

PSA Newsletter

AUSTRALIA

JUNE 2023



Welcome

Our new PSA members in May were:

Sue Curtis, Woonona, NSW

Charlotte Carter, Thornlands, QLD

Mark Brennan, Toongabbie, NSW

This brings our individual membership in Australia to 175.

Our members are in the following States and Territories:

ACT 2

NSW 92

QLD 30

SA 14

TAS 6

VIC 30

WA 1

Congratulations

Jen Fawkes and Lai Man Pang have been awarded APSA and Roy Killen has been awarded FPSA.

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.

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KEEPING YOUR DETAILS UP TO DATE

If you change any of your person details (email, postal address, etc) please do the following:

1. Log on to the PSA website.
2. Select "Members Only" near the top of the page.
3. Select "Edit your member profile".
4. Change your email (or other information), then scroll to the bottom of the page and "Save Changes".

PSA Journal

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

WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?

Over the last few months I have been able to share with you some wonderful contributions from members:

February - Brian Menzies' article on "Unforgettable landscapes" and Nilmini De Silva's article on "Street Photography".

March - Jen Hawke's article on "Originality".

April - Geoff Wiggins' article on "A Love of birds", Jenny Hartman's article on what she likes about photography, and Jacky Lee's article on "Aerial Photography in Hong Kong".

May - Helen Walker's article on "Street Photography".

If you missed any of these articles you can view them on my website in the PSA section: <https://www.roykillen.photography/>

Unfortunately, this month I did not get any contributions. So, a special plea - please send me something for next month! It does not have to be long - just a few paragraphs about anything related to photography and preferably a couple of images.

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IS THE SKY GOING TO FALL IN?

Roy Killen, APSA, GMPSA/S, EFIAP, APSEM

In recent months there has been lots of excitement and lots of doom and gloom about programs such as MidJourney and DALL-E that enable images to be generated from text. Then Adobe put the cat among the pigeons by releasing (in the beta version of PS at this stage) their “generative AI” feature that enables images to be generated from text *within Photoshop*.

It only takes a little experimentation with this new PS feature to realise it is very powerful, lots of fun and not quite perfect.

OK, they are not pigeons, but you get the idea!

So what does this mean for the future of photographic images?

Some will argue that this is the end of photography as we know it; that we can no longer accept that any image is “real”.

Others will argue that this is just another tool to assist with creating images.

Major photographic organisations such as PSA and FIAP are already taking steps to limit AI generated or enhanced images in competitions and this is an issue that photography clubs will have to address. The PSA response (at this stage) has been to modify the Conditions of Entry of exhibitions (from 1 January 2024) to include this statement:

In all sections of the exhibition, images must originate as photographs made by the entrant. They may not incorporate identifiable images produced by anyone else (for example: clip art, replacement skies, or stock images). *Images created in whole or in part by image creation software (frequently called ‘AI’ images) are not allowed.* Editing or alteration of images is permitted within the limits specified in the relevant section definitions that are available here <https://psa-photo.org/page/division-definitions>.



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IS THE SKY GOING TO FALL IN? (Cont.)

Entrants to PSA-recognised exhibitions also have to agree to an “Exhibition Entrant’s Agreement” that includes these statements:

- I hold copyright of each submitted image and all components of each submitted image.
- Each submitted image and, where applicable, all component parts of each submitted image have been photographed by me.
- If requested, I will provide the *original, unedited version of each image I entered with original EXIF data intact, and any other information the investigator considers necessary to establish the legitimacy of my images.*

The above rules apply to all exhibition sections, not just the reality Divisions (Nature, Photo Travel and Photojournalism).

For the majority of exhibition entrants, these rules will provide sufficient guidance to enable them to submit ‘honest’ entries and, if required, to provide sufficient evidence to establish the legitimacy of their images.

The easiest way to establish the legitimacy of an image is to provide the ‘as captured’ RAW file, and in previous newsletters I have encouraged members to keep a backup of those files.

Recently, a member asked me the following questions (with my simple answers):

Can RAW files be faked? Yes, but not easily.

Is there some way to validate a RAW file? There are various ‘forensic’ techniques to determine the likelihood that a file has been modified.

Is a DNG considered to be a RAW file? Yes if the camera captures DNG files. Otherwise it is not considered an original file.

What if the in-camera image was captured as a JPEG? An original unedited JPG can be used as evidence of the legitimacy of an image. It is relatively easy to determine if a JPG file has been altered.

My basic advice is this:

Capture RAW files.

Save a backup copy of those RAW files before any editing is done.

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IS THE SKY GOING TO FALL IN? (Cont.)

Several companies (such as Adobe) have announced they are planning to introduce some form of digital ID to indicate when an image has been fully or partially AI generated. How comprehensive this will be or how useful it will be for photographers remains to be seen.

There is no simple answer to how PSA (or photography clubs) should respond to the developing opportunities and challenges presented by AI. Rules created by organisations such as PSA can provide guidance, but there will always be people who want to push the boundaries. Regardless of what is possible now or in the future, we all have a responsibility to be honest and ethical in our photographic endeavours.

Here is something to consider:

- When you photographed on slide film, what you captured was essentially the final product.
- When you photographed on negative film there were skilful people who could manipulate the printed image in the darkroom.
- In the early days of digital photography there were limited options of altering the truth of the image, but it was much easier than in the darkroom.
- Early versions of Photoshop (and other editors) allowed images to be altered easily with tools such as the clone stamp.
- Later versions of Photoshop enabled changers with a healing brush.
- Then the healing brush became ‘content aware’.
- Now the Photoshop ‘remove’ tool has taken content-aware fill and healing to a new level.
- The generative fill feature in Photoshop beta extends the capabilities of content-aware fill and cloning.

At what point in this progression should we say “this is no longer photography”?

At what point should we say “it does not matter what you do with your images, adding things with AI generation is really no different from adding textures or overlays that were created by someone else”?

If you want to share your thoughts on these issues and challenges please send me an email and I will include your contribution in my next newsletter.

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4 Nations Competition

If you are a member of the Australian Photographic Society (APS) you are invited and encouraged to submit images for possible selection for the 4 Nations Competition. This is an annual competitions between Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and Canada.

There are four sections: Open (OP), Monochrome (MO), Nature (NT) and Our Country (OC).

The national photographic organisation in each participating country selects 20 images in each of the four competition categories. Each of the selected images must come from a different member of the national organisation.

Specifications for submitted images are:

- Maximum resolution 1920 x 1200 pixels (when viewed in correct orientation)
- Maximum file size 2MB.
- sRGB colour space.
- JPEG file format.
- File name in this format: Section_Society_Title_Your_Name.jpg (for example, NT_APS_Pelican_Mary Smith.jpg)
- 4 Images overall per member may be submitted.

All entries should be sent to Kerry Boytell kerryboytell@gmail.com by WeTransfer or email.

Please submit your entries as soon as possible but no later than **21st June**.

Any image previously selected to represent APS in the 4 Nations Competition may not be entered.

Individual entrants must hold, and will retain, the copyright of their images. By entering this competition, the individual entrant agrees that images accepted as part of the APS entry may be used for publicity and promotion purposes of the 4 Nations Competition in publications and on websites of all four participating Societies.

Further information is available on the APS website <https://www.a-p-s.org.au/index.php/exhibition/4-nations/4-nations-2023> or from Kerry Boytell.

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Some Upcoming Exhibitions

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

VIGEX Digital (PSA 2023-247). Three PIDC sections (Open, Creative, Scapes), PIDM, Nature and Photojournalism. **Entries close 2nd July**. PSA, FIAP and APS approval. Full details here <https://vigex.org.au/>

Newcastle International Digital Circuit (PSA 2023-333). Sections for PIDC, PIDM Open, PIDM Portrait, Nature. **Entries close 2nd July**. Full details <https://newcastleint.myphotoclub.com.au/> APS approval for three exhibitions in the circuit.

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

Everyone, please consider sending me some news or articles for my next newsletter!

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

Regards,

Roy

Dr Roy Killen, APSA, GMPSA/S, EFIAP, APSEM

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