

Your Story in a Photo...

Photojournalism workshop booklet



Children in the Kibera slum (Nairobi, Kenya) bringing water home. Photo credit Ann Alimi Photography.

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Welcome!

Thank you for participating in our workshop and/or photography competition! We designed this resource to help set you up for the best possible outcome in this competition, while hopefully helping you build a skill (photojournalism) you can use and enjoy in the future.

This workshop and/or photography competition is organized as part of a PhD research project at the University of Waterloo. The researcher, Elaine Ho (PhD Candidate), will use the ideas and perspectives shared in your work to shape the future of water monitoring¹ in your community. Elaine is also the Resident Researcher at Great Art for Great Lakes (greatnessglp.com/GAGL).

The goal of this workshop is two-fold: first, to build your skills in photography and photojournalism, and second, to capture the relationships between people and the Grand River or Lake Erie. Your final submission to this research and, if you so choose, to the competition will be based on one (or more) of the following themes: things you care about, water challenges, or ideas for solutions.

Eligibility

You must meet both of the following criteria:

1. You are a member of Six Nations of the Grand River (on or off-reserve) OR you live, work, or attend school in Haldimand County.
2. You are 16 years of age or older. Signed consent to participate in this research is required; if you are 16 or 17 years old, you will need your legal guardian to sign for you.

Biographies

Elaine Ho (Researcher)

Elaine is a PhD Candidate in Social and Ecological Sustainability (Integrated Water Management) at University of Waterloo, a member of The Water Institute (based at University of Waterloo) and a student in the Canadian Rivers Institute (based at University of New Brunswick). Elaine is also the Resident Researcher for the Great Art for Great Lakes project 2019. In this role, she works with the selected artists and workshop participants in connecting the science to the art and the art to the science.

¹ Water monitoring in this study refers to the way we measure and interpret the health of our river and lake. Common things to monitor include water quantity (e.g., drought versus flooding), water quality (e.g., presence of E. coli or pollutants like mercury) and living things (e.g., checking fish for parasites or illness, ensuring they are breeding).

As a student researcher in the nationwide Global Water Futures collaborative, Elaine strives to strengthen surface freshwater monitoring, management and decision-making in Ontario. Water monitoring is the way we measure and interpret the health of our river and lake. Common things to monitor include water quantity (e.g., drought versus flooding), water quality (e.g., presence of E. coli or pollutants like chloride/road salt) and living things (e.g., checking fish for parasites or illness, ensuring they are breeding).

A serial entrepreneur, Elaine currently owns and operates TRIECO Research and Consulting and is the Director of Training and Consulting at Synergy Sustainability and Development Group. Additionally, she is the international Women's constituency representative on Action for Sustainable Development's Facilitation Group. In this role she provides guidance from an academic perspective as well. Elaine also supports various ongoing initiatives, including the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Canada and projects she initiated in a remote Maasai community in Kenya (e.g., a women's bead cooperative, school projects, micro tourism and sustainability education).

Read about Elaine's research (which this workshop and photo competition are a part of) at her website, www.GrandErieStudy.ca.

Ann Alimi (Photographer)

Ann is the co-lead for this workshop and is one of the judges for the photography competition. She is a graduate of the New York Institute of Photography for both film and digital media. She is also a Master level photographer at the Toronto Camera Club and a Certified Judge for the Canadian Association of Photographic Art and the Ontario Council of Camera Clubs.

Ann has completed the Individualized Photography Course and the Image Analysis Course Certificate with the Photographic Society of America, has won several photographic awards and has her photos published in magazines such as Canadian Camera Magazine, Pro Digital Imaging, Digital Camera World, Photo Life The Outpost Travel Magazine and Digital Photographer. She is currently the Chair of Audio Visual Presentations for both the Toronto Camera Club, the Canadian Association for Photographic Art and the Photographic Society of America. Ann is currently an active participant in photography competitions, public presentations and the judging of Photography and Audio Visual Presentation Competitions Nationally and Internationally.

View some of Ann's work at her professional website, www.AnnAlimiPhoto.com.

Types of photography

An important part of this workshop is defining what “photojournalism” is and is not. It *is* a photo that tells a story. It is *not* meant to be a piece of photographic art. It could be both, but *not* purely artistic.

It is also important that you are aware the difference between “photojournalism”, “street” photography and “documentary” photography. They are very similar. We will discuss some of the most important differences below.

Photojournalism

Photojournalism is the communication of news by way of photographs in the media (e.g., newspapers and magazines). *They are not to be altered* and are meant to convey current or historical news – *not* to present an artistic eye of the world. They document an event or occurrence.



This type of photography abides by a code of ethics that reporters have to comply with (which street photographers don't). Photojournalistic images are always posted with an explanation of context (e.g., a write-up), which is rarely the case in street photography.

One of the world's most famous images in photojournalism is the “Afghan girl” portrait taken in 1984 by Steve McCurry. This image, which portrays a 12-year old Pashtun orphan in a refugee camp, was published on the cover of *National Geographic* in June 1985 and accompanied by a story titled *Along Afghanistan's War-torn Frontier*. What made this image so famous and so impactful was the girl's incredible look and her penetrating gaze. The girl is poor but shows great pride, fortitude and self-respect. This photograph has circulated the world over and over, boasting an incredible global impact.

If you're interested, check out [this recent article](#) in the magazine *Digital Photo Pro* talks about a master photographer and what makes his photos so good.

Street photography

Street photography describes photos that show the human condition within any public place. The biggest misconception is that street photography must be composed with a “street” and portrait-style “people” in the photo. In fact, “street” refers to a time/candid moment when people are out and about, not a place. The subject could be anything that presents a story and the images do not need text or explanations to accompany them (unlike photojournalism).



Our first photographic example, known as “V-J Day Kiss”, was taken in 1945 by Alfred Eisenstaedt. The end of World War II was celebrated around the world. The photographer was ready with his camera as New Yorkers took to Times Square to celebrate a new era of peace and hope. This photo of a US Navy sailor grabbing and kissing a woman in a white dress (a nurse), has become a cultural icon. The photographer was

standing near them when he instantaneously snapped four sequential photos in the few seconds before the moment passed.

Our second example, “Lunch atop a skyscraper”, was taken by an unknown photographer in 1932. It portrays 11 construction workers taking a lunch break atop the steelwork of the Rockefeller Centre during its construction, about 850 feet above New York City. The image is iconic and epic; however,



this simple snapshot of workers on the job was in fact staged. Thus, this does not qualify as photojournalism, though it also doesn't lose its artistic quality and great story under street photography. Street photographers may stage their images, photojournalists cannot.

Our final example, below (credit: Ann Alimi Photography), does not show people, but for the purpose of this competition it does tell a story about the need for water for all (plant) life. We see the droplets that have formed on the seeds of a plant, perhaps a dandelion, with a flower in the background flowers mirrored on each of the droplets. This is an artistic style of street photography that requires a great deal of technical skill to create.



Both photojournalism and street photography are based on candid photography and the goal is to capture a real moment as it happens. You don't control your subject in photojournalism and ideally not in street photography. However, if you choose to control your subjects, that is acceptable in street photography (e.g., if you are creating a photo essay for a specific purpose) – not in photojournalism. In either case, the photo should portray a realistic view of life.

Documentary photography

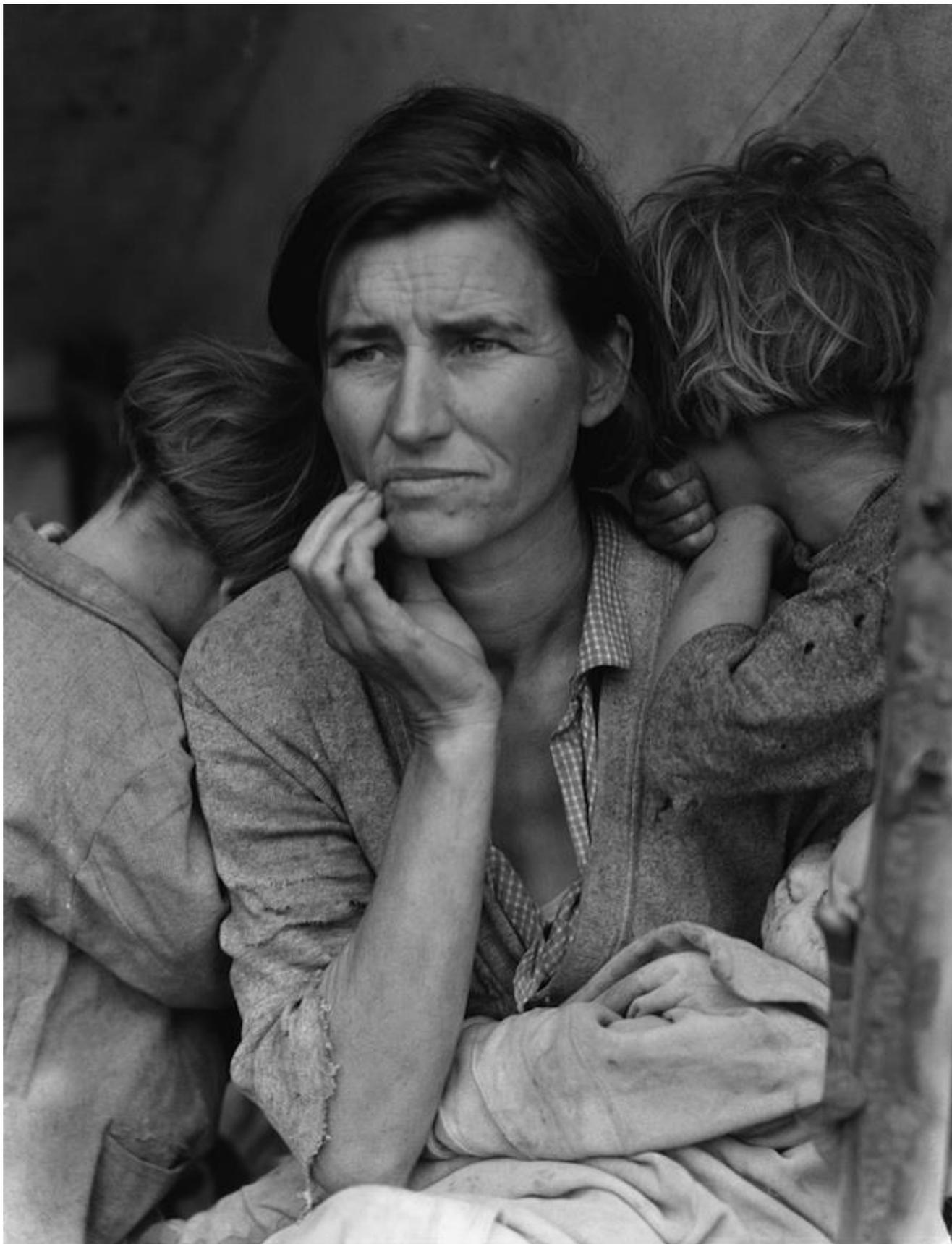
Documentary photography is almost identical to photojournalism but conveys a different message. Documentary photographers reveal an infinite number of situations, actions and results *over a period of time*. In short, they reveal life. Life isn't a moment. It isn't a single situation, since one situation is followed by another and another. Photojournalism – in its instant shot and transmission – doesn't show 'life'. It neither has the time to understand it nor the space to display its complexity.

Many of the photos we see in our newspapers are used outside the rules of photojournalism and documentary photography. Those images show frozen instants that can be taken out of context and put on a stage of the media's making, then sold as truth. True photojournalism aims to inform us as truthfully and quickly as possible about events of social relevance and doesn't seek to dig any deeper (i.e. no real planning or research). A documentary photographer does. In documentary photography, the photo or (most often) the series of photos is often accompanied with in-depth research about the subject(s) or a discussion of observations and learning from time spent with the subject(s).

Documentary photography has a more complex story line than photojournalism or street photography and is usually used in long-term projects. This is because the storyline usually needs to be developed by photographers, subject matter experts and/or activists who are deeply concerned about the topic of the image. Photojournalism, in comparison, is associated with breaking news (e.g., a specific event or moment, not a phenomenon).

The image below, known as the "Migrant mother", was taken by Dorothea Lange in 1936 during the Great Depression. It is one image of a series of documentary photographs that depicts the hardships of a specific family, especially the worried migrant mother, hungry and desperate at the time. This photograph in particular inspired strength for people across the United States.

The impact of such photographs and photo series is demonstrated nearly half a century later in 1983, when the mother was suffering from cancer and a stroke and was at the end of her life. A public appeal was made for her treatment costs and donations poured in from across the country. On September 16, 1983, the woman died surrounded by her family, including the grown children who clung to her in the famous photograph. Her gravestone reads "Migrant Mother — A Legend of the Strength of American Motherhood."



For the purpose of this contest you are free to submit **one photo** that fits any of these three types of photography. While candid photography challenges your skill as a photographer, you are permitted to stage your subject(s). Whichever genre you choose to use, **please do not heavily process your images**. The **only** edits permitted in this competition are cropping, exposure/lighting (including contrast) and, if you so wish, converting from colour to black and white. No other edits are permitted (including saturation), and no filters or other special effects are to be used. We will repeat this in the 'rules' section. Remember, the idea here is to take a great photograph from the start that represents real life (e.g., without filters – 'truthful' images).

Note: for the purpose of this workshop and competition, "photojournalism" is used to describe the submissions regardless of whether your work portrays newflash stories, a piece of artwork or a documentary issue. What all three have in common is that your photo **MUST** tell a story. Think of the saying "a picture is worth a thousand words" when you do your photography. In fact, your photo may actually be closer to documentary than any of the other two types.

Tips for good photojournalism

1. Plan what you want to photograph. For example, is there an event you want to capture? If so, attend and catch a moment that tells the story of that event. Or, if you prefer to go for a walk for some unplanned moments instead (perhaps around an intentional topic or in front of an intentional background), pay attention to what is happening around you and find the most interesting and meaningful visual opportunities. Sometimes just sitting down and patiently observing people or events around you may be all you need. Other times you may find yourself in front of an object or subject that tells an important story.
2. Take control and know your camera enough to have the exposure properly set so that you can catch that moment without ruining the shot. Most cameras and cell phones today can take excellent quality images on the auto setting if you are unfamiliar with the camera settings.
3. The point of photojournalism is to draw the viewer's attention to the elements that are critical/important in a short time. Sometimes you may be too far away to accomplish that. Generally, cropping is an acceptable practice but is the only adjustment allowed in photojournalism. Be conscious about how you frame or bring attention to your subject(s).

4. Take great care to make sure the photo is in focus, otherwise viewers won't be able to see or appreciate the story you intended to portray.
5. To tell a story it is usually best not to go for close-up portrait shots unless you are sure they are of the "Afghan girl" quality. Even then, close-ups may not be the best strategy given the theme of this competition. Shoot wide so that you give the viewer context for your subject – this may allow for easier interpretation of your story.
6. Don't pose your subjects unless you want to "stage" a photojournalistic shot (like the skyscraper photo above). Remember you are looking for candid shots that tell a story and represent the truth as closely as possible.
7. Photojournalism is sometimes best done in black and white. This can remove the distraction of focusing on many busy colours that can exist in real life/on the streets, allowing the viewer to focus on the subject(s) and story. However, both colour and black and white images are acceptable.

When to request photo releases

In this competition, in accordance with the University of Waterloo's ethics guidelines, if you are photographing people in public going about their usual business you do not need to ask for a photo release. They know they are in a public space and should act accordingly.

There are some exceptions to this. First, homeless individuals do not necessarily have a choice but to be in the public eye, so please do not take any photos of homeless individuals unless you have a photo release form signed. Second, if you are photographing someone performing an employment or volunteer duty, you will also need to obtain a signed photo release since these individuals are acting out of necessity and the 'public' space is considered their workplace for the duration of their duty.

Second, when photographing the faces of children, or any images in which children are a focus point of the photo, you must have a signed consent form from a legal guardian. Also, if you are posing or staging someone (e.g., not photographing candidly), you must also obtain a signed photo release before photographing.

If you are photographing your own children, the act of photographing them and submitting their image to the research and competition is implied consent for us to use the images for any purpose outlined in the Information and Consent Form.

If you are unsure whether or not you need a photo release form, please contact the researcher (Elaine) at e23ho@uwaterloo.ca to confirm whether one is needed. Elaine also has a photo release form you can use, so email her to request the form if you anticipate you might need one.

How to use camera settings

Using a cellphone

The most important is that you set the focus point on the most important subject for your story and that you know how to use the exposure of your phone so as not to overexpose or underexpose a photo. Usually if you press on the subject with your finger slightly it should set both the focus and exposure for that subject. Some more advanced cells have exposure bars that let you control the light hitting the subject.

Using a digital camera

Automatic settings are usually adequate in today's cameras for the purpose of this competition. However, if you want to venture beyond that, try using your camera on aperture priority with a setting of about f8 (which is generally sufficient for an all-round sharp photo). The camera will choose the speed based on how much light is available. However, make sure the speed does not go lower than 1/60 or you risk the camera shake causing an unfocused photo.

Should the light not be sufficient for higher speed than 1/60 consider either opening up the aperture to a lower number than f/8 and/or increasing manually the ISO. Should you need to focus on a foreground subject and blur the background, a focus of f2.8 or f4 will be required. Generally, however, photojournalistic stories involve the entire image being sharp, which requires f8 or higher.

Because photojournalism photos tend to be photographs you take quickly, you need to have your camera always ready and set properly. Take a few test shots in the area you plan to photograph prior to setting yourself up for the actual shooting. If all these digital settings don't mean anything to you, it is best you set your camera to auto. In-depth photography techniques require an entirely separate course as we would need more time to go over how every setting works.

How to take a great photo (general photography tips)

In order to make your photo interesting, impactful and able to draw attention to your subject(s), consider composing your photo in various ways other than a straight on snapshot image. For example, change your angles (point of view); try shooting from the ground level or from above the subject(s). Move around subjects to make sure the background does not include distracting elements and consider following or breaking the 'rule of thirds' in photography.

You will want to consider perspective when you want to draw attention to size or scale. Also, engage in eye contact when photographing people or animals. Below are some images showing examples of different compositions.

Perspective: By placing a person in the picture, it is easier to get a feel for the immense size of the desert dunes.



Point of view/eye contact. Below are two documentary style images. Both images use direct eye contact for maximum emotional impact. The first has so much more impact taken from above than it would have if it were taken straight-on. Also, the removal of color simplifies the story and intensifies the reality of the subjects' lives.



The second image is much more artistic in nature and shows the photographer chose an angle ideal for experiencing the reflection of the raptor water's surface.



In terms of water-themed photojournalism (e.g., for this contest), you will be looking to photograph anything that tells a story about the Grand River and/or Lake Erie. The story will relate to one or more of the three themes: things you care about, challenges you have observed or experienced, and potential solutions. Your submitted photo can include or exclude people, machines, animals, plants, and can even include or exclude water – basically, anything at all that you find will tell the world something about our precious water resources.

Some good examples

The following images are some good water-themed examples that tell a story. What story do they speak if of in your interpretation? What do they mean to you?





Not-so-good examples

Here are some water examples of what not to submit. These images involve or portray water; however they are either weak in storyline and/or technically deficient. Can you guess the weaknesses of each image?







Photo competition rules and information

To submit your photograph to the competition, email the following three things to Elaine Ho at e23ho@uwaterloo.ca:

1. The signed Information and Consent form, Registration form, and – if applicable – photo release.
2. One photo submission in a resolution of approximately 1400x1050 pixels in JPEG or similar format (contact Elaine if you're not sure about format).
3. Your write-up of no more than 200 words, either in a separate word document or in the content of the email, describing the story portrayed in your photograph and how it addresses at least one of the three themes (i.e., things you care about, challenges observed, potential solutions).

Please include "Photo submission" in the email subject line.

Advanced editing is NOT permitted. The following are the only alterations permitted:

- Cropping
- Exposure, lighting and contrast
- Converting from colour photography to black-and-white photography

No other edits are permitted, including adding filters, changing colour saturation, erasing or adding elements into the image, etc.

If you earn one of the highest scores, you will be offered a spot in the exhibit, which will be displayed at The Carolinian Café at 5 Cayuga St. N, Cayuga. If you choose to exhibit, you will be responsible for providing the printed version of your submission. Please ensure your photo is of a high enough resolution to display in print.

All entries are intended for the general public. Entrants are fully responsible for the photographs they submit. The Competition Sponsor will not accept photographic entries that are offensive and reserves the right to disqualify, in their sole discretion, any photographic entries that contain, for example, racist, hateful, sexist, homophobic or pornographic content.

Judging criteria

All winners will be selected on the basis of skill as determined by a panel of 3-4 judges. Photos will be judged on the following criteria:

- Thematic relevance (/5) – judged by the full panel
- Story (/5) – judged by the full panel
- Composition (/5) – judged by the full panel
- Visual impact (/5) – judged by the full panel
- Technical quality (/5) – judged by the two technical experts (award-winning photographers Ann Alimi and Olivia Goldstein)

Winners only will be notified by email and winning images may be published and/or printed and publicly be displayed. Elaine Ho (the researcher) reserves the non-exclusive right to publish any entry and/or use any entry in its material during or after the competition without further compensation to the entrants.

The winners will be notified by email or telephone by August 16, 2019. The cash prize will be delivered to the winners by mail. All decisions of the competition judges are final.

The top prize is \$250 in cash. Runners-up will be offered a space to exhibit their photograph at the Cayuga Café (at 5 Cayuga St. N, Cayuga). All prizes must be accepted as awarded.

Copyright

Photography releases are the responsibility of the entrant and must be scanned and submitted with your photo entry. If you need a template release, you can request this from Elaine at e23ho@uwaterloo.ca.

Photographic entries must not infringe upon or violate any laws or any third-party rights, including, but not limited to copyright, patent, trademark, trade secret or other proprietary rights and must not constitute material that would be considered libeling, defamatory, or a privacy violation.

Entrants must obtain all necessary permissions, licenses, clearances, releases, waivers of moral rights and other approvals from third parties (including but not limited to all copyright holders and all individuals appearing in the story submission), necessary to use the photographic entry, in whole or in part, in any way, including to reproduce, make derivatives, edit, modify, translate, distribute, transmit, publish, license and broadcast the photographic entry worldwide, by any means, without limitation. Any and all such permissions, licenses, clearances, releases, waivers of moral rights and approvals must be included.

The owner of a photographic entry retains ownership over the photograph. Each entrant (and his/her/their parent or guardian) irrevocably and in perpetuity grants Elaine Ho (the researcher) and research affiliates (e.g., individuals/departments at University of Waterloo, research partners like Great Art for Great Lakes) a world-wide, royalty-free, irrevocable and non-exclusive right and licence to use, copy, adapt, transmit, communicate, publicly display and perform, distribute and create compilations and derivative works or merchandise from the photographic entity to promote the research, researcher, and research affiliates.

Each entrant (and his/her/their parent or guardian) represents and warrants that he/she/they have the right to grant the licence set out above.