2026/454 2026/475 L260116 2026/006 2026/117

11th PHOTO CONTEST BULGARIA 2026

Organized with the financial support of the
Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Bulgaria

Република България
Министерство на културата

FIAP - Federation Internationale de L'Art Photographique
IAAP - International Association of Art Photographers
GPU - Global Photographic Union
APB - Academy of Photography Yanka Kurkchieva
ICAP - International Club of Art Portrait

ORGANISER

Varna Open Art Ltd., Varna, Bulgaria

Chair:	Dimitrina Vasileva
E-mail:	info@varnaopenart.org
Location of Entry Form:	https://www.photocontestbg.org/ Click on ENTRY FORM
Website:	https://www.photocontestbg.org/

SECTIONS AND THEMES

6 sections, all digital

OPEN COLOR	[Color only] - PI C
OPEN MONOCHROME	[Monochrome only] - PI M
NATURE GENERAL	[Color/black & white] - N
PHOTOJOURNALISM	[Color/black & white] - PJ
PORTRAIT & BODY	[Color/black & white] - PB
LANDSCAPE	[Color/black & white] - L

FEES AND DISCOUNTS

Individual Entries
1-2 sections – 20 euro
3-4 sections – 25 euro
4-6 sections – 30 euro
Early Bird Fee (before 23 Oct. 2026)

1-2 sections – 15 euro
3-4 sections – 20 euro
5-6 sections – 25 euro
Black Friday Weekend Discount 20% Off (for all Sections – 6-7 Nov. 2026)

Group/Club Entries
5 -10 authors – 10% discount
10 - 20 authors – 15% discount
Over 20 authors – 20% discount

PAYMENT METHODS
By PayPal through our website: https://www.photocontestbg.org/
OR to **PayPal ID:** info@varnaopenart.org
We accept payment in any currency. During payment, PayPal converts your currency to the above stated euro fees at its daily exchange rate.
Bank transfer is also possible.
Bank Details:
Bank: FIRST INVESTMENT BANK
IBAN: BG56 FINV 9150 1017 4381 32
Recipient: Varna Open Art Ltd
BIC code: FINVBGSF

Participants should keep in mind that in case of bank transfer, they should add 7 euro to the entry fee to cover bank commission.
Once payment is received, the payment status in your profile will be updated.
Entries for which no or no complete payment has been received will not be judged. Regardless of the results, the fee is non-refundable.
If, for some reason, you cannot pay the fee, please e-mail Exhibition Chairman and we will find a solution: info@varnaopenart.org

CALENDAR

Closing date: 2026-12-02
All Judging Completed by: 2026-12-16
Score reports sent by: 2026-12-17
On-Line gallery posted by: 2026-12-17
On-Line Catalogs posted by: 2026-12-27
Awards mailed by: 2027-02-20
Exhibition: 2027-06-19
See Garden Varna - Grand Outdoor Exhibition and at other locations.

JUDGES

Anastasiya Barmina, EFIAP, E IAAP (Russia)
Ryszard Lomnicki, IAAP Master (Ireland)
Dimo Hristev, EFIAP/s (Bulgaria)

Rules for the Judging Process
• An entrant's images will not be presented to the judges consecutively.
• An entrant's four images will be distributed throughout four rounds of judging in that section.
• Distribution of images will be in the same round order as submitted by the entrant.
• At no stage will a judge be able to view all the entrant's images together.

AWARDS

OPEN COLOR	OPEN MONOCHROME	NATURE GENERAL	PHOTOJOURNALISM	PORTRAIT & BODY	LANDSCAPE
FIAP Gold Medal	FIAP Gold Medal	FIAP Gold Medal	FIAP Gold Medal	FIAP Gold Medal	FIAP Gold Medal
IAAP Gold Medal	IAAP Gold Medal	IAAP Gold Medal	GPU Gold Medal	GPU Gold Medal	Salon Gold Medal
APB Gold Medal	APB Gold Medal	APB Gold Medal	APB Gold Medal	APB Gold Medal	APB Gold Medal
Salon Gold Medal	Salon Gold Medal	IAAP Silver Medal	IAAP Silver Medal	Salon Silver Medal	Salon Silver Medal
Salon Silver Medal	Salon Silver Medal	Salon Silver Medal	Salon Silver Medal	IAAP Bronze Medal	IAAP Bronze Medal
Salon Bronze Medal	Salon Bronze Medal	Salon Bronze Medal	Salon Bronze Medal	Salon Bronze Medal	Salon Bronze Medal
FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon
FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon	FIAP HM Ribbon
GPU HM Ribbon	GPU HM Ribbon	GPU HM Ribbon	GPU HM Ribbon	GPU HM Ribbon	GPU HM Ribbon
APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon
APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon	APB HM Ribbon
IAAP Diploma	IAAP Diploma	IAAP Diploma	IAAP Diploma	IAAP Diploma	IAAP Diploma
ICAP E- Diploma	ICAP E- Diploma	ICAP E- Diploma	ICAP E- Diploma	ICAP E- Diploma	ICAP E- Diploma
Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate
Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate
Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate	Judges Choice E-Certificate
FIAP Best Author - FIAP Blue Badge					
Best Participating Club/Group - SPECIAL CUP. Award is given to the photographic club with the most members' acceptances in the final selection.					
Best Participating Club/Group runner-up – GPU GOLD MEDAL					
Best Portrait in the PORTRAIT & BODY Section - ART PORTRAIT GOLD MEDAL					

- Medals and Ribbons will be posted by Post.
- FIAP Best Author: FIAP Blue Badge will be awarded to the Best Author who achieved the highest number of total acceptances. In case of a tie, it will be awarded to the entrant with the highest number of points from all the sections in this Salon. In case of a tie, the exhibitor who won the most awards shall be declared the recipient.
- Digital Electronic Diplomas for ICAP and Judges Choice Awards.
- E- Diploma, Judges Choice Awards and will be sent by email to each award-winning author after the results are announced, in PDF or JPEG format.
- To be eligible for Club Award, a minimum of 5 participants from a club must participate and pay their entry fees. Club Awards will be sent to a single address as communicated by the identified Group Leader.

The organizer is required to adjust the number of awards based on the total number of acceptances.
Each participant will receive an electronic certificate for the accepted and awarded photos in PDF format by email after the results are announced.
The decision of the Jury is final and irrevocable.

CATALOG

Online PDF Exhibition Catalogue will be available for download on our website:
https://www.photocontestbg.org/

RESULT

Result can be downloaded from the website and individual scorecards will be emailed.

DIGITAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

a) Photos must be submitted in JPEG file format following instructions https://www.photocontestbg.org/
An entry consists of up to 4 images per section.
Authors must fill out an Online Entry Form on the official website and submit entries online.
Titles:
● Each image requires a unique name that contains a maximum of 35 characters.
● Each title is to be used consistently across all FIAP exhibitions, without variations introduced by typographic errors or punctuation.
● Nothing in the image title can identify the photographer.
● A title should be an interpretive or meaningful title that transforms a visual document into a deliberate artistic statement. Titles entered as file numbers such as IMG_6608, DSC-76499 or in any other camera file format are prohibited.
● Meaningful Titles may be followed by numbers, for example, Ballet Dancer 34.
● Titles may use Latin1 or Latin2 character sets which allow diacritical marks (e, n, u, ą, ę, ś, etc), however non-Latin writing systems (العربية , русский, ελληνικά, 中文, カタカナ, _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _) may cause problems in Catalogs, Galleries and Star applications.
● Color and Monochrome images from the same capture that share substantial pictorial content in common will be considered the same image and must be given the same title.
FILE NAMING
No requirements for file names. Our program will later add the necessary data.
b) Entered files should be maximum 3840 px on the long side of the photos. Resolution of the image - 300 dpi.
c) Exhibitions are not allowed to resize oversized images. In such cases the entrant is required to resubmit their entry with properly sized images.
If you have trouble submitting your digital images on-line, please contact the Chairman:
info@varnaopenart.org
You will be receiving emails from info@varnaopenart.org
Please ensure your SPAM filter will always accept emails from this address
NOTICE: When entrants fills in the Entry Form to submit an entry they will see a feature to affirm they have read these Conditions of Entry.

Reproduction: Entrants grant sponsors free reproduction rights for exhibition-related media, including low-resolution web posting. Entries will not be accepted from entrants who restrict reproduction rights. The exhibition assumes liability for copyright misuse.

Re-use of accepted images: Any image that has been accepted in this exhibition, past or present, may not be entered again.

JUDGING METHOD

- Judging is to take place remotely.
- Equipment to be used will be color-calibrated and images will be displayed at exactly 100% of their resolution.
- Award session will be held with all of the judges together remotely.

Distribution of images shall be in the same round order as submitted by the entrant, but they shall not appear to the judges' consecutively.

- At no stage will exhibition software allow a judge to view all the entrant's images together.
- Target Acceptance Range: 25 - 30%

FIAP REGULATIONS

FIAP Statement regarding pictures generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI)

PICTURES CREATED BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THIS SALON! It is reminded that all parts of the image have to be photographed by the author who is holding the copyright of all works submitted. Offenders will be sanctioned for life!

FIAP Monochrome Definition

A black and white work fitting from the very dark grey (black) to the very clear grey (white) is a monochrome work with the various shades of grey. A black and white work toned entirely in a single colour will remain a monochrome work able to stand in the black and white category; such a work can be reproduced in black and white in the catalogue of a salon under FIAP Patronage. On the other hand a black and white work modified by a partial toning or by the addition of one colour becomes a colour work (polychrome) to stand in the colour category; such a work requires colour reproduction in the catalogue of a salon under FIAP Patronage.

FIAP Breaches of rules:

By the sole act of submitting his/her images or files to a salon under FIAP Patronage, the entrant accepts without exception and with no objection the following terms:

- that the submitted images can be investigated by FIAP to establish if these obey to FIAP regulations and definitions even if the entrant is not a member of FIAP,
- that FIAP will use any means at its disposal for this undertaking,
- that any refusal to cooperate with FIAP or any refusal to submit the original files as captured by the camera, or failure to provide sufficient evidence, will be sanctioned by FIAP,
- that in case of sanctions following the non-compliance with FIAP regulations, the name of the entrant will be released in any form useful to inform the breaches of the rules.

As mentioned in II.2 of the FIAP document 048/2025 participants must leave the EXIF data in the submitted files in tact in order to ease eventual investigations. If, at any time, it is determined in the reasonable discretion of the exhibition organizer or the judges before, during, or after the judging of an exhibition that an entrant has submitted entries where one or more images may fail to comply with these Conditions of Entry, including the stated definitions, the exhibition organizers reserve the right to delete the entry from the exhibition and void any or all acceptances or awards in connection with the exhibition. Fees may be forfeited or refunded in these circumstances. The entrant acknowledges that the decision of the exhibition organizers or the judges is final.

FIAP - CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

Each entrant to FIAP salons must observe the rules of FIAP and conform to the regulations of document 048/2025 and document 038/2023 E.

Each entrant to FIAP salons must observe the rules of FIAP whether or not he is a member of FIAP.

FIAP NOTICE: During the entry process all entrants will be required to tick a box to agree to the following statement.

"I hereby expressly agree to FIAP Document 048/2025 Conditions and regulations for FIAP Patronage and FIAP document 038/2023 E . Sanctions for breaching FIAP regulations and the red list. I am particularly aware of chapter II. Regulations for International photographic events under FIAP

patronage. of FIAP document 048/2025 dealing under Section II.2 and II.3 with the FIAP participation rules, the sanctions for breaching FIAP regulations and the red list. Failure to agree will mean that the application will not proceed.

DATA PROTECTION

By entering this exhibition, you are explicitly consenting to the personal details you have supplied, including physical addresses, email addresses, being held, processed and used by the exhibition organizers for purposes associated with this exhibition. You also explicitly consent to such information being sent to organizations that have accorded official recognition, patronage or accreditation to this exhibition. You acknowledge, agree and accept that by entering this exhibition, your participation status which includes your first and last name, name of the country used during registration at the exhibition, number of sections entered and number of photos entered in those sections will be made public in a published status list and that the results of your entry shall be made public in exhibition gallery, exhibition catalog. You also agree and accept the policy regarding non- compliance to the rules of.

Declaration of authorship: By virtue of submitting an entry, the entrant certifies the work as his own (aliases are not permitted). He also declare that his final images are not generated using Artificial intelligence software. The entrant permits the sponsors to reproduce all or part of the entered material free of charge for publication and/or display in media related to the salon. This may include low resolution posting on a web site. The photo salon (and it's exhibitions) assumes no liability of any misuse of copyright. The organizer can use the exhibited works for reproduction in the album, classical printed exhibition (inside & outside) and for any non-commercial aims to promote the salon without any further paying of author's fee.

SUBJECT MATTER AND SECTION DEFINITIONS

OPEN Color Definition

Any image that satisfies the general rules may be submitted in the Open section. Any subject, theme or technique is eligible. Images that have been manipulated extensively should be submitted in the Experimental section.

FIAP Monochrome Definition.

A black and white work fitting from the very dark grey (black) to the very clear grey (white) is a monochrome work with the various shades of grey. A black and white work toned entirely in a single color will remain a monochrome work able to stand in the black and white category; such a work can be reproduced in black and white in the catalogue of a salon under FIAP Patronage. On the other hand a black and white work modified by a partial toning or by the addition of one color becomes a color work (polychrome) to stand in the color category; such a work requires color reproduction in the catalogue of a salon under FIAP Patronage.

PORTRAIT AND BODY Definition

Center of interest is the human face and body in all its forms and manifestations. Portrait and fine art nude photography. Portraits of people of all colors, races, religions, the whole range of human feelings. Live photography, outdoor photography as well as studio portraits. Men, women, children. The human face as a reflection on emotion and life experience.

Fine-art photography, taken outdoors or under studio conditions, full of idea, creativity, with a touch of erotic mood, which depicts the nude human body with an emphasis on form, composition, emotional content, and other aesthetic qualities.

LANDSCAPE Definition

This category calls for the most beautiful landscapes from all over the world. Best panoramic landscapes. With or without people, at any weather condition and seasons, at the very best light. Sea / water and under waterscapes, desert / arctic / icy mountain and forest landscapes, cityscapes – whatever you like! Show us the beauty of the world we live in! We expect spectacular and imaginative shots beyond the usual perspective!

FIAP NATURE Definition

Content Guidelines

Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both over water and underwater.

Nature images must convey the truth of the scene. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity threatening a living organism's life or welfare are not allowed.

The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells. High technical standards are expected and the image must look natural.

- Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
- Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals, and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
- Photographs made where the scene is natural and the animal is unharmed in a carefully managed environment, such as Zoo, rescue centers, and ethically managed natural environment farms are permitted.
- Attracting or controlling subjects through the use of food or sound for the purpose of photographing them is not allowed. Maintained situations such as provided supplemental food due to hardship caused by weather conditions or other conditions beyond the animals' control, where photography is incidental to the feeding of the animal does not fall under this provision.
- Controlling live subjects by chilling, anesthetic, or any other method of restricting natural movement for a photograph is not allowed.
- Human-made elements shall be permitted under the following circumstances:
  a) When they are an integral part of the nature story, such as a songbird singing atop a fence post, a manmade object used as nest material, or a weather phenomenon destroying a man-made structure.
  b) When they are a small but unavoidable part of the scene, such as an unobtrusive footprint or track in the background.
  c) Scientific tags, collars, and bands are specifically allowed.

When photographing at a zoo, sanctuary, or rehabilitation center, it would be construed that the photographer ensured that it's properly accredited and conforms to best practices.

Wildlife Photography

In addition to the restrictions on nature photography, to be eligible for any Wildlife award and acceptance, images must meet the following conditions:

- Zoological organisms must be living free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat of their
- own choosing.
- Images of zoological organisms that have been removed from their natural habitat, are in any form
- of captivity or are being controlled by humans for the purpose of photography are not allowed.
- Botanical organisms may not be removed from their natural environment for the purpose of
- photography.
- Images that have been staged for the purpose of photography are not allowed.

Editing Guidelines:

Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, except that conversion to grayscale monochrome is allowed.

Allowed Editing Techniques:

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene
- Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure

blending or focus stacking)
- Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas).

Editing Techniques That Are Not Allowed:
- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- Adding a vignette during processing
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome

Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color.

Definition of PHOTOJOURNALISM

Photojournalism entries are images with informative content and emotional impact, reflecting the human presence in our world.

Content Guidelines

• The journalistic (story-telling) value of the image should receive priority over pictorial quality.

• Images that misrepresent the truth, such as those from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography, are not eligible.

• When Human Interest is specified, those images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional or unusual situation, excluding sports action.

Editing Guidelines

Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible.

Allowed editing techniques:
- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
- Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome.
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking);
- Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas);

Editing techniques that are not allowed:
- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- Adding a vignette during processing.
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
- Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color.