

AWARDS FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC MERIT

TRIAL OF TWO NEW LEVELS

In response to demand from Individuals, Clubs and Federations, the PAGB is introducing, on a trial basis, two exciting new ways to achieve an Award for Photographic Merit.

BPAGB. The Badge Level will be assessed at exactly the same standard as the CPAGB but will require fewer images and a slightly lower passing score. (7 Prints required. Entry Fee £42)

- 1 Entry is available under the same conditions and criteria as apply to CPAGB applications.
- 2 The entries will be included in the CPAGB category, and the Adjudicators will not be told which are CPAGB entries and which are BPAGB entries. They will thus be voted on according to the same criteria against the same standard as the CPAGB.
- 3 Entry is not available to holders of the CPAGB.
- 4 The entry is 7 images. The passing score for BPAGB will be 125. The normal review procedure of near misses will apply. Entrants achieving 125 or more will be awarded a BPAGB Certificate and Badge*.

**A newly sourced badge, identical to the CPAGB but White.*

EPAGB. The Excellence Level is a step up from DPAGB, assessed at exactly the same standard but with a significantly higher passing score. (15 Prints required. Entry Fee £90)

- 1 Application for the Excellence Award is only open to existing holders of the DPAGB in Print, PDI or AV who have held the DPAGB for at least 11 months and who are still current, active members of an affiliated Club.
- 2 The entries will be included in the DPAGB category, and the Adjudicators will not be told which are DPAGB entries and which were EPAGB entries. They will thus be voted on according to the same criteria against the same standard as the DPAGB.
- 3 No images which were used in the previously successful DPAGB entry can be used for the entry for EPAGB.
- 4 The passing score for EPAGB will be 330. The normal review procedure of near misses will apply. Entrants achieving 330 or more will be awarded a EPAGB badge*. Entrants failing to achieve 330 but achieving 300 or more will be awarded a further DPAGB certificate and badge but the post nominal will remain unchanged.

**A newly sourced badge – similar to the current DPAGB with an added “scroll”*

Both new levels are NOW OPEN FOR ENTRY for the next Adjudication in November but, for this trial, only applications in Prints will be accepted.

Photographic Alliance of Great Britain AWARDS FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC MERIT



Lockdown by Stan Farrow

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APM LEAFLET 1 APM DESCRIPTION AND FAQ

1. QUALIFICATION.

All applicants must qualify and apply via their Federations. Entrants must have been active members of an affiliated Club for a minimum of 2 years for CPAGB, 3 years for DPAGB and 5 Years for MPAGB. A retrospective period of 10 years may be considered. Applications for MPAGB must have held DPAGB for at least 11 months on the date of adjudication. Please contact your Federation Awards Officer for further guidance.

Entries will only be accepted for one Class and one Media in any single Adjudication. Mixed entries with Prints and PDI are not permitted.

2. PRINTS & PROJECTED DIGITAL IMAGES (PDI).

Print, and Projected Digital Image Adjudications will normally be held in April and November. Although the closing date for applications will normally be 31 January and 31 August, respectively, most Adjudications fill up much earlier. The minimum number of entrants for any one day is normally 30 and the minimum for each section is normally 5.

The maximum number of Prints and Projected Digital Images to be adjudicated on any one day is approximately 850. Pictures will not be presented as panels but will be mixed with those of all other Entrants in the Section and judged as individual photographs.

3. ADJUDICATION METHOD

3.1 Adjudications in Projected Digital Images (PDI) and Prints are carried out by a panel of six Adjudicators selected from the PAGB Approved List of Judges for their photographic skill, their extensive experience and their ability to assess different genre. It is impossible to eliminate subjectivity totally, but they are carefully briefed as to the standard required in each section.

3.2 Photography is more art than science and judges will always be influenced by their emotional response to an image. As in any competition, you should be prepared for some pictures to score higher than you had anticipated and for some to score lower.

3.3 Even pictures which you have submitted to a previous Adjudication may score a little better or a little worse than before.

3.4 The Non-Voting Chairman of the Adjudication Panel observes closely throughout the proceedings and he and his team have the authority to review near misses. This is done on the day and there is no process to appeal.

3.5 Each of the 6 Adjudicators is required to **Vote** on each photograph and their Votes are recorded electronically using 'silent' scoring equipment. This leaflet explains how they are briefed to reach that decision, how they assess the work at each level and what each vote/score means. If a photograph does not meet our requirements, it should receive 6 "NO" Votes = 2 points per judge x 6 = 12 or, if it meets our criteria, it should receive 6 "YES" Votes = 4 points per judge x 6 =24.

3.6 However, it is unrealistic to expect complete unanimity with 6 different Adjudicators and most total scores will represent a compromise between these limits. Scores above 24 are relatively unusual but will be achieved by the very best images. High scores may indicate that the image may be successful at the next level.

3.7 Applicants should be aware that photographs which would be best displayed as a coherent panel may score less well as individual images.

NOT SCORES BUT VOTES

For convenience, we announce and record a total score, but we instruct the Adjudicators to consider these as Votes.

A **YES** vote is recorded by pressing **4** and a **NO** vote by pressing **2**. This, of course, means that good pictures which are not quite up to the standard may receive **six NO** votes and a score of 12. This is not an indicator of the value of that photograph in relation to other scores, simply that 6 adjudicators agreed that it was not up to the standard required. Since a score of 200 is required to secure CPAGB and 300 for DPAGB, there is an assumption that 20 is the score to look for. In fact, you should aim for six adjudicators to vote **YES**, giving a score of **24** per photograph.

A vote can be lodged for a **NEAR MISS** by pressing **3**, but we stress that this is a **very near miss**, not just a better 2 than a previous picture. We are not placing a relative value on the photograph, simply voting **Yes** or **No**, so it is important that the **NEAR MISS** vote is used carefully. After all, 4 votes of **NEAR MISS** and just two votes of **YES** will result in a score of 20. $3+3+3+3+4+4$. This can result in a passing entry when only 2 adjudicators thought that the pictures were good enough.

For the MPAGB, although use of the **NEAR MISS** button is permitted, we are particularly keen that the judges should try to vote **YES** or **NO**. From the entrants' point of view, this can result in a disappointingly low score, but this does not indicate the value of the picture – just that they agreed that it did not quite reach the standard required.

The **5 VOTE** is only used when the photograph is considered likely to achieve a **YES** vote of 4 at the next level up. If you achieve a score of 24 at (say) CPAGB, this means that all six adjudicators thought it was on the standard for that level but that none of them thought that it was good enough for the DPAGB. So, when you think about entering for DPAGB, you should consider the possibility that your pictures could score up to 6 points less than they did at CPAGB.

SUMMARY

Our adjudicators do not score the photographs. They vote **YES** or **NO**, with some leeway to vote **NEAR MISS** or **GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE NEXT LEVEL**. The process is to Pass or to Fail and you should not be discouraged if your scores fall well short of the total required. A score as low as 12 simply means that all 6 Adjudicators thought it was not up to the standard required. It could be quite a close decision and you may have missed by very little.

4. ENTERING PDI AND PRINTS. Prints may be sent in advance or they can be delivered and collected on the Adjudication Day. PDI copies and titles of all prints, and all PDI entries must be submitted online via the PAGB CES, not later than the advertised deadline. For details of how to submit an entry, please see the separate APM Leaflet 2 and to the instructions in the Entry Pack from the APM Secretary.

5. ALL REASONABLE CARE will be taken with entries, but no liability of any kind is accepted for loss or damage. The Host Federation is responsible for the return of Prints not collected on the day, and they will normally return them by your preferred method if you have included the correct payment. Payment for return is paid directly to the Host Federation and they will provide details of how this should be done. These will be included in your Entry Pack

6. AUDIO VISUAL. Applicants may apply either singly or jointly for an Award in AV. Adjudications will be held as and when it is deemed appropriate and provided there is sufficient demand. Please see the separate APM Leaflet 4 dealing specifically with Audio Visual.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT. Applications will be acknowledged on receipt and an Adjudication Date will be provided as soon as possible, normally about 4 months prior to the Adjudication.

8. WITHDRAWAL OF ENTRY. It is difficult to fill places in the event of cancellations, and as we get nearer to the Adjudication date, it is almost impossible. Whilst we are currently looking at other payment options, the fee is currently paid by cheque. We will retain the cheque securely for 6 weeks, during which time an applicant may withdraw without penalty, and we will not present the cheque. After this grace period, the cheque will be presented and no money can be returned in the event of a cancellation.

Should such applicants wish to take part in a future Adjudication they will need to complete a new Application Form, including the Certificate of Qualification by their Federation Awards Officer, and the full fee, not the re-submission fee, will be payable.

9. ADJUDICATIONS are normally open to spectators. Applicants receive one free ticket. Further tickets may be purchased from the organising Federation. Details will be included with the Entry Pack.

10. RETAINED WORK. One print, occasionally two, will be retained from every successful entry. All the PDI and all the Audio-Visual Sequences will also be retained. These may be used, without payment, to promote the Awards for Photographic Merit, including, but not confined to, publication in **e-news**, use in Advisory Workshops and to brief the Adjudicators at future events. They may also be compiled into an advisory programme to be made available through the PAGB Recorded Lecture Service.

Copyright of these images remains with the Originator. The PAGB will try to credit the photographer wherever possible but accepts no liability for failing to do so.

Whilst individual scores are not normally published, scores from successful entries may be disclosed where it is useful in a workshop, article or a recorded lecture.

11. RESUBMISSION. Entrants who fail to gain the award may make further applications at the same level for the resubmission fee stated under each level. A new application form must be completed, including the Certificate of Qualification signed by their Federation Awards Officer

12. CHAIRMAN OF ADJUDICATORS. The Non-Voting Chairman will brief the Adjudicators beforehand and will observe throughout to ensure a high degree of consistency.

13. IMMEDIATE REVIEW OF RESULTS. After every section the Non-Voting Chairman of the Adjudicators, together with other experienced judges, will review the “near miss” applications. There is no right of appeal and after this Review the decision made on the day cannot be changed.

14. DECLARATION. By completing the Application Form the Applicant confirms that he/she has read this Explanatory Leaflet, accepts the PAGB General Conditions for Entry* and confirms that all the photographs entered are entirely their own work. Composite images are permitted provided all component images meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any other source including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks and clipart are not permitted.

15. APPLY EARLY but not before you are ready - there is a cancellation penalty. Adjudications are usually oversubscribed well before the closing dates specified above. PAGB policy is to try to ensure that every applicant is offered an Adjudication date not more than 12 months distant.

TRIAL

NOW TWO MORE LEVELS FOR APPLICATION IN PRINTS ONLY



*See the PAGB General Conditions at -

www.thepagb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/general_conditions.pdf

WHAT DO OUR ADJUDICATORS LOOK FOR IN A PHOTOGRAPH?

Most Club members can recognise a good photograph when they see it but it is impossible to define in advance what a good photograph will look like. Judging is an Art and not a Science and our response to an image can be highly subjective. Sometimes we don't even know why we have reacted positively or negatively to a photograph.

Our Adjudicators are very experienced and are chosen for their ability to assess all kinds of image fairly and as accurately against our requirement as is humanly possible. They are carefully briefed and we have in place an established review team who are able to adjust the score of any image which has been "unlucky".

None of this is very helpful to an entrant trying to understand what is required at each APM level, so we have tried to list just some of the things that you should consider when assessing your own work.

Content. We are looking for the interesting, original, creative content to convey an idea, an emotion, a message or a purpose. The subject can be quite mundane, provided that the photographer has demonstrated an interesting approach, showing us something that we may otherwise have missed.

Composition. This is central to the attraction of an image and should bring all the visual elements together harmoniously, so as to express the purpose of the image. Effective composition immediately attracts the Adjudicators to the image and should prompt them to look where the photographer intended. Good composition will normally lead the viewer to the main point of interest. There can be primary and secondary centres of interest, and occasionally there will be no specific point to look at if the entire scene collectively serves as one focus of interest.

Impact. Our Adjudicators are not pressed to assess too quickly but the immediate impression is still important. Images with impact can instantly evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, admiration or wonder.

Lighting. The use and control of light is the essence of photography and critical in APM entries., Our Adjudicators will look for the effective use of light, natural or manmade, to add excitement to a photograph, enhancing its story telling and impact

Story Telling. We are not looking for a "big" story, simply how the image communicates with the viewer to help them understand why it was taken.

Colour Balance. Our Adjudicators will consider the use of colours and tones in an image. An image in which the tones work together, effectively supporting the image, can enhance harmony. Of course, a lack of harmony can be used for effect, to evoke negative feelings

Technique. This is the approach used to create the image. Does it show effective input and choice by the photographer, in view point, lens chosen, focus and other camera settings? In other competitions where the image has done well, did the prize go to the photographer or to the subject? What did the photographer bring to the image beyond pressing the shutter release? Effective use of focus, tone and contrast can greatly enhance an image, giving it depth, with a more 3 dimensional quality.

Delivery. All of the above are the most decisive factors, but the APM also require a degree of skill in processing and printing - appropriate to the level applied for. At CPAGB this should demonstrate competence but minor errors or deficiencies may be overlooked if the image meets the other criteria. Processing, printing and presentation should be excellent for a successful DPAGB entry and at MPAGB should be extremely proficient, approaching perfection with no detectable faults.

BADGE AWARD OF THE PAGB. (BPAGB)

The entry fee is £42.00. Resubmission £40.00.

Entrants must have been active members of an affiliated Club for a minimum of 2 years.

7 Prints are required and a total score of 125 or more will gain the Award.

Our Adjudicators are able to assess an image against the many criteria which contribute to a good photograph in a very short time, but they must also apply their judgement in relation to the level of Award being considered.

The images needed to achieve the Badge Award can be described as approaching “Good Club Photography”. Photographs which meet the requirement for BPAGB will probably do well in a good Club in an Advanced Section of their internal competitions or in Inter-Club competitions, the kind of image which a Club may sometimes choose to represent them in Federation events.

However, this is simply offered as general guidance since there is no such thing as a consistent “Club Standard”. The quality of photography varies considerably from Club to Club and what is “Good” in one Club may not be so successful in another one.

We cannot know the standard of work in your Club or in your Federation and, **by the sheer variety of Club work, there can be no consistent “Club Standard”**. It is our experienced Adjudicators who define for this Award what the requirement is for “Good Club Photography”.

They have judged at a great many Clubs and they are well equipped to do this, plus we have in place a permanent team and careful briefings to ensure that the process is as fair and consistent as is humanly possible.

Adjudicators are likely to be receptive to a greater range of images than may be successful in some Clubs.

CREDIT AWARD OF THE PAGB. (CPAGB)

The entry fee is £60.00. Resubmission £50.00.

Entrants must have been active members of an affiliated Club for a minimum of 2 years.

10 Prints or 10 PDI are required and a total score of 200 or more will gain the Award.

Our Adjudicators are able to assess an image against the many criteria which contribute to a good photograph in a very short time, but they must also apply their judgement in relation to the level of Award being considered.

The images needed to achieve the Credit Award can be described as “Good Club Photography”. Photographs which meet the requirement for CPAGB will probably do well in a good Club in an Advanced Section of their internal competitions or in Inter-Club competitions, the kind of image which a good Club might choose to represent them in Federation events.

However, this is simply offered as general guidance since there is no such thing as a consistent “Club Standard”. The quality of photography varies considerably from Club to Club and what is “Good” in one Club may not be so successful in another one.

We cannot know the standard of work in your Club or in your Federation and, **by the sheer variety of Club work, there can be no consistent “Club Standard”**. It is our experienced Adjudicators who define for this Award what the requirement is for “Good Club Photography”.

They have judged at a great many Clubs and they are well equipped to do this, plus we have in place a permanent team and careful briefings to ensure that the process is as fair and consistent as is humanly possible.

It is not a requirement that images entered should have won Club awards and our Adjudicators are likely to be receptive to a greater range of images than may be successful in some Clubs.

DISTINCTION AWARD OF THE PAGB (DPAGB)

The entry fee is £90.00. Resubmission £80.00

Application can be made for the DPAGB Award without first gaining the CPAGB, provided the applicant meets their Federation requirement.

15 Prints or 15 PDI are required and a total score of 300 or more will gain the Award.

The Adjudicators are looking for photographs that, in their opinion, should be good enough to achieve a high level of acceptance in Open Exhibitions but, although there can be a much greater commonality of standard at exhibition level, there are still considerable variations.

Some Exhibitions accept up to 40%, or more, of the entries, many accept around 20%. Some Exhibitions have experienced judges whom the PAGB would choose as Adjudicators, some don't. Some Exhibitions, particularly overseas, apply different criteria and standards. Not necessarily poorer but different.

Exhibitions cannot therefore be relied upon to define a consistent "Exhibition Standard". Other bodies, such as FIAP, BPE and PSA award their distinctions for a high number of exhibition acceptances but the PAGB Award is given based solely on an assessment by an expert panel of Adjudicators. They will not be informed of any previous Exhibition successes although they may, of course, be aware from their own experience.

The pictures do not need to have been previously entered in any Open Exhibition although success at this level is obviously a good guide. However, a high number of exhibition acceptances for an image does not guarantee it a high mark in the PAGB Adjudication.

Our Adjudicators will also give due credit to photographs, such as Record and Documentary, which meet our requirements but may be less likely to be accepted into exhibitions.

EXCELLENCE AWARD OF THE PAGB (EPAGB)

The entry fee is £90.00. Resubmission £80.00

Only existing holders of the DPAGB Award may apply for the EPAGB and none of the images used at DPAGB may be used for EPAGB.

15 Prints are required and a total score of 330 or more will gain the Award.

The Adjudicators are looking for photographs that, in their opinion, should be good enough to achieve a high level of acceptance in Open Exhibitions but, although there can be a much greater commonality of standard at exhibition level, there are still considerable variations.

Some Exhibitions accept up to 40%, or more, of the entries, many accept around 20%. Some Exhibitions have experienced judges whom the PAGB would choose as Adjudicators, some don't. Some Exhibitions, particularly overseas, apply different criteria and standards. Not necessarily poorer but different.

Exhibitions cannot therefore be relied upon to define a consistent "Exhibition Standard". Other bodies, such as FIAP, BPE and PSA award their distinctions for a high number of exhibition acceptances but the PAGB Award is given based solely on an assessment by an expert panel of Adjudicators. They will not be informed of any previous Exhibition successes although they may, of course, be aware from their own experience.

The pictures do not need to have been previously entered in any Open Exhibition although success at this level is obviously a good guide. However, a high number of exhibition acceptances for an image does not guarantee it a high mark in the PAGB Adjudication.

Our Adjudicators will also give due credit to photographs, such as Record and Documentary, which meet our requirements but may be less likely to be accepted into exhibitions.

MASTER AWARD OF THE PAGB (MPAGB)

The entry fee is £120.00. Resubmission £110.00.

Applicants for MPAGB must have held the DPAGB for a least 11 months on the date of the adjudication

20 Prints or 20 PDI are required and a total score of 450 or more will gain the award.

The MPAGB is awarded for the very best of UK amateur photography and the Adjudicators are looking for images which, in their opinion, contain the elements of a good photograph in abundance, which are beautifully produced, and which should enjoy a very considerable level of success in Open Exhibitions, including consistent and frequent awards.

Pictures do not require to have been entered or accepted previously in any Exhibition but must be of an exceptional standard.

As an applicant for MPAGB, you will probably have submitted to many exhibitions, and you will be aware that even your most successful pictures sometimes fail. If, for example, a photograph has achieved 40 acceptances in 50 attempts that still represents a 20% failure.

Many Exhibition acceptances indicates the possibility of a good Adjudication score, but this is given as general guidance only, and does not guarantee success at MPAGB.

Exhibitions cannot be relied upon to define a consistent “Exhibition or Award Standard”. Other bodies, such as BPE, FIAP and PSA award their distinctions for a high number of exhibition acceptances but the PAGB Award is given based on an assessment by an expert panel of Adjudicators.

Some photographs, such as Record or Architectural photographs, may not be particularly successful in most International Exhibitions, but they will be given due and fair consideration by our Adjudicators.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Please be assured that, if you are planning to apply for the first time or to apply again after an unsuccessful attempt, your entry will receive as fair an assessment as we can possibly achieve.

Q1. Why has one of my pictures scored lower than it did in a previous Adjudication?

A1. Even judges are human, and six Adjudicators marking separately cannot be as precise as one marking alone. This variation is seen at club level when pictures are entered in different competitions and becomes even more noticeable if the picture is entered to several exhibitions. Acceptance into one exhibition and rejection from the next is not unusual. Over the longer term these fluctuations should even out.

Even judges are human ..

The first thing to understand is that the Adjudicators VOTE, rather than score. A **YES** VOTE is indicated by pressing 4, a **NO** VOTE is shown by pressing 2. They only use 3 for a very **NEAR MISS**, whilst the 5 means it is **GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE NEXT LEVEL**.

If the Adjudicators look at a picture which is borderline, maybe **just below** or maybe **just above** the standard required, then they must decide to vote **FOR** (4) or vote **NEAR MISS** (3). This can be a tiny movement for an individual Adjudicator but if two or more Adjudicators move from 4 to 3 then the score drops by 2 points or more.

We understand how difficult it can be when you are making a second attempt. Obviously, since you need to average 20, you will feel that the pictures which scored 20 or more should score just as well this time as they did at a previous Adjudication. This is a dangerous assumption. Remember that a score of 20 probably means that **only two** of the Adjudicators thought it was good enough, voting 4 for Yes, whilst the other four Voted 3 for a Near Miss. As a single image this picture was, in fact, **not good enough** to meet the passing criteria and, since it is so borderline, the next set of Adjudicators might all vote NEAR MISS for a total of 18 or even NO, for a total of 12.

A drop of 5 to 7 points for a single photograph from one Adjudication to the next is not too unusual and simply means that some of the Adjudicators in one panel were a **tiny** bit more sympathetic to your work than some Adjudicators were in another. For the Adjudicators, it was a very small movement, but, for you, the reduction in score can be massively disappointing. By the same token an image may score **more** than it did previously.

Neither adjudicating panel is necessarily right or wrong. Perhaps the first panel averaged out a little high and the second averaged a little low. The photograph is still borderline - sometimes it will

It is not unusual for re-submitted photographs to score higher the second time around, although this has seldom generated a complaint.

get a passing score, sometimes it will not. A picture which meets our requirements in the opinion of all 6 Adjudicators will score 24, and these are the ones you can rely upon. Any score lower than that had not convinced all the Adjudicators and can easily score lower

at a subsequent Adjudication. Of course, there is a little bit of luck involved, and even a 24 may score significantly lower or higher if this panel disagrees – even slightly – with the last.

We work very hard to ensure consistency. Our Adjudicators are the best there are, but judging photography is not a science. There are no real objective criteria to assess against and nobody is pretending that there isn't a little bit of luck involved. If your entry is borderline, you have at least as much chance of passing as you have of failing but you cannot be confident of either.

Q2. What can I do about these fluctuations?

A2. Where you have two different scores for the same picture, the truth is probably somewhere between the two. On different occasions the Adjudicators shaded their marks up or down to your benefit or disadvantage. You almost certainly need to improve, or replace, that photograph. However, the fact that the same team have conducted the Review for many years ensures that these observed fluctuations in scores will be considered.

Q3. How can a photograph with several Exhibition Acceptances not be up to the Exhibition Standard that seems to be suggested for the DPAGB?

A3. We must put some label on the Award to describe our requirement to achieve the DPAGB but there is no such thing as a consistent "Exhibition Standard". Some Exhibitions accept up to 40% or more of the entries, many accept around 20% and one, at least, accepts less than 7%. Some Exhibitions have high class judges who the PAGB would choose as Adjudicators, some don't. Some overseas Exhibitions apply different criteria and standards. Not necessarily poorer, but different and not in line with UK camera club work. Most active exhibitors have experienced the variation between Exhibitions. A medal at one and being rejected from another is not unusual.

By their sheer variety, Exhibitions cannot be relied upon to define a consistent "Exhibition Standard". Other bodies, such as FIAP and PSA award distinctions for a high number of exhibition acceptances but the PAGB APM is granted on an assessment by an expert panel of judges and acceptances into Exhibitions does not guarantee that the PAGB will agree that it meets our requirement for the Award. Exhibition Acceptances and even Medals will not be considered.

It is our highly experienced Adjudicators who define what the PAGB requirement is based on the information given in this leaflet and, of course, we have in place a permanent team and careful briefings to ensure that this is as fair and consistent as is humanly possible.

Q4. How can an exhibition medal winner score poorly?

A4. Regular exhibitors know that there is no such thing as a guaranteed acceptance and that a medal winner at one event can easily be rejected from the next. The PAGB cannot know what the standard of entry was or the expertise of the judging panel at any exhibition. Some exhibition selectors are much more exacting than others and they will often seek to accept, and sometimes commend, pictures which are outside the normal run - "something a bit different". Such images run the risk of not appealing to other judges at other times against other competing images. Being accepted into an exhibition and even winning a medal at several exhibitions does not necessarily mean that the image meets our requirements.

Also, the audience may not be aware that the version of the picture submitted is not necessarily the version which won the medal, nor that it may have secured the Award in a limited "specialist" section, nor how long ago the medal was awarded. Perhaps it was entered to a Salon as a PDI, but the Adjudicators are assessing a print. Perhaps it is even a different, not so well executed print. Over the years, we have observed many examples of this happening.

.. the version of the picture submitted is not necessarily the version which won the medal

If our Award for Photographic Merit was made for success in Exhibitions, we wouldn't need you to submit work to our Adjudicators.

Q5. I am a member of a good Club and my pictures do well in their competitions and in Inter-Club competitions. Why have they scored lower than 20 for the CPAGB?

A5. We must put a descriptive label on the Award to describe our requirement to achieve the CPAGB, but there is no such thing as a consistent "Club Standard". We cannot know the level of work in your Club or in your Federation nor can we know the expertise of the judges you use. It is our highly experienced Adjudicators who define what the PAGB requirement is, based on the information given in this leaflet, and, of course, we have in place a permanent team and careful briefings to ensure that this is as fair and consistent as is humanly possible. If the Award was made for success in your Club, we wouldn't need you to submit work to our Adjudicators.

Q6. Is the standard rising all the time?

A6. The PAGB is confident that we have maintained the standard at the same level, but external standards have risen. Good Club Photography, for example, is still assessed against what our Adjudicators consider to be good club photography, bearing in mind that Club Photography is generally much better now, than when the APM started. A major factor has been the constant

improvement in digital technology and the increasing “digital” skill level of entrants. Nature and Creative photography, in particular, are genres which have dramatically improved. There are also fashion changes and there are subjects and styles which may score lower today than in earlier years. The APM seek to reflect what is happening at Club and Exhibition level.

Q7. If I don't want the PAGB to retain the print they choose, can I change it?

A7. We must have a suitable print exactly reflecting the requirement, but there may be room for negotiation. Talk to the Chairman at the end of the day. You can provide a duplicate mounted copy if you wish – say because there are important labels on the back – but all postage and packing is your responsibility. We will not allow you to take your print away on the promise of a replacement. This has happened several times in the past and no replacement has ever arrived. (We keep all the PDI.) The photographs are used for workshops, presentations and in our Recorded Lectures.

Q8. What is the Review?

A8. After every section of every Awards Adjudication the Chairman of the Adjudicators, together with an experienced team of judges, reviews the “near miss” applications. This is not an attempt to undermine the work of the Adjudicators but recognises that the system of voting can sometimes lead to “unfair” swings in scores. The PAGB has maintained a solid level of experience and continuity in the Review personnel since 1994 when the Awards commenced.

Q9. At what score, will an entry be reviewed?

A9. The level at which this review is conducted is decided by the APM Team on the day. Note is taken of the general trend in scoring in any given section as well as the individual scores awarded by each Adjudicator. Usually we will look at entries scoring 185 or more for Credit, 280 or more for Distinction and 430 or more for Master.

Q10. How is the review conducted?

A10. A sympathetic stance is taken. The review team will look at every picture and add points without compromising the integrity of the Awards. They **never** mark any picture down, even if it seems to have scored better than they might have expected.

Q11. Can I appeal against failure?

A11. There is no right of appeal and the decision made on the day will not be changed. If you are really dissatisfied and think that you have been unfairly treated, you can write to the Chairman of the Adjudicators who cannot change the decision, but is able to examine your evidence and your entry to provide you with feedback.

Q13. Can I discuss my unsuccessful entry with someone from the PAGB?

A13. We regret that it is not normally possible to discuss your personal entry afterwards. This would only be possible with the pictures to look at and would have to be done face to face. It would be just too time consuming. However, the Adjudicators always make themselves available at the end of each day and will be happy to look at your work at that time. Surprisingly few people take this opportunity.

Q14. How can I improve my entry?

A14. Enter as many Open Exhibitions as you can and try to be involved in PAGB competitions such as the GB Cups, GB Trophies and the Masters of Print.

Seek as much advice as possible from qualified people. Preferably people who have acted as Adjudicators at previous events or, at the very least, people who have been successful at the level you hope to achieve. However, even if you have been advised by an Adjudicator, he/she could vote slightly differently in the highly focused atmosphere of an actual Adjudication.

Please note that, although there is nothing to prevent you showing your pictures to an Adjudicator, we advise those who are already empaneled to avoid detailed discussion with prospective entrants prior to the event.

Be wary of placing too much reliance on scores you may have achieved at a “Mock Adjudication” organised by your Federation or your Club.

Q15. Are there any suitable workshops?

A15. Federations often run such workshops. The PAGB will pay the travelling expenses to allow the Chairman and/or other members of the organising committee to attend Federation Workshops with images from previously successful panels and to advise applicants individually.

The PAGB also offers an “Introductory APM Workshop” to those Federations scheduled to Host the Adjudication two years hence. These are designed to introduce the Awards and to appeal to Club members who are only starting to think about participating. The object is to “kick start” people to be ready to enter when the Adjudication comes to their own Federation. Contact your Federation Awards Officer for further information.

The PAGB also runs an Online Advisory Service. Please see APM Leaflet 7.

Several Federations have a 1:1 Mentoring Scheme.

Q16. Has anyone failed who should have passed?

A16. The APM team and those involved in the Review process are confident that our immediate review has ensured that nobody has ever failed who should have passed. Since we only review entries which have not achieved the passing score, we cannot say that nobody has passed who might have failed.

Q17. How are the judges selected and would it be better to have the same judges every time?

A17. The judges are chosen each year by the PAGB from the best in the UK, those who have been appointed to the PAGB List of Approved Judges. We try to keep a measure of continuity, with at least one or two taking part in the subsequent Adjudication, but this is not always possible. Normally two of the Adjudicators will be drawn from the most experienced judges in the APM team.

We also work hard to create a balanced group representing different genres of photography. For example, we strive to have at least one Nature “specialist” judge, but this is not always possible.

As the APM are held each time in a different Federation we also need to take account of travelling distances and we like to ensure that the Host Federation is represented on the panel. Although we cannot keep the same judges for every Adjudication, which may lead to small variations in scoring, we have in place a long-standing Review Panel with a procedure to ensure continuity.

Q18. What other information can the PAGB provide?

A18. Some Federations have a “mentoring” service, and we recommend those – you should contact your Federation Awards Officer in the first instance. The PAGB also runs an Online Advisory Service. <http://www.thepagb.org.uk/awards/apm-advice-service/>

APM Guidance Leaflets are available from the PAGB Library on our website at <http://www.thepagb.org.uk/library/>

Several, generously illustrated and regularly updated, DVDs, which describe the standard required for CPAGB and DPAGB, are available for clubs (only) to hire from the Recorded Lecture Service of the PAGB at <http://www.thepagb.org.uk/services/recorded-lectures/>

The PAGB also supports Federation Advisory Workshops where you can have your work reviewed by APM “advisers”. Information about APM Advisory Workshops and all the other PAGB events and activities is regularly published in our free newsletter. You can register for **e-news** and browse back issues at www.pagbnews.co.uk