



## CRITICAL MASS 2023: ONLINE ENTRY GUIDELINES

Registration for Critical Mass 2023 will be open from June 1- 30 (noon Pacific Time). You can log in at any time during that window to complete the following steps:

Please enter only **one** body of work. Participants are asked to submit work not previously submitted to Critical Mass, but up to two previously submitted images are acceptable. You must submit at least 7 images.

**\*Please Note:** Throughout its history, Photolucida has welcomed creative technologies and tools in photographic image-making. We remain committed to celebrating diverse approaches of visual storytelling. The emerging field of AI (Artificial Intelligence) – generated imagery is a new frontier for all—one that is quickly evolving in terms of authorship, intellectual property (IP), valuation issues, and more. Given that the consensus of industry-wide best practices concerning these many complex questions is still evolving, Photolucida will not accept submissions of AI-generated imagery in our 2023 open call for entry for Critical Mass. Our goal is to continue exploring issues at the intersection of AI, creativity, and photo-based work through ongoing conversation with curators, gallerists, collectors, thought leaders, and, of course, you- our community of passionate photographers.

### Registration:

- **Create a Username and Password**- you will use this information to access and edit your submission until the deadline. If you've previously registered anytime in 2019-2023 or have an existing username/password, login first and then signup.
- **Personal Information**- This is your contact info as you want it to appear online and to the jurors. This can be different from your billing information. Your first and last name, email address, geographic location, and website are required. If you don't have a website enter "No Website". Collaborator and Agency fields are optional, **please leave blank unless applicable to your entry.**
- **Artist Statement**- This should address the specific body of work under consideration, not your general philosophy of artmaking (2000-character max).
- **Print and Pricing Information**- This information should include title, date, dimensions, media type, edition information (if available), and price. This can be conveyed as a list for each image (when the information is different for each print) OR as an overall statement for all of the works (when the information is the same for all prints). This information will

be distributed to jurors and fellow participants exactly as you have entered it. **\*See below for suggestions on writing your artist statement as well as pricing and editing your work.**

- **Upload Your Images**- Image files must be named like so: LastName\_FirstName\_1.jpeg and must be in jpeg/jpg format. Each image cannot exceed 2MB in size, and must not exceed pixel dimensions of 1000 pixels wide or 750 pixels high (any resolution will work as long as the pixels and MB guidelines above are followed). Limit 10 images, you do not have to upload all of your images at once- more can be added after you register and you log back in.
- **Enter Image Titles (Optional)**- Text entered in the title box will appear in your submissions exactly as you have entered it. \*Please note that image titles are different than file names! Do not title your images with the file spec requirements above.
- **Payment Information**- Enter your credit card and billing information and hit “Submit” to complete your registration. We use Stripe for secure payment processing.

You will receive a confirmation email from us when your registration has gone through. This will include a link to your Dashboard. Click the link to login and review or edit your submission at any time. From here you can adjust your artist statement, print information, and switch out or finish uploading images if you didn't upload all ten images the first time around- until the final deadline. If you lost your email or it did not come through, you can go to the website and under the Critical Mass drop down menu select “Login”.

**Make sure to check your uploaded images.** Once your images have uploaded, you can click on the thumbnails on your Dashboard for full-size previews. Verify that everything is as you want it – *what you see is what the jurors see*. You can change images or text information up until the last day of registration, but please, **do not wait until the last minute to enter everything!** Change your work as much as you like, but all changes must be made by **12:00pm (noon) Pacific Time on Friday, June 30**. Make sure you have the right image, with the right title, in the right sequence.

**There is no “submit” button. Your entry will be automatically submitted on the deadline date – exactly as you have it prepared.**

### Notes On Writing an Artist Statement

Yes, artist statements are important! Within the context of Critical Mass, we suggest a length of no more than approximately 250 words/1500 characters for your statement. The strength of an artist statement can be one of the determining factors for jurors in assigning a stronger score to your series as a whole. Take the time to craft a clear and concise statement to support your body of work. Amy Touchette offers some sage advice for photographers writing artist statements [here](#).

Here is an artist's statement from a previous Critical Mass entry that we feel is an excellent example:

*For my series Interwoven, I explore the challenges of homosexuality in a hyper-masculine culture within Swaziland. Given that homosexuality is illegal in this small African country, gay men constantly have to hide their sexuality and suppress their true identity. After befriending several gay men in Swaziland, who confided in me their personal stories of struggle, I asked them to choose a piece of local fabric typically worn by women with which I made unique wraps on each of their heads. It would be taboo for men to wear these head-wraps in public, as that would indicate homosexual tendencies. This was one simple way for them to express their individuality that they regularly have to hide.*

*The woven process is inspired by my apprenticeship work with several local handicraft artisans making baskets and rugs, which involved intricate weaving techniques. In using this technique, I hand-shred the printed portraits, and then weave them with fabric from the head wrap in the actual photograph. Each man's gaze is directly on the viewer as if demanding attention to their true identity while still being hidden behind the fabric, which is a metaphor for their culture suppression. This masked, submissive state is typical in their everyday lives. Through this series, I aim to channel a voice for these silenced men and embracing an otherwise frowned-upon identity with a sense of pride without neglecting the reality of their everyday existence.*

– Kyle Meyer

### Notes On Print Pricing and Editioning

Some Critical Mass entrants chose to leave their pricing and/or edition information blank. Jurors have noted that not having access to this information has an impact on their voting. As a tool, we offer the comments below as general pointers on how to price or edition your work. Please note these are only general suggestions and do not represent the opinions of all jurors, as their backgrounds vary greatly.

#### **Pricing your work:**

While gallerists do not necessarily expect an artist coming to them to know what the price of their prints should be, they should have an idea. Also, artists should be clear about what they want the size of their editions to be and most of all, at what print size they feel their work looks best.

Photographic prints generally cost between \$100 and \$100,000. An artist's basic trajectory is to start print prices lower and have them rise as the demand for the work rises. The price for a given size and type of print should never go down and your print prices are going to be weighed in the context of other artists' prices. That means that you should be finding out what other unrepresented photographers are charging – ask them how they configure things! You can also check prices at non-commercial exhibition venues, such as university galleries. Once you enter a

relationship with a gallery, your print prices will go up because of the value added that the gallery contributes by exhibiting them and working for you to place them in private, and sometimes public, collections.

If you are guessing on a price to place your work at, and it is obviously inaccurate or inflated, jurors will spot and question this. Just because you assign a high price to your work, it does not mean someone will pay it or jurors will think it more worthy content-wise. Research before you assign!

### **Editioning your work:**

Should one assign an edition to one's work, or leave it open? Some photographers (and most gallerists) believe that in today's market it is critical for an artist to make a limited edition of their work, and that all good collectors demand it. This gives the artist the ability to be able to stop selling a particular image, and to move on and let it have a second life on the secondary market. There is no better sales tool than having a sold-out print. It makes a collector pay more attention to what is still available, so that it doesn't sell out before they can buy it. In general, an artist should be more concerned about what they are going to do next than what they have done in the past.

Some photographers do not like assigning editions to their work as they feel it gives gallerists too much control. For example: if a collector or museum wants a particular image that has a sold-out edition, the artist is no longer able to reprint and sell it to them. They will have to purchase that image from the secondary market and you, the artist, lose out that sale/income.

In the end, you are responsible for deciding how best to price and edition your work. We've heard from some jurors they are more likely to purchase a print if the pricing information is listed (and reasonable). While you should determine your pricing based on an objective analysis of the market and your costs, you're not required to list a figure here if you feel that would be premature. To suggest that potential buyers "inquire for pricing" is acceptable but know they would prefer to see the price listed and be prepared with an answer if you are asked.