

EMBARGO to Thursday 30 March, 12:00 noon

**The Royal Photographic Society Professional Photographers Association (RPS-PPA)
is officially announced today**

The Royal Photographic Society and the Master Photographers' Association are launching the RPS-PPA - an entirely new organisation that will provide leadership, support, education and qualification for the entire professional photographic community.

30 March 2023, Bristol: The Royal Photographic Society and the Master Photographers' Association have today announced the launch of the RPS-PPA, an entirely new representative body for all professional photographers.

The initiative to bring the RPS-PPA to full operation (by March 2024) combines the knowledge, experience and expertise of the MPA with the rich and internationally-respected 170-year heritage of the RPS. It will create a single unifying and representative body for professional photographers. The RPS-PPA will provide its members with an association that is relevant, respected, and actively take the leading role in supporting all those involved in professional photography, and provide authoritative representation on the issues that most affect them and their work.

The RPS-PPA will become the unifying body under which all professional photographers and representative bodies from allied creative sectors can coexist for the wider benefit of the entire professional photography category.

Dan Jones, CEO of the RPS, comments: "I am delighted to officially announce the beginning of the phased launch of the RPS-PPA and it is my ambition to work with our staff and trustees to create a body that will benefit all of those connected with or working in professional photography. The RPS and the MPA share so much in common, but it is the unique attributes and experiences of each organisation that will set the RPS-PPA apart and make it a leading, forward-thinking and robust body for its members. The RPS-PPA will have one vision and it will speak with one voice for the benefit of its members and the entire professional photography sector, helping the public and commerce to better understand and value the expertise and the commitment of professional photographers."

Creating an association that fits the vision of all concerned will take time, so announcing the launch today will set in motion a 12-month project to bring the two organisations together as the RPS-PPA. A project programme has been agreed which sets out a clear timetable for the next 12 months, during which all MPA members will transition to the RPS-PPA as founding members of the new association. During this period the two organisations will collaborate closely to understand and serve the needs of members while initially operating independently and under their own respective brands until full migration is completed in early 2024.

As part of the transition process, a number of joint initiatives have been agreed to provide a set of clear, tangible benefits to MPA members. The first of these benefits includes:

- Simplified MPA subscription and payment offer which includes a subscription donation to the RPS
- Full RPS membership benefits immediately available to all MPA members

- New professional training and development events for MPA members at RPS House (the premises owned by the RPS in Bristol), and other venues around the UK
- Opportunities for MPA members - as full members of the RPS - to exhibit and promote their work at RPS House and other venues across the UK
- The chance to collaborate in industry-focussed research and have a say in the future direction and development of the RPS-PPA; this will determine the priorities for the association and identify opportunities for the association providing much-needed leadership across the full spectrum of the photographic community
- New joint communications to inform and alert members to the progress of the RPS-PPA initiative and to identify education and professional opportunities for members
- Further developments to the MPA 'Hive' and movements to more closely align MPA and RPS technology, communications and outreach activities
- Joint RPS and MPA activities and initiatives throughout 2023 that will move both organisations towards the full emergence of RPS-PPA in early 2024

Following the final issue of the MPA magazine, the RPS and MPA will keep members informed through a new monthly RPS-PPA email communication. The first of these will be issued in May 2023 and will provide more detail about developments in benefits, programmes, joint activities and further initiatives for 2023-2024.

ENDS

ABOUT THE ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The Royal Photographic Society (The RPS) is an educational charity with an international membership. Founded in 1853, when photography was in its infancy, the objective of the RPS is to make the art and science of photography more widely available and is committed to bringing photography to everyone. Today, the RPS is a world-leading photographic community, based in Bristol, UK, with a membership of over 10,000 photographers. The RPS aims to inspire people through its innovative exhibitions, its award-winning RPS Journal, and its highly respected awards and events. The RPS helps photographers create images through its educational programmes, qualifications, and its public initiatives; and it seeks to connect photographers through its UK and international regional hubs, and specialist groups. Membership is open to everyone. The RPS Gallery is situated in the photography hub at Paintworks, Bristol, UK.

ABOUT THE MASTER PHOTOGRAPHERS' ASSOCIATION

Established in 1952, the Master Photographers' Association (MPA) is one of the longest standing photographic associations in British history. As the UK's leading qualification body exclusively for the professional wedding, portrait and commercial photographer, the MPA encourages professional photographers of all levels to join the Association. With a qualification and mentoring system designed to promote continual professional development, the MPA are recognised leaders in setting the standards of professional photography today. Offering a wide variety of membership benefits and a tiered membership system, the

MPA strives to develop both the professional photographer as well as the aspiring photographer just embarking on their career. With nearly 70 years in the professional photography arena, the MPA prides itself in developing some of the industry's leading photographers of today.

For more information contact: media@rps.org or call 01173 164466