

APJA NEWS

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President's Message

As the first full year draws to a close I wish all members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. While on the international scene a few positive things have happened in the past few weeks but on the domestic scene arts funding has been emasculated and our application for a grant looks dim. As soon as the Council for the Arts advises me of the results I will let everyone know the outcome.

A number of Judges Survey responses have been received but there are a few still outstanding. If you have not forwarded your survey then please send it through by end of January 2016.

This next year is looking positive with a number of initiatives under way as noted in the syllabus following. Personal thanks to all members who participated in various events over the past twelve months, especially Committee Members, for without your volunteer work the advances being made about judging or appraising images would not have eventuated.

APJA Syllabus

The syllabus for 2016 has been set but there may be changes when co-ordinating with other photographic bodies.

18th January: Monday - Committee Meeting 8pm (St. Anthony's)

7th February: Sunday 1pm General meeting Speaker Presentation (St. Anthony's)

Licentiate training modules: First week March - Victoria (St. Peter's)

11th April: Monday - Committee Meeting 8pm (St. Anthony's)

Associate training modules: First week May - Victoria (St. Peter's)

15th May: Sunday 1pm General meeting Speaker Presentation (St. Anthony's)

13th June: Monday - Committee Meeting 8pm (St. Anthony's)
Commence interstate negotiations to deliver program: June

26 June: Sunday 1pm General meeting Speaker Presentation
(St. Anthony's)

July 17th: APJA's AGM (St. Anthony's)

**Introduction to Judging training modules: First week August -
Victoria (St. Peter's)**

15th Aug: Monday - Committee Meeting 8pm (St. Anthony's)

18th Sept: Sunday 1pm General meeting Speaker Presentation
(St. Anthony's)

Intern training modules: First week October - Victoria (St. Peter's)

10th Oct: Monday - Committee Meeting 8pm (St. Anthony's)

APSCON presentation: 12 to 16 October - Adelaide, South Australia Paul
Robinson booked in for this.

13th November: Sunday 1pm General meeting Speaker Presentation
(St. Anthony's)

Photographic Artist Review

Sebastiao Salgado was born on February 8, 1944 in Aimorés, in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. After a somewhat itinerant childhood, Salgado initially trained as an economist, earning a master's degree in economics from the University of São Paulo in Brazil. He began work as an economist for the International Coffee Organization, often travelling to Africa on missions for the World Bank, when he first started seriously taking photographs. He chose to abandon a career as an economist and switched to photography in 1973, working initially on news assignments before veering more towards documentary-type work. Salgado initially worked with the photo agency Sygma and the Paris-based Gamma, but in 1979, he joined the international cooperative of photographers Magnum Photos. He left Magnum in 1994 and with his wife Lélia Wanick Salgado formed his own agency, Amazonas Images, in Paris, to represent his work. He is particularly noted for his social documentary photography of workers in less developed nations. He has been a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador since 2001.

Salgado works on long term, self-assigned projects (Sometimes taking up to ten years to complete) many of which have been published as books: *The Other Americas, Sahel, Workers, Migrations* and *Genesis*.

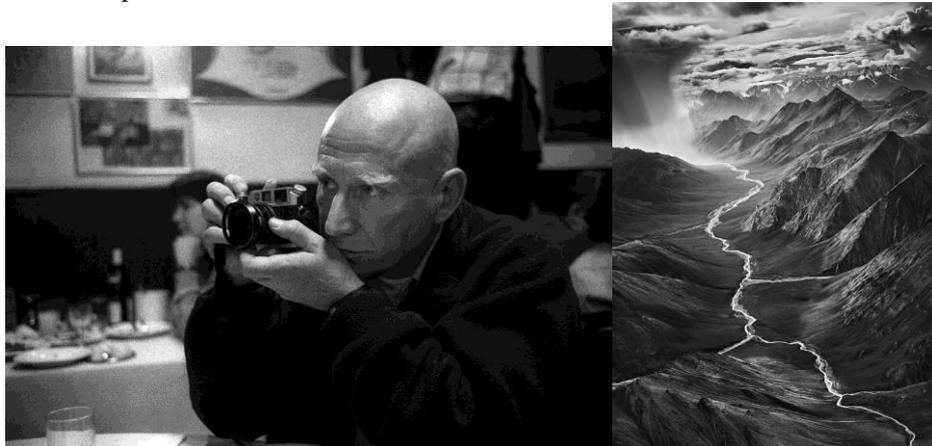
The latter three are mammoth collections with hundreds of images each from all around the world. His most famous pictures are of a gold mine in Brazil called Serra Pelada. Between 2004 and 2011, Salgado worked on "Genesis," aiming at the presentation of the unblemished faces of nature and humanity. It consists of a series of photographs of landscapes and wildlife, as well as of human communities that continue to live in accordance with their ancestral traditions and cultures. This body of work is conceived as a potential path to humanity's rediscovery of itself in nature.

In September and October 2007, Salgado displayed his photographs of coffee workers from India, Guatemala, Ethiopia and Brazil at the Brazilian Embassy in London. The aim of the project was to raise public awareness of the origins of the popular drink.

Together, Lélia and Sebastião, have worked since the 1990s on the restoration of a small part of the Atlantic Forest in Brazil. In 1998, they succeeded in turning this land into a nature reserve and created the Instituto Terra. The Instituto is dedicated to a mission of reforestation, conservation and environmental education.

Salgado and his work are the focus of the film *The Salt of the Earth* (2014), directed by Wim Wenders and Salgado's son, Julian Ribiero Salgado. The film won a special award at Cannes Film Festival and can be viewed on-line through Youtube Movies. Nearly all his work is in B&W and since the early 2000's all on digital equipment.

REF: Wikipedia





Current Photography Exhibitions

TarraWarra Museum of Art

311 Healesville-Yarra Glen Road,

Healesville, Victoria, Australia

Melway reference: 277 B2

Howard Arkley (1951-1999) is one of Australia's most significant artists. He pursued a singular vision that incorporated aspects of high art and popular culture, such as punk and pop; a love of urban and suburban imagery and architecture; an ongoing preoccupation with pattern and colour; and a life-long dialogue with abstraction.

Howard Arkley (and friends...) includes over 60 paintings by Arkley from 1974 until 1999, featuring a number of works that have not been shown before along with some of his most iconic images. Photographs, visual diaries, sketch books and source material, on loan from the State Library of Victoria, reveal Arkley's ideas, influences and working methods in developing his images; a selection of tracks from the artist's record collection played throughout the exhibition, highlights the influence of music on his work; Arkley applied to each work of art, and traces his journeys through abstraction and figuration; pop and punk; sampling and the spray painted line. It reveals the ways in which the artist consumed and then altered his source material through the use of high keyed colour, pattern and repetition, abstraction and the fuzzy, optical effects of the airbrush, transforming our perception of the everyday world around us.

APJA Facts

At the association meeting on 20th September Ron Cork presented about why we judge photography. The following is the next part in his series. If you have any questions about content of the articles then please contact Ron: RCmurbella7@gmail.com.

Why Have Your Photography Judged?

As a general rule, whilst many folk appreciate good imagery, in a situation where the image is a little more abstract, few will understand what they are looking at. Some may like some of it, but not the rest. The ancient adage is certainly true that,

"You can please some of the people all the time, all the people some of the time, but not all of the people all of the time".

This is not to say that the general, artistically unsophisticated public does not appreciate art that is not so obvious, as is usually the case with

contemporary photography. There are folk who can see the art in casual snapshots. They can extract the stories and pickup on the finer details and points all the university tuition of an arts degree told them about (or not). To appreciate this, you should visit the Victorian Centre for Contemporary Photography.

To most visitors to that space, the works typically on display seem to have been created by lazy, talentless casual snapshot shooters that don't have a single artistic molecule in their head. At least that was my impression on my first visit many years ago. On subsequent visits since, I have modified my views, but only occasionally. As with all art, beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, it's up to you to decide what you like. Contemporary photography is very much about the personal view.

Why such sludge is labelled 'contemporary' is beyond my meagre capacity to appreciate because all current photography is contemporary, as of this moment, or at least of the moment the shutter was released. Look up the definition. Even works like portraits and landscapes lauded by all is or was contemporary, at least for a brief time. Thank goodness the 'official' version of 'contemporary' art is such a fleeting thing. Those pieces that persevere will not be considered 'contemporary' for very long, but will quickly be relabelled as art.

If your target audience is a camera club judge with the view to winning a merit or an award, then you will have to construct your images with a lot more consideration. You need to read and understand the club rules for the competition you are entering, including any constraints toward image editing, image size and any definitions provided.

You will need to be totally cognisant of all the so-called rules of photography, like the rule of 3rds, the need to take care with white at the edges of the frame and other bright spots. You need to have a defined focal plane in the image with a precise and obvious focus point, where something is (or should be) sharp, knowing that a focus point is not necessarily the same as the focal point, the latter being the main point of interest in the frame.

You will need to have accurate and appropriate levels of sharpness in the appropriate areas of the image, use properly placed focal points to create 'points or centres of interest', create good bokeh where it is needed, have an obvious sense of the image depth, which requires an understanding of Depth-of-Field and how to use it, have adequate and appropriate levels of

contrast and saturation, both global and local and there is much, much more. But you need to remember that you are trying to appeal to the sensibilities and prejudices of a single (and invariably unknown) person.

By sticking to the known 'rules' of photography with high diligence, composing the frame with care and executing the processing expertly and discretely, you will at least satisfy the aesthetic leanings of most of the current stable of 'circuit judges' available to clubs, even if it's not your own sense of art.

The big problem with this approach to producing photographic art is that your work will not only quickly become cliché and even boring, to everybody including you, you will be severely limiting your creative and artistic abilities and potential. You will simply be echoing the current trends and standards with little regard to creativity and individuality. The sad consequence of that is, as is currently happening in the camera club movement, the incentive to be creative and different is being judged and 'critiqued' out of the mindset.

Yes, there are some people judging at club level who are a bit more independent in their thinking, have a wider and deeper experience, have a higher sense of 'art', are respectful of abstract works, are open to more creative thinking in composition and subject matter, toning and presentation and are capable of finding the often hidden meaning in the imagery, people who will read and assess your efforts differently than most. These are the people who can appreciate an image for its own sake and value, regardless of their personal preferences. Unfortunately these people are few and are becoming more scarce each year, at least those judging at club level.

I would say that the quality of club judging has been steadily going downhill for many years. Praising an image for some of its aesthetic qualities and ignoring the technical, the fact that it is so out of focus you can't tell rocks from trees, is a waste of your time and the audience. Even worse is the fact that some judges can't tell the difference themselves, because they haven't been taught that when there is a difference, it is important to be noted and should be pointed out to the audience.

The technical quality of cameras progressively gets higher each year, yet the technical ability of the modern user gets lower. Most people now are expecting the equipment to do all the work and won't even take the time to analyse the images beyond their first glance. Judges are reinforcing this

thinking by not highlighting the faults. It gets worse when the judge either can't recognise the faults or does but won't suggest a solution, which of course assumes the judge has recognised the fault and knows a solution. We are teaching people not to care too much about the finer details in technical quality of their images, to ignore the technical flaws. This is wrong. While the artistry and aesthetics of an image may initiate the immediate interest, if technical faults and flaws are too obvious, then the overall impact will quickly diminish. People prefer to appreciate the ability of the artist in both vision and execution.

I will add that while cameras are getting better all the time, lenses are not necessarily keeping pace, particularly at the cheap end. An old fixed focal length, fixed aperture Box Brownie, made from thin plywood and cardboard produced sharper images than a lot of modern kit lenses. People need to appreciate this and be educated in the value of careful choices. But, to continue... *To be continued next newsletter*