PSA Competition Guidelines and Information

What is PSA?

The Photographic Society of America, or PSA (www.psa-photo.org), is an international photo organization with members in 60 countries, ranging from professional to amateur enthusiasts of all ages and levels of achievement. PSA has seven interest groups called "Divisions".

Individuals choosing to join PSA with an individual membership can take advantage of different courses in photography, technical information services; critique and evaluation services; group workshops; photo seminars; print, slide, digital essay competitions and more.

PSA also offers membership to camera clubs. Charlotte Camera Club (CCC) is a member-club with PSA. That means, as a club we can take advantage of some of PSA's club services and join specific divisions and participate with other member-clubs in Interclub competitions. The PSA year runs from September to June.

CCC and PSA Competitions – How it Works

CCC participates in five PSA Divisions:

1. Open   2. Creative   3. Travel   4. Photojournalism   5. Nature

Each division holds 3 Interclub competitions (rounds) each year. Within each division the participating clubs are split into Groups – so clubs are competing against clubs with similar skill levels.

Active CCC members (dues paid) can submit one image in each PSA Division competition round. Every active CCC member is eligible to participate in PSA competitions through CCC. You do not have to join PSA as an individual.

Images should be uploaded to the appropriate club Smugmug link before midnight of the deadline date. Each competition's due date is published on the CCC calendar, on our Website, and listed in the *CCC and PSA Image Due Dates* document on the CCC Website's Member Resources page. Images which have been submitted for other CCC competitions or events MAY also be submitted in PSA competitions, provided they adhere to the specific PSA Division's criteria detailed later in this document. Nudes are not acceptable in any CCC event therefore, not in CCC's PSA contests. The club's PSA Coordinators will download the images and post them online in a Smugmug gallery. That Smugmug gallery link and a SurveyMonkey voting link will be emailed to all CCC members, so our members can rank the images.

For each competition, a maximum of six images can be submitted by a club. The top six images selected by our membership will be sent to PSA as our club's entries for the competition. Those "final 6" images will be posted to the CCC Website's PSA Results page.

PSA will include CCC's 6 images with images from the 10-20 other clubs in our division "group." Together, this slate of images will be viewed and scored by a panel of 3 judges at a PSA member club NOT in our "group". Each image in the slate is given a score by each of the 3 judges using a scale of 1-5 (with 5 being best.) The image's 3 scores are added, resulting in the image's competition score of 3-15. After the competition, scores are returned to CCC along with any Awards or Honorable Mentions. The results are then updated on the CCC Website's PSA Results page.

Some divisions have end of the year competitions. PSA may automatically include CCC images that win Awards or Honorable Mentions.

How to Submit Images#

Make sure your image complies with ALL the criteria for the Division contest you've chosen to enter (See specifics in next section).

Naming and dimensions

- Your image, in its usual viewing orientation, may be no more than 1400 pixels left to right and no more than 1050 pixels top to bottom.

- It must be in JPG (JPEG) format and be oriented properly. Images will be judged (or rejected) exactly as they have been submitted.

- **FILE NAMES**:
  1. must include the **IMAGE TITLE** (not exceeding 25 characters) followed by a **DASH** then followed by the **PHOTOGRAPHER'S NAMES** in this order:

     Example: **Golden Gate Bridge-James Constantinopolis**

  2. may ONLY contain letters, numbers, spaces and a dash.
     may NOT include any punctuation or special characters.

- The file size should not exceed 1.7 Mb.
- Since images will be viewed by projection, ppi resolution does not affect image quality.
- It is recommended you resize your images before final sharpening.

Sending your entries

By the deadline date listed on the CCC Calendar:

- Upload your image to Smugmug using the link below.
  PSA Open
  https://charlottecameraclub.smugmug.com/upload/P2ZsFP/PSAOpenUpload
  PSA Creative
  https://charlottecameraclub.smugmug.com/upload/2V4NHW/PSACreativeUpload
  PSA Travel
  https://charlottecameraclub.smugmug.com/upload/FtCwWP/PSATravelUpload
  PSA Photojournalism
  https://charlottecameraclub.smugmug.com/upload/nkF393/PSAPhotojournalismUpload
  PSA Nature
  https://charlottecameraclub.smugmug.com/upload/jcfqTN/PSANatureUpload

PSA Division-specific Definitions and Criteria

Each division within PSA is specific to a particular interest in photography. Therefore, some divisions have different requirements and criteria for contests and images. Outlined below are the criteria and definitions for the five divisions/contests in which CCC participates.

The **Projected Image Division (PID)** is PSA's largest Division.
Charlotte Camera Club participates in both the 1. PID Open and the 2. PID Creative Divisions.

1. PID Open Division

- Open means there are no theme, style or subject matter restrictions.
- The photographs will be digital only (scanned film/slides is permitted.)
- Alterations are allowed.
- All image content must entirely be the photographer's own, no commercial or clip art is allowed.

2. PID Creative Division

*The PSA definition of Creative is "**Altered Reality**". More specifically, the image must obviously display a change in natural color, form, shape, or any combination of three. Noncreative images (i.e. images not having "Altered Reality") are not eligible for this competition.*

- The original image must be made by the photographer on slide/film or acquired digitally.
- Images can be creative using in-camera techniques (double exposure, creative panning/zooming, etc.) or through post processing.
- High Dynamic Range (HDR) images <u>without further changes</u> are not considered "Altered Reality."
- All images must be original and may not incorporate elements produced by anyone else.
- Images may be altered by the maker/entrant, and artwork or computer graphics created by that maker/entrant may be incorporated, if the photographic content predominates.
- Images may not be constructed entirely within a computer.
- Remember the core image of the photo should be identifiable.
- Any subject matter is acceptable as long as the Altered Reality guidelines are apparent in the image.

3. Travel Division

A Photo Travel image must express the feeling of a time and place, and portray a land, its distinctive features or culture in its natural state

- There are no geographical limitations.
- Close-up pictures of people or objects must include distinguishable environment. **NOT permitted are:**
- techniques that add to, relocate, clone, replace, combine, or remove any element of the original image, <u>except by cropping</u>.

- ultra close-ups which lose their identity, studio-type model shots, or photographic manipulations that misrepresent the true situation.
- derivations including infrared.

Allowed are:
- resizing, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, sharpening, and restoration of original color to the scene.
- techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches;
- Full conversion to grey-scale monochrome.
- All allowed adjustments must appear natural.

4. Photojournalism Division

According to PSA definition, Photojournalism is devoted to recording current events or situations to preserve them for the future. News, features, man and man's environment, human interest, all are included. Photojournalists contribute to the world's archives for future generations.

- The story-telling value of the image is most important and shall be considered over pictorial quality while still maintaining high technical quality.
- Photojournalism images shall consist of images with informative content and emotional impact, including human interest, documentary and spot news.
- PJ images can be either Human Interest or General Photojournalism (i.e. informative, news, sports.)
- Human Interest images depict a person or persons in an interactive, emotional, or unusual situation excluding sports action, but sports emotion, unusual sport situation, etc. is permitted.
- Human Interest images must actually include a person or persons (not just an implied person.)
- Human Interest Images will be judged on the photojournalistic story depicting/illustrating i**nteraction** or **emotion** or **unusual situation**.

NOT permitted are:
- photographs which misrepresent the truth, such as those with manipulation that alters the subject matter (including post processing background blurring.)
- setup situations.

Allowed are:
- resizing, cropping, selective lightening or darkening, sharpening, and restoration of original color to the scene.
- techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches;
- Full conversion to grey-scale monochrome.
- All allowed adjustments must appear natural.

5. Nature Division Definition of Nature Photography

All images used in PSA Nature Division competitions and PSA-recognized Exhibitions must meet the PSA Nature Definition of Nature Photography as follows:

Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology, in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject material and certify its honest presentation.

Note: The **story telling** value of a photograph **must** be weighed more than the pictorial quality while still maintaining high technical quality.

Images for PSA Nature Division competitions can have as the primary subject matter:

- landscapes, geologic formations, weather phenomena.
- extant zoological or botanical organisms which o includes images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food (provided the artificial habitat is not apparent in the image.)
    - includes images taken with the subjects free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat.
    - This is not limited to animals, birds and insects. Marine subjects and botanical subjects (including fungi and algae) taken in the wild are suitable subjects, as are carcasses of extant species.

NOT permitted:

- human elements, except where those human elements are integral parts of the nature story such as nature subjects, like barn owls or storks, adapted to an environment modified by humans, or where those human elements are in situations depicting natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves. If you can see a fence, road, bridge, power line or other human created elements in your image it will not be accepted in the Nature division competition.
- photographs of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals such as: cattle, sheep, horses, etc. or mounted specimens.
- techniques that add, relocate, replace, or remove pictorial elements, <u>except by cropping</u>;
- any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement;
- stitched images;
- infrared images, either direct-captures or derivations.

Allowed are:

- scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals
- techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph without changing the nature story or the pictorial content, or without altering the content of the original scene, including HDR, focus stacking (such as Helicon Focus) and dodging/burning;
- techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise, and film scratches;
- color images can be converted to grey-scale monochrome.
- All allowed adjustments must appear natural.

Note: Since titles will be read at PSA's judging, we recommended you do not advertise the fact something was taken at a zoo or other controlled situation as part of the title. Avoid cute titles if possible.