

Short Description:

PhotoSpiva 2026 – Celebrating 50 Years! National Photographic Competition & Exhibition

Will exhibit from March 14 – May 2, 2026

Online entry is from November 7, 2025 – January 5, 2026 at 11:59 pm.

Hosted annually by Spiva Center for the Arts, the competition is open to all amateur and professional US photographers.

Established in 1977, PhotoSpiva is the longest-running competition of its kind.

PhotoSpiva will be presented in the Main Gallery at the state-of-the-art Harry M. Cornell Arts and Entertainment Complex and is accompanied by some of Spiva's signature programming: PhotoSpiva Kids, Spiva in Bloom, and the 1000 Words Poetry Event.

PLEASE NOTE: No work that is accepted may be framed. Instructions for the matting of the images will be sent if work is accepted.

Long Description:

PhotoSpiva is a national photographic competition hosted annually by the Spiva Center for the Arts in Joplin, Missouri. Established in 1977, it stands as the longest-running competition of its kind in the United States – celebrating 50 years in 2026. As envisioned by its founders, PhotoSpiva seeks to “present an exhibition of excellence in photography, celebrating the scope and vigorous activity of today’s contemporary photographers.”

Juried selections will be exhibited from March 14–May 2, 2026 in Spiva’s state-of-the-art galleries in the Harry M. Cornell Arts & Entertainment Complex. Each year, a new juror—chosen from among the nation’s most respected photographers and curators—brings a fresh perspective to the exhibition.

We are honored to welcome renowned photographer Dan Winters as the 2026 juror. (*Learn more about Dan at www.danwintersphoto.com*).

PhotoSpiva is accompanied by signature programs including PhotoSpiva Kids, Spiva in Bloom, and the 1000 Words Poetry Event.

AWARDS

1ST Place | \$1,000

2ND Place | \$750

3RD Place | \$500

Merit Award (3) | \$150

Honorable Mention (3) | \$100

All entrants will be informed of acceptance or declination via email by January 28. Please contact exhibits@spivaarts.org if you have questions or concerns.

Application Requirements:

IMAGE REQUIREMENTS

There is no theme. The images need to be JPEG formatted and in RGB color mode. In sizing, A good guideline is to make either the width or the height about 1600 pixels and maintain the aspect ratio. If selected for exhibition, all work is required to be printed, mounted on a rigid backing and matted.

PLEASE NOTE: No work that is accepted may be framed. Instructions for the matting of the images will be sent if work is accepted.

PRINTING & MATTING PARTNERSHIP

Spiva Center for the Arts is pleased to partner with a local professional print house to offer optional printing and matting services for PhotoSpiva entrants. Accepted artists may choose to have their work printed and matted locally at a discounted rate, ensuring consistency with exhibition standards. Artists who prefer may also submit their own finished, matted work following the provided specifications. Complete details on file preparation, pricing, and shipping will be provided upon acceptance.

ENTRY FEE

A \$40 fee is required to enter five (5) photos. **You must enter five images and no less (you can enter the same photo 5 times if you do not have additional photos).** If you wish to submit more than five images, each additional entry is \$10. All images must be entered in the same application at one time.

Eligibility Criteria:

ELIGIBILITY

PhotoSpiva is open to any amateur or professional photographer in the United States or its territories. Submitted images must be the photographer's own work, and it is the sole responsibility of the photographer to obtain written releases from any recognizable person(s) depicted. Two-dimensional work derived from any photographic process — traditional, digital, or photo-based mixed media — is eligible as long as the work is original and has never been exhibited at George A. Spiva Center for the Arts. Three-dimensional work is not eligible for this competition and exhibition.

Rules and Terms to Apply:

Spiva Center for the Arts assumes the right to reproduce any entry for publicity purposes related to this or future exhibitions.

INSURANCE & LIABILITY

Accepted artists are responsible for the cost of shipping and insurance of work to and from Spiva. The Center is not responsible for damage or loss during transit. Spiva Center for the Arts will exercise all due care in handling work, but will not be responsible for loss, damage, or replacement except for loss by theft or fire. If complete loss or damage occurs in such a situation, artist shall receive the insurance value stated on inventory form. Damage due to normal wear and tear, gradual deterioration, natural disaster, or resulting from any artist-approved restoration or retouching process, etc., is not covered under Spiva's "all risk" policy. Artist agrees to release and to hold harmless George A. Spiva Center for the Arts, its officers, directors, employees, volunteers and agents from any and all liabilities and damages to artwork and/or persons as a result of any part of artist's participation in the exhibit.

SALE OF ARTWORK

Accepted work is not required to be for sale. Artist will set prices for pieces that are for sale and will receive sixty percent (60%) of the retail price; Spiva will retain the balance. Spiva, in Spiva's sole discretion, may discount items no greater than ten percent (10%) of the retail price. Spiva will absorb any discount, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. Artist agrees that: purchasers may be allowed payment terms not to exceed ninety (90) days; items will not be released to buyer until full payment is received by Spiva; and Spiva will remit payment to the artist after the purchase is paid in full.