



IPIP PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

JULY 2026 NEWSLETTER

CANDLE LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY



Topic: An image where the lighting is only from a lit candle. If the candle is not present it must be obvious that the subject is lit by a candle.

Elevation: Balance the candle's warmth using the Kelvin White Balance instead of auto White Balance

Submission Deadline: 25th July 2026

Set Subject image cut off date: 1st July 2025

MC Subject image cut off date: 1st February 2026

Next Meeting: 4th August 2026

Venue: Moth Hall 18.00 for 18.30 start

Workshops and outings

Long Exposure evening in a park – Willem Conradie Park Floracliff **Friday 17th July 2026 from 17.30**

We are looking for a new destination for next years weekend away, when and where was the question. Koedoeslaagte is an option for next year

Set Subject Topics

Month	Set Subject	Submission Deadline	SS Image Cut off Date	MC Image Cut off Date
August	Candle Light	25 th July 2026	1 st July 2025	1 st February 2026
September	Long exposure	22 nd August 2026	1 st August 2025	1 st March 2026
October	Decay	26 th September 2026	1 st September 2025	1 st April 2026
November	Nature	24 th October 2026	1 st October 2025	1 st May 2026

Month	Set Subject	Definitions
August	Candle Light	An image where the lighting is only from a lit candle. If the candle is not present it must be obvious that the subject is lit by a candle. Elevation: <i>Balance the candle's warmth using manual Kelvin white balance instead of auto WB</i>
September	Long Exposure	A longer than normal shutter speed to capture the passing of time in a single Image.
October	Decay	Capture the visual elements of decline, ruin and decomposition. Elevation: <i>Shoot macro decay at 1:1 magnification using diffused off-camera Flash to reveal microdetails</i>
November	Nature	No manipulation allowed (See PSSA definitions of the NATURE category And how MANIPULATION is defined)

Franconi Challenge

This regular activity will take place again during 2026, subject to the following guidelines:

1. One topic may be chosen and submitted, thereafter the final image may be taken;
2. Six images must be submitted with a written narrative
3. Deadlines for submission 31st October 2026
4. You may change your topic once through the year, taking images from that new date
5. Choose a topic which will challenge you and with which you will learn new skills
6. Do not choose a theme that you used in previous years, even in a different variant
7. You can practice many more topics, decide which will work, perfect the process, submit as topic and then take your final images (may not work with travel photos)
8. Submit your images to other photographers – share your photos and get feedback
9. Carefully choose the name of the submission – it must reflect the topic
10. Make sure each image reflects and encompasses the topic and the name of the submission.
11. The set will be judged as a panel (set). They must all clearly speak to the topic.
12. Take note of the order of the photographs – the order could tell a story
13. Each image must be technically correct in terms of focus, exposure, etc. (unless intentionally otherwise, which you explain in your text submission)
14. Study the comments and scores of your and other panels to further your learning
15. Normal club rules apply for manipulation and use of AI.

CANDLE LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

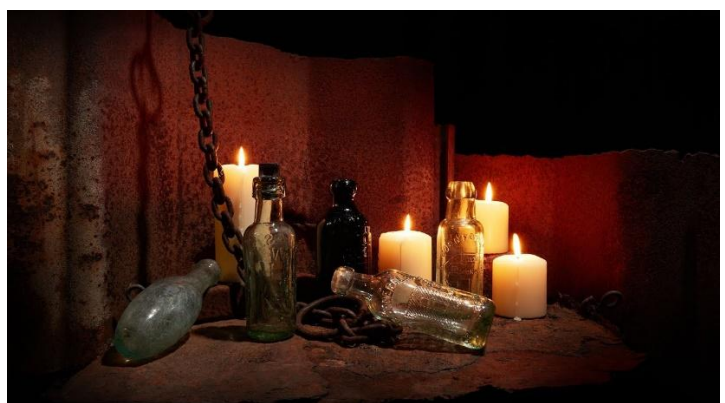
- Candlelight photography is one of the oldest forms of low-light photography.
- The appeal lies in its simplicity. A single candle can transform an ordinary scene into something intimate, mysterious or romantic.
- Unlike studio lighting, candlelight is extremely soft and directional. It falls off rapidly, meaning that areas close to the candle are illuminated while backgrounds quickly disappear into darkness. This creates natural separation and depth.
- The biggest challenge is the low light level. Modern cameras make this easier than ever, but photographers still need to balance aperture, shutter speed and ISO carefully.
- A common mistake is exposing for the flame itself. The flame is many stops brighter than the surrounding scene and will almost always blow out. That's perfectly acceptable. The important part is that the subject is correctly exposed.
- Remember that candlelight is naturally warm. Many photographers unintentionally remove that warmth by over-correcting white balance. Embrace the golden tones—they are part of the story.

Camera Settings

- Shoot RAW
- Aperture: f/1.4 – f/2.8
- ISO: 800 – 6400
- Shutter speed: as slow as possible without blur
- Use image stabilization or a tripod when practical

White Balance

- Auto WB often removes the warm glow
- Try "Cloudy" or "Shade" settings
- For maximum control, adjust in RAW processing



Remember: expose for the subject, not the flame.

Many may assume more candles will reduce the mood. In reality, several candles can produce beautiful soft lighting while still maintaining the candlelit atmosphere.

Side lighting often works best because it creates shape and texture. Front lighting can appear flat, while back lighting can produce dramatic silhouettes and rim-lit portraits.

Still-life photography is particularly suited to candlelight. Subjects such as wine glasses, books, flowers, old objects and musical instruments can produce striking images.

When photographing people, focus on the eyes. In low light autofocus systems can struggle, so be prepared to use manual focus.

Avoid mixing light sources. You must shoot using candle light only.

The judges will look for more than simply a visible candle. They want to see that the candlelight itself has become the primary creative element of the image. Ask yourself: if the candle were removed, would the image lose its impact?

The best candlelight photographs use the limitations of the light to strengthen the story, mood and emotion of the image rather than fighting against them.

Lighting Techniques

- Use several candles instead of one for more even illumination
- Place candles to the side for texture and dimension
- Place candles behind the subject for rim lighting
- Use white card or a reflector to fill shadows

Composition Ideas

- Portraits lit by a single candle
- Hands, faces and still life subjects
- Reflections in mirrors or glass
- Silhouettes against candlelight
- Include the flame as part of the composition

Focus Tips

- Focus on the eyes in portraits
- Use single-point autofocus
- Switch to manual focus if autofocus struggles

Common Mistakes

- Mixing candlelight with room lights
- Overexposed flames dominating the image
- Camera shake from slow shutter speeds
- Excessive noise from very high ISO settings

In candlelight photography, darkness is not the enemy—it is part of the composition."

General Guidelines for submission of members monthly images

Submission procedure:

All images must be submitted via [www. Photovaultonline.com](http://www.Photovaultonline.com)

Instructions on how to use the app can be obtained from the committee

Time limits:

Set subject to be taken within the 12 months of submission

Members challenge to be taken within 6 months of submission

Monochrome submission should you submit 2 set subjects and 2 members challenge images one must be monochrome

Should you submit 4 colour the image with the lowest score will be disqualified

Should you submit 3, 2 or 1 images there is no need to submit a monochrome image

A workshop will be done on shooting in monochrome and editing monochrome.

Image Processing

- Images must have been taken by you
- You may however use photoshop brushes
- Should you, for example do a background or sky replacement, you may not use the AI tool for this purpose. The new background or sky must have been taken from another one of your images

Naming of Images

- When naming your images for submission, use the opportunity to tell the judges more about the image.
- Use a name which fits the image
- Try not to use the theme name in the name with number eg. Abstract 1 and Abstract 2
- Try not make it a long sentence, remember someone has to type the name out twice in full, once for peer vote voting form and once for the judging outcome

NAMIBIA

Earlier this year, Geoff and Nikki Twomey embarked on an unforgettable photographic adventure to Namibia with two fellow photographers. During our last meeting, they generously shared the highlights of their journey, taking us through Namibia's breath taking landscapes, and the stunning images they captured along the way. Their presentation was both inspiring and informative, giving us a glimpse into the beauty of this remarkable country while sharing the experiences, challenges, and memorable moments that made their trip so special. Thank you, Geoff and Nikki, for allowing us to travel with you through your photographs and stories. Here is a blog: www.saveursdelavie.com



ABOUT VENTUREKJ

VentureKJ is a collaboration between two well-known South African nature photographers, Kyle Goetsch and Jon Kerrin.

They share a passion for photography, nature and adventure, and love to teach others how to capture the wonderment, beauty and excitement of nature through photography.

Kyle and Jon specialise in travelling to remote locations and capturing stunning moments in nature.

They offer guided photography workshops and tours to some of the best photographic locations in Southern Africa, promising adventure while learning the art of landscape photography in a fun and relaxed environment.



CONTACT DETAILS:

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Email: info@venturekj.com

Macro Photography Lighting

In macro photography, light does more than illuminate; it defines texture, depth, and detail. In macro photography lighting, even the smallest adjustment can dramatically change your image.

Because you're working at close distances, light becomes more intense and more directional. Therefore, learning to control it is essential.

Why Lighting Matters in Macro Photography

Small subjects reveal extraordinary detail and challenge your technical skills in unique ways.

Insect and flower photography highlights intricate textures and patterns, sharpens your precision, and uncovers beauty that often goes unnoticed.

As a result, this genre helps you become a more patient, observant, and technically skilled photographer.

Using Natural Light for Macro Photography

Natural light is the easiest way to start. Moreover, it creates soft and balanced results.

In macro photography lighting, natural light works best when:

- ☐ The sky is overcast
- ☐ You shoot during early morning or late afternoon
- ☐ Light is diffused through clouds or curtains

To improve results:

- ☐ Position your subject near soft light
- ☐ Avoid direct harsh sunlight
- ☐ Adjust your angle to control shadows

As a result, your images will feel natural and clean.

Diffusing Light for Softer Results

Harsh light can create unwanted shadows. Therefore, diffusion is key.

In macro photography lighting, you can diffuse light using:

- ☐ Sheer fabric
- ☐ Paper or soft panels
- ☐ Built-in diffusers

Diffused light:

- ☐ Softens shadows
- ☐ Reduces contrast
- ☐ Creates smoother transitions

As a result, your subject appears more evenly lit.

Using Flash in Macro Photography

Flash gives you greater control over lighting in macro photography, but it needs to be used carefully to achieve natural-looking results.

In macro photography, flash can help freeze motion, add brightness in low-light conditions, and highlight fine details that might otherwise be lost.

To use flash effectively, avoid direct harsh light by using a diffuser or small softbox.

Adjust the flash power gradually until the lighting looks balanced and realistic.

As a result, your macro images will appear more natural while still capturing sharp detail.

Controlling Shadows for Depth

Shadows are just as important as light in macro photography. They add depth, structure, and dimension to your images.

Soft shadows create a natural and balanced look, while stronger shadows can introduce drama and mood. Directional light helps define the shape and texture of your subject, making fine details stand out more clearly.

Rather than trying to eliminate shadows completely, focus on controlling them to enhance the overall composition.

Reflectors and Light Control Tools

You don't need expensive gear. In fact, simple tools work well.

For macro photography lighting, try:

- ☐ White paper to reflect light
- ☐ Aluminum foil for stronger reflection
- ☐ Small reflectors

These tools help:

- ☐ Fill in shadows
- ☐ Balance light
- ☐ Improve exposure

You gain more control without complexity.

Composition Tips for Macro Lighting

Lighting and composition work together. Otherwise, the image can feel flat.

Keep these in mind:

- ☐ Position your subject relative to light direction
- ☐ Use shadows to guide attention
- ☐ Simplify the background
- ☐ Highlight key details

As a result, your images feel more intentional.

Why Macro Photography Lighting Matters

Macro photography reveals incredible detail, but without proper lighting, much of that detail can be lost.

Effective macro photography lighting enhances texture and form, improves clarity, and creates a stronger sense of depth. Good lighting helps bring out the fine features that make close-up images so compelling.

Therefore, mastering light is essential for creating sharp, detailed, and visually striking macro photographs.

Thank you to Dudley Schetler for this interesting article you shared with us



If anyone has some interesting article or story to share please can they send me an e-mail to my direct address: sacha.fermor@gmail.com

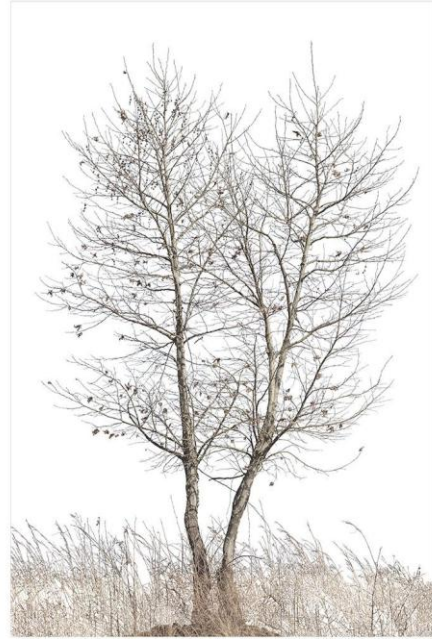
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Jenny Williamson



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Peer Vote Winner 4 Star

Sacha Fermor



Lilac Breasted Roller

Members Challenge Winners 5 Star and Peer Vote Winners 5 Star

Deon Heyns



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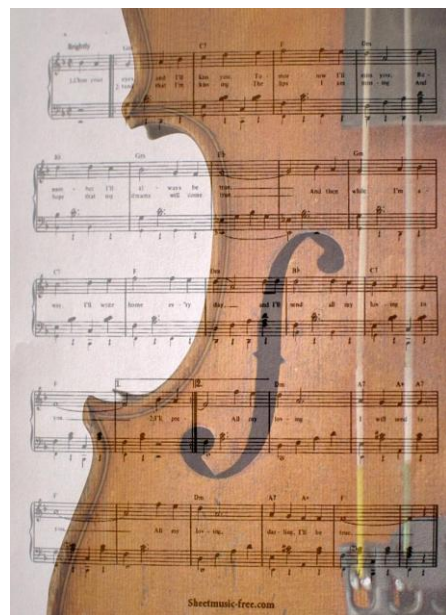
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Peter Casalis



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Peer Vote Winners Set Subject 1-3 Star Double Exposure

Elme Coetzer



A Legacy Protected

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Peer Vote Winner Set Subject 4 Star

Sacha Fermor



Zebras going for a walk

Set Subject 5 Star Tie – Double Exposure

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Peer Vote Winner Set Subject 5 Star

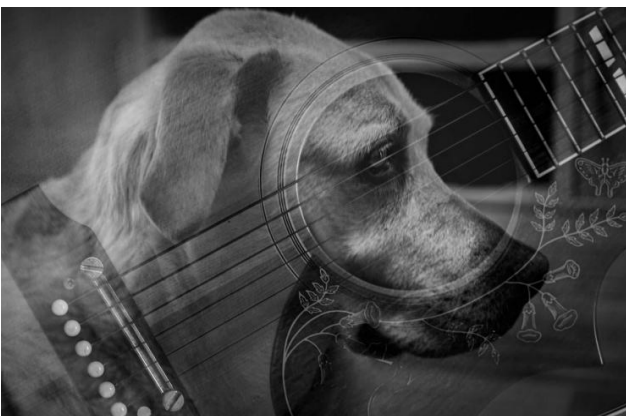
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Monochrome Winner 1-3 Star

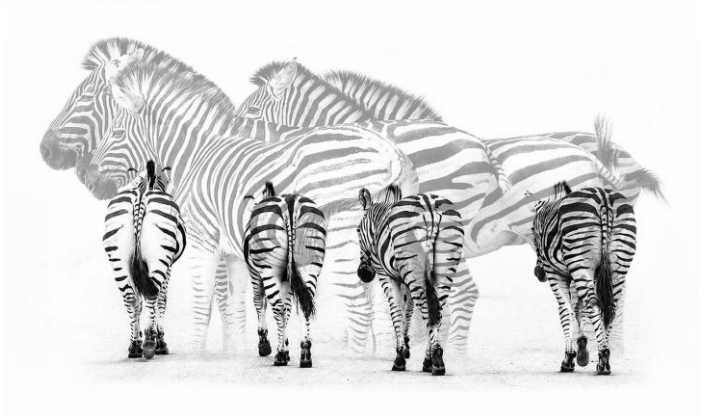
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Monochrome Winner 4 and 5 Star

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Monochrome Winner 5 Star

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Some interesting facts that you might not have known about Photography

What are the 7 C's of photography?

Mastering these interconnected concepts is what separates a passive observer from an active visual storyteller. In the following exploration, we will dissect each of these seven pillars: **Composition, Contrast, Color, Cropping, Clarity, Creativity, and Consistency.**

What is the 3 rule in photography?

The rule of thirds is a compositional guideline that divides an image into nine equal squares using two horizontal and two vertical lines. By aligning key subjects with these lines or their intersections, you create a more balanced, dynamic, and visually engaging photograph than one with a perfectly centred subject.



Why is photography interesting?

Photography is a powerful mix of art and science that allows you to freeze fleeting moments, tell visual stories, and see everyday surroundings from a fresh perspective. It acts as a permanent time capsule, preserving your memories while keeping your creativity active.

