

# Cleaning Up the Grey Areas

## ..... what you can and can't use in your photographs

It's often difficult to know what you can and can't do when creating photographs for PSSA sanctioned events such as club judging, salons, competitions, honours applications etc.

With so much material freely available on the web it stands to reason, or so you would think, that if it says, "free to use" you can do just that. But no, as in the previous article, that is not the case and as always you need to carefully pay attention to the small print.

**By virtue of submitting an image to a PSSA sanctioned event, the photographer asserts and agrees that:**

**i) For the purposes of all PSSA sanctioned events, a photographic image is defined "as being a captured image on a light-sensitive device (e.g. film camera, digital camera, smartphone, tablet, etc...) and recorded on film or in a digital format."**

**ii) An artificial intelligence (AI) generated image is not deemed to be a photographic image because it was created from scratch by the AI system and contains no image captured by the entrant. Therefore, this type of image will not be accepted into our events.**

**iii) The final images and all elements included therein are his/her own and that no second party can claim authorship of any part of the said image.**

**iv) Use of AI features contained within a post processing application (e.g. masking, sharpening, de-noise, enlarging, etc...) are permitted provided they comply with a category's editing criteria and do not contain any elements which were not captured by the entrant (e.g. texture, sky, etc...).**

**The photographer may be called upon to supply proof of the authenticity of all the elements in the presented image(s). If the entrant cannot supply such proof, his/her entry in the event will be disqualified and sanctions may be applied.**

**There has always been the question  
– can you photograph someone else's art?**

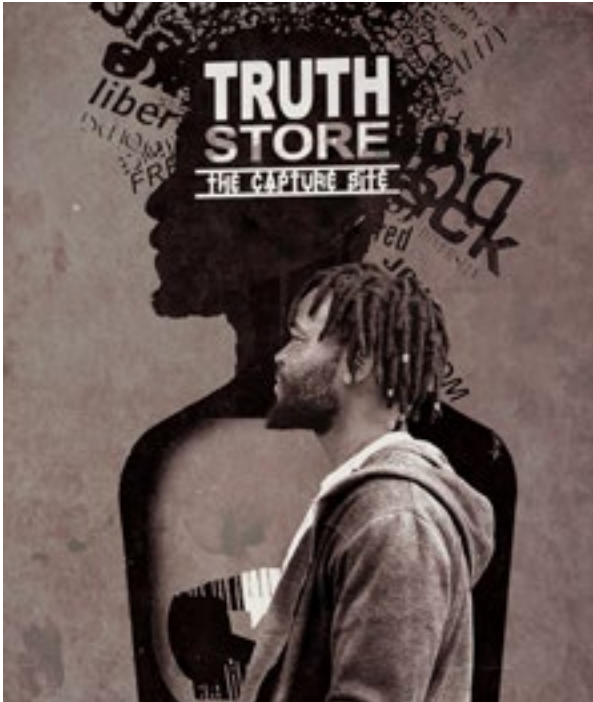
Think of it in terms of you being the artist – how would you feel if someone photographed all or part of your photograph and used it in their composite or as a background to their pic?

You wouldn't be happy would you?

So how is it different if you photograph a painting or other piece of art when you were not the artist?



In the case of AI, even though you may have “designed” the image, you did not actually create the image and therefore you cannot use it. *This is as opposed to photographing your own painting – you painted it!*



A good rule of thumb is that if it is a 2D subject then you can't just photograph it – then it is just a copy of someone else's art. You also can't photograph it and use part of it in a composite. That is plagiarism!

Take for instance a picture of graffiti – on its own it is just copying someone else's art and not allowed.

The moment you add a figure into the image, when taking it, you have created your own work and therefore it is allowed.

If however you took that picture (record) of the graffiti and took it home and then replaced your background in an image with that one, it also wouldn't be allowed.

Just photographing an artwork, such as this mosaic is not on, no matter how creatively you do it. Unless you have added that 3rd Dimension by adding another aspect or element to the photograph you may not use it.



Including the written graffiti that was on the wall adds that 3rd Dimension, so it is OK.

Now you can see that the mosaic is a 2D piece of art but it is the inclusion of all the writing on the wall around it that has made it into something that you have seen and photographed as opposed to just a copy of someone else's artwork.



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..... continued

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Then we come to 3 dimensional subjects such as statues, buildings etc. – you can photograph these and enter them because they have depth (the 3rd dimension) and you are adding to the image by the way you interpret the subject, what lighting you use etc. Your creativity comes to play as you are now in control. You can photograph 3D subjects and use them in your composites, be they as textures, backgrounds etc.



An image of a 3D subject however can just be a record, and while you are within the rules you are not going to do well with it unless you do more than just take a record shot.



No matter how big or small an added element is in your photograph, it all has to be your own work when you enter it in to a PSSA, or for that matter any International Photographic Society event (such as FIAP, PSA, CAPA etc.).

There is nothing to stop you using AI or downloading a copyright free image or element and using it but just not in any of the abovementioned events. And don't forget, always read the small print.