

PAGB Audio Visual Awards Consultation

The PAGB is currently reviewing its approach to Audio Visual Awards to ensure that the requirements recognise advances in all aspects of the craft. There is, however, a more specific reason for this current review which relates to the origin of images used in AV sequences - specifically the use of images which are not the original work of the applicant.

The PAGB has always required that all images entered for Awards assessment should be the work of the entrant, and applicants for the PAGB Awards in AV sign a declaration to the effect that they own the copyright in all images included in submissions. It has been obvious for some time that many submissions have not strictly complied with this requirement and that clarification is needed.

In 2011 the PAGB re-confirmed a general rule that all images submitted for competitions and APM Awards assessments must be entirely the work of the entrant, clearly excluding the use of images from any other source regardless of copyright issues.

The PAGB recognises that a strict approach to image ownership could impact on the number of applications for the AV Awards which, currently, are embraced within the PAGB Awards For Photographic Merit (APM). However, assessment can hardly be based on photographic expertise if any, many, or all of the images are not the work of the applicant.

AV has tended to be generally defined as slide/tape sequences comprising still images with associated, separately generated, sound tracks.

In recent years, the advent of digital imaging and audio recording equipment and techniques, and the demise of film slide photography has brought with it new opportunities for creativity that were not possible with historical methods.

Audio Visual could now be more usefully defined as the creation of a 'production' comprising visual (not solely still photographs) and sound elements.

The demonstration of overall production expertise, rather than just photography, would, therefore, appear to be a more appropriate measure of such work.

If this new, broader, definition of Audio Visual were to be adopted by the PAGB the use of images and other visual elements from any source would be acceptable although applicants for Award assessments would be expected to be able to demonstrate consent to use all the material involved in the production.

The PAGB is an association dedicated to photography, so an emphasis on still images as the primary visual content would be entirely consistent with the Association's aims and objectives.

However, the advent of still image cameras which are also able to record continuous video material - with simultaneously recorded soundtrack – provides new opportunities for photographers to explore added dimensions, both visually and audibly, in the creation of audio visual productions.

It is suggested that such material should not be excluded from audio visual productions provided that its inclusion is appropriate to the overall production objective and that the production itself remains true to still image photography as its primary content.

In order to recognise this broader definition of Audio Visual it is suggested that the PAGB replaces the Audio Visual category within the Awards for Photographic Merit with new Awards in Audio Visual Production at Credit, Distinction and Master levels.

The PAGB will discuss this issue at its next executive committee meeting in February 2012 when it is hoped that agreement can be reached to adopt these new procedures in time for them to be in operation for the currently proposed AV assessment in October 2012.

This Consultation is open until 21st January 2012

Comment is invited from any audio visual worker who is a member of a PAGB affiliated club, especially those likely to consider submitting AV productions for future awards assessment, and those already holding APM Awards in AV.

Comment would also be welcome from any other individuals or organisations with an interest in AV production.

Those interested are requested to complete a simple web based questionnaire at: www.pagbnews.co.uk/avawards/index.html

Additionally, more expansive comments can be submitted directly by email to: avawards@pagbnews.co.uk

Tony Riley
Chairman – PAGB Standards Sub Committee
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