

PSA Embarks on Major Revisions to Members' Recognition Programs

In 2008, when the Photographic Society of America (PSA) Board of Directors (BOD) met at its annual spring meeting, a committee was appointed to review the Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) program: to examine the current ROPA program to determine if it was structured to provide the appropriate recognition for PSA members and whether it might be expanded to provide for increasingly significant achievements of photographic excellence. In 2009, due to the relationship of the ROPA criteria with Star Ratings, the committee also conducted a review of the Star Ratings program.

In May 2009 the ROPA Review Committee distributed a report on the ROPA program and Star Ratings to the PSA Board and the Divisions. That report contained a review of the current ROPA and Star programs along with a number of recommendations to improve and expand their impact on all PSA members who participate.

As a result of feedback from Division members, and further review of the ROPA Committee proposals at the recent PSA Conference in Yellowstone where some aspects of the original proposal were modified to address a number of concerns raised during those discussions, a final recommendation was presented to the Board on September 26, 2009.

The final revised ROPA and Star Ratings proposals were presented to the PSA Board for approval at the Yellowstone Conference and we're pleased to report that both motions received unanimous approval.

We're pleased to provide PSA members with information about these exciting changes to ROPA and Star Ratings. These changes are the first major changes to ROPA in 10 years and, for Star Ratings, the most comprehensive changes in the history of our Society.

Recognition of Photographic Achievement Program

The ROPA Review Committee heard from many members who expressed concern about the ROPA criteria where a member could attain their Proficiency (PPSA) distinction with anywhere from 288 to 640 acceptances depending on which Division they attained their Star Rating. Similar discrepancies also

occur in the Excellence (EPSA) designation. To reduce those variances, the ROPA Review Committee recommended that the ROPA distinction be based on total acceptances regardless as to the Division where they were attained. **Schedule A** outlines the new ROPA program approved by the PSA board **effective July 1, 2010**.

Star Ratings

The ROPA Review Committee also examined the impact of their ROPA proposals on the current Star Ratings program. The Committee discovered, that although the revision of the ROPA criteria to a program based on cumulative acceptances, rather than specific Division Star Ratings levels, went a long way to eliminate the current discrepancy in ROPA acceptance numbers, there remained differences in those numbers that did not fully address the inequalities within the Division Star Ratings programs.

The Committee, after considerable discussion among its own members and PSA Division members, concluded that the Star Ratings programs would benefit from a new approach to address current concerns with the programs.

The Committees Star Ratings recommendations were based on:

1. An acceptance in one Division should carry the same value and importance as an acceptance in any other Division. Currently the Star Ratings program tries to equate Star Ratings in each Division based on the number of annual exhibitions recognized in each Division. It was structured so a member in any one Division might attain a particular Star Rating in a similar time, as a member in any other Division would achieve a similar Star Rating. The Committee felt that a Star program that recognized all acceptances as being equal would mean that the divergent acceptances numbers between Divisions for a similar Star Rating would not be necessary or acceptable.
2. New PSA members in particular have stated that PSA's Star Ratings program is very confusing and difficult to understand.
3. Likewise it is also confusing when a member says they have a 5th Star. Most would assume that that measurement is equivalent.

Terry Carroll
Exhibitions Services
Vice President



Terry Carroll

However we know it's not an equal measure as a 5th Star could mean 288, 480 or 640 acceptances depending on the Division where the Star was awarded.

The ROPA Review Committee concluded that a universal Star Ratings program applicable to all Divisions would reduce and most likely eliminate the discrepancies with the current Star Ratings program.

The ROPA Committee Star Ratings proposal was submitted and subsequently approved by the PSA Board on September 26, 2009. Therefore, effective July 1, 2010, PSA Uniform Practices (Part A), II Divisional Star Ratings Standards will be revised to a universal Star Ratings Standard as per attached **Schedule B**.

There are two important adjustments to the universal Star Ratings program:

1. The Nature Division's Photo Naturalist program will remain as currently structured. The Nature Division's Galaxy Star Ratings program will convert to the universal program on July 1, 2010. The Photo Naturalist Award program is a distinct program based on restricted subject whereas the Galaxy program is based solely on acceptances in exhibitions that have PSA Nature Division recognition.
2. A re-examination of the impact of the universal Star Ratings program for the Stereo Division resulted in a recommendation that the Division continues with their current Star Ratings program until such time that conditions warrant their conversion to the universal Star Ratings program. As Stereo is the smallest PSA Division in membership and participation in exhibitions, a review indicated that the universal Star program would negatively impact the Stereo Division. For all our other Divisions, conversion from the various Division Star programs to the universal Star program results in the majority of members attaining a higher Star Ratings. This is not the case for Stereo where conversion results in a lower Star Ratings. That, in combination with the realization that Stereo recognized exhibitions are about half that of the next lowest Division, encouraged the retention of the Stereo division's current Star ratings program.

The second issue to be dealt with is the conversion from the current Division Star Ratings system to the universal Star program on July 1, 2010. To allow members sufficient

time to submit their acceptances for conversion to the universal Star program, members have until June 30, 2011 to submit any additional acceptances received but not claimed prior to June 30, 2010 to be included in the conversion to the universal Star Ratings program. This approach ensures both that members have time to prepare their documentation and to allow for acceptances that might be otherwise lost due primarily to a change in the number of acceptances per title. More information on the conversion process will follow shortly.

The conversion of a member's current Star Rating is a crucial element in the implementation of the universal Star program. The Committee has structured the universal Star program in such a manner that no PSA member would see a reduction in their current Star Rating. In fact, the majority of our members will see their current Star Rating converted to a higher Star Rating when the universal program takes effect. For example, A CPID Galaxy 3 exhibitor (940 acceptances) would convert to a Galaxy 6 under the universal Star program. If you are a Star exhibitor and want to see what your current Star Rating might be converted to, match the number of acceptances you've received for your current Star Rating and find the closest comparable acceptance number on the Star Ratings chart (Schedule B). In most cases the acceptance numbers on the current Divisions Star Ratings chart will not exactly match the new universal Star Ratings chart but the ROPA Review Committee has developed a conversion process so that no member will lose any acceptances on conversion to the universal Star Ratings program.

In summary, both the ROPA and the new Star Ratings program are scheduled to come into effect on July 1, 2010. The committee has received great interest and encouragement to proceed with revisions to both programs in writing and in conversation from numerous PSA members. We believe that the revisions in the ROPA program add significantly to PSA's program to recognize our members' achievements. And we are excited about perhaps the most significant changes to the Star Ratings program since its inception. We believe the changes to that program will continue as the primary recognition program of our members' photographic diversity within our Divisions.

More information on both the ROPA and Star Ratings program along with more detail on the conversion of members' current Star

Ratings to the universal Star program will be provided in upcoming *PSA Journals*.

Terry Carroll, PSA Exhibitions Services Vice-President, (Chairman of the committee)

Committee Members:

Vijay Karai, FPSA

Sharp Todd, APSA, PPSA

Gerry Emmerich, FPSA, EPSA

Fred Greene, FPSA, EPSA (ex officio)

Schedule A Recognition of Photographic Achievement

Effective July 1, 2010

Recognition of Photographic Achievement

- To develop an array of steps or levels of recognition that will challenge even the most experienced PSA member to participate in international exhibitions
- To develop a program to recognize participation in a variety of PSA Divisions

Purpose:

- To provide ongoing recognition of significant photographic achievements by PSA members in PSA-recognized international exhibitions by awarding PSA designations on attainment of certain significant photographic criteria

Objectives:

- To encourage PSA members long term participation in PSA-recognized international exhibitions
- To encourage participation in a variety of subject areas
- To encourage participation in exhibitions for multi Divisions Distinctions

Proficiency (PPSA)	288 acceptances
Excellence (EPSA)	700 acceptances
Master (MPSA)	1500 acceptances
Grand Master (GMPSA)	3000 acceptances

Application Process

- ROPA applications require Star Ratings from one or more Divisions/Sections equal to or higher than the acceptances number for the distinction applied for.

Members will note that, effective July 1, 2010, a ROPA applicant will need to provide sufficient Star Ratings to equal the number of acceptances required for the designation requested.

Schedule B UPAC (Part A) II DIVISIONAL STAR RATINGS STANDARDS

Star Rating	Additional Titles	Cumulative Titles	Cumulative Acceptances
1	6	6	18
2	6	12	36
3	12	24	72
4	24	48	144
5	48	96	288
Galaxy 1	25 new titles with 3 acceptances each	121	363
Galaxy 2	25 new titles with 3 acceptances each	146	438
Galaxy 3	25 new titles with 3 acceptances each	171	513
Galaxy 4	25 new titles with 3 acceptances each	196	588
Galaxy 5	25 new titles with 3 acceptances each	221	663
Galaxy 6	50 new titles with 3 acceptances each	271	813
Galaxy 7	50 new titles with 3 acceptances each	321	963
Galaxy 8	50 new titles with 3 acceptances each	371	1113
Galaxy 9	50 new titles with 3 acceptances each	421	1263
Galaxy 10	50 new titles with 3 acceptances each	471	1413
Diamond 1	50 new titles with 6 acceptances each	521	1713
Diamond 2	50 new titles with 6 acceptances each	571	2013
Diamond 3	50 new titles with 6 acceptances each	621	2313
Diamond 4	50 new titles with 6 acceptances each	671	2613
Diamond 5	50 new titles with 6 acceptances each	721	2913
Diamond 6	75 new titles with 6 acceptances each	796	3363
Diamond 7	75 new titles with 6 acceptances each	871	3813
Diamond 8	75 new titles with 6 acceptances each	946	4263
Diamond 9	75 new titles with 6 acceptances each	1021	4713
Diamond 10	75 new titles with 6 acceptances each	1096	5163