



North Queensland
Camera Group Inc

January 2024

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NEXT CLUB NIGHT

TUESDAY

6th February 2024

7pm

Aitkenvale Library

Meeting Room

**Please bring a cup—it's
far more enjoyable than
a disposable one.**

GET FOCUSED

NORTH QUEENSLAND CAMERA GROUP NEWSLETTER

A Message From Maureen

Volume 7 Issue 63

Hello Members,

I wonder how many of you set down New Year's resolutions, even if only for fun. I find that my success rate when it comes to N Y resolutions is pretty low, so I don't generally bother. And given that I have enough trouble working to my financial budget, I don't see myself keeping a resolution very long so I hope you have more success with yours than I do.

But something dear to my heart is the Mission Focus Photographic Arts Competition and Exhibition.

We don't have a lot of opportunity here in the north to participate in exhibitions, celebrating photography and for many years now the Mission Arts Gallery has run this successful exhibition which I hope you will consider participating in this year. Entry Form and details are on Page 5.

The Opening Night and Awards Presentation will be held on Friday, 15th March 2024 at Mission Arts (Mission Beach) at 6.00pm and I hope that I see a few of our members there this year again.

It is a good excuse to get out around the region, while everything is still green and usually there are some rain clouds in the skies to enhance our images and the odd high tides lapping at our photographic toes on the beach. Come to think of it, this month I entered one of my beachscapes from last year which Wendy will recall well as I thought we might have got washed away that magical morning.

Happy New Year and all the best to you and your families this coming year.

PS Can someone please let me win our competition this year for a change? LOL, love your captures keep them coming.

Maureen Carthy
President,
North Queensland Camera Group

2024 Monthly Competition Topics and Dates

Page 2

2024 NQCG Club Competition			Entries	
Comp	Categories		Entries Close 11.59pm	Results at Club Night
Mar.	Monochrome - Open		Feb 1	Tues 5 March
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Macro			
	Creative - Open (Qld Interclub)			
April	Monochrome - Silhouettes		March 1	Tues 2 April
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Food Photography (Qld Interclub) dominant subject of the image).			
May	Monochrome - Open		April 1	Tues 7 May
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - People (Qld Interclub)			
	Creative - Open (Qld Interclub)			
June	Monochrome - Hands		May 1	Tues 4 June
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Nature (Qld Interclub)			
July	Monochrome - Open		June 1	Tues 2 July
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Architecture (Qld Interclub)			
	Creative - Open (Qld Interclub)			
August	Monochrome - Low Key		July 1	Tues 6 Aug
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Juxtaposition of 2 or more things (Qld Interclub)			
Sept.	Monochrome - Open		August 1	Tues 3 Sept
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Expressions			
	Creative - Open			
Oct.	Monochrome - Windows and/or Doors		Sept 1	Tues 1 Oct
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Seasons			
Nov.	Monochrome - Open		October 1	Mon 11 Nov
	Open - Open			
	Set Subject - Sport			
	Creative - Open			
Please Note:				
1. For details of topics and definitions refer to NQCG 2024 Club Competitions – Digital.				
2. Also doubling as an Old Interclub theme				

Please see Myphotoclub for the full list of competitions. * Interclub competition

Program/Presenter	Aitkenvale Meeting Room	Date
Julie Devery	<i>Intro to Myphotoclub, Competition info, Zoom meetings</i>	20 February, 7-9 PM
Phil Copp	<i>My Photography Journey</i>	19 March, 7-9PM
<i>Club Speakers – Maureen and others</i>	<i>Garden Club talk on photog- raphy to be held off- site</i>	2 April,

There's plenty of opportunity to socialize and enjoy your photography with like-minded people. So take the challenge and join us in growing your skills.

Roll on 2024!

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TUESDAY**

6th February 2024

at 7pm

Aitkenvale Library Meeting

Club email addresses are :

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Messages in Monochrome Focus Group)

You're invited! educate inspire engage



Where art meets inspiration ...

2024 PSQ Convention

Join us in Brisbane for this exciting 3 day event 4th, 5th & 6th May



Kedron Wavell Services Club plenty of parking, accommodation close to venue

Kittyhawk Drive Chermside

Registration opens in February

Enquiries: Pete Law 0400 065 714
president@aspleycameraclub.org.au

Image credits left to right - Kris Anderson, Andy Campbell, Mel Sinclair

Your hosts...



Meet Our Keynote Speakers

Kris Anderson
Andy Campbell
Gary Cranitch
Mel Sinclair
Lisa Kurtz

plus an ever growing programme of skilled presenters providing workshops, walkabouts, demos, both internal and on location, from early morning to late evening

Sponsored by
CameraPro

a trade show is planned where you can engage with representatives of the major equipment brands

and don't forget!

The Gala Dinner on Sunday Evening in the KittyHawk Room at Kedron Wavell.
Presentation of the SEQ Awards
Fine Art Print Auctions and more.

Great food and beverages for all.

educate inspire engage



Where art meets inspiration at the 2024 PSQ Convention



Proudly supported by the Lord Mayor's Community Fund



CameraPro

Dedicated to a better Brisbane

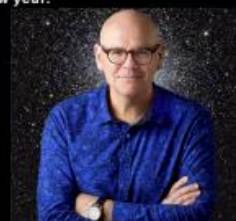


Kris Anderson - I'm hitting the stage for the PSQ Convention in May 2024. I'm equal parts excited and nervous. I'll be doing a live dance shoot. (No I'm not dancing, don't get too excited: I'm shooting). I'll show how I light and execute a classic dance shoot, working with a dancer, refining lighting and posing to get an amazing result. Then comes the real high-risk part - a live abstract long-exposure shoot. Will it go well? Will it crash and burn? Only one way to find out - buy yourself a ticket when registration opens in the new year.

Andy Campbell

For me, Astrophotography is a unique blend of Science, Art & Philosophy

Like having dinner with Brian Cox, David Hockney and Billy Graham



He's won a prestigious Eureka Prize for his photography, published multiple books, excavated long-lost warships and explored more of the Great Barrier Reef than most could ever dream of. But despite his broad list of achievements, photographer Gary Cranitch says his focus is laser sharp to inspire as many people as he can to save our natural spaces, above and below the waves.

Lisa Kurtz has dusted off the crystal ball and is making bold predictions about equipment, technology and attitudes, seeing the future as exciting and ultimately positive, Lisa will discuss ways to embrace the changes. You'll be inspired to not only maintain but grow your passion for the medium. There are far reaching challenges ahead for photographers and clubs as they navigate a world where AI is already creating works of art and a Photoshop filter can change the direction of a subject's gaze.



Mel Sinclair - Landscape Photography is my Zen, my passion. My visual career began with undertaking University study in the Fine Arts, and in turn, I have had a lot of exposure to different disciplines within the creative industries. This has allowed me to develop my attitudes and styles within Contemporary and Traditional Fine Art Photography. This is a lot of words to say that I love both a traditional landscape and what I'm discovering to be my style - a mix of both. I'm enjoying exploring Queensland's regional areas for new and never-before seen content.

FOCUS

Photography Awards Exhibition
March 15 – April 23 2024

Sponsored by Tassal Group

Open to All Photographers

\$2150 in Prizes

Category/Award	Sponsor	Prize
Townscapes of the Cassowary Coast	Mission Beach Real Estate	\$150
The Michael Johnson Landscape Award	Sarah Johnson	\$150
The Michael Johnson Seascape Award	Sarah Johnson	\$150
Abstract and Still Life	Beachside Nail Art & Beauty by Alina	\$150
People/Portraits/Groups/Crowds	Agape Family Dental	\$150
Pets	Tropical Vets	\$150
Sports/Action	Leny's	\$150
Wet Tropics Flora & Fauna	C4	\$150*
Macro	Beachside Nail Art & Beauty by Alina	\$150
Travel	Mission Beach Charters	\$150
Youth (18 years and Under)	Nature Things	\$150
Display Team Prize	Mission Beach Real Estate	\$100
Judges' Choice	Shane Knuth MP	\$300
People's Choice	Tassal Group	\$100

*This prize will be a voucher to the value listed of goods specified from the sponsor

Entries Close: Friday, 1 March
Photo Delivery: Saturday, 9 March
Wednesday, 13 March
Exhibition Opening: Friday, 15 March



Enquiries: Mission Arts | 4088 6116 | exhibitions@missionarts.org.au | missionarts.org.au

Mission Arts FOCUS Photography Awards Exhibition

15 March–23 April 2024

ENTRY FORM 2024

EMAIL TO: exhibitions@missionarts.org.au



ALL BOXES MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR ENTRY FORM							
PAYMENT AMOUNT:		RECEIPT NO:		DATE:			
Name:							
Address:							
Contact Phone No:		Email:					
Please provide your banking details to enable payment if your photograph is sold in the exhibition.							
Account Name:		BSB:		Account No:			
Are you a current financial member (2023-2024) of Mission Arts?				Yes		No	
Memberships are \$20 youth/student, \$40/year for Individuals & \$70/year for Families & are accepted at the time of entry. Membership is online at New Member Sign Up - Mission Arts or forms are available at Mission Arts, by email request to: memberships@missionarts.org.au							
Entry Fees: (Max 3 entries). Entry Fees are Non-refundable. Member: \$10 per entry. Non-Member: \$15. Youth Member(18 and Under): \$5. Payable via direct bank transfer or in person/phone at Mission Arts (10am-2pm daily) by credit card.							
Banking Details: Bendigo Bank BSB: 633-000; Account: 136803608 Note: Please enter MAFE + Your Name in the description/reference field & email your entry form to exhibitions@missionarts.org.au or deliver to Mission Arts.							
ARTWORK DETAILS – NOTE: MAXIMUM THREE ENTRIES TOTAL PER ARTIST							
Image Title	Sale Price including 25% commission		Category (see Terms & Conditions) Only one photo per category				
1							
2							
3							
IF YOU ARE NOT DELIVERING THE WORKS YOURSELF PLEASE COMPLETE THE DETAILS BELOW							
Name of Agent/Courier				Contact No:			

- Please note that all portraits must include the model's permission on the 'Authority to Use Image' form.
- This Exhibition is a very popular community event. To ensure we have adequate exhibition space for all entries, we are strictly limiting the size of each entry. Please see the terms and conditions for dimensions and presentation requirements. Non conforming entries will not be accepted.

All entries should be mounted on foam core board with the photographer's name, address, category, image title and hanging orientation (ie. which way is up↑) written clearly on the back. Photos must have been taken within the past 2 years, be the work of the person named on the entry form and not previously exhibited at Mission Arts. Framed work will not be accepted.

I have read and agree to the Terms and Conditions attached to this entry form.

Name:		Signature:		Date:	
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Entry forms due to Mission Arts by Friday 1st March 2024. LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Electronic images due to Art Print Frame for printing no later than Friday 23 February 2024.

Photo delivery to Mission Arts Saturday, 9 March & Wednesday, 13 March 2024 (10am-2pm).

Enquiries: Mission Arts | 4088 6116 (10am-2pm) | exhibitions@missionarts.org.au | www.missionarts.org.au

Mission Arts FOCUS Photography Awards Exhibition 2024



Terms and Conditions of Entry

We invite participants in the following categories:

- a) **Townscapes of the Cassowary Coast:** Images including subjects that are part of a place/town (ie. signage, cultural/historic landmarks, shopfronts or markets, unique or quirky points of interest). Entries may include humans or animals as a minor element of the composition,
- b) **Landscape:** Images must depict the natural environment. Entries may include humans and/or animals as a minor element,
- c) **Seascape:** Images must depict the natural environment. Entries may include humans and/or animals as a minor element,
- d) **Abstract & Still Life:** Artistic captures of inanimate objects or scenes.
- e) **People/Portraits/Groups/Crowds:** Images must depict people as the primary subject and may include street photography and portraits,
- f) **Pets:** Images must depict pets as the primary subject,
- g) **Sports/Action:** Images may depict individual or team sports or sporting events as the primary subject,
- h) **Wet Tropics Flora and Fauna:** Images must depict animals or plants from Far North Queensland as the primary subject,
- i) **Macro:** Images that showcase the subject larger than life size,
- j) **Travel:** Images may depict photographs taken on your travels outside the Cassowary Coast Region,
- k) **Youth (18 years and under):** Images may depict any subject.

Standard conditions for all entries:

- Photos must be the original work of the entrant taken within the past two years. The entrant holds copyright. The photo must not have been exhibited previously at Mission Arts.
- Photos may be taken using conventional and digital cameras, smart phones or drones. Photos digitally altered will be accepted.
- All entries must either be a **rectangle (A3 type format with the longest side not exceeding 420 mm) or square format (not exceeding 300mm)** and mounted onto foam core board. Panoramic formats will only be accepted for the Landscape and Seascape category and must be mounted onto foam core board. Panoramic measurements, **minimum size 300mm up to a maximum of 420 x 900 mm**. Mission Arts suggests using Art Print Frame for this process: PH: 4088 6255, 1/12 Stephen Street, Mission Beach or e-mail info@artprintframe.com.au. Digital images need to be submitted to Art Print Frame **no later than Friday 23 February** with at least 240 dpi resolution. Mounted photos must then be collected by **Friday 8 March** and delivered to Mission Arts by **Saturday 9 March or Wednesday 13 March 2024**. However, entrants are free to use their own supplier if preferred.
- Entrants may submit their entry forms and payments electronically or in person by **Friday, 1st March 2024**.
- No diptychs, triptychs, other multiples, or other formats other than that defined above will be accepted.
- Photos will not be accepted with borders, visible dates, watermarks or any size outside the above specifications.
- The entrant's name, phone, category, title and hanging orientation (ie. which way is up↑) of the photograph must be clearly written on the back of the entry. Labels are the responsibility of the entrant and must be affixed before delivery to Mission Arts.
- Entry cost is \$10.00 per Member or \$15 per Non-Member or \$5.00 per Youth Entry. A maximum of three photos per person is permitted.
- The subject's permission must be given on the entry form in respect of portrait-style images. MBCAC Inc. members and volunteers will take all due and reasonable care but will not be held responsible or accept liability for any loss or accidental damage to photographs.
- Permission to reproduce entries for publication to promote the Exhibition and for use in an audio-visual presentation of the exhibition will be assumed unless expressly denied.

Mission Arts FOCUS Photography Awards Exhibition 2024



- The Committee reserves the right to reject any entry that, in the opinion of the Committee, does not meet the Terms and Conditions of Entry or is unsuitable for public display.
- The entries will be subject to judging prior to the opening and judges' decisions are final. All entries are eligible for the Judges' Choice and Display Team Awards. There will also be a People's Choice award voted on by the public for the duration of the exhibition and awarded at the close of the exhibition.
- **Opening Night and Awards Presentation will be held on Friday, 15th March 2024 at Mission Arts at 6pm.** All entrants are encouraged to attend. Entry is free but, advance bookings are required. Bookings: <https://www.trybooking.com/CNXHT>
- **A Judges' Critique/Talk Session will be held on Saturday 16 March, at Mission Arts from 10 am. to 11 am.** Entrants are encouraged to attend this session which is both informative and a chance to have your questions answered.
- **All entries are to be picked up from Mission Arts by Saturday, 27th April 2024.** For return of entries by mail, please include self-addressed, postage paid packaging. Entries not collected by 11 May (2pm) will be disposed of.

EXHIBITION SPONSOR



TASSAL GROUP
a better tomorrow

AUTHORITY TO USE IMAGE

This section is to be completed for each person depicted in photographs submitted for the exhibition. It is the responsibility of the photographer to ensure the authority form is signed by the person whose image appears in the photograph. General photographs of people in public places will not require signed consent to exhibit.

If the image is of a person under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must sign the form.

This Authority is given by:			
Name of person depicted in the photo:			
of (address):			
I authorise the use of my image, taken by the photographer named below, for the purpose of exhibition at the Mission Arts FOCUS Photography Awards Exhibition 2024.			
Signature of person in photo: <i>(or guardian if under 18)</i>		Date:	
Signature of photographer:		Date:	

Enquiries: Mission Arts | 4088 6116 (10am-2pm) | exhibitions@missionarts.org.au | www.missionarts.org.au

Collaborative Sharing & Photographic Feedback Session

Why not join me on the 29th of January at 7:00 PM, yes that's a Monday.

You will all receive a Zoom Invite. If you want to test your Zoom capability (Sound & Visibility) before the event please let me know and I will include you in the Zoom test I will do with our guest the week before.

This Month's guest is Corinne Bramwel from the Cairns Photographic Society, who will be sharing some of her wonderful photographic altered reality artworks and will be there to answer any questions we may have.

Please remember to have a few images of your own to share on the night.

- ♠ Are you working on a photographic project, want a sanity check, or maybe you would like some general feedback?
- ♠ Why not show off what you're working on now?
- ♠ Learn how to develop your photographic eye.
- ♠ Did you learn a new software trick, that you are happy to share with the group?
- ♠ Maybe you have some great images from the last field trip.

Maureen

Maureen Carthy

Queensland Photographic Society Accredited Judge

PSQ Judge's Executive

Phone 0400947771

<https://www.maureencarthy.com/>

www.flickr.com/photos/110907276@N06/

Your NQCG Committee

President: Maureen Carthy

Secretary: Karlene Jacobsen

Treasurer: Larry Mudge

General committee: Barbara Millard, Diane MacIntyre, Philip Agnew, David Thomsen

**NEXT CLUB NIGHT
TUESDAY**

6th February 2024

at 7pm

**Aitkenvale Library Meeting
Room**

**Please bring a cup and your
name tag.**

Proposed Outings

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Upcoming 2024 Photography Outings		
Coordinator	Recently completed Outing / Trips	Time & Date
		JANUARY
David	<p>Loam Island / Riverway Rowing Club Ross River, Rasmussen</p> <p>A chance to capture all the beauty & grace of rowers rowing their sculls over the mirror-like surface and capturing lovely reflection shots.</p> <p>The rowers will pass under the motorway's lower bikeway section between 5:30 & 6am, on down-stream and upstream legs.</p> <p>Following this, we've been invited to the boatshed to meet some of the rowers, perhaps shoot a few close-ups, have a chat, cup of tea etc.</p> <p>And if possible, it would be a nice thank you gesture if each attendee could supply a couple of jpg images to the rowing club.</p> <p>David to supply contact details</p>	<p>1st day - Sat. 7th Jan; 2nd day - Wed 10th Jan</p> <p>For sign on either day, meet by 4:55 - 5am, at Burrum Ct, Playgrounds, on Freshwater Drive Douglas.</p> <p>Suggest parking at/near Playgrounds. Consider being at the bikeway balcony lookout positions by 5:15am.</p> <p>Boatshed 7 - 7:30am.</p>
David	<p>Jourama Falls National Park</p> <p>The picnic grounds for Jourama Falls NP can be reached by driving 75km north from Townsville, then turning left into Jourama Road and driving a further 6km.</p> <p>Subject to stream flow, the creek's rapids, pools, gnarled trees, grottos, sunbeam effects, insects, birds etc are well known to provide good image opportunities. And, for those who've brought their breakfast, there are nice picnic facilities in the NP.</p>	<p>Sun. 14th Jan.</p> <p>Suggest leave T'sville 5:45am to arrive carpark 7am Expected best time for shoot 7 - 9am</p>
David	<p>"Vasco Da Gama" Cruise Ship entering Townsville Port</p> <p>A huge ship at 219m, 13 decks high and 31m wide, it makes a spectacular sight dwarfing other port users as it enters port!</p> <p>(landscapes, yacht scenes, scullers, rock fishermen, ferries, sea birds & earlybirds)</p>	<p>Wed. 24th Jan.</p> <p>Suggest setting-up at city-end of Western Breakwater @ 5am in case it arrives before the 7am est. arrival</p>

More excursions and field trips will be planned as the year develops. If you have an idea or a place worth considering as a destination, please speak to one of our Committee members who will pass on the information. Also, if you become aware of various events planned for Townsville throughout 2024, we'd love to know about it.

Proposed Outings

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Continued ...

Upcoming 2024 Photography Outings		
Coordinator	Recently completed Outing / Trips	Time & Date
		JANUARY
A Townsville City Council Event	<p>Aussie Beach Day Out <i>Fun Run & Free Breakfast at Rockpool, The Strand, 6am & 8am</i> <i>Flag Raising at Jezzine Barracks – 9am,</i> <i>Great Australian Bites 11am – 2pm</i></p> <p>Email: enquiries@townsville.qld.gov.au</p> <p>Phone: 13 48 10</p>	<p>Fri. 26th Jan. The Strand.</p> <p>Please note: The Aussie Beach Day Out is a public event organized by the Townsville City Council</p>
<p><u>TBC</u></p> <p>Check details on NQCG Facebook site.</p>	<p>Charters Towers - Goldfield Cricket Ashes Airport Reserve - more for costumes, fun & frivolity. Mosman Park, Lister St - for quality A-Grade games on beautifully maintained, picturesque ovals. www.goldfieldashes.com.au/</p> <p>Outing details to be confirmed mid-January on our club's Facebook site</p>	<p>Sat. 27th Jan.</p> <p>Meet 8am Centenary Park, Hackett Terrace for signing the club's attendance sheet.</p>

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**GET FOCUSED
NORTH QUEENSLAND CAMERA GROUP NEWSLETTER**

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New Year's Resolutions for New Photographers

Posted: 12/29/2023 by Picture Correct

Relevant note: deal ending soon for [The Confident Photographer at 71% Off](#)

Many of us have received or bought ourselves new digital cameras for Christmas, and with this comes the zeal to create great images. Sadly, the chances of this happening are small, as most of us know that a camera doesn't take great images, the photographer does. So what resolutions can you make that will start your photography journey in the new year on the right footing?



photo by [Ricardo Liberato](#)

1. Read your camera manual

Please don't stop reading this article because I said this. Go back to the box and get the manual out. In order to become a good photographer you need to do just that. Unless you know the basic functions—and specifically, the creative modes—you're going to struggle to get the good images you see in books and magazines. This is important if you want to proceed to the next resolution. So, at least learn the basic functions if you aren't up to reading the whole manual.

2. Find a basic photography course

This can be a book, an online course, or a local photography course. Whatever it is, resolve to find something that is going to lay a foundation and teach you the basics. You need to get your foundations right from the get go. If you are a self-starter then find books, magazines, and Internet-based material that you can self-study. Find something that works for *you*.



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photo by [Loughborough University Library](#)

3. Plan photography time

Photography is not something you just decide to do when you feel like picking up your camera and taking some shots. You need to plan uninterrupted photography time into your schedule. Not reading or learning time, but finger on the shutter button time. Time dedicated to taking photographs on a daily or weekly basis is *so* important if you want to go anywhere in your photography journey.

4. Discover your photographic passion

What do you like doing in your life? What are your hobbies or interests? If you are a stamp collector or an extreme sports person, the chances are that you will want to take photos of your passion. This is not always the case but it will help you discover your passion. So sit down, if you don't already know, and write down what you love doing. Then ask yourself if any of these interests are what you like to shooting. There will be equipment limitations based on your camera and lenses, so work within these restrictions.



photo by [Brook](#)

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NORTH QUEENSLAND CAMERA GROUP NEWSLETTER

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5. Think before you shoot

Put in your mind right at the outset of your photography journey that you are going to think before you shoot. The disease of digital is indiscriminate shooting without a plan, purpose, or thought. It's like spraying a target with machine gun fire and hoping to hit the bull's eye. Pretend you are shooting film and only have 36 exposures in your camera. If you can think before shooting rather than hoping that out of a hundred photos a few may be good, you are on your way to becoming a great photographer.



photo by [Nick Page](#)

Remember that just because you own a camera it doesn't mean you are a photographer in the same way owning a box of paints doesn't make you an artist. Resolve to do these things as you enter a new year with a new camera, and start your new photography journey as you learn. Happy shooting!

About the Author:

Wayne Turner has been teaching photography for 25 years and has written three books on photography. He has produced *21 Steps to Perfect Photos*, a program of learner-based training using outcomes based education.



23 Powerful Tips for Successful Fireworks Photography

A Post By: [Darren Rowse](#) Issue #813 21 December 2023 Digital Photography School
This article was updated in November 2023 with contributions from Darlene Hildebrandt, [Darren Rowse](#), [Tom Bricker](#), and [Rick Ohnsman](#).

Fireworks, oh how they light up the night sky with their vibrant colors and explosive beauty! There's something truly magical about witnessing a fireworks display, and as a photography enthusiast, you can't help but feel the burning desire to capture those fleeting moments forever.

However, shooting fireworks can be incredibly challenging and require some real technical finesse. That's where this article comes in handy; I explore a handful of effective approaches to help you master the art of fireworks photography and capture awe-inspiring shots.

Specifically, I share:

- The best settings for fireworks images
- Essential fireworks photo gear
- A simple way to prevent image blur

Much more!

Just a quick note before we get started: Please remember that if you've never tried fireworks before, it does depend heavily on trial and error. I've made a lot of mistakes myself before I got any images that I was happy to show anyone. Each time I photograph fireworks, there's always an element of unpredictability, so you have to learn to adapt, learn from your own mistakes, and do it again.

Ready to learn how to photograph fireworks? Then let's dive right in!

1. Bring the right equipment

What will you need to make good fireworks photos? Let's break down the basic equipment needs:

Use a DSLR or mirrorless model for more flexibility

You can take fireworks photos with a smartphone camera if that's all you have. However, the results won't be quite as impressive, and I'd therefore recommend you invest in (at least) an entry-level DSLR or mirrorless camera.

Also, be sure to have a good-sized storage card, as well as a spare battery or two, as you'll usually take lots of shots at a fireworks show.

Use a zoom lens for compositional variety

Lens choice largely depends on how close you will be to the fireworks launch location. If you are close, you may need a wide-angle lens to keep the larger bursts in the frame. If, however, you are a long distance from the show or want to compress the apparent distance between your foreground object and the sky bursts, a telephoto lens might be in order.



at 7pm

Aitkenvale Library

Meeting Room

**Please bring your
cup and a name tag.**

My go-to lens for firework photography is a [Canon EF 24-105mm f/4L IS](#), which covers a good range. Note that you don't need a particularly fast (i.e., wide-aperture) lens as you will be working with mid to small apertures and longer shutter speeds. Of course, it's worth using a lens that offers consistently crisp results, so don't skimp on this piece of equipment!

Use a tripod to keep your camera still

To capture sharp fireworks shots, it is crucial to keep your camera perfectly still, and this generally requires the use of a sturdy tripod.

Why is a tripod so important? Fireworks displays occur at night, when lighting conditions are challenging, and long shutter speeds are necessary (more on this later!). When you're capturing a lengthy exposure, even the slightest camera shake can result in blurry images – unless your camera is set up on a rock-solid tripod, that is.

Ensure that you set up your tripod on a stable surface and shield it from any potential wind. If you don't already own a tripod, there are affordable options available, including some [portable travel tripods](#). If you don't have the time or money to purchase a tripod, you can always improvise by placing your camera on the ground or a table.

Note that shooting with a tripod offers additional benefits: It enables you to try [HDR bracketing](#), and it encourages you to compose more deliberately and thoughtfully by slowing down the process.



Use a remote release to further reduce camera shake

Even with your camera securely mounted on a sturdy tripod, there's a risk of camera shake when you press the shutter button, resulting in blurry shots. This is why a [remote release](#) is an essential firework photography accessory.

A remote release is a wireless device that connects to your camera, allowing you to trigger the shutter from a distance. By using the remote, you eliminate the need to physically touch the camera, ensuring maximum stability and sharpness in your images.

Happily, investing in a remote release won't break the bank (they're quite affordable)! However, if you don't have one or prefer not to purchase it, you can get a similar result by activating your camera's two-second self-timer. While this method isn't ideal – you'll need to anticipate the firework bursts and fire the shutter two seconds in advance – it can still get the job done.

2. Scout the location in advance

When it comes to capturing stunning fireworks photographs, preparation is key. Firework displays take place after sunset, and if you've ever tried to compose in the dark, you'll know that it is *hard*. To ensure you make the most of the limited time you have to photograph the spectacle, it is crucial to scout the location in advance.

Visiting the location earlier in the day allows you to familiarize yourself with the surroundings and identify potential vantage points that will offer breathtaking perspectives. Seek out locations that allow for expansive and sweeping shots, where you can capture the full grandeur of the display. Consider the angles, sightlines, and potential obstacles that may hinder your view or introduce unwanted distractions. By doing so, you can position yourself to capture the magic as it unfolds.

Note, however, that while scouting the location in advance provides you with valuable insights, it doesn't mean you have to rigidly stick to predetermined compositions. Embrace the spontaneity of the moment and be open to improvisation. Fireworks are dynamic, and each explosion brings unique patterns and colors to the sky. Use your scouting knowledge as a foundation, but allow yourself to experiment and adapt on the spot!

3. Use a low ISO for the cleanest shots

High [ISOs](#) create brighter exposures, but they also create noise, which reduces image quality and looks plain *bad*.

So whenever possible, use your camera's lowest native ISO setting. And only raise the ISO if your exposures are turning out too dark.

I recommend using ISO 100 or 200, and this is for a couple of reasons. First, the higher the ISO you use, the more noise you'll introduce in your images. Noise also tends to live in blue areas of images, and nighttime has a *lot* of blue, so that compounds the issue. Plus, long exposures tend to increase noise.

Bottom line: You should work especially hard to minimize noise in your fireworks photos, and that involves using a low ISO. Fortunately, fireworks tend to be very bright, so as long as you use a tripod, you probably won't need to raise your ISO.

Therefore, I'd recommend setting it to ISO 100 and only raising it if you absolutely need a boost.



4. Shoot in RAW

For fireworks photographers, [photographing in RAW](#) is a game-changer. While beginners may opt for JPEG files due to their simplicity and immediate usability, you won't be able to realize the true potential of your fireworks photographs without working in RAW.

JPEG files may seem appealing at first, with their smaller size and lack of post-processing requirements. However, they limit your creative freedom when it comes to refining your images. On the other hand, RAW files offer an abundance of possibilities during post-processing. These versatile files allow you to recover details hidden in shadows and highlights, ensuring that every element is faithfully preserved. With RAW, you also have the ability to fine-tune colors and tones, enhancing the overall impact of your firework photographs.

While it's true that RAW files require post-processing before sharing them on websites or social media platforms, the editing process can be remarkably quick. Software programs like Adobe Lightroom offer intuitive interfaces that allow you to quickly convert RAW shots into shareable files.

So don't let the additional workflow step deter you from shooting in RAW; it's an investment that *really* pays off.

5. Switch off your flash

It's simple, really:

An on-camera flash (or even an off-camera flash) can only illuminate the area a handful of meters in front of you. Therefore, *a flash cannot affect a firework*, and turning on your camera's flash will only serve to waste battery.

Plus, if your camera uses a flash metering system, an active flash will cause the fireworks to come out dark. And constant flashing may even frustrate other folks trying to watch the fireworks.

So switch your flash off. And use the long-exposure technique I discuss below!

6. Turn off long exposure noise reduction

Many modern cameras have a noise reduction feature, which after the first exposure, takes a second "black frame" exposure, detecting the noise and then subtracting that from the initial exposure. It can work well in some situations, but here's the thing:

The second exposure takes as long as the first, and if you're making multi-second exposures, your camera will be busy working, and you'll be missing subsequent firework bursts.

So turn it off. You'll generally be using a low ISO with minimal noise anyway, and the delay in being able to make more shots isn't worth the benefit.



7. Do *not* use Live View

Live View lets you preview your exposures on the camera LCD before you actually press the shutter button. It comes in handy in a lot of situations, but it'll eat up your battery fast.

My recommendation: Save your battery for actually shooting and set up your shot using the eyecup viewfinder.

(That said, if you use a mirrorless camera, Live View is actually *less* energy-intensive than work via the electronic viewfinder. Therefore, if you shoot mirrorless, using Live View is a good idea!)

8. Use smaller apertures for the best fireworks photography

The lens [aperture](#) controls the image [depth of field](#) – that is, whether the scene features a small sliver of sharpness ([shallow depth of field](#)) or whether the scene is sharp throughout (deep depth of field). But what aperture is right for photographing fireworks?

If you're capturing fireworks that are far off in the distance and you have no foreground subjects, then you can get away with pretty much any aperture, from wide options like f/2.8 to narrow options like f/16.

However, if your composition features foreground elements or the fireworks are relatively close to your position, then you'll want to use a narrow aperture (anywhere between f/8 and f/16 is good).

Plus, those apertures are pretty optimal for fireworks as the light streaks are controlled by the size of the aperture. Closing down more will make the light trails thinner, opening up more will make them wider and possible too over exposed. Do some tests but all the times I've done fireworks I keep coming back to f8 as my preference.

The narrower aperture will widen the depth of field, ensuring that the fireworks *and* the rest of the scene turn out sharp.

9. Use a longer shutter speed (but don't let it go too long!)

Fireworks are a moving subject, and [shutter speed](#) deals with subject motion. So if you want to get great fireworks shots, you *must* choose the perfect shutter speed.

Now, fireworks leave beautiful light trails, and you can capture this with a longer shutter speed. However, you don't want to let the shutter go for *too* long. Fireworks are bright, and if you're not careful, you'll end up with lots of clipped highlights in your frames.

An easy method to handle this is by switching your camera over to [Bulb mode](#). Once in Bulb mode, the shutter will remain open for as long as you hold down the shutter button (or the shutter release).



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When a firework is about to explode, you can hit the shutter button. And you can hold down the button until the explosion is finished.

Do a test shot before the show starts and see if the sky is too dark or too bright and adjust the exposure time accordingly. As long as you're under 30 seconds (the longest shutter speed on most cameras), you can let the camera time the shots for you. Or you can switch to Bulb and just open and close manually when you feel you've captured enough bursts in one image.



10. Use manual focusing for sharp shots

Mirrorless autofocus systems are better than ever before – yet focusing in low light still causes cameras to struggle. Plus, refocusing on each new burst of fireworks takes time, which may ultimately cause you to miss the shot.

Therefore, instead of trying to autofocus, switch your lens over to [manual focus](#).

Then, when you see the first burst of fireworks, manually adjust the focus ring until the scene appears sharp. Take a test shot, and be sure to zoom in on your LCD screen to make sure it looks good.

Once you've acquired perfect focus, simply leave it alone for the rest of the fireworks show, and the results will turn out great (especially if you're using a narrow aperture!).

One note: Changing focal lengths will change the plane of focus on most lenses, so if you zoom in or out, you should check your point of focus (and re-focus if necessary).

11. Anticipate the best compositions

Even if you've done plenty of scouting, one of the most difficult parts of photographing fireworks is working out where to aim your camera. The challenge is that you generally need to compose *before* the fireworks actually burst, so anticipation is key. Here are a few quick tips to help you select compositions in advance:

Watch a few bursts before you shoot. In general, each new firework will come from (roughly) the same spot, so by observing the skies, you can get a sense of where to train your camera. You can also get a sense of how long you have between bursts; that way, you can be ready to fire the shutter before each new explosion.

Decide whether to shoot vertically or horizontally. You can capture fireworks vertically (portrait orientation) or horizontally (landscape orientation). Both can work for fireworks photography, but I personally prefer a vertical perspective – after all, there's a lot of vertical firework movement! Horizontal shots are nice if you're after an expansive shot using a wide-angle lens, however.



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Refine your framing. Once you've found a nice composition, don't take a single shot and then move on to the next frame. Instead, see if you can improve the result by moving to one side, getting down low, getting up high, etc. You might be surprised by what you can create when you really dedicate yourself to working the scene.

12. Enhance your firework compositions with foreground interest

Beginner firework photographers often just point their camera at the sky and shoot away – but while this can produce nice results, if your goal is to create captivating images that leave a lasting impact, incorporating an interesting foreground is a great idea.

You see, by seamlessly blending a magnificent sky explosion with a compelling foreground, you offer viewers a visual journey. They can start by appreciating the foreground's charm before engaging with the mesmerizing backdrop.

Note that you can include all sorts of elements as your foreground interest: buildings, mountains, hills stretching into the distance, or even amusement park rides. The choice is yours, but I encourage you to think carefully about which foreground elements will complement the fireworks display.

By the way, if you can include foreground elements that offer [leading lines](#), the results will be especially spectacular. These lines can create a visual pathway that not only connects the foreground and the fireworks but also enhances the overall composition!

13. Include reflections in your firework compositions

Looking to elevate your firework shots from ordinary to extraordinary? Incorporating reflections into your compositions can provide that extra touch of brilliance.

You'll need to strategically position yourself to include a reflective surface with the frame, but finding a suitable reflective object is easier than you might think. While lakes and ponds can always work, you can also unleash your creativity by utilizing puddles, glossy car surfaces, or even sunglass lenses.

I'd also encourage you to experiment with different compositions. For instance, try placing the horizon line in different areas of the frame and see what you think of the results. A dead-center horizon will yield a symmetrical shot infused with tension, while a horizon positioned in the upper or lower third of the frame will infuse your image with a dynamic and captivating feel.

14. Include people in your images

While the magnificent bursts of fireworks alone can create awe-inspiring images, incorporating people into your compositions can elevate your fireworks photos to new heights.





For one, including human figures in your frames will introduce a sense of scale that emphasizes the grandeur of the dazzling light show unfolding in the night sky.

Additionally, people can act as foreground interest, adding depth and narrative to your photographs.

Plus, you can use people to tell stories; a solitary figure gazing in awe at the fireworks can evoke a sense of wonder, while a group of friends or a

couple holding hands can portray a shared moment of joy and celebration.

One fascinating element to explore when including people in firework photography is the interplay between focus points. Experiment with different approaches to create varied effects. You can choose to focus on the fireworks, allowing the people in the foreground to become slightly blurred – or you can focus on the people in the foreground, intentionally blurring the fireworks in the background, creating an ethereal and dreamlike atmosphere. Both techniques can yield compelling results, so don't hesitate to try different focal points and see which resonates with your artistic vision!

15. Experiment with different focal lengths

Firework photography comes with a major dilemma:

On the one hand, you can use a [telephoto lens](#) (such as a [70-200mm](#)), which will get you detailed shots of the fireworks but is difficult to use. With a long lens, you'll need to keep your camera trained on the right part of the sky at the right time, and it can be easy to miss.

On the other hand, you can use a [wide-angle lens](#) (such as a [24-70mm](#)), which will capture the entire skyline but won't offer lots of detail. Wide-angle lenses feature great "safety" focal lengths because you can generally trust that they'll include the fireworks in the scene, even if the results aren't quite as impactful as you might like.

So which lens should you use? As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, I'd recommend working primarily with a wide-angle zoom. But once you've grabbed a few wide-angle shots that you like, feel free to switch over to your telephoto lens and see if you can nail some close-ups.

Of course, if your camera offers enough resolution, you do have the option to crop afterward – just bear that in mind!

16. Use a neutral density filter to get a longer exposure if need be.

Here, the bursts don't really make a nice arch, but a longer exposure will make your trails more impressive. You choose how you want them to appear and adjust the shutter speed accordingly.



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If it's not 100% dark out yet (i.e., the sky still has some light), an ND filter will allow you to get a longer exposure and make sure the fireworks bursts have a nice arch. You see, if your exposure is too short, you'll end up with short, stubby-looking bursts rather than nice umbrella-shaped ones.



Now, if your bursts are too short, you can start by simply extending the shutter speed. But if the files turn out overexposed, slap on that neutral density filter! Plus, using the ND filter if it is dark will also allow you to shoot lengthy exposures that capture more bursts per image.

Experiment, have fun, and try shooting with and without the filter. (A polarizing filter will work, too, but to a lesser degree.)

As far as which filter to get, the ND 0.9 filter has become the filter of choice for fireworks photographers due to its price and because it typically achieves optimal exposure lengths. Another option to consider is the ND 1.8 filter. Far fewer brands make ND 1.8 filters, and the brands that do are usually more expensive, *but* the filter is very versatile and offers a couple of advantages over the ND 0.9 filter.

First, since it reduces the exposure by six stops of light as opposed to the three stops of light, you'll be able to get decent shutter speeds even with a slightly wider aperture. And a wider aperture – in the f/5.6-f/8 range – minimizes diffraction and maximizes sharpness. Plus, an ND 1.8 filter can come in handy when shooting other subjects in the daytime or at twilight, whereas an ND 0.9 filter won't have a huge effect.

17. Shoot most of your shots at the start of the show

This tip is quick but handy:

Whenever possible, capture your most interesting, surefire compositions at the beginning of the show, not the end.

This will avoid the smoke and haze that appears a bit later. Eventually, the sky will be filled with smoke, which doesn't look as pretty. (Later on in the show is when I like to try some close-ups or abstracts.)

18. Make sure you leave enough room in your frame to anticipate the height of the opened bursts

If you fail on the first shot, simply make adjustments as needed. In my experience, it's a lot of trial and error and correcting. It's often hard to tell where the highest fireworks will end up in the sky, so you may want to try both horizontal and vertical compositions.



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Try a vertical composition for an added sense of power, especially if you can get a reflection like this. (Image by Darlene Hildebrandt)

19. Practice timing your shots

Consider starting your exposures when you hear the fireworks being released; that way, you're more likely to capture a few bursts.

Also, do some testing to see how many bursts are just right for your taste. Try some shots with more and some with less. Having too many may overexpose the overall image, so keep that in mind, as well.

20. Shoot facing east

If you want a darker sky in your fireworks shots, you should definitely photograph eastward rather than westward.

I've found that when I shoot into the sunset, the sky gets too blown out and the lights of the fireworks don't show up as well as they do against a darker sky. So try and find a vantage point that has you facing east when possible!

21. Try zooming during the exposure

Note how the bright pink burst appears here, thicker streaks at the base of each trail growing thinner at the tip. (Image by Rick Ohnsman)

You may have seen those photos where the bursting fireworks look more like a flower, fat blurry trails with sharp points. How is that done?

Here's the technique, which you can vary for different results.

Know this takes practice, and luck plays a big part. So decide if you have already got enough necessary shots before you try it and whether the show will last long enough for some experimentation.



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If you're game, here's how you do it:

- You will need your hands free for this, and you'll want to look through the viewfinder or perhaps use Live View, so using the remote release probably isn't going to work. Instead, set your shutter speed for about 8-10 seconds, leaving all the other camera settings where they were.
- Set your lens to manual focus, then focus on the spot where the fireworks will burst. Turn the ring so things are out of focus.
- Just as a firework explodes, fire the shutter and smoothly turn the focus right back to the focus point. You must get the fireworks in focus before the exposure is complete, but if you finish early, that's okay.



Two images using the defocus-to-focus technique. (Images by Rick Ohnsman)

And try different things with subsequent shots. Go from focused to unfocused, zoom in or out during the exposure, or maybe take the camera off the tripod and move it during the exposure to make light trails. Play and see what you like.

Just remember that the duration of the show is limited, so try some experiments but also be sure you have some solid keepers.

22. Use the black hat trick

Here's a handy trick that can produce very artistic results:

- Have a hat, preferably one that's dark and opaque.
- Put the hat over the front of the lens.
- Have the camera in Bulb mode, and just before the firework launches, click open the shutter.
- Quickly but gently – so as not to bump the camera – remove the hat while the firework explodes.
- Leave the shutter open and carefully replace the hat. Repeat, removing and replacing the hat for multiple fireworks bursts. (You may need to have a smaller aperture or lower ISO to do this as you will be building up exposure brightness with each additional firework added).
- Unlock the remote and close the shutter when you've done all you want.



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What you're doing is making a multiple-exposure image in-camera. Of course, you can always capture several images and blend them during post-processing instead!

23. Experiment and evaluate your results

As you shoot, don't be afraid to experiment with different compositions and ideas! For instance, you might zoom in for a tighter perspective, zoom out for a wider perspective, change your angle, include people or buildings in the frame, and much more.

Also, periodically check your results for perfect sharpness, composition, and exposure.

I recommend taking a few photos at the start of the photoshoot. Review them on your LCD. If they look good, then keep going (and if they look bad, make the necessary adjustments!). Be sure to view your shots throughout the shoot to make sure you haven't messed up in some significant way.



How to photograph fireworks: final words

And there you have it! Armed with these tips and techniques, you're ready to capture the dazzling magic of fireworks like a seasoned pro.

Remember, it's not just about pointing your camera to the sky and hoping for the best. Incorporating a captivating foreground adds depth and engages your viewer from the get-go. You can also prepare yourself by exploring the location in advance, seeking out prime vantage points, and envisioning different compositions. Finally, remember that flexibility is key. Be ready to adapt on the spot and let your creativity soar.

So grab your camera, head to the next firework extravaganza, and have plenty of fun! Now over to you:

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Coming Up: 26 January 2024 Australia Day activities -

Fun Run & Free Aussie Breakfast 6.00am & 8.00am, The Strand

Australia Day Flag Raising Ceremony, 9.00am Jezzine Barracks

Beach Day Out, 10.30am—3.00pm, The Rockpool to Strand Park

NOTE—this is a Council run event

Remember to use our Facebook page to suggest outings and ask for company if you want to go somewhere to practise your photography.

Markets provide a great opportunity to practise street photography and we are lucky to have a few in our district. Be Covid aware when moving around groups of people.

Townsville: Wulguru (Sundays), Cotters (Sundays), Renegade (2nd Sunday), Willows (Sundays), Bushland Beach Markets (1st & 3rd Sundays), Magnetic Island RSL Night Markets (Fridays), Mundingburra Markets (3rd Sunday), Balgal Beach Markets (1st Saturday), Strand Rotary Night Markets (1st Friday), Upper Ross Community Markets (1st Saturday), Bluewater Community Centre Twilight Market (2nd Saturday).

Ingham: Conroy Markets (2nd Saturday), Ingham Raintree Markets (1st & 3rd Sunday).

Facebook Group Banter

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/NQCameraGroup/>

Winner #rowsofthings- Avi Treanor



What a great selection of things we had for December's theme of 'All in a row'. Congratulations Avi on the winning pic and thanks Dee for the theme.

This month's theme is #water—get clicking!





Row 1: Melinda Jane, Karlene
Row 3: Julie, Rhonda, Michael

Row 2: Diane, Sue
Row 4 : Sue, Sue

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Row 1: Sue, Amanda
Row 2: Sue, Wendy
Row 3: Barbara, David

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Row 1: Avi, Alison

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Row 3: Wendy, Barbara

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Row 1: David, Kathy

Row 2: Sue, Julie

Row 3: Chele