

# 2025 PPSC Photographic Competition Rules

The Professional Photographers of South Carolina (PPSC) will hold its 2025 Annual Photographic Competition on May 8th, 2025, starting at Noon Eastern Time. The competition will be held online at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com).

The competition includes Photographic Open (Portrait, Illustrative, Reportage), Artist (Open and Restoration), and Wedding (all wedding, including albums), with several subcategories in each.

There is no limit to the number of entries, and we welcome non-members to submit their images.

Register at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com).

## Deadline and Fees

- Competition date: May 8, 2025, 12:00 PM EST (Noon).
- Early deadline: Wednesday, April 23, 2025, 11:00 PM EST.
- Final deadline: Sunday, May 4th, 2025, 11:00 PM EST.
- Register online at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com). Select the PPSC competition.
- PPSC Member Entry Fees:
  - Early Entry Fee: \$20 for per entry
  - Final Deadline Entry Fee: \$25 per entry
- Non-Member Entry Fees:
  - Early Entry Fee: \$25 for per entry
  - Final Deadline Entry Fee: \$30 per entry
- Critique fee: \$10 per image.
- Critiques will be delivered in June or early July 2025.

## Why Enter?

- Explore your creativity!
- Get feedback and scores on images you plan to enter in other events or competitions, e.g., Professional Photographers of America (PPA) events, i.e. Monthly Image Review (MIR).
- Get image critiques from a trained judge to improve your photographic skills.
- Compete for awards and recognition.
- PPSC members are also eligible to receive PPSC exhibition merits toward the PPSC Associate Fellow and Fellow Designation.

## Available Categories

### **In Photographic Open (See page 4):**

#### Portrait:

- Children (Newborn – 12 years of age)
- General Portraits (Ages 13 and over, including high school seniors)
- Groups (Any group with two or more subjects, to include at least one person. One or more pets may be included as subjects, but a group with pets only should be placed in the Pet category.)
- Pets and Domestic Animals

#### Illustrative:

- Nature/Landscape/Wildlife/Zoo
- Commercial (architecture, real estate, product photography)
- Illustrative General (images not included in the above categories)

#### Reportage:

- General Reportage & Sports

### **In Wedding (See page 7):**

- Wedding Open
- Single-Maker Album
- Multi-Maker Album

### **In Artist (See page 9):**

- Artist Open
- Artist Restoration

## Judging and Scoring System

Images will be judged on the PPA 12-Elements of a Merit Print standard. **PPSC will utilize the numeric scoring system that PPA used historically.** There will be five PPA Jurors which includes a Moderator. We have an illustrious panel of PPA Approved jurors including:

- Juror #1 & Moderator - Dennis Hammon, M.Photog., Cr., CPP, F-ASP, PPA Approved Juror
- Juror #2 - Karen Doody, M.Photog., M.Wed.Photog., Cr.
- Juror #3 - Steven Kemp, M.Photog., M.Artist, MEI, Cr., CPP, PPA Approved Juror
- Juror #4 - Chris Richman, M.Photog., M.Artist, Cr., CPP, PPA Approved Juror
- Juror #5 - Gena Tussey, M.Photog., M.Artist, Cr., CPP, PPA Approved Juror

## Awards

Awards for the 2025 PSC Photographic Competition will be as follow (*all awards below are given for merited images by PSC members, except for the Non-Member Award Certificate*):

**Category Awards** (Any ties will be broken by the jury panel):

- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards will be given for each category listed below, for images meriting with a score of 84 or higher.
- If no images qualify for one or more of the category place awards, the next highest merited image scoring between 80 and 83 will be awarded an Honorable Mention Award.

*Award Categories for Artist, Photographic Open, and Wedding)\*:*

- Artist
  - *Artist Open*
  - *Artist Restoration*
  
- Photographic Open
  - *Children's Portraits*
  - *General Portraits*
  - *Portrait Groups*
  - *Pets and Domestic Animal Portraits*
  
  - *Illustrative (Nature/ Landscape/Wildlife/Zoo Animals)*
  - *Illustrative (Architecture, Real Estate, Product Photography)*
  - *Illustrative General (images not included in the above categories)*
  
  - *Reportage (General Reportage & Sports)*
  
- Wedding
  - *All Wedding*

\* Bulleted lines (●) are the categories or subcategories that receive awards.

Albums are entered into their respective categories and will be judged as equal entries to single images within the category.

**Individual Awards** (Any ties will be broken by the jury panel):

- *Photographer of the Year* (determined by head-to-head judging of the highest-scoring cases of four or more entries in Photographic Open)
- *Artist of the Year* (determined by head-to-head judging of the highest-scoring cases of four or more entries in Artist)
- *Best of Show* (highest scoring image in the entire competition)

- *CPP Award* (highest scoring image in the entire competition made by a CPP)
  - *Best Black and White Image* (highest scoring black and white image in the entire competition)
  - *ASP Elite Award* (highest scoring image made by a member of ASP)
  - *Judge's Choice Awards* (awarded to different images, chosen by the individual judges from among all merited images)
  - *Certificate of Merit* (for all PPSC members who did not qualify for an award, but who achieved at least one merited image in the competition)
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- *Non-Member Award Certificate* (for the highest-scoring merited image by a non-member)

### **Image Feedback**

Providing feedback on an entrant's images is one of the goals of the PPSC photographic events.

- The best way to get feedback is to request a critique. This provides a recorded video with suggestions to improve your image. These are normally about 3 minutes in length but vary by judge.
- Judges' challenges will also provide feedback during the judging of an image.
- Brief comments will be provided by jurors on all the images after the completion of the judging.

### **Photographic Open Category**

The purpose of this competition is to allow photographers to enter photographic digital files, and/or digital albums to be judged against a standard of excellence using the **12 Elements of a Merit Image**.

These rules pertain to images entered as digital files created by any photographic processes. All entries must be registered at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com).

- Entrants may submit digital files, digital albums, or a combination for judging.
- No changes to your entry are permitted once the entry deadline has passed.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

1. The PPSC Annual Photographic Competition is an event that illustrates the photographic knowledge and skill set of the maker. However, a maker can use supporting photographic elements that they did not create, provided those elements are referenced as guide images on the face of the entry. The original photographic capture by the

entrant should be merit-worthy independent of the work that was not their own. Elements created by the maker must not be part of the guide images. This includes images within an album entry.

2. All processing, manipulation, or rendering were done by the entrant.
3. The entrant has obtained and has access to all necessary releases (model or property) and agrees to hold PPSC harmless against all claims and liabilities arising out of PPSC's display, publication, and promotion or other use of each image submitted to PPSC.
4. The entrant's name, studio name, or other identifying marks shall not appear anywhere in or on the face of the entry.
5. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed. Images created in an educational environment under direct supervision from an instructor are ineligible.
6. Any entry that has been created from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic, or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the rules. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of PPSC, violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law, that entry shall not be displayed or published.
7. Once an image has been awarded an exhibition merit in any category of PPSC image competition, it may not be entered again in any other category or PPSC competition, at any time, by any entrant. No image that receives a merit may be entered more than once under any condition, including any image from a merited album.
8. Images submitted to the PPA Monthly Image Review (MIR) or PPA IPC competition during the previous 12 months will be accepted even if they received a Merit or Image Excellence designation.
9. Images not of acceptable PPSC exhibition content will be reviewed for Merit and Image Excellence but may not be displayed. The decision of acceptable content will be at the discretion of PPSC.
10. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed, as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
11. PPA IPC images that attain a "finalist" status are ineligible.

You must designate one of the following categories for each entry:

- **PORTRAITS-CHILDREN:** Consists of portrait images. This category includes children newborn to 12 years of age.
- **PORTRAITS-GENERAL PORTRAITS:** Consists of portrait images. This category includes high school students, adults, models, and fashion portraits, in addition to tastefully artistic figure studies.
- **PORTRAITS-GROUPS:** Consists of portrait images of any group with two or more subjects, to include at least one person. This category includes families, groups, couples, and relationships. One or more pets may be included as subjects, but a group with only pets should be placed in the pet category.
- **PORTRAITS-PETS AND DOMESTIC ANIMALS:** Consists of portrait images. It

includes animal(s) portraits using structured lighting in a studio, or outdoor environment, where the owner or photographer controls the animal(s).

- **ILLUSTRATIVE-NATURE/LANDSCAPE/WILDLIFE/ZOO:** This category includes landscapes, outdoor scenic, sunset/sunrises, animals in a natural or zoo environment, flowers, and insects.
- **ILLUSTRATIVE-COMMERCIAL:** This category includes architecture, real estate, and product photography.
- **ILLUSTRATIVE-ILLUSTRATIVE GENERAL:** Images not included in the above categories.
- **REPORTAGE:** Photographic images that illustrate an actual public or non-public event, life, an area of human interest, telling news that has meaning in the context or record of events, high impact, and/or lasting emotional response. Images that illustrate sporting events are included in this category.

#### DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRIES

- Prior to uploading images in any category, files must be sized at 4000 pixels on the longest dimension, be saved at a JPEG maximum quality, in Lightroom with a quality setting of 100 or in Photoshop with quality setting of 10-12, and contain an embedded color profile of sRGB or Adobe RGB1998.

#### DIGITAL ALBUM ENTRY

1. Prior to uploading images in any category, files must be sized at 4000 pixels on the longest dimension, be saved at a JPEG maximum quality, in Lightroom with a quality setting of 100 or in Photoshop with quality setting of 10-12, and contain an embedded color profile of sRGB or Adobe RGB1998.
2. Each page/spread file may contain as many images as you desire.
3. An entry shall contain a minimum of 5 page/spread files up to 36 page/spread files.
4. Files are to be numbered in viewing order using three digits, i.e. 001 jpg, 002 jpg, 003 jpg, etc.
5. All individual files must be compressed into a single ZIP file. ZIP file must be named: Album Title.zip (e.g. Summer Wedding.zip).
6. Studio identification, entrant's name, or other identifying marks cannot appear on any file within the album entry.

Failure to comply with these rules may result in disqualification of entry. The decision of PPSC is final.

## Wedding Photography Category

The purpose of this category is to allow photographers to enter photographic digital files, or digital albums to be judged against a standard of excellence using the **12 Elements of a Merit Image**. In addition to the twelve elements, for an image to be merit-worthy in the wedding review, an additional evaluation will be considered for the entries that illustrate the personality of the subject or subjects and the story of the wedding as well as the artistic and technical skills of the image-maker. Jurors will keep in mind that the maker has limited control over many aspects of a wedding. For example, subject matter, environment, and time of day. Ultimately, additional consideration will be given to the maker for technically and artistically executing at a merit level despite the challenges involved at a typical wedding.

Images and all elements of an image in the Wedding review must be created in connection with an actual wedding. The entrant or entrants must have captured all elements of the final submission from that wedding. Images in the Wedding review should reflect the personality or personalities of the subject(s) or the story of the wedding as well as the personality, artistic and technical skills of the image-maker. Images should include some kind of visual wedding reference(s). The originally captured image (in RAW or jpg) must be available if requested by PPSC.

These rules pertain to images entered as digital files, or digital albums created by traditional photographic processes as well as those captured electronically with a digital camera or scanner. All entries must be registered at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com).

- Entrants may submit a case of either digital files, digital albums, or a combination for judging. Entrants are required to upload a digital file for each image entered.
- No changes to your entry are permitted once the entry deadline has passed.

### ELIGIBILITY

1. Entrant must have captured and created the original exposure or exposures during the time constraints of the wedding.
2. All processing, manipulation or rendering, were done by the entrant.
3. The entrant has obtained and has access to all necessary releases (model or property) and agrees to hold PPSC harmless against all claims and liabilities arising out of PPSC's display, publication and promotion or other use of each image submitted to PPSC.
4. The entrant's name shall not appear anywhere in or on the face of the entry.
5. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed. Images created in an educational environment under direct supervision from an instructor are ineligible.
6. Any entry that has been created from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the rules and will not be

judged, accepted or displayed. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of PPSC, violates copyright, trademark or any other applicable law, that entry shall not be displayed or published.

7. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed, as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
8. Once an image has been awarded an exhibition merit in any category of PPSC review, it may not be entered again in any other category, at any time, by any entrant. No image that receives a merit may be entered more than once under any condition, including any image from a merited album.
9. Images submitted to the PPA Monthly Image Review (MIR) or PPA IPC competition during the previous 12 months will be accepted even if they received a Merit or Image Excellence designation.
10. Images not of acceptable PPSC exhibition content will be reviewed for Merit but may not be displayed. The decision of acceptable content will be based on the standards set by PPSC Competition Committee.
11. PPA IPC images that attain a “finalist” status are ineligible.

#### WEDDING COMPETITION CATEGORIES

You must designate one of the below Categories for each entry.

- WEDDING OPEN
- WEDDING ALBUM

#### CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

**WEDDING OPEN:** Images can portray a subject or subjects from all aspects of a wedding including traditional portraits, candid, or detail work.

**SINGLE MAKER WEDDING ALBUM:** Multiple images combined into a digital album collection exclusively showcasing a specific wedding.

**MULTI-MAKER WEDDING ALBUM:** Images in the album must be the work of the two entrants, with a minimum of 20 images per entrant. Each entrant must individually enter the competition and pay appropriate entry fees. Multi-maker Wedding albums will be judged as one entry.

#### DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRIES

- Prior to uploading images in any category, files must be sized at 4000 pixels on the longest dimension, be saved at a JPEG maximum quality, in Lightroom with a quality setting of 100 or in Photoshop with quality setting of 10-12, and contain an embedded color profile of sRGB or Adobe RGB1998.

## DIGITAL ALBUM ENTRY

1. Prior to uploading images in any category, files must be sized at 4000 pixels on the longest dimension, be saved at a JPEG maximum quality, in Lightroom with a quality setting of 100 or in Photoshop with quality setting of 10-12, and contain an embedded color profile of sRGB or Adobe RGB1998.
2. Each page/spread file may contain as many images as you desire.
3. An entry shall contain a minimum of 5 page/spread files up to 36 page/spread files.
4. Files are to be numbered in viewing order using three digits, i.e. 001 jpg, 002 jpg, 003 jpg, etc.
5. All individual files must be compressed into a single ZIP file. ZIP file must be named: Album Title.zip (e.g., Summer Wedding.zip).
6. Studio identification or entrant's name cannot appear on any file within the album entry.

## MULTI-MAKER ALBUM

1. Images in the album must be the work of two entrants, with a minimum of 20 images per entrant. Each entrant must individually enter the review and pay appropriate entry fees.
2. Multi-maker albums will be reviewed as one entry. Each entrant must use the same title when entering a multi-maker album.

Failure to comply with these rules may result in disqualification of entry. The decision of PPSC is final.

## Artist Category

The purpose of this Category is to allow the entrant to demonstrate their art skills and expertise. Entries will be reviewed for digital, artistic, and technical proficiency. All entries must be registered at [www.printcompetition.com](http://www.printcompetition.com).

- Entrants submit digital files for judging.
- No changes to your entry are permitted once the entry deadline has passed.

## ELIGIBILITY

1. Photographs may be used in this category in creating an entry, but it is not a requirement. Entries may include freehand drawing or painting in digital applications. Entries can include stock photography, photographs, or artwork from another artist (s) with written consent to use those sources. Documentation may be requested by PPSC before, during, or after the competition. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of the PPSC Competition Committee violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law

and cannot be proven otherwise, that entry shall be disqualified and merits revoked if issued.

2. All processing, manipulation, artwork, or rendering must be done by the entrant.
3. Guide images must be included on the face of the entry.
4. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed.
5. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
6. Once an image has been awarded an exhibition merit in any category of PPSC image competition, it may not be entered again in any other category at any time, by any entrant. No image that receives a merit may be entered more than once under any condition. The entrant's name shall not appear anywhere in or on the face of the entry.
7. Images submitted to the PPA Monthly Image Review (MIR) or PPA IPC competition during the previous 12 months will be accepted even if they received a Merit or Image Excellence designation.
8. PPA IPC images that attain a "finalist" status are ineligible.

#### ARTIST COMPETITION CATEGORY

You must designate one of the following categories for each entry.

- ARTIST OPEN: Submissions must include guide images.
- ARTIST RESTORATION: Submissions must include guide images.

#### DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRIES

- Prior to uploading images in any category, files must be sized at 4000 pixels on the longest dimension, be saved at a JPEG maximum quality, in Lightroom with a quality setting of 100 or in Photoshop with quality setting of 10-12, and contain an embedded color profile of sRGB or Adobe RGB1998.