



American Society of Photographers “Images of Distinction” Competition Rules

IMAGES OF DISTINCTION COMPETITIONS

Two competitions will be held each year: Round 1 and Round 2.

Round 1:

- Held in the spring of each year, Round 1 will include a Panel Review/Commentary of the images that will be held on day 2.
- Round 1 is open to all. Members may enter 8 images, non-members may enter 4 images.
- First place trophies will be awarded for categories. Second and third places will receive certificates.
- Images that receive a score of 85 or higher will receive the ASP Seal of Distinction.

Round 2:

- Held in the late summer, Round 2 will ideally take place before registration for PPA’s IPC closes.
- Round 2 is open to members only. Members may enter 4 images.
- Any image that receives the Seal of Distinction in Round 1 may be entered directly into Round 2 (untouched, with no further edits or improvements) and will be included in the ASP Best of the Best collection without further judging.
- If the maker chooses to ‘break the seal’ (make changes, improvements or edits to the image that received the Seal of Distinction in Round 1) and enter it into Round 2, it will be judged for a new score.
- First, second and third place trophies will be awarded for categories.
- Images that receive a score of 85 or higher will receive the ASP Seal of Distinction.

The ASP Images of Distinction Competition will take place on March 22, 2024, with a panel discussion of the images on March 23, 2024. The purpose of this competition is to allow photographers to enter digital files to be judged against a standard of excellence using the 12 Elements of a Merit Image. (For more information concerning the twelve elements, go to [PPA 12 Elements of a Merit Image.](#))

These rules pertain to images entered as digital files created by any photographic processes. All entries must be registered at printcompetition.com under the ASP competition link.

GENERAL INFORMATION (Read before proceeding to category rules.)

A. Fees

For ASP Members

1. Early entries: Entrants will pay \$20.00 per image if registered by 11:59 PM (Eastern time) on February 25, 2024, with a limit of eight images.
2. Late entries: Entrants will pay \$25.00 for each entry with a limit of eight images for entrants registering February 26, 2024 at 12:01 AM (Eastern time) to March 10, 2024, at 10:00 PM (Eastern time). No registrations will be accepted after March 10, 2024, 10:00 PM (Eastern time).

For Non- ASP Members

3. Early entries: Entrants will pay \$30.00 per image if registered by 11:59 PM (Eastern time) on February 25, 2024, with a limit of four images.
4. Late entries: \$35.00 for each entry with a limit of four images for entrants registering February 26, 2024, at 12:01 AM (Eastern time) to March 10, 2024, at 10:00 PM (Eastern time). No registrations will be accepted after March 10, 2024, 10:00 PM (Eastern time).

B. No changes to your entry are permitted once the entry deadline has passed. No refunds will be issued after the entry fee is paid.

C. Entrants do not have to be ASP members to compete in the ASP "Images of Distinction" Round 1 competition.

D. Eligible images include:

- Images that have received a Merit or Imaging Excellence score in Merit Image Review (MIR)
- Images that were entered into IPC, but did not receive a Top 32 designation
- Fresh images that have not yet been entered into a competition
- Images that have been entered into a previous Images of Distinction competition that have not received a score of 80 or higher.
- Images from other image competitions, except those excluded below.

Images that are NOT eligible include:

- Images that have been selected for the World Cup competition
- Images that have received a Top 32 designation in any IPC category
- Images that have received an ASP District Award
- Images that have received an ASP Medallion Award.

E. AI Statement: No entry in any category can be created in part or whole using Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology software that is intended to create whole images, backgrounds and other elements entirely from programmed images. A human must have had creative control over the work's expression. Images and their elements must be created with traditional elements of authorship.

PHOTOGRAPHIC OPEN RULES

- A. The Photographic Open Competition is to show the photographic knowledge and skill set of the maker. However, a maker can use supporting photographic elements that they did not create, provided those elements are referenced as guide images on the face of the entry. The original photographic capture by the entrant should be merit-worthy independent of the work that was not their own. Elements created by the maker must not be part of the guide images. This applies to images within an album entry.
- B. All processing, manipulation, and printing or rendering were done by the entrant or under their direct supervision.
- C. The entrant has obtained and has access to all necessary releases (model or property) and agrees to hold ASP harmless against all claims and liabilities arising out of any ASP display, publication, and promotion or other use of each image submitted to ASP's image competition.
- D. The entrant's name shall not appear anywhere in the entry.
- E. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed. Images created in an educational environment under direct supervision from an instructor are ineligible.
- F. Any entry that has been created from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic, or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the competition rules and will not be judged, accepted, or displayed. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of the ASP Image Competition Committee, violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law, that entry shall not be displayed or published.
- G. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed, as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
- H. Images not of acceptable ASP exhibition content will be judged, but may not be displayed. The decision of acceptable content will be based on the

standards set by the National Gallery in Washington, DC and at the discretion of the ASP Image Competition Committee.

PHOTOGRAPHIC OPEN COMPETITION CATEGORIES

You must designate one of the below categories for each entry.

General Portrait - Images can portray a subject or subjects from all walks of life and should reflect the personality of the subject(s).

Children - This subcategory must contain a child or children from birth to age 16.

High School Senior - This subcategory portrays a male or female age 16 to 18.

Animal - This subcategory captures an animal(s) portrait using structured lighting in a studio or outdoor environment, where the owner or photographer control the animal.

Illustrative/Commercial – This sub-category is for capturing industry, advertising and architectural areas.

Landscape/Nature - This sub-category shares joy and adventures while expressing a sense of place. Wild animals in an uncontrolled lighting environment, zoo animals, flowers, seascapes, cityscapes, urban landscapes, and sunsets with or without people can be placed here.

Illustrative/General - This sub-category is for still-life images and any other image that doesn't fit in another Illustrative category. Albums displaying portrait and story-telling in a non-wedding event or session may be entered in this category.

Reportage: Images that illustrate an actual public or non-public event, life, an area of human interest, telling news that have meaning on the context or record of events, high impact, and/or lasting emotional response. Images that illustrate sporting events are included in this category. ONLY basic color and brightness adjustments, cropping, dodging and burning in are allowed. Only single-capture images will be accepted. Composite and multiple exposure images will not be accepted. The original captured image (in RAW or jpg) must be available if requested by the committee.

NOTE: The ASP Image Competition Committee reserves the right to re-categorize your images, if the committee feels that an image has been entered into the wrong category.

ARTIST CATEGORY RULES

There will be two categories within the artist category:

1. Artist Open
 2. Restoration
- A. Entries may be created in various artistic mediums. Photographs may be used in this category in creating an entry, but it is not a requirement. Entries may include freehand drawing or painting in traditional or digital applications. Entries can include stock photography, photographs, or artwork from other artist (s) with written consent to use those sources. Documentation may be requested by ASP before, during or after the competition. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of the ASP Image Competition Committee, violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law and cannot be proven otherwise, that entry shall be disqualified.
 - B. All processing, manipulation, artwork, or rendering must be done by the entrant. Printing may be done under the maker's direct supervision.
 - C. The entrant's name shall not appear anywhere in or on the face of the entry.
 - D. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed.
 - E. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
 - F. Guide images must be included on the face of the entry. For restorations, it is recommended that, in addition to the guide image for the image being restored, two guide images that show the progress of the restoration be included.

WEDDING CATEGORY RULES

- A. The Wedding Category consists of:
 1. Images that portray a subject or subjects from all aspects of a wedding including traditional portraits, candid or detail work.
 2. Multiple images may be combined into a digital album collection exclusively showcasing a specific wedding.
- B. Entrant must have captured and created the original exposure or exposures during the time constraints of the wedding
- C. All processing, manipulation, and rendering were done by the entrant or under their direct supervision.

- D. The entrant has obtained and has access to all necessary releases (model or property) and agrees to hold ASP harmless against all claims and liabilities arising out of any ASP's display, publication, and promotion or other use of each image submitted to ASP.
- E. The entrant's name shall not appear anywhere in or on the face of the entry.
- F. No entry will be eligible if it has been made under the supervision of an instructor or as a class assignment. All images submitted must be self-directed. Images created in an educational environment under direct supervision from an instructor are ineligible.
- G. Any entry that has been created from an existing photograph, portrait, graphic, or any other artwork produced by another person is a violation of the competition rules and will not be judged, accepted, or displayed. If an entry, in the good-faith opinion of the ASP Image Competition Committee, violates copyright, trademark, or any other applicable law, that entry shall not be displayed or published.
- H. Entries of the same subject in multiple images will be allowed, as long as the images are entirely different concepts.
- I. Images not of acceptable ASP exhibition content will be judged but may not be displayed. The decision of acceptable content will be based on the standards set by the National Gallery in Washington, DC and at the discretion of the ASP Image Competition Committee.
- J. Wedding themed images taken outside of the time constraints of the wedding event should be entered in the PO portrait or illustrative category depending on content.

STRAIGHT OUT OF CAMERA (SOOC) RAW CATEGORY RULES

The intention of this category is to evaluate the art created in camera without any post-production applied, including RAW adjustments in or out of the camera. Only RAW files may be entered in this category.

- A. The purpose of this competition is to allow the entry of non-manipulated imagery. This category is designed for images which come straight from the camera. You must enter your unedited, un-manipulated raw image.
- B. The image must have been captured by the entrant alone.
- C. No images taken under the direction or supervision of an instructor or in a class setting are allowed.
- D. The entrant's name must not appear within the image.
- E. As in the other categories, no image that violates trademark or copyright laws will be allowed.
- F. RAW entries created using cell phones images or drone images are**

not allowed.

- G. For the 2024 Round 2 competition, cash prizes will be awarded for the top three SOOC RAW images: \$250 to the first-place winner; \$150 to the second place winner; and \$100 to the third place winner.

SOOC RAW FAQs

- A. **How do I enter the RAW category?** After registering for ASP IOD competition, select “RAW” as the category for an entry and upload a RAW file (in native camera format) you wish to enter.
- B. **How are the images judged?** Every RAW file contains an embedded JPEG. This is used by cameras to show image previews in the camera (LCD/View Finder). ASP IOD officials will extract the embedded JPEG and this file is will be used for judging.
- C. **Can I apply presets in the camera?** Yes, in-camera presets (picture styles) can be applied, such as Monochrome mode, etc. The embedded JPEG will have those presets applied and will be used for judging.
- D. **Do I need presentation for SOOC RAW entries?** No. As RAW files are entered and embedded JPEGS are judged, no additional presentation is allowed or possible.
- E. **What can I use to view the JPEG embedded in the RAW file?** ASP IOD will use Photo Mechanic to extract the JPEG from the RAW file. Additionally, there are some free RAW preview extractors available as well.
- F. **Are there any other ways to know what the JPEG looks like?** While photographing, capture both RAW and JPEG and the JPEG file can help visualize the image that will be judged.
- G. **Can I enter images created with in-camera techniques like double exposure, gels, shutter drag, etc.?** Yes, absolutely! Your creativity with in-camera techniques is your limit.

VIEWING CONDITIONS FOR IMAGE REVIEW

For color management help, see Video Tutorial: ***IPC Participant Resources***

Note: ASP Competition judges will be instructed to calibrate their monitors to these specifications just prior to the competition: Digital Files: Monitor Settings, D65, 120 cd/m2, 2.20 gamma.

DIGITAL IMAGE ENTRY SPECIFICATIONS

NOTE: Failure to comply with these rules may result in disqualification of the

entry. The decision of the ASP Image Competition Committee is final.

Single Image Entry

- A. RAW files will be accepted for the SOOC RAW category only. There is no file size limit for the SOOC RAW category.
- B. In all other categories, files must be sized so the longest dimension is 4000 pixels. Each file must contain an embedded color profile of either sRGB or Adobe RGB1998 and be saved at a JPEG quality setting of 10. In most cases, the total file size should not exceed 3.5 MB. Larger files will be accepted when necessary, so long as they are JPG/10.
- C. Files should be named with the image title, for example, *Delicate Beauty.jpg* or *The Sentinel.jpg*.

Album Entry

- A. Albums pages will be combined into a .zip file prior to uploading the album entry to printcompetition.com.
- B. You must include a grey spread with your album title on the page as your PAGE ONE.
- C. Maximum Viewable Canvas Size: 2560x1600, in a horizontal page format.
- D. A page may represent a single album page or a spread.
- E. A page may contain as few or as many images as desired.
- F. Entry may contain up to 36 canvases or spreads. Page 1 must be filled with grey with the album title on it.
- G. Each page or spread must contain an embedded color profile of either sRGB or Adobe RGB1998 and be saved at a JPEG quality setting of 10.
- H. Identify pages sequentially in the order to be viewed using the following 3-digit format. Example: (001.jpg, 002.jpg, 003.jpg, 004.jpg, etc.)
- I. All pages of an album must be in one folder. Please zip the contents into one file and upload to printcompetition.com.
- J. Entrant's name may not appear on the album.

AWARDS

Category Awards:

The top ten scoring images and ties from ASP members, in each category, will be judged head to head, and judges will select the top three images. In Round 1, first place will receive a trophy. Second and third places receive a certificate. In Round 2, trophies will be awarded to the first, second and third finishers in each category.

In Round 1, non-ASP members entries that received a score of 80 or higher in all categories combined, will be eligible for awards. The judges will select the best three overall images in among the non-member entries. The first place overall will receive a trophy. Second and third places receive a certificate. In Round 2, there will be no non-member entries.

SOOC RAW Category Only - In addition to first, second and third place trophies for this category, winners will also receive a cash award: \$250 to the first place winner; \$150 to the second place winner; and \$100 to the thirdplace winner. This is for Round 2.

Judge's Choice Awards:

Each judge will select their favorite overall image for the Judges' Choice award from images that receive a score of 80 or above submitted by ASP members or non-members. Judges' Choice award winners will receive certificates of recognition.

Best of the Best:

The images included in the ASP Best of the Best Collection are:

- Images that received a Seal of Distinction in Round 1 and were entered into Round 2 with an unbroken seal.
- Images that received a Seal of Distinction in Round 2.
- Images that were selected as State Elite winners by state community network partners (formerly known as 'affiliates'.)
- These images will be eligible for ASP Medallion Awards. (More about Medallion forthcoming on the Awards are ASP website.)

PANEL DISCUSSION

- A. All images submitted by ASP members will be discussed on March 23, 2024 by the judging panel at no extra charge.
- B. The per-image entry fee for non-ASP members includes the image panel discussion.

PLEASE NOTE: The image reviews are automatic. If for any reason you do not want your image to have a panel discussion, you must choose "no" for the registration screen question that asks "Do you want jurors to discuss your images on our Day 2 Image Discussion?" Opting out will include all images you

submit—you cannot select only certain images in your submission to opt out of critique, unless you email Lori McCoy at lori@bellavita-photo.com or John Herrel at john@johnherrel.com or Thea Martin at sunstramals@gmail.com and clearly indicate which entries are to be omitted from the critique discussion and which entries are to be included in the critique discussion. All emails regarding split critique requests must be received no later than March 10, 2024, at 10:00 PM. The entry fee remains the same, regardless if you opt out of the panel discussion.