

2026 Photography Competition

New York State Fair Wegmans Creative Arts Center

(315) 728-4328 – Creative Arts Center Office

nyscreativearts@agriculture.ny.gov

Presented by the New York State Fair, Syracuse, New York 13209,
from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm daily (6:00 pm on Labor Day, Monday, September 7, 2026)

Fees:

1. **Exhibitor Fee: \$15.00**

2. **Entry Fee: \$7.00 per photo for adult entries.**

An Adult Exhibitor, Professional or Amateur, may enter a maximum of **Six (6)** entries. **NEW** Only **Two (2)** entries per Exhibitor for Division E, The Great New York State Fair, and Division F, Pride of New York State. Only **One (1)** entry per Exhibitor for Division J, “Through the Lens – America at 250”. These count towards your maximum of six (6) entries.

3. **Entry Fee: \$5.00 per photo for Senior entries.**

Seniors are limited to a maximum of **Four (4)** entries. **NEW** Only **Two (2)** entries per Exhibitor for Division E, The Great New York State Fair, and Division F, Pride of New York State. Only **One (1)** entry per Exhibitor for Division J, “Through the Lens – America at 250”. These count towards your maximum of four (4) entries.

4. **NEW! NO ENTRY FEE for Youth entries.**

Youths are limited to a maximum of **Four (4)** entries. Division E, The Great New York State Fair, Division F, Pride of New York State, and Division J, “Through the Lens – America at 250” are Adult Only competitions.

PHOTOGRAPHY RULES:

1. Please see the **Creative Arts Center General Rules and Regulations** and the **Creative Arts Center Exhibitor Schedule** that is on the NYS Fair website under Creative Arts Center. This schedule contains all dates and times that pertain to entering and exhibiting in the NYS Fair Creative Arts Center Competitions.
2. The rules printed herein are made a part of the conditions under which all entries of exhibitors are made, and exhibitors are respectfully requested to read them carefully, thereby avoiding confusion at the time of the competition and to make certain in which classes their entries belong.
3. **No CD** or digital submissions will be accepted.

4. **PLEASE NOTE:** Entry size is 11” x 14”. **No Exceptions!**

5. **ELIGIBILITY:** The competition is open to New York State Residents only who are studying, working, or participating in the photographic media (amateur, professional, youth, or senior).
 - **Professionals are defined as (but not limited to):** i.e., instructors, teachers, judges, curators, media, photographers who sell their work either directly or through a third party., i.e., internet, galleries, or art shows, etc....

 - **Amateur is defined as:** any individual who participates strictly as a hobby.

 - **Youth is defined as:**
 - Class 1: Youth who have completed grades 1 – 4.
 - Class 2: Youth who have completed grades 5 – 8.
 - Class 3: Youth who have completed grades 9 -12.**Please Note:** If you enter as a Youth, you are **NOT** eligible to enter any other divisions.

 - **Senior is defined as:** Any individual who is 65 years of age or older beginning after March 1st of the current year. If you enter as a Senior, you are **NOT** eligible to enter Divisions C or D. You may enter Divisions E & F & J.

 - **PLEASE NOTE:** If you are considered a Professional, you are **NOT** eligible to enter the Senior or Youth Division, no matter the age. If you enter as a Youth or as a Senior, you are **NOT** eligible to enter as an Amateur. IF you enter as an Amateur, you are **NOT** eligible to enter as a Youth or as a Senior.

6. All entries must be of original photography and personal execution and must be printed and matted as described under “presentation”.

7. **Exhibitor Tag(s):** You will receive your exhibitor tag(s) when you drop off your item on receiving day. You will be responsible for attaching tags to the back of the foam board. The only exception is mailed in entries; the Photo Department Staff will assist with this. **NEW** Please remember to complete the New York State Fair Shipping Form and the New York State Fair Entry Label for mailed in entries.

8. **PRESENTATION: Only prints on photo paper will be accepted, NO copy paper.** No transparencies or negatives unless specified in category. **NO** glass, metal framing or double matted prints will be accepted – **NO EXCEPTIONS**. The same subject may **NOT** be used in more than one (1) entry. All prints, black-and-white and color, must be unframed and mounted or matted on a 11" x 14" board, then mounted on a 11" X 14" foam board, NO WIRES. Actual photos may be 11" x 14" or smaller. All work **MUST BE** received with appropriate matting/mounting on an 11" x 14" foam board and be clearly labeled **with exhibitor tag taped** securely to back of foam board. **Please remember to remove your exhibitor tag claim stub first before securing.** The photo consent form may also be attached to the back of the foam board if applicable. If a smaller photo is used, the mat/foam board **MUST** still be 11" x 14". Vertical or horizontal photographs are accepted. Please indicate on the back of foam board the photo orientation., i.e., **"TOP"**. This includes non-traditional photos. Prints may be signed, if desired, but signature should be covered. This is for judging purposes only. Signatures will be displayed during the Fair on accepted photos. When filling out your entry form, you may add what type of equipment you used to take photos, i.e., camera, phone, etc.

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT PRESENTATION
REQUIREMENTS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE.**

9. **PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM:** You will need to include a Photography Consent form for any photos with a recognizable person. The signed form must be securely taped to the back of the foam board at the time of judging. The only exception to this is photos submitted in Division E, New York State Fair photos. This is in accordance with the right of publicity, which protects people from commercial use, without their permission, of their name, image, likeness, voice, and other elements of their persona. The right of publicity is protected under state law, and the laws vary from state to state. Some states only protect celebrities while others protect everyone. Some states protect people's publicity rights for some period after their death while others do not protect posthumous rights. Determining which state's law applies and what that law protects can be complicated and challenging—and making a mistake can give rise to significant damages and other remedies. In response, we have decided to require a photography consent form for **ANY** photograph that contains a recognizable person. The photo consent form is located on our website as a printout.

10. **NOTIFICATION:** Exhibitors will receive an email(s) notifying you if your entry(s) was “Accepted” or “Not Accepted” by 4:00 pm Friday, August 14 following judging days. If you have not received an email by Monday, August 17, you may call the Creative Arts Center Office at 315-728-4328 or email Yvonne.bakowski2@agriculture.ny.gov to verify the status of your entry(s). **PLEASE NOTE** that results will **NOT** be given. **NEW! Non-Accepted Pick-Up Day is now on Tuesday, August 18 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. All entries not picked up on that day will be put in storage until after the fair.**
11. **SALE OF PHOTO:** The New York State Fair will not handle the sale of any artwork in the exhibition. Names, addresses and phone numbers of interested parties will be listed on the back of the work the party is interested in by gallery staff. The artist is responsible for contacting possible buyers. Please note that if you are entered as an amateur and you sell your work, you must enter as a professional for the next Fair.
12. **TRADITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY:** The capturing of an image using a camera with slide/print film or a digital camera. Traditional photography uses the following acceptable modifications:
- Correcting – contrast, exposure, tone, color enhancement
 - Dodging – reduces exposure of certain areas.
 - Burning In – increase exposure of certain areas.
 - Use of Toners – to add warm/cool tones to black & white prints.
 - Pin Hole Camera
 - Cropping
13. **NON-TRADITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY:** Involves traditional film/slides or digital images manipulated with post-processing that permit or encourages different communicative applications. These include, but are not limited to:
- Pin Hole Camera
 - Combining Multiple Images
 - Hand Coloring
 - Photocopy, Image Scanner, Photograms
 - Photo Mosaic
 - Photo Collage
 - Radical Change of Color

DIVISION A: PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

CLASS 1: Black & White Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$125.00
1 Second Prize	\$75.00
1 Third Prize	\$50.00

CLASS 2: Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$125.00
1 Second Prize	\$75.00
1 Third Prize	\$50.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented for each class in the Professional Division.

DIVISION B: AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY

CLASS 1: Black & White Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

CLASS 2: Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented for each class in the Amateur Division.

DIVISION C: NON-TRADITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY **PROFESSIONAL**

CLASS 1: Collage, Hand-Color Tinted, experimental, etc.

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented in this Division.

DIVISION D: NON-TRADITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY **AMATEUR**

CLASS 1: Collage, Hand-Color Tinted, experimental, etc.

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$50.00
1 Second Prize	\$35.00
1 Third Prize	\$15.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented in this Division.

DIVISION E: THE GREAT NEW YORK STATE **FAIR PHOTOS**

Only two (2) entries allowed per Exhibitor

This Division is for adults only. Professional, Amateur, and Senior will be judged together. Photos must not have been entered before in any New York State Fair Division. Include a short narrative on back, i.e., where, and when. **NOTE:** Division E – The Great NYS Fair Photos, when submitting photos for this Division, a photography consent form is **NOT** required.

CLASS 1: Black & White or Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented in this Division.

DIVISION F: PRIDE OF NEW YORK STATE

Only two (2) entries allowed per Exhibitor

This Division is for adults only. Professional, Amateur, and Seniors will be judged together. Photos must not have been entered before in any New York State Fair Division. Show us your apple picking, farm products, Adirondack adventures or anything that celebrates our Great State of New York. From the cities, farms and all the roads in between. The location of where the photo was taken is to be in the **“Title Box”** on the entry form. **NOTE:** On photos that include recognizable people, a photography consent form must be filled out and taped to the back of the foam board. The photo consent form is located as a printout on the website.

CLASS 1: Black & White or Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented in this Division.

DIVISION G: YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY

Open to all students in grades 1st – 4th, 5th – 8th and 9th – 12th. Grade is based on grade completed at end of school year. Photos submitted in Youth Division will be judged separately from other competitions. Rules and presentation are the same as Adult Competition. **NOTE:** You are **NOT** allowed to enter the Amateur Competition if you are entering the Youth Division.

CLASS 1: Grades 1st – 4th Black & White or Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	Ribbon
1 Second Prize	Ribbon
1 Third Prize	Ribbon

CLASS 2: Grades 5th – 8th Black & White or Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	Ribbon
1 Second Prize	Ribbon
1 Third Prize	Ribbon

CLASS 3: Grades 9th – 12th Black & White or Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	Ribbon
1 Second Prize	Ribbon
1 Third Prize	Ribbon

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented for each class in the Youth Division.

DIVISION H: SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Open to all adults 65 and older. Photos submitted in Senior Division will be judged separately from other competitions. Rules and presentation are the same as Adult Competition with the exception that you cannot enter the Amateur competition if you enter the Senior Division.

CLASS 1: Senior (65 and Up) Black & White Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$50.00
1 Second Prize	\$25.00
1 Third Prize	\$15.00

CLASS 2: Senior (65 and Up) Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$50.00
1 Second Prize	\$25.00
1 Third Prize	\$15.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented for each class in the Senior Division.

NEW! DIVISION J:
“THROUGH THE LENS: AMERICA AT 250”
PHOTOS

Only one (1) entry allowed per Exhibitor

Join us in celebrating 250 years of American courage, conflict, and community. We invite you to share your unique perspective of American history with the New York State Fair. This Division is for adults only. Professional, Amateur, and Senior will be judged together. Photos must not have been entered before in any New York State Fair Division. Include a short narrative on back of photo describing your unique perspective of our countries' 250 celebrations. **NOTE:** On photos that include recognizable people, a photography consent form must be filled out and taped to the back of the foam board. The photo consent form is located as a printout on the website.

CLASS 1: Color Print

PRIZES:

1 First Prize	\$75.00
1 Second Prize	\$50.00
1 Third Prize	\$25.00

Honorable Mention Ribbons may be presented in this Division.

**THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR “BEST OF SHOW – ADULT” IS DETERMINED
FROM ALL CLASSES IN
DIVISIONS A, B, C, D COMBINED.
\$125.00 AWARD**

**THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR "BEST OF SHOW - YOUTH" IS
DETERMINED FROM ALL CLASSES IN DIVISION G.**

**THE NEW YORK STATE FAIR "BEST OF SHOW - SENIOR" IS DETERMINED
FROM ALL CLASSES IN DIVISION H.
\$75.00 AWARD**