



WideOpen: Light + Time

A call for contemporary photography.

WideOpen: Excellence in Photography, held biennially, is organized by The Dairy Barn Arts Center in collaboration with the Ohio University School of Visual Communication.

Entry Fee: \$45 for up to 3 entries. \$35 for Dairy Barn Members.

Works may be listed as “Not for Sale”. If offered for sale, the artist receives 65%.

WideOpen: Excellence in Photography reflects both the enduring legacy and the evolving possibilities of lens-based photographic practice today. This year’s theme, **Light + Time**, foregrounds the essential elements that define the medium—light as material and time as both subject and structure. From fleeting exposures to extended durations, from subtle shifts in illumination to deliberate manipulations of process, the works in this exhibition examine how photographers harness these forces to construct meaning.

Bringing together established, emerging, and self-taught photographers, the exhibition spans a wide range of genres, technical approaches, and ways of seeing. WideOpen positions photography as both a rigorous technical discipline and a dynamic cultural language—one shaped by observation, experimentation, and lived experience. The exhibition celebrates the depth and diversity of contemporary practice while highlighting how artists continue to expand the medium’s expressive and conceptual boundaries through their engagement with light and time.

Please reach out to Erin McKenna (exhibitions@dairybarn.org) with any questions about submitting work to this exhibition.

KEY DATES

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: June 1 - July 25, 2026

NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTED WORK: August 21, 2026

EXHIBITION AGREEMENT DUE: August 28, 2026

ARTWORK DELIVERY: September 14- 25, 2026

ON VIEW: October 2- November 29, 2026

OPENING RECEPTION: Friday, October 2, 2026 from 5-7pm

ARTWORK RETURNED BY: December 20, 2026

SUBMISSION AND EXHIBITION AGREEMENT TERMS

ELIGIBILITY

Wide Open: Excellence in Photography is open to all photographers, regardless of geographic location, background, or level of experience. Submissions are welcome from established, emerging, and self-taught artists working in any photographic genre or approach, including but not limited to documentary, photojournalism, experimental, and fine art photography. There are no thematic or stylistic restrictions; all subject matter and photographic processes are eligible for consideration.

Regarding AI, see below

MEDIA

Open to all genres of photography, including, but not limited to: fine art, commercial, conceptual, and photojournalism.

DATE RESTRICTIONS

All entries must be completed on or after June 15, 2017. The recent modification of an older or previously dated work does not make the work eligible unless the photographer can provide significant documentation of differences between the original and revised versions of the piece.

JURORS

Amy Schuessler

Alex Snyder

Tim Tadder

WideOpen: Excellence in Photography is a juried exhibition. For 2026, jurors will evaluate submissions in direct response to the theme **Light + Time**, considering how effectively each work engages the fundamental elements of the photographic medium—light as material and time as duration, interval, memory, or transformation. Artists may interpret the theme conceptually, technically, narratively, or formally; however, a clear and intentional relationship to the theme must be evident in the work.

In addition to thematic alignment, jurors will assess:

- **Technical Skill & Craft Consideration** – Command of exposure, focus, color or tonal control, printing or presentation quality, and overall technical resolution appropriate to the artist's intent.
- **Creativity & Originality** – Distinctive vision, innovative use of process or materials, and evidence of experimentation or risk-taking.
- **Concept / Story** – Conceptual clarity, narrative strength, or intellectual depth. Works should demonstrate thoughtful development beyond surface aesthetics.

- **Design & Composition** – Formal strength, including composition, spatial organization, use of light and shadow, rhythm, balance, and visual coherence.

Selections will be made exclusively from **digitally submitted images**. It is the artist's responsibility to ensure that submitted files accurately represent the work in terms of color, contrast, cropping, and overall quality. Accepted works must correspond precisely to the juried images.

The jury panel is composed of **three arts professionals** with experience in photography and contemporary visual culture. Jurors review submissions independently and collectively. Their names and biographical information will be published on the website prior to the announcement of accepted artists.

AWARDS

- **Terry and Lyntha Scott Eiler Award \$1,000**
Award for the best human-condition image or series that captures dynamic moments of culture, interaction or relationships.
- **Ohio University Alumni Award**
Solo exhibition (VISCOM FOCUS gallery) and opportunity to travel to Athens, Ohio to lecture at Ohio University
- **WideOpen: Best in Show Sony Camera kit**
Awarded to a work that demonstrates exceptional mastery of light and time, combining technical skill, conceptual clarity, and visual impact. The piece should embody the exhibition's theme in an innovative and memorable way, pushing the boundaries of contemporary photographic practice.
- **Emerging Vision Award (35 & Under) Sony Camera kit**
Recognizes outstanding work by photographers aged 35 or younger, judged on originality, experimental approach, and compelling interpretation of light and time. Emphasis on emerging voices with distinct photographic perspectives.
- **Masterful Perspective Award (65 & Over) Sony Camera kit**
Celebrates photographers aged 65 or older whose work shows sustained engagement with the medium. Judged on depth of vision, technical proficiency, and nuanced exploration of time, memory, or accumulated observation. Honors lifetime experience expressed in a single compelling work.
- **Technical Excellence Award \$150**
Given to a work demonstrating superior command of photographic technique and craftsmanship. Jurors consider exposure, focus, tonal control, presentation quality, and intentional use of process in service of concept. Can include conventional or experimental approaches, with technical mastery required.
- **Innovation in Light & Time Award \$150**
Recognizes exceptional creativity and conceptual risk-taking in response to the theme. Works may experiment with exposure, motion, or unconventional uses of light, as well as narrative or formal structures that reinterpret time. Emphasis on originality and expansion of photographic language.
- **Regional High School Student Award of Excellence \$100**
- **Juror Awards: \$150 each**

AUTHORSHIP

Works eligible for consideration must be the result of independent effort unless all collaborators are acknowledged at the time of submission. Artwork cannot be created for or as the result of an instructional setting in which another artist or teacher has provided guidance. The artwork must be an original design, not a copy or a variation of the original design of another artist working in any medium.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

WideOpen Excellence in Photography prohibits the submission created by generative AI. If you have questions about whether a particular use of AI is allowable, please contact exhibitions@dairybarn.org.

SUBMITTING WORK

The following information will be required on the entry form: Entrant name, contact information, the title of work, completion date, print dimensions of work (length and height in inches), materials, techniques, statement, and photo description. If a submitted photograph is a part of a larger photographic series, the applicant must list the series title on the entry form. All collaborators must be listed on the entry form. Entrants will be asked about their award eligibility. Additional information may be requested on the submission form.

ENTRY FEE

Each artist may submit up to 3 photographs. The submission fee is \$45 per artist. Members of The Dairy Barn Arts Center receive a discounted submission fee of \$35.

ENTRY IMAGES

You may upload up to three images per entry. The first image must clearly show the entire artwork, including all edges. The second and third images should be detail shots or different angles (for 3D work). All images must be in focus, well-lit, and taken against a clean, uncluttered background, representing the artwork exactly as you would wish it to appear in reproduction. Only images of completed artwork will be accepted—do not submit work-in-progress images. These images are the primary materials the jury uses to make their selections, so high-quality, accurate documentation is essential.

DIGITAL IMAGE FILE SPECIFICATIONS FILE TYPE

Files must carry the extension “.jpg.” The acceptable resolution is 72 dpi. Images should be sized no larger than 2000 pixels on the longest side. If you have issues submitting your images, please contact exhibitions@dairybarn.org.

FILE NAMING

“Title.jpg” for the overall image; if providing a detailed photo, please use “Title_detail_1.jpg”, “Title_detail_2.jpg”, etc. Please do not include your name in the file.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Upon submission of artwork, an artist's statement of no more than 80 words is required. This statement will appear on gallery materials. The Dairy Barn Arts Center will not publish more than 80 words per artist and reserves the right to edit statements for clarity, punctuation, grammar, etc.

PRINTING AND FRAMING

All accepted photographs must arrive at The Dairy Barn Arts Center ready to install and hang. Alternative hanging methods are acceptable, so long as the integrity of the photograph is maintained. All accepted entrants/photographers are responsible for printing and framing of their accepted work.

SALES & INSURANCE

Artists will be asked for both retail and insurance value for each piece of accepted work. The insurance value is 65% of its fair market value. In the event of loss or damage, it will be the artist's responsibility to provide documentation concerning the value of the work and the extent of the claim. The Dairy Barn Arts Center will insure the artwork while it is in our gallery for the duration of the exhibition, but the artist is responsible for their own insurance during shipping to and from The Dairy Barn Arts Center.

A work identified as For Sale (e.g. with an established retail price in U.S. Dollars) must maintain that status for as long as it is part of the active exhibition. Artists whose work is not for sale (NFS) must write NFS and must list a valid insurance value in U.S. Dollars. Insurance values for artworks that are not for sale are calculated by 65% of the fair market value.

In the event of a sale, the artist will be paid 65% of the retail price listed. The Dairy Barn will retain a 35% commission on work sold during the exhibition at The Dairy Barn or any sale that results from mediation by Dairy Barn Staff.

NOTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE

All artists will be notified via email, following the jury process. The Dairy Barn Arts Center reserves the right to refuse work that is drastically different from what was photographically represented in the submission. The Exhibition Agreement will be emailed, and must be completed and submitted by the date listed above. Selected works will be on display at The Dairy Barn Arts Center in the Sauber Gallery.

AGREEMENT

Submission of a work of art to this exhibition and the completion of the online entry process shall be understood to constitute an agreement on the part of the artist to all the conditions set forth. This will also grant The Dairy Barn Arts Center the rights to reproduce and distribute the images through print and electronic media for promotion of the exhibition and its entrants. Artists will retain all copyrights to their work.

DELIVERY AND RETURN OF WORK

Artists are responsible for the shipping of their work to and from The Dairy Barn Arts Center. Selected pieces MUST be shipped to arrive or be hand-delivered by dates listed above.

The Dairy Barn Arts Center
8000 Dairy Lane

Athens, Ohio, 45701

The artwork will be returned in the same container in which it was shipped. Please make sure that your shipping container is sufficient. The Dairy Barn Arts Center is not responsible for artworks damaged from insufficient packaging or handling during delivery.

Please send a prepaid, self-addressed return shipping label with the artwork. Do not send cash or personal checks with an estimated amount for postage.

REV. 6.12.2026