PPC 2026 Member-at-Large (MAL)
Quarterly Image Competition

The PPC Members-At-Large (MAL) quarterly image competitions were established to give members at large (not a member of a PPC Affiliate) the opportunity to have images judged against a standard of excellence using the 12 Elements of a Merit Image (see below). The intent is to help the maker, through critique and scoring, to prepare the images for State (PPC) and/or National (PPA) competitions. While no PPC or PPA merits are issued, therefore allowing the images to be entered in other competitions, there are some awards for the winners.

Judges may be a mix of vetted PPC judges as well as certified PPA judges. The overall winner of the competition will be the Member-At-Large having the highest combined total score spanning all four quarterly contests (see scoring table below). The overall winner will receive a certificate to the next year's West Coast School session. While this is open to Members-at-Large; PPC state affiliate members may enter but are not eligible for awards.

The competitions will run 4 times a year, will be judged by a panel of three PPC or PPA-qualified judges and will take place through the website www.PrintCompetition.com. The competition can be viewed through a live Zoom meeting, and the judges will comment on each image, giving the maker insights into how they would improve the image for competition at State or National level.

These rules pertain to images entered as digital files created by traditional photographic processes, those captured electronically with a digital camera or scanner, as well as those created digitally:

1. All entries must be registered through www.PrintCompetition.com (entrants must create an account on the website).
2. Only digital files may be submitted for judging.
3. Each quarterly contest is limited to (4) entries per entrant.
4. No changes to your entry are permitted once the entry deadline has closed.
5. No refunds will be issued after the entry fee is paid.
6. Entrants must be a current PPC Member-At-Large (MAL). PPC state affiliate members may enter but are not eligible for awards.
7. Images previously receiving merits at any PPC State Photographic Image Competition, Affiliate Competition, Professional Photographers of America (PPA) or International Photographic Competition (IPC) are not eligible, including any image from a merited album.

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ELIGIBILITY

1. Images created under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment are not eligible. All images submitted must be self-directed and personally created.
2. Entrant must have captured and created the original exposure or exposures. Any entry which has been generated from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic, or any other artwork generated by another person is a violation of the competition rules and will not be judged.
3. All processing, manipulation, and rendering, must be by the entrant or under their direct supervision.
4. The entrant must have obtained and have access to all necessary releases (model or property) and agree to hold PPC harmless from all claims and liabilities arising out of PPC's display, publication, and promotion or other use of each image submitted to PPC.
5. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed, if the images are entirely different concepts.
6. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of the Judging committee, violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law and cannot be proven otherwise, that entry shall be disqualified.
7. Entries should not display any identification (i.e. name, studio, etc.) anywhere within or on the face of the entry.
8. A maximum of four (4) entries, per quarterly contest, may be submitted per entrant.
9. Images that have been awarded a Merit in any previous PPC or PPA competitions may not be entered in this competition. This is true for individual images contained within a meriting album as well.

REGISTRATION

Registration opening and closing dates & times will be posted on www.ppconline.com calendar as well as social media advertisements.
Membership on www.PrintCompetition.com is required for registration. Basic membership is valid for one year, and it covers all photographic associations that run image competitions using the platform.

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CATEGORY DESIGNATION

Image entries must be designated to one of the categories below:

- Commercial
- Illustrative
- Landscape
- Nature
- Reportage
- Portrait
- Animal
- Wedding
- Digital/Electronic Imaging

CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

Commercial - Industrial, architecture, tabletop, advertising, stock and aerial images.

Illustrative - Images representing an alternative type of creativity, photography, and/or not meeting the requirements of any other category.

Landscape - Images of landscapes, seascapes, cityscapes and nightscapes being the dominant subject. People can appear in the image.

Nature - Images where the flora and/or fauna are the dominate subject, and no man-made objects are visible. Domesticated animals and in-house plants are not considered nature and may be entered into Portrait or Illustrative categories where appropriate.

Reportage - Image captured at the peak of action that tell a story. Nothing may be altered. Minor dodging, burning, dust spot removal, curves adjustment, and conversion to black-and-white are the only treatments allowed. The maker must be prepared to submit the original file at any point for verification proving no alterations.

Portrait - Images that portray a subject or subjects from all walks of life and should reflect the personality of the subject(s) Examples include children, families, high school seniors, animals, groups, couples, models, and fashion portraits, in addition to tastefully artistic figure studies.

Animal - Images of animal(s), wild or domesticated, with or without their human companions. Man-made objects are permitted.

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Wedding - Images created in connection with an actual wedding or related social events including Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Quinceaneras.

Digital/Electronic Imaging - A single final image comprised of multiple photographic images, digitally manipulated using computer software. Source files must be included as thumbnails beneath the fine image. If source file contains stock photography, proof of purchase or copyright release from the original artist may be requested by the Image Competition Chair. Images that have painterly qualities or use strong filter effects, heavy digital manipulations, or other special effects belong in this category.

DIGITAL SUBMISSION

- Image files must be sized with the longest dimension equal to or less than 4000 pixels. Each file must contain an embedded color profile of either sRGB or Adobe RGB (1998) and saved with a JPEG quality setting of 10. *Note: In most cases, the total file size should not exceed 3.5 MB. Larger files will be accepted when necessary, as long as they are saved as JPEG, at quality 10.*
- Files will be automatically named and numbered by the www.PrintCompetition.com website.
- Image fee is $15.00 per image with a maximum of four (4) images, per quarterly contest (16 max. for the year)

SCORING

Entries will be scored using current PPA guidelines as follows:

100 - 95	Exceptional (Top-tier Image)
94 - 90	Superior (Highly Ranked Image)
89 - 85	Excellent (Strong Image)
84 - 80	Merit (Meriting Image)
79 - 75	Above Average
74 - 70	Average
69 & below	Below Standard

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Judges will be using the 12 Elements of a Merit Image to derive their scoring:

1	Impact
2	Technical Excellence
3	Creativity
4	Style
5	Composition
6	Presentation
7	Color Balance
8	Center of Interest
9	Lighting
10	Subject Matter
11	Technique
12	Story Telling

AWARDS

Quarterly awards and Photographer of the Year award are decided using the following point(s) table. Only images scoring 80 and above earn points that are then used to determine category winners. Quarterly awards will be announced at the conclusion of the quarter competition. Photographer of the Year will be presented at the annual Installation & Awards program in January of the following year.

Image Score	Points Awarded
80 – 84	1 point
85 – 90	1.25 points
90 – 100	1.5 points
Best in Category winner	Add 0.5 point
Best in Show winner	Add 1.0 point

Quarterly Recognitions:

In quarterly competitions, the Best-in-Category Award is selected by the judges from all entries in a specific category from images scoring 80 and above.
The Best-in-Show Award is selected from Best-In-Category winners by the judging panel.

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Photographer of the Year Recognition:

After completion of the (4) quarterly competitions, the Photographer of the Year is determined if all the criteria below are achieved:

1. Entrant must have entered at least three (3) of the four (4) Quarterly Image Competitions throughout the current competition year.
2. Entrant must score 80 and above on images in at least (3) categories.
3. If there is a tie between two or more photographers, the photographer with the highest aggregate score of points will be considered Photographer of the Year.