

## STARTING OUT ON THE EXHIBITION TRAIL

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Taking part in International Exhibitions (also called Salons) can be most rewarding. If the bug gets you, you can become drawn in for several years. Starting out is simple. You read the instructions, complete your entry and, with a little luck and skill, you get your first acceptances. You gain a few more and then learn of awards granted by FIAP or PSA, who are the principle organisations involved in “Patronising” or “Recognising” exhibitions world wide.

This is where, you can come unstuck. I will not tell you how to take pictures; I would not presume to do that. This is about how you organise yourself and keep records so that, when applying for an award, you don't have the problems that many people suffer from. For the purpose of this article I will deal mainly with matters relating to FIAP, although some reference to PSA may be helpful.

In the case of FIAP, whilst they recognise the various sections, such as Open, General, Nature, Photo-Travel, Colour Print, Monochrome Print etc, when it comes to working out whether you are qualified for an award, acceptances and awards from different sections are treated equally and are in effect lumped together. All that is required is that the particular exhibition is ‘patronised’ by FIAP. Here can be the first trap.

It is not unusual for an exhibition to be patronised by FIAP one year and then not the next. It is also not unusual for an exhibitor, having entered the exhibition whilst patronised, not to notice that it was not the next year. So make sure of FIAP Patronisation. It will be on the exhibition paperwork, usually the year followed by a 3 digit number (Eg: - 2011/023). Separate parts of a circuit will have different FIAP Numbers.

With PSA, there are separate divisions that are responsible for particular sections, such as Open, Nature etc, and you have to apply to each separately for many awards. If you are interested in PSA, or think you may be in the future, you need to record which sections you receive acceptances in, and if ‘Recognised’ by PSA.

### **RECORDS**

When applying for a FIAP award you will be required to complete a record of your acceptances on what they call a “Dossier File”. This file will be supplied to you by the FIAP Liaison Officer, along with comprehensive guidelines for completing your application, once he has opened the annual process (only one batch of applications is allowed from a country in any one calendar year), or you can download it from the FIAP web site \*\*. FIAP now insist you complete and submit it electronically, as well as supplying a ‘hard copy’. They will not accept handwritten entries, nor will they accept adhoc print outs attached to the dossier. The FIAP “Dossier File” is prepared on Microsoft Excel. You may therefore wish to keep your exhibition records on Excel; it will save you a lot of hassle later on.

*\*\* A word of caution: FIAP have a track record of changing their rules at short notice, therefore it is unwise to download the Dossier File before you are about to make an application for an award. You will also not have the benefit of the guidelines to help you through the application process. **How right this statement has turned out to be. FIAP have made further changes to the criteria for 2013 and changed the Dossier file, albeit for the better.***

The data needed on the part of the dossier recording your Acceptances is:-

1. The title of each accepted photograph.
2. The Name of the Exhibition /Salon, and if a circuit, the part of the circuit you got the acceptance in.
3. The name of the country where the Exhibition is held.
4. The FIAP Number allocated to the Exhibition or part of the circuit.
5. If any Award has been achieved with an acceptance.
6. Whether the acceptance was gained with a Print or a PDI.

Your file should have columns for all this data, along with any others you decide to keep. The next few paragraphs, give you some idea of what sort of entry you will need in each of the columns

#### Title Column

The title should be that which appears in the catalogue. Do not repeat the title for each acceptance within a given group. The title should be the same for all acceptances for that photograph. If for any reason you have used a different title **then you are strongly advised not to include that acceptance in your listing.** FIAP's current rules are quite clear and I quote:- *“The same work submitted to several salons under FIAP Patronage or to FIAP Biennials must bear the same title”* – their words and emphasis, not mine. If the salon has entered your title up wrongly in the catalogue, then it is your responsibility to check the catalogue upon receipt and request that a correction is made and notified to FIAP (and PSA for that matter if applicable). You should retain copies of the correspondence and attach

them to your application. If you have had to curtail a long title due to entry form restrictions then, provide you have complied with the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence of this paragraph put the curtailed title in brackets in the next line below the correct title. This is the only reason you should need to use 'Alternate Titles'.

We now come to another issue that comes up rather too often. Sadly, there are those among us who are prepared to cheat to achieve awards. The use of more than one title for a single photograph is one method used. There are others. Therefore there is a need to protect the integrity of exhibitions.

Firstly, every photograph must be given a title. As from this year the use of "untitled" (or variations of that) is prohibited in FIAP patronised Exhibitions and Salons have instructions not to accept such entries.

Secondly, as mentioned earlier, the title given to a photograph should be unique in your records. Once you have given a particular photograph a title that title should stay with that photograph. It should not be given to another photograph and that photograph should not be given a different title, no matter what sections you enter it in. If you enter a title in different sections, eg Open and Photo-Travel for example, the latter may need a more descriptive title than the former. Take this into account in giving it a title.

On the subject of titles, the practice of using the same title for different images, differentiated by a number is to be strongly discouraged. This is because some exhibitions do not include such numbers in their catalogues; consequently such acceptances may not be verifiable.

Many exhibitions place arbitrary limits on the length of titles. This can vary from 25 to 35 characters including spaces. With 'on-line' entry systems that refuse a title if it does not comply, you need to bear this in mind as well. Nature section entrants can save themselves much effort and frustration by not adding Latin sub-titles. They are rarely if ever read out to the selectors and even more rarely are they included in catalogues.

#### Salon Column

There is now much more space on the dossier file but it is still totally unnecessary to include full details of longwinded salon names. We do not need all that information. In the case of a stand alone Exhibition, such as say "*The 32<sup>nd</sup> Northern Counties International Salon of Photography 2011*" we don't need all that. All we need you to put in the Salon column is **Northern Counties**. We don't need, in fact we don't want all the other superfluous wordage.

In the case of a Circuit we do need more information, in that we also need to know which leg of the Circuit is involved, but again it should be very basic. So for example the "*Linz*" Exhibition in the "*Trierenberg Super Circuit*" should be shown as **Trierenberg – Linz**. The hyphen identifies we are dealing with a Circuit. A second example may be the "*Carlisle*" Exhibition of the "*Great British Small Prints Circuit*". This can be shown simply as **GB S/Prints – Carlisle** or even as **GBSPC – Carlisle**. If an acceptance was gained in a FIAP World Cup or FIAP Biennial event, then enter brief details of its name (eg: "World Cup" or "Colour Print Biennial" –do not put in the year)

#### Biennial or World Cup

If an acceptance for a particular title was gained in either a FIAP Biennial or a World Cup then, having identified that event in the "salon" simply enter the year of the event in this column.

#### Country Column

In dealing with this please remember that England, Scotland and Wales are separate countries and should be shown as such. Do not use UK, United Kingdom or Great Britain in the Country column.

#### FIAP No. Column

Remember this piece of information must be accurate. It can be gained from the promotional material for any FIAP patronised Salon or from its catalogue. Failing this you can obtain historical information from the FIAP web site at <http://patronages.fiap.net/>. This information goes back to 1979.

#### Awards Column

Space is limited here and only the barest of details is required here, 'Gold medal', or 'HM' or 'Ribbon' is the sort of thing that is sufficient.

#### Media used

You will need two small columns to denote whether the acceptance was obtained as a "PDI" salon or as a "Print".

You should aim to collect and record your data as you go along, remembering that it does need to be set out in a specific order in the dossier

- a) **FIAP have now issued an instruction that titles must be in ALPHABETICAL ORDER**
- b) All acceptances for any one given photograph must be grouped together.
- c) The acceptances for each group need to be ordered more or less as they were received. There is some leeway on this and the FIAP Number can be used to create this ordering. This will not necessarily put them all into the absolutely correct order but it will group them into years, and this will be sufficient.

Many applicants expect to be able to copy and paste multiple records into the FIAP dossier file. Up until now that has not been as easy as one might wish. However with the new Dossier form it is far simpler, but you must be careful not to disturb the formatting of the Dossier, it is likely to be refused if you do.

With my knowledge of programming, when I copy and paste between different Excel files, it not only copies the data it also copies the cell properties, font, font size, border and background as well. I am sure that those with greater skills know a way round such things, but these notes are also aimed at those who are not so confident with such things

If you want to copy and paste, then one way is for you to ensure the file you are copying from (your records) is IDENTICAL in formatting to the one you wish to paste into. The below lists the properties and formatting for both EFIAP Levels applicants and those for AFIAP and EFIAP.

<u>Background:-</u>	set no properties for backgrounds
<u>Font Properties:-</u>	
Font:-	Arial
Font size:-	10
Type set:-	normal
<u>Columns &amp; Borders:-</u>	
Column borders:-	Single thickness line
Line borders:-	Single thickness line for each line

#### **KEEPING UP TO DATE**

If you have not already done so, you are strongly advised to subscribe to **PAGB 'e-news'** as we are now using that and also the PAGB website at [www.pagb-photography-uk.co.uk](http://www.pagb-photography-uk.co.uk) to circulate information. You can subscribe to PAGB 'e-news' very simply via the web site, and it is free of charge.

#### **FINALLY**

The above may seem complicated, but it is really quite simple and largely commonsense. I can speak from experience and say that once you get your organisation correct you should find it relatively straight forward and the lack of consequent hassle will hopefully enable you to enjoy Exhibition Photography all the more.



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