

The Award of Distinction

By Terri M. Johnson

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What is the Award of Distinction?

The Handbook on Judging and Exhibition, Eighth Edition, Section 7.3.9 defines the Award of Distinction as: Awarded once to a cross, exhibited individually or collectively, representing a worthy new direction in breeding. The award is granted unanimously without scoring by the judging team assigned. If the hybridizer and exhibitor are different, each shall receive a certificate.

This review of the Award of Distinction evaluates the breeding results of the crosses receiving Ads. We will look in retrospect at how these crosses have performed as parents. While some have not produced any progeny, others have been successfully used in breeding to carry forward their desired traits. We will also examine the recently granted Ads that represent the latest "new directions" in breeding.

Describing the Award of Distinction

As a reference base I reviewed the descriptions in the Awards Quarterly to see why a cross received an AD. What I had hoped would be a simple task became difficult due to the general lack of descriptions! For example, statements such as "a definite improvement in Cymbidium breeding," commended for new breeding line, "awarded for unusual direction of breeding," and "the giant step manifested by this cross deserved recognition" were typical of the types of descriptions encountered. As Dr. Alec Pridgeon stated in his article Improving Awards Descriptions, "Special awards are required to have the rationale for the award included in the description. An Award of Distinction should be given for something other than 'a worthy new direction in breeding' which is inherent in the award."

The description for Epilaelia Connie, AD/AOS (Epi. belizense x L. milleri) reads, "a group of 4 plants given an Award of Distinction for unusual results in color inheritance; flowers with red-orange sepals and petals and bright orange lip with red veining; flowers larger than expected and fine, branched spike habit." Richard Peterson comments in his article The Rarely Used Awards that "the description does cover the main points of the Award of Distinction, though to others judges and interested readers, unfamiliar with (Epi. belizense), some note on (its) color ...would make this succinct description even more informative. The 'fine, branched spike habit' is also unqualified. Readers, one supposes, are expected to know that rupicolous laelies are rarely branching in their inflorescences. Thus,

for this desirable trait ...to come through in a hybrid is a welcome departure from the norm. At any rate, readers interested in the awards system should pay particular attention to the Award of Distinction. From this may proceed the interesting new 'looks' of the future."

An example of one of the more informative descriptions is the one given for *Opsistylis* Ruben, AD/AOS (Vdps. *Parishii* x *Rhy. retusa*). The judges recognized this cross as a new direction because of the long inflorescence, many flowers and excellent substance. They noted that *Rhy. retusa* was previously used infrequently as a parent and that the flowers were long lasting.

Where and when have Ads been granted?

A total of 82 Ads were granted from 1957 through 1988, primarily in Florida (27) and New York (913). The awards' popularity has varied through the years, averaging about five per year from the 1950s to the early 1960s, dropping to only one or two per year from the late 1960s through the 1970s. The AD gained popularity again in the 1980s averaging three to four per year. (See Tables 1 and 2.)

Why does a grex receive an AD?

There are two primary reasons an AD is granted. One reason is when a grex is "new" - the first time a genus is used in hybridizing, the first intersectional cross of its type, or the first intergeneric cross using two previously unused genera. Examples of this type of AD are found in *Sarcochilus* hybrid; *Phaiocymbidium* *Chardwarensis* (*Phaius tankervilleae* x *Cym. giganteum*), the first intergeneric cross of *Phaius* and *Cymbidium*; *Tubaecum* *Snow Gem* (*Angm. philippinense* x *Tblm. kotoense*), the first intergeneric cross of *Angraecum* and *Tuberolabium*; and *Onc. Marion Sheehan*, an intersectional cross of *Onc. splendidum* (section *Plurituberlata*) with *Onc. triquetrum* (section *Oncidium*).

Secondly, several Ads have been given to crosses for establishing a new color form within a genus. *Eurynopsis* *Fort Caroline* (*Echn. rothschildiana* x *Phal. Terri Cook*) is a hopeful candidate for injecting green into *Phalaenopsis* hybrids. *Phalaenopsis* *Golden Louis* and *Phal. Greenland* both received the AD in the early 1960s for their desirable yellow flowers; *Phal. Golden Sands* did not.

Dead End Crosses?

A number of crosses receiving an AD have never been used in hybridizing. This may be for several reasons; the plants could be sterile, may no longer be in cultivation, or just from a lack of trying. Some crosses have a few registered progeny, but these were never awarded or used in further breeding. *Aeridovanda* *Hollyhock* (*Aer. lawrenceae* x *V. rothschildiana*) was awarded in 1970, and has no registered progeny. In the *Cymbidium* alliance, two

hybrids of *Cym. Alexanderi* (the famous tetraploid parent) received Ads in the early 1960s. These were *Cym. Coquette* and *Cym. Tiger Tail*. Neither of these crosses has any registered progeny. Two *Cym. madidum* hybrids, *Cym. Little Black Sambo* and *Cym. Pat Ann*, also received Ads during the 1960s, and each has produced only one hybrid (with no awards granted to the progeny). *Dendrobium Duke Bibus* (*DeHinchey x draconis*), an intersectional cross, is pollen sterile according to Paul Bibus, the hybridizer of the grex. Paul has tried using the plant as the pod parent, but has not been able to obtain viable seed. Another charming grex, *Cattleya Helene Garcia* (*Henrietta Japhet x aurantiaca*) has bred only two unawarded offspring since it received the AD in 1963.

Interestingly, a couple of grexes receiving an AD produced first generation progeny which were also bestowed Ads, and then disappeared! *Cattleya Antigo*, a distinctive *C. granulosa* hybrid, received an AD in 1958. Its progeny, *Bc. Jungle Wine* (*x B. digbyana*), also received an AD in 1967. *Brassocattleya Jungle Wine* has never been used in further hybridizing. One of the two crosses made with *Epicattleya Frances Dyer*, AD/AOS (*Epi. fragrans x C. bowringiana*) was *Vaughnara Central America*, which was awarded an AD in 1971. Again, no progeny have been registered in this grex.

Down the Road of Distinction

Many crosses receiving Ads have established new lines of breeding. These hybrids and their progeny have a number of quality awards granted to them as well. They have also proven that the characteristics for which they were deemed worthy can be transmitted to their progeny.

One successful cross using *Doritis pulcherrima* that meets this criteria is *Doritaenopsis Red Coral*. The tall, upright spike habit, floriferousness and intense color of *Dtps. Red Coral* is apparent in its hybrids. The grex has received 19 quality awards in addition to the AD. First generation awarded progeny include *Dtps. Fire Cracker* (*x Dor. pulcherrima*), *Dtps. Coral Glean* (*x Rose Glean*), *Dtps. Jane Sector* (*x Phal. Dos Pueblos*) and *Dtps. Clarelen* (*x Phal. Zada*). Another first generation hybrid, *Doriellaopsis Nacrescent*, was produced by two parents who both garnered an AD - *Dtps. Red Coral* and *Doriella Tiny*. Second generation *Dtps. Red Coral* hybrids also exhibit long, branched spikes and brilliant color. For instance, *Dtps. Kyoto* (*x Mem. Clarence Schubert*) and *Dtps. Truly Scrumptious* (*x Violet*) which have both received quality awards. When *Dtps. Red Coral* was crossed with *Asctm. miniatum*, it produced another grex which received an AD - *Beardara Charles Beard* awarded in 1973.

Brassada Memoria Bert Fields, AD/AOS is an example of injecting a different color into a line of breeding. This cross of *Brs. verrucosa x Ada aurantiaca* displays clear, bright orange coloration. One of its progeny, *Duggerara Robbie 'Sun Drop'*, HCC/AOS (*x Mtssa. Brazilia*) is a vivid yellow-orange with sharp, clear bars on the sepals and petals.

Brassolaeliocattleya Lester McDonald AD/AOS (Lc. Ann Follis x B. digbyana) has bred several famous green Cattleya hybrids. Awarded offspring include Blc. Greenwich (x Lc. Ann Follis), Blc. Ruben's Verde (x Green-heart), Blc. Orglade's Chartreuse (x memoria Helen Brown), Blc. Mystic Mariner (x B. digbyana) and Blc. Esmeralda (x Holiday Gem). Some outstanding greens are also found in the second generation; Blc. Chinese Jade Greenwich x C. guttata), Blc. Hausermann's Jade (Greenwich x Envy), Blc. Rita Coffman (Green Empire x Lc. Ann Follis) and Blc. Orglade's Seaspray (Greenwich x Memoria Helen Brown). Even a third generation cross of Blc. Chinese Bronze (Chinese Jade x C. bicolor) has garnered two quality awards.

Two hybrids in the Dendrobium alliance were granted Ads for the introduction of stripes into Dendrobium phalaenopsis breeding. Dendrobium Mini Stripe, AD/AOS (bairdianum x phalaenopsis) has not registered progeny at this time. However, Den. Candy Stripe AD/AOS (Dianne McFarlane x Margaret Joan Fell) has produced three first generation hybrids, all displaying the desirable striping of the sepals and petals. These grexes are Den. Autumn Stripes (x phalaenopsis), Den. Hawaiian Stripes (x Purple Stripes) and Den. Caesar Candy (x Caesar). Dendrobium Hawaiian Stripes and Den. Caesar Candy have both been granted quality awards.

Masdevallia Angel Frost, AD/AOS is the exquisite result of crossing the large Masd. veitchiana with the small Masd. strobelli. The flowers are various shades of yellow and orange-yellow with either white or purple hairs. According to the hybridizer Marguerite Webb, Masd. Angel Frost is a vigorous grower with long stems carrying the flowers well above the foliage. She has also bred three second generation hybrids that garnered awards - Masd. Sunny Angel (x triangularis) which looks like a miniature Masd. Angel Frost and has received two AMs, and Masd. Freckles (x decumana) which recently garnered an AM. Marguerite's third generation hybrids of Masd. Angel Glow and Masd. Freckles are coming up, but she has not yet seen the results.

The Recently Granted ADs

The Awards of Distinction granted since the mid-80s may produce new trends in orchid breeding. These recent arrivals could open avenues for new shapes, sizes and colors. Envision the possibilities these "worthy new directions" can offer in the future.

Barkeria skinneri is in the background of both Staalara Gerardus, AD/AOS and Cattkeria Doctor Mark, AD/AOS. Staalara Gerardus (Sl. Psyche x Bark. Skinneri) is noted for its "very good closed, flat form and is considered a new direction in multiflora dwarf catt' breeding." Cattkeria Doctor Mark (C. Henrietta Japhet x Bark. Erika) was granted the AD because of

"the contribution of the *Barkeria* parent to the exquisite presentation of the flowers, prominent flattening of the lip and the remarkable clear lavender-pink color.

Four *Dendrobium* hybrids have garnered ADs since 1984. *Dendrobium Fumiyo Tomie x superbium*) was commended for "intersectional breeding of two difficult types of dendrobiums. *Eugenanthe* breeding line is very strong, noticeable in growth habit and scented flowers." *Dendrobium Donie* (*Rachelle Simpson x bigibbum* var. *compactum*) was awarded in San Antonio in 1984. This grex is one of the floriferous, miniature *Den. bigibbum* hybrids that have become popular in recent years. *Dendrobium Allyn Star* (*gracillimum x tetragonum*) is aptly named for its form which it derived from the native Australian species *Den. tetragonum*. *Dendrobium Violet Yamaji* (*Midnight x spectabile*), a *Latouria* section hybrid, has exceptionally dark burgundy red flowers of good substance and velvety texture.

An AD was given to *Masd. Claret Chalice* in 1986. This "distinctive new hybrid using *Masd. uniflora* has rich plum purple flowers with raised deeper plum purple venation."

This intense color has been consistent in the awarded clones 'Rolfe', HCC/AOS and 'D&B', AM/AOS.

Trichocidium Memoria Sarai Ribicoff (*Trctm. pfavii x Onc. splendidum*) recognized "the use of *Trctm. pfavii* as a parent; being a new direction in breeding. It produced an offspring with a highly desirable multi-branched inflorescence." Another *Oncidium* intergeneric cross, *Carpenterara New Dimension*, AD/AOS (*Odcm. Big Mac x Bapt. echinata*) was awarded for "a new direction in breeding resulting in better quality, display, shape, color, size and number of flowers." Milton Carpenter states that the plants of this cross are quite vigorous and have inherited good warmth tolerance from the *Baptistonia* parent. The spikes are semi-pendent (halfway between the two parents), and usually branched. The color is clear and the spots are well-defined. Unfortunately, he did not have a large germination, so only a few plants resulted from the cross. Milton is planning to breed on with it further as it has some admirable traits.

The fictional "black orchid" is now a reality with the appearance of *Catamodes Black Magic* (*Morm. sinuate x Ctism. Orchidglade*), awarded in 1987. According to Gene Monnier, the judges that awarded the AD commented that this was the blackest flower they had ever seen. Gene has not yet been successful breeding with *Ctmds. Black Magic*, but hopes to achieve pollination on a future blooming.

Summary

The Award of Distinction spotlights a distinctly different yet meritorious avenue of hybridizing. Remember this rarely used award when evaluating plants submitted for

judging. Utilize the AD when it is applicable; for example, when a grex is the "first" of a kind -either an attractive new intergeneric or intersectional cross, or a different color form within a genus. Although a cross may represent a worthy new direction and merits an AD, we do not know at the time the award is granted how this grex will perform as a parent. To remain up to date with the latest trends in orchids, keep your eye on the Awards of Distinction!

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TABLE 1. AWARD OF DISTINCTION BY GREX, 1957-1988

Grex	Place	Date
Aeridolabium Springtime	HI	1959
Aeridovanda Hollyhock	CA	1970
Bardendrum Elvena	FL	1961
Beardara Charles Beard	FL	1973
Brassada Mem. Bert Fields	PA	1975

Brassocattleya Jungle Wine	FL	1967
Brassoepidendrum Peggy Ann	GA	1975
Brassolaeliocattleya Dorothy Friedel	FL	1962
Brassolaeliocattleya Lester McDonald	CA	1965
Brassolaeliocattleya Mem. Dorothy Bertsch	CA	1980
Burrageara Living Fire	FL	1979
Carpenterara New Dimension	FL	1988
Catamodes Black Magic	FL	1987
Catasandra Fanfare	PA	1985
Cattkeria Doctor Mark	NY	1985
Cattleya Antigo	FL	1958
Cattleya Helen Garcia	FL	1963
Cycnodes L. Sherman Adams	FL	1961
Cymbidium Coquette	CA	1964
Cymbidium Fifi	CA	1964
Cymbidium Green Gorge	CA	1961
Cymbidium Little Black Sambo	PA	1965
Cymbidium Oriental Legend	CA	1962
Cymbidium Pat Ann	PA	1968
Cymbidium Tiger Tail	CA	1962
Dendrobium Allyn Star	WA	1984
Dendrobium Candy Stripe	FL	1981
Dendrobium Donie	TX	1984
Dendrobium Duke Bibus	FL	1981
Dendrobium Firefly	HI	1962

Dendrobium Fumiyo	HI	1988
Dendrobium Mini-Stripe	FL	1979
Dendrobium Violet Yamaji	FL	1983
Deverauxara Hawaiian Adventure	HI	1982
Doriella Tiny	FL	1968
Doritaenopsis Red Coral		1961
Epicattleya Frances Dyer	FL	1958
Epicattleya Fred J. Fuchs, Jr.	FL	1958
Epicattleya Peach Glow	FL	1970
Epicattleya Preview	FL	1963
Epidendrum Mem. Young C. Lott	FL	1959
Epilaelia Connie	NY	1976
Epiphronitis Pat	NY	1974
Eulocymbidiella Susan Orenstein	CA	1981
Eurynopsis Fort Caroline	DC	1984
Laeliocattleya Issy	NY	1957
Lagerara Printaw	NY	1972
Masdevallia Angel Frost	NY	1983
Masdevallia Claret Chalice	NY	1986
Odontocidium Eric Kuhn	NY	1974
Odontocidium Tyler Ku	NY	1982
Odontioda Michiko	NY	1974
Oncidium Bountiful	MEX	1986
Oncidium Kulow	PA	1964
Oncidium Marion Sheehan	OK	1986

Opsistylis Mem. Mary Natrass	FL	1973
Opsistylis Ruben	FL	1985
Phaiocymbidium Chardwarensense	HI	1962
Phalaenopsis Cutie Pie	FL	1965
Phalaenopsis Golden Louis	FL	1958
Phalaenopsis Greenland	VEN	1969
Phalaenopsis Limbo	MS	1987
Phalaenopsis Moonglow	FL	1958
Phalaenopsis Paskal Indukbaru	TN	1988
Phragmipaphium Hanes' Magic	CA	1982
Renades Hades	NY	1961
Renanstylis Jo Ann	HI	1962
Renanthopsis Amy Russell	PA	1966
Rhynchorides Springtime	HI	1959
Richardmizutaara First Edition	DC	1981
Sarcochilus Fitzhart	PA	1978
Schombocattleya Snow White	FL	1964
Schombodiacrium Ipo	NY	1958
Sophrocattleya Pink Boots		1964
Sophrolaeliocattleya Winneu		1958
Staalara Geradus	NC	1985
Trichocidium Elvena	FL	1959
Trichocidium Mem. Sarai Ribicoff	NY	1985
Tubaecum Snow Gem	TX	1983
Vanda Waimea	HI	1965

Vandaenopsis Penny Stewart	DC	1987
Vaughnara Central America	NJ	1971

TABLE 2. AWARD OF DISTINCTION BY LOCATION, 1957-1988

Location	Number of ADs Granted
Location Unspecified	3
California	10
District of Columbia	3
Florida	27
Georgia	1
Hawaii	8
Mexico	1
Mississippi	1
North Carolina	1
New Jersey	1
New York	13
Oklahoma	1
Pennsylvania	7
Tennessee	1
Texas	2
Venezuela	1
Washington	1
Total	82