

## ***PHOTOGRAPHY***

**PHOTOGRAPHY is the process of creating an image. By focusing on objects using various lenses, filters, and light sources, photographers may demonstrate the use of photographic techniques conventionally or digitally. *Collages and collections of photos are not accepted.***

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### **To Portray Your Original Artwork**

- **Consider the following accepted forms of photography:**
  - A Single Photo, Panoramic, Photomontage (one print of multiple original photos), Multiple Exposure, Negative Sandwich, Photogram
  - Entries may be black-and-white and/or color images.
- **Avoid the following unaccepted forms of photography:** entries with added graphics and/or non-photographic elements (e.g., lettering, icons), collages and collections of photos, original film (negatives or transparencies), and multidimensional pieces.
- **To show a clear relation to the theme,** use objects, lighting, location, etc.



## Entry Checklist & Reminders

### **National-Level Requirements:**

- **Student Artist:** The photographer (student submitting entry) is a person who captures their own thoughts and ideas with a camera.
- **Accepted formats:** JPEG, JPG, PNG.
- **Sizing:** Print images should be between 3x5 to 8x10 inches. Digital should be at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution. Mounted prints must not exceed 11x14 inches, including matting. *Framed photos are not accepted.*

### **Reminders:**

- **Photomontages vs. Collages:** Collages make use of non-photographic elements, and are not accepted. Photomontages, which are accepted, are composed of multiple original photographs which are edited and combined to create a new photographic creation. *Collages may be submitted in the Visual Arts category.*
- **Added Elements:** Do not include graphics, illustrations, word overlays, or other non-photographic elements (e.g., craft or other external materials).
- **Reproductions and Replications:** Inspiration may come from existing photographs, but the final piece must be an entirely new and original creation and interpretation, including angles, perspective, shape, size, values, message, etc.

## Category Tips: Artist Statement and Title

Titles and artist statements can be useful in sharing details specific to your photography that help capture your creative process and theme interpretation. Consider the following:

- **Describe** the main subjects or objects in your piece (composition, arrangement, lighting, location) that most clearly connect to the theme.
- **Provide context** around the photo setting (environmental elements, season, time of day), and how it influences the piece.
- **Explain** the photographic techniques and equipment used to take, edit, and/or enhance the photo.

## Image Quality Tips

Tips for taking, finalizing, and saving a high-quality photography image file for your submission:



### Preparing to Take the Photo:

- **Find Good Lighting:** Natural light is your best friend! Take photos near windows or outside during the day. If light is too strong, use a sheer curtain or a white sheet to soften the light and reduce harsh shadows.
- **Use Multiple Light Sources:** Combine different light sources, like lamps and overhead lights, to create a balanced and well-lit scene. Avoid using just one light source, which can create unflattering shadows.
- **Keep Steady:** Hold your camera or phone with both hands to avoid blurry pictures. You can also use a tripod if you have one.

### Taking the Photo:

- **Focus on Your Subject:** Make sure your main subject is in focus. Tap on the screen of your phone or use your camera to focus if needed.
- **Try Different Angles:** Experiment with different angles and perspectives to make your photo more interesting.
- **Edit Your Photos:** Use simple editing apps to adjust brightness, contrast, and colors. You can also crop your photo to remove any unwanted parts. Add filters sparingly. Use edits to enhance your photo, not change it completely.
- **Check the Details:** Zoom in to make sure everything looks good and there are no unwanted spots or blurs.

### Finalizing and Saving the Photo:

- **Avoid compression:** Minimize the use of compression when saving your images, as this can reduce quality. Save files in formats like PNG or TIFF for better quality.
- **Resize with care:** If you need to resize an image, do so carefully to avoid losing quality. Use tools that allow you to maintain the original aspect ratio and resolution.
- **Sizing and quality:** Before finalizing your image, check the properties to ensure its quality and sizing needs are met. Digital images should be at least 640x960 pixels and 300 dpi resolution. Most editing software allows you to view and adjust these settings easily.

## Copyright and Plagiarism

**Plagiarized entries will be disqualified. Use of copyrighted material is not acceptable**, including any copyrighted cartoon characters, material downloaded from the internet, and copyrighted photographs/stock images, except for the following:

- Entries may include public places, well-known products, trademarks, or certain other copyrighted material as long as that copyrighted material is incidental to the subject matter of the piece, and/or is a smaller element of a whole. The resulting work cannot try to establish an

association between the student and the trademark/business/material, or influence the purchase/non-purchase of the trademarked good.

- Photography entries may include portions of existing copyrighted works, such as photographs, magazine or digital media clippings, and/or type cut out of a newspaper, as long as those portions of copyrighted works are used to create an original interpretation and a completely new and different work of art.

### **Digital Tools and Technology**

**Digital technology and/or software may not provide the primary design and/or concept, but can be used to develop, enhance and/or present an entry.** Entries may not be exclusively created with generative tools (e.g., AI) and/or composed exclusively of elements generated or provided by a technology platform.

#### **Accepted:**

- Prototyping an original idea, design, or concept with generative tools before creating the final submission.

#### **Not Accepted:**

- Creating an entry composed of generative elements and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials.
- Entries composed with generative elements and/or unoriginal, downloaded materials, including templates, formulas, graphics, drawings, paintings, etc.

#### **Guidelines:**

- **Use Description:** If digital technology software/tools are used in the creation process, including any generative elements (AI), entrants should use the back of the student entry form to briefly describe these methods in 10 to 50 words. This description will be used to assist judging during the evaluation process.
- **Verify Prohibited Technology:** Check if your state PTA prohibits the use of any digital platforms and/or methods (i.e., artificial intelligence). \*Ohio PTA does not prohibit the use of digital platforms beyond permitted usage stated in the National PTA Entry, Category, and Division Guidelines.