

The Art of Exhibition

Mary Dew

Email: dew150@comcast.net

College of DuPage

Photography Department

© 5/2006, Revised 5/09, 5/11, 5/12, 6/13 Mary Dew

The Art of Exhibition

Table of Contents

The Art of Submission	3
Marketing	3
Research	3
The Prospectus	5
Sample Prospectus	6
The Artwork	7
Framed Work	7
Website	8
CDs/DVDs/USBs	9
Slides	10
The Self-Promotion Piece	10
Pricing	12
The Artist Statement	14
The Artist Resume	16
The Cover Letter	20
Putting a Show Together	21
Theme/Title/Prospectus	21
Hanging Artwork	22
Hanging Artwork Diagram	24
Artwork Labels	24
Artist Statements/Curator Statement	25
Marketing the Show	26
Opening Reception Planning	26
Opening Reception Checklist	27
Sample Interview Questions	28
Resourceful Websites	29

The Art of Submission

Submitting your artwork to galleries, competitions, and publications is really an art. It requires professional skills, time and dedication in order to be successful, much like creating your art. The process can be rather sophisticated and just like a job interview. My hope is that this guidebook will help take you from the art of creation to the art of exhibition, so that others may experience and enjoy your work.

Marketing

I think you are going to quickly find out that learning the "Art of Exhibition" really requires you to hold two positions, that of an artist and that of a business person. Marketing your artwork is the only way it is going to get sold, and no one is going to care about selling your work more than you. In order to successfully market your artwork, it is likely that you will need to spend an EQUAL amount of time self-promoting your artwork as you do creating it. There are two themes that students hear me say often and that you will continuously hear throughout this guidebook, professionalism and consistency. These are not just words used by me. These are words that are stressed by gallery reps, curators, jurors, marketing reps and the like. The first key to promoting your self successfully is to make sure that all of your marketing tools (website, business card, mailers, resume, artist statement and portfolio) have a CONSISTENT and PROFESSIONAL look. Consistency means using the same font, graphics, logos, and images throughout. Professionalism means a clean look that is easy to read. Professionalism does not have to be boring, just the opposite is the case; it should be unique, just not over the top.

Research

The art of submission is a process. The first and perhaps most important step is research. Before you put forth the time, effort and expense, you need to make sure that your artwork meets the criteria. In other words, don't enter your work into a competition that calls for large-scale paintings if your work is in photography or your work doesn't meet the proper dimensions. This often pertains to media, size, artist's affiliation or status, geographical location, etc. If your artwork first meets ALL the criteria, then you need to investigate if it is consistent with the recipient's objective. Usually this pertains to the genre and concept of your artwork. If a gallery mostly represents abstract art and your portfolio is mostly documentary, don't waste their time and yours. Or, if a

publication is looking for an image that is edgy and experimental, do not send your commercial portrait portfolio. Very often competitions and publications will clearly state what they are looking for on their prospectus or submittal form. When you are looking to submit your portfolio to a gallery, you should become acquainted with the type of work they represent and several shows they have exhibited both recently and in the past. The Internet now makes this really easy. However, I really recommend attending a few of their shows in person. This can also become an excellent networking opportunity.

If you are first starting out, I recommend you begin by joining an artist league or organization. Members will often receive educational resources, marketing tips, opportunities to exhibit their artwork in sponsored shows, and the chance to network with other artists. I also recommend you start the submission process with photographic competitions or juried show exhibitions. This will help you become familiar with the entry process and help build your resume, and more importantly, help you start building your contact list. A next step can be searching for local communal spaces such as libraries, cafes or small galleries that cater more to the less experienced. This can help you transition your artwork from local spaces, eventually to more established galleries and larger public spaces. Very often large public venues, such as an arboretum have excellent exhibition spaces that are forgotten, and would be a great match for specific types of photography such as landscape. Once you have had a chance to gain experience and develop your professional portfolio, you may then be ready to submit to major galleries.

Never approach a gallery in person and request an unsolicited portfolio review. They set up their submission guidelines for a reason and are not going to make an exception. Many galleries list their submission guidelines on the web. This information is sometimes listed on their contact page. If you do not see their guidelines listed, send a self-addressed stamped envelope requesting a prospectus or submission packet. Once you have properly submitted your artwork according to their guidelines, be patient in waiting for their response. Galleries receive a vast quantity of portfolios to review, and it is a rather lengthy process. There can be a significant wait, sometimes up to one year or more. It is unprofessional and annoying to continuously call and check to see if your work has been reviewed. After one follow-up phone call to ensure receipt, then give them time to contact you.

Accept rejection as part of the process. It is not necessarily a reflection on you or your artwork, after all, viewing artwork

is somewhat subjective. Remember, it only takes one YES to get the process started. If you are continuously receiving rejections from galleries and statements that your portfolio is underdeveloped, I recommend that you seek out competitions and publication opportunities. Maybe you have a few individual images that are spectacular, and you could use this time to further develop your professional portfolio. I think the key is to remain committed and continually create new work. If you take producing your artwork seriously, others will too. You may also want to consider a professional portfolio review workshop such as Review Santa Fe (see resources for more listings). While they can be a little expensive, it will not only provide you invaluable feedback from fine-art professionals, it is also a great way to network and seek exhibition opportunities.

The Prospectus

The prospectus is an entry form that usually will request information about you and your artwork and provides the submission guidelines. Again, make sure that your work meets all the requirements before beginning. I recommend that you make a copy of the form before you begin filling it out, in case of a mistake. Also, read the form entirely before you begin and follow the directions EXACTLY. Do not leave any space blank. Do not add any additional information they do not request, and make sure that your writing is legible. Answer the questions in a professional manner. If it asks for the price of your artwork, state the price. Do not put "I don't know" (for more help on pricing your work, see pricing guide) or "best offer". If you do not wish to sell the artwork, put "NFS" (Not for Sale). If you are asked to write an artist statement that is 100 words or less or you are given a space to fill it in, do not exceed the limit. Once you have filled the prospectus out entirely, make a copy for you to keep. This way you will have all the important dates at hand and you can check off all the requirements that need to be completed for proper submittal. The following page contains a sample prospectus.

Sample Prospectus

<p>Important Dates</p> <p>Entry Deadline Wednesday, July 5th</p> <p>Acceptance of Notification & Pick-up Entries Not Accepted Wednesday, July 12th</p> <p>Exhibit Dates July 19th through August 16th</p> <p>Opening Reception Wednesday, July 19th</p> <p>Pick-Up Artwork: August 17th & 18th</p>	<p>About the Show/Purpose</p> <p>The Photographic Exhibition course was created for College of DuPage photography students, in order to gain exposure for their work and for the promotion of visual arts as a whole. "Visually Speaking" is a photography show entirely put on by students in the Photographic Exhibition course.</p>	<p>Entry Form - Please print legibly.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____</p> <p>State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>E-mail _____</p>
<p>Agreement</p> <p>Submitting an entry to this show constitutes an agreement with all conditions of this show. The WINGS Gallery assumes the right to photograph an accepted work for publicity purposes. Students will be ineligible for entry if the entry forms are incomplete or deadlines are missed.</p>	<p>Entry Requirements</p> <p>Students must be currently enrolled in the Photographic Exhibition photography course at the College of DuPage. Any size photo may be submitted, not exceeding 20x24 inches framed. All photographs submitted must be matted. Photographs selected must be framed and ready to hang with a secure hanging wire and completed submission form on the back. All work must stay on display for the duration of the exhibit.</p>	<p>Entry #1</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Media _____</p> <p>Size (HxW) _____</p> <p>Price _____ Ins. Value _____</p> <p>Entry #2</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Media _____</p> <p>Size (HxW) _____</p> <p>Price _____ Ins. Value _____</p>
<p>Liability</p> <p>Works will be handled with the utmost care. The exhibition committee may be held liable only for the value of the materials used to make the image and/or the value of the framing materials that are damaged.</p>	<p>Sales</p> <p>Artwork not for sale should be listed "NFS". Otherwise, state the sale price on your entry form. The Gallery does not accept commissions on sales. Students are responsible for delivery of works sold.</p>	<p>Entry #3</p> <p>Title _____</p> <p>Media _____</p> <p>Size (HxW) _____</p> <p>Price _____ Ins. Value _____</p>

The Artwork

Follow ALL the guidelines EXACTLY when it comes to submitting your artwork (am I repeating myself?). Sometimes the recipient will request the actual work already matted and/or framed to their specifications. Other times, they may want emailed submissions. Most recently, they are more often requesting images on CD or a USB drive. On a rare occasion, you might see requests for slides. If you would like your submitted media returned to you, you should include a self-addressed stamped envelope. Only submit up to the maximum number of images allowed, and do NOT go over. Learning to edit your own work is an important skill. In the case of a juried show, try and send in the maximum number of entries allowed to increase your chances of getting selected. It may also help increase your chances of acceptance if you send distinctly different types of artwork (ex. abstract and architecture) that still fit within the shows concept. This allows you to appeal to the different tastes of jurors. For gallery submissions, you will want to do the opposite. Submit images from your professionally developed portfolio(s) that are CONSISTENT. In this case, DO NOT sacrifice quality for quantity. Your artwork is only as strong as its weakest image! Make sure that you include along with your artwork all requested information, which may include: an image inventory sheet, artist statement, resume and cover letter. More on this documentation will follow.

Framed Work

Images should be presented professionally. This entails using clean and accurately cut mats. Neutral colors are best. Acid free materials should be used so that sold work is archival. Make sure the print is attached securely to the mat. The glass should be free of dust and finger-prints. I know this is stating the obvious, but I still see it happen. The frame should compliment, but not overpower the artwork. Cheap frames can look cheap; show that you care about your artwork because the juror or curator is going to care about the quality of the presentation. Most galleries will only accept frames with wire on the back instead of saw tooth hangers. This is because wire backs are more secure. It is not the gallery's responsibility to clean or secure your artwork properly, and you may lose your opportunity to exhibit because of it. If you are shipping your artwork, make sure you use a good sturdy box because it will likely be used to ship the artwork back to you. Wrap the image fully in bubble wrap or sheets of foam, and try to avoid using foam peanuts. Make sure you secure the box with strong packing tape. Include in the box a return label as well. I would highly recommend insuring the package for the value of your

artwork and getting a signed receipt so that it is not left outside. Take careful precautions in putting together and mailing your artwork. After all, you did spend the time getting your artwork selected, so you will want to make sure it gets there in one piece!

Website

A photography website is the most powerful marketing tool available. The obvious reasons being your artwork can be viewed by anyone, anywhere, at anytime, and can easily be updated with new artwork. That is why I highly recommend that this is the one marketing tool that you invest a great deal of time and expense. Make sure that the layout of your website is in keeping with your logo and design, and its operation should be quick and simple to navigate. You don't want to loose people because your website is frustrating slow or difficult to locate certain bits of information.

You want to make sure that people can easily remember your website, so I highly recommend that you use your "last name" and/or parts of your first name, and "photo" or "photography" in your domain name. If you already have a business name, then of course, that should be reflected in your domain name, but just my \$.02, people are more likely to remember your name more than a business name like "A Touch of Nature". Again, the overall layout and function of your website should be professional. I highly recommend that you do not share or post any personal information or comments, keep that for a personal website or facebook.

Good news, you don't have to be an IT expert or hire a website designer to get a professional looking site up and going quickly. Now and days you can google "Free Website", "Free Website Builder", "Free Website Hosting", etc. and a plethora of site come up. I am going to recommend for first timers, to use the www.weebly.com site. You can have a site up in running in as fast as 20 minutes. Literally! There are over 100 templates to customize the look of your e-portfolio. You can customize the type of pages you want, create image galleries, slideshows, videos, and even have a blog.

There are several key pieces of information to a good artist's website, and these include making sure that a viewer will be able to learn who you are, see what you do, the purpose of your work, and how to contact you. For viewers to learn about who you are, I highly recommend having an "About" page and an "Artist Statement" page. The "About" page is usually a bio that gives general background information about you in relation to

the field of photography and is usually written in the 3rd person. This area is also a perfect place to describe the purpose of your website. Meaning, are you looking to sell prints, to exhibit prints, and/or commissioned to create new work. On your "Artist Statement" page, this is written in the 1st person, and it is you describing your images pertaining to a particular body of work. Specifically you should describe why you are passionate about making that type of artwork and the purpose of the body of work you are discussing. There is a separate section in this book that explains in more detail about writing an artist statement.

Next, of course is the actual artwork. I highly recommend that you divide your artwork into different "Galleries". The division of your "Galleries" depends on what you do. You may want to divide up your work by the type of photography (ex. Commercial and Fine-Art), by portfolio (Architecture and Abstract), by genre if your work is thematic, or by location of the artwork created. In the "Galleries" section of your website, it is very important that the functionality is very simple. In other words, make sure your images have the appropriate resolution and viewable size. Make sure that it is easy to navigate from image to image and from gallery to gallery.

Finally, make sure you have a "Contact" page. What good is it to have a website for you to try and sell or generate work for hire, if no one can contact you. Make sure that you list an email that you check frequently. I highly recommend creating an email address that utilizes your domain name. Also make sure that you list a phone number that has a professional sounding voicemail that you also check frequently. I do NOT recommend listing a personal address on your contact page.

Finally, there are a few other pieces of information that your website can serve. You may choose to set up your website with "Pricing" and the ability to "Acquire" so that viewers can purchase your prints, photobooks, calendars, museum quality prints, etc. And if you are continuously hired to create new work, you may want to consider adding a "Client Viewing" password protected page, so that clients have a place to view the images you took for them. Once you have established your artwork a bit, I highly recommend you add an "Exhibitions" or "Publications", etc. type pages. Once you have established your photography career, I recommend you add a "Resume" page. You may also want to add a "Blog" page about what you are currently working on, or any "Upcoming Events", "News", or share photography information so that you continue to get frequent viewers.

Some final thoughts on your website... Make sure that you update your artwork and any important information every few months. After all, this is one of the major advantages to having a website!

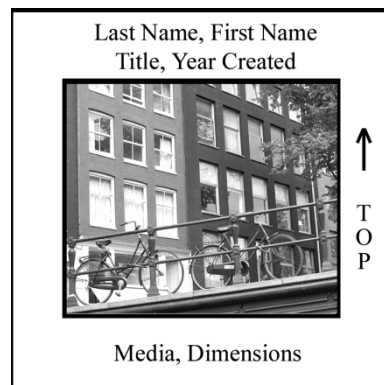
CDs/DVDs/USBs

Make sure that you adhere to the recipient's guidelines. They will usually specify if they accept Macintosh and/or PC format. Do not send hi-res files (not to mention, for reasons of theft!). Check the submission policy for the preferred resolution size or dpi (dots per inch), but if nothing is specified, 150 dpi will more than suffice. Make sure you also orient and resize them to fit on screen. Make sure that each image is correctly oriented for viewing horizontal and vertical formats properly and size properly. I suggest making the longest side no longer than 10" so that the full image can be viewed on almost all screens. Depending on specifications, images may be saved in .jpg or .pdf formats. If the format is not specified, use the universal format .jpg. I recommend that you save each image file as your last name and with a number to correspond to any requested text, for example, "dew1.jpg". In addition, it is good to also include a slide show presentation on your CD/DVD/USB. I recommend using Adobe Acrobat (.pdf file) because it is universally accessible. A Power Point presentation is also another option, but might not be accessible to everyone. You will likely be requested to include on your media an Image Information Sheet, which is a word document (.doc) or pdf file (.pdf) with a list of the images pertinent information. Now here is a chance to get creative with your packaging and presentation of your media. I have seen lots of unique presentations in the form of metal cases and even unique handmade books that have the images in printed form as well as a place to hold the CD/DVD/USB in back. I still recommend you keep the look consistent with your marketing pieces, and make sure that you neatly label the CD/DVD/USB and whatever holds the media, with your name and contact information (logo).

Slides

With digital technology, the use of slides is becoming obsolete. On occasion I still see requests so I am still keeping the information in here for our future reference.

All slides should be professionally made. They need to have proper exposure, even lighting, and be in sharp



focus. There should be no drastic colorcast so make sure they are photographed in the proper type of lighting that corresponds to the film (i.e. use Tungsten balanced film with incandescent lighting and use Daylight balanced film outdoors). I recommend using two incandescent sources each at a 45° angle and at an even height with the artwork to produce even lighting and ensure no shadows. Another alternative is to photograph the artwork at noon with the sun over your left shoulder. Make sure there is no glare off shiny surfaces, and remove the glass if framed. The backgrounds should be neutral, typically either black or white, and free of any other distracting elements. Bring your film to a professional lab for proper development and more accurate color and exposure. Make sure each slide is mounted securely in a cardboard or plastic mount. Check the submission guidelines for how you should properly label the individual slides. Write neatly on the slides, and do not use labels as they can get stuck in the projector. If there are no specifications on what to label, include: your name, title, media, size, and direction pointing to the proper orientation of the slide. Place all slides in a plastic sleeve with your name and contact information labeled clearly at the top.

The Self-Promotion Piece

Self-promotion pieces can come in many forms: small books, CDs/DVDs/USBs, fine-art prints, calendars, and in particular postcard mailers. Your promo is your chance to express your creativity. It should reflect your uniqueness and style. But again, it should be consistent with your other marketing materials and look professional.

Very often, the promo you send in the mail or leave behind at an interview will be the first impression you make on galleries, curators, marketing reps, etc., so don't forget the details. Here are a few tips.

It is a good idea to make the packaging attractive since it will be first thing they will see. Here is another chance to get creative with the packaging and presentation. If the promo is a postcard, check online or with your local post-office to make sure that their stickers and stamps won't cover up any important information. Just as in advertising, you will want to consider who you are sending the promo to and what purpose you are trying to achieve with it. Self-promo pieces are often sent to publicize an exhibition and/or reception opening, introduce yourself as an emerging artist, and announce new artwork added to your portfolio. You want to send a clear message to the recipients on the intention of the marketing piece. Also, it is VERY important that all promotional pieces be an accurate

reflection of your portfolio or the work being exhibited. If it peaks their visual interest they will want to see more. Mailers are also sent as a way to keep in touch with important contacts and serve as gentle reminders that say, "I am still making art and looking for opportunities to show my work". For this reason, I recommend attaching a small personal note, but only to those you know. Of course, make sure all pieces are checked for typos, grammar and spelling. Use caution; inundating recipients with a stack of promotional mailers will only annoy them. Not to mention, if done well, these pieces can be costly, so really consider who would be a good fit to send your work to. Because many reps keep and remember these self-promotional pieces, think about how you would like them to remember your work. You want your self-promo pieces to leave an impression on them!

Pricing

For students or newly emerging artists, figuring out how to price their artwork is a common concern. Unfortunately, the answer isn't so simple and begins with my usual response; you have to do some research. There are several factors that you should consider.

First, you need to see where your artwork fits into the current market, including the consideration of location. Obviously, artists displaying their work in a coffee shop in suburban Wheaton, versus an art show in Door County, versus a gallery in an art district of Chicago, all will have very different price points. Likewise, consider the population that the space markets to, the mass public or an avid art collector. Start by visiting the galleries/spaces in the area that you will be displaying your work. Try and find work that is of a similar medium to yours and note their prices and sizes. More importantly, try to find out the sales history of the artist and the space. If the work isn't selling, consider if the space is new, the prices are set too high, or if it could be the work itself. Because there are so many variables, this is why I recommend you don't judge your pricing on one space and one artist! As artists begin to establish a sales history, they can begin to raise their prices.

Once you have established a range of prices for the area and the population that you will be marketing to, you need to consider the medium and size of the work. If your artwork is easily reproducible, an ink jet photograph versus an original Polaroid transfer, the pricing should reflect that fact. If you plan on selling multiple copies of the same image and at different sizes, obviously the bigger the size of the artwork, the more

you should charge. I recommend using the basic math formula discussed below, to calculate the price difference in size.

To start, I recommend you begin with one piece of artwork that is reflective of your body of work, and that you have received favorable feedback by viewers. Calculate the expenses you occurred to create the artwork, including your time, and then consider the lowest amount of profit you would be willing to walk away with. Then, factor in the gallery's percentage of the commissions (it will have a little extra because you will also be doubling your cost). The rate varies depending on location, usually between 20%-50%.

For example, if my total expenses and time is \$25 (double this amount to \$50) and I want to make \$50 profit: $\$50$ (expenses) + $\$50$ (profit) = $\$100$. Factor in the commission: $\$100 \times 50\% = \200 .

Now that you have established this benchmark, price the other work accordingly. Any other artwork from the same series, of the same medium, and same size, price it identically. To adjust for different sizes, apply the following formula:

For an 11x14 image calculate the square inches: $11" \times 14" = 154$ square inches. $\$200$ (established price) / $154 \text{ in}^2 = \$1.30$ per square inch (rounded up to nearest cents).

So, now to calculate what you should sell the same image if it were a 16" x 20": $16 \text{ in} \times 20 \text{ in} = 320 \text{ in}^2$. $320 \text{ in}^2 \times \$1.30 \text{ per in}^2 = \416 .

All artwork for sale needs to be of archival professional quality, including framing materials, and properly assembled. Most students and newly emerging artists tend to price themselves unrealistically, so try and get feedback from others that are unbiased of your work. Also, if you are too emotionally attached to an original artwork piece, I recommend you mark it as NFS (Not For Sale). Remember if your prices are too high to begin with it is likely not to sell, and the goal is to get your artwork shown and to start making money, not just have it sitting in your portfolio box. You can always re-adjust your prices and raise them later as you begin to sell more. Just as the making of art is a process, so is marketing. The more you research, build your resume with work shown, and sell artwork, the more self-assured you will become when concerning pricing.

The Artist Statement

You may want to start your artist statement with the title of the body of work in which you are describing. Remember, this is YOUR artist statement! It is your words about your artwork, and therefore, should be written in the first person. On occasion, it may be acceptable to include a quote about your work, but only by a professional artist, critic or curator. The statement should be kept simple and brief, usually between a few paragraphs and certainly no more than one page. It doesn't bode well for your artwork if it requires a lengthy explanation. From time to time, you will be asked to send an abbreviated version (usually a few sentences) of your artist statement on your prospectus or along with your competition submission. The writing should above all sound professional. It can be eloquent and creative, but use caution. Overly descriptive and formal statements can often appear as arrogant. Also, avoid using language that is evaluative of your own work, such as beautiful, rich tonalities, and inspirational. That should be left for the viewer to decide.

What to write?

The following are suggestions to help you get started. The two major themes that can be discussed are the content and the concept. They are very often intertwined, but the majority tends to be on the latter. In discussing the content, this is where you can describe the subject matter of your artwork. Almost always, there should be a common thread found in the content of the body of work. You may also want to write about what originally attracted you to your subject(s). Very often discussing the content should answer who and/or what, and maybe when and where questions. Answering the how and why will help you discuss your concept. The concept (the most significant part of your artist statement) should address any technical information that is necessary to include, and most importantly your intention and purpose for creating the art. This is your chance to discuss your artwork as your personal self-expression. What are you communicating to your viewers through your artwork? Why are you passionate about creating these types of images. This may also include the inception of your idea, what originally inspired you to communicate your message, and how your thought process evolved over the course of creating the work.

Other possibilities to explore.

You may want to express any personal connections you may have to either your subjects or your concept, and your artistic process,

as most bodies of work tend to be created over an extended period of time. Depending on the body of work, it may be necessary to explain individual images, in addition to the body as a whole. This is also personal preference. If this body of work somehow relates to another of yours, this may also be addressed. Finally, you may want to write about your philosophy (why you are passionate about your art form and creating your artwork), reference your style (how your artwork relates to other genres, e.g. abstract-expressionism, documentary, etc.), and describe any pertinent techniques (only essential data on how your artwork is made and/or significant or unique materials that are used). Remember to keep the technical information simplified, not everyone is familiar with the technical language of your process and you don't want to give away your secrets!

Just express yourself

Don't be scared of writing your artist statement. Just like learning art techniques, the more you practice, the better you become. If you don't take writing your artist statement seriously, your artwork will likely not be taken seriously. Grammar and spelling mistakes are unacceptable. Remember, you are only considered as strong as your weakest submission piece. I recommend you always ask someone to proof read your statement, but don't ever allow him or her to substitute your thoughts for theirs. While I am encouraging you to spend some time and effort on your artist statement, do not strain continuously over it. Just say how you feel! This way your creative abilities and your love for your artwork will stand above all.

The Artist Resume

The purpose of the artist resume is to show your credibility as an artist and to highlight your artistic achievements. It should be clean and organized, not artistic and fancy. It should look professional. The biggest mistake that is most often made is making it overly complicated and wordy in an attempt to impress. All the information in this resume should be about your work in the art field. It should not contain professional experiences from other career fields, nor personal information such as hobbies and interests. If you are active in more than one discipline or career field, it is best that you create two different resumes. I recommend that that you update your information frequently, so that you don't forget dates and places and so that it will be ready to go at a moments notice. More importantly, don't forget to edit out old or no longer relevant information. There are two standard formats which are paragraph form or bullet form. Choose what you are most comfortable with. As you become more experienced, you will need to create two variations, a long version vitae (up to 4 pages) and a short version (1 page abbreviated), depending on the submission guidelines. It is also best to choose a standard font (no smaller than 10 point size anywhere) that is easy to read, such as Times New Roman, Helvetica, Arial and Courier, especially if you are attaching your resume in an email. You will likely want to use your logo/font for your header to maintain the consistency of your marketing pieces. There is absolutely no excuse for spelling and grammar mistakes, and worthwhile to ask others to proof read it for you. All your printed materials should be on the same heavy weight paper.

Heading

This section is a list of all your important contact information. You will want to offset the heading and make it stand out by using your marketing logo, or if you don't have one, try using bold, larger font, centering, a line(s), and/or any combination of these. Include the following information that pertains to you:

Name: What you use to publicize your work. Your name should be in a larger font than the rest of the heading.

Mailing Address: List where you want to be contacted, for example, your home, office or studio. If you have a campus address, you may also want to list your permanent address as well.

Phone #'s: List all that applies: home, cell, studio or work, and fax. Make sure that the numbers you supply are those that have a reliable voicemail. Also, make sure that the outgoing message sounds professional on every number you list.

Internet: List your email address, and if you have website with images of your artwork, list your web address. Only list your website if it is updated and complete. If you don't have a website yet, and even if you're not quite ready to put one together, I highly recommend you purchase your domain name. It is inexpensive and a good idea to get your name before some else takes it. Professionals tend to recommend that you use your name as part of your domain (ex. marydewphotography.com) instead of a creative company name (ex. beyondnaturephotographs.com) because it can be much easier to remember or do a google search for you.

Body

There are many different sections and categories you can record in the body. Begin with those areas that are strongest. Within each section or category, the events should be listed in reverse chronological order.

Include the following that pertain to you:

Education: Include all post-secondary academic degrees you have earned. Note the institution, the degree earned, the graduation date, and any honors that apply. If you have not graduated yet, put that you are a candidate for the degree and your expected graduation date (Ex. Associates in Photography Candidate 2011). You may also want to include any relevant workshops you have attended, and if notable, the artist/teacher you studied under.

Exhibitions: If you have a small amount of experience exhibiting your work, you may want to list all the events under the "Exhibition" category and then note the type. When you have a wide-range of exhibition experience, it may be best to categorize the events by the type of show, i.e. "Solo Exhibitions", "Group Exhibitions", "Juried Shows", "Art Fairs", "Touring Exhibitions", and "Museum Shows". Once you have quite an extensive history, only list those events within the last ten years (unless it was a one-person show, a show at a well-known museum, a show in a major city outside your residency, the show was highly publicized or reviewed favorably, the juror or curator is well-known, or you won an award). Make sure with each entry, you record the title of the exhibition, the exhibition space, the city and state, the year, and the type (if not already categorized). (For example, "Faces & Places", Bloomingdale Art Museum, Bloomingdale, IL, 2009, Juried Art

Show.) Also, list any notable curators or jurors, and any awards or honorable mentions.

Collections: This is where you list any artwork you have sold. Once you have sold several images, you may want to consider separate categories, i.e. "Private Collections", "Corporate Collections", and "Permanent Public Collections". Be sure you receive permission from the private collector/owner before putting their name on your resume.

Publications: In this category you will want to describe any books, magazines, newspapers, or catalogues for which your artwork was published. Also, include in this category any articles or reviews you may have written (in particular, those that are photojournalists). If you have written a substantial amount of articles/reviews, you may want to make a separate category "Bibliography". For the more accomplished artist, if the articles or reviews are written about you and your work and are not written by you, make a separate category called "Articles and Reviews". With any of these types of publications, list the name of the author, the title of the publication in quotations, the medium of the artwork, the volume/issue, the month and year, and page number.

Awards/Grants: Under this category list all recognitions of grants, fellowships, scholarships, awards, and merits. Do not duplicate awards that were part of your exhibition experience.

Related/Teaching/Professional Experience: Keep it relevant to the art world! Include experience in your professional art-making career, such as teaching art, any technical positions, jobs within the field, and any presentations, workshops or lectures you may have given. Omit this category if you don't have any employed art related experience.

Affiliations: List any professional organizations to which you are affiliated. Also, note the membership type (i.e. professional, student, etc.), if you held a position (president, website manager, etc.), or if you served as a volunteer, and the date that you joined. (Ex. Chicago Artists' Coalition, member, 2006. Only list affiliation with which you are currently a member and omit those that you no longer belong to.

Other possible categories/sections: Art Fairs (those events that you have sold work), Festivals, Collaborations, Commissions, Artist-in-Residence, Current Gallery Representation, and/or Biography.

If you are just starting out and finding you don't have much information to put on your resume (which is probably why you are taking this course), consider the following: a brief artist statement, biography, or combination of both (this should be placed under the heading and before the body in paragraph form). This can be a great way to introduce yourself and your work to prospective galleries. You may also want to consider including a "Bodies of Work" section, which will allow you to describe the various facets to your art work. Begin by listing the title of the body of work, the medium, the year(s) created, and a brief description (1-3 sentences) on the purpose of the work. Finally, you may want to add a section of "Related Course Work" where you can very briefly describe some of the unique areas you have studied. While this section is typically listed only on the curriculum vitae, it can show the reader techniques that you have incorporated or that have influenced your artwork. It is advisable that you do not list introductory or foundation courses, but rather those selected topics that are more specialized (ex. Alternative Process). List the course title, and then either a brief description of the course or a list of the topics/techniques that are covered.

References: It is no longer necessary to list "References Available Upon Request" as a category. I do recommend that you put together a separate page with your three best references. Of course, before using someone's name as a reference, you should request his or her permission. References should come from teachers, jurors, curators, gallery representatives, organizational professionals, known artists, etc. those who are very familiar with your art process and artwork. Personal references are not appropriate.

Now it's time to write!

The Cover Letter

Every time a submission requires you to send a resume, a cover letter should precede it. Again, don't forget to proof read the letter and check for spelling and grammar. It too should sound professional and have the same look as your resume. The following format is merely a helpful suggestion on what a cover letter should contain.

Header- your logo that is consistent with your business cards, web site, etc.

Your Name
Your Address
City, State, Zip Code
Your Main Telephone #
Your Email Address

Month, Day, Year

Gallery Contact's Name (Get the correct contact person's name.)
Gallery Contact's Title
Gallery Name
Gallery Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Gallery Contact's Name, (Do NOT put "To Whom it May Concern," you would not want to receive a letter that said "Dear Photographer".)

This first paragraph should state why you are writing and introduce your self as an artist to the Gallery Manager. You may want to briefly mention your history as an artist, and highlight a few of your most important accomplishments contained in your resume.

In the second paragraph you should mention why you chose this gallery and what makes it stand out from others. Demonstrate that you have done your research about the gallery. I would also suggest you describe why you feel your work would correspond well with the gallery's vision.

Use the last paragraph as a closing and indicate that you would like to interview with them. Affirm how they can contact you. Finally, I suggest thanking them for giving of their time and for considering your artwork.

Sincerely,
Your Handwritten Signature
Your Name Typed
Enclosure

Putting a Show Together

Theme/Title/Prospectus

The title and theme of the show helps establish the vision, and lets the viewers know what they can expect. Hopefully, it will also be an attention getter! Typically, when it is a solo show, the title is very often the same title as the body of work being shown. But, when it is a group show, the title usually needs to be much broader to encompass different types of work.

To decide on a theme, think about both the concept (the message/idea you want to convey) and the content (the type of work or subject matter being shown). For example, "Windows and Mirrors" describes the vision of John Szarkowski's famous show at MOMA in 1978. That title would be the concept, the idea that all photographs are either a self-reflection of the artist (mirror), or their view of the world (window). Now if all the images had literally been of windows and mirrors that would also describe the content. "Paintings from Provence" would describe the content. "Visually Speaking: A Photographic Exhibition and Charity Fundraiser" would describe both concept and content.

Once the theme and title have been established, the next step is to outline the requirements of the show. For a juried show, you will likely need to create a prospectus. This type of entry form will allow each artist to know the specifics of the show that relate to the concept and content, as well as the deadlines and requirements. It should also reflect the written contract agreement between the artists and the space. The prospectus is another way for the artist to list the important information about each image that is listed on the artwork label. To see an example prospectus, please refer to page 6. For a coordinated group show, I recommend that each exhibitor read carefully and each sign the contract with the space.

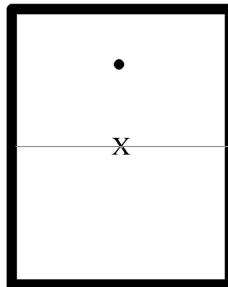
Hanging Artwork

When it comes to hanging a show, it can be considered an art form that requires vision, as well as meticulous skills. It is important to look at the flow of the space and how you want the artwork to correspond with that flow. Equally important is how each art piece is going to flow with one another. Assembling a visually pleasing fine-art show takes experience. The following is an example for a basic hanging and for achieving a simple clean look.

I recommend first starting with the main wall in the space. Set out all the artwork on the floor, and begin arranging the pieces

on the floor. First, find a featured piece that stands out just a little more in size, color, contrast, etc., but one that really fits the theme of the show. Use that as a center focal point on the main wall. Work your way out from there arranging all the pieces on the floor/against the wall. If available, consider putting any images that are very prominent on their own feature wall. As you place adjacent images, make sure that the artwork compliments one another and does not compete. If you need to do more than one row of images, you may want to keep it simple by placing the larger image on the bottom. Once you have established the placement of all neighboring artwork, the hanging can begin.

For those that are new to hanging an entire show, in order to hang the work precisely with minimal evasion to the walls, I recommend making paper templates of each image. Templates can be made quickly by tracing the outside of the frame on brown craft paper. Mark the center of the image with an X and a horizontal line running through it from end to end. Next, measure the location of where the nail will rest tautly against the wire, and mark it with a • on the template. The following diagram is an example template.



How to hang the templates (Refer to the diagram on the following page):

1. Walk through and become familiar with the space, and think about how you want the exhibit to look. Find the center of the main wall horizontally and mark it with an X in pencil.

2. At that center point of the wall, measure from the floor to your desired height and mark it. 57"-63" is standard for viewing at eye level. If the images are all smaller, say 11" x 14" and under, you can hang the work slightly higher, say around 60"-66" (in my example I use 60"). Be careful though, the tendency is to hang the artwork too high. The dimensions of the wall and the sizes of the artwork need to be considered. This is where using your eye to adjust the composition becomes necessary. Once you have decided on the height, stretch a string across the entire wall and use pushpins on either end and

in the center to secure it. If you are hanging several shows often, I recommend investing in a tripod mounted laser level.

3. Place the center of the template on that centerline and tape it to the wall.

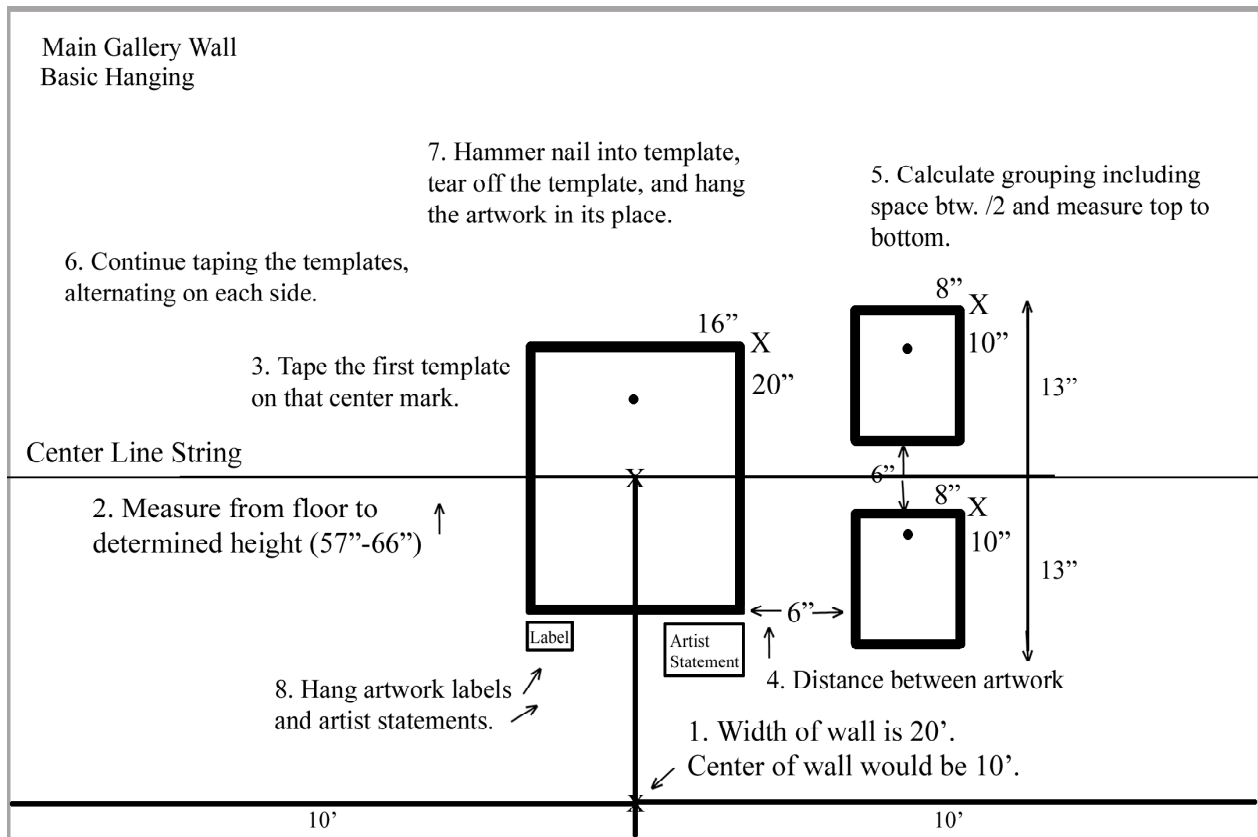
4. From the first taped template, measure the distance of space you want to leave between each image. You should have some idea from the spacing that you placed between them on the floor. I would recommend leaving no less than 6" when you have lots of images in a small space. I would also not recommend having more than 2' between each frame otherwise it looks too sparse. The larger the artwork, you should allow for a little more space between each. For a very clean look, I recommend keeping the spacing consistent between all images.

5. Calculate the center of the next image or grouping (if you have more than 1 row), and place those templates at the desired number of inches (in my example 6") from that center image. If you are hanging a grouping (one on top of another) you have to also account for the vertical spacing in between the two frames. Here is a calculated example: for 2 8x10 vertical frames, calculate the height of each frame (10" + 10" = 20") plus the vertical distance between both images (add an additional 6" = 26" of height). Divide this number in half to find the center (26" / 2 = 13"). Now measure 13" up from the centerline and tape the top of the template to that line, and measure 13" down from the centerline and tape the bottom of the next template to that line. By doing this you are finding the top and bottom of the grouping and centering it on the 5'6" height.

6. Continue working on both sides. After you have a few templates hung, take a step back and make sure you are pleased with the composition. The beauty of taping templates is they are easy to adjust if need be and you don't have a bunch of holes to repair. Continue until you have hung all the templates evenly, and are pleased with the arrangement.

7. Hammer a nail or anchor into the template on the drawn nail • and rip off the templates. Make sure the hanger can is for the appropriate weight of the artwork (most standard hangers come in sizes that hold pounds of 5,10,50 & 100 pounds of weight). On very large artworks, you should use 2 hangers for stability. Now hang the artwork in its place. Continue until all the images are hung.

8. Get rid of any visible pencil marks and patch any holes. Hang the artwork labels (in a consistent place for each image), and any artist statements/curator statements.



Artwork Labels

To get important information about the artwork, each image should have a label. Artwork labels should be typed (don't forget to check for spelling and typos) on the computer, and you can print them on label sheets (I recommend the clear slightly oversized labels) or they can be printed on paper that is then mounted on foam core board. Check with gallery, as some spaces have strict rules about what type of adhesive can be used. The following information should be listed:

1. Image # (in accordance with # in program)
2. Artist name
3. Title of work, date created
4. Medium, size
5. Price or NFS (for museums owner or copyright holder)

Example:

<p>1 Mary Dew Growing Pains, 2006 Silver Gelatin Print, 16x20 \$300</p>

Artist Statements/Curator Statement

I am an advocate for displaying artist statements with artwork. I think it is an excellent form of communication that allows artists the chance to discuss the purpose/meaning of their artwork. Very often we don't get a chance to discuss the work with artist. Usually the only opportunity is on opening night and even then it can be difficult if there is a large crowd. It also serves as communication throughout the remainder of the show, when the artist is not present. People are more likely to appreciate the artwork if they understand the meaning and purpose. Artist statements help connect both the artist and the artwork with the viewer.

If it is a solo show, very often the artist statement is approximately one typed page. It contains not only information about the artwork on display, but usually will also have background and process information on the artist as well as previously exhibited work. Often museums or galleries will have artist statements printed on 8 ½ by 11 typing paper, for viewers to take. If there are several artists, I suggest typing a brief paragraph summation by each artist that describes the purpose of the work shown (background and process information would be too much) so that it can be hung with each artist's images. All artist statements should be formatted and mounted in the same manner. I suggest the following as an easy standard: Times New Roman, 12-point font, left justified, 1.5 spacing, ½ inch border all around, and printed on a 4" by 6" card and mounted to foam core board. Then they can easily be fixed to the wall with Velcro (again, check with the space on their rules for the use of adhesives on the walls). If they don't allow adhesives, clear acrylic frames work well. The following is a sample:

<p>Title</p> <p>Paragraph(2-3 sentences)</p> <p>Artist Name</p>

Curator Statements are another great form of communication that helps to summarize the purpose of the show's theme. They describe the vision of the show and what the Curator hopes the viewer's will experience. They are sometimes displayed on a vinyl sign that is burnished to the wall. They can also be printed on a large heavy card stock to hang on the wall or be

placed in an acrylic frame. Curator statement's information can also be used as a great marketing tool. They can be included in show programs, on the web page of the gallery, or in newspaper articles. Which brings us to the topic of marketing...

Marketing

There are many ways to market an art show, but it is important to pick those that will be most successful. Start planning early! To begin, really consider your target audience. Is it the general public, students, artists, private collectors, etc. If you can get a local newspaper to write an article on the show which can generate great free publicity that can hit the masses. If it is a student show, marketing flyers around campus or in the campus newspaper can create lots of exposure. Also, it is a good idea to send announcements to art clubs, art leagues, and other galleries in the same area. I highly recommend mailing out invitation postcards to all the artists' contacts. Shows that are set up as a charitable fundraiser also have major benefits. While you generally have to donate a portion of your sales, people are more inclined to buy when there is a charity involved. And when you're new, remember the goal is to sell some work! The great thing about working with charities is that they can send invites to their large mailing list and they tend to generate good media coverage. Not to mention, using art to give back to the community is a noble experience that helps benefit society. After all, isn't that the one of the major reasons for displaying art?

Opening Reception Planning

Now that the artwork is hung and you've marketed the show, the final details of organizing the opening reception are left. If you haven't already been given the information, request the spaces' rules for hosting an opening reception. Every space differs on its level of involvement and what it does or doesn't provide for receptions. Some spaces may provide light hors d'oeuvres and beverages, while others may leave it entirely up to you. If you want to serve wine, make sure they allow the serving of alcoholic beverages. Many will require you to hire a bartender for liability purposes. To create ambiance, I recommend putting together soft background music, and add finishing touches like nice tablecloths and a flower arrangements. Remember that the goal is to sell artwork, so I highly recommend making programs that viewer's can take home (these should include: the curator statement and/or artist statement, a listing of the information on the artwork labels, and the procedure for purchasing the art). Don't forget to include contact information for purchasing artwork after the

show has ended. If the gallery takes commissions then they will have receipts for sales, however, if the space is rented or borrowed, you may have to create your own sales receipts. Finally, don't forget to have business cards on hand.

Opening Reception Checklist:

- Programs
- Receipts
- Hors d'oeuvres (finger foods work best)
- Beverages (water especially, punch is cheap and easy to make!)
- Wine (Make sure alcoholic beverages are approved!)
- Tables for food and beverages
- Tablecloths
- Small plates
- Napkins
- Utensils (if needed)
- Toothpicks (if needed)
- Platters/Bowls
- Cups
- Punch bowl
- Cooler(s)
- Ice
- Paper towels
- Trash Bags
- Music/Music Player (optional, for ambiance)
- Flowers/Vase(s) (optional, for ambiance)
- Sign-in/Comment Book (optional)
- Red Dots (for sold work)

Sample Interview Questions (that a gallery rep or curator might ask during a portfolio review)

1. What can your artwork bring to this site?
2. Why do you want to exhibit at this gallery?
3. If your artwork is selected, what are your goals for exhibiting at our location?
4. What are your professional goals? Where do you see yourself in five years? Ten years?
5. Why are you coming to this gallery if your resume says you're specialty is in _____?
6. What have you enjoyed most about your previous exhibition sites?
7. What have you enjoyed least about your previous exhibition sites?
8. Why are you an artist/photographer?
9. What artist/photographer do you admire most?
10. What is the most interesting exhibition you have ever seen? Why? What is the most interesting exhibition you have seen recently? Why?
11. What would your peers/professors say about you and your artwork?
12. What words describe you? What words describe your artwork?
13. What is your artwork's greatest strength?
14. What is your artwork's greatest weakness?

Resourceful Websites

Gallery Sites

Chicago Gallery News- an excellent source for gallery listings and descriptions, openings and resources

www.chicagogallerynews.com

Center Stage Chicago- another excellent list of galleries with descriptions and links

www.centerstagechicago.com

Chicago Artist Resource- "Calls for Artists" listing for exhibitions, grants, publishing, etc. and great articles on local artists

www.chicagoartistsresource.org

Art Scope. Net- news, announcements and gallery listings for Chicago (and suburbs), national and international

www.artscope.net

Art Deadline- a listing of local, national, and international announcements; membership required for a full listing

www.artdeadline.com

Artists Register- showcases visual art by artist for paid members and markets to galleries, collectors, corporations

www.artistsregister.com

The Art List- art contest, art competitions, juried art shows for paid subscribers

www.theartlist.com

i2Art- provides artist portfolios, promotions, and resources for the business of art to members; also lists call for entries, artist residencies, and art jobs

www.i2art.com

Visual Art Prospectus & Submission Guidelines- art of the Artists Helping Artists, a FREE listing of contests and awards

www.calltoartscontests.org/submitart.htm

E Photo Zine- an online magazine that hosts exhibitions and competitions

www.ephotozine.com

PDN: Photo District New- a pro photo online magazine with a contest gallery and business advice

www.pdnonline.com

Photo Review- a national renowned journal that reviews portfolios, exhibitions, and books. The website has competitions and auctions that you can enter for a chance to be published in their journal.

www.photoreview.org

Local Art Organizations

Chicago Artists' Coalition- a great visual arts organization that provides professional and educational services, as well as a calendar of events and online gallery space for members

www.caonline.org

The DuPage Art League- non-for-profit school and gallery; members can sell work in their gallery, enter juried shows and traveling exhibits

www.dupageartleague.org

Alliance of Fine Art- a non-profit organization comprised of several artists' leagues in Illinois. Has workshop, exhibition and art fair opportunities.

Friends of the Arts- a really great organization that offers photography discussion seminars, gallery hopping Fridays, opportunities to display work in associate galleries, and online gallery space to its members

www.fota.com

Marketing Sites

Mary Virginia Swanson- THE photography consultant and educator on marketing your photographs. Has a listing of great workshops and contests. Great sample portfolios too!

www.mvswanson.com

Portfolio Review Events Websites

www.fotofest.org

www.visitcenter.org -Review Santa Fe

www.photolucida.org

www.photonola.org

www.photofocus.com

www.filterphoto.org -Chicago based!

Framers/Framing Supplies

Blackbird Gallery + Framing- Master Framer and owner Fernando Mastroianni can create custom framing and matting.

www.bbirdgallery.com

DuPage Framing Center- Master Framer Bob Greene can create custom frames and mats.

www.dupageframing.com

The Art of Exhibition

Mary Dew © Revised 6/2013

Frame USA- Great source for pre-cut mats and frames.
www.frameusa.com

Golden State Art- Reputable and inexpensive site for buying pre-cut mats in bulk.
www.goldenstateart.com

Clear Bags- Crystal Clear Bags that are archival safe and great for protecting your portfolio artwork without hindering the viewing of the artwork.
www.clearbags.com

So that's it! I know learning and implementing The Art of Exhibition can take a great deal of time and effort. But, the benefits and rewards can be well worth it. Best of luck in your creative art process.