



Paul Colley researched underwater composition



Dr Giles Hudson wrote about Sarah Angelina Acland



Put words to your passion

Do you want to write about images? Then a REAP Distinction could be for you. Panel chair David Bruce FRPS explains

FAQs

What is a REAP Distinction?

The full title is *Research, Education and Applications of Photography*. A REAP Distinction gives the applicant the chance to develop and share knowledge about aspects of photography.

How does it work?

You submit written, not photographic, work for a REAP Distinction. You can use images to illustrate it and the submission could be a website, an essay or an academic paper.

Do I need to be an expert?

No. At Licentiate level you can write about any aspect of photography you are enthusiastic about. Submissions should meet certain standards (see main text), but if you have got something you want us to hear about, a REAP Distinction could well be for you.

OUR ROYAL CHARTER states: 'The objects of The Society are to educate members of the public by increasing their knowledge and understanding of Photography and in doing so to promote the highest standards of achievement in Photography in order to encourage public appreciation of Photography.'

The fact that 'educate' is in the first line gives the main clue as to what REAP is about. Of course, for most members the principal reason for being part of the Society is to enable them to improve their picture making to 'the highest standards'. But there is a great deal more for the Society to do if it is properly to fulfil its 'educational' function. It has to promote the appreciation and understanding of the medium both within and

beyond its membership, and the charter also talks about the means by which it must pursue its objectives, including 'promoting and carrying out research' and 'publishing and distributing information'.

So, as its name indicates, REAP is interested in how photography is considered, how its history is recorded and preserved; how photography is taught; and how it is understood in its own terms and as part of a wider visual and artistic culture.

REAP provides a route to a Distinction that is unlike any other within the Society. A Distinction gained through REAP may well add to a member's credentials and also to the greater sum of knowledge about photography. It could be a biography, a history, an account of a certain

technique or aesthetic, or almost anything across the range of the medium.

Although there are no fixed themes for REAP submissions, the areas which the REAP panel would most expect to see covered are: research on an individual photographer, school or genre; photographic education; aspects of the history of photography; the conservation and restoration of photographs and photographic material; curatorial accomplishments, or new thinking about photography and photographic theory.

In terms of presentation, there are naturally different criteria to be applied according to the level of Distinction that is being sought, with those for Licentiate being not especially difficult to meet.



Dr Howard Oliver researched Airborne Cloud Photography in WW1

A WIDE RANGE: SUCCESSES IN THE REAP CATEGORY

Dr Terry Speake FRPS

What is Wrong With Disability Imagery? Towards a New Praxis of Social Documentary Photography

Dr Giles Hudson FRPS

Sarah Angelina Acland – First Lady of Colour Photography

Dr Robert Willingham FRPS

Judo: The Thrill of Victory and the Agony of Defeat

Russell Young FRPS

Art history on soft-focus lenses

Dr Howard Oliver LRPS

Airborne Cloud Photography in WW1

Philip Harris FRPS

Photographing Landscape

Wendy Allard ARPS

Ethnography of Photography

Nick Robertson-Brown FRPS

Underwater Photography

Paul Colley ARPS

Advanced composition and techniques in underwater photography

THE REAP PANEL SEEKS TO PERSUADE AS MANY MEMBERS AS POSSIBLE TO PUT IDEAS TO THEM

The applicant will have to display evidence of original research, good writing, presentation and arguments, and an awareness of current thinking, but if they have enthusiasm for a subject – such as the work of a particular photographer, process, technique or application – and can match the criteria, there is no reason why he or she cannot apply at Licentiate level.

An Associateship will only be gained by a higher standard in all of the skills required for Licentiate level, plus a clear point of view.

It is at Fellowship level

that the criteria necessarily become very exacting and at this level submissions are expected to be equivalent to a very high academic standard and clearly making a significant contribution to the understanding of photography.

While the panel has necessarily to be rigorous in its assessments, whether a submission is at Licentiate, Associate or Fellowship level, it is determined to encourage every approach that is made to it.

Its members have a broad range of experience of photography, its history and applications (see panel, right), and when a submission goes beyond its collective expertise the panel will draw in other experts to help.

It therefore seeks to persuade as many members as possible to offer ideas

that might develop into full submissions.

To make the process as easy as possible, there is a free “pre-application” system which allows members to outline an idea for a project that might be considered appropriate for a full application. A 500-word paper may be enough to outline a potential submission, but so too might a paper accompanied by an existing piece of work, a publication, a website, or something else.

Therefore, if, as a member, you would like to contribute to the sum of knowledge about photography as a means of gaining a Distinction, please do get in touch.

Contact distinctions@rps.org or to download an application form and guidelines please visit rps.org/distinctions/downloads

REAP panel members

- David Bruce FRPS (chair)
- Dr Michael Pritchard FRPS (deputy chair)
- Ralph Jacobson ASIS HonFRPS
- Ray Spence FRPS

External advisors

- Dr Alison Morrison-Low
- Professor Andrea Liggins
- Professor Elizabeth Edwards



ABOUT THE AUTHOR DAVID BRUCE FRPS

David has been chair of the REAP panel since 2012, and has a Fellowship on the history of photography. He has been director of the Scottish Film Council and the Edinburgh International Film Festival. His writings include *Sun Pictures – The Hill-Adamson Calotypes*, and *Scotland the Movie*.