



# SNAPSHOT

Newsletter of the Hermanus Photographic Society  
April 2018

## View from the chair

### Top honours for our top achiever

Our Club has a good spread of photographic skills and experience.

It varies from about 15% of our most active members on Five-star or Magister level, to the majority of about 60% on Three-star and Four-star level, and about 25% on One-star or Two-star level.

This month we are particularly proud of some achievements on the higher level.

Treurnicht du Toit, our most experienced and highest rated active photographer, was handed a certificate for winning the Club Top Achiever Award for Hermanus in the PSSA's Impala Trophy competition of 2017.

Nicol du Toit, Western Cape Regional Director of the PSSA (Photographic Society of South Africa), who came from Cape Town to Hermanus to hand the certificate at our April meeting, said Treurnicht had ended among the top twenty candidates.

The competition is based on successful Salon participation.

But that achievement was overshadowed by the PSSA's recent announcement that Treurnicht had been awarded the top Honours award of EPSSA (Mille).



This award is also based on successful Salon participation. To qualify for it the candidate, a full member of the PSSA, must either have a total of 1 000 acceptances in one of three possible divisions (Open, Nature or Monochrome), or 500 in each of two divisions – the route that Treurnicht had followed.



*Nicol du Toit (left) and Treurnicht du Toit with the certificate*

For this award Treurnicht will receive a certificate and a badge at the PSSA National Congress later this year.

## Putting perspective into our exhibition

“Perspectives” is the name of our Print Exhibition, which will be part of the FynArts 2018 festival in Hermanus from 8 to 17 June.

The name was chosen about six months ago to meet the deadline for the printing of the FynArts Programme booklet – so long ago that we apparently forgot all about it. So the alternative name that we chose at our April meeting will have to stand over to be considered for FynArts 2019.

The word “perspective” has a variety of meanings, of which two are applicable to our exhibition.

In its art sense, perspective means “the art of representing three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface so as to give the right impression of their height, width, depth, and position in relation to each other”. Thus defined, by the Oxford Dictionary, perspective is an important part of what most categories of photography are about.

In a more general sense, perspective can be “a particular way of viewing things that depends on one’s experience and personality”, quoting the Cambridge Dictionary. That definition will hopefully catch all categories of photography that may have escaped the first definition.

It also opens participation in the exhibition to all our Club members, with their variety of skills and experience, personalities, individual approaches, and more.

(Each member may enter up to four images, which must be submitted in digital format by Tuesday 1 May.)

**Charles Naudé**

## More variety in Salon successes

Despite the achievements of being awarded the top Honours award of EPSSA (Mille) and winning a Club Top Achiever Award for Hermanus in the PSSA's Impala Trophy competition of 2017, both for Salon successes, Treurnicht du Toit was still going strong on the Salon scene last month.

And he was joined by a newcomer on the scene, Elizma Fourie, who broadened our participation to include the acceptance of an Audio-visual.

Treurnicht was awarded a PSA Gold Medal for his image *Ill-omened*, by the Elixir International Circuit in India, where an incredible 113 of his images were accepted for Exhibition.

Nationally he was awarded two Certificates of Merit and had 12 images accepted for exhibition by three salons.

Elizma's AV, entitled *A Smile to Remember*, was accepted by the PE Camera Club's third International Audio-visual Festival.



*Ill-omened, which brought Gold for Treurnicht du Toit*

## A pair of bright shooting stars

Another two Club members were promoted to a higher Star level. Kobus and Marié Botes had collected enough points and Golds by March to become a four-star and a three-star photographer respectively. He will need 200 points and 60 Golds to reach the next level, and she 100 points and 25 Golds.



## Small creatures at Abalone

On a slightly overcast Thursday morning, 8 March, a group of eleven enthusiastic photographers met outside the gates of the Abagold Abalone Farm. After a quick introduction we booted up and ventured out.

For most of us it was quite an eye-opener. The sheer number of people and size of the operation was staggering. We experienced the aquaculture industry of abalone farming on a huge scale, the oldest and largest abalone hatchery in South Africa.

We quickly learned how incredibly intricate it is to farm abalone as our guides introduced us to abalone in its natural environment.



*The group of photographers at Abagold Abalone Farm*

We walked among 40 000 baskets, learning more about the system and technical infrastructure that keeps Abagold's 10 000 000 abalone healthy and happily housed.

We photographed the life cycle of this mysterious mollusc and hatchery, where the broodstock is cared for and baby abalone (spats) are produced. We also photographed the activities of feeding, tank cleaning and sorting of abalone.

These young creatures are really small – not hamsters and bunnies, but snails and insects. Those critters that can go unnoticed, but have unique beauty, particularly when photographed close up. - **Diane Steenkamp**

## The month ahead

The next meeting will be in the Dutch Reformed Church Hall, as usual, on Wednesday 2 May at 19:00. Members may enter up to three images of their choice for evaluation, and one image on the Set Subject, Feathers, for discussion. The best set-subject image will be decided by voting.

There will be an exclusive outing for photographers to Eagle Encounters at the Spier Winery in Stellenbosch on Thursday 12 April, which will provide opportunities for members to focus on "feathers" for the Set Subject.

# Photographing feathers

There are various possible ways of photographing feathers.

One way is to do the obvious – take a photograph of one or more feathers, on or off a bird.

Another is to do something abstract, for example by macro photography. Or to take a portrait shot of the so-called bird on a stick.

Perhaps more challenging is to capture a bird in flight.

Here are some tips for photographing flying birds, put together by **Jim Harmer**, founder of Improve Photography, which is published on the internet.

Tip 1: Watch your composition. Strong composition for a moving subject usually means that the photographer places a large amount of negative space on the side of the frame to which the bird is traveling.

2: Adjust your elevation. Usually birds in flight look best when the photographer is relatively close to the same height as the bird.

This can be tricky in some situations, but your best photos will likely occur when the bird is swooping down low or when you can get on a hill or in an elevated bird stand.

3: Adjust your camera settings. You will certainly want to use continuous focus (AF-C on a Nikon, or AI Servo on a Canon), select the proper focus point (I usually use the centre point or dynamic autofocus), a sharp aperture, and a fast shutter speed, somewhere around 1/1200th of a second.



*An image of a feather, published on [www.shawacademy](http://www.shawacademy)*



*Winning abstract image by Marc Albiac, Young Bird Photographer of the Year 2017*

4: Shoot away from the sun. Usually backlit birds will not be as good-looking as front-lit birds. Simply planning to stand in the correct spot will significantly improve the quality of your images.

5: Shoot in short bursts of two or three images. This will increase your chances of getting a sharp photo without filling your buffer too quickly.

6: Don't skimp on depth-of-field. While a high shutter speed is certainly important, achieving that by lowering aperture is not the answer. Many birds have a large wingspan, and a low aperture will often put the wing tips out of focus. If you need more light to increase your shutter speed, use a higher ISO.

7: Shoot with both eyes open. This is a matter of personal preference, but I learned how to shoot with both eyes open because I used to teach shotgun shooting classes. Applying this technique in photography allows you to see what is in front of the bird so you can prepare your shot. If the bird is swooping down to catch an animal, I can see it before it's too late.



*Look into my Eyes - portrait by Johan J Ingles-Le Nobel, published on Flickr*

8: Pay attention to the background. While a background of a pure blue sky can work in some situations, many birds in flight images will be much stronger if a more interesting background is captured. Wait for the birds to swoop down low where trees or water can provide a compelling background.



*Peregrine Falcon in flight by Ofer Levy, published on naturescapes.net*

9: Don't skimp on Image Stabilization. It is unfortunate that image stabilized lenses often come at a premium, because some photographers opt for the cheaper lens without image stabilization. Especially for telephoto lenses, your image stabilization will be absolutely vital to the success of your photography of birds in flight.

## Audio-visual Interest Group

It is acceptable that you combine music created by someone else with your own images to create your AV. But what if you want to use images created by someone else as well?

This controversial topic will be discussed at the joint meeting of our Club's AV Interest Group and that of Helderberg, in Kleinmond on Saturday 14 April.

The main purpose of the meeting is to show and discuss AVs by members of the two groups, led by Izak van Niekerk of Helderberg and Friso Woudstra of Kleinmond. It will start with an AV by Woudstra, to get into the spirit of things.

The discussion on the use of images by someone else, to be introduced by Nico Jacobs of Kleinmond, will happen after the first break. It will be based on the AV The Innocents, created by Charles Hulse.

The joint meeting, in the Kleinmond Dutch Reformed Church Hall, on the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, will start at 09:00.

## PSSA participation

Our Club has started to participate more actively in the club activities of the Photographic Society of South Africa (PSSA). We entered our two top images from our March evaluation in the Senior and the Junior Club Competition.

The monthly results and entries are published regularly on the PSSA website. We did not win with our first attempt, but watch this space.



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All of them are available to assist you with your queries.

Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit.