PSA 2026-1395

ILLUMINATI WINTER CIRCUIT 2026

EXHIBITION REQUIREMENTS (Part A)

Chair: **Soumya Banerjee (India)**
Email: illuminaticircuit@gmail.com
Location of Entry Form: https://winter.bestphotocircuit.com (Click on REGISTER)

SECTIONS AND THEMES:

Six Sections and Three Salons - All Digital

OPEN COLOUR	(PIDC)	Color Only
OPEN MONOCHROME	(PIDM)	Monochrome Only
NATURE GENERAL	(ND)	Color/Greyscale Monochrome
PHOTO TRAVEL WORLD IN FOCUS	(PTDW)	Color/Greyscale Monochrome
PHOTOJOURNALISM GENERAL	(PJD)	Color/Greyscale Monochrome
PEOPLE	(PIDC)	Color Only

FEES AND DISCOUNTS:

International Entrants

23 Euro for any 1 section
4 Euro for each additional section
Group/Club Discount
22 Euro for group of 7 or more for any number of sections
19 Euro for group of 11 or more for any number of sections

Indian Entrants Only

INR 1800 for any 1 section
INR 400 for each additional section
Group/Club Discount
INR 1900 for group of 7 or more entrants for any number of sections
INR 1600 for group of 11 or more entrants for any number of sections

Early Bird (Individual entrants): 26 Euro or INR 2000 for all sections for first 32 paid entrants

Payment Options

PayPal ID: illuminaticircuit@gmail.com
Indian Entrants may use direct credit to an Indian bank account. Email illuminaticircuit@gmail.com for details.

The works of the authors who do not make any payment by the closing date or make partial payment of entry fees will not be judged and such fees will not be refunded.

CALENDAR:

Closing date:	**2026-12-10 UTC−12:00, Baker Island**
All judging completed by:	2027-01-07
Score reports sent by:	2027-01-14
EDAS submitted by:	2027-02-08
Online Galleries posted by:	2027-01-28
Award/Catalog posted by:	2027-03-10
Status Page and Website availability until:	2027-12-10

JUDGES:

For all sections

SALON 1

Peter Teuschel, MPSA2 (Germany)
Vincent Cochain, MPSA, EFIAP/g (Belgium)
Ajay Kumar Tharavath, PPSA (India)

SALON 2:

Filiz Koprulu, PPSA (Turkey)
Lajos Nagy, GMPSA, EFIAP/d3, GPU CR5 (Romania)
Tibor Jakab, MPSA (Romania)

SALON 3:

Wendy Allard, PPSA, FRPS (England)
Colin Harrison, MPSA, EFIAP/d3, MFIAP, GPSA (England)
David Stout, EPSA, EFIAP (England)

AWARDS:

Open Colour (PIDC)	Open Monochrome (PIDM)	Nature General (ND)	Photo Travel World in Focus (PTDW)	Photojournalism(PJD)	People (PIDC)
PSA Gold Medal	PSA Gold Medal	PSA Gold Medal	PSA Gold Medal	PSA Gold Medal	PSA Gold Medal
Salon Gold E-Certificate	Salon Gold E-Certificate	Salon Gold E-Certificate	Salon Gold E-Certificate	Salon Gold E-Certificate	Salon Gold E-Certificate
Salon Silver E-Certificate	Salon Silver E-Certificate	Salon Silver E-Certificate	Salon Silver E-Certificate	Salon Silver E-Certificate	Salon Silver E-Certificate
Salon Bronze E-Certificate	Salon Bronze E-Certificate	Salon Bronze E-Certificate	Salon Bronze E-Certificate	Salon Bronze E-Certificate	Salon Bronze E-Certificate
3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates	3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates	3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates	3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates	3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates	3 X Salon Diploma E-Certificates
6 Jury Choice E-Certificates	6 Jury Choice E-Certificates	6 Jury Choice E-Certificates	6 Jury Choice E-Certificates	6 Jury Choice E-Certificates	6 Jury Choice E-Certificates

- Note: Medals shall be shipped by India Post.
- Ensure that the postal address you provide to the exhibition is correct in all respects. The Exhibition is not responsible for Customs Duties or Fees additional to postal costs for Award

Medals and Ribbons in the country of arrival. Once dispatched if the package is undeliverable or refused by the entrant, it will not be reposted unless delivery fees are paid by the entrant.

- Salon Gold, Silver, Bronze, Diploma and Jury Choice are digital awards to be downloaded by the winning authors from the exhibition website. Awards won by authors of the same group/club shall be sent to a single address only
- All physical awards to be dispatched after we receive the medals from PSA
- The organizer is required to adjust the number of awards based on the total number of acceptances,

CATALOG:
Digital catalog shall be available at the exhibition website for download
https://winter.bestphotocircuit.com

RESULT
Result can be downloaded from the website at **https://winter.bestphotocircuit.com** and individual scorecards will be emailed.

DIGITAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

a) Photos must be submitted in JPEG file format following instructions **https://winter.bestphotocircuit.com**. Title of each image cannot exceed 35 characters. Titles do not need to be translated to English but must be given in English characters.
b) Maximum Horizontal length is 1920 pixels Maximum Vertical length is 1080 pixels at 300 dpi. Compression 7-12, maximum 2MB.
c) Exhibitions are not allowed to resize oversized images. In such cases the entrant is required to resubmit their entry with properly sized images.

JUDGING METHOD

- Judging is to take place remotely.
- Equipments to be used will be color-calibrated and images will be displayed at exactly 100% of their resolution.
- Award session will be held with all of the judges together remotely.
- Distribution of images shall be in the same round order as submitted by the entrant, but they shall not appear to the judges' consecutively.
- At no stage will exhibition software allow a judge to view all the entrant's images together.
- Target Acceptance Range: 25 - 30%

EXHIBITION REQUIREMENTS: (PART B)

Applicable Rules: This exhibition will be conducted in accordance with the rules of the PSA.

Entry Requirements: This exhibition is open to everyone; however, an entry may be rejected when the exhibition chair believes the entry does not conform to PSA exhibition rules and these Conditions of Entry. Membership in any photographic organization is not required. Neither awards nor acceptances will be granted to any entrant who is on the PSA Penalties List for Ethics Violation, and entry fees are not refundable in these circumstances. Throughout this document, entrant, author and photographer are used interchangeably, and each term refers to the person who is the original creator of a submitted image. Entrants are required to submit their own entries with properly sized images.

PSA Star Ratings: To receive star ratings credit from PSA, entrants must provide their names and country exactly the same way in each exhibition. Aliases are not permitted. Please contact PSA in the event of a name change or relocation to another country. Using one's name differently in different exhibitions exposes the entrant to the risk that many of their acceptances may not be recognized in PSA Star records.

Reproduction: Entrants grant sponsors free reproduction rights for exhibition-related media, including low-resolution web posting. Entries will not be accepted from entrants who restrict reproduction rights. PSA may request specific permission for educational use under mutually agreed terms. If an image violates PSA's exhibition rules or its Ethics Policy, PSA may reproduce the image without permission for educational purposes or to illustrate rule violations, with the entrant's name withheld. Neither PSA nor the exhibition assumes liability for copyright misuse.

Re-use of accepted images: Any image that has been accepted in this exhibition, past or present, may not be entered again in the same division star ratings class in any future instances of this exhibition. It may be entered in any other PSA recognized exhibitions but must always have the same title. Re-titling in another language is not allowed.

Entry: An entry consists of up to 4 images per section, with each image limited to 20 total acceptances per star path. Identical or similar images are prohibited within the same exhibition, and if similar images are uploaded, all will be disqualified across all sections. While similar images may be entered in different exhibitions, they may later be disallowed during star/diamond/galaxy application reviews. Similar images are those which are practically equivalent, as defined on the page available at https://psa-services.org/ES/#entrants . To avoid disappointment, do not enter images that are practically equivalent. Watermarks, copyright text or any other visible markings are prohibited.

Titles:

- Each image requires a unique name that contains a maximum of 35 characters.
- Each title is to be used consistently across all PSA exhibitions, without variations introduced by typographic errors or punctuation.
- Nothing in the image title can identify the photographer.
- A title should be an interpretive or meaningful title that transforms a visual document into a deliberate artistic statement. Titles entered as file numbers such as IMG_6608, DSC-76499 or in any other camera file format are prohibited.
- Meaningful Titles may be followed by numbers, for example, Ballet Dancer 34.
- Titles may use Latin1 or Latin2 character sets which allow diacritical marks (é, ñ, ü, ą, ę, ś, etc), however non-Latin writing systems (العربية, русский, ελληνικά, 中文, カタカナ, देवनागरी) may cause problems in Catalogs, Galleries and Star applications.
- Color and Monochrome images from the same capture that share substantial pictorial content in common will be considered the same image and must be given the same title.

Protection of Entrants' Personal information: By entering this exhibition, you agree to comply with PSA rules and policies, and consent to the exhibition chair and recognized organizations holding and processing your personal details for exhibition purposes, and accept that your participation status (name, country, sections/photos entered) and results will be made public in status lists, galleries, and catalogs.

Target Acceptance Range:

- The acceptance target range will be no more than 30% in each section except 3D, which cannot be more than 45%.
- No image may receive more than one individual award in a section of any salon.
- In circuits, an image may receive an award in different salon sections.
- The organizer is required to adjust the number of awards based on the total number of acceptances.
- For sections with more than 250 images, no more than 20% of the acceptances can receive awards.
- For sections with 250 images or less, the chair will allow a maximum of 11 awards.

SUBJECT MATTER AND SECTION DEFINITIONS:

While the following section provides summaries of PSA definitions, entrants must refer to the PSA website for the authoritative definitions for each Division:
https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/exhibitions

Image Creation and Authorship
Summary: All submitted images must be entirely the photographer's original work, including post-processing, with every pictorial element captured by the submitting photographer. Images must not incorporate or present other artists' work as the photographer's own, in whole or in part (clip art, stock images, replacement skies, photos of others' artwork, AI-generated content, etc). The term author refers to the person who is the original creator of a submitted image; photographers may own the rights to use purchased content, however authorship requires that all visual elements in the submitted photograph be personally created by the photographer. Photographers must retain copyright ownership of all visual elements contained within any submitted image, including composites. A violation of this rule constitutes plagiarism, a serious PSA ethics offense.

Artificial Intelligence
Summary: Recognizing the rapid evolution of AI software, this rule is subject to change. For the latest rules, consult the AI Statement on PSA's website. AI photo editing tools which enhance, adjust, or intelligently modify what was already captured in your photograph are permitted, provided they use only visual information already present in your photograph. Outpainting tools (generative fill) which allow you to expand a cropped image using a context-aware extension of the original photo are permitted, unless restricted by the Division's definition. Other generative AI tools that generate new synthetic visual content based on external image data not originally present in the author's photograph are prohibited, regardless of how small the edited area. Any person who violates this AI rule shall be banned from PSA exhibitions for a period ranging from 3 years to permanent exclusion. See additional AI notes in the editing matrix below.

Subject Matter
Summary: PSA's fundamental rule prioritizes animal welfare over photography, prohibiting baiting with live creatures, nest disturbance, endangering subjects, or depicting feeding of live prey to captive animals. Aerial photography must not disturb individuals or animals and must comply with local regulations. The images must comply with the division and section definitions listed on the PSA website; images that do not comply will be disqualified by the judges. Participation in PSA exhibitions is conditional on entrants accepting these policies.

Color versus Monochrome (Black and White)
Within photography an image is either monochrome or color; there is no third option.

- A **color image** is defined by the presence of more than a single color or hue. If an image is treated with two or more colors in any manner or any amount (spot coloring, duotone, etc), it is a color image.
- A **monochrome image** is defined by the presence of exactly one color or hue; it can display unlimited variations in that single color's intensity, tints, and shades but may not include additional colors (partial toning, split-toning, spot coloring, etc). Black and white images (also referred to as grayscale) are considered monochrome, though technically they are achromatic images which may span the full tonal range from black to white. **Monochrome images may not be entered in color sections of PPD or PID.**

Pictorial Image Division (PID) Definition
https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/division-definitions#pid
Summary: PID allows open photography with no subject or editing technique restrictions, other than those listed in the PSA guidelines that apply to all Divisions (i.e. authorship, AI, etc). The division includes both unrestricted open sections and themed sections with specific definitions to guide judges and participants. PID includes 2 Star paths: color and mono.

PSA/FIAP Nature Division (ND) Guidelines
https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/division-definitions#nd

Summary: Nature photography truthfully documents nature stories, both over water and underwater, while maintaining high ethical and technical standards. The 2024 rule allowing human-made elements when "necessary to the nature story" has been replaced with three specific categories: integral story elements, small unavoidable background features, and scientific equipment on animals. Attracting subjects with food or sound is prohibited (unaddressed prior to 2025), though incidental photography during hardship feeding remains acceptable. Zoo photography must now be at accredited facilities following best practices, and includes rescue centers and ethical farms. Images eligible for a Wildlife Award or entered in a ND Wildlife theme must follow all Nature rules with additional restrictions: all animals must be living freely in their natural habitat without human control or captivity, botanical subjects cannot be removed from their environment, and no staging is permitted for photography purposes. Readers are reminded that Wildlife photography is restricted to natural habitats only, removing the 2024 allowance for adopted habitats. Nature photography does not include anthropology and archaeology.

Photojournalism Division (PJD) Definition
https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/division-definitions#pjd
Summary: Photojournalism prioritizes storytelling value over pictorial quality, featuring images with informative content and emotional impact that reflect authentic human presence in the world. Images that misrepresent truth through staged events or directed subjects are prohibited. When a Human Interest theme is specified or if this award is offered, typical sports photographs are excluded and instead the focus is on people in interactive, emotional, or unusual situations.

Photo Travel Division (PTD) Definition
https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/division-definitions#ptd
Summary: A Photo Travel image is a portrayal of the world we live in, without geographic limitations. New for 2026, PTD is divided into 2 Star Paths: PTD Documentary (PTDD) and PTD World in Focus (PTDW). PTD Documentary remains as a reality-based PTD definition, portraying the world as it is found naturally, through images of distinctive places or through images of people who show distinct cultural characteristics or activities. In PTD Documentary images must avoid studio-like settings and setup or arranged photography. In contrast, PTD World in Focus is aligned with the FIAP World in Focus definition. PTD World in Focus allows for images of places or people found naturally, as well as a more diverse range of content such as food and studio portraits. In PTD World in Focus, images that are setup or arranged are allowed.

People Definition (PIDC) Color Only
Images in this category should portray people in a variety of real-life situations—men, women, and children, whether photographed alone or in groups. Subjects may be captured in daily activities, indoor or outdoor, street scenes, cultural traditions, workplaces, social events, or moments that highlight human relationships but the focus must remain on the people and their story.

MATRIX OF EDITING TECHNIQUES (2026) permitted [✓] prohibited [X] no restrictions [NR]	reality divisions				
	ND	PTD	PJD	3DD	PID/PPD
a) Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
b) Removing or correcting elements added by the camera or lens (dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration, lens distortion).	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
c) Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
d) Complete conversion of color images to monochrome grayscale.	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
e) Using **permitted AI-enhanced editing** (see Note 1 below).	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
f) Image stitching – combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas).	✓	✓	✓	NR	NR
g) Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending or focus stacking).	✓	✓	X	NR	NR
h) Combining images (2-4), each with a small white border on a single image that depicts a progression of events or related activity.	X	X	✓	NR	NR
i) Adding, deleting or moving pictorial elements of which you **ARE** the author.	X	X	X	NR	NR
j) Removing, adding, or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.	X	X	X	NR	NR
k) Blurring or darkening parts of the image to hide pictorial elements, or adding a noticeable (dark or light) vignette during editing.	X	X	X	NR	NR
l) All color conversions other than to monochrome grayscale.	X	X	X	NR	NR
m) Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or over-saturation of color.	X	X	X	NR	NR
n) Using **prohibited AI-enhanced editing** (see note 2 below).	X	X	X	X	X
o) Adding pictorial elements of which you **ARE NOT** the author, such as sky, background, people, animals, etc. Refer to the PSA statement on Image Creation and Authorship.	X	X	X	X	X
p) Adding a watermark, copyright or any similar visible markings.	X	X	X	X	X

Notes: Understanding which techniques are prohibited is crucial to avoiding low scores, disqualification and potential penalties. Always refer to the PSA website for the complete and current rules and definitions governing exhibitions: https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/exhibitions

1. **Permitted AI-enhanced editing:** includes editing tools that perform transformations, enhancements, or corrections based exclusively on the existing pixel data captured in the author's original photograph without introducing externally-sourced content.
2. **Prohibited AI editing:** includes any AI-assisted processes for synthetic image generation that incorporate external image data, visual elements, textures, objects, or scenes not originally present in the author's photograph are prohibited.

Non-compliance:
PSA reserves the right to investigate complaints, void acceptances, impose penalties, and add violators to the shared Penalty List.

- Chairs or judges may request raw/unedited files to verify compliance and authorship; for composite images, all component files are required;
- Non-cooperation with investigations results in penalties.

Participating in this exhibition constitutes automatic agreement to these terms. Entrants are requested to read the PSA's Ethics Policy and statements on Subject Matter and AI for compliance guidelines: https://psa-services.org/ES/#entrants

RECOGNITION STATEMENT

The sponsors of this International Exhibition of Photography have been awarded Recognition by the Photographic Society of America (PSA). PSA, although it has provided recognition, is neither a sponsor nor directly involved in the operation of this exhibition.

Valid acceptances received by PSA Members in recognized sections of this exhibition are eligible for PSA Star Ratings, listing in the world-wide PSA *Who's Who of Photography* and credited towards the PSA Distinctions.

PSA is a non-profit organization promoting the advancement of photography in all its forms to novice, amateur and professional photographers worldwide. For information on membership and the many services and activities of PSA, contact:

Photographic Society of America
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