

APJA NEWS

Issue 1. March 2015 Marketing and Publicity: Mark Teague

Press Clippings

Welcome to our inaugural e-newsletter with a title suggested by Mark Teague. The APJA is the first nationally focused judges association for Australia of which we should feel quite proud. Well the year has commenced by a slow start compared to the momentum gathered last year. I had a trip to Tasmania; mostly photographing a current environmental hotspot, the Tarkine on the north west coast; followed by a trip to Europe where I 'galleried' myself out; but on the return flight from London to Melbourne became quite ill which has caused a few delays with APJA. My apologies for this, but to quote Margaret Zommers "It is time to crank up the APJA". Just in case members have been wondering there have been committee meetings with the next scheduled for Monday, 20th April. To date the committee has made a draft syllabus (more on this soon) as well as devised a seminar about judging but being the next step in training beyond the introductory workshop conducted by VAPS.

A venue has been negotiated where general member and committee meetings will be held, please note the address:

St Peters Anglican Church Hall
(rear meeting room)
Cnr Ames Ave and Neerim Rd Murrumbeena
(Melway 68 K5).

There is ample parking on site as well as unrestricted street parking. The usual facilities are included such wheel chair access, rest rooms etc.

Planning is about to commence with training modules and more about this in the next APJA NEWS.

While in Europe I went to Bath where the Royal Photographic Society is located (Fenton House, 122 Wells Rd.) and met with the Director-General, Dr. Michael Pritchard FRPS. He kindly gave me a tour of their headquarters which included three full time paid staff as well as a number of volunteer staff, an international standard gallery, learning rooms and various wall displays of member and historic images. The reason for the meeting was to glean as much information as possible about how the RPS train their judges and how they carry out the granting of photographic honours. In a nutshell no formal training of judges occurs. However, judges are selected from either within the organization or from professional photographic associations or from within amateur associations within the UK.

The judges are selected for the quality of the work they produce which includes those with expertise within specific areas of photography. The judges are formed into panels with a Panel Chair who provides feedback to judges about the quality of their assessments of images. Further, a Moderator sits in on panels to ensure standards are maintained and a judge can only sit on a panel for a maximum of six years. Both the Panel Chair and the Moderator look for any biases which may occur in the judging process. More about the RPS in the next APJA News.

APJA Facts

Aside from cramped conditions, sleepless travel and great aerial photography opportunities planes do have the conducive ability to encourage reading on long flights. Some of my ongoing research about the judging process, at near the speed of sound, included "Thinking, Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman. Amongst a number of things he is a Nobel Prize winning psychologist (A rarity, he has won two Nobel Prizes) and this book explains how our minds think. In essence, we think fast (the intuitive, expedient and the alert 'experiential system') and slowly (the lazy, coherent, logical and the careful deliberation process 'system'). Some interesting facts were insightful so here are some which may help us with our judging.

- The prevalence of bias in human judgment is a large issue and especially in lay judgements (p.165)
- Humans are incorrigibly inconsistent in making summary judgements of complex [visual] information. Unreliable judgments cannot be valid predictors of anything (pp 224-225)
- It is unethical to rely on intuitive judgements [Example: I am passionate about this image it is the best I have ever seen - it deserves first place] for important decisions if an algorithm is available that will make fewer mistakes. (In psychology an algorithm is a rule [aesthetic guideline] that guarantees the right solution by using a formula or other foolproof method) (p.232)
- There are many pseudo-experts who have no idea that they do not know what they are doing (called the illusion of validity) and that as a general proposition subjective confidence is commonly too high and often uninformative (p.239)
- Dealing with subjective confidence 'experts' may not know the limits of their expertise (p. 242)
- Subjective confidence is not a good diagnostic of accuracy: judgments that answer the wrong question can also be made with high confidence (p.243)
- We have neither the inclination nor the mental resources to enforce consistency on our preferences and are not magically set to be coherent (p.336)
- It is expected that any institution [i.e. APJA] that wishes to elicit thoughtful judgements would seek to provide the judges with a broad context [i.e. in art context means the set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event, situation, etc. This could include when a work of art was made, where, how, and for what purpose. This could include historical information on the artist or issues or things the artist references. Examining many works of art enriches or broadens the context for the judge. For example, studying the landscape work of historical painters and photographers from Ansel Adams to Yoshikazu Shirakawa] for the assessment of individual cases [images] (p.361) [my words]

Image References

Following on from Daniel Kahneman's 'broad context' let's look at the photographic practice of image makers that will broaden our understanding of particular topics in photography. Most of us in the APJA have photographers we reference when wishing to inspire photographers to continually improve their image making. *Submissions from members for this column*, say a list of photographers you admire in a particular genre (i.e. portraiture, landscape or colour etc.) where their work can be seen on the internet, will be taken from issue no. 2 of APJA NEWS. Try to keep the reference list within a specific area of image making but have depth to the list of say at least a dozen photographers. This will help broaden our collective understanding of photography.

Here is a list of photographers dealing with architectural photography:

- Airey, Janie - UK
- Baan, Iwan - Holland
- Domiri, Mohammad - Iran
- Enrich, Victor - Spain
- Evans, Frederick H. - UK
- Fouillet, Fabrice - France
- Gilbert, Dennis - UK
- GrosPierre, Nicolas - Poland
- Guerra, Fernando - Portugal
- Guttridge, Nick - UK
- Harris, Michael G. - UK
- Hicks, Roger - UK
- Hewitt, Daniel - UK
- Joaquim, Eddy - USA
- Kopelow, Gerry - Canada
- McGrath, Norman - USA
- Mork, Adam - Denmark
- Polidori, Robert - Canada
- Schultz, Frances - USA
- Seivers, Wolfgang - Australia
- Shulman, Julius - USA
- Shulz, Josef - Germany
- Siskin, John - USA
- Slavin, Randy Scott - USA
- Stephenson, David - Tasmania
- Strange, Ian - USA

Quickest way to images on the net is by adding after their names - architectural photography images.

