

The Second PSA Portfolio Assessment

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From January 19 to 22, 2017, a team of volunteers conducted the second PSA Portfolio Distinctions Assessment in Largo, FL. **John M. Davis, Jr., HonPSA, MPSA**, coordinated the Assessment and the Assessor selection, and served as Moderator. **Erik Rosengren, APSA, PPSA**, coordinated the site and logistics for the Assessment; **Dan Charbonnet, III, HonPSA, EPSA**, read the Statements of Intent, called the scores, and handled the computer tasks; **Jim Goins** coordinated the print overview presentation and pass through the light box; and **Liz Rylan** served as Scribe. The Assessors were **Bill Buchanan, HonPSA**; **Louis Duncan, APSA, PPSA**; **Jon Fishback, APSA**; **Erik Rosengren, APSA, PPSA**; and **Joanne Stolte, FPSA, MPSA, EFIAP**.

Prior to the Assessment, the five Assessors completed the nine lessons of the Assessor Training program developed and administered by Jon Fishback. Jill Sneesby directs the PSA Portfolio Distinctions Program and Chairs the Portfolio Distinctions Committee.

The PSA Portfolio Distinctions are given for a body of work, digital or print, which reflects a photographer's photographic interest and personal style. A portfolio includes three parts.

* **Statement of Intent:** A Portfolio must have a central theme that is evident in the brief, concise (no more than 75 words) Statement of Intent that explains the purpose, objective, or intention of the author in presenting this work. The author's name,

camera or lens information, or other personal information may not appear anywhere in the Statement of Intent. A separate space is provided for the Portfolio title (up to five words).

• **Overview Image:** The Overview Image provides the overall layout to view the Portfolio while listening to the Statement of Intent, and the sequence that the individual images in the Portfolio are to be viewed. The Overview Image needs to be compositionally pleasing, have color and tonal balance, and be cohesive, consistent, balanced, and have symmetry. The finished overview image should be a beautiful picture, one that might even hang on a wall by itself. The author's name, Portfolio Title, Image Titles, or Image Numbers may not appear anywhere on the Overview Image. See the examples of approved Portfolios from the January Assessment on pages 17 and 18.

• **Images (digital or print):** Each image should demonstrate variety and not be too similar to any other. Ten images are required for the first level (Bronze—BPSA), fifteen are required for the second level (Silver—SPSA), and twenty images are required for the third level (Gold—GPSA). Prints must be prepared by the entrant; commercially prepared prints are not eligible. The author's name may not appear anywhere on the projected image or print.



Print Portfolio Assessment. Photo © Jim Goins



Digital Portfolio Assessment. Photo © Jim Goins



Portfolio Assessors Thank You Certificates. Photo © Liz Rylan



**Statement of Intent: Valencia Science Park;
Gary Shinner, EPSA, BPSA, EFIAP/b; Wales**

The Valencia Science Park offers an ultra-modern location that lends itself to photographic exploration throughout the day and night with changes of composition, lighting and mood.

A BPSA (Bronze) Portfolio of ten images can have an Overview Image layout of five images in the first row and five images in the second row. However, if it provides cohesion, consistency, balance, and symmetry; it could have three images in the top row, three images in the second row, and four images in the bottom row or any combination all based on the balance and consistency of form, size, color, tonality, subject, etc., that the overall layout provides.

A SPSA (Silver) Portfolio of fifteen images could have a layout of five images in each of three rows; however, a layout of four images in the top row, five images in the second row, and six images in the third or bottom row that portray a cohesive, consistent, balanced, and symmetrical set of images is a possibility. Similarly, three images could be in the top row with six images in the second and bottom rows.

A GPSA (Gold) Portfolio of twenty images can only be submitted by a member who has received a Silver Distinction, SPSA. The twenty images could have a layout of five images in each of four rows; however, a layout of three images in the top row, five images in the middle two rows, and seven images in the bottom row might represent a balanced and symmetrical portfolio.

For the second Assessment, Portfolios were submitted and assessed for all levels (Bronze, Silver, and Gold). Some Portfolios from the first Assessment were granted a re-submit and those Portfolios were also assessed. Portfolios already submitted to another photo organization for similar recognition are not eligible.

Fifty (50) Portfolios were received for the second Assessment. Four were Print Portfolios, one for the Bronze-BPSA, two for the Silver-SPSA, and one for the Gold-GPSA. One Bronze and one Silver Print Portfolio were approved. Of the forty-six (46) digital Portfolios submitted,

twenty-four (24) were for the Bronze-BPSA, nineteen (19) were for the Silver-SPSA, and three (3) were for the Gold-GPSA. Six (6) of the twenty-four Bronze, nine (9) of the nineteen Silver, and one of the Gold portfolios were approved. This means that 36% of the Portfolios submitted were approved.

The Print Portfolios were assessed first, beginning with the Bronze and continuing with the Silver and Gold. The digital Portfolios were then assessed, beginning with the Bronze and continuing with the Silver and gold Portfolios.

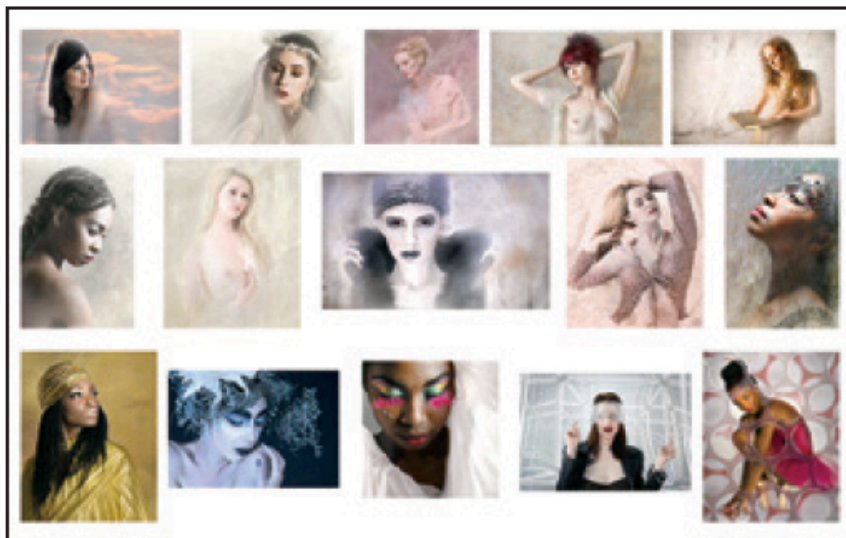
Initially, the Assessors stood on a platform to view the prints presented as the maker specified in their Overview Image while the maker's Statement of Intent was read. If the Assessors wished, the Statement of Intent was read again. The Assessors then viewed each print as it was passed through a Light Box. At this time, without discussion, the five Assessors scored the Overview Image of that Portfolio's Prints and the Statement of Intent, one for "In" and zero for "Out," using the scoring system purchased for the PSA Portfolio Assessments. The score was called and, based on the score, a discussion was conducted among the Assessors and any Assessor could request to change their score. Each print was then placed in the Light Box, scored, the score called, a discussion among the Assessors was conducted, and Assessors could change their score.

This process was then followed for the projected image Portfolios. The Assessors had laser pointers available and used them to call attention to concerns they had with an image during the discussion phase. Unlike most Exhibition/Salon judging, time is taken for the Portfolio images to be studied, carefully reviewed, and discussed by the Assessors.

If a final score for the Overview Image

or any individual image was three, four, or five; the image was successful and the maker received a "Credit" for this image in this Portfolio. If the score was a zero, one, or two; the image was not successful, the maker did not receive "Credit," and Assessors made constructive comments that were summarized by the Moderator and typed into the maker's feedback sheet by the Scribe.

Once all scores were confirmed and any



**Statement of Intent: The Art of Portraiture;
Janet Haines, SPSA, EFIAP; Netherlands**

Photography is an art form and in all my work I set out to interpret the faces of beautiful women, whilst simultaneously producing works of art. First I capture the essence of the model; a mood or a look. Sometimes with a wacky fun twist to the work and often with a contextual overlay to enhance the artistic look and feel I set out to achieve. I hope you enjoy my portraits with a difference.



**Statement of Intent: Ballerina Dreams;
Mohammed Salim, GMPSA, SPSA, EFIAP/p; USA**

Ballet is an art form created by the movement of the human body. I tried to depict the expressive ballet dancer by capturing the ballerina's emotions along with her dance movements. Through her flowing movements and emotions, she transforms herself from a blooming flower to a floating swan in her dream world.

comments completed, those Portfolios with the Overview Image & Statement of Intent and all images having Credit (a score of three or higher), were approved and received the Portfolio Distinction. Those Portfolios with the Overview Image and Statement of Intent and all images except one or two had Credit (a score of three or higher), were given "re-submit" status which means that the maker can replace those low scoring images (print or digital), re-create their Overview Image, re-submit this Portfolio in the next Portfolio Assessment at a reduced fee, and potentially receive the Distinction. Six Portfolios received a re-submit status (four BPSA and two SPSA).

The Portfolio Assessment process is an educational one, not a "competition." Following the Assessment an email was sent to all applicants, with suggestions for improvement included for all those images that were not successful. Successful applicants have been able to use the PSA Portfolio acronyms after their name since they received the email notifying them that their application was approved. They can use the acronyms as long as they remain a PSA member.

At the conclusion of the second Portfolio Assessment the Assessors were presented with certificates thanking them for their service.

At the 2017 PSA Conference in Pittsburgh, PA, an overview of the PSA Portfolio program will be presented including: "Preparing a Portfolio Statement of Intent" by John Davis and "Creating a Portfolio Overview Image" by Joanne Stolte. Additionally, the eighteen successful PSA Portfolios will be presented and the Portfolio Distinction Certificates will be presented to the recipients in attendance. A Portfolio Workshop is also planned with a question and answer session; and individual guidance and consultation for PSA members who bring Overview Images, Statements of Intent, and/or Portfolios that they are developing on a Travel Drive. A Sign-up Sheet for the Consultations will be available in the Conference Registration area.

Jon Fishback has prepared an online course "Creating Portfolios for Assessment" that is accessible via log-in to MyPSA on the PSA website. The course includes: crafting the Portfolio theme, fashioning the Overview Image, and forming the Statement of Intent. The course is designed to be completed in two months, at a speed that is comfortable for the member.

For more information: <http://psa-photo.org/index.php?portfolios>. The next PSA Portfolio Assessment is planned for June 2017 in Massachusetts and online submissions can be made now from the same webpage. ■