



Guide for Judges and Chairs of PSA-recognized Exhibitions with Photo Travel Sections

Photo Travel Division

Updated July 1, 2020

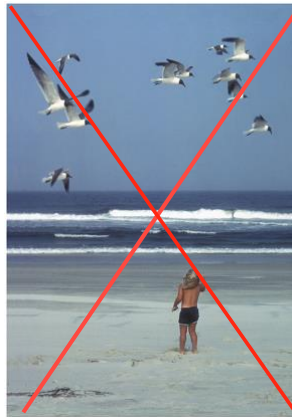
This guide should be studied by the exhibition chair, the PT section chair and the PT judges before any judging and should be closely adhered to. This update will be in effect for PT exhibitions with closing dates in 2021 and beyond.

Purpose of the Photo Travel Definition

The PSA Photo Travel Division (PTD) is *reality-based*, like the PSA Photojournalism and Nature Divisions. The objective of PSA Photo Travel (PT) is to show the world *as it is found naturally*. The purpose of the PT Definition is to guide PT photographers towards making images that show *how our world really is*, rather than to arrange it and to manipulate images to obtain the “best” photographs. *PT images should be a true record of that scene. The PT Definition is also a guide for exhibition judges to ensure that images that violate the definition are not accepted.*

Below are the individual sections of the PT Definition *in red*, illustrated with examples and comments.

A Photo Travel image expresses the characteristic features or culture of a land as they are found naturally. There are no geographic limitations.



In the case of landscapes or buildings, it is not necessary to know “where the place is.” The image only needs to have identifiable features so that the place can be recognized by someone visiting it.



Images from events or activities arranged specifically for photography, or of subjects directed or hired for photography are not permitted.



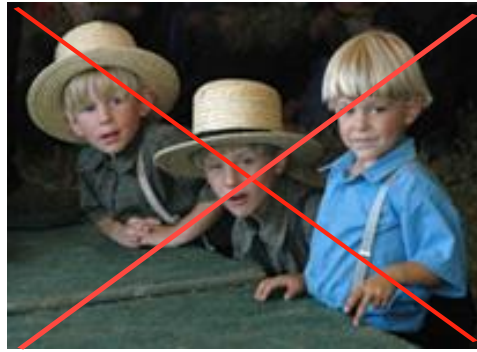
The photo below confirms that the picture of the boys throwing water is a “setup,” it is staged.

This is not the normal behavior of these fishermen. It’s a “setup” for photographers.



Setups can be identified when many images of the same or similar scenes are submitted to exhibitions, or when they depict unnatural actions or behavior by the people shown in the photo.

Close up pictures of people or objects must include features that provide information about the location.



The purpose of this requirement is to eliminate photographs that could have been taken in a studio instead of the natural environment of the person(s) shown in the photograph.

Techniques that add, relocate, replace or remove any element of the original image, except by cropping, are not permitted.



Image manipulation by removing, moving or adding objects is often difficult to spot and to prove. When judges suspect a violation that should be investigated.

The only allowable adjustments are removal of dust or digital noise, restoration of the appearance of the original scene, and complete conversion to greyscale monochrome. Other derivations, including infrared, are not permitted. All images must look natural.





Oversaturated, overly sharpened and other images with unnatural artifacts, such as halos or strong vignetting, should be given lower scores in judging. Extreme fish-eye images that are distorted do not appear natural. Partial desaturation of areas of the image does not look natural and is not allowed.

Entire PT Definition:

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 permitted. Close up pictures of people or objects must include features that provide information about the location.

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 greyscale monochrome. Other derivations, including infrared, are not permitted. All images must look natural.

Additional Comments:

Judges of PT exhibitions should ask themselves the following questions when judging each image:

1. Does this image meet the PT Definition, in particular, does it look natural?
2. Is this image the result of a setup (i.e. is it staged), beyond reasonable doubt?
3. Does it meet the definition of the theme, if the exhibition has theme sections (e.g. are landscape images submitted to "People" sections, or people images submitted to "Scapes" sections)?
4. Images that are being judged as not meeting the PT Definition should be scored lower, regardless of their photographic merit. However, disqualification should be used only in extreme, unambiguous cases.

For additional information, contact Nadia Filiaggi, EPSA, PTD Exhibition Standards Director, ptd-esd@psa-photo.org

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With contributions, approval and distribution by PT Division

ADDITIONAL READING AND EXAMPLES: by Nadia Filiaggi EPSA.

There have been entries in the PT sections where only part of the image has been converted to greyscale monochrome while other areas of the image still appear to show some slight signs of color (image 1). There are some entries where there are whole areas of an image that are left in full color, while other small areas of the image are converted to greyscale monochrome. Entrants are converting only the sky or surrounding elements to greyscale monochrome (image 2). Images can be entered into PT sections in color (image 3) or in complete greyscale monochrome (image 4).

Image 1



Image 2



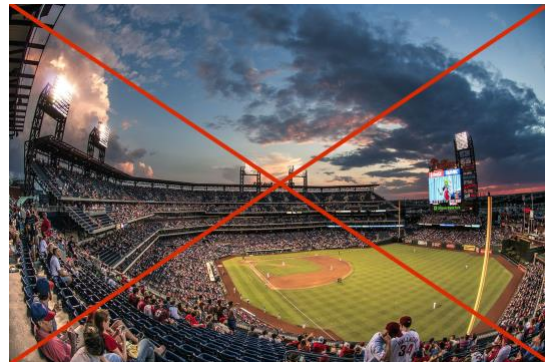
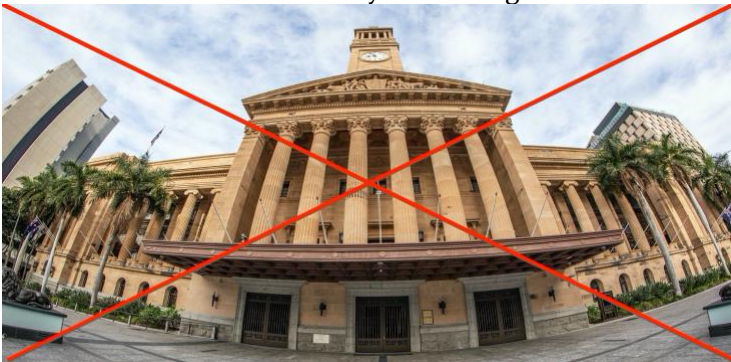
Image 3



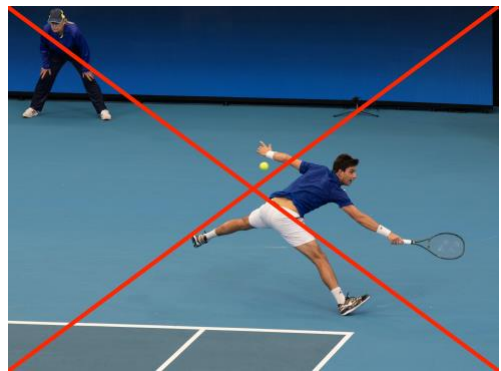
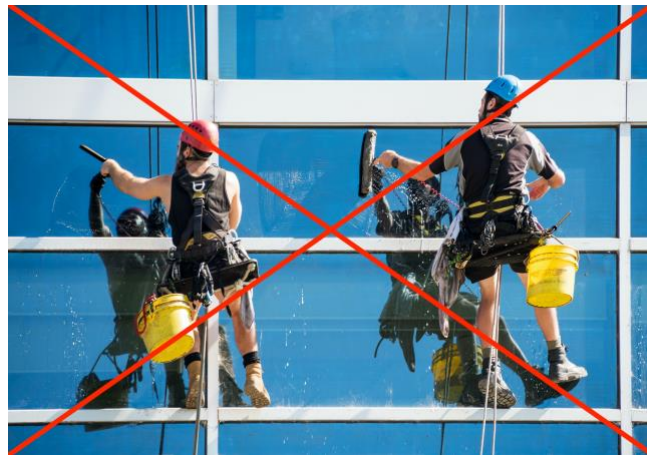
Image 4



DISTORTED IMAGES: Fisheye lens images that show distortion do not adhere to the PT definition



The images below are examples of images that can be entered into PID and PPD exhibitions but should not be entered into PT sections because they do not adhere to the PT Definition. They do not **express characteristic features or culture of a land** as the definition requires.



STAGED IMAGES

The following images are staged. They can be entered into PID or PPD but are not permitted in Photo Travel because they are a result of organized setups. PT is about images that show the truth of a culture or of the characteristic features of a land as they are found naturally. Images from arranged situations cannot be entered into PT.

It is not always easy for a judge to ascertain whether an image has been staged but they should always ask themselves if the scene looks natural.

Be on the lookout for sunlight rays which fall perfectly on the main subject or of elaborately dressed (or undressed) individual/s posing in scenes. PT is about reality and images must adhere to the PT definition.

If a judge suspects that an image is from an event or activity arranged specifically for photography or of subjects directed or hired for photography then that image should be scored low.

During the scoring, if a judge or chairman is certain an image is staged then he/she should stop the proceedings and notify his fellow jury members.

Attending organized photoshoots can be exciting and help expand a photographer's portfolio. Photography tours make photography fun and provide different and wonderful opportunities. They play an important part in photography, however, images taken at organized events cannot be entered into PT which is a reality-based medium. These images are ideal for PID and PPD. As a judge you should do your best to exclude staged images from PT awards.



Fisherman with his cormorant. A very small number might still practice this type of fishing for self-sufficiency but this particular scene is staged. There are photography guides in Guilin that will arrange these shots for photographers. Sometimes it will involve fake smoke/fog. These images are allowed in PID and PPD but not in PTD.



You will find many adaptations of this scene. Sometimes the shot is taken with a birdcage as a frame. The locals do not dress up so elaborately when making these cages. These images are suitable for entry into PID and PPD but not in PTD.





This scene of a farmer walking across this bridge is organized for photographers. There are many variations of this set up shot. This scene is taken at the Lishui Xiandu bridge in China. They are suitable for entry into PID or PPD sections but not in PTD.





You will find many versions of the above scene, which is taken in the Yang JiaXi village in Xiapu, China. It can sometimes involve a lot of sunlight coming through the trees.



The other organized photoshoot at Yang JiaXi is of the famous 'Drying of the Hanging Nets'. These beautiful images of an old-time practice are perfect for PID and PPD but this particular scene is arranged solely for photographers and therefore not permitted in PTD.



Be on the lookout for aerial shots of women in red carrying yellow buckets across their shoulders. These similar shots can be taken at Dong Bi or at Xiao Hao in Xiapu, China and are arranged for photographers.





Inle fishermen will sometimes pose for photographers and are paid for their time. Even if a judge did not realize this, they might be suspicious of the image with the three fishermen, all with their baskets facing the same way and posing in perfect unison. You will also find shots of fishermen throwing their fishing cage onto the water in perfect unison, creating perfectly timed splashes. Would this really happen? These staged images could be entered into PID and PPD but not in PTD.



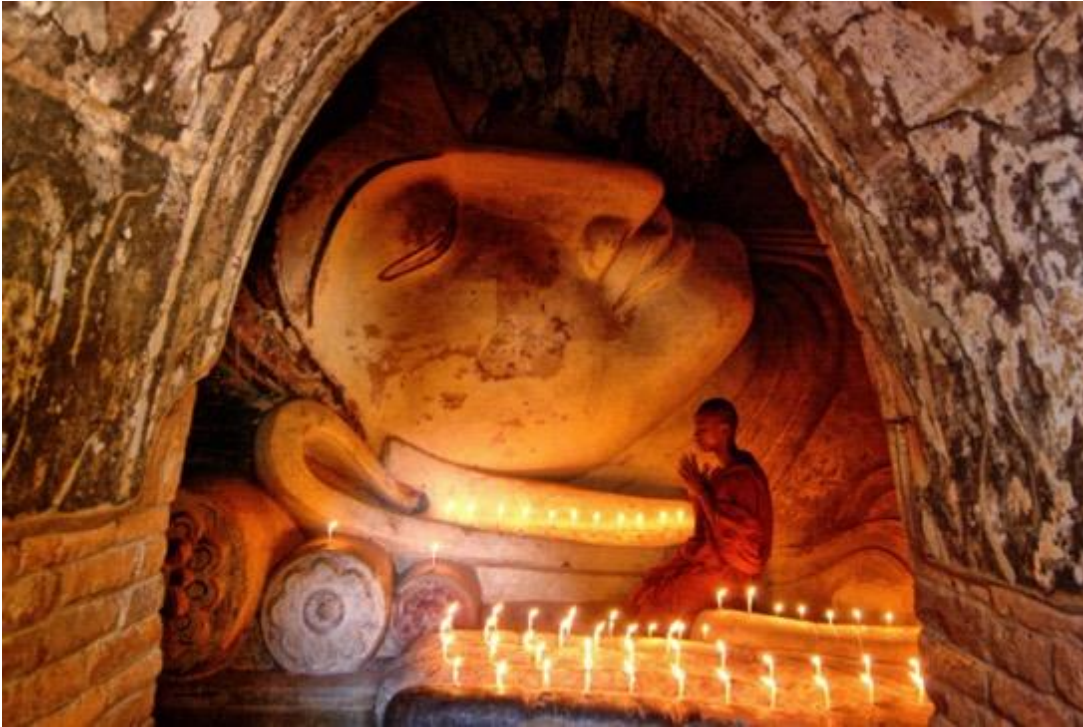
The above image was taken at an organized Photoshoot in Inner Mongolia. Even if the judge did not realize this, one would question why would two elaborately dressed men be racing camels down a sand dune in perfect light. You will sometimes find dogs running beside the camels. This scene is staged for photographers.



This setup scene is at Tukad Unda dam in Bali. The images are not always of boys and their bright buckets, they sometimes feature adults in costume. Usually the group will be in unison. Remember if it does not look natural it is most probably staged.



Canning, West Bengal, India. Judge might not realize this is staged. But perhaps they should notice that having three perfectly placed boats with a boy on the edge of each bow of the boat, jumping in near perfect unison would be suspicious. If a judge suspects an image might be setup then the judge should score that image low.



These images of Monks were setups in Bagan, Myanmar. If a judge suspects that an image could be staged, the image in question should be scored low.



The performances of these horses galloping in such large numbers are staged for photographers and occur in all seasons. The organizer of this shoot is herding the horses especially to the area where hundreds of photographers are waiting. This area is called 'Ba Shang Pasture' and is located between Inner Mongolia and Beijing. In PTD, images from staged, organized photoshoots are not permitted.

There are also organized shoots of horses running through water.



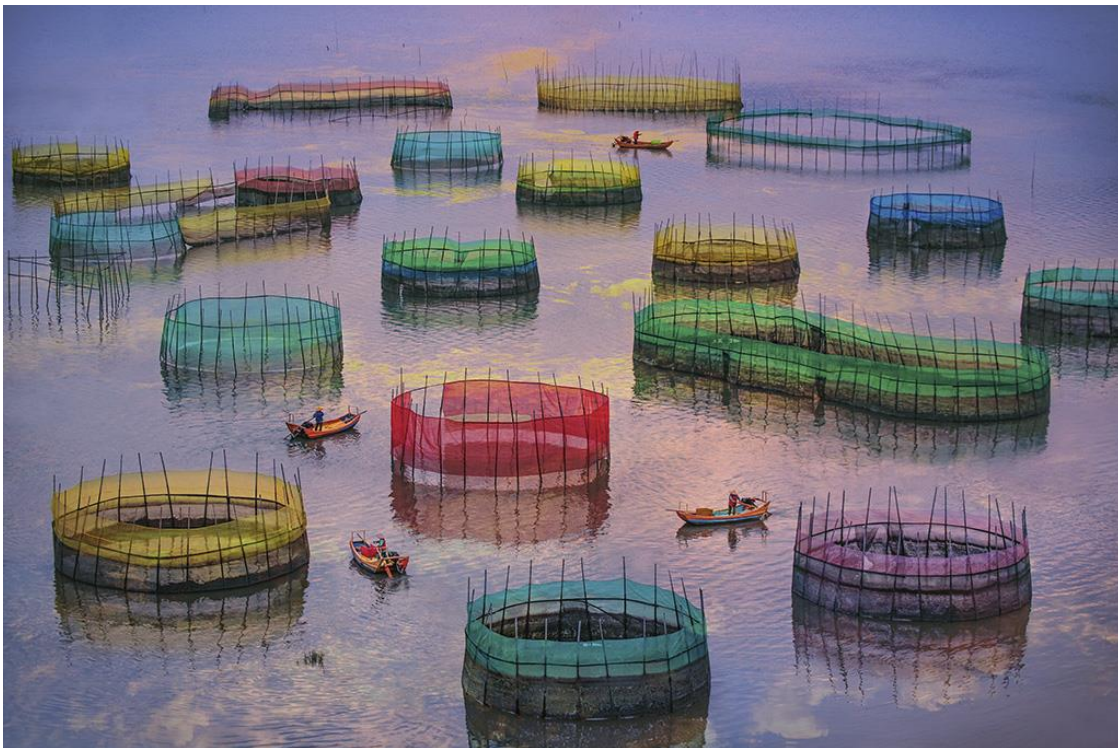
Fishermen walking with stilts is a feature of the old days and it is not a common practice in China now. These days fishermen seldom use this kind of fishing net to catch fish as it is not efficient. This image was taken at a staged photoshoot.



One thing that the judges should take note of is how the boats are placed just so the photographer gets a clear shot of everything and everyone in the scene. Note how they are all positioned in near perfect mirror placements. Another hint that this is a setup is the arc of the water... very well timed and perhaps rehearsed.



This is a famous site in Xiapu China. With no doubt, scenes here are organized for photographers and the models are paid. The owner of this property charges an entrance fee for photographers to enter this area. To the right of these raised banks are colorful circle crab nets. The boatmen are paid to weave their way through these circle crab nets for photographers.



Circle Crab Nets in Xiapu, China. Some property owners use colored nets for a better visual appeal for photographers. These images are allowed in PID and PPD but not in PTD.



This person is the owner of a Tea House in Chengdu, China. You have to pay a photographer's fee to photograph inside the teahouse. He will perform for the photographers. You will find images of water sprays in 'Z' shapes and 'O' shapes etc. If photographers miss the shot the owner can be paid to redo the water spray. These images are not permitted in PT.



This is a very famous spot in Myanmar, the walkway of the Shwezigon Pagoda in Bagan. The monks come here to receive food very early in the morning. You will find many staged images of monks in this colonnade. You will sometimes find a monk posing or a few monks walking in unison. Sometimes the monks are asked to carry umbrellas. Ask yourself is carrying umbrellas under a covered walkway a natural behavior?



The real monks walk up to the Myatheindan Pagoda in Mingun, Myanmar under a specially built covered path. This image of monks that are jumping on the wave stones is staged. Even if a judge did not realize this, he/she should question if this appears to be something that would happen naturally.

Further reading on staged/fake photography can be found at <https://www.picsofasia.com/the-library-of-fake-travel-photos-in-asia/>

The article is written by Etienne Bossot and is updated regularly.

If you are able to contribute any staged images please contact the Photo Travel Exhibition Standards Director ptd-esd@psa-photo.org

Staged Images written by Nadia Filiaggi EPSA
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