

Dobson Henry Awards 2019 (JKB & JS)

This year the RPS AV Group are delighted to be able to present two renowned UK workers with the “Dobson Henry Medal”, an award presented for outstanding contributions in the Audio-Visual Medium, for furthering the activity and for long service to the medium.

Normally we would present two, independent citations, but in this case the contribution of the recipients has been very much as a two-person team. That’s not to say that they don’t have their individual strengths, but for so many years they have worked together and contributed seamlessly.

My first experience of these ‘Nationals’ was in 2007 and it was there that I first saw one of their AVs. As soon as I mention the name of the AV which I saw at that event, many will recognise the recipients of this year’s awards. The AV I saw, which had the audience rolling in the aisles (and that in itself is a clue), went on to win the very first ‘Pollock medal’. About a naive Yorkshireman’s visit to the opera, “Messiah” continues to be one of those AVs you can watch over and over. 15 years previously, before my AV time, our other recipient also won the best first-time entrant prize with “The Dream”, but in my ‘era’ made a great impression with those butterflies in “The Colour Thief”.

Though they started in the tape/slide era, working in the computer and sound industries made their transition to digital less painful and soon made them the gurus of digital AV and ambassadors and experts in everything PTE. Their knowledge and presentation skills have meant that, over the years they have lectured to innumerable camera clubs and AV groups, particularly in the north of the country. Both have been presidents of their PAGB Federations and continue a close relationship with the PAGB, particularly in the AV awards that body offers.

For the RPS, they became joint editors of the AV News magazine for 7 years, setting up a web presence which continues to be the ‘go to’ site for checking on events and competitions.

Many of you will be attending the next national competition, the Great Northern Festival, which their team took over from Howard and Suzanne Gregory and for which they will be very much ‘up-front’. Maybe you will be in Wilmslow for the AV group’s regular meeting, where our recipients will be making sure it all works, especially from the technical side. Or perhaps you will travel to Capel Curig to enjoy the IAC Peter Coles competition where they will undoubtedly be providing all the technical support. And following that competition, I suspect as has happened in recent years, they will be taking the winners to the BIAFF festival to show our video and film colleagues, the best of the world’s AVs.

Both of them are now straying into the dark arts of video and gaining awards from the IAC in this medium and both have judged at the BIAFF festival. She now has gained a licentiate distinction from the IAC, whose acronym rather inappropriately appears as ‘LACI’.

By now most of you will have realised that the awards this year go to Jill K Bunting CPAGB LACI and John Smith APAGB CPAGB. It gives me great pleasure to make this award on behalf of the RPS AV Group and the whole AV community, and to present each with a Dobson Henry Medal.