

THE *NAILYMPIA* GO-TO GUIDE TO COMPETING 2023

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COMPETITIONS

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As a proud curator of the nail industry for the past 25 years I've been blessed with the best seat in the house to watch it spawn, grow and flourish. In my roles as editor and organiser of *Nailympia*, I've seen first-hand the power of community, working together, education and product innovation. Competition is a powerful tool and this industry has born the fruit of this endeavour most intensely and effectively.

The nail industry is teaming with remarkable people. From the artisan to the teacher, the inventive to the genius, the passion, drive, expression and vision that I've witnessed has always been my driving force. I simply love nail professionals. *Nailympia* is so much more than an arena. It's a theatre, a stage, a circus, a retreat, but most of all it's home.

During its 19 years, it's showcased the talents of nail techs all over the world, (UK, Australia, Estonia, USA, Canada, Germany and Mexico), and brought like-minded, artisans together to share, showcase and build on their careers and skills. It's helped pilot relationships, connections and growth, both personally and professionally.

The nail industry can be a lonely place for many, the competition arena's ultimate ethos is being together, belonging; it's about regeneration, it's content and it's emotional too. Confidence is built, career trajectories changed, success is realised and wisdom accrued. Most of all, *Nailympia* is a friendly place. The expert judges work together to support and grow its presence, to bolster and comfort competitors and to bring a huge positive energy cloud over all proceedings.

Don't deliberate, actuate. There is a *Nailympia* near you!

Alex Fox



"The growth of *Nailympia Competitions* is testament to the flourishing global nail sector, and the professionals within it that seek to better their skillset, raise industry standards and be part of something amazing.

"*Scratch* magazine is dedicated to championing talent and supporting industry growth, and through its partnership with *Nailympia Competitions*, it will continue to raise the profile of nail talent and techniques."

Scott Derbyshire, CEO & publisher of *Scratch* magazine

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THE BIRTH OF NAILYMPIA

Nailympia was born from *The Nail Olympics USA*, a competition set up in 2001 in Las Vegas. Set up by three organisations (IBD run by Lee Tomlinson, Dianne D'Agnolo & James Johnson of Too Much Fun and David Daniel & Danny Haile of EZ Flow), the concept behind this new competition was simple – to be non-biased and non-product led. In order to create a fair playing field for all, these three nail brands made it clear that competitors could use any system or brand and would be categorised by relevant divisions pertaining to their skill and expertise. These divisions were to be kept anonymous during each competition and judging, so that each competitor, regardless of skill level, was judged exactly the same.

Only after judging, were the competitors grouped and ranked in their own and correct division. This original ethos remains the same today.

What is at the core of Nailympia?

Nailympia's reputation is based on it being run by an organisation and individuals that are non-product biased. Alex Fox, global competition director, since its inauguration into London in 2005, was the editor-in-chief of *Scratch* magazine and has been a journalist in the nail industry since 1998.

Its growth and popularity across the world is a direct result of its mission to bring in key industry figures and experts to judge. The judging panel is an international mix of industry experts who have amassed experience, knowledge and a reputation in



their respective countries. Each judging panel has its regular judges for stability and flow, while also bringing in new and fresh experts each year to make sure it remains unbiased while evolving. This annual competition has become a Mecca for nailists seeking international recognition and industry accolades.

The competition began with six categories and now boasts anything from 10 to 17 depending on the location. Over the years some categories have been eliminated and new ones have taken their place. These changes have been dictated by industry nail trends. Each *Nailympia* across the world offers the categories most relevant to its industry.

Where has Nailympia been hosted?

Nailympia has previously taken place in Australia (2014-2018), hosted by Reed Exhibitions in Sydney and the USA competition in Texas (2017-2018), was hosted by Athena Elliott at *The Best Lil' Nail Show*.

In 2019, *The Premiere Show Group, USA* took over the US event and launched *Nailympia Orlando*. In 2018, Tallinn, Estonia (*Nailympia Estonia*) was started by champion tech, Viktorija Prihodko and the brand launched *Nailympia Canada* 2019 in Saskatoon, Canada.

It has also been hosted twice in Mexico City under the expert eye of Dafne Fernández and 2023 sees its second edition at *Beauty Düsseldorf*, run by nail champion, judge and educator, Stefanie Lo Re.

The success of the *Nailympia Orlando* 2019 and 2022 editions will see *Nailympia Competitions* at beauty exhibitions in the following locations, in line with the Premiere Group's growth across the USA:

This expansion comes at an exciting time, since Informa Markets announced earlier this year that it has partnered with the *BolognaFiere Group* and the *Professional Beauty Association* to deliver a landmark joint venture, promising an impressive series of beauty events in the US beauty market.



Nailympia Competitions will be hosted in seven locations for 2023; London, UK; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Düsseldorf, Germany, and Anaheim CA, Orlando FL, San Antonio TX and Columbus OH in the USA, in partnership with the world's leading nail magazine, *Scratch*.

Each USA location will offer six live competitions on the show floor:

UV/LED Gel Tip & Overlay, L&P Acrylic Sculpture (with Perfect Match), The Joy of Nails, Stiletto Nails, Salon Nails and Reality Nails.

There will be four turn-in categories, comprising *Flat Art, Runway Nails, Invent A Nail Shape* and *Extreme Nails Styling* poster. All turn-in categories will have a theme that will be announced before each event and *Reality Nails* will be themed on the floor during the competition brief.



WHY SHOULD I COMPETE?

Why is it important for nail techs to enter competitions?

Competing will stretch and fine tune nail skills. It's a place to extend and explore creativity. It's where a nail tech can shed salon life and literally create without boundaries. It's a place to show the world their artistic potential and ability.

Competitions challenge techs to step into a new place, to think and deliver their artistry in new ways – they get industry acknowledgement and become known, many become industry experts and mentors. Their salon business benefits as their marketing reflects this element and if an award is won, it helps them extend their menu and raise their prices. It can also open many other doors in the nail industry that they may not have considered such as being a brand ambassador, educator, designing posters, editorial shoots, advertising campaigns and fashion week teams too.

Nail professionals love to compete to stretch and showcase their skills. It's a place where they can extend their creativity and go wild, since this is their artistic platform to explore their own ideas. In the salon they can be limited and restricted by time and the client's request.

For nail professionals that want to explore their own creative avenue it's a great way to challenge themselves, plus they get to see what other ideas and innovations are being used around the world by other techs and they get to network and can grow their salon business by marketing the fact they are competing. A medal also helps them extend their menu and raise their prices.

First time competitors should seek out a like-minded mentor to guide and motivate them through the process. These are easy to find on IG and FB. Past competitors are brilliant mentors. They could also take competition classes. These will show them special hints and tips that get them to their goal faster than finding it all out for themselves. The competition nail is very different to the salon nail. Finding a good, patient model with great nail beds, hands and personality is so beneficial. If entering a competition like *Nailympia*,



bear in mind that you can only ever be in Division 1 once, so it's best to enter as many competitions as you can, so you make the most of this division.

Keep your confidence high, don't let anyone take you off your path, focus and believe in yourself. Compete to see what you can achieve and don't worry about what anybody else is doing. This is your experience, so most of all, enjoy it – it's an exciting element to your work life.

To those who need motivation. Remind yourself why you love nails. Feel the power and buzz that nails gives to you and go and share that in the arena. You'll be around like-minded people, your peers, surrounded by people that want you to be the best you can be. It's only you that's holding you back. Another person's nails is their experience. This is yours – so get out there and show us what you can do and 'wow' us with your skills, talent and creativity. This industry needs you – we need to elevate and create together. So get your competition head on and show us your style. You just never know – a medal could be in your hands very soon. And that feeling is sensational.

To prepare, find a nail professional that can mentor or guide you, Practice as much as possible. Practice on every client in the salon. Practice timings, smile lines, etc. Sculpting pink & white, nail art ideas etc. Find a model, try a competition class with a champion, refresh your skills and get hints and tips from those that have done it.

Competing brings highs and lows that generate feelings. It's emotive and exciting, it's full of flavour and intensity and it's downright exhilarating. It's a powerful experience that all techs that truly love their nail craft should try out at some point in their career. After all, you have nothing to lose!



HELPFUL GUIDE TO COMPETING

How should nail technicians prepare for a competition?

It's wise to get guidance from a past competitor/winner in the form of a mentor. Many nail artists become consultants and mentors after leaving the arena and coach teams or individuals. Their guidance is priceless and worth it. Practice is essential, to get skills honed and your timings on track, you can practice on every client in the salon. It's a nice touch to get your clients on board to support you and give you a boost. Their backing can really make a difference to your confidence. Find a good model, try a competition class with a champion, refresh your skills and get hints and tips from those that have done it. Always read the rules and the score sheets so you can see where the points are given.

What should nail techs bring to a competition to compete?

Confidence, a full kit (read the rules and make sure you've got all the necessary items). Check if you need to bring a desk lamp, a bin and make sure you know whether certain products must be unopened. Make sure all products are labelled, don't forget the wrist rest, towel and a cardigan and a large scarf for your model. If she's too hot, she needs to be able to shed her clothing easily and likewise, she needs to wrap up easily if she's cold. A clock/mobile phone for your model to watch and keep you aware of the time. A bottle of water for you and your model, you do not want to find yourself thirsty in that environment.

What can be done to calm nerves before/during a competition?

Everyone suffers with nerves, however many times they've competed, it's par for the course in this environment. So, breathe deeply, get the correct mindset on and focus on the competition itself. I highly recommend Rescue Remedy, it really does help. Don't overthink it – don't be put off by the size of the arena or the people you see there. Everyone has been in your shoes, everyone has walked into an arena for the first time at some point. Just breathe deeply and get into the flow. You will love the experience.

What should a competitor be mindful of before the competition?

The temperature of the room, for the tech's sake and the model. The noise levels, where they choose to sit – as too close to spectators can be off putting. The lighting in the room and that they have got every product they need with them. Always pack your nail kit at least two weeks before the comp and have a checklist to work through to make sure everything is packed in there.

What should a competitor do/ask for post competition?

Most competitions give the score sheets out after the competition is completed and the judges are often available to give positive critiques on them.

What is there to love about nail competitions?

I love how nail competitions respond and reflect the shape of an industry. We are forever changing the competitions in response to industry innovations and trends. It's exciting to see the style and array of nail competitions on offer and more importantly, to see how the competitors interpret them. I love nails; sculpted, embellished, long, short, extreme and natural. I love nails so much, that every competition feeds my need to see the boundaries stretched as the art triumphs.

What can competitors expect from Nailympia?

A feeling of family – we are one big nail community and we thrive when we are together and networking. The *Nailympia* arena is a beautiful space where creativity oozes across the floor and the energy is high and happy. It's adrenaline pumping and powerful. It's a great nail space.



MEET THE NAILYMPIA HOSTS & THEIR LOCATIONS ACROSS THE GLOBE



Alex Fox

Nailympia London, Nailympia Orlando & Nailympia Columbus

After a small stint working in Brooklyn, New York, Alex Fox began her career in journalism in 1993 working on photographic titles. In 1998, she embraced a role on the first UK trade nail magazine, *Nails Plus*, where she headed a team of 10 as editorial director & hosted *The Nail Championships* in Earls Court, London. In 2003, Alex co-founded the UK's *Scratch* magazine, a trade title for hand, nail and footcare professionals. Seeing a niche in the ceremonial sector, in 2012, Alex helped conceive and develop the *Scratch Stars Awards*, devised to recognise outstanding talent in the UK nail industry. She then spearheaded the first consumer nail title, *Gloss*, and originated *Scratch Middle East* magazine in 2014, while living abroad for 10 years in Qatar.

Alex returned to the UK as *Scratch's* editor-in-chief and global director for *Nailympia Competitions*. Giving nail education a new twist, Alex joined forces with industry professionals & co-founders of the FNP, Marian Newman and Jennie Nippard, to offer a unique annual 5-day education event, called *Nail Safari*, located on her family zoo.

Now firmly planted in the nail industry and sitting on the volunteer board of the UK's *Federation of Nail Professionals* (FNP), Alex is passionate about raising standards while celebrating global nail artists through her interviews on *GlossaryLive.com*.

"I've been running nail competitions since January 2003 and have found them to be an incredible source of good, buzzing energy. It's a very emotive place. I've loved watching people come into this industry, begin competing and then watched them grow and become champions. I've also then worked alongside them in their next role as a judge. Many have become my friends over the years. I've met incredible people and loved every moment of building the *Nailympia* competition brand into the beast that it is today. I'm thrilled that it holds its head up high on the global stage and is loved and respected all over the world. It's my passion and delight to provide this platform to the nail world and to watch those who participate get such rewards from it."



Stefanie LoRe

Nailympia Germany

Nailympia's concept always served me well back when I was a competitor. After many national championships, I dared to register for London and I'm so pleased I did, nobody can take this experience away from me. Not only did I get to know many new colleagues, but I was able to learn a lot as a nail designer through discussions and observing. The more I participated, the better my performance became. Being judged by so many experts at an international level gave me new motivation to keep training to attain more points next time. *Nailympia* is one of the most prestigious championships in the world. The work of Alex Fox and its continued expansion, means its reach today is considerable. The different categories and its adaptation to each respective market also make *Nailympia* unique.

Participants from all over the world are offered offline as well as live championships. Even countries that are not in a good financial position can still participate. There really is something for everyone. When SNI, together with Alex Fox and Messe

Düsseldorf, got the chance to bring *Nailympia Germany* to life, this was a new challenge for me as a former competitor, judge and international trainer. For me personally, it's always been important to create new opportunities and perspectives for nail designers and to make their dreams come true. *Nailympia* offers the quickest way to get the best results in every direction as a nail designer. Championships are also excellent training for everyday studio work. As a designer you automatically become faster, more precise and more efficient. You leave your comfort zone and experience things that make you escape from everyday life. Your circle of colleagues also expands; it's great to have contacts and to exchange ideas instead of walking the path alone.

I was very lucky to get to know and start with colleagues such as Tom Holcomb, David Fowler, Tom Bachik, Karin Ström, Trang Nuygen and many other top-ranking nail designers. Seeing their work and competing alongside them was a great honour and helped me on many levels in the industry. Friendships were developed and ideas exchanged, products were tested during the championships and a lot of fun ensued. At the same time we learned through diligence, much sacrifice, hard work and a lot of discipline to reach our limits and to overcome them to break new ground. Giving up was never an option for any of us, even



Dafne Fernández

Nailympia Mexico & Nailympia Brazil

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Working as a nail professional since 2009, Dafne Fernández, known for both her nail sculpture, structure and art skills, is the founder and owner of Stanzy Nails & Beauty, Botica Puré, Mano Santa Nail Art and the director of the Stanzy Academy in Mexico City. Dafne became globally renowned after taking the role of global educator for Artistic Nail Design from 2012-2018. A champion tech, Dafne has won accolades in Orlando, Vegas, Pasadena and at the first *Nailympia Canada* in 2019. Dafne is an international judge, who has educated in Japan, the USA, China, Turkey, The Netherlands, the UK, Russia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, New Zealand, Australia and Greece. She's also the host of *Nailympia Mexico* and the forthcoming *Nailympia Brazil*.

"I wanted to host *Nailympia* in my region because I believe that competitions are necessary in order to build and grow as a nail professional. This activity sets high standards and challenges that a competitor must work through in order to participate. As each element of competition tests the tech, abilities are realised and then stretched, skills and creativity are raised and the nail professional finds their purpose as success is enjoyed."

if you weren't always the best, you kept going and didn't stop, because one thing was clear to all of us, you're always learning, and the experience can't be taken away from you. The best things were always the score sheets and the subsequent discussions with the judges and other colleagues/participants. The work was broken down and you flew home and continued training. And yes, it can be an addiction. In the studio you train in speed and rhythm, in a championship you train in precision and consistency. You can't lose, you can only win; I learned that through *Nailympia*. Every organization is wholeheartedly involved, and you still see a strong bond between many colleagues today. Every profession offers growth, it just depends on what you make of it. Do you stop or do you keep going?

No one should be afraid to compete. Championships are part of it and I'm thankful for *Nailympia* because there weren't really many championships at that level back then. But not only then, but of course also today, I'm very happy to be on the other side and to organize *Nailympia Germany*. This is the only way for new generations to emerge and for the nail industry to grow.



Hemi Park

Nailympia Anaheim & Nailympia San Antonio

@premierebeautyshows
@sugarplumfairfingers

Hemi Park is a California-based Korean-American nail artist and educator. A keen competitor, Hemi has been building her career around nail competitions, including *Nailpro Competitions*, *Nailympia* and *Nails Next Top Nail Artist* in the USA, and has since expanded her pathway in this direction by coordinating and moderating the *Nailpro Global* competitions in the Asia region alongside other competitions in the USA, all since 2019.

Hemi also enjoys working in the creative field of nail artistry, her work has been featured in multiple nail media and has made it onto the covers of magazines around the world.

"I love being a nail professional because it's about much more than services and making pretty nails. The industry as a whole is so complex and requires well-rounded skills of communication, artistry and scientific knowledge, as well as patience and an open mind. My career has constantly challenged me in every way possible, and I've grown artistically, personally and professionally from learning and overcoming those challenges. There's no accurate way to describe why I love nails so much, all I know is that nails have become part of my identity over the last 10 years.

"As an artist and a brand educator/ambassador, I'm always required to be creative and trendy, while keeping in mind sales, marketing and presenting professionalism. I consider myself very lucky to have moved from the nail desk to the creation of digital content to assist in raising brand awareness for the brand I stand behind. My relationship with the brand is a direct result of my years competing.

"My first competition experience is memorable, and from that moment my entire career path changed. When I got my license, I literally had no one around me, no friends, no mentors and no education opportunity. I flew myself to a small education event where I submitted my very first nail art entry, and long story short, I came home with a medal and lists of friends and mentors. That hype continued through *Nailympia*, *NTNA* and *Nailpro* competitions. Nail competitions are a form of continuing education in my opinion. They have pushed my personal limits, gave so much motivation and courage, and widened my perspective and network.

Why compete? What's the benefit? What would be the return of this investment? These are the questions I often get asked. I can answer the questions in so many different ways, but I'll make it short. I am living proof of how much you can expand yourself beyond the nail desk. I want everyone to feel and breathe the high energy of the competition arena. I want everyone to experience the personal and professional growth. I want everyone to see how much this multi-billion dollar industry can offer in different opportunities.

"I decided to jump in the competition coordination and organization sector, because I wanted to be the go-to guide to nail competitions for everyone. The walls of nail competitions felt so high when I first started competing, so I want to be a welcoming hand to those willing to try it. I want nail brands to recognise the high standard of competitors we see, so we can reform into a truly professional-driven industry. So let me ask you now, are you ready to expand your nail career? If so, then start by applying for *Nailympia* today.

NAILYMPIA TROPHY CRITERIA

Naillympia Global Cup

The global winner is calculated by the scores from *Stiletto*, *L&P Acrylic Sculpture* & *Gel Tip & Overlay*. 3 highly technical & challenging competitions undertaken in all active locations – currently this is – Germany, Mexico, Brazil, four locations in the USA and the UK. It is awarded in London. The *Global Cup* requires scores from 3 locations. With scores from more than 3 locations, the 3 highest scores will be applied.
*** Some locations will host L&P Acrylic Tip Overlay in place of UV Gel Tip & Overlay**

Naillympia European Cup

The European winner is calculated by scores taken from *Stiletto*, *Joy of Nails*, *Salon Nails* & *Reality Nails*. The active locations for this cup are Germany and the UK. It is awarded in London.

Individual Top Scorer

You must enter 3 or more competitions to qualify.
NOT INCLUDED – *Gel Polish Manicure*, *Runway Nails* & *Photographic*.

Winner of Winners

There is one *Winner of Winners* per division. The 3 highest scores from qualifying competitions are entered and tallied.
NOT INCLUDED – *Runway Nails*, *Dip System*, *Gel Polish Manicure*, *Fantasy Complete Look*, *Mixed Media Boxed Art*, *Reality Nails* & *Photographic*.

Art Winner of Winners

You must have won one of the qualifying competitions to enter. You must enter at least two competitions.
Qualifying competitions; *Runway Nails*, *Joy of Nails*, *Reality Nails*, *Mixed Media Boxed Art* & *Fantasy Complete Look*.
*** In the USA Flat Art & Invent a Nail Shape qualify in place of Fantasy & Mixed Media.**

Top Country Tech (optional)

You must be a citizen, resident or working in the location to qualify for this trophy.
Qualifying competitions; *L&P Acrylic T/O*, *UV/LED Gel T/O*, *L&P Sculpture*, *UV/LED Gel Sculpture*, *Salon Nails*, *Fantasy Complete Look*, *Mixed Media*, *Stiletto Nails* & *The Joy of Nails*.

Team Trophy (optional)

A team is made up of 3-6 people only. At every relevant competition – the team's three highest scores are taken (not per competitor across the competitions).
NOT INCLUDED – *Gel Polish Manicure*, *Runway Nails*, *Reality Nails* & *Photographic*.



NEW TROPHIES FOR 2023

Two new trophies are expected in 2023

Naillympia Premiere Cup

Competitors must compete at two of the four USA locations. The Premiere winner is calculated by scores taken from *L&P Acrylic Sculpture*, *Joy of Nails*, *Salon Nails*, *Flat Art* & *Reality Nails*.

skills and offers networking opportunities on an unimaginable level. I've seen it truly elevate people's confidence and industry journey, so I'm hoping that the nail professionals of all skill levels, seize the opportunity to compete in one or more of the exciting locations in 2023," enthuses Alex Fox.

The Americas Cup

Competitor must enter *Naillympia Mexico* or *Naillympia Brazil* and one Premiere location during 2023. The Americas winner is calculated by scores taken from *Stiletto*, *Joy Of Nails*, *Salon Nails* & *Reality Nails*. It will be awarded at *Naillympia TBA*.

"Naillympia offers great and exciting categories, with fun and imaginative themes. It fashions a fantastic panel of industry experts for each of its judging panels, who all believe in the brand and in competing. It also awards a multitude of medals, since its three-division system means there are three golds, three silver and three bronze medals awarded per category. It affords the chance to accrue medals towards a series of trophies; *Winner of Winners*, *Art Winner of Winners*, *Top Country Tech*, *Global Cup*, *European Cup*, *Individual Top Scorer*, *Team Trophy*, *Americas Cup* and the *Premiere Cup* (trophies awarded subject to each location).

"Competing is an experience that offers so much more than meets the eye; it's not as simple as people see on the outside. Competing changes people's careers, enhances their nail



MEET THE 4 GLOBAL CHAMPIONS 2017-2022



Madelene Wolf – Sweden – 2017

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 Madelene Wolf Naildesign
www.madelenewolf.com

Madelene Wolf was the first *Global Cup* champion back in 2017. From an almost chance beginning on the arena, after being asked to travel to Las Vegas to support her colleague who was competing, Madelene found herself on the winner's podium. After that, she was hooked.

Now an international educator and judge, her six-year competition career saw Madelene take on a strong mentor in Najet Hamila Strand at the start. "I took private classes with Najet and with Tom Holcomb too. Then in 2014 I took classes with David Fowler and Stefanie Lo Re, which completely changed my understanding of competition nails. I've watched many of the masters in this industry to learn the specifics to help me create the best competition nails. My eye for perfection has also been hugely beneficial.

"I'm naturally a competitive person and like to prove to myself that I can get better and better; this is why I love competing. I also love how it's brought new like-minded friends into my life."

How has competing changed your career?

"My customers were so proud to have their nails done by someone who was competing that they talked about it. Spreading the word that I was a good nail therapist got me lots of new clients, even though I was new to the industry. This really helped my success in the salon."

How has winning the 1st Nailympia Global Cup changed your life & career?

"Oh...first of all my confidence has grown, especially as I reached the goal I set at the beginning to be better while hunting those amazing trophies. The *Global Cup* cemented that I was the best in the world at that time and now I'm a person that people look to as they want my help to get them on the road to success too.

Do you have advice & recommendations for competitors of all levels?

"Set small goals for yourself and try to reach them step-by-step. Take classes from a variety of different people whose skills you admire. It's important to do everything in your own way, do not copy anyone, just take the knowledge with you and do it in your style. I always say to my students, 'try to be you, no one else'."

Do you offer competition training & mentor programs?

"Yes, I love to share my knowledge and skills. I travel the world presenting classes in competition nails for both UV/LED gel and L&P acrylic. If you want me to come to your school/salon/studio just ask. I've started my own nail brand, so I'm looking for nail professionals to train and mentor for TEAM WOLF."



Lena Kurach – Poland – 2018

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Lena Kurach joined the nail industry in 2005 and after her initial training in nails, opened her first beauty salon. Based in Warsaw, Poland, Lena spent the first 10 years focusing on hard work and observing the work of others, of which Tom Holcomb was her main inspiration. Those years of practice helped Lena create her own style and motivated her to start competing.

This guided Lena to develop her own one-of-a-kind technique, the NSM Manicure, which gains the best results without the use of scissors or cutting tools. At the time Lena didn't have a favoured brand, but instead preferred using different products and brands in order to understand their differences and create her own, optimal, high quality line of products.

Lena began competing in 2015 in Poznan, Poland and that year also entered London. "I appreciate all competitions as they give me a shot of adrenaline and help me improve my skills and ability to work under pressure, but I think, and am certain that most will agree, that *Nailympia* is the most prestigious one and is the biggest event in this field. My first *Nailympia* competition was in London in 2015. I've always felt my skills could get me through the toughest competitions and winning the *Nailympia Global Cup* was my goal, which I'm proud to say, I've reached.

"Competing, and most importantly, winning has helped me prove to my students that they learn from the best and I feel that, thanks to their trust, they've managed to become leaders and award-winning competitors themselves," states Lena. "Since my victories, my students are mainly nail educators who desire to improve their skills. Moreover, being a widely renowned nail stylist, has allowed me to start thinking about creating my own team and line of products.

"My victory, as well as success in preparing other stylists for their own career and competitions, has allowed me to believe in myself. I've recently created my own brand called Better Nails and my own product line, Q by Better Nails. 'Q' stands for quality, which is the most important ingredient in everything we do. I've also put together a team of instructors who educate in Poland and a few other European countries. My brand incorporates quality salons willing to benefit from my know-how that use my products. Currently my team has 25 extremely talented instructors, but will be expanding further. I'm always looking for ambitious and talented nail stylists that are ready to spread my idea of fair trading, fair play and are willing to join a team."



Joanna Bandurska – Poland – 2019

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www.bandurska.com

Joanna Bandurska, the third global champion of *Nailympia*, is an Indigo nail expert and educator. She currently holds the national record for the number of awards won individually in the shortest possible time in Poland for the cosmetics industry. She's a judge of the *Polish and European Championships* with an impressive 159 medals won during her career to date.

Known as a versatile champion, this is displayed by winning titles such as *Top Master*, *Overall Champion*, *Grand Master*, *Winner of Winners* and *Art Winner of Winners* as well as taking the 2nd *Vice World Championship of Nailympion*. Joanna has been styling nails since 2008 when she first came across L&P acrylic. Confessing it's hard to choose one favourite technique, Joanna admits to loving both acrylic and UV gel media, as each offers something special and unique, when crafting the perfect French. Joanna's versatility means she's also just as excited by nail art and design.

"I love to paint and sculpt, create 3D acrylic, flat design, hand painting, encapsulation and all the possibilities associated with nail art. Nail styling has become my greatest passion," Joanna enthuses. "I take part in international nail styling championships as often as possible. I enter to prove to myself that I'm in the right place and to show that anything and everything is possible if you want it badly enough. Thanks to my achievements I feel sensational in my role as an educator. Thanks to my extensive experience, I'm able to teach students how to style nails correctly from the basics right up to advanced skills and prepare them for international championships. I've trained many students who are now taking their work further. This drives and motivates me. Students and colleagues alike say that patience is my strength – indeed, nails can silence me even after the biggest storm. My goal is continuous development and mentoring the next pearls and masters in the fabulous world of nail styling."

Joanna has her own training center in Katowice, Poland and runs an online school too. You will find it at www.Bandurska.com



Olena Özman – Germany – 2022

@olena_ozman
www.nailacademy-online.com/en/home/

The fourth and current *Nailympia Global & European Champion*, Olena Özman is now a highly sought-after educator and mentor. Based in Berlin, Olena has spent a number of years competing all over the globe and through her ambition, drive, focus and determination, has taken the world's top titles. Taking the expertise she's learned from taking classes, by following a mentor and from crafting nails herself, Olena has brought all her knowledge together and created a unique online academy, which offers over 500 live courses.

"If you come to work with a smile on your face and don't consider it to be boring and exhausting, it means the choice you made – is the right one," enthuses Olena. "In my case I've been feeling this for about 14 years. Passion, dedication, perfection and creativity, are the things that fulfil me and power me up so I can give 100% and more to my work.

"I invest a lot of time and effort in continuously upgrading my skills and I feel my mission is now to help others to get better and benefit from my knowledge. It makes me happy to see my student's faces, when they master difficult things that help them to get better and achieve new goals.

"My experience from everyday life, with an average of about 10 clients a day, my experience as a competitor and as a teacher have all helped me to make an innovative learning program that is one-of-a-kind. I understand that to teach takes more than just an ability to make nice nails. It is a responsibility and dedication, it is the intention of giving all you know to make someone's way to success easier and better!"

"Believe in yourself, it's ok if you don't place. Find out where your skills were lacking and work on that aspect until the next competition. From that stance you can only get better and better. Do not see the other people in the competition arena as enemies, they are your new friends!"

Madelene Wolf

NAILYMPIA DIVISIONS & CATEGORIES

Nailympia prides itself on being a non-biased forum where products and brands have no bearing on the placing of a competitor. This competition is all about skill and creativity. All skill levels are catered for, the judging system, which has evolved over time, holds true to its original concept of all competitions are judged blind, the judges have no idea who's work they are assessing and all divisions are judged together in the same manner. This keeps the system fair and even. It also means a Division 1 competitor can win with a higher score than seen in the above divisions – again showcasing that the skills and creativity are assessed on their own merit.



CATEGORIES ON OFFER

Each location chooses the most relevant categories for its nail culture. These will include qualifying competitions for trophies and will take into account whether it's a two or three-day *Nailympia* event. Some of the competitions are hosted live at the arena, some are hand-in at the event and others are offline email photo entries. Please check the website www.nailympia.com to view each location's individual schedule, requirements and length of each competition.

- L&P Acrylic Tip & Overlay (P&W one hand) arena 75-minutes
- L&P Acrylic Sculpture (P&W one hand) arena 75-minutes
- UV/LED Gel Tip & Overlay (P&W one hand) arena 75-minutes
- UV/LED Gel Sculpture (P&W one hand) arena 75-minutes
- Perfect Match for L&P & Gel categories (match 2-hands)
- Salon Nails – arena 60-minutes (one hand & subject to change)
- Sculpted Acrygel – arena 60-minutes
- Stiletto Nails – arena 2-hours (one hand)
- French Twist 5 Shape Challenge arena – 2-hours (One hand)
- The Joy of Nails with Bling – 75-minutes (can do on own hand – 3 fingers)
- Fantasy Complete Look – 1-hour (apply hair, make-up, costume before the comp, adhere nails on model in arena)
- Reality Nails - 45-minutes arena/online/hand-in
- Runway Nails – hand-in/online
- Invent a Nail Shape – hand-in/online
- Mixed Media Art – hand-in/online
- Flat Art – hand-in/online
- Extreme Nail Styling Poster – online/email

WHAT IS YOUR DIVISION?

Division 1 – Novice (no educators)

Students and professional nail technicians that have never participated in any recognised nail competition anywhere in the world. (NO educators/trainers to enter this category.)

NB: *Nailympia* will accept entrants in division 1 providing they have not entered more than two national nail competitions in the preceding 12 months before entering any *Nailympia*.

Division 2 – Apprentice (educator entry level)

Students and professional nail technicians that have competed, but never won a recognised competition anywhere in the world, but have placed up to 2nd position. All educators MUST use this as entry level unless they enter the masters – division 3.

Division 3 – Master

Any competitor that has won a world title, placed first in a recognised nail competition of any type or is ranked as a *Top Competitor*.

ART THEMES for *Nailympia* London 2023 – closing date 18-08-23

- **Runway Nails**
Theme: WIZARD OF OZ – 3 nail tips all depicting this
- **Invent a Nail Shape**
Theme: ARABIAN NIGHTS – 1 extreme nail
- **Flat Art**
Theme: SPEAKEASY – 10 nails, 5 sizes, gap between nails
- **Reality Nails**
3 nails – 3 themes – quick salon art (points for simplicity)
1st nail tip – POETRY IN MOTION
2nd nail tip – HOUSE OF CARDS
3rd nail tip – LEATHER & LACE

NOTE: Mixed Media remains – an open theme on 10 nail tips of 5 sizes with gaps between each nail tip

MEET A SELECTION OF THE VAST ARRAY OF NAILYMPIA JUDGES



Marian Newman – head judge – UK

@mariannewmannails

Nailympia is the most important, well organised and fair nail competition in the world. By entering, you have a choice of new and innovative categories, so you will find one or more that will suit your skills. But why enter? Being a nail professional is often an isolated career with just you and your clients and little to no interaction with other like-minded people (other than on social media), so it's easy to become far too comfortable in your own track, forgetting about upgrading and updating your skills. Entering a competition means you need to really think about your skills and protocols plus your clients will love to hear about your competition journey. I guarantee that every competitor will be a better nail pro after. It doesn't have to be as stressful as you may think. The secret is practice, then planning, basically your kit and working with your model.

The organisation behind *Nailympia* is tried and tested, so it's easy and you will be listened to and helped every step of the way. The organisers go to extreme lengths to ensure it is a level playing field for all. Although all competitor's work is judged together, you will only be competing against similarly skilled nail pros via the 3 division system. What have you got to lose? Nothing, in fact you have everything to gain!



Gergana Bangeeva – Bulgaria

@cucciobulgaria

I'm a firm believer that *Nailympia* is the most prestigious and most popular nail competition in the world. It's always well-organized, the regulations are clear and there's a variety of categories to choose from, so all nail professionals can find the one that's right for them. In addition, new categories are added every year in accordance with the novelties that the nail industry imposes.

The presence of divisions is the most impartial and fair part that the competition has and it gives every participant a chance to show what they are capable of and for them to be evaluated fairly, worthy of their qualities and skills, compared to the professionals of their rank and division.

Nailympia has changed the lives of hundreds of professionals and helped propel them to enjoy much success in their careers. Over the years I've had the honour of being a judge and during those times I've witnessed the fortune of many nail techs change. *Nailympia* has given a start to many who began from ground zero and then climbed the ladder of success and won awards many times over.

When one is persistent, ambitious and disciplined with a yearning for personal growth, and if they put in the work and have a strong desire, they will not fail to be successful. Everyone can be a winner, if they wish to be one.



Alisha Rimando – USA

@glossary_live

I think competing confirmed my love and my commitment to this industry. I was introduced to competitions in my first year as a nail tech when being a model for world champion, Tom Holcomb. I didn't understand it at first, but it only took one competition to get me hooked. By modelling, I was able to see the skill in front of me. I could study the practice before, the timing during and the completed work for weeks after. As a model I could help, and be part of a winning team. As a competitor I was driven to perfect my skills, to understand every detail of my craft, from products and tools to application and technique. Every piece and part, no matter how small, was important to the outcome. This created a passion, almost obsession, in me to understand everything, and getting better and better at nails was just a result. I actually got worse before I got better, but that's also part of the process.

During my 10 years as a competitor I became part of a community I didn't know existed. I made friends with the most passionate people I'd ever known. I found my place, my family, my career. You wouldn't think all that would happen from just going to a nail competition – but it did. It changes people's lives. It changes your course. It opens your eyes and lights a fire. After 25 years there's still a passion that rumbles inside when I see artists competing. I love knowing what they are feeling as they work, it's electric, contagious and inspiring. You can feel it just entering the room. Judging is another aspect I'm now honoured to do. I can still be a part of it all without the stress and the massive hours of practice just before. I can continue my study, be part of my community, and help inspire a new generation of nail artists. If you're thinking about competing, don't think, just do it! And if you're not ready, find a competitor and ask to be a model. There's plenty of learning on that side of the table too!



Jacqueline O'Sullivan – head floor judge – UK

@jacquiOs

Nailympia is a great way of helping you as a nail pro, stretch yourself and gain invaluable benefits. These benefits can include learning life skills like resilience, collaboration, support, coaching and mentoring. By taking part in *Nailympia* you will learn to understand that it's good to be competitive. Watching other people work can help you to see the industry from another perspective.

I take my role as an international floor judge and competition director extremely seriously. As a mentor to competitors for over 25 years that have placed and not placed in competitions, I understand the range of emotions that a competitor and their trainers/mentors can experience.

So floor judging. 'We are watching you'. What's it all about?

The spirit of healthy competition is always at the heart of *Nailympia*. As floor judges we endeavour to deter dishonesty, or any disrespect shown to any other person. We always try to put our competitors and models first.

Floor judging is not a measure of your finished work. We try to create a positive environment that encourages a level playing field for all competitors at any level who wish to step up and enter the *Nailympia* arena. Most importantly, floor judges are approachable and impartial, we are there to maintain standards on the competition floor. Should you require any assistance, remember your floor judge may not speak your language so make sure you have a translator if you do not speak English.

During the competition, floor judges walk up and down the arena floor. They are observing your working practice, ensuring all health & safety issues are adhered to. This encompasses all aspects of your service. They will also inspect your products and tools to check you do not have anything that is not allowed within the stated rules of the specific competition you are entering.

Do not underestimate the importance of floor judging. It does not matter to the floor judge what level you are competing at or how amazing your skills are. We do not award points, however we can deduct points from your final score and this may impact heavily on where you are placed in the final results.



Zrinka Vuksan – Croatia/Canada

@zrinka_vuksan_bolancha

As someone who's competed in various competitions before, winning as well as losing, I can only say a competition such as *Nailympia* will only sharpen your skills.

Having your salon set as your arena, where you can prepare, choose the right and proper model to practice with, you will learn so much in this process. The preparation you put in brings you a step closer to winning something and proving to yourself that you can do it. The adrenaline rush a competitor feels before, during and after a competition is something everyone should feel at some point in their career, because it breeds more confidence and fuels you up for more! Even if you don't win anything, you've won a huge experience that builds and shapes you as a nail professional and can move you in directions that you may never have thought imaginable, yet may have quietly wished for. Competing encourages the professional while adding experience and knowledge into your working life.



Jan Arnold – CND

@CNDworld

Competing in a global professional nail competition, such as the world class *Nailympia*, is the ultimate form of learning, refinement and excellence as a nail professional. *Nailympia* invites you to look at your own work critically, as you also observe the other super stars around you, to achieve that next level of precision that makes for a champion. Competition also provides you the much-valued mentorship from an elite team of judges and experts in the field to help you reach higher levels of success. *Nailympia* is managed with the strictest of guidelines and judging criteria, in line with its leading status in professional competition. I encourage all nail professionals to compete at *Nailympia*, as we all strive to advance the state of our industry with passion and commitment.





Mirka Poikkus
– Finland
@royalcosmed

Just by entering you become a winner. The experience of taking part will bring so much to your life. The real journey of entering a competition comes from challenging yourself to perfect a skill or create something amazing that started from an idea. Always remember that it's you against yourself, teaching yourself patience, focus, creative thinking and not giving up.



Krasimira Petrova Krumova
@krasimirap

Nailympia presents great organisation, structure, rules, criteria, score sheets, communication and feedback. Uncomplicated, strict and fair judging on the floor, online and in the booth, it delivers precise and comprehensive evaluation from a special selection of legends in the nail industry, world champions, renowned teachers, trainers, innovators and industry leaders, whose expertise have been formed over many years of professional experience. When you compete at Nailympia you feel like you've reached the stars because you're comparing your work to the best in the world and you get a grade that is priceless. When you receive a medal or trophy from Nailympia, you receive not just an item, but a piece of joy, energy and love woven into it by its creators.

As I like to say: "If you've not competed at Nailympia, consider yourself to have never competed at all!"



Jeanette Ulriksen
– Denmark
@nails_beauty_and_wellness

Nailympia is a professional competition that supports the nail industry worldwide. There are so many nail techs around the world who don't get the education, networking or recognition they deserve, however, Nailympia provides a place to network as well as experience expert judging in a professional setting, thus opening up new avenues and opportunities. Nail pros can find it difficult to get recognized in their native country, yet when participating on a global stage, suddenly others notice the effort, time, investment, passion and skills behind their work. Competing helps to expand a tech's reach, it cultivates friendships that will not only support the person but provide pathways to new ideas, ways of working that help grow skills and creativity. It might be hard to compete, but it gives so much in return so give it a go, not for anyone but yourself. It will boost your confidence and give an experience of a lifetime."



Hazel Dixon – UK
@hazeldixon

Nailympia is THE top competition in the world. It's organised extremely well, judged by the best professionals in the world and most importantly it's fair!

Competitions are a fantastic tool for upskilling. I'm someone who works well when I have set goals and competitions give me goals to strive for. This is important as I love structure and routine and this spilled over into my salon work, which in turn meant I was quicker, my nails were more consistent and I could service more clients, thereby earning a better income. Initially I had no idea of the choices that were available in the industry, but after I found competitions, a whole new world of opportunities opened up to me.

I advise competitors to set mini goals to work towards every year and believe in yourself. You will come across many hurdles along the journey to achieving your dreams, but never let anyone stop you. I've encountered a few obstacles myself, but one has to learn from these and turn them into a positive. I'm a great believer that you can do anything you want to as long as you put 100% into it and work hard to achieve it.

I love competitions, even though they can be very time consuming, over all they are a fantastic experience. I've met some of my best friends at competitions and been offered so many opportunities that I wouldn't have got close to if it wasn't for people seeing my work in the arena.

My career has evolved in so many ways because of competitions. As a result of making my name on the competition circuit, particularly in extreme art and fantasy nails, I've done so many amazing things in the industry that I'm very proud and thankful for. For instance, I was invited to be part of an R&D team for its product innovation for a global nail company, I've been invited to write books, I became a distributor for a global gel brand where I learnt so much about product chemistry... all of this and much more was from competing and meeting new people, which opened up a whole new world of opportunities.



Reni Modrandt
– Sweden
@renimodrandt

Weeks and months before a competition every detail is perfected. Sidewalls, smile, filing techniques. They are practiced and practiced and as such you see how every detail gets sharper and better. This puts a smile on your face. But once you get to the competition arena, then you have to keep your focus. You will absolutely have fun, but it's not a normal day on the job. You should gather all your focus and all your will. It's your way to trophies. In Sweden we call it, 'Pannben', it is something like, 'use the will that is behind the frontal bone'. Sounds maybe crazy in English, but that will give you the force.

There's an exciting exercise you can do to sharpen your focus. Stand on the floor; stand on one leg with the other at a 90-degree angle (measured from the knee and back). Let your hands hang straight down and close your eyes. Now stand still for one minute. Feel how your whole body just focuses on that you must stand still and straight, without wobbling. Focus. Then do the same thing again on the second leg and stand still for a minute. Do this each day before the contest, and you will have a razor-sharp focus.

In addition, you will also have a little better balance, which is also good when you sit by the competition table. The feeling you have when you are standing on one leg, with your eyes closed, and focused on not wobbling, take that feeling with you into the competition arena. Shortly before the competition starts when you are sitting on your chair, close your eyes for a moment and feel how you focus. It shall be your table, your model and nothing around. Focus on every detail that you have practiced – and focus on the trophy. Hold this feeling when the competition starts. Now you have come a big step closer to the big trophy!

I think everyone is a winner. In my opinion there are just two degrees – win or improve. No one loses a competition! Thrilling isn't it! Good Luck! See you in London!



Gari-Dawn Tingler – USA
@gelishprofessional

Since the inception of Nailympia in 2001, the team at Nail Alliance has been this event's fiercest supporter. We are all passionate about creativity and the nail industry's future talent, and this directly aligns with the goals of the Nailympia competition. It's one of the only unbiased nail competitions in the world and, whilst we have brands of our own, we recognise and support exceptional nail artists when we see them regardless. The international appeal of this competition is what makes it the most exciting time in any nail technician's calendar. Bringing the global nail industry together is like having all of your nail Instagram inspiration under one roof. Who wouldn't want to meet their nail Insta-hero!

Competing at Nailympia is fundamental to a nail tech's growth as this industry keeps on innovating. Skills and techniques change with trends and customer demand, and Nailympia keeps your portfolio relevant and up to date. It's a competition that supports you throughout your career, no matter what products you use.

If you have any doubts about your ability, this is the competition that will motivate, build your confidence and help you be the best nail tech version of yourself.

NAILYMPIA FAQS



Can I work on my own hand or do I need a model?

Some competitions do allow you to work on your own hand so do check in with each location, as this is subject to the organiser's opinion and individual location. For example, in London you can do *Stiletto Nails* and *The Joy of Nails* on your own hand.

What length must the pink & white nails be for the tip/overlay & sculpture competitions?

Nailympia is unique in this category as it does not specify any length for the nail. It asks instead that every nail is consistent, that they are all the same. This means the competitor chooses the length and the ratio of pink to white and then repeats this format exactly on three fingers. The pinky and thumb must adhere to the same consistency in sidewalls, apex, structure, length etc, but are finished in a red creme nail polish.

If the rules do not mention an aspect of the nail creation/styling, what do I do?

If there is no mention or clear indication of any technique, product use or style in the rules pertaining to any given competition, it means you can do it.

I'm an educator that has never competed, what is my entry division?

You must use the entry level of Division 2.

Do I need to bring electrical adapters with me to Nailympia?

Yes. Wherever you are travelling to make sure you bring an extension cable/lead and enough adapters for your equipment.

I've brought acetone with me, but the jar is not labelled, what do I do?

You can take a pen/marker and label the jar before the competition starts. If it is not labelled, the floor judges will take the product away and give it back to you when the competition ends.

Can I share products with my team mates?

You must not share anything with your team mates, friends, spectators, interpreter during the competition. You must gain the attention of a floor judge and they will help you source what you need if it is possible and within reason.

What size does the box need to be for my Mixed Media entry?

Please go to the *Nailympia* rules for your chosen location as it clearly specifies the size and state of how to enter. This competition may require a certain sized box in one location or photos and video in another.

My model is 16 years old, is this acceptable at Nailympia?

Every location is subject to local government rules and regulations as well as the stipulation made by each event co-ordinator too. Please check this with each *Nailympia* host before registering. In London and all four USA locations, for example, your model must be over the age of 16.

For LSP acrylic and UV gel PSW competitions, do I need to create a precise smile line under my red crème nail polish to match the fingers?

You no longer have to create a smile line on the pinky and thumb for these categories. The judges do not need to see white on the underside of those two nails.

How do we attach the nails for Fantasy Complete Look to the model?

Ensure the model's nails are free from any product and are manicured ready to go. Apply 'press on' nails with your choice of product or nail glue/resin, this gives the fantasy nails a platform to adhere them too. Apply the fantasy nails using 3M High Performance Double Sided Tape or Scotch Double Sided Mounting Tape that can hold up to 2kg in weight. Keep the heavy pieces of fantasy towards the back of the nail to ensure they keep their balance and are comfortable for the model to wear.

Where do I find out about all the different Nailympia competitions?

Go to the official website, www.nailympia.com, then click on the menu header, Competitions & Locations. The drop-down menu will list all the active competitions and lead you to their specific information and entry options. You can also find us on *Instagram* at @nailympiacompetitions.



Nailympia is the most prestigious nail competition in the whole world! The level of competence and professionalism at all levels is second to none!

Krasimira Petrova Krumova



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Acknowledgement of long term support

The team at *Nailympia London* would like to thank REM for its continued support of the event by providing nail stations every year to the arena. The team at REM arrives to build each nail station, returns to flat pack the desks and then stores them safely for a year. Thanks to REM the *Nailympia London* arena has looked striking, sharp, clean and crisp every year.

www.rem.co.uk

Nailympia is the sister-brand to *Scratch* magazine. *Scratch* was established in May 2003 by Scott Derbyshire and Alex Fox, *Scratch* is the world's leading publication for nail professionals. Its printed magazine lands with subscribers on a monthly basis, and is complemented by daily news, features and opportunities across *Scratch's* website and social media platforms.

The flagship publication in the Seed Publishing Ltd portfolio, *Scratch* has an unrivalled loyal readership and is dedicated to producing groundbreaking content for the professional nail sector. With its finger firmly on the pulse of the nail world, *Scratch* enjoys global recognition for its stunning visuals, trusted content and relentless passion to inform and inspire the nail professional both in print and online.

Under the *Scratch* magazine remit, Seed Publishing Ltd introduced the only awards solely dedicated to the UK nail industry in 2012; the *Scratch Stars Awards*, held annually to celebrate the achievements of nail technicians, salons and businesses within the UK nail sector. The awards perfectly complements the Seed Publishing Ltd philosophy of passion, achievement and uncompromising focus.

Its latest addition, under the expert eye of managing editor Helena Biggs, is the launch of *World's Star Nail Artist* (WSNA). This global online competition is an opportunity for creative nail experts to immerse in themed challenges across 10 weeks.

Sponsored by CND, it unites the global nail industry in a fantastic series of nail art challenges that sees entrants whittled down to a final three. A nail artist is eliminated after each stage, before the final three nail artists are invited to London, where the winner will be announced on Sunday 23 July.



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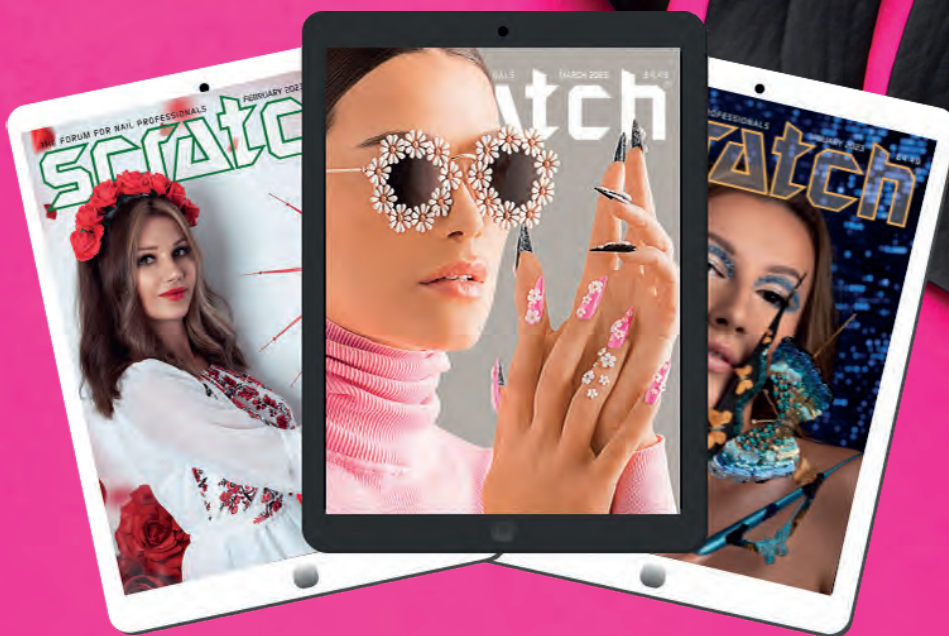


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