



## 2016 Annual Chapter Report to Members

APA New York Chapter Member,

Happy New Year! We are grateful for your ongoing participation in the New York Chapter of APA, a member run organization, and we wish you great success in 2017. We urge you to read this annual State of the Chapter letter to keep you up to date on our chapter's health, activities, and initiatives - starting on the following page.

The State of the New York Chapter is good. Our financial situation is excellent, and we continue to host a robust calendar of events. Our Chapter engages actively with all aspects of the photography community to expand name recognition, mindshare, and grow our membership.

However, we do face challenges from the ongoing changes in the photography industry which you see impacting your individual business as well. This has manifested in Membership, the lifeblood of our organization. In 2016, one in five APA|NY Members, 20%, declined to renew their membership. Stemming this Member departure will be a strategic priority in 2017.

The Board believes that creating a value proposition for our Members, by providing real as well as intangible benefits will entice more of our photo community to join and stay with APA|NY. The very reason for our existence is to help members be successful in their photography business. With this in mind, we formulated these three guiding principles:

1. How can APA best serve our Members and what benefits our Members most?
2. Which benefits cause photographers to join APA and boost our membership?
3. How can we promote our Members and APA to potential clients?

Unfortunately, the Board receives minimal input from Members about their priorities and expectations. And without that, we cannot be certain of addressing those areas that concern you the most. Take the time and let us know how the Board and Chapter can best serve you!

Fill out this [Member Survey](#) or [Email](#) us anytime at ([office@apany.com](mailto:office@apany.com))

Our Chapter sustainability relates directly to the community of Members. Without your regular participation, our strength and voice wanes and our ability to help you and the community declines. In these times of dramatic changes to our industry and challenges to our businesses, by banding together we can support one another and strengthen our ties with colleagues and clients. As you make your new year goals, set one to remain an active voice and participant in our amazing creative community.

Board of Directors  
New York Chapter  
American Photographic Artists

## MEMBERSHIP

The Board of Directors has been grappling with a big question all year: with more than 20,000 photographers, assistants, students, digital techs, etc. in New York, not to mention in the rest of our Chapter territory from Pennsylvania and Ohio up to Maine, how can our chapter only have 450 members?

- Why aren't we over 1,000 members strong?
- What can we do to boost membership, especially the Pro and Leader categories, those established and experienced commercial photographers?

A cursory glance at our membership in 2016 looks benign, we started with 453 members and finished with 448. But during the year, we lost 135 members (30%) of whom, 40 rejoined (this is often due to an inadvertent credit card cancellation). So our net loss was 95 Members, or 1-in-5 of our fellow photographers, an alarming departure rate. While we offset this loss by adding 116 New Members, we are not optimistic that this rate can be sustained.

- Why do Members leave?
- What can we do to retain them?
- How do we show them the value of APA?

## FINANCIALS

At the end of 2016, the New York Chapter is in excellent financial shape. Without the part-time post of Regional Director, we have saved a significant amount of funds, which allowed the Chapter to increase some benefits to our Members, such as greater spending on networking events and reduced charges to attend certain events.

We plan to hire a Regional Director in 2017 to improve our services to our members. This would be a part-time, contract position of about 10-15 hours per week that would consume approximately 50% of our annual budget.

Sponsorship continues to be a challenge; most of our affiliated partners prefer to offer member discounts than provide financial support. Our key sponsor, Adorama, contributed significantly to our financial strength in 2016 in a mutually beneficial partnership. However, the Board is preparing for a decreased contribution in 2017 as cash sponsorships decline across the industry.

## EVENTS

This was a busy year for APA|NY. We produced or hosted many events, averaging almost 2 per month. In the spring, we concluded our Apple *Image Makers* Lecture Series after 5 years. This



was a great platform for our Member's photography, but Apple Store decided to no longer host the event in order to promote more Apple photo products.

Some of the past year's highlights include:

- *How to Land the Job - A Career in Fine Art* hosted at the Foley Gallery, LES
- Annual Portfolio Review at Wix Lounge was a huge success.
- *Capturing Motion* in collaboration with AbelCine
- Photo Contest (June) and Awards Party in July.
- *Steps to Success* Seminar with photo consultant Selina Maitreya.
- Photoville (Sept) APA|NY hosted a information table for the first time
- Holiday Party - see the greatphotos (shot by Cliff Hausner/Profoto) on Facebook

Throughout the year, APA|NY worked to bring members together with the client side of our community by hosting or co-hosting networking events with The Art Directors Club, the American Society of Picture Professionals and a photojournalists group of editors and shooters at an on-going event known as *PJ Beer & Wings*.

Finally, sprinkled throughout the year, are two on-going lectures series produced with **Adorama**, one highlighting the emerging talent among our membership and the other addressing various business topics of interest to photographers.

## ADVOCACY / COPYRIGHT

Our Advocacy work continues unabated, there are so many changes - both good and bad - happening in the advocacy world right now it's hard to keep up. It is not widely known (perhaps APA can do a better job of tooting our own horn) that APA is the leading organization fighting for photographer's rights. At times in the past, APA has stood alone in the fray against bigger and better funded interest groups.

Today APA is collaborating closely with many different organizations representing individual creators of imagery to shape legislation in Washington, D.C. Key initiatives include passage of a Copyright Small Claims Bill, presently before Congress, and updating and modernizing the Copyright Office, to make copyright registration easier.

Finally, we are pleased to report the formation and approval of a new Collective Rights organization, initially supported exclusively by APA. The American Society for Collective Rights Licensing, Inc. ("ASCRL") will help manage secondary rights payments for visual works used overseas under "Fair Use" business models. More details will be coming in the next month or two.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

This year, our Board gained several new members while several stepped down, including our Secretary Adele Godfrey, that position remains vacant for now. We added five enthusiastic new Board members (in alphabetical order): Dhrumil Desai, Tony Falcone, Alley Maher, Sharlene Morris along with industry stalwart, Scott Nedermeier. Numerous others have participated on an ad-hoc basis, attending Board meetings to provide input on various matters, including: Sue Barr, Ari Burling, Alan Mahon, FIT's Ron Amato, Nicole Pereira, Lisa Saltzman, Alessandro Casagli, Jennifer Taylor.

Our Board meetings are open to members, with prior notice; we welcome and encourage your participation. To remain viable, we need dedicated, thoughtful, and hard-working new Board members to continue leading our organization in these challenging times.

## LOOKING AHEAD

As we prepare for 2017 and beyond, the Board will focus on the following strategic goals: increasing **Membership**, nurture our sense of **Community** and create opportunities to **Network**, **Promote Members** work to potential clients, build relationships with **Sponsors and Partners** to benefit our Members, and maintain a robust calendar of value-added **Events**.

**Community and Networking** You have told us via our [Member Survey](#) and face-to-face feedback, that a feeling of community is an important benefit of APA Membership. We will strive to continue providing great opportunities to network with fellow photographers, but more importantly with potential clients. We want to build in some networking opportunities in all of our events.

**Membership** We will continue to try and identify what makes the sale on membership, what value proposition gets someone to join APA.

**Member Promotion** Showcasing the great work of our members, especially our Leader and Pro Members remains a priority. Tell us whenever you are doing something interesting, send us your links, promos, etc. and we will endeavor to push your news out via our substantial following on social media. We want to regularly promote our Members work to the greater community.

*proof sheet magazine* We started our quarterly e-zine last year and have completed a five issues, featuring image rich stories from our Members, as well as articles from industry leaders. However, given a lower than expected level of readership, we are reconsidering the cost-benefit of continuing with this initiative in 2017.

**Sponsors and Partners** We want to continue to identify opportunities to secure discounts and other benefits from Partner vendors, such as the 15% discount from CSI Rentals, for our



Members. Also, securing cash Sponsors remains important, however these types of arrangements are becoming less prevalent between vendors and trade associations.

**Events** Our 2017 calendar will be anchored with several key events, our Portfolio Review (spring), our Photo Contest (summer) and Photoville/PhotoPlusExpo, (fall), and our Holiday Party in the winter.

We will round out the calendar with educational and professional development events as well as various networking events. Let us know what you want! We are always receptive to ideas from Members for what activities to produce.

### **Other Initiatives**

- Message Board: We are considering a Members only message board, where you can post questions or comments and get feedback from your fellow New York Chapter Members.

- Photography Grant: The Board is considering establishing a modest grant program to financially assist member photographers with specific long-term projects. This would be similar to the now defunct Getty *Grants for Good*. We hope to be able to move forward in the second half of 2017 with this initiative.

- Assistant Program: Board Member Alley Maher continues to expand our Assistant initiatives, aimed at expanding our assistant member roles, providing professional development, and networking to bring assistants and photographers together.

- Member Input / Participation. It is vital to hear from you, the Board is made up of all volunteer Members, your fellow photographers, who donate significant amounts of time and effort to the organization. We always need more contributors, from giving us your opinion to giving us your time, connections, resources (maybe you have a studio we can use).