



Monthly Newsletter: April 2026

April Photography Club Highlights

April already... somehow, we've blinked and found ourselves in the fourth month of the year. Here in the Western Cape, it feels like we skipped autumn entirely and stepped straight into winter. The days are growing shorter, the nights a little longer, and there's a definite chill in the air. But with every seasonal shift comes a fresh opportunity to see the world differently and that's where creativity truly comes alive.

Winter might keep us indoors a bit more, but it also brings its own kind of magic. Think dramatic skies, moody light, rain-soaked streets, and those truly stunning sunsets we're so lucky to experience this time of year. It's the perfect moment to challenge ourselves, think outside the box, and capture beauty in new and unexpected ways.

This month also marked a first for our club, as we combined our Black & White session with our regular club evening. It was a great success, and it was wonderful to see how well it all came together, thank you to everyone who embraced the change and contributed to making the evening so enjoyable.

We also had a fun outing to Kalk Bay, where some members arrived early to catch the stunning sunrise, nothing quite beats an early morning paired with a good cup of coffee. As usual, everyone headed off in their own direction in search of inspiration. Some found it in reflections, while others were drawn to the interesting people and character of Kalk Bay.

And, as always, a sincere thank you to all our members who continue to submit their photographs each month. Your passion, effort, and willingness to share your work are what keep our club inspired and thriving

The editor



April Results

In our **Open category**, members could submit any photo they wanted, truly showcasing how they see the world through their lens. The variety was incredible, ranging from beautiful reflections in Kalk Bay, to detailed macro work, forgotten towns, striking portraits, and even some high-adrenaline sport. Each image told its own story and highlighted the unique vision of the photographer behind it.

Our **Still Life category** was equally impressive and challenged our members to think differently. From traditional still life setups to bold, out-of-the-box creations, it was clear that still life is very much an art form and our members did not disappoint.

Congratulations to all our photographers who submitted images. The standard was exceptionally high, and for the first time in a long while, we had so many photos tied on points that selecting second and third places in each category was no easy task.

A very special congratulations to our overall winner of the evening

🏆 Club Overall Winner

- *Quayside Reflection* – Peter Dewar

Top Photos – Open Category

- 🥇 *Quayside Reflection* – Peter Dewar
- 🥈 *The Dentist* – Antenie Carstens
- 🥉 *Price of Making Art* – Hilldidge Beer
- 🏅 *Kalk Bay Abstract Colours* – Riaan van den Berg
- 🏅 *Kilmainham Gaol* – Steve Trimby

Top Photos – Still Life Category

- 🥇 *Fire Starters* – Steve Trimby
- 🥈 *Nest of Zest* – Carima van den Berg
- 🥉 *Photo of a Windmill* – Neels Beyers
- 🏅 *Dark Reds in Flower* – Riaan van den Berg
- 🏅 *Sprout of Serenity* – Carima van den Berg
- 🏅 *Bible* – Neels Beyers
- 🏅 *The Boxing Gloves* – Sandra Snyman

Another fantastic evening filled with passion, creativity, and a shared love for photograph



April Winner - Quayside Reflection – Peter Dewar (Kalk Bay)

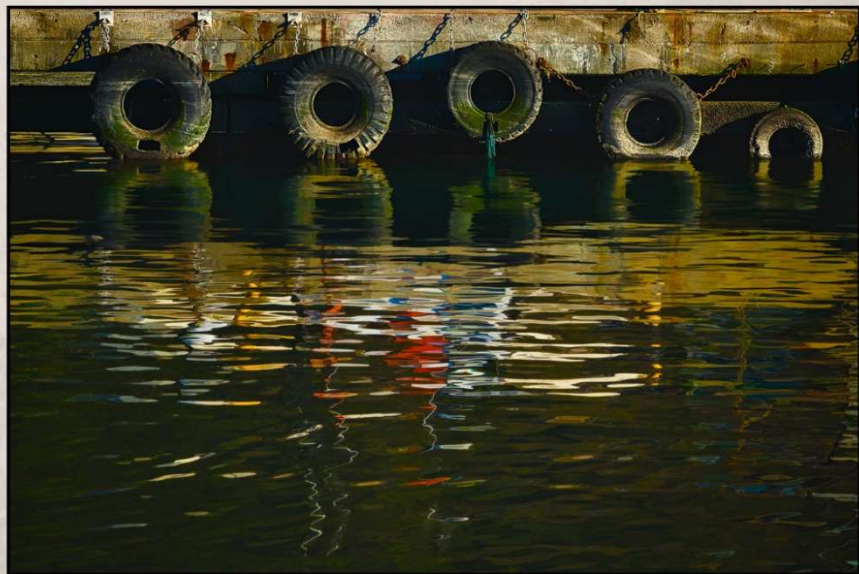
There's a quiet strength in this image, solid, weathered tyres hanging along the quay, built to absorb impact and protect what matters. Yet below them, the water tells a completely different story. It softens everything, breaking the rigid world above into fluid strokes of colour and light.

The contrast is what makes this photograph so compelling. The hard textures of rubber, rust, and concrete meet the ever-changing surface of the sea, where reflections dance in abstract patterns. Hints of boats and harbour life appear only as ripples, suggested rather than seen, inviting the viewer to interpret their own version of the scene.

Captured in Kalk Bay, the image feels both grounded and dreamlike. It reminds us that even in the most industrial, functional spaces, there is beauty, often just beneath the surface, waiting to be noticed.

OPEN & OVERALL WINNER: APRIL '26

**QUAYSIDE REFLECTION
BY
PETER DEWAR**



Open 2nd Place



Above Photos by

The Dentist - Antenie Carstens

Kalk bay abstract colours - Riaan van den Berg

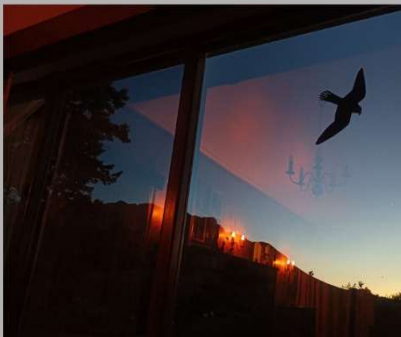
Price of making art - Hilldidge Beer

Kilmainham Gaol - Steve Trimby

Open Members Photos



Open Members Photos



Above Photos by

Wasp - Bernard Seymour Hall

Old meets ancient - Hilldidge Beer

Pre-Dawn Kalk Bay - Peter Dewar

De Hoop late afternoon - Sandra Snyman

Kalk Bay Harbour - Wynand Muntingh

Wasps Foot - Bernard Seymour Hall

Kitesurfer coming down a wave - Neels Beyers

Fishing Trawlers - Wynand Muntingh

S21 Strand Classic - Carima van den Berg

Rubberduck blue and red - Neels Beyers

Slowmotion sunset - Riaan van den Berg

Jess - Steve Trimby

Late Flight Escaping The Fire - Antenie Carstens

Louw - Carima van den Berg

Hoop Church - Sandra Snyman

Set Subject: Still Life

**SET SUBJECT: STILL LIFE
WINNER: APRIL '26**

FIRE STARTERS
BY
STEVE TRIMBY



Set Subject: 2nd Place Still Life



Photos Above 2nd place Still Life

Nest of Zest

Carima van den Berg

Photo of a windmill

Neels Beyers

Dark reds in flower

Riaan van den Berg

Sprout of Serenity

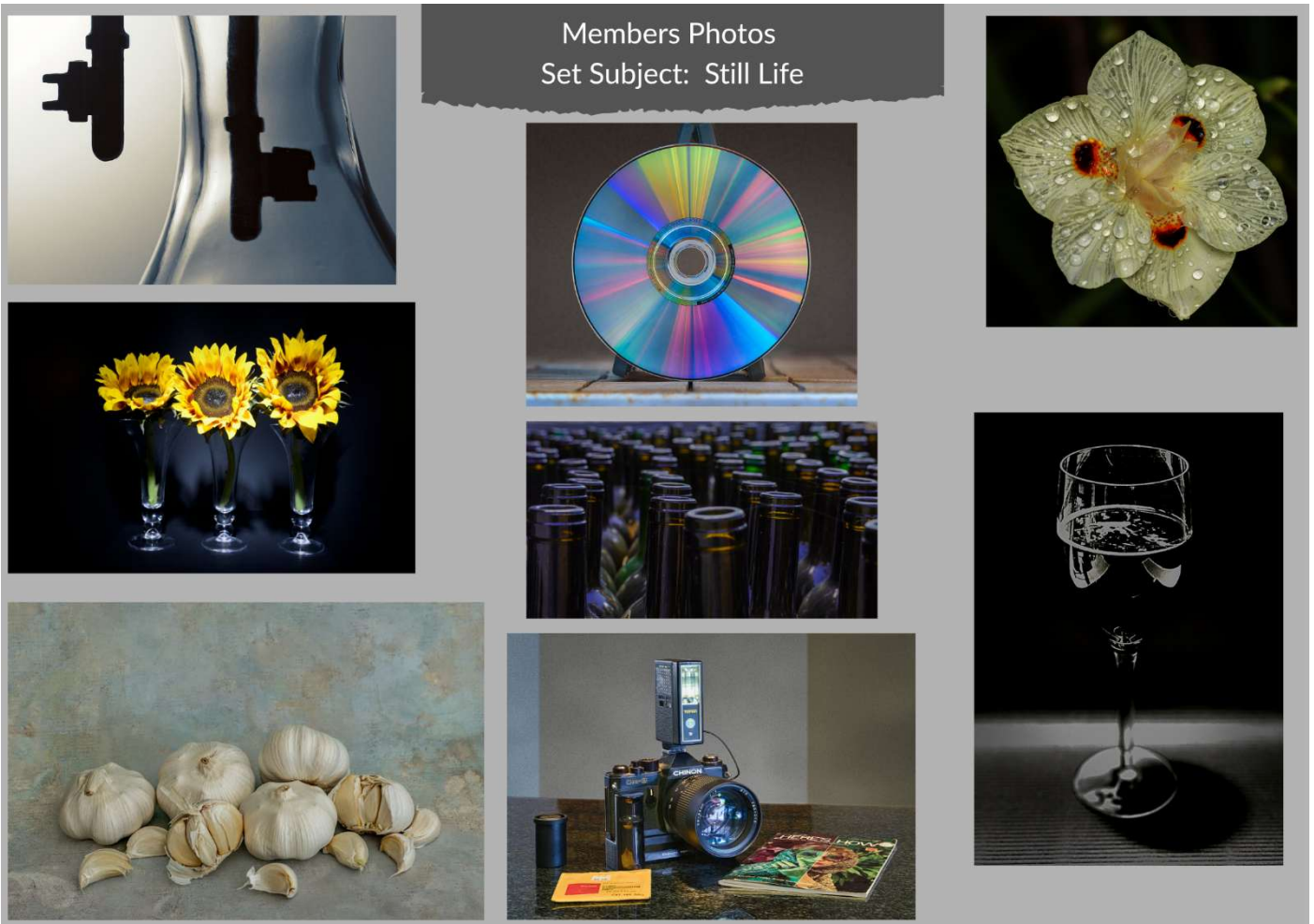
Carima van den Berg

Bible

Neels Beyers

The boxing gloves

Sandra Snyman



Photos: Still Life

Whistle in the wind

Hannes vd Walt

Coffee reclassified Hilldidge Beer

Colour Wheel

Peter Dewar

Sonneblom Trio Sandra Snyman

Vampire repellent

Steve Trimby

Master key

Hilldidge Beer

The Old Days

Peter Dewar

The rain has come

Riaan van den Berg

Club Meeting Information:

Our next meetings will be on the following dates in May remember the closing dates of Photo Vault (PV)

Meeting	PV Closing Date	Meeting Date	Set Subject
Club Normal	8 May 2026	12 May 2026	No Set Subject

Take note: May Photo Evaluation (AI Session)

A relaxed, non-competitive evening focused on learning and feedback.

👉 How it works:

An AI tool will evaluate each photo, giving a score and constructive feedback to offer a fresh perspective.

👉 Members' input:

Members will also score images, compare results with the AI, and discuss how to improve them, including why opinions may differ.

🌟 No competition:

No winners, just open discussion and learning. AI will not edit photos, only provide feedback.

📌 Submissions:

Up to 4 Open images for May

Set Subject moves to July (July will have Open + 2 Set Subjects)

AI feedback will be shared with each photographer at the meeting.

! Note:

All images remain the photographer's property and will not be stored online. A separate AI tool (not ChatGPT) will be used.

Outings, Workshops and Courses

Outings

Velddrif Kuifkop Weekend 25-28 August.

Self-catering midweek break, bird cruise on Cracklin' Rosie, maybe wildflowers are in bloom ect ect.

Contact Nettie for more information

2 May – Old Nectar in Stellenbosch.

If you see something interesting on Facebook or any groups, please share with the group.



Audio-Visual

AV Meeting on Saturday 21st of March at the PJ Olivier Centre, Stellenbosch. Our new venue proved to be just the right size, able to be darkened, and convenient. Thanks to Antenie who set up the space - so much organisation!

Attendees were Irmel, Antenie, Neels, Izak, Johan, Esther, Wilhelm, and Nettie. Several AVs were shown and discussed in a friendly and informal way - just the way we like it! We all brought our own refreshments, after which Antenie gave us a very informative talk on recording sound for our AVs. Thank you, Antenie.

Our next outing will be at Old Nectar Garden on the road to the Jonkershoek Forest. Saturday 2 May - meeting at 'Mother Dough' a small restaurant on the way to Old Nectar. Two small signboards on either side of the road - time 11.00am. Attendees can decide to go straight to the garden or have something to eat before going to the garden for the afternoon light.

Entrance to the garden is R50 (honesty box at the gate). Members who don't usually make AVs are welcome to come too! Remember that you can make 'macro' pictures for a future set subject! See you there!



Next JAP training starts 10 Oct 2026

A general application form will be available to download from this section of the PSSA website as of **1st July 2026**. The closing date for applications will be **1st August 2026**.

Light & Lens Monthly Articles – looking for some ideas on what you want to read about and send me some interesting articles that I can use



Seeing Differently: Turning Everyday Moments into Powerful Photographs

OUTSIDE-THE-BOX TECHNIQUES, PRACTICAL TIPS, AND THE ART OF NOTICING

Photography doesn't really begin when you press the shutter. It begins the moment something catches your attention.

If you've ever stopped your car to photograph an old truck, a weathered wall, or a quiet patch of light, you've probably been met with a puzzled look or two. "Why would you take a photo of that?" And yet, when the final image is shared, the reaction often shifts. Suddenly, that overlooked, ordinary scene becomes interesting—even beautiful. That shift is what photography is all about.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LOOKING AND SEEING

We all look at the world constantly, but we don't always see it. Our brains filter out what they consider unimportant so we can focus on what matters in the moment. A camera, however, doesn't have that luxury. It doesn't filter. It doesn't prioritize. It simply records everything within the frame—the subject, the distractions, the clutter, the beauty, and the chaos.

This is where many photographs fall apart. What felt clean and simple to your eye suddenly looks busy in a photo. Learning photography, then, becomes a process of training yourself to see like the camera, while still holding onto your own creative interpretation.



THE ART OF NOTICING

At its core, photography is the art of noticing—not just the obvious, but the subtle. A photographer doesn't just see objects; they see relationships. Light falling across a surface. A shadow creating a shape. Colors interacting. Textures telling a story. What might seem like "nothing" to one person can become a compelling image to another, simply because they noticed something different.

QUICK TECHNIQUES FOR GREAT PHOTOS ANYWHERE

- Use windows/light for soft, flattering portraits.
- Shoot from the ground up to add drama.
- Open up your aperture to create a shallow depth of field.
- Look for soft, natural light to create natural highlights.
- Try portraits when you're not too far from the subject.
- Use a slower shutter speed to create motion blur.
- Find contrast and juxtaposition to add interest.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Photography is not about chasing perfection or waiting for extraordinary locations. It's about recognizing that the extraordinary already exists within the ordinary—and having the awareness and skill to reveal it. When you slow down, observe more carefully, and start thinking about how your camera sees the world, you begin to create images with intention. Images that feel considered, balanced, and meaningful. And perhaps most importantly, images that show others something they may have never noticed before. Because in the end, photography isn't just about taking pictures—it's about changing the way we see.

TRANSLATING VISION INTO A PHOTOGRAPH

Noticing something is only the first step. The real challenge is translating what you saw and felt into a photograph that communicates the same idea to someone else.

This is where technique becomes your creative toolkit.

CHANGE YOUR PERSPECTIVE
Move. Shoot from low to the ground for drama. Climb higher for patterns and relationships. The best angle is often the one that feels slightly uncomfortable to get.

SIMPLIFY AND CONTROL THE FRAME
Pay close attention to the edges of your frame. Anything entering or leaving should feel intentional. A powerful image is rarely about adding more—it's about removing what doesn't belong.

USE LIGHT TO SHAPE THE SCENE
Light is emotion. Directional light creates depth and mood. Early morning, late afternoon, and blue hour offer the most beautiful, manageable light.

WORK WITH CONTRAST AND TONE
If color isn't working, consider black and white. Contrasting colors—the warm light in a cool scene—can add impact and energy.

COMPOSE WITH INTENTION

Every element in your frame should have a purpose. You can't always remove distractions, but you can control how they appear.

LOOK BEYOND THE OBVIOUS SUBJECT
The most interesting part of a photo isn't always the main subject. It might be the lines, shapes, or the way elements interact within the frame.

BE PATIENT—LET THE MOMENT HAPPEN
Light changes. People move. Clouds shift. Patience allows you to capture moments that feel natural and unforced.

EXPERIMENT WITHOUT FEAR
Rotate your camera. Shoot through objects. Use motion blur. Break the "rules" and see what happens. Not every experiment will succeed—but each one teaches you something.



FROM OBSERVATION TO EXPRESSION

At some point, photography stops being about capturing what something looks like and starts becoming about expressing what it feels like.

You begin to notice things differently—the way light defines a shape, the distance between elements, the mood of a scene, the fleeting nature of a moment. And with that awareness, even the most ordinary environments become full of potential.

Light & Lens Monthly Article

by Carima van den Berg

Seeing Differently: Turning Everyday Moments into Powerful Photographs, *Outside-the-box techniques, practical tips, and the art of noticing*

Welcome back to another instalment of ***Light and Lens***. This month, we're stepping away from settings, gear, and technical debates, and focusing on something far more important, how we see.

Because photography doesn't really begin when you press the shutter. It begins the moment something catches your attention.

If you've ever stopped your car to photograph an old truck, a weathered wall, or a quiet patch of light, you've probably been met with a puzzled look or two. "*Why would you take a photo of that?*"

And yet, when the final image is shared, the reaction often shifts. Suddenly, that overlooked, ordinary scene becomes interesting, even beautiful. That shift is what photography is all about.

The Difference Between Looking and Seeing

We all look at the world constantly, but we don't always see it.

As humans, our brains are incredibly efficient. They filter out what they consider unimportant so we can focus on what matters in the moment. It's why you can walk past the same street every day and never notice the small details that make it unique.

A camera, however, doesn't have that luxury. It doesn't filter. It doesn't prioritise. It simply records everything within the frame, the subject, the distractions, the clutter, the beauty, and the chaos.

This is where many photographs fall apart. What felt clean and simple to your eye suddenly looks busy and confusing in a photo. That beautiful barn you remember? The camera also sees the power lines, parked cars, and everything else your brain chose to ignore.

Learning photography, then, becomes a process of training yourself to see like the camera, while still holding onto your own creative interpretation.

The Art of Noticing

At its core, photography is the art of noticing, not just the obvious, but the subtle.

A photographer doesn't just see objects; they see relationships. Light falling across a surface. A shadow creating shape. Colours interacting. Textures telling a story.

What might seem like "nothing" to one person can become a compelling image to another, simply because they noticed something different.

Take something as simple as a fire hydrant. To most, it's functional and forgettable. But to a photographer, it might be:

- A bold shape against a textured background
- A pop of colour in an otherwise muted scene
- A point of balance within a composition

The subject itself doesn't change, only the way it's seen.

And that's where photography becomes less about equipment and more about awareness.

Translating Vision into a Photograph

Noticing something is only the first step. The real challenge is translating what you saw and felt into a photograph that communicates the same idea to someone else. This is where technique becomes your creative toolkit. Change Your Perspective

One of the simplest ways to elevate an image is to move.

Shoot from low to the ground to create a sense of scale and drama. Find a higher vantage point to reveal patterns and relationships. Even a small shift in position can completely change the story.

Often, the best angle is the one that feels slightly uncomfortable to get.

Simplify and Control the Frame

Your camera sees everything, so it's up to you to decide what stays and what goes. Pay close attention to the edges of your frame. Anything entering or leaving the image should feel intentional. This idea of "edge control" is one of the most overlooked aspects of strong photography. A powerful image is rarely about adding more, it's about removing what doesn't belong.

Use Light to Shape the Scene

Light is not just illumination, it's emotion. Flat light can leave a scene feeling lifeless, while directional light creates depth, contrast, and mood. Sometimes, even introducing a small, controlled light source can transform an image completely. Early morning, late afternoon, and blue hour are particularly powerful because of the softness and direction of the light.

Work With Contrast and Tone

If colour isn't working, consider removing it. Black and white photography can emphasise shape, texture, and contrast in a way that colour sometimes cannot. On the other hand, contrasting colours, such as warm light in a cool scene, can add visual impact and energy. The key is to recognise what the scene needs, rather than forcing it into a single approach.

Compose With Intention

Every element in your frame should have a purpose. Sometimes you can't remove a distracting object, but you can decide how it appears in your composition. By adjusting your position, focal length, or framing, you can turn a distraction into a supporting element. A strong composition feels balanced, deliberate, and complete.

Look Beyond the Obvious Subject

In many cases, the most interesting part of a photograph isn't the main subject at all. It might be the lines leading toward it, the shapes surrounding it, or the way different elements interact within the frame. A wheel, a fence, or even painted lines on a road can become part of a much larger visual story. Great images are often built from the relationships between simple elements.

Be Patient — Let the Moment Happen

Not all photographs are waiting to be taken immediately. Some need time. Light changes. Shadows move. People enter and leave the frame. Clouds drift into position. These small shifts can transform a good composition into a great one. Patience allows you to capture moments that feel natural and unforced.

Experiment Without Fear

Some of the most memorable images come from trying something unexpected. Rotate your camera. Shoot through objects. Play with reflections. Use motion blur. Break the "rules" you've learned and see what happens. Not every experiment will succeed, but each one teaches you something new about how you see.

Quick Techniques for Great Photos Anywhere

Even in everyday situations, there are simple techniques that consistently produce strong results:

- Use window light for soft, flattering portraits
- Shoot from the ground up to add drama and depth
- Open your aperture to separate your subject
- Look for reflected light to create natural highlights
- Try panoramas when a scene feels too big for one frame
- Use a slower shutter to introduce motion and emotion
- Find contrast and juxtaposition to add interest

These are practical tools, but their real power comes when combined with strong observation.

From Observation to Expression

At some point in your journey, photography stops being about capturing what something *looks like* and starts becoming about expressing what it *feels like*.

You notice things differently:

- The way light defines a shape
- The balance between elements
- The mood of a scene
- The fleeting nature of a moment

And with that awareness, even the most ordinary environments become full of potential.

Final Thoughts

Photography is not about chasing perfection or waiting for extraordinary locations.

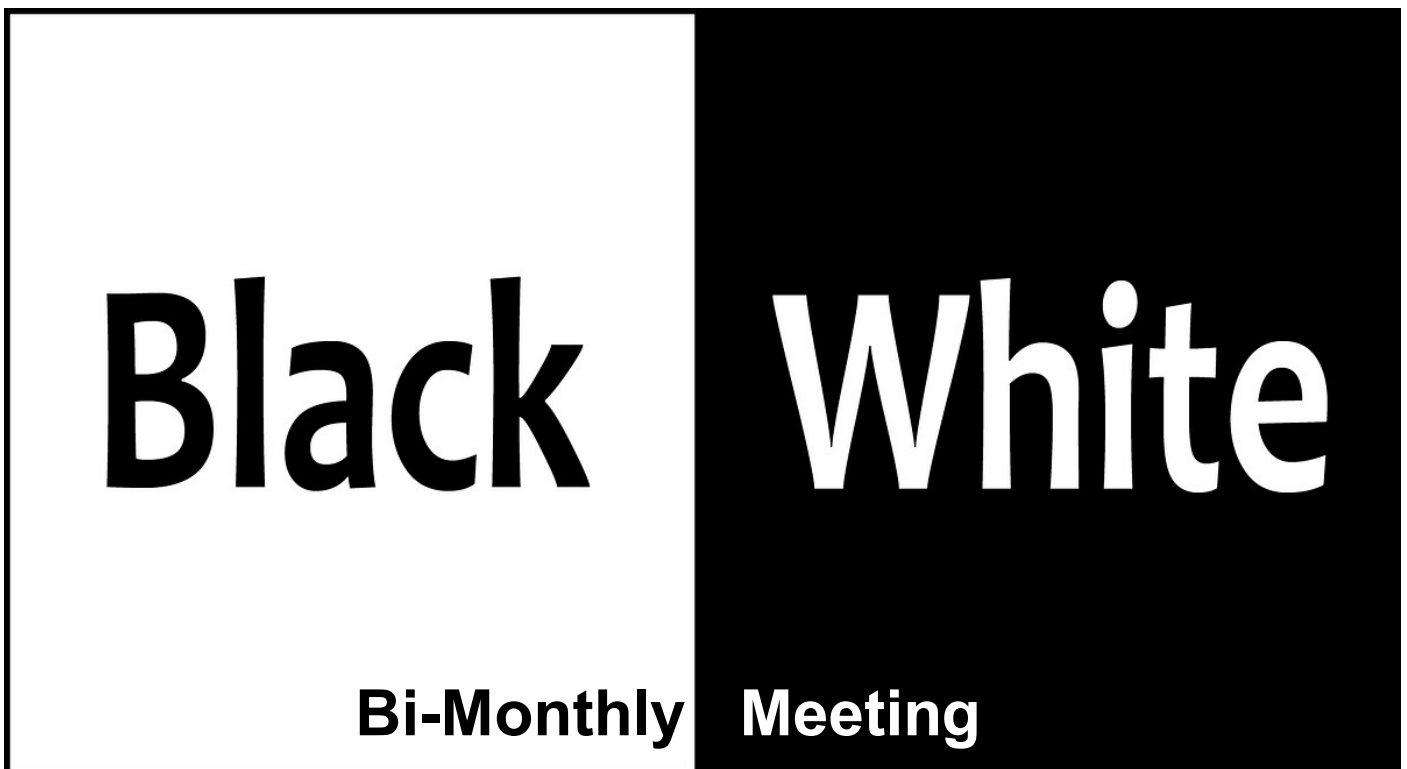
It's about recognising that the extraordinary already exists within the ordinary — and having the awareness and skill to reveal it.

When you slow down, observe more carefully, and start thinking about how your camera sees the world, you begin to create images with intention. Images that feel considered, balanced, and meaningful.

And perhaps most importantly, images that show others something they may have never noticed before.

Because in the end, photography isn't just about taking pictures —

it's about changing the way we see. 🇺🇸



We combined our Black & White session with our regular club evening. It was a great success, and it was wonderful to see how well it all came together, thank you to everyone who embraced the change and contributed to making the evening so enjoyable. In April our Open Category once again proved that there are truly no limits to our members' creativity.

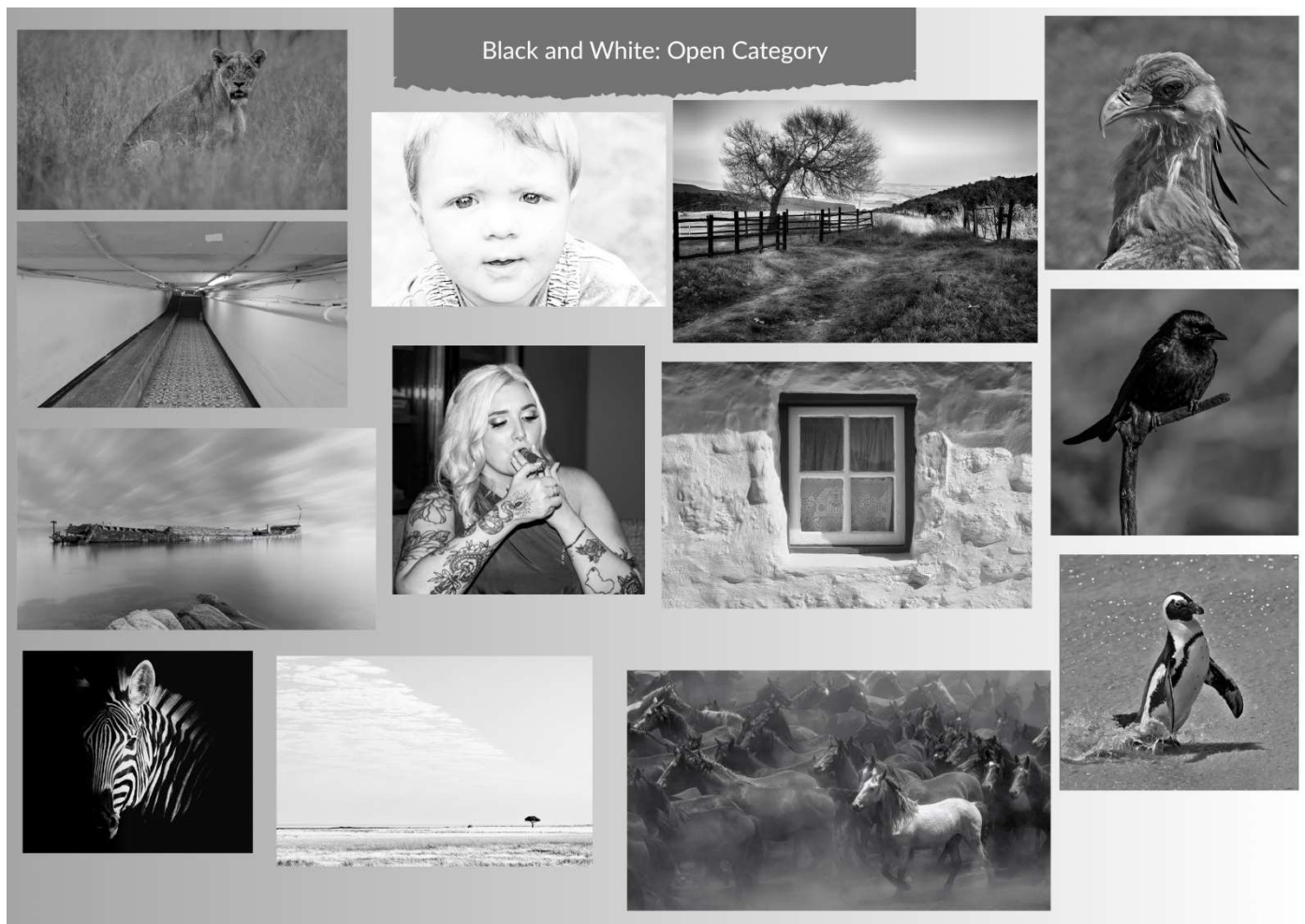
All the beauty of life is made up of light and shadow.” – Leo Tolstoy

This quote feels especially fitting for our recent set subjects: Still Life and High Key & Low-Key photography. At its heart, photography is nothing more than the art of seeing and shaping light and understanding how shadow gives that light meaning.

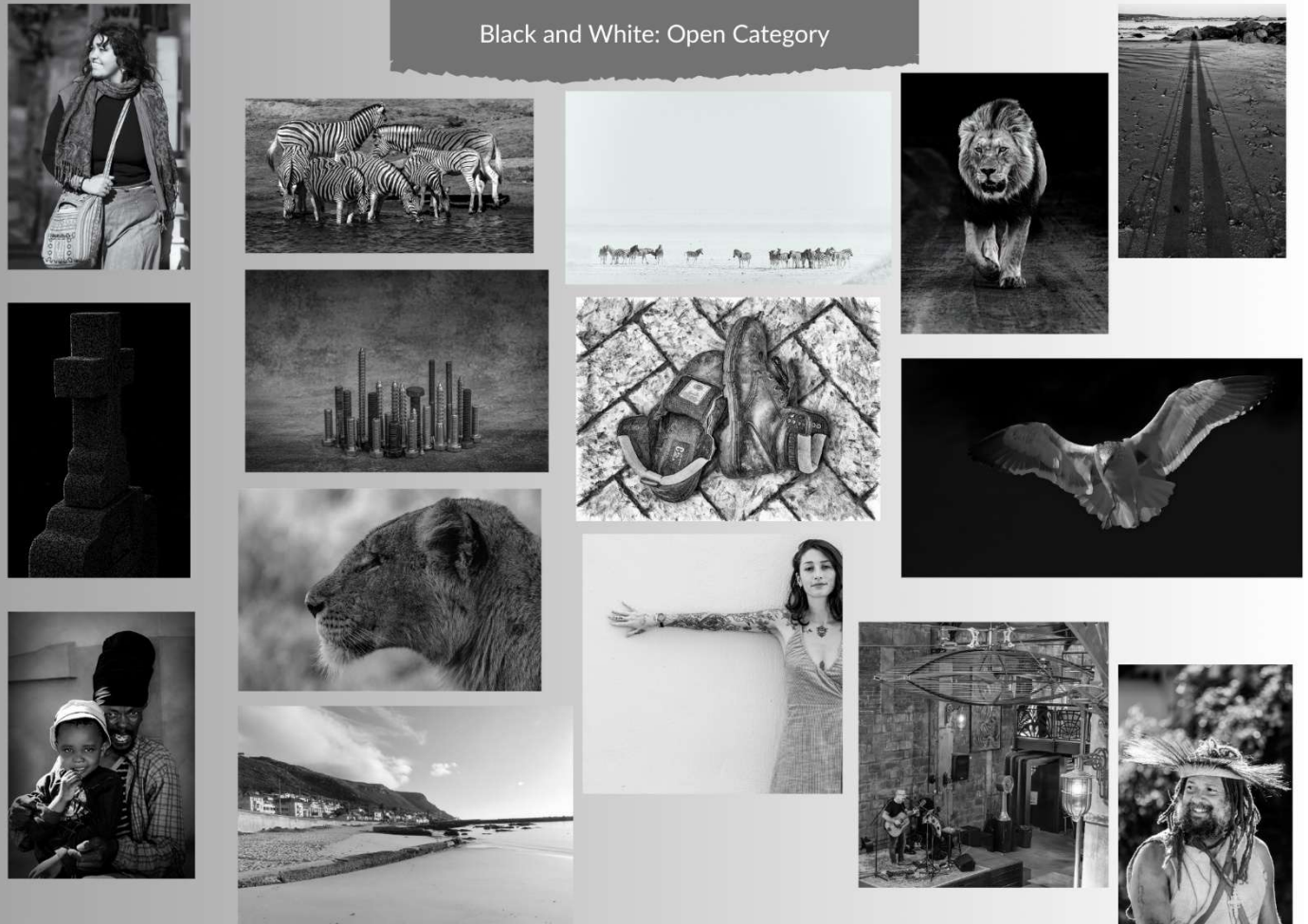
In still life, we carefully choose and arrange our subjects, but it is the play between light and shadow that brings them to life. A simple object can feel dramatic, peaceful, or mysterious depending on how the light falls and where the shadows settle.

High key photography leans into the light, soft, bright, and airy, with minimal shadows. It often creates a sense of calm, purity, and simplicity. Low key, on the other hand, embraces shadow, deep, rich, and moody, where light is used sparingly to reveal just enough. It invites emotion, depth, and sometimes a sense of intrigue.

Together, these approaches remind us that beauty doesn't live in light alone or shadow alone, but in the balance between the two. Just like in life, it's the contrast that gives things shape, feeling, and meaning.



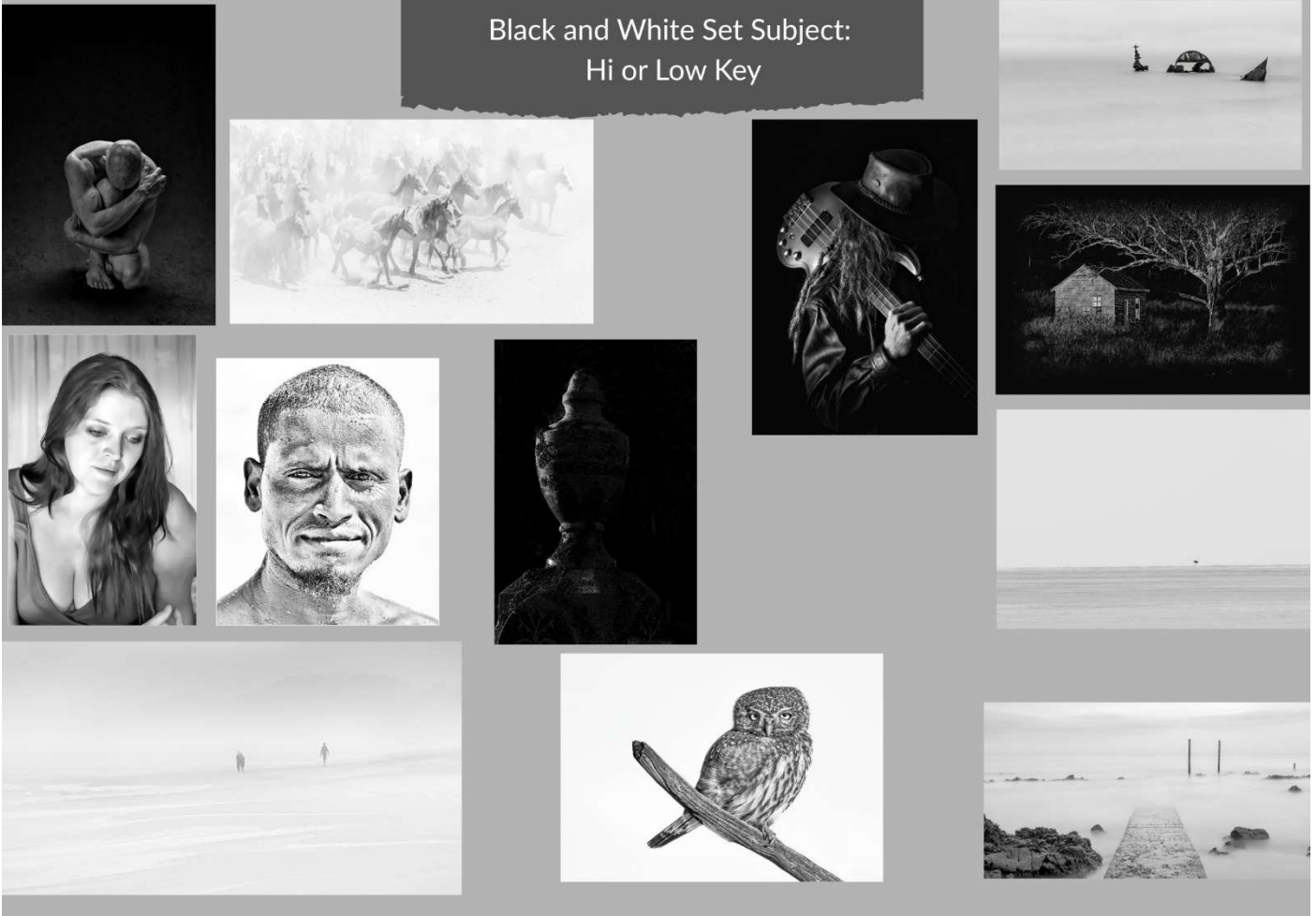
Black and White: Open Category



List of photos

Open	Carima van den Berg	One Blood	Izak van Niekerk	Cross
Open	Neels Beyers	Zebras drinking water	Peter Dewar	Early Riser
Open	Riaan van den Berg	Lioness intense stare BW	Steve Trimby	Bolt City
Open	Wynand Muntingh	Kalk Bay Beach	Bernard Seymour Hall	Sakmanne
Open	Carima van den Berg	Haydar	Izak van Niekerk	Dazzle
Open	Neels Beyers	Secretary Bird BW	Peter Dewar	Dem Boots BW
Open	Riaan van den Berg Lone	Lioness in Greater Kruger (BW)	Steve Trimby	Jess
Open	Wynand Muntingh	Subway	Carima van den Berg	Mikstert Byevreter
Open	Izak van Niekerk	Eyes	Neels Beyers	Penguin walking fast
Open	Peter Dewar	Farm Scene	Riaan van den Berg	Sunken Barge BW
Open	Steve Trimby	Tayla	Carima van den Berg	Zebra portrait
Open	Izak van Niekerk	Lines and Textures	Neels Beyers	Gull coming down
Open	Peter Dewar	Cottage Window	Riaan van den Berg	The White Horse BW
Open	Steve Trimby	The Musician	Bernard Seymour Hall	Klara

Black and White Set Subject:
Hi or Low Key



List of photos

Hi / Low Carima van den Berg

Archimedes

Izak van Niekerk

Earn

Hi / Low Neels Beyers

Young man

Peter Dewar

Beach Walk BW

Hi / Low Riaan van den Berg

From the Dust BW

Steve Trimby

The Bassist

Hi / Low Carima van den Berg

Edge of Silence Franskraal

van Niekerk

Etosha

Hi / Low Neels Beyers

Lauren (5)

Peter Dewar

Shack Sketch

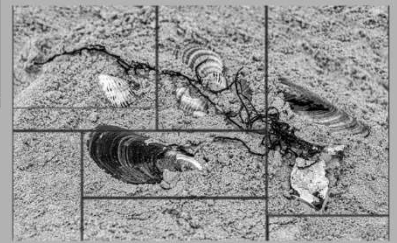
Hi / Low Riaan van den Berg

Past return BW

Steve Trimby

Alone

Black and White Set Subject:
Still Life



List of photos

Still Life Izak van Niekerk

Shells

Neels Beyers

Hugo de Groot

Still Life Peter Dewar

in Ashtray

Steve Trimby

Tear jerkers

Still Life Izak van Niekerk

Life from the beach

Neels Beyers

Glasses

Still Life Peter Dewar

Old Days BW

Steve Trimby

Vampire repellent

Additional Information:

Our **website** is being updated regularly, go and have a look.

Visit our **Facebook** page, invite friends to like our Facebook page.

Webpage: <https://helderbergphoto.com/> Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/helderbergphoto/>