



Monthly Newsletter: August 2026

Editor's Note

And just like that... spring has arrived!

Although, here in the Helderberg, we know better than to get too comfortable. We get about two weeks of spring before summer arrives at full blast! Longer days, earlier sunrises, warmer mornings and suddenly the camera starts calling again.

Our August club evening was once again a wonderful showcase of the photographs created by our members. Our set subject was Flowers, a very fitting choice for spring, and it was fantastic to see the many ways our photographers interpreted the theme. One flower, many photographers, many completely different stories.

And that is one of the things we love about photography. There is no single "right" way to see an image. It can be about colour, light, texture, mood, detail or simply capturing something beautiful in front of you.

Our club evenings are a reminder that photography isn't just about cameras and settings. It's about seeing, experimenting, learning and finding your own way of telling a story through an image. Editing with a Vision. Editing isn't about fixing everything; it's about knowing what you want your photograph to say and how you want it to feel.

Listen to feedback, experiment, try different approaches, and learn to trust your own vision. Sometimes the best edit isn't the one that follows every rule, it's the one that makes the photograph feel right to you.

And remember, photography isn't about how many likes you get on social media. It's about the feeling behind the image. Now that spring has arrived, it's time to get our creativity out of winter mode!

Dust off the camera, get outside, make use of those longer days and earlier mornings, and start looking for those little moments that take a great photograph.

Thank you to everyone who shared their images at our August meeting. Your creativity, enthusiasm and willingness to share your work are what keep our club growing and inspiring each other.

So goodbye winter, hello spring!

The editor

August Results

Our August club evening once again reminded us why photography keeps pulling us back month after month one room, a hundred different ways of seeing the world.

We kicked things off with our Black & White session, and this category just seems to be growing from strength to strength. With colour removed, photographers are challenged to look at light, shadow, texture, contrast and emotion in a completely different way. We're seeing more members embracing the challenge, and the results are proving just how powerful a monochrome image can be.

If you haven't entered a Black & White evening yet, consider this your gentle nudge come and be part of it!

Open Category

As always, Open gave us a wonderful variety of images. Wildlife, landscapes, portraits, architecture, creative work, quiet moments and everything in between each photograph showed not only the photographer's skill, but also their individual personality and way of seeing the world.

That's what makes Open so special. There are no boundaries or set subjects. Every photographer gets to tell their own story, and every image gives us a little glimpse into what caught their eye.

Set Subject – Flowers

This month's set subject was Flowers, and our members certainly didn't disappoint!

From beautifully crafted floral art to delicate wildflowers and, of course, the ever-popular roses, we were treated to flowers in all their forms. Some images were soft and elegant, others bold and creative, proving once again that even a familiar subject can be photographed in countless different ways.

It was wonderful to see how each photographer interpreted the subject differently because ultimately, it's never just about photographing a flower. It's about how you choose to see it.

A huge congratulations to everyone who submitted photographs this month. The standard was exceptionally high, and the variety of work made for a fantastic evening.

And to those who are still wondering whether they should enter next month yes, you should! You don't have to be an expert, and your photograph doesn't have to be perfect. Enter, learn, get feedback, enjoy the process and most importantly, keep photographing.

Because behind every photograph is a photographer with their own eye, their own story and their own way of seeing the world.

OVERALL, WINNER

Title: One in a Million

Photographer: Peter Dewar

Mark: 15/15

Top Entries – Open Category

Straightly – Hilldidge Beer – 14/15

Emu – Neels Beyers – 14/15

Antelope Portrait – Carima van den Berg – 14/15

Mothly crew – Hilldidge Beer – 14/15

Top Entries – Set Subject: Flowers

One in a Million – Peter Dewar – 15/15

The orange rose (857233) – Riaan van den Berg – 14/15

Dahlia 1 – Steve Trimby – 14/15

Strelitzia in Kirstenbosch – Carima van den Berg – 14/15

August Winner: One in a Million – Peter Dewar

Peter Dewar has created something truly special with “One in a Million.”

A flower arrangement, but not quite as nature intended! The striking Protea takes centre stage, surrounded by delicate seed pods, lush foliage and a wonderfully soft, feathery background that gives the whole image an almost dreamlike, magical feel.

There's a beautiful balance between the sharp detail of the flowers and the dreamy, surreal textures surrounding them. It feels less like a traditional botanical photograph and more like stepping into a fantasy garden where nature has been given a little creative makeover.

“One in a Million” is a wonderful reminder that photography isn't always about capturing nature exactly as we see it — sometimes it's about taking what's familiar and turning it into something unexpected, imaginative and completely eye-catching.



Open Category: Members Photos



Malachite Sunbird hover – Riaan vd Berg – 13



Cape vulture (67896) – Riaan van den Berg – 13



Biggleswade Viaduct – Bernard Seymour Hall – 13



We live in a misshapen world – Fiona Nell – 12



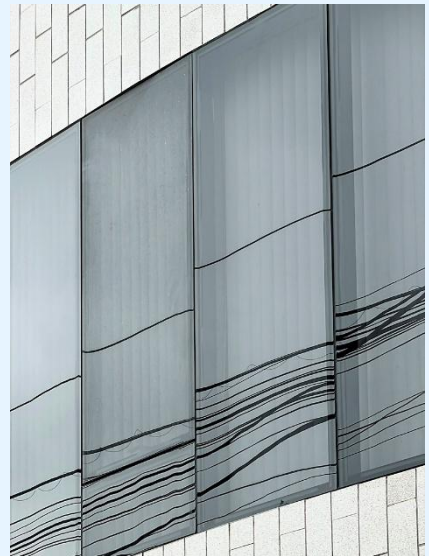
Gold Paved Venetian Road – Fiona Nell – 13



Tied Up – Peter Dewar – 13



Emu – Neels Beyers – 14



Straightly – Hilldidge Beer – 14



Macaw 6442 – Neels Beyers – 13



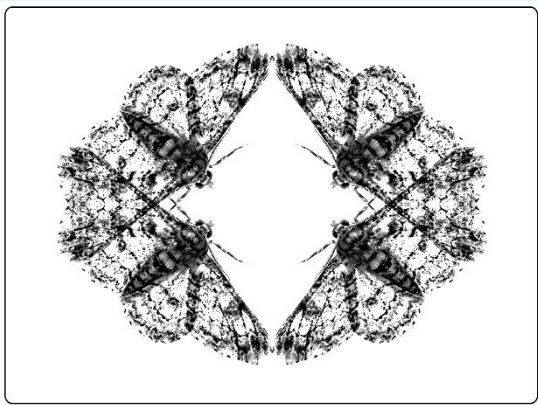
Symbiotic Trio – Carima van den Berg – 13



Antelope Portrait – Carima van den Berg – 14



Big eyes – Lorian PAGE – 11



Mothly crew – Hilldidge Beer – 14



Vat Nie Kak Nie – Bernard Seymour Hall – 13



Rust to Dust – Lorian PAGE – 11

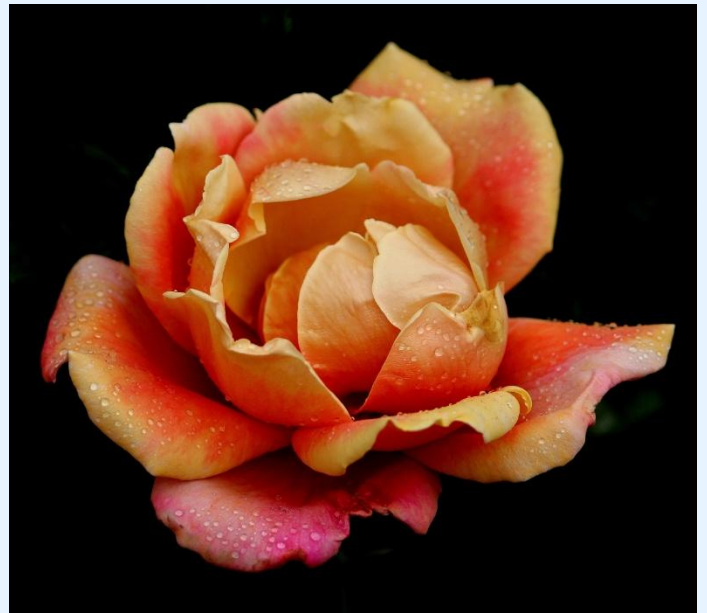


A Sosusvlei Winter – Peter Dewar – 14

Full List of Entries: Set Subject – Flowers



Double yellow – Lorian PAGE – 10



Vibrancy – Fiona Nell – 13



Na die reen – Neels Beyers – 14



Duplicate beauty – Hilldidge Beer – 12



Dahlia 2 – Steve Trimby – 13



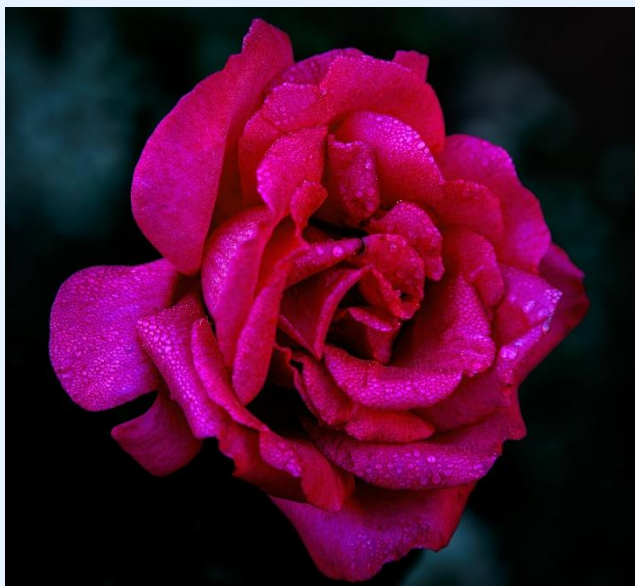
Granite Poppies – Nigel Mudge – 13



Strelitzia in Kirstenbosch – Carima van den Berg – 14



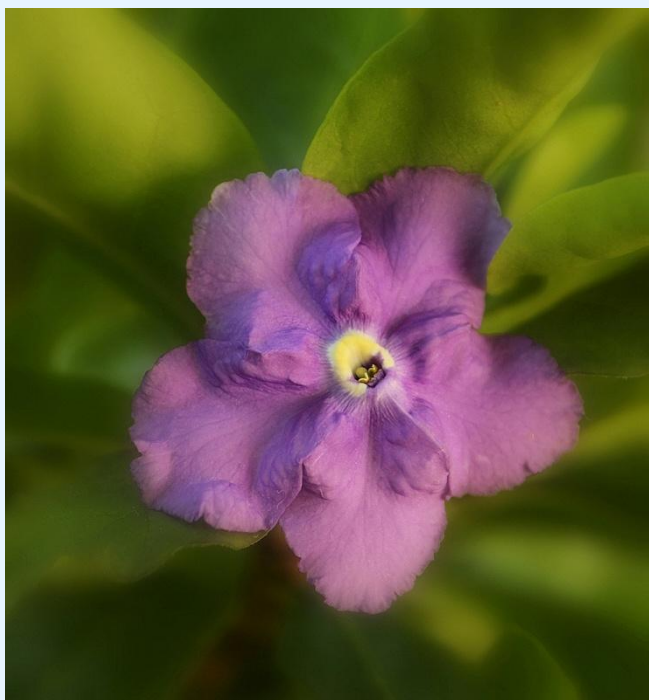
Red Rose – Wynand Muntingh – 10



Rose – Carima van den Berg – 13



Yellow 6617 – Neels Beyers – 11



Yesterday Today and Tomorrow – Fiona Nell – 13



The red rose (857256) – Riaan van den Berg – 13



Between a rock and a hard place – Nigel Mudge – 12



The orange rose (857233) – Riaan vd Berg – 14



Flowers in the garden – Wynand Muntingh – 11



Bearded Iris Detail – Peter Dewar - 14



Dahlia 1 – Steve Trimby – 14

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	4 September	8 September	Black & White

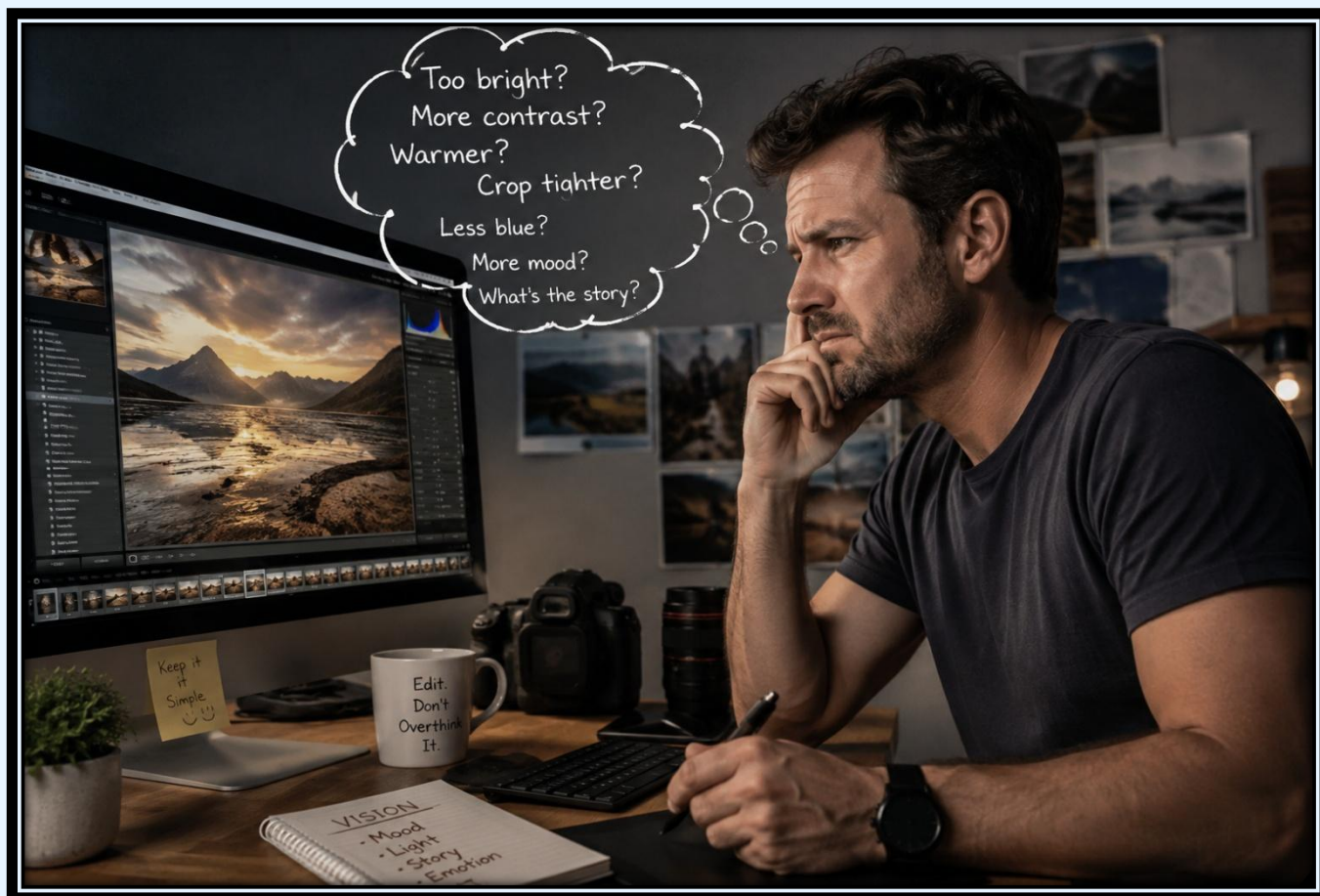
Black and White

The final image must be monochrome, including only shades of grey from black to white (or a single-toned variant). The subject matter is unrestricted, but the emphasis shifts to tonal contrast, texture, form, composition and light rather than colour. Manipulation is allowed as long as the result remains photographic, and the author retains copyright of the original capture.

Outings, Workshops and Courses

Outings

If there are any ideas, please let us know, also keep your eye on the WhatsApp group.



Light & Lens Monthly Article

by Carima van den Berg

Before You Edit: Decide What You Want the Photograph to Become

One of the hardest parts of editing a photograph is not always knowing what to do next. Sometimes the bigger problem is that we never clearly decided what we wanted the image to become in the first place. We open Lightroom or Photoshop, look at the photograph and think, "*Something is missing.*" So, we brighten it. Then we add contrast. Maybe we warm up the colours. We sharpen the subject, darken the background, try a preset, remove something we don't like and suddenly we have made twenty adjustments without knowing whether the photograph is better.



Sound familiar?

The truth is that editing should have a destination.
Before touching a slider, stop for a moment and really look at the photograph.

Ask yourself:

What caught my attention when I took this photograph?
Was it the beautiful light? The expression on someone's face? The movement? The colours? The mood?
The landscape? A tiny detail that made you stop and press the shutter?
That is your starting point.

Now ask yourself:

What do I want the viewer to notice first?
This is where editing becomes much more purposeful.
If the person's expression is the story, perhaps you don't need a dramatic sky. If the light is what attracted you, don't edit it away. If the photograph is about a quiet, moody moment, perhaps making everything brighter and more colourful isn't helping.

Sometimes the best edit is not adding something.
Sometimes it is removing distractions.

Darken a bright corner. Crop out something unnecessary. Reduce a distracting colour. Soften the background. Bring attention back to your subject.
And sometimes the photograph doesn't need much editing at all.
That's an important lesson for photographers, especially when you're still finding your own style:

Editing isn't about fixing everything; it's about having a vision.
But having a vision doesn't mean you have to get everything right on your own.

Listen to feedback.

One of the most valuable things we can do as photographers is show our work to other photographers and genuinely listen to what they see.
Not every piece of feedback will resonate with you and that's okay. You don't have to change your photograph every time someone has an opinion.
But listen. Sometimes another photographer will notice something you completely missed. Perhaps the highlights are pulling attention away from your subject. Maybe the crop is weakening the composition. Perhaps the colours don't quite match the mood you're trying to create.
And sometimes someone will tell you they love something about your image that you hadn't even realised was working. That's how we grow.

Feedback isn't necessarily criticism. It can be another set of eyes helping you see your own photograph differently.
But there is another trap photographers can easily fall into today.
We start judging our photography by numbers.
How many likes did it get?

How many comments?

Why did *that* photograph get 200 likes while the one I spent three hours editing got 27?

Social media can make us believe that popularity equals quality.

It doesn't.

Photography is not about how many likes you get on social media. It's about feeling.

A photograph can have five likes and still mean the world to you.

It can remind you of someone you love. Capture a moment that will never happen again. Make you remember exactly how the light felt that afternoon. Show a person's personality in a way that words never could.

And sometimes a photograph doesn't need to impress anyone else.

It just needs to make you feel something.

Of course, we all enjoy getting likes. Let's be honest nobody posts a photograph and thinks, "*I hope absolutely nobody likes this.*"

But don't let the algorithm become your art director.

Don't start editing your photographs simply because you think a certain look performs better online.

Learn to recognise your own voice.

Maybe you love soft, muted colours. Maybe you love dramatic contrast. Maybe you prefer rich greens, warm skin tones, deep shadows or bright, airy images.

There is no single "correct" way to edit a photograph.

There is only the question:

Does this edit support the story I am trying to tell?

Your goal isn't to make the photograph look "edited."

Your goal is to make the photograph look like the photograph you *saw in your mind* when you pressed the shutter or perhaps even better, to discover something in the image that you didn't see at the time.

And sometimes that takes experimentation.

Edit it one way. Walk away. Come back tomorrow.

Make a black-and-white version. Try a completely different crop. Pull the saturation back. Push the contrast. See what happens.

You are not just learning Lightroom or Photoshop.

You are learning how you see.

The more photographs you take, the more you begin to recognise what works light, composition, colour, timing, background, perspective and the easier it becomes to make decisions both behind the camera and in front of the editing screen.

So next time you're stuck in Lightroom wondering what to do next, don't immediately reach for another slider. Step away for a moment. Look at the photograph.

Ask yourself:

"What is this photograph trying to say?"

Then ask:

"How do I want someone to feel when they look at it?"

Then edit *that*.

Listen to feedback. Learn from others. Experiment. Ignore the like counter occasionally.

And most importantly, don't lose sight of why you picked up a camera in the first place.

Because good photography isn't about perfection.

It isn't about the most likes.

It isn't even about having the fanciest camera or the most complicated editing workflow.

It's about seeing something, feeling something, and finding a way to share that feeling with someone else.

And sometimes, knowing when to stop editing is the hardest part.

Black

White

Bi-Monthly Meeting

Finding the Story in Black and White

This month's Black and White evening brought a wonderful sense of creativity and discovery to the room. We welcomed more members than usual, including some joining us for the first time, all bringing fresh perspectives, new ideas and thoughtful conversation.

Our August set subjects were Human Portraits and Flowers, and the images shared offered a fascinating range of interpretations.

Black and white photography encourages us to look differently. When colour is removed from a flower, we notice its texture, shape, patterns and delicate details. Without colour to guide our eyes, the image invites us to look more closely and discover another kind of beauty.

The same is true of human portraits. In black and white, people can appear more expressive and full of character. Without the distraction of colour, we focus on the eyes, the lines of the face, the light and shadow, and the emotions within the image. A portrait can feel more honest, dramatic and timeless. Although black and white images are sometimes described as colourless, they are anything but. They open our eyes to a different vision of the world one shaped by light, contrast, texture, form and feeling.

One of the most valuable parts of these evenings is that they are never simply about displaying photographs. They are about learning, sharing, asking questions, receiving feedback and discovering new ways to see. Our conversations often explore questions such as:

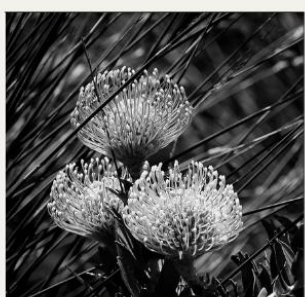
- How was the image created?
- Why were a particular edit chosen?
- What makes the photograph work?
- Could anything make it stronger?

This month, we enjoyed seeing even more black and white photographs than usual, as members and invited guests embraced the challenge of seeing beyond colour. The portraits revealed personality and emotion, while the flowers demonstrated how texture, structure and light can transform a familiar subject into something extraordinary.

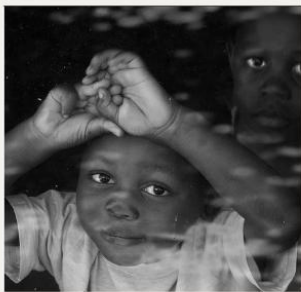
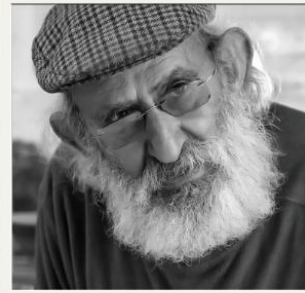
Thank you to everyone who joined us, especially our visiting members. Your photographs, feedback and conversations are what make these evenings so special.

Black and white photography reminds us that colour does not always tell the whole story. Sometimes, removing colour allows us to see more clearly and to discover a completely new way of seeing.

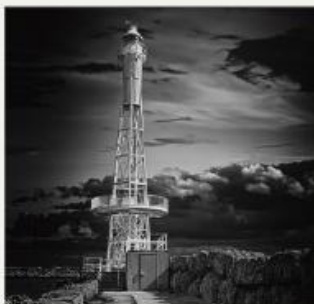
Flowers



Portraits



Open



Open



Set Subject Human Portraits

curly hair girl	
Brenda	Bernard Seymour Hall
Amanda sing	Carima van den Berg
Break The Landscaper Mould BW	Izak van Niekerk
Mysterious eyes BW	Neels Beyers
Tereen	Peter Dewar
Doda and sister	Riaan van den Berg
Listening	Steve Trimby
Post Bank Client	Wynand Muntingh
Tana the bedoin BW	Bernard Seymour Hall
ST Josh	Carima van den Berg

Set Subject Flowers

Just a flower	Neels Beyers
Inside	Peter Dewar
Zinnia 8469	Riaan van den Berg
Pincusions BW	Steve Trimby
The most beatifull little thing BW	Wynand Muntingh
Dahlia 1	Bernard Seymour Hall
Rose	Carima van den Berg
Shooting Out	Izak van Niekerk
Lilly BW	Peter Dewar
One in a Million BW	Steve Trimby
Sunflower BW	Bernard Seymour Hall
Dahlia 2	Izak van Niekerk

Open

Millers Point	Bernard Seymour Hall
Antelope Portrait	Carima van den Berg
Flamingos	Izak van Niekerk
Steam Locomotive	Neels Beyers
A Thousand Words BW	Peter Dewar
Elephant Trunk BW	Riaan van den Berg
St Marks Campanile	Steve Trimby
On the promenade	Wynand Muntingh
On The Hunt	Bernard Seymour Hall
Girl in frame	Carima van den Berg
Genadendal	Izak van Niekerk
Steam Locomotive under observation	Neels Beyers
Fish Trap BW	Peter Dewar
Storm appoaching (BW)	Riaan van den Berg
LAGulhas Lighthouse	Steve Trimby
At the dam	Wynand Muntingh
Chess	Bernard Seymour Hall
Trees in Mist	Carima van den Berg
Droplets	Izak van Niekerk
Hillarys Marina Lighthouse BW	Peter Dewar
Tate Modern Gallery London	Steve Trimby
Paloris Falls	Bernard Seymour Hall
Namaqualand	Izak van Niekerk
Sosus Dunes BW	Peter Dewar
Spotted Thick Knee	Steve Trimby

Webpage: <https://helderbergphoto.com/>

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