

Science Museum Camera Club



Member Handbook

SMCC Mission Statement:

The Science Museum Camera Club is a community of photographers that have been meeting at the Buffalo Museum of Science since 1939. As a community, we welcome photographers of all levels of experience. We believe that by sharing our knowledge, experience, and friendship, we can grow in our abilities as photographers while having fun.

Meetings:

Meetings are held on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month from September until May.

Meetings are usually held in the Buffalo Museum of Science Auditorium at 7:00 PM. (Check the SMCC website to verify the meeting time and location.) Because of weather and Museum activities, meetings might be changed or canceled. Check the website for changes.

Competition night: We show the images, both Projected Images and Prints, and a judge provides feedback and a score for each image. The judge's feedback helps us grow as photographers.

Program night: The program may be educational, an outside speaker, or a club activity. This night includes time to socialize as the talk will end early enough to allow for a little camaraderie and to talk "shop."

Critique night: An informal review of images by the group and an opportunity to ask for the opinions of our experienced membership.

Membership:

The annual individual membership fee is \$40.00, and the family membership fee is \$50.00. Students over 18 with a school ID can join for free. Members are given a lanyard with a badge showing their membership. Members must stop at the Museum Desk to sign in and should wear their badges at all meetings. There is no charge for SMCC members to enter the Museum on meeting nights after 5:30 PM or for early education classes. Board Members have blue badges for easier identification. Feel free to ask any Board Member any questions or concerns that you might have.

Dues must be paid at the 1st meeting in September or mailed to the Treasurer before the 1st meeting. Only members who have paid their dues can enter images into competitions.

Visitors are always welcome at any meeting and are not required to join; please feel free to drop in at any meeting. We welcome all levels of photographers. Just sign in at the Museum entry desk as a guest.

After you submit your membership form to our Treasurer, you will receive a name badge and access to the SMCC website. The website login will be sent to you after the membership director records your membership information. If you belong to another club using the Visual Pursuits website, your login and password will remain the same, and you will see both clubs listed when you log into the SMCC website.

How are your membership dues used?

SMCC is a self-funded organization. The dues paid by the membership pay for various expenses generated by the club.

These expenses include:

- Club's promotional brochure, Name Badges, office expenses, such as paper and copying, etc.
- Dues for memberships, such as the Photographic Society of America (PSA)
- Insurance and bank fees
- Fees for the Club's Website
- Competition ribbons and End of Year awards
- We also pay honoraria to judges for intra-and inter-club competition judging
- Program presenters receive an honoraria
- There are expenses for editing software, equipment acquisition, and maintenance

Other Sources of Club Revenue:

50/50 Raffle:

The club holds a 50/50 raffle during meetings to raise additional funds.

Community Service:

As a club, we volunteer to photograph events at the Science Museum, the Ride for Roswell, and the Kevin Guest House every year. We encourage the members to volunteer to photograph the events at the Science Museum since they let us use their facilities. Also, other opportunities come up during the season. If you offer to help, please wear your club badge when photographing these events. The badges will give us visibility at the events and help to recruit new members.

SMCC Website:

<https://smcc.photoclubservices.com>

Visual Pursuits hosts the SMCC website. The advantage of using this hosting company is that it is made for camera clubs and provides many features for members of the clubs. Features include uploading images to competitions hosted by the website, maintaining an image library for each member, and galleries created by members showing their work to others in the club. The site has instructions explaining how to enter competitions, historical documents showing results of competitions and an individual's scores and help to better yourself as a photographer. Another advantage is that some clubs within the region use the same host. If you belong to more than one club hosted on the Visual Pursuits, you can use the same user ID and password to access the website for each club. Please explore the website and become familiar with the site and its resources. By uploading any images or documents to the website, you agree that what is uploaded is your original work. Although the website will store your images, it is not a backup service. You are responsible for backing up your images.

SMCC Critique Forum:

Our website has a critique forum where you can submit images and receive feedback from some of the more experienced members. To find the Critique Forum, log into the website and look under "Resources".

SMCC Social Media

The SMCC has a presence on Social Media.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BuffaloScienceMuseumCameraClub/>
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/buffalosmcc/>
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn6UL1H5BUODH-dWit-ABdg>
Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/buffalosmcc/>

Photographic Society of America/PSA:

The Photographic Society of America (PSA) is a worldwide organization for anyone with interest in photography. Founded in 1934, the Society is for casual shutterbugs, serious amateurs, and professional photographers. PSA has members in over 80 countries. Individual and photo organization memberships offer a wide variety of services and activities: a monthly journal, online photo galleries, image evaluation, study groups, courses, competitions, an annual conference, opportunities for recognition of photographic achievement and service, and discounts on photography-related products and services. To learn more about PSA and its activities, go to the website: <https://psa-photo.org>

SMCC has a club membership in PSA. This membership allows us to compete in various PSA inter-club competitions. The club started competing in the PSA Projected Image Division (PID) inter-club competitions in the 2016-2017 season. Beginning in the 2019-2020 season, we submitted images in the following Competitions: PID Creative Inter-club, Photojournalism Inter-club, Nature Inter-club, and Photo Travel Inter-club.

Science Museum Camera Club Competitions:

The first Wednesday, from October until April is either competition or critique. We hold four competitions during the season and the other three meetings are Critique nights. In some years, we might reduce the number of competitions by a month (depending on extenuating circumstances). Members can compete in the Projected Image General, Projected Image Creative, Color Print, and Monochrome Print competitions. Submitting images that were solely generated using artificial intelligence (AI) will not be allowed. The competition judges are known for their skills as photographers and judges. Images receive scores from 9 to 15, where 9 indicates a need for improvement. A score of 15 usually means an outstanding image, both technically proficient and impactful to the judge.

Each member participates in one of four divisions in Projected Image, Color Prints, and Mono Prints. The division is reflective of the member's experience level. Members start in the Bronze Division and can progress over time to the Platinum Division, based on how well the photographer's images do in competition. New members who compete in other club's competitions can start in the division at their competition level in the other club. During the competition, the image's score and the photographer's division will determine if the photographer receives an Honorable Mention. To receive an Honorable Mention, the image must receive:

For members in the Bronze division, a Score of 11-15 points

For members in the Silver division, a Score of 12-15 points

For members in the Gold division, a Score of 13-15 points

For members in the Platinum division, a Score of 14-15 points

Please be advised that by entering images into a competition, you grant the SMCC the right to display your prints in the club's display box at the Science Museum, display your images online and submit the images to the regional competitions, such as the PSA competitions. You, the maker, will still maintain the copyright and ownership of your images.

Print Competition:

A member may enter 4 prints in each monthly print competition. The prints can be two color prints and two monochrome prints. The total number of entered prints can be 4. If a member cannot turn in a print on competition night, the member may submit an extra color print and an extra monochrome print to catch up. Members may not enter the same image in projected images and

prints in the same month. Large format (16 x 20, 11 x 14) prints are judged separately than medium format (8 x 10 or 8x12) prints.

All prints must be mounted and matted (if desired), but frames are not allowed. Members must bring their prints in between 6:30 and 6:45, before the start of the evening's competition.

Prints receiving ribbons either during regular monthly competitions or "Print of the Year" may not be resubmitted again at any time except for the "Print of the Year" competition during the same club year.

Please see the competition rules on the website for current print rules, including print sizes and how to enter prints.

Digital copy of prints:

Members must upload digital copies of their prints. Digital copies are projected during the print competition at the same time the print is displayed so that all members in the Auditorium can see the image since the prints can be hard to see in the print display box if you are farther back in the Auditorium.

Projected Image General Competition:

A member may enter a maximum of 2 images in the Projected Image Color and Projected Image Mono competitions in each competition. Some years, competitions may begin in November instead of October due to special program requirements for October.

Members can enter up to 2 images divided between Color and Monochrome

For example:

2 images in Color, or

2 images in Monochrome, or

1 image in Color and 1 image in Monochrome

Any combination of the above would make up the 2 entries for that competition month.

There are no restrictions on the mix of categories entered throughout the year. Members may not enter the same image in both the projected image competition and print competition during the same month.

Projected Image Creative Competition:

We have a separate competition for Creative Images. A member may enter one image in the Projected Image Creative competition.

The PSA definition of Creative is "Altered Reality." The image may be of any subject matter and must display a change in natural color, form, shape, or any combination of these three. All images must be original and may not incorporate elements produced by anyone else. Artwork or computer graphics generated by the entrant may be included if the original photographic content

predominates. Images may not be constructed entirely within a computer. Image titles for creative images will be read aloud to the judge before the image is shown. (See Year-End Awards: Projected Image of the Year).

Submission Deadline

The competitions are open for submissions after the first meeting of the season, and members can submit their images **no later than midnight on the Saturday before the competition night**. Members must upload the images on the SMCC website into the correct competition for each month.

Projected images receiving ribbons either during regular monthly competitions or "Projected Image of the Year" may not be resubmitted again at any time except for the "Projected Image of the Year" competition during the same club year.

Resubmitting images or prints

Members may resubmit the same image or print in the same category in subsequent monthly competitions during the same year except if the image received an honor award. The image can only be resubmitted one additional time during that year. The image may be resubmitted with or without changes. This does not affect the rule that allows the same image to be submitted in another category (i.e., the same projected color image can be submitted into the color print category and the monochrome print category during the same year.) This rule is intended to allow a member to obtain a second judge's opinion of their image without having to wait until the following year's competition. Considering this, we encourage members to submit new images for each monthly competition so that the members can learn and improve their photographic skills.

SMCC YEAR-END AWARDS

Top Cumulative Scores:

Up to 8 (depending on the number of monthly competitions held that year) digital images may be submitted during the club year. A minimum of 6 digital images are required to have your cumulative score considered for end-of-year awards. The 6 highest scores are used to calculate the average score. The members with the highest averages in each division are recognized at the Awards Banquet. In a tie, the person with the most ribbons will win; if there is still a tie, then the most 15 scores, if there is still a tie, then the most 14 scores, etc.

General Projected Image of the Year:

The club holds an End-of-Year competition in May. Members may submit four digital images only from images entered in a regular monthly competition (The E. Thomas Smith Nature Competition is **NOT** a **REGULAR** monthly competition) during the current club year. They need not have won a ribbon to enter. Images must be the same as they were judged in monthly competition and cannot be modified. Members must submit the images from their Image Library on the SMCC website. The deadline for entering images for Projected Image of the Year is the Saturday before the competition. There is first, second, and third-place awards and honorable mentions for approximately 20% of the entries.

Creative Projected Image of the Year:

Along with the General Projected Image of the Year, members may submit two digital images from the images entered in a regular creative monthly competition. The E. Thomas Smith Nature Competition is **NOT** a **REGULAR** monthly competition during the current club year. They need not have won a ribbon to enter. Images must be the same as they were judged in monthly competition and cannot be modified. Members must submit the images from their Image Library on the SMCC website. The deadline for entering images for Projected Image of the Year is the Saturday before the competition. There is first, second, and third-place awards and honorable mentions for approximately 20% of the entries.

Print of the Year:

A final print competition will be held in May to determine the monochrome and color print of the year. Members may submit up to **four monochrome and/or four color prints** entered in a regular competition during the current club year. They need not have won a ribbon to enter. First, second, and third place will be awarded in monochrome and color. Honorable mention will be awarded to approximately 20% of the entries with the highest scores. Members must bring the prints to the meeting with the proper website label, direction arrow, and title on the night of the competition. Members must submit the digital copies of the prints by Midnight on the Saturday before the Print of the Year competition. Members can submit either small or large prints and they will be judged separately.

A panel of 3 judges will judge both the "Projected Image" and "Print" competition at the "End of the Year" competition meeting. The "Projected Image" and "Print" winners will be awarded within the club, not in each division. "End of the Year" entries do not count toward the top cumulative scores.

Moving up into a higher Division:

Members can move up to the next level in a Competition Division if they submit at least 6 images (or two less than the maximum allowed) in that category and the average score of those images in the Competition Division is equal to the honor award score for the current Competition Division.

- Bronze to Silver must have an average of at least 11 points
- Silver to Gold must have an average of at least 12 points
- Gold to Platinum must have an average of at least 13 points.

The scores to receive an honor award are: Bronze is 11+ Points, Silver is 12+ Points, Gold is 13+ points, and Platinum is 14+ points.

E. Thomas Smith Nature competition:

This annual SMCC nature competition was initiated in 1968 by Mrs. Janice Healy in honor of her father, E. Thomas Smith. The winner receives the E. Thomas Smith trophy at the banquet in May. The winner keeps the trophy for one year, until the following May banquet when it passes to next year's winner. This competition follows the Photographic Society of America's (PSA's) rules for nature images. These images shall be truthful to the subject as seen and shall not show evidence of the "hand of man." See Website for official "PSA Nature Rules" of competition.

The PSA's Nature Rules:

"No techniques that add, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements except by cropping are permitted. No hand of man may appear in the image. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content or without altering the content of the original scene are permitted, including HDR, focus stacking, and dodging/burning. Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches, are allowed. Stitched images are not permitted. All allowed adjustments must appear natural. Color images can be converted to grey-scale monochrome. Infrared images, either direct captures or derivations, are not allowed." More detailed information and rules can be found on the SMCC website.

DOROTHY RALPH ESSAY COMPETITION RULES

This annual competition began in 1997 and is in honor and memory of Dorothy Ralph. Dorothy was a longtime member of the Science Museum Camera Club who bequeathed a Hummel figurine of a photographer to the club. The figurine was mounted on the trophy that is awarded to the competition winner to keep for one year. All winners' names, and year awarded, are engraved on the trophy base. When the trophy is returned by the prior year's winner, a keeper award is given to that person.

ESSAY ELIGIBILITY OF WORK

There is no restriction as to the subject unless there is an assignment or request created by the Science Museum Camera Club Board Members. All digital images must be the original work of the club member. Essays are judged and critiqued by individuals known for their expertise in photography or art. Judging is based on how well the essay meets the statement of purpose and the photographic quality of the images. Only one winning essay entry is selected.