

PSQ and Judge's Executive recommendation on image protocol

There have been some questions raised regarding protocol when editing and preparing images for competition entry.

While PSQ does not have a specific involvement in writing the definition for most competitions (other than the annual PSQ Salon of Excellence) we have been asked by many people for our opinion on what is allowable when editing images for entry into club, interclub and other competitions.

The following are our thoughts and recommendations, but these are certainly not binding on the clubs preparing competition definitions. They are recommendations only.

1. **The use of text in an image.** This question was raised specifically for the Movie or Song Title competition, but this applies to entries in all competitions unless specifically stated otherwise. Our thoughts are that all elements in an image should be photographic in origin and therefore adding text using the text tool in any editing programs (i.e. Adobe Photoshop) are not allowed. Text or lettering from a sign, book, newspaper or magazine that has been photographed and included in an image is acceptable. One underlying rule is that all elements in the image should be produced by the photographer.
2. **The use of brushes, presets or actions.** This question about presets, actions, brushes, filters, etc has also been raised. Our recommendation is that these **are allowable** regardless of whether they were purchased or made by the photographer. In most cases additional skills are required to use and apply these tools and where they are appropriate to improve the image. The **only exclusion** are brushes that replace the photographic elements in the image for example, replacing skies unless the maker has created the element. The key is the image should be all the makers own work.
3. **The use of textures.** This is another matter and our recommendations are that the textures should be produced photographically by the maker and not downloaded or otherwise produced by someone else.

Please be aware that these recommendations only apply to definitions that allow significant editing. Categories such as Nature/Wildlife, Photojournalism/Social Documentary, Photo Travel, or others have overriding restrictions to preserve the integrity of the original scene.

While this is a PSQ opinion, clubs are free to set their own guidelines and definitions. We want to encourage our photographers to be creative with their own work and not rely on elements created by others.

Other outside competitions may have different guidelines, such as the Qld Interclub, Rivercity prints etc and members entering these competitions should read the definition for the set subjects carefully.

Ralph Brown

Chairman, PSQ Judges Executive