

# PSA News

AUSTRALIA

MARCH 2023



## Welcome

Our new member in February was:

*Jim Metcalfe, Killara, NSW*

## Congratulations

**Craig Parker** has been awarded GMPSA

If you gain a new ROPA or Portfolio distinction, or achieved anything else that you would like to share with other PSA members, please let me know.

## Problems Renewing Membership

If you have any problems renewing your membership through the PSA website please contact John Keyes at PSA Headquarters. His email is [membership@psa-photo.org](mailto:membership@psa-photo.org)

## AI

I came across this very interesting interview about AI with Mark Heaps who works in the industry. It is long, more than an hour, but it gives great insight into where AI is going (not just with images). Well worth the time. Really interesting around 49 minutes when he is talking about Photoshop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7loJey9lvDg>

## PSA Journal

The March issue of the PSA Journal is available now and can be downloaded from the PSA website <https://psa-photo.org/page/journal> after you log in.

In this Issue:

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## Originality

Jen Fawkes, EPSA,SPSA

Let's talk about originality. We all know that if we want to capture the eye of the judge we need to produce an image that has impact, one that stands out from the crowd and makes the judge want to look further. All too often photographers assume that having strong skills in the technical aspects of taking an image, or post processing an image, is enough to make the image worthy of entering in a competition. Perhaps we need to remember that this is about international competition, and we can assume that all (well most) participants have the skills to take and post process an image effectively.

So how do we make our images stand out from the crowd? Imagine the thought process of a judge looking at up to 500 images (or more) in one section of the competition. Imagine that there are many images of a rodeo, or of landscapes, or even portraits. If we assume that most of them are taken and processed well, then what do we need to do to make ours noticed?

One of the key elements that can add impact, is the concept of originality. But what makes an image 'original'?

In the first instance we might have an original subject. That might be a subject that is rarely seen in competition. In a sports section we might pick a sport that is not commonly presented in competition, we might turn the camera on the crowd, or the coach, or wait for the end of the game to capture the joy, or disappointment.

In my role as an educator at PSA, I get many students tell me that their image is original, since no-one else has taken that particular subject before. This might be an image of their grandchild taken at a playground. My response is something like this:

*Pictures of children at a playground is not an original subject. Just because no one has seen your grandchild before, does not make the image 'original' for a judge.*

The other aspect to consider is that if you are lucky and capture an original subject – will it be interesting for the judge? Remember that originality is only one feature that might add impact to your image.

Another way to look at this is to consider an original presentation of a common subject. Sometimes it's hard to find something original to shoot but try to think of a new way to shoot a common subject. Perhaps find a different angle, from up higher, or down lower. While a portrait might not be original, you can make it original by using props, lighting, an interesting environment or adding emotion.

(cont.)

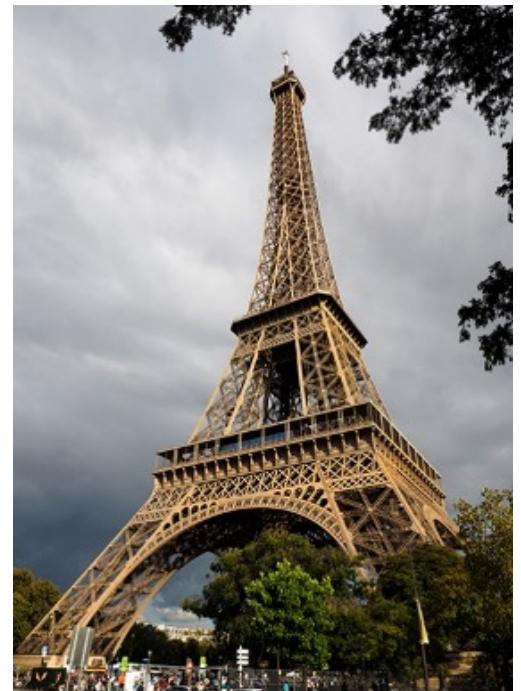
## Originality (cont.)

I was recently trawling through some old photos of Paris, taken in 2017, long before I really knew how to take a competition worthy image. I found a range of images of the Eiffel Tower, all of the same common subject. Obviously, I was trying to understand the idea of originality back then!

While I'm not suggesting that any of the following images are actually competition worthy, they do show how a little bit of thought might make an image more original.



*A common presentation of a common subject – this is NEVER going to capture the attention of the judge.*



*Perhaps an attempt at creative Framing – it is an unusual angle.*



*I liked this one, shame I didn't have a wide enough lens to capture the top of the tower.....*



*Converting to monochrome might work, it changes the story from that of the tower, to one of lines and shapes.*



*The Eiffel Tower at night,  
That's a novel idea?*



*And now for something completely  
different. This one taken with love  
locks from a distant bridge.*

## ChatGPT – friend or enemy?

I guess by now that most of you have heard of the AI program known as ChatGPT. In case you haven't, this is how ChatGPT describes itself:

“ChatGPT is a type of artificial intelligence language model developed by OpenAI that can understand and generate human-like language. The "GPT" in ChatGPT stands for "Generative Pretrained Transformer", which refers to the specific architecture of the neural network used to build the model. The model can be used for a variety of natural language processing tasks, including text completion, question-answering, and conversational agents.”

That might sound a bit weird, but the basic idea is you type in a question or request and ChatGPT provides an answer. I have been experimenting with ChatGPT for a couple of weeks and I think it has a lot of potential and it can be fun to use.

The reaction of most people I speak to about it is - “This has to be bad. Students will use it to cheat”. There are already news reports of some school banning it. That, to me, is crazy.

I think of it this way. If I need information about something I can spend hours in a library or I can Google it and get a list of websites that might provide information about that topic. I can then spend a lot of time exploring those websites, some of which will be helpful and some which will not. If I put exactly the same query into ChatGPT it will give me a straightforward answer (that usually hits on the main points) in a matter of seconds. I can then ask ChatGPT to give me further information about points in the answer. The easiest way to illustrate this is with an example.

Question to ChatGPT: What gives a photographic image impact?

Answer: A photographic image can have a strong impact on the viewer for a variety of reasons. Some of the factors that can contribute to the impact of a photograph include:

1. **Composition:** The way the elements of the image are arranged within the frame can greatly affect its impact. A well-composed photograph can draw the viewer's eye to the subject and convey a sense of balance and harmony.
2. **Lighting:** The lighting in a photograph can affect the mood and emotional tone of the image. Strong and dramatic lighting can create a powerful and impactful image, while softer lighting can create a more peaceful or contemplative mood.
3. **Contrast:** The use of contrast in a photograph can create a sense of depth and add visual interest. High contrast images with deep shadows and bright highlights can create a dramatic impact, while low contrast images can convey a sense of calm.

4. **Color:** The use of color can also greatly impact the emotional tone of a photograph. Bright, saturated colors can create a lively and energetic mood, while muted or desaturated colors can create a sense of serenity or melancholy.
5. **Subject matter:** The subject of a photograph can also greatly influence its impact. Photographs of people or animals can evoke strong emotions, while landscapes or still lifes can create a sense of awe or wonder.
6. **Narrative:** A photograph that tells a story or captures a specific moment in time can also have a strong impact on the viewer. By conveying a sense of context or emotion, a photograph can make the viewer feel more connected to the subject and the world around them.

Follow-up question to ChatGPT: How can you combine impact and originality in a photographic image?

Answer: Combining impact and originality in a photographic image can be challenging, but it is possible with careful planning and creativity. Here are some tips that may help you achieve this:

1. **Experiment with different angles and perspectives:** One way to make your image more original is to experiment with different angles and perspectives. This can create a unique and eye-catching composition that stands out from more conventional shots.
2. **Play with color:** Using unusual or unexpected colors can also make your photograph stand out and create an impact. Consider using color to create a particular mood or atmosphere, or to draw attention to a particular subject or element within the image.
3. **Add an unexpected element:** Incorporating an unexpected element into your photograph can add a sense of originality and intrigue to the image. This could be something as simple as a prop or accessory that is out of place or doesn't quite fit with the rest of the scene.
4. **Use creative editing techniques:** Post-processing and editing can also help you create a more original and impactful image. Consider experimenting with different filters, overlays, and other effects to create a unique and eye-catching final product.
5. **Consider the emotional impact:** Finally, remember that the emotional impact of your image is key to creating a lasting impression on the viewer. Consider how the subject matter, composition, and other elements of your image can create a sense of emotion and connection with the viewer, and use this to create an image that is both impactful and original.

You may not particularly like the answers above, but they illustrate (at a very basic level) the capabilities of ChatGPT and how it could be useful for someone exploring a topic for the first time.

If you want to have some fun exploring Chat GPT, try using some of the following queries:

What are the basic principles of image composition?

Explain how to use a curves adjustment layer in Photoshop.

How can I control depth of field in a photographic image?

What is the purpose of the fill slider in the Photoshop layers palette?

Teach me how to adjust an image in Adobe Camera Raw.

Basically, I have tried to illustrate that ChatGPT can be a useful tool - think of it as Google on steroids!

## Backing up your files

Several members have asked me for advice on backing up files. Obviously the best method or you will depend on your specific needs and preferences, but the basic options are:

1. External hard drive. A simple and relatively cheap option.
2. Cloud storage. Has the advantage of being able to access your files from any location where you have internet access.
3. Network-attached storage (NAS). Can be a practical way of getting access to files on a home network from multiple devices.
4. Online backup service such as Carbonite can automatically back up your files to a remote server.

Whichever backup method you choose, it's important to make sure you regularly back up your files to avoid losing important data. The best way to do this is to use at least a simple method of automation rather than doing your backups manually.

I backup to external hard drives using a Mac program called Carbon Copy Cloner. It is simple to set up and provides very flexible options for automatic backups of individual folders, multiple folders or complete disks. It is reasonably priced and can be installed on multiple computers in your household. You can get a free 30-day trial. (Unfortunately I don't get a commission for advertising their product!)

## Some Upcoming Exhibitions

**Southern Cross International Exhibition of Stereo Photography** (PSA 2023-126). 3D digital - Open and Scapes. Entries close *3rd April, 2023*. Full details here <http://www.oz3d.info/>

**Queensland International Digital Circuit** (PSA 2023-206). Three PIDC sections (Open, Weather, Seasons) and two PIDM sections (Open and Smoke, Fire, Fog or Steam). Approval from PSA, FIAP, GPU and APS. Entries close *19th June, 2023*. Full details here <http://www.queensland-photo.com/>

**A full list of all PSA-recognized exhibitions for 2023 is available here** <https://listings.psaems.org/>

**Thank you to all those who contributed to  
this month's newsletter.  
Everyone, please send me some news or  
articles for my next newsletter!**

If you need help with any PSA matters please contact me.

Regards,

Roy

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