

## Competition Definitions

- Each theme will have a maximum of 3 digital and 3 prints, except for the **Open competitions in January and September where the maximum will be 2 digital and 2 prints.**
- Note these definitions are the committee's interpretation of the nominated themes and may differ from VAPS definitions.

**If you see a QR code scan it for more information.**

### How to Use the QR Codes

Open your phone's camera app, point it at the QR code, wait for a notification or banner to appear, tap it, and follow the on-screen

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### JANUARY – Open Due 27 Jan

#### What is Open Photography?

The Open category allows complete creative freedom for photographers to explore any subject, theme, or style of their choosing. Images should demonstrate strong visual impact through thoughtful composition, lighting, and technique.

#### Project Brief:

This is your opportunity to showcase your personal vision and creativity — whether it's a striking landscape, expressive portrait, abstract detail, or moment captured from everyday life. The emphasis is on producing an image that conveys your unique perspective and artistic interpretation while embodying the key elements of good design and composition.

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### FEBRUARY – Black and White Due 23 Feb

#### What is Black and White Photography

Black and white photography is the art of capturing images using shades of gray, ranging from deep blacks to bright whites. Without the distraction of color, this style emphasizes light, shadow, tone, texture, and composition to convey mood, emotion, and storytelling. It allows photographers to focus on the essentials—contrast, structure, and form—creating timeless and expressive images that highlight the beauty in simplicity.

#### Project Brief:

For this competition, participants are invited to explore the power and emotion of monochrome photography. Your challenge is to create images that rely solely on light, shadow, and contrast to tell a story or evoke a feeling.

You may choose any subject—portrait, landscape, street, abstract, or still life—but your image must be presented entirely in black and white or grayscale. Focus on composition, tonal range, and visual impact rather than colour to communicate your artistic vision.

Judges will be looking for creativity, technical execution, and the ability to capture depth and emotion through the absence of colour.

**Check out Meike Boynton's *Black and White Photography Essentials PDF* – Scan the QR Code to view.**



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## MARCH – Street Photography Due 23 Mar

### What is Street Photography

Street photography is a genre that captures candid moments of everyday life in public places. It focuses on people, places, and scenes that reflect the human condition, culture, and rhythm of daily life. Street photography is not staged — it's about observing and recording real moments as they unfold, often highlighting emotion, interaction, or atmosphere within the environment.

### Project Brief:

For this competition, photographers are invited to explore the streets and document authentic moments that tell a story. Capture the essence of human presence — from fleeting expressions and gestures to architectural backdrops and urban textures. Look for light, movement, and emotion that bring your scene to life.

Your entry should reflect your unique perspective of the street — whether it's bustling city life, quiet suburban corners, or intimate encounters that reveal the soul of a place.

## MARCH – Melbourne Cup and VAPS entries Due 23 Mar

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## APRIL – Nature Due 27 Apr

### What is Nature Photography?

Nature photography captures natural elements such as landscapes, wildlife, plants and close-ups of natural scenes and textures. Wildlife can be animals, birds and insects. Zoo animals are eligible but domestic animals are excluded. Marine subjects and botanical subjects, including fungi and algae, taken in the wild are suitable wildlife subjects. No techniques that add, relocate, replace or remove pictorial elements (except by cropping) are permitted.



### Project Brief:

To capture and showcase the beauty and diversity of the natural world through photography, focusing on authentic representations of landscapes, wildlife and other natural elements

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## MAY – Capture Motion Due 25 May

### What is Capture Motion Photography?

Motion photography is about capturing movement — the energy, rhythm, and flow of life in action. It reveals what the eye often misses, freezing a fleeting moment or blurring motion to create a sense of speed, rhythm, or emotion. From the rush of traffic trails, the spin of a dancer, to the simple movement of wind through leaves, motion photography transforms time and movement into visual art.

Photographers can use various techniques such as panning, long exposure, or high-speed capture to interpret motion creatively. The key is to convey movement in a way that draws the viewer into the moment.

### Project Brief:

For this competition, your challenge is to capture *motion* in a single frame. Your image should communicate a sense of movement, energy, or transition — whether subtle or dramatic. Consider how light, shutter speed, and composition can enhance the feeling of motion.

You may choose any subject that conveys movement: people, nature, machinery, water, light, or abstract forms. The goal is to showcase your technical skill and artistic interpretation of motion.



## Tips

- Experiment with different shutter speeds to control blur and sharpness.
- Use panning to follow a moving subject.
- Play with light trails, water flow, or repetitive movement.
- Think creatively — motion can be implied, not just shown.
- Scan QR code to view **Shutter Speed, Aperture, and ISO Cheat Sheet**



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## **JUNE** – Scapes Due 22 Jun

### What is Scape Photography?

Scape photography is a visual exploration of three distinct environments: cityscapes, seascapes, and landscapes. It typically features a broad field of view, ensuring no single element takes prominence while including a portion of the sky to enhance the composition.

### Brief:

**Sea** – A photograph of natural coastal scenery, waves or the open sea, provided that the sea is the centre of interest. People, boats and man-made structures may be present if they are incidental to the photograph.

**Land** – A photograph of natural scenery. Evidence of man, people, animals or part of the sea may be included provided that none of these additional elements dominate the photograph.

**City** – A photograph of buildings in an urban environment where individual structures or their details do not dominate.

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## **JULY** – Still Life Due 27 Jul

### What is Still Life Photography?

Still life photography is the art of capturing objects that are carefully arranged and composed. It focuses on the beauty, form, texture, and lighting of inanimate subjects — things that do not move. This genre allows photographers full control over the composition, lighting, and mood, making it a great way to practice both technical and creative skills.

Common subjects include everyday items such as fruit, flowers, glassware, tools, or personal belongings. The goal is to bring these ordinary objects to life through thoughtful placement, lighting, and composition.

### Project Brief:

Your task for this competition is to **create a still life image** that demonstrates careful control of composition and lighting. Choose one or more inanimate subjects and arrange them to create visual interest, balance, and mood.

You are encouraged to think about how the choice of background, texture, and light direction affects the final image. Whether you work with natural light from a window or use artificial light, aim to create a scene that feels intentional and expressive.

## Tips

1. Select your subject(s) — keep it simple and meaningful.
2. Plan your composition — consider shape, balance, and negative space.
3. Experiment with lighting — side light and backlight often add depth and texture.
4. Use a tripod for precision and consistency.
5. Pay attention to detail — reflections, dust, or uneven surfaces can affect the final image.
6. Edit carefully to enhance tone, contrast, and colour without over-processing.
7. Talk to Charlie Scicluna – he is very knowledgeable in this area, especially lighting and composition.



## AUGUST – Portraits Due 24 Aug

### What is Portrait Photography?

Portrait photography is the art of capturing the likeness, personality, and spirit of a physically living person or group of people. It accurately represents their anatomical features, with the face being the predominant element in the image. The goal is not simply to record an appearance, but to meaningfully reproduce the recognisable qualities, character, and mood of the subject. A well-crafted portrait conveys emotion, tells a story, and creates a connection between the subject and the viewer. Beyond documentation, its purpose is to memorialise an image of someone for the future — a lasting representation of who they are in that moment.



### Project Brief:

For this competition, create a portrait that goes beyond the surface. Capture the true essence of your subject — their personality, emotion, and individuality. The face should be the main focus of the composition, while lighting, setting, and expression should work together to tell the story of your subject.

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## SEPTEMBER – Open Due 28 Sept

### What is Open Photography?

The Open category allows complete creative freedom for photographers to explore any subject, theme, or style of their choosing. Images should demonstrate strong visual impact through thoughtful composition, lighting, and technique.

### Project Brief:

This is your opportunity to showcase your personal vision and creativity — whether it's a striking landscape, expressive portrait, abstract detail, or moment captured from everyday life. The emphasis is on producing an image that conveys your unique perspective and artistic interpretation while embodying the key elements of good design and composition.

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## OCTOBER – Negative Space Due 26 Oct

### What is Negative Space Photography?

Negative space photography focuses on the space around and between the main subject rather than the subject itself. This empty or uncluttered space — called *negative space* — helps to draw attention to the main subject, creating a sense of balance, simplicity, and visual impact.

The use of negative space can evoke emotion, convey isolation or calmness, and guide the viewer's eye directly to the subject. It's a powerful compositional tool that often relies on minimalism, strong shapes, and thoughtful placement within the frame.

### Project Brief:

Your task for this competition is to **create an image that makes effective use of negative space**. The photograph should clearly show a main subject with surrounding empty or minimal space that enhances the composition and mood.

You may choose any subject - people, nature, architecture, or objects - but the success of your image will depend on how you use space, balance, and simplicity to communicate your idea.

### Tips

1. Choose a simple subject that stands out clearly from its background.
2. Look for clean or open spaces — sky, walls, water, or simple landscapes.
3. Frame your subject off-centre to create visual balance using the rule of thirds.
4. Pay attention to colour, tone, and contrast to separate the subject from the background.
5. Use lighting to highlight your subject and maintain a sense of space.
6. Edit minimally — keep the image uncluttered and true to the minimalist style.



## NOVEMBER – Member' Projects Due 7 Nov

### "A Year Through the Lens: Sharing Our Photographic Journeys"

Members will embark on a year-long visual exploration. Share their distinctive perspectives and experiences through the lens. Capturing moments that resonate with them and letting their photographs tell their unique stories.

#### Project Brief:

This year-long photography project encourages members to document their personal journeys, experiences and observations through the lens of a camera. Participants will create a visual diary that spans the year. The project will culminate in a presentation where each member shares their photographic journey with the group.

Each presentation will be allocated an 8-minute timeslot to ensure that all members are able to present on the night. The project is optional, but we would love to see your presentation and gain an insight into your year.

## November – End of Year Awards submissions due 23 November

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## Club Outings, Speakers and Workshop Events

Several club activities and workshops, as well as special speakers, have been organised for 2026. These events will be announced in the newsletter, members Facebook Group and at club meetings.

## Interclub Competitions

### Victorian Association of Photographic Societies Interclub Competition

Each year we participate in the Victorian Association of Photographic Societies (VAPS) interclub competition where we compete against images from other Victorian photographic clubs.

The club can submit up to 15 digital and 15 print images, with a maximum of two from any club member in each category. All images that meet club competition rules are eligible to be entered.

The VAPS Annual Convention for 2026 will be held at the **Rich River Golf Club Moama 29-31 May**.

Details can be found at <https://www.vaps.org.au/convention.html>

Entries will be due Monday **23 March**

### International Competition – The Melbourne Cup

This will be the twelfth year that we have had a competition against our namesake club in the United Kingdom, the Preston Photographic Society.

The UK will be hosting the competition this year. Each club will submit 25 digital images, with no more than three images from any one club member.

All images to be taken 24 months before the competition date.

Entries will be due **Monday 23 March**

Subject: **Open**

### Coburg – Preston Interclub Competition

Coburg will be hosting the annual interclub competition this year.

The date for judging will be **Thursday 27 August 2026**

