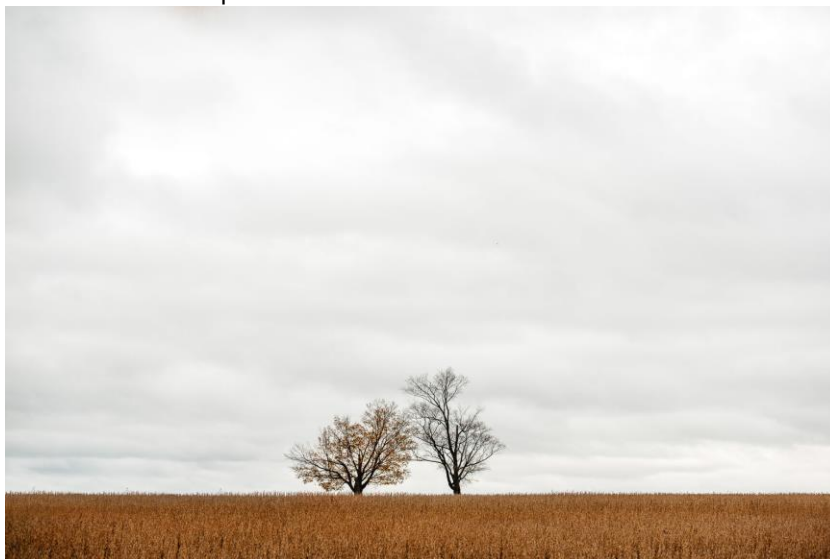
There is a wonderful beauty in images that, with barely anything in the frame at all, make a soul-stinging impact on the viewer. Such is the evocative power of the art of minimalism. In modern lifestyle minimalism has become part of our lives and we are forced to decide what we really need to get along with. That's true of photography as well, where incorporating a minimalist aesthetic has led to carefully executed and compelling works of art.

Minimalism is as subjective in photography as is any style of art. That is, what appears simple and soothing to one viewer might strike another as deep and complex, or have no meaning at all to another. This openness for interpretation can cause the photographer to feel uncertain about sharing her vision. It might boost your confidence to learn some elements of minimalism that help you capture the strength and essence of your subject, and take your images from mundane to intriguing.

Here are six elements of minimalist photography to think about as you create your powerfully simple frames:

### 1. Simplicity

Keeping it simple doesn't mean keeping it boring. In fact, a minimalist approach requires careful thought, observation and the creativity of working within certain boundaries — exploring how much information to keep and how much to take away from the image before it loses impact.



## 2. Negative space

What you do with negative (or empty) space is contrary to what the term implies. Negative space is the element that determines how freely the eye moves about in the image, and directs the eye to a place to rest. Negative space can be smooth, textured, colored, and/or even contain some detail. We're surrounded by such open, blank canvases in everyday life: an overcast sky, a calm lake, a blanket of snow, a thick haze of fog, an open field, an unadorned wall.

Negative space in minimalist photography has visual mass. The key to the amount and placement of negative space is achieving a balance between the impact of it and your subject. This openness is meant to create breathing room for the subject, but not lose the prominence of the subject entirely. That said, not all images require expansive negative space to make an impact.

## 3. Powerful composition

One can't over-emphasize how much composition matters in minimalism photography. An appealing placement of the subject creates ease when our eyes read the image. Otherwise, our eyes are going to swirl around, looking for an anchor in the image, and do it over and over again until we lose interest. Try to work with the rule of thirds, or even a smidge tighter when composing minimalistic images. This technique helps bring the eye from left to right, or top to bottom, and creates a balance without perfect symmetry. That's important: Although your subject may be the smallest element in the frame, it needs to become the most significant once the eye comes to rest on it.

### USEFUL TIPS:

1. If the flow of the image doesn't feel right, a simple horizontal flip of the image in post-production might be an easy fix.
2. View the image in thumbnail size to evaluate the overall balance of the composition.
3. There are always exceptions to the rules — sometimes the subject belongs front and center in the frame.

## 4. Isolation

Because the frame will contain so little, it's important to think about the nature of your subject, and how its relevance in the frame will create an impact on the viewer. How will you isolate the subject, whether it's a lone tree in a field or a bird on a wire? By eliminating all other distractions from the scene, the viewer can really connect with the subject.

### USEFUL TIPS:

1. Move around your subject until you find a way to isolate it. Get low to the ground or shoot upward toward the sky to change perspective and eliminate unwanted distractions in the frame.



2. If changing perspective doesn't achieve your goal, use a shallow depth of field to separate your background from the main subject. Beautiful bokeh can bring subtle, soft tones to your negative space.



## 5. Color.

We all love a beautiful black-and-white conversion for minimalist images, but bold colors in minimalism certainly do have a place. Color can give the image a big dose of wow. It's about finding complementary colors (refer to a color wheel), and how those colors will complement the simplicity you are working to achieve.

Another play on color is to use a small amount of it. A simple pop of color can be an element that draws the eye. You can use just one or two colors, and when you do, make sure that negative space does not compete with, but rather complements the use of color.



### USEFUL TIP:

Whether you use black and white or color in your minimalistic photograph, there needs to be contrast in the tones or your subject could fade into the sea of vastness. That contrast should feel both harmonious and bold.

## 6. Lines and shapes

Leading lines guide the eyes through an image and can contribute to the viewer's sense of isolation, separation, distance, and scale. With little other information to go by, leading lines are often necessary. Shapes work well to create a sense of abstract in your frame. Think of using repetition, symmetry or geometry to frame a subject or draw attention. Strong, unique shadows can also captivate and pull a viewer into the frame.

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### TPS TEAM – DEDICATED TO SERVE YOU



Chairperson - Lynne Kruger-Haye  
082-576 7776  
lynnekrugerhaye@gmail.com



Michael West - Secretary  
083-2533052 mw.west@icloud.com



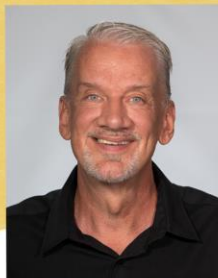
Ohna Nel - Treasurer  
083-6591873 oloftus@gmail.com



Martin Kleingeld  
Photovault/Housekeeping  
084-588 5686 | kleing@telkomsa.net



David Barnes  
Photovault  
082-492 7905 | actyot@iafrica.com



Stephen Burgstahler  
Education - 060-7398578  
stephenburgstahler@gmail.com



Alida Heine 061-4058700  
Newsletter Editor  
alida@alidaheinephotography.co.za

*Until we meet again – happy shooting!!*