

Clarifications Concerning the Updated Photo Travel Definition

For all PSA-recognized Photo Travel (PT) exhibitions and Interclub PT competitions closing after December 31, 2015, an updated Photo Travel Definition will apply. This definition reads as follows (major changes from the previous 2012 Definition are in bold type):

*A Photo Travel image expresses the characteristic features or culture of a land as they **are found naturally**. There are no geographic limitations. **Images from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography are not appropriate**. Close up pictures of people or objects must include features that provide information about the environment. Techniques that add, relocate, replace or remove any element of the original image, except by cropping, are not permitted. **The only allowable adjustments are removal of dust or digital noise, restoration of the appearance of the original scene, and complete conversion to grayscale monochrome**. Other derivations, including infrared, are not permitted. All allowed adjustments must appear natural.*

Why was the definition updated? This has to do with the fact that the Photo Travel Division is a reality-based division, like the Nature and Photojournalism Divisions. The object of Photo Travel is not just to produce good images, but to portray and communicate the world as we find it, rather than as we can arrange it to obtain THE best photograph. Our world is an infinitely interesting and varied place. We want to explore, capture and present it as it is, in its many interesting manifestations, rather than photographing the same limited number of setup situations over and over (think camels wandering the dunes at sunset) or to post-process the image

to the point where it deviates substantially from the original scene.

The update concerning image manipulation is relatively easy to understand and follow, both for photographers and judges. Compared to the previous definition, it was simply made more precise.

The update concerning setup situations is a guideline for photographers to follow, rather than for judges to discern. Many setup situations are not obvious to the person who has not been there. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, even a judge who suspects a setup needs to give the photographer the benefit of the doubt. However, if the same type of image shows up in exhibition after exhibition, this may be a contrived situation created for the purpose of giving a small number of people a better shot at winning a medal.

In the sentence “*Images from...*” the emphasis is on “*arranged specifically...*” and “*subjects directed or hired...*” In order to illustrate the specific meaning, let’s assume someone photographs a reenactment of a civil war battle or a festival and submits this to a PT exhibition. No problem, because the people that were doing this were not hired or directed specifically for the photograph to be taken.

Is it okay to tip a subject? Yes, if the subject is doing what they would substantially be doing without being photographed, if it’s a small tip, and if the behavior, dress or posture was not specifically managed for the primary purpose of obtaining a better photograph.

Photo Travellers are ambassadors to other people and cultures. We do not want to contribute significantly to the distortions that are taking place as a result of the business that is being made out of hiring or directing native people to act in unnatural ways for the purpose of tourist photography.

The other three PSA divisions, Projected Images, Pictorial Prints and 3D do not have definitions that limit the subjects of their images. In other words, any subject matter can be submitted to those exhibitions, including camels wandering the dunes at sunset hired for that purpose.

If you have further questions about this definition, please contact me at ptd-chair@psa-photo.org. ■



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Chair, Photo Travel Division

Change of Email Address

Members change email addresses frequently, but sometimes they forget to tell PSA!

Please advise PSA Headquarters, all Divisions in which you work as a volunteer, and all individual PSA contacts. You can also visit the PSA website to update your email address.

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