



The **San Diego County Fair's Exhibition of Photography** is one of Southern California's premier photography events. This prestigious juried print competition draws amateur and professional photographers from across the globe, offering over \$22,000 in prizes. The exhibition provides a unique opportunity for participants to showcase their work in a high-visibility venue, attracting thousands of fairgoers. Our educational program offers diverse workshop topics and access to photography judges and educators. Workshops, events, and shootouts are held every Friday, Saturday and most Sundays. Join us in celebrating photography at the largest and oldest juried print exhibition in North America.

Exhibition Timeline

Entry Deadline	Monday, April 7, 2025, by 8pm
Tier 1 Notification Email (check spam folders)	Wednesday, April 16, 2025
Shipped Entries May Arrive	Thursday, April 17– Tuesday, May 13, 2025
Entry Delivery	Monday, May 12, 2025, Noon – 7pm and Tuesday, May 13, 2025, Noon – 7pm
Fair Dates	Wednesday, June 11, – Sunday, July 6, 2025 (<i>closed Mondays and Tuesdays</i>)
Artist Reception	Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 6:30pm
Judges' Roundtable	Saturday, June 14, 2025, 7-9pm
Judges' Critique	Saturday, June 21, 2025, 7-9pm
Entry Pickup	Tuesday, July 8, 2025, Noon-7pm



Eligibility

- Adult exhibitors must be 18 years old by the Entry Deadline shown.
- Youth exhibitors must be between the ages of 13-17 by the Entry Deadline shown.
- Entries must be original work of the exhibitor, including all individual elements of a composite work. Stock art and borrowed imagery are not eligible. Fair Management may request original source files used in entries.
- Work by two (2) or more artists is *not* eligible.
- Work, or nearly identical work, previously shown at the Fair, regardless of title, is *not* eligible.
- Identical prints may not be shown in more than one division of the show. Submitting color and black-and-white versions of the same image(s) is **not** allowed.
- Any work created by *generative* Artificial Intelligence (AI), either partially or completely, is *not* eligible. Please see detailed Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Rules below.

Contact Us

[Lois Fong-Sakai](#) and [Amethel Parel-Sewell](#), Coordinators

San Diego County Fair Entry Office

2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd, Del Mar, CA 92014

Office (858) 792-4207 - Mon-Fri 10am-4pm

2025 Local Rules

1. Completion of online entry registration shall be deemed acceptance of all rules. Acceptance includes permission to use your name, photograph, and exhibit for the news media.
2. Online registration is required in all departments and for one-day contests. Online entries are accepted until 8:00pm (Pacific Time) on the deadline day for online entry registration, unless otherwise stated.
3. Once registered, the description, title, and price may not be changed. Substitutions will not be allowed. Fair Management is not responsible for errors on entry forms which may lead to elimination or disqualification of an entry.
4. Processing fees must be paid online at the time of registration. Processing fees are non-refundable.
5. Exhibitors must be living at the time the entry form and/or online entry is submitted.



6. All non-livestock entries must be the creative work of the exhibitor (whose name appears on the entry registration), be in good taste, and suitable for family viewing. Fair Management reserves the right to disqualify any entry/exhibit it deems objectionable or not in accordance with competition standards.
7. If an entry is disqualified after judging is complete, no changes will be made to the status of awards given for other entries.
8. Exhibitors are responsible for obtaining necessary permission from models and/or to use material in their entry that is considered copyrighted.
9. No entry will be accepted should the exhibitor describe the conditions under which he/she will exhibit, or the exhibit will be displayed.
10. Judges are qualified in the medium(s) they are judging. New judges may be chosen each year, and judges may be assigned to different divisions/classes from year to year.
11. If a coordinator or judge deems an entry to be in the incorrect category, division, class, etc., he or she may direct the Entry Office to move that entry as appropriate. The Entry Office may combine divisions or classes to create an adequate judging pool.
12. Fair Management reserves the right to limit entries, and display thereof, to facilities available and to cancel any division or class in which, in its judgment, the entries are insufficient to secure adequate competition.
13. Entries must be delivered on the date(s) and times specified. Entries will not be accepted before or after the stated entry delivery date. All accepted exhibits must remain on display and shall not be removed until the stated entry pick up date. Any exhibit not picked up on the specified date becomes the property of the San Diego County Fair and will be disposed of promptly.
14. All exhibits are entered and shown at the owner's risk. Reasonable care will be taken to prevent loss or damage to exhibits, but in no event will the 22nd District Agricultural Association (San Diego County Fair) be responsible for any injury or loss which may occur or for the actions of third parties. Insurance, if desired, should be obtained by the exhibitor at his/her own expense.
15. Any person who violates any Local, State, or Department rule or displays unethical conduct will forfeit all privileges and premiums and be subject to such penalty as the 22nd District Agricultural Association (San Diego County Fair) may order.
16. To ensure reliable award notification, exhibitors are responsible for submitting all address, phone number and email address updates promptly in writing to entry@sdfair.com or Entry Department, 2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd, Del Mar, CA 92014.



17. Premium money will be paid per the recorded placings in the official judging books rather than the ribbon attached to the exhibit.
18. Donated Award recipients will be selected per the instructions given on the Donated Award Confirmation Form submitted by the donor.
19. Premium, donated cash award, and auction checks will be made payable to the exhibitor as listed on the online entry registration. Checks will be mailed within 30 days after the close of the Fair to the address shown on the online entry registration, or as updated by the exhibitor via written notification to the Entry Office. Auction checks may be held longer if the buyer has not paid. Checks not cashed within 6 months from the date of issue will be forfeited. Replacement checks may be subject to a \$35 stop payment fee.
20. The 22nd District Agricultural Association (San Diego County Fair) is required by the Internal Revenue Service to report any premiums paid totaling the amount of \$600 or more. Exhibitors may be required to submit a W-9 form.
21. The 22nd District Agricultural Association management reserves the right to amend or add to these rules; the 22nd District Agricultural Association (San Diego County Fair) assumes no liability or responsibility not herein expressed.

California State Rules apply and are available [here](#).

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Rules

Generative AI (e.g., Midjourney, Stable Diffusion, or other text-to-image or image-to-image apps) is **prohibited** in all divisions and classes.

Moderate use of corrective/enhancement tools and techniques that maintain the integrity of the subject matter and specific category are allowed. These include cropping, color and exposure adjustments, sharpening, noise reduction, healing, cloning, removing, liquifying, layer masking, focus stacking, stitched panoramas, HDR/exposure blending, and infrared.

Photoshop's Content-Aware Fill/Expand may be used as a minor corrective tool (like healing, cloning, and removing) when not significantly altering the primary photographic content. It may **not** be used with text or image prompts to add substantive generated content.



Entry Limit

Twenty (20) entries per exhibitor in all classes combined.

Entry Fees

Adult Divisions: \$20 per entry

Youth Divisions: \$20 per entry

Entry fees are payable online with a credit card and are not refundable.

Fair Tickets

Each exhibitor will receive two (2) Exhibitor Access Passes.

How to Enter

1. After reading all entry materials, click the "Enter Now" link below to go to the ShoWorks Entry Homepage.
2. Register as an **Exhibitor**.
3. Select the appropriate division and class and input the required information. (See "Divisions and Classes" below for a list of all divisions and classes.) In the Description field, provide the following (100 character limit):
 - a. Location where the image was taken
 - b. What is depicted
 - c. For Division 1209: Large Prints, include final presentation size.
4. In the "Image Processing" field, provide the following:
 - a. Software used for image processing
 - b. Any special image processing techniques used such as Content-Aware Fill/Expand or compositing
5. Review your entry before completing registration to ensure that you have entered the correct division and class for each entry.
6. Click the check-out button and pay for all entries.
7. Read the confirmation statement and type YES. **Do not click multiple times**, as it will charge you each time.
8. You will be prompted to upload your image(s) AFTER you pay. Digital image(s) of entries must be submitted before the entry deadline. Ensure uploaded images match the entry division, class and title for each entry.

**Image Format**

- Acceptable file formats are .JPG (preferred), .PNG, or .TIF. **6MB is the maximum file size.**
- iPhone users must change default HEIC camera setting to JPEG or convert the image.
- RGB color space (CMYK files will be converted to RGB by the system)
- Make sure the images are rotated to the upright position/orientation.
- Images should be approximately 2048 pixels on the long side for horizontal or vertical images.
- No names, signatures, watermarks, or other identifying information shall be allowed on the image, title, or description.

If you plan to make changes to your entries or need to leave ShoWorks at any time, SAVE YOUR CART before exiting out.

For additional help with entering and uploading images, review this detailed step-by-step guide:

[Entry Tutorial](#)

Still have questions? Please call or [email the Entry Office](#).

Phone: (858) 792-4207, Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm

Sale of Entries

Exhibitors wishing to sell their entry must enter the sale price and preferred contact information on the online registration form. Exhibit coordinators will provide the preferred exhibitor contact information to potential buyers upon request.

No business cards or personal advertisements will be displayed in the exhibit.

If no price is listed during registration, the item will be marked NFS (Not For Sale).

All sales must be negotiated and completed directly between the exhibitor and the buyer.



Judging

The Exhibition of Photography is a two-tier, juried competition that uses the American system of judging.

Tier 1 Judging of exhibitors' uploaded digital images determines which entries will advance to Tier 2 judging. Exhibitors will be notified via email with the results of the Tier 1 judging. Entries advancing to Tier 2 judging must be prepared and delivered per the requirements described herein.

Tier 2 Judging will occur in person, when judges view the photographic prints in person and select award winners. Judges will determine which prints will be included in the exhibition during Tier 2 judging.

Judging Criteria

Entries are judged on visual impact, composition, technical quality, creativity, and presentation.

Judging Results

Results will be announced at the Exhibition of Photography Awards Reception and posted on the San Diego County Fair's website by the second week of the Fair.

Judging Feedback

The Exhibit Coordinators will host the following events during the Fair to provide feedback on judging:

- Judges' Roundtable: Judges explain the elements they are looking for in an award-winning photograph.
- Judges' Critique: Exhibitors may bring photos for an in-person critique.

Please see the Exhibit Timeline for dates/times of these two events.

Entry Delivery & Pickup

Only entries advanced to Tier 2 judging may be delivered to the Fairgrounds. Please refer to the Exhibition Timeline for in-person delivery and shipping acceptance dates. If advanced to Tier 2, exhibitors will be emailed additional delivery and pick up instructions including **a map** showing access to the Fairgrounds.

A claim check will be issued to each exhibitor upon entry delivery and must be presented at the time of entry pick up. If an exhibitor is unable to pick up their



artwork, they may arrange for another person to bring in their claim check with a signed written authorization from the exhibitor.

Entry Shipping - The 22nd DAA (San Diego County Fair) is not responsible for lost or delayed shipments and assumes no responsibility for damage to shipped artwork. For return of shipped entries, a pre-paid return label from the shipper (UPS or USPS) must be included with the entry.

Ship to: San Diego County Fair

Ag & Ed Department • Exhibition of Photography

2260 Jimmy Durante Blvd.

Del Mar, CA 92014

How to Prepare Your Entry for Delivery

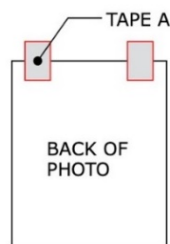
1. The finished dimensions of ready-to-hang entries in all divisions must be **exactly 16" x 20"** no matter the size of the printed artwork. The only exception to this rule is for Division 1209: Large Prints. Presentation may be vertical or horizontal.
2. The finished dimensions of ready-to-hang entries in Division 1209: Large Prints must be bigger than 20" x 30" and no more than 40" x 40", including any matting. Panoramic prints with an aspect ratio between 2:1 and 3:1 must have a minimum long end length between 36" and 40". Presentation may be vertical or horizontal. Large prints may not weigh more than 7 lbs.
3. Mounted artwork must be securely adhered to mount board, foam core, or other backing board. Metal, acrylic, canvas, or other substrates are allowed. For safety reasons, metal prints must have round corners. **Framed images, glass, or float mounts are not allowed.**
4. Single window matting is allowed. Double or multiple mats are not allowed. (See Instructions for Entries with Window Mat & Mount Board below.)
5. All mats and mount boards must be BLACK or PURE WHITE. Ivory, cream, or colored mats or mount boards are not allowed. The mat may have a black outside and white core, or a white outside with a black core.
6. Consider your substrate and mounting materials as Velcro will be attached to the back of each entry to adhere to Velcro-receptive display panels.
7. A digital media tag will be included in your acceptance e-mail. Print and affix the tag to the back of your entry. The tag has a thumbnail of the accepted image - it should be placed in the orientation that the work should hang.
8. **No names, signatures, watermarks, or other identifying information are allowed on the front of the image or the mat.**



Instructions for Entries with Window Mat & Mount Board

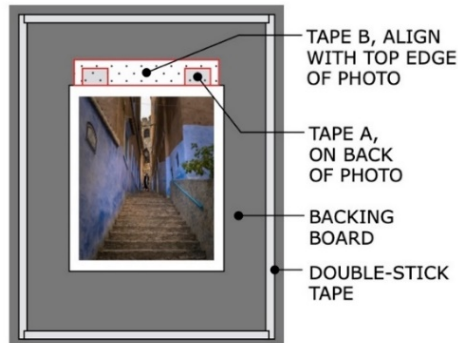
Basic Materials: Window mat, backing/mounting board, linen hinging tape or photo mounting tape, and double-sided tape. *Do not use* masking tape, transparent tape, photo corners, or spray glue to mount prints. The window mat and backing board should be the same size.

> FIGURE 1

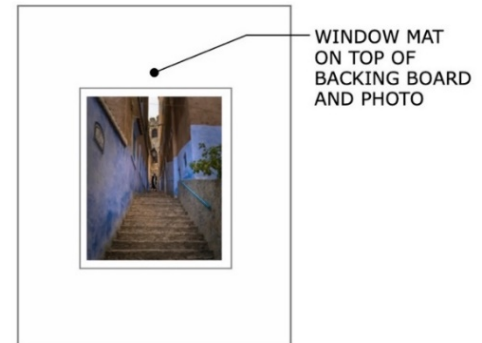


TAPE A: ADHERE 1/2 OF EACH TAPE STRIP TO BACK OF PHOTO

> FIGURE 2: PHOTO ON BACKING BOARD



> FIGURE 3



1. On the backing board, position photo, then add guidelines to mark desired placement of photo in the window mat.
2. Turn photo over (Figure 1) and apply 2-3 strips of hinging or mounting tape at the top edge of photo (Tape A). Half of the mounting tape should be on the back of photo, with the other half extending at the top. Tape only the top of photo; don't tape all four sides of photo.
3. Carefully turn the photo right-side-up and reposition it on the backing board using your guidelines (Figure 2).
4. Place a longer strip of mounting tape (Tape B) over the sticky part of Tape A, which is hanging off the top of photo. Tape B is only over Tape A and the backing board, not overlapping the photo.
5. With the print mounted to the backing board, double check that the photo and window mat are correctly positioned relative to the backing board.
6. Add double-stick tape around perimeter of backing board. This will keep the window mat in place.
7. Carefully center window mat over photo and board. Place firmly to ensure mat adheres to board (Figure 3).



Awards

Award checks will be available at entry pickup. Checks not picked up will be mailed within 30 days.

The following will be awarded in each class:

1st Place	\$200 and Rosette
2nd Place	\$175 and Rosette
3rd Place	\$150 and Rosette
4th Place	\$125 and Rosette
Best of Show, awarded to the top entry selected from the 1st Place winners across all classes within each division	Ribbon and \$200 gift card - <i>Award donated by Chrome Digital</i>
Honorable Mention ribbons may be awarded at judges' discretion.	

Special Awards

Coordinators' Award	\$100 and Rosette
Margaret Frye Award	\$100 and Rosette
Gene Wild Award	\$100 and Rosette
People's Choice, selected by popular vote during the Fair.	Ribbon and gift card- <i>Award donated by Chrome Digital.</i>

Donated Awards: Provided by various businesses and individuals. Gift certificates/cash awards and ribbon.



Divisions and Classes

All Divisions are Adult Divisions except Division 1210.

DIVISION 1201: COLOR SCENIC – LANDSCAPE

Images should reflect the season, regardless of when they were taken. For example, an image with fall colors should be entered in Class 003 – Fall, and one with snow or bare trees in Class 004 - Winter. Images of the Arctic/Antarctic may be entered in Class 004 - Winter. Waterscapes, Seascapes, Black & White Landscapes, Night/Astrophotography, and Cityscapes must be entered in Division 1202 or 1205.

Class 001 Spring

Class 002 Summer

Class 003 Fall

Class 004 Winter

Class 005 Timeless Landscapes - scenic color landscapes that aren't seasonal, including, but not limited to: deserts, dunes, coniferous forests, monuments in landscapes, foggy scenes, and aerial/drone images.

DIVISION 1202: COLOR

Class 006 Waterscapes, Seascapes, Waterfalls, Water Details, etc.

Class 007 Architecture or Cityscapes

Class 008 People, formal – Includes studio and environmental portraits. Artificial lighting, props and other staging are allowed. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*

Class 009 People, informal – Informal candid images may include travel, street, concert, and other non-posed and un-staged images.

DIVISION 1203: COLOR NATURE

Zoo animals and aquarium sea life are allowed, but not photos of domestic animals. Studio photography is permitted in Class 010 and Class 011 only.

Class 010 Flowers. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*

Class 011 All Other Plants and Trees

Class 012 Wild Animals – Mammals

Class 013 Wild Animals – Birds

Class 014 Animals – Insects, Reptiles, Amphibians, and Aquarium Sea Life

DIVISION 1204: CELL PHONE

Color or black-and-white images taken with a cell phone.

Class 015 Cell Phone



DIVISION 1205: BLACK & WHITE – Duotones, including sepia-toned images, are acceptable. No colors other than black or white or sepia tones are allowed. No photos of domestic animals. Studio photography is allowed in Classes 017 and 019.

- Class 016** Scenic – Landscapes, waterscapes
- Class 017** Nature – Plants, insects, and wild animals
- Class 018** Architecture or Cityscapes
- Class 019** People – Formal or informal

DIVISION 1206: COLOR OR BLACK & WHITE

- Class 020** Documentary – Must be a single image that is not staged or altered to change content. May include travel photos if they meet the above criteria. Basic cropping, dodging, and burning of the image is allowed. No other manipulation is allowed.
- Class 021** Close Up, Macro, and Micro – Photo must be equal to or greater than life-size (1:1). May include photomicrographs and electron microscope images of things that cannot be seen with the naked eye.
- Class 022** Sports
- Class 023** Still Life – A collection of inanimate objects arranged in a specific way; may include flowers, food, a game, or man-made objects. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*
- Class 024** Abstract – Usually not recognizable as an object. May include detailed shots of nature.
- Class 025** Water Experience- The photographer must be **submerged underwater or deep within the water** when capturing these images, not on a boat or other vessel. This category includes marine life and underwater model photography.
- Class 026** Family Moments – The image should capture the essence and spirit of human family relationships, emphasizing connection, love, and togetherness. Including family pets as integral members of the family is also welcome.
- Class 027** Night – Low-light images of night skies, astrophotography, moon and eclipse photography, and painting with light. May include images from dawn, dusk, or aurora borealis (northern lights).
- Class 028** Fair Theme – San Diego County Fair: *Summer Pet-tacular!* Celebrate our furry, feathered, and scaly friends through captivating portraits, dynamic action shots, and close-up photography.
- Class 029** At the Fair – Moments and scenes from San Diego County Fair from any year.



Class 030 All Things Mechanical – Trains, planes, automobiles, farm equipment, and industrial machinery; may include people as secondary elements.

DIVISION 1207: FILM AND ALTERNATIVE PROCESSES

Images produced through traditional wet darkroom techniques and alternative genres such as Polaroid prints, cyanotypes, and emulsion lifts. Photo restoration or hand coloring of photographs are also allowed; for these, work should include the before and after images in equal size.

Class 031 Film and Alternative Processes. *In-kind awards donated by Camera Exposure & Safelight Labs*

DIVISION 1208: DIGITAL ART

Artwork based on photographs and manipulated digitally. Work must conform to **Eligibility Requirements and Use of Artificial Intelligence Rules**. For Tier 1 digital image upload, the **original source images must be included** as thumbnails placed along the outer edges without obscuring the main image. If accepted to Tier 2, the delivered print does not need to include the thumbnails.

Class 032 Digital Photographic Art

DIVISION 1209: LARGE PRINTS

Color or black-and-white images, any subject and any style, which are larger than 20" x 30" but no larger than 40" on the longest side (including any matting). Large prints may not exceed 7 lbs.

Class 033 Large Prints. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*

DIVISION 1210: THROUGH THE EYES OF YOUTH

Independent youth photographic work by youth between the ages of 13-17. Work may be done with any type of camera and in color or black & white.

Class 034 People & Animals – The image should center on people and/or animals, including pets and wildlife. This can encompass candid or formal portraits, as well as documentary or street photography where the main subject is either a person or an animal. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*

Class 035 Nature and Environment – The image should primarily focus on nature or the environment, including scenic landscapes, architecture, cityscapes, or waterscapes. Macro photography is also permitted. *In-kind awards donated by George's Camera*