

SPRINGFIELD PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

STANDARDS FOR EXHIBITION

(Revised: September, 2025)

GENERAL

The Board of Directors has decided that the term *exhibition* shall be used instead of “competition” to better reflect the goals of the monthly entries that are submitted to a panel of judges for scoring. The following are the Standards (rules) for Monthly Exhibitions and End of the Year Judging.

All members in good standing are eligible to enter all Digital and Print exhibitions each month. Members in good standing are those who have paid their season dues by November 1. Any ambiguities in these rules will be resolved by Club Officers. Members should not hesitate to ask any officer or experienced member for help with the details of exhibition.

The purpose of an exhibition is to provide a vehicle to promote and teach photography. The intent is not to be overly critical of members’ work, but to instruct all members about photographic techniques and the selection of their own best work for submission to any exhibition or competition.

SPS in general follows the guidelines and standards set by the Photographic Society of America and the New England Camera Club Council, but has, and will, deviate from those standards where the Board of Directors feels it is for the good of the club and its members. SPS will continue to submit members’ works to the NECCC interclub competitions if there is sufficient interest from our membership. Selection of the digital images for these competitions will be done by the assigned Board member or NECCC representative. Selection of any work for this purpose should be considered an honor. Entry by an individual in the monthly Club exhibitions implies a willingness to have his or her work selected to represent SPS in an NECCC interclub competition. Should any individual not wish to have their work submitted outside of SPS, notify the appropriate Vice President, Digital and your wishes will be honored.

EXHIBITION DATES

Club exhibition dates will appear in the *EXPOSURES* newsletter and on the club web site in the Calendar section.

DEFINITIONS

All definitions below apply to both Digital and Print exhibition images. For all categories, no makeups are allowed unless a technical error occurred in the image’s submission that was not the fault of the maker.

Any image generated by AI is totally prohibited for any category. AI tools may be used that are available in editing software, as long as no images, subjects, or items not made by the maker are added to the photograph. For example, AI Generative Fill may be used to remove or replace subjects/items in an image in place of the clone tool or content aware tool. Makers are responsible to ensure that AI content replacement is similar to what could have been done manually. They must also follow all the Category Definitions below.

GENERAL: General images are not confined to any particular subject, type, or style of photography. For General images, the emphasis is on interest, visual impact, composition, and technical excellence. The image must be properly exposed and have appropriate focus and depth of field.

Images may be edited on the computer or adjusted in the camera. Edits include various lighting or color adjustments, perspective correction and/or removal of distracting elements. (See **NATURE** section below for further guidance on editing techniques.)

The final image should be as realistic as possible and reflect the truth of the scene at the time the image was produced. Images in the realm of digital art or altered reality should be entered into the Artistic category. High Dynamic Range can be used but the image must look natural or realistic. Focus stacking and dodging/burning is allowed. No techniques that add, remove, relocate or replace MAJOR ELEMENTS except by cropping are allowed. Removal of minor distracting elements such as trash, wires, out of place persons or parts of people, sensor dust, noise and lens flare are allowed. Panoramic images are allowed. We do not wish to be overly restrictive in the use of editing software to create images in this category, however we rely on the ethics of the maker not to make major changes to the image that did not reflect the truth of the scene/subject when it was taken. Cloning in from another scene or image is not allowed in any category but Artistic or Photo Challenge.

CHALLENGE: An exhibition based upon an assigned theme, technique or subject. This category was instituted to challenge a person's creativity in interpreting a specific photographic subject or technique. The main criteria of judging in this category will be how well the image reflects the required challenge topic and how well it meets the standards of an excellent image for technical quality, composition, and impact. The image may look realistic or artistic. Any kind of manipulation is allowed in the Challenge image including cloning in from any other of the maker's original images, but you cannot use clip art. A Challenge image for the month can be entered only as a digital entry.

NATURE: The standards below have been revised to match the club's objectives for members' nature photography. SPS no longer strictly adheres to the PSA/NECCC criteria for a nature image.

Nature photography includes all the trees, plants and flowers, birds, mammals and insects that we find in the wild. Presentation may range from macro photography to grand landscapes. Nature images could include action or storytelling, as well as scenic and static portraits. Nature images should have excellent technical quality, composition, and impact.

Zoo animals or nature set-ups taken in a studio setting are not permitted, as well as animals taken in game farms and private reserves where the animals are enclosed or restricted. These types of images may be entered in General, Black & White or Challenge (if applicable.)

Human elements should not be present whenever possible, and especially where such elements would be distracting or detract from the natural beauty of the image. Examples of human elements that should be avoided include roads, paths, trails, vehicle tracks, power poles, fences, and signs. They can be removed by cloning or healing (refer to allowed editing below). However, our intent will be to evaluate the entire image and there will be times that an image with an elusive animal or a great story will still be viewed as a strong nature image even if there is minor intrusion of human elements. The emphasis is on "minor intrusion"; it is not expected that you can remove a major road or dominant path – that would not preserve the truth of the scene. However, power poles and fences (to some degree) can be removed. The main subject of the photograph must be the depiction of nature. (Please do not refer to human elements as "hand of man." This terminology does not cover all the possible examples of "human elements.")

Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals (except wild equines), domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that radically alters the truth of the original scene. No techniques that add, relocate, or replace pictorial elements are allowed. **Cultivated or hybrid plants may be present in a Nature image as long as the plant is not a major element of the image.**

Infrared images, either direct-captures or derivations, are not allowed. These may be placed into the Artistic category. No vignettes or special effect filters can be applied. Borders or digital frames are not permitted unless they are a 5 pixel or less wide line in white, black or grey that help define the image from the background during exhibition.

It is important that any techniques/edits that enhance the presentation of the photograph preserve the nature story and the truth of the scene when captured. Adjustments must appear natural including sharpening. *Editing techniques that are allowed are:* removing distracting elements or human elements by cloning or healing (to a limited degree), exposure blending, focus stacking, stitching of multiple images with overlapping elements, cropping, reversing (flipping horizontally), contrast adjustment, selective lightening or darkening (dodging/burning), and restoration of original color. One may remove dust spots, lens flare and digital noise.

Color images may be converted to monochrome.

Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals are permissible.

ARTISTIC: An exhibition based on the following definition:

Artistic photography is the production of an image through the use of imaginative skill or originality of thought including the altering of reality. No image should be eliminated from exhibition simply because it looks realistic, provided it shows originality of concept. Artistic images may include modifications in the computer or in the camera, as well as unusual points of view (or angles), imaginative use of subject matter or lighting, or any other presentation that begins with the maker's photograph or a collection of photographs. Artistic images may be achieved via computer enhancement, montaging, adding textures or filters, double exposure, long exposure or any other form of manipulation including cloning in from any other of the maker's original images. Manipulation is not a requirement. For example, non-manipulated glassware/still life setups could be regarded as Artistic. If an image is manipulated, all manipulations must be done by the entrant. SPS requires that all elements of the image must be of the maker's creation (including textures). Infrared images whether direct captures or derived by editing software shall be placed into the Artistic category.

Images are judged both for their technical and pictorial merit. The image should have strong composition, impact, and color, texture, pattern, and/or tone. The appropriateness of the technique selected to create altered reality is considered in judging. The content is unrestricted. If an image that is entered into the Artistic category does not seem to be creative or artistic, but is still an outstanding image, a maximum score of 9 can be given.

The images should be created to show the skill, uniqueness, creativity and imagination of the photographer, not just their skill with image editing.

BLACK & WHITE: An exhibition based on the following definition that reflects the PSA definition of monochrome, which shall be referred to herein as Black & White: An image is considered to be Black & White only if it gives the impression of having no color (i.e. contains only shades of gray which can include pure black and pure white) OR it gives the impression of being a grayscale image that has been toned in one color across the entire image. (For example by Sepia, red, gold, etc.). Any addition of another color that is not on the gray scale is not permitted.

Editing and manipulation of a Black and White image is limited to those allowed as described in the General category.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS – DIGITAL EXHIBITION

An entrant may compete in any, or all of 5 categories: Artistic, Black & White, Challenge, General or Nature, with a limit of 1 image per category for each exhibition. The original image, and all editing, must be made by the entrant. Images submitted for Nature exhibition may have limited manipulations and are described in the Definitions section of these Standards. Photographing two dimensional photographs or art work of another person for exhibition is prohibited. There is no time requirement for which the image must be made. Images must follow the guidelines of each category's Definition in the Definitions section. An entrant need not be present when the image is judged providing all criteria have been met. Any image not adhering to the Standards may be disqualified or reclassified by the Vice President, Digital or by his/her agent.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS - PRINT EXHIBITION

The above entry requirements for digital exhibition also apply to prints, except as noted here. An entrant may compete in any or all of 3 categories: Artistic, Black & White and Color. There are no Challenge or Nature categories in the Print Division. Images of nature subjects should be entered into either the Color or Black & White categories. The Color category should follow the same standards as Digital General. The other categories follow the standards of their digital counterparts.

Prints may be produced either by the maker or in a commercial print lab. However, no corrections or enhancements should be made to the file by the lab. Every print must be mounted on a solid backboard. Matted prints are permissible, but no entry can be framed. The back of the print shall indicate the month of submission, category, title, maker's name, and an arrow indicating the top of the print. No entry may display a name or any other identifying mark on the front of the print or mat. There is no restriction on the size of the print image or its mat/mounting.

Print Label:

An Excel spreadsheet is available from the VP of Prints for creation of a print label. The label is taped securely to the back of the print. Example:

| | | |
|---|------------------------|---|
| ↑ | Tape Securely to Print | ↑ |
| Print Label | | |
| Springfield Photographic Society | | |
| Points: _____ | Award: _____ | |
| Name: <u>Kevin Fay</u> | _____ | |
| Month/ Year: <u>Sep, 2024</u> | _____ | |
| Type: <u>Color Print</u> | _____ | |
| Title: <u>My Color Print</u> | _____ | |
| Maximum of 25 characters (including spaces) | | |

SUBMITTING ENTRIES

GENERAL

All digital and print entries are to be submitted via email to sps.digitalentries@gmail.com and must be received 9 days before the exhibition (i.e. Monday of the prior week). Each image must be saved as a jpg file and in sRGB format. They are to follow the size and naming conventions outlined below in INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING.

All print entries are to be submitted at the meeting on the exhibition night. Whenever a member expects to be absent, he/she may arrange to have his/her entry submitted by another member. Alternatively, the prints can be delivered to the appropriate Vice President before exhibition night. No entries will be accepted after judging begins. Print labels should be completed before the exhibition and brought to the meeting attached on the back of the print.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING

File Naming:

Each file has the following information and in this order:

Category, image title (use initial caps and spaces between words, with a maximum of 25 characters including the spaces), maker's initials. Where two members have the same initials, the Vice President, Digital will give one a slightly different code.

| Category | Digital | Print |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Artistic | A | AP |
| Black and White | B | BP |
| General | G | CP |
| Challenge | C | --- |
| Nature | N | --- |

Examples:

Digital Entry:

Image titled, My Favorite Place, entered into the General category by Barb Krawczyk
G-My Favorite Place-BK

Print Entry:

Print titled, My Special Place, entered into the Color Print category by Kevin Fay
CP-My Special Place-KF

File Sizing:

Images should be resized to 1920x1080, that is a maximum width of 1920 pixels and a maximum height of 1080 pixels. (When resized, neither dimension can exceed these sizes, but one or the other will often be smaller. That is normal.)

Submission of Digital Files for Digital and Print Exhibitions:

Entries are jpeg files sent via email to the Vice President, Digital at sps.digitalentries@gmail.com. Files should be email attachments within one email. **The email title should be: “Mon, Year - Your Name”.** Example:

To: sps.digitalentries@gmail.com

Subject: Sep, 2024 - Kevin Fay

SPS RESPONSIBILITY

Reasonable care will be given to all entries. However, SPS can assume no responsibility for loss or damage. All works sent to any outside competitions will also be handled with care while they are in possession of SPS. However, SPS cannot be held responsible for any damage incurred to the images while in possession of other parties.

DUPLICATION OF ENTRIES

Any image whether it be print or digital that wins an Honor Award or Honorable Mention in any SPS competition may not be re-entered into any other SPS exhibition except for the End of the Year judging. Non-winning images may be entered in another year. **However, an image similar to one submitted earlier in the year may be resubmitted later in the year, so long as the original did not win an award and new one is a re-shoot (i.e. same place, but different time of day, weather conditions, etc.**

An entry bearing a marked similarity to a previous winning entry, whether color or black & white, submitted by the same member, is not permitted regardless of the title. Two versions of an identical image or one very nearly identical, for example, one color and one black and white, cannot be entered in the same exhibition.

JUDGES AND JUDGING

The appropriate Vice Presidents or a Board-appointed individual will develop a slate of qualified judges. A panel of four judges will be selected from this list by the Vice President or appointed individual to judge the entries submitted for exhibition. Each judge will score an entry on a scale of 7 to 10. We drop the low score and sum the other three to get a total score for the image. A judge does not give a score to his/her own image. In that case, from the remaining three scores, the lowest score is dropped and the remaining lowest score is doubled. For example, a 10-9-8 becomes a 10-9-9 and a 9-9-7 becomes a 9-9-9. SPS shall attempt to limit the number of times a person serves as a judge to three exhibitions.

AWARDS

On exhibition night all entries will be exhibited, judged, and commentary given on selected images. The “Honor Award” system is used. Awards are given based solely on the score that the image receives, regardless of the scores and awards of other entrants.

Honorable Mention: 26 points

Honor Award: 27 points or more

END OF THE YEAR AWARDS

The following Awards have been dedicated to long-time members of the Springfield Photographic Society:

Sylvia Pyzocha Award - Best Artistic Print
Ken Cook Award - Best Black & White Print
Les Campbell Award - Best Color Print
Jim Theres Award - Best Artistic Digital
Paul Deegan Award - Best Black & White Digital
Dick Simmons Award - Best General Digital
Harry Ahern Award - Best Nature Digital
Bob Cookish Award - Best Portrait (see below for entry instructions)
Richard A. Novak – Image of the Year

There will also be a Print of the Year, that is not dedicated.

Note that there is no end-of-the-year judging for best Challenge image. A Challenge image may be entered as one of those images that meets the criteria for another category such as General Digital or Artistic Digital.

The only restriction is that an entrant's chosen image(s) must have been entered into the appropriate exhibition at some point during the current season. Thus, a digital image must remain as a digital image and likewise for a print. The entries must be submitted to the appropriate Vice President before the date they specify. A maximum of three images may be submitted in each category in which the member exhibited.

End of the Year selection of winners: Each person who submitted entries for End of the Year awards is provided a ballot with all the image entries and given an opportunity to participate in judging. Participation is not mandatory. For each category, the participating member ranks five images from 1 to 5, 5 being their favorite/best. The digital scoring is completed via email on line. The print judging is conducted in person by the SPS judging panel. The scores are tallied, and the winners selected from the top scoring images. The Image of the Year will be restricted to a Digital image. An outside judge or panel of judges will select the Image of the Year and Print of the Year.

The Bob Cookish Portrait Award

This annual award is in honor of long time SPS member Bob Cookish who particularly enjoyed creating portraits. The requirements for submittal are:

1. Any member can submit up to two digital images.
2. They can be color or black & white.
3. The image does not need to be one that was entered into exhibition in the current season or any prior year.
4. It must be a portrait image, according to our definition: **“a close-up image of one person, not restricted to a studio environment”**. If you choose to enter an image taken out on the street, it does not need to be cropped from the shoulders up. However, it needs to be a strong image of the person, with a lesser emphasis on the environment. (A picture of a small person in a large landscape would not fit the portrait definition.)
5. Each image should be resized to the 1920x1080 standards that we always use for digital files.
6. Name your files as follows: Bob Cookish–*Image Title-Your Name*
7. Send them in an email to the Digital VP's at sps.digitalentries@gmail.com by a date in May TBD.
8. Use “Bob Cookish” as your email title.
9. The winner will be chosen by the year end judges.
10. You can enter an image into this event that was submitted into another year end category.

Cumulative Score Awards

First, second and third place awards will be given for cumulative scores for each Digital category. One set of cumulative awards is now given for prints. To be eligible for any Digital end of the year cumulative score award, a member must have participated in seven of the nine applicable monthly competitions and only the top 7 scoring images in each category will be counted towards the score award. For prints, the cumulative awards will be best on the members' top ten scores across all print categories.

Any award can be withdrawn if the respective Vice President determines that there were insufficient entries to justify presenting an award in that particular division or category.