

Professional Guidelines

TOP TEN TIPS for Getting Into a ... Juried Exhibition, Craft Show, Book or Magazine.

INTRODUCTION

This Professional Guidelines document provides information that can improve an artist's or craftsman's chances of being accepted into exhibitions, craft shows, books and magazines - anywhere that inclusion is decided by a jury.

By its very nature, the jury process is exclusionary. Juried venues allow you to test your technical, design or conceptual abilities in a competitive environment, subject to the (hopefully) informed and objective opinions of the jurors. Juried venues can raise your professional visibility within your field and are an excellent means for emerging artists - including students - to build an exhibition track record independent of any commercial or academic activities. But who gets in and who doesn't, in the end, boils down to the consensus of the jury. A basic understanding of how this process works, some strategic thinking and a little extra preparation can improve your chances.

Remember that juried opportunities can be quite competitive. Exhibition space is often limited and the number of square inches available on the printed page is precious. The same holds true for the number of booth spaces available in a craft fair. It is the jury's job to eliminate weaker entries. Don't let sloppy documentation, incomplete paper work, or poor visuals become the reason that a jury rejects your work. Be sure to put your best foot forward!

Below is a summary list of the TOP TEN TIPS:



1. **DAZZLE THE JURY WITH AMAZING IMAGES!**
2. **DYNAMIC DETAIL IMAGES ARE KEY.**
3. **DO NOT SEND A BAD IMAGE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**
4. **CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE ARRANGEMENT OR ORDER OF THE IMAGES CHOSEN.**
5. **AVOID AMBIGUITY IN YOUR IMAGES, DESCRIPTIONS AND APPLICATION**
6. **CONSIDER YOUR ENTRY THOUGHTFULLY AND STRATEGICALLY.**
7. **FILL OUT THE APPLICATION NEATLY AND COMPLETELY.**
8. **ALWAYS LABEL YOUR IMAGES.**
9. **PLAN CAREFULLY TO MEET ALL DEADLINES.**
10. **BOOTH IMAGES NEED TO BE FANTASTIC!**

More information in the appendixes:

Appendix I - Sample Contact Sheet.

Appendix II - Where Can Artists Learn about Juried Exhibitions, Craft Shows, Books or Magazines to Submit their Work?

Appendix III - A Word about Publicity.

Appendix IV - Slides Image Labeling Information.

- A more thorough and comprehensive explanation of each TIP and the rationalization behind it follows in this document. If there were only one TIP, however, which the Professional Guidelines could offer, it would be:

TIP #1. DAZZLE THE JURY WITH AMAZING IMAGES.

- The quality of your photographic images is so important that there are two documents in the Professional Guidelines that are specifically dedicated to helping you to improve and to better evaluate your photographic images. These are titled: [Guide to Professional Quality Images](#) [Working with Digital Images Effectively](#)
- Further information can be found in the additional **Professional Guidelines** titled: [Juried Exhibitions](#). Another helpful resource in reviewing a show's prospectus before you decide to enter a juried show is: [Exhibitions: Artist Checklist](#). More information about exhibitions and professional advice found on: [ASK Harriete](#).

Success is within your grasp with careful planning and preparation!

TIP #1. DAZZLE THE JURY WITH AMAZING IMAGES!

It cannot be stressed enough that fantastic, high quality images are the most important step towards professional success.



Do not let the quality of your images eliminate your work from the next juried exhibition, craft show, book or magazine. Always keep in mind that the jury is looking at a photographic representation rather than the actual work. No matter how good your work may be in reality, your photographic image must capture that reality in a dynamic and compelling manner. In a competitive environment, jurors must sort through hundreds of images. This is your opportunity to grab the jurors' attention and set your work ahead of the pack by showing the jury fabulous images.

Superior photographic images can make the difference as to whether you will be accepted or rejected. Read [Guide to Professional Quality Images](#) in the [Professional Guidelines](#) for a few suggestions that may help you or your photographer obtain top quality images.

Consider hiring a professional photographer.

Spend your time on what you do best: making great work. A cover photo, newspaper article or magazine spread is free publicity that may be worth thousands of dollars in exposure and perhaps even sales. But publishers select visuals based on the strength of the image rather than the work itself. So apply the same standards of quality to your photographic images as you do to your work.



Sending photographic images presents a nearly identical scenario for the artists submitting work for review. The primary difference lies in the review process for the jurors. Read [Working with Digital Images Effectively](#) in the [Professional Guidelines](#) which covers issues specific to digital images.

Keep in mind that some works will not reveal their beauty or significance in the flattened photographic image.

The limitations of computer monitors increase this deficit. Choose the images that best suit the parameters of the venue while clearly illustrating the object's strengths. A clean, uncluttered, well-lit and straight-forward image of a strong piece is always best.

A full view image must convey as much information as possible. In the end, only one image - the full view - will likely be the primary image that represents the work. For this reason, take photographic images from a number of angles; open, closed, up, down, in and out. Select from these the one image that best illustrates the true nature of the work - its size, surface character, color, etc. - in as accurate and crisp a manner as possible.

If there is a specific function of the work, clearly illustrate this in the image.

Be sure that the photographic image clearly indicates whether the object is a ring, sculpture or a teapot. If, for instance, a secret moving element is a significant aspect of a piece, be sure that this is somehow illustrated photographically.

Submit your punchiest, boldest images.

Intricate work which may not come across as dynamic in an image can be difficult for jurors to quickly understand, and consequently will fail to grab their attention.

The background should indicate what is top and bottom -- even without a dot or arrow on the mount. In a quality image, location and direction of shadows, gradation of background lighting and the visual weight of an object all indicate the proper orientation of an image. Keep this in mind as you stage your work and click the shutter.

Keep your message simple and easy to grasp in the few seconds that the jury will be looking at the images.

The majority of competitive juried situations draw an overwhelming number of entries. "Sell" your work with images that have straight-forward content and make a dynamic impression. Even if the content of the artwork is fairly dense or multi-faceted, this is not the situation in which to try to inform the jurors of this complexity.

They simply don't have the time to dwell on a quantity of information when they have hundreds or a thousand images to review.

The key is to make it through the first cut and into the final selection round.



Along these same lines, if your work incorporates a lot of text, then use images with only a few words, not a complete sentence or paragraph. If the jury does not understand your work within a few seconds of review, most likely they will vote “no”.

Project your images before you submit them to a jury or look at your image very closely. It is difficult to tell if your digital images are in perfect focus on a computer model. Project your digital images with a digital projector, if possible. Before you spend money on an entry fee, find out how your two-inch brooch translates to an eight-foot tall image that is projected for a total of 10 seconds (approximation of the time each image is projected during initial jurying rounds).

Ask yourself:

- a) How does this image compare to the quality of images you commonly see published in magazines or books?
- b) Are you ready to risk rejection or stake your money and your reputation on these images?

Avoid distractions in the background of your images.

Here are a few specific examples to avoid:



- An unbalanced image such as the subject off to one side.
- Heavily textured fabric or paper for displaying small objects or jewelry.
- Wrinkled or sloppily draped background materials.
- Too much empty space in your photographic image - fill the frame with information.
- Excessively strong colors. Colored backgrounds can present a problem if all your images don't have that same colored background. If you need to have something photographed on a color for a special shoot, such as a magazine, consider having it photographed on graduated gray or white during the same session just in case you need this image to match your other photographic images.
- Overly dramatic or contrived backgrounds such as sunsets, dramatic landscapes, wet stone, leaves, grass or exotic handmade papers.



Installation shots are only appropriate if:

- **The work includes an installation or display materials that are inseparable or intentional elements of the piece.**
- **This is a very large sculpture.**
- **The site of the piece is conceptually relevant to its content.**
- **This is actually an installation piece.**

Submit your best work and your best images, not your best seller.

Your best seller may be an irrelevant issue to the jury regardless of whether you are submitting work for an exhibition or a wholesale/retail show. Keep in mind that your best seller may sell because it has a good price point, appeals to a wide audience or reflects fashion trends. It may even sell well because shoppers consider it to be a good “gift item”. While all this is fine for sales, it may have little to do with what makes your work powerful in the eyes of a jury. There may be a huge difference between what the jury will consider your best work and what the public buys.

TIP #2. DYNAMIC DETAIL IMAGES ARE KEY.



Your detail image should be able to stand alone on its own merits.

No matter what aspect of the work you are choosing to place at center stage, the detail shot should be visually compelling, and well designed.

Ideally, a good detail image is also a superb composition with great colors, and formal pictorial qualities. Think of all the formal properties of a good painting. The detail image should be an eye-catching image that exists independently of the full view shot, even if it is not projected.

Details should always offer as much information as possible about the work.

Consider in advance the fundamentally important or unique features of your work (never forgetting the impact of a thoughtful and carefully arranged composition). The close-up should expand on the information given in the full view image and further define the particular character of the piece. Featured details of surface, functionality, or special technique should always be viewed in that context. If the conceptual content is an important aspect of the work, then the detail should somehow address that issue.

Your close-up should also be considered a companion image to your full view.

In many circumstances, only two images for each piece will be sent to the jury, a full view and a close-up. This combination should be a fantastic “one-two punch” offering a lot of straight forward information. Although there are no guarantees that your detail and full view shot *will* be shown together, you can increase the likelihood that they will be by placing your images adjacent to each other in a digital format. Additionally, be sure to clearly label on both image and paperwork that this is a detail of the full view.

Details shown should be relative to the size of the work. The detail for a small piece of jewelry is going to show half the piece or even less with very little or no background. An artwork that is five feet tall might have a close-up that shows about 12”.

The camera “sees” all details as being equal.

In contrast, human vision establishes a hierarchy in what it sees, often assigning greater visual weight to a focal point in the work. The camera does no such thing. Consequently, flaws, shoddy craftsmanship and unintended imperfections are depicted with the same visual weight as everything else. This, of course, is distracting and will immediately turn off a knowledgeable juror, critic or curator.

Details must be crisp, clean and in focus.

Close-ups of small objects or jewelry are especially difficult and present many problems for the photographer. General-purpose camera lenses usually do not have a focal range for close-up (macro) photography. Some cameras may be able to use macro lenses or extension tubes (a less expensive alternative), but if your camera will not focus on your detail, do not take the picture. A bad detail can become more of a hindrance than an advantage. Your chances of being chosen are greatly diminished by including a bad close-up. (Read [**Guide to Professional Quality Images in the Professional Guidelines.**](#))



Creating a close-up image with Photoshop from your large view digital image is possible, but may not produce the best close-up.

Framing the shot and lighting the artwork is extremely important. The staging required to produce a quality image for a full view shot can be quite different than for a detail shot. Trying to adapt one shot to serve two purposes most often yields poor results. In addition, when you Photoshop the image you don't want to reduce the size of the file (if you are intending to use the digital image for printing in books and magazines). If you are zooming in on a small portion of your digital image, make sure that you do not reduce the pixel resolution of the image. (Read the document [Working with Digital Images Effectively](#) in the [Professional Guidelines](#).)

TIP # 3. DO NOT SEND A BAD IMAGE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.



Know that one bad image may ruin all the others.

It is exactly like the saying, "One bad apple can ruin the whole barrel". Never, under any circumstances should you send a bad image.

What is a bad image?

A bad image might fall under one of the following categories:

- **An image that is out of focus.** The focal point of your image should be about 1/3 from the bottom of the image.
- **An image that is incorrectly exposed:** either over-exposed, or under-exposed.
- An image with strongly distracting shadows or blinding highlights.
- **An image using a live model that distracts from the work.** Avoid using live models unless the resulting image comes across as professional, and somehow illustrates some crucial aspect of the work. (Read [Guide to Professional Quality Images, Section IV page 4](#) for more information about using live models.)
- A sample [Model Release Contract](#) is included as a separate document in the [Professional Guidelines](#).)
- **An image with any apparent photographic or physical flaws, even if this is the only photo documentation of your work.** The film emulsion of a slide should not have been disturbed, fingerprinted, dusty or moldy - before it was scanned into a digital image. These slight imperfections show up when the image is projected as a digital image.
- If your slide was scanned to be converted to a digital file, make sure the image is "Photoshop-ed", unless otherwise specified, to optimize the image color and remove dust and imperfections from the slide emulsion.

Never send a flawed image; you will be wasting your money on jury fees and wasting your time filling out the application.



If you are still sending slides, do not send a slide if the mount is warped, cracked, or damaged.



If the mount prevents the slide from dropping into the slide projector or causes the slide projector to jam, this makes your slide problematic to show. Slide mounts should be in perfect condition. Plastic mounts are preferable to cardboard. If necessary, remove the slide film, remount it in a new slide mount and re-label the mount

Do not send gigantic digital files for PowerPoint presentation or quick image review.

- Follow recommendations for the size of digital files requested.
- Very large digital files are perfect for printed images, but can take too long to load for a quick image review or PowerPoint presentations.
- Images for PowerPoint presentations should be 72 dpi to 200dpi.
- Huge files can cause computer malfunction during Power Point presentations or simply take too long for the computer to load and test the patience of the viewer.
- Look at the properties of each file.
- Small image files are in KB. Larger files will be described in MB.

Jurors, curators or gallery owners can only judge what they see. They may reasonably assume that the *quality of the photographic documentation* of your work is representative of the quality of your work. While this assumption may not be true, visual images play such an important role in the jurying process that their quality and appearance sends a powerful message. If you don't care enough to document your work professionally or to submit a top quality image, then the jurors may assume that you don't care enough about the juried opportunity itself or, at the very least, your poor documentation reflects a less than professional approach to what you make. If the images do not meet a professional level, it may be a logical assumption that you, the artist, are not a professional.

If the images do not capture the *character of the work*, don't send them.



It is unlikely that you will be chosen in a competitive situation with anemic images. Save your time and money and invest in better quality images in preparation for the next call for entries.

It is better to send fewer top quality images than to fill in with substandard visuals - unless it is a requirement to send a fixed number of images. If you're not required to send three images, send two good images of one piece rather than risk rejection by adding a third image.

Be bold and confident: select your best work and best images.

Do not send images of less impressive work or a less impressive image of a great piece. When it comes time for the jury to winnow down the number of pieces to be accepted, the person with the "mixed bag" of work may be eliminated - based on the body of work submitted.



TIP # 4. CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE ARRANGEMENT OR ORDER OF THE IMAGES CHOSEN.



A good prospectus will tell you how the digital images will be projected during the jury review (e.g., “all five images will be shown straight across at the same time,” or “three images will be shown at one time”). If the prospectus does not offer this information, contact the organization sponsoring the show, exhibition, fair, etc. and find out how the image review will be organized.

Your images should read like a sentence conveying a clear sense of focus.

This means that although the work or views are different in each image, there is a clear and unmistakable thread running through them. This is not the time to demonstrate your virtuosity with a variety of techniques or media.

The jurors want to see maturity and consistency in a solidly organized presentation.

Experienced jurors express a strong opinion that submitted images “**should speak with a single voice**” and reinforce an artist’s **identity, style and strength**. What may seem to you to be a demonstration of your versatility may look to the jurors like a “hodgepodge,” lacking a unifying voice.

The careful and considered arrangement of your images within that “sentence” creates a powerful presentation.

Once you have selected images that are consistent and related, it’s best to consider how that group will look projected together as a composition - think about how the eye of the juror(s) will travel around the group:

- Does the first image have a strong initial impact, giving a terrific first impression, and does the final image close the sequence nicely? Are the intervening images linked well by their sequence and position? How about the visual balance of vertical vs. horizontal shots?
- Organize your images to make a flowing and dynamic presentation with each image leading toward the next image using color or position to circulate the eye.
- Use the first image on the LEFT and the last image on the RIGHT as a framing device for the images in the center. An ideal example would be if the outside images turned (or pointed) toward the center.
- If the images are to be shown as multiple images in a single row, place a dynamic image in the center of the row, so it can serve as a focal point for the group.

Review your image selection.

Ask other artists, friends or family to look over your image selection and review your application. As impartial observers they may have a better perspective than the artist. At least, they will come to this with a fresh eye. Ask them for an honest opinion. As an impartial, but supportive “practice jury”, they might be able to tell you which images are the most effective, and see mistakes or confusing information in your written application.



Ask your “practice jury”:

- Can they tell you which images offer the most information?
- Do they think that the arrangement makes sense?
- Is this an appropriate selection of work for this particular show?
- Do these photographic images represent your best work?



If all the images are going to be shown at the same time it is best if they all have a similar background, lighting and color. This offers the most cohesive and least distracting presentation. Details or close-up images should be next to the full view (on the right) of the same piece to avoid confusion.

If possible, enter your most current work.

Chronological order of the work by date is rarely a consideration for juries, but check the rules or prospectus just to be sure. Juries prefer to see new work, pieces that they have not already seen. In the same vein, submit images of your work that demonstrate a clear artistic voice or identity.

Look at your work (and images) objectively: Never send an image of a piece that may be confused with the work of another - perhaps well-known - artist.

Limit the number of items in each image.

Unless the work is conceived as a group, one object per photographic image is a safe decision. This suggestion is true for all media. Multiple items in each image offer too much information to the jury and may make your submission look cluttered.

Show some range in your work.

In jewelry, for example, try to include a necklace, one pair of earrings, brooch, and a ring with one item per image. If you work in ceramics, a variety of plates, bowls and one teapot might be another example. This shows versatility in your line - as long as all of the items demonstrate a consistent “voice”.

Avoid fancy colored backgrounds, multi-colored or decorative frames, and multi-layered images.



If you are submitting both color photographs and black and white photographs for a juried or wholesale/retail show, they should be arranged, methodically, in groups. This also applies to digital prints.

Do you need to include an image of your booth?

Try to include an interesting shot that gives the jurors a clear idea of your booth design and merchandise. It is best to include this as your last image on the right.

(See **TIP #10** for more information on this topic.)



TIP #5. AVOID AMBIGUITY IN YOUR IMAGES, DESCRIPTIONS AND APPLICATION.



Be as straightforward as you can in all matters of application.

Perhaps the biggest liability that an applicant can incur is leaving the jury confused or uninformed, scratching their heads and wondering about the function or role of an object, its scale, the specific nature of its surface, what it's made of, etc.

Materials should be clear - descriptions regarding functionality, or the type of piece should be understandable without question.

Once again, a jury may have many, perhaps hundreds, even thousands of images to consider. Weak visuals, confusing details, incomplete descriptions and paperwork, and indecipherable handwriting can leave a juror frustrated, and can lead to rejection.

Expecting jurors to have the time to puzzle out anything about an entry is courting disaster. For example, the term, "Mixed Media" may be fine for a museum label when you are looking at the actual work, but it would be inadequate to describe work in a photographic image. Keep in mind that the jurors are making their best effort to interpret a projected photographic image in a very limited time with only the information provided. Information is key to their understanding. A clear and detailed description helps the juror understand the true nature of your work.

Be as specific as possible.

For example, "newspaper, magazines, eggshells, beads, horsehair, polymer medium and enamel" are much more informative terms than "mixed media". Never resort to "Mixed Media" as a catch-all material description. It is of no help whatsoever to a juror. If the juror is on the fence about accepting an entry, more descriptive written information may help them make a decision in your favor.



Always state materials, dimensions, type of object and processes in the image description and in the application neatly and legibly in black ink. If a jury needs to refer to any paperwork, it should be easily read in the dim light of the jurying room.

TIP #6. CONSIDER YOUR ENTRY THOUGHTFULLY AND STRATEGICALLY.



Read the application/prospectus thoroughly and determine how your work can best match the stated premise or expectation of the juried exhibition, craft show, book or magazine. Know your audience and speak consistently to it from images to application.

Is the venue appropriate to your work? A venue that has only displayed wall-hung paintings and prints may not be prepared to display jewelry or objects. An exhibition site expecting work that will be displayed outside may not even have indoor exhibition space protected from the elements, sun, rain or dust. Research what type of work they are prepared to handle and display.

Does your work fit within the theme?

Production work conceived and designed to be worn at the office may not be the best choice to submit to a conceptually edgy or provocative exhibition. Conversely, one-of-a-kind pieces featuring controversial or political subject matter may not be suitable for submission to a church-based craft fair. A book theme focused on 500 Images to define one topic may be seeking a full spectrum from the exquisite, minimalist definition to the most outrageous or baroque, but this may not be the place to submit work that is not clearly distinguishable from the mass produced and marketed pieces that fill the pages of glossy magazines.

Give some practical thought to the reputation of the sponsors, the location of the event, the cost of participation and shipping/insurance.



- Ask your colleagues about the professional level of a juried craft show.
- Is a particular exhibition or craft show considered to be in some way prestigious and a solid addition to your resume?
- Is this exhibition an annual event that draws an informed audience?
- Will the event be widely promoted, perhaps with visuals (yours?) in print?
- Has it/will it be reviewed?
- Are the entry fees in line with similar venues? Can you afford it?
- Will there be an accompanying catalogue?

Consider the background of each of the jurors.

Being acquainted with the interests or background of a particular juror may lead an artist or craftsman to select specific work to submit - or perhaps decide not to submit at all. There is a good possibility that a juror was chosen specifically because of their particular professional aesthetic or expertise. The juror's known aesthetic or curatorial reputation may have actually influenced the premise or subject of the exhibition, book or magazine. This is not to suggest that artists should in any way cater to jurors' likes and dislikes. But as they say, being forewarned is being forearmed.

On the other hand, emerging artists should apply widely.

While this may seem contradictory to the previous paragraph, it is important for those artists who are trying to establish a place and voice for themselves in the field to seize every opportunity they can. While it may be worthwhile for established artists and craftspeople to target their choice of juried venues based on experience, emerging artists are seeking to gain that experience.

If you spend too much time trying to figure out which juror or venue is a good fit, you may never enter anything!

Some say that if you feel bad when you are rejected from a juried competition, then you're simply not entering enough of them. Calluses only develop in response to irritation. Save your rejection letters in a file folder (at the very back of your filing system) to prove to the I.R.S. that you are making a good faith effort to develop your art/craft business. Go back to your studio and keep working.



Questions?

Read the application/prospectus over and over before calling and asking questions of the exhibition sponsors. If you have read the entire application and still have questions about these topics, call the sponsors with your questions.



Consider whether your work can be shown to its best advantage in the planned venue. If the strength of a piece relies on function, will it be evident within a display case? Is the piece strong enough visually to exist without some indication of its function? Not every piece can be shown successfully in every situation.

Modify your artist statement to address the theme of the exhibition, craft show, book or magazine. Do not send a generic artist statement that describes your entire body of work. Be specific about the work submitted and make it relevant to the opportunity and the audience.

TIP # 7. FILL OUT THE APPLICATION NEATLY AND COMPLETELY.



The appearance of your application should reflect the same care and attention you have put into your work.

If you can, **scan** the prospectus into your computer and type in your information. Another possibility is to print out the various elements of your answers and glue the paper to the prospectus. You can then photocopy the “pasted up” application and send the neat photocopy. Following the directions is very important, otherwise you may risk your application being rejected on technicalities.

Use black or blue pen. If printing from a computer, print in black.

Your goal should be to fill out the application form as neatly and clearly as possible. Do not use purple, pink, gold, or any other unusual colors. Odd colors may be very difficult or impossible to read on your application in the dim light of the digital viewing room. If the situation is very competitive, the personnel may be unsympathetic to an indecipherable form or to bad handwriting.

Media, techniques, and/or materials need to be as specific as possible. No “tech” talk. If the application/prospectus asks for media, techniques, and/or materials, as separate questions, make every effort to be clear, detailed and concise as possible even if this seems obvious or redundant to you. (Think “sound bites” or presentation bullets.) Do not write “same” or be dismissive of the sponsor’s efforts to offer the jurors information that can help them fairly evaluate your photographic images.

Write the entire description neatly in the space provided.

If you cannot fit all the information into the allotted space consider using your computer with a smaller typeface, print out the description, cut and glue this description to your entry form, as mentioned earlier. Another possibility is to write a succinct, abbreviated version on the application and staple a more complete, neatly typed description to your entry form. Make sure that you include your name, the title of the piece, and entry number as appropriate on every piece of paper submitted.



Do not alter the form or add information unless you know this is acceptable.

A juried show is different than a curated or invitational show. The organizers opening the envelopes are not choosing your work, and there isn't time during the jury to go over the resumes of 200 to 300 people. Sending statements, resumes, cards, etc. that have not been requested just adds more paper for the organizers to discard.

Supplementary information (if you decide that this is acceptable) should always be labeled with your complete name and the title of the artwork along with the image file name or number. Do this just in case it is separated from your application/prospectus.

Send a SASE (Self Addressed Stamped Envelope) large enough and with adequate postage for returning all your materials, if you want them returned.

Clearly address the return envelope. Consider putting all your materials (application/prospectus, entry fee, etc.) inside the *unsealed* SASE return envelope. Place the return envelope inside a larger envelope for mailing to the exhibition sponsor. When your materials arrive, the exterior mailing envelope can be discarded and everything is still enclosed in the clean and neat return envelope.



Do NOT use excessive tape to seal the envelope containing your CD and other information. Excessive tape makes opening each entry more time consuming and could result in damaging the contents when the tape is cut. Restrict your tape to the flap.

Make a copy of your entry form (both sides) so you can remember what images you sent. You think you will remember when you fill out the form, but several months later, your memory may not be reliable. Also make sure you have kept or copied the shipping information, show dates, rules, etc from the prospectus so you're prepared when your work is accepted. Don't rely on the organizers to answer questions about information provided on the entry form. Imagine how you'd feel getting 100 phone calls asking about which piece to send.

Your submission must be complete, neat and well-packaged, so that nothing gets separated or lost. Remember that the jury review process is very complicated for the organizers who must sort and process all the applications. Late or partial packages can vanish, or get mislaid.

This is no time to be sloppy. A neat and clearly completed form assures that your information is properly conveyed. Your materials should always reflect the same care and attention you put into your work.



TIP #8. ALWAYS LABEL YOUR IMAGES



An unlabeled CD may become useless without the artist's name. It may not be shown, it may not be returned. It might be thrown away.

Always label your images EXACTLY according to the instructions specified in the prospectus. Follow the instructions for labeling your digital images.

Some programmers prefer all lower case letters or an application might specify an entry number as the file name. Use only periods(.) or underscore(_).

Google search engine now prefers dashes (-) between words for improved SEO.

For more information about this, watch this presentation:

[Image File Names for Better Search Engine Optimization](#)

ASK Harriete also has a post titled:

["How to "name" your digital image files for distribution."](#)

If not specified differently, digital Images should be titled with last name, first initial and a short description. If all your images start with the same letters, they will automatically organize themselves as a group every time they are loaded or reloaded on a computer or disc. For example:

BermanHredbrace.jpg

BermanHbluebrace.jpg

BermanHbluebr.close.jpg

BermanHblue_br.jpg

Avoid sticking labels on your C.D.

Labels can jam, get stuck, or throw the disc off balance. Write with a Sharpie in the clear center of your disc, or use one of those special pens for writing on CDs.

Send digital images on a CD along with a CONTACT SHEET.

(See a sample contact sheet in **Appendix I** at the end of this document.)

Also see [Professional Guidelines: Working with Digital Images Effectively.](#)

Label your images following the prospectus instructions.

How to make a Contact Sheet:

OPEN Photoshop, **CLICK: File** (drop down menu will appear), **CLICK: Automate** (from drop down menu) **CLICK: Contact Sheet** (from drop down menu), **Browse** to select images. Decide on the **number of images per page, row and column**. Add text for images if you want (optional). Print on photographic paper for the best quality images.

If your object moves or changes in some way make sure this information is clear.

Movement is very hard to depict in a static image. Do your best to describe this in your text description. Or consider submitting video if permissible.

Slides image labeling information - see appendix 4 on page 19.

TIP #9. PLAN CAREFULLY TO MEET ALL DEADLINES.

Be sure to read and understand all deadline information.

Check that you understand whether the deadline refers to receipt of applications or instead to the postmarked date by which applications must be mailed.

Put the deadline on your calendar and make certain that you can meet all the requirements before the due date.

Adopt the motto "Under commit and over perform."



Prepare your application at least several days in advance so that you can review it multiple times before mailing it. If you are up against the deadline trying to finish your piece, and are short on time, practice filling out the form during one of your breaks so that you will have enough time to evaluate and re-evaluate the information before the work is finished. (Read **TIP #5** for hints about filling out the application form.)

Allowing your subconscious to work on your application while you continue to work on the piece is a smart use of time. In addition, preparing your application a few days in advance allows time for problems with the photo lab, your printer or computer snafu's. These troubles should be "bumps in the road," not obstacles to success.

Submit your images and application early. If the exhibition sponsor has been organizing the images as they arrive in an effort to keep the images submitted neat and organized, the early submissions will be closer to the beginning and last minute arrivals will be at the end. What this means is that the jurors will be "fresh" when they begin the review process. They may be looking at early arrivals first and be more open to the work shown. After a few hours and a few hundred images, the jurors will have seen a tremendous amount of work including a lot of very good choices suitable for the situation. Having your images at the beginning of the jury review process means they might even remember your work. For this reason, if at all possible, avoid sending in your prospectus and images at the last minute right before the deadline.

TIP #10. BOOTH IMAGES NEED TO BE FANTASTIC!

This is a relevant issue only in the case of wholesale/retail craft shows where the artist is exhibiting work in a "booth" of their own design. However, the required image of your booth may make all the difference between whether "you're in" or "you're out."



Booth shots may or may not be shown with the work. But sometimes the booth shot is used as a "tie-breaker" to help the jury decide between work of equal merit. So "WOW!" them with your booth shot!

Make sure your booth shot duplicates the environment for the wholesale/retail show. If the juried show is held inside a large convention center, do not include grass and trees in the booth shot.

Booth shots should come in closer. Though instructions for booth shots generally suggest that the entire booth be visible in the image, it is better to come in closer (editing a little of the front edges) to have a good inside view of your booth. Never include the clutter outside your booth. The tree, the fire hydrant and the sidewalk can all distract from a great image.

Take the booth photo at an angle.

Focusing a little more on an inside back corner as this will create a more interesting image incorporating angles. The angles themselves make a more dynamic image as compared to a straight on shot.

The booth image should range from the floor to the ceiling of your booth.

Avoid including any signage with your name (or company name) since the jury is supposed to be anonymous.

Try to include the same work in your booth shot that you are submitting to the jury for review.

This connection between the work submitted to the jury and the work in your booth is very helpful in creating a cohesive presentation and an artist's identity for the jurors. Jewelry may be too small to be visible in a booth shot, however, if you have a large photo of your work at the back of your booth, this is smart to include in the booth shot.

Appendix I

Sample Contact Sheet (to accompany disc of digital images).

	Entry 1a File: Berman3Identity.jpg Title: 3 Identity Bracelets 2007 Materials: All made from recycled tin from post consumer steel cans, 10k gold rivets, brass rivets Dimensions: .5 cm to 1.3 cm thick x 13 to 15.3 cm diameter
	Entry 1b File: Berman3IdentityClose.jpg Title: 3 Identity Bracelets 2007 (close up view) Materials: All made from recycled tin from post consumer steel cans, 10k gold rivets, brass rivets Dimensions: .5 cm to 1.3 cm thick x 13 to 15.3 cm diameter
	Entry 2a File: Berman4Identity.jpg Title: 4 Identity Bracelets 2007 Materials: All made from recycled tin from post consumer steel cans, 10k gold rivets, brass rivets Dimensions: .5 cm to 1.3 cm thick x 12.5 to 15.3 cm diameter
	Entry 2b File: Berman4IdentityClose.jpg Title: 4 Identity Bracelets 2007 (close up view) Materials: All made from recycled tin from post consumer steel cans, 10k gold rivets, brass rivets Dimensions: .5 cm to 1.3 cm thick x 12.5 to 15.3 cm diameter

Appendix II

Where can artists learn about juried exhibitions, craft shows, books or magazines to submit their work?

Artists and craftspeople are often searching for opportunities to show case their work. This is a very important issue for emerging artists. Below are a number of steps you can take to find juried opportunities.



- A. **Go to your local bookstores and library.** Look in the back of every arts and crafts magazine. There is usually a classified listing in the back for upcoming juried shows organized by region, state and national categories.
- B. **Buy a subscription to the magazines that are most aligned with your work** so you will not miss an opportunity. Read the classified listing for shows as soon as you get your magazine. Do not wait; you may miss a deadline.
- C. **Go to museum bookstores and do research.** Look at the cards, calendars, magazines and books. Do you see where your work would be appropriate? Write down the addresses, contact the publishers. Find out if they take artist submissions.
- D. **Become a member of your local, state, regional and national groups** specific to your field, e.g.: SNAG, Rhode Island Council on the Arts, Bay Area Metal Arts Guild, Midwest Metalsmith's Society, Woodworkers Association, NCECA, etc.... Many of these associations have newsletters or email announcement that are only sent to members. Comb through this information, line by line, page by page for clues.
- E. **Volunteer at your local arts center, museum or with an arts /crafts organization.** Get to know the members, make a contribution. You will learn a lot, foster professional relationships, and create opportunities.
- F. **Start a local arts group to generate your own juried shows.**
- G. **Look on the Internet for art organizations that list upcoming juried shows and opportunities.**
- H. **Join on-line organizations** that will send you emails for upcoming juried opportunities - and grants as well. Facebook, Flickr, Crafthaus and other 2.0 sites all have groups you can join. Also check out blogs and join on-line groups.
- I. **Take a positive and adventurous attitude to entering juried shows.**
A member of the Professional Guidelines offers this: "If you are fishing, chances get dramatically better when throwing out a wider net." The more you enter, the better the chances of your success. Do not be dismayed by a rejection, it only means that you are trying something challenging and you should take it as a pat on the back that you are discovering new territory. It means you are taking risks. Be brave! Cocky! If you find that you are feeling dismayed that you were rejected by something, it means you are not entering enough and have placed too much importance on one application.

It should be standard fare during your business week to enter calls and competitions - it will hone your application skills will improve your entry-savvy.

J. Save all documentation of your research and rejections.

The I.R.S. will see your hard work as legitimate effort to generate income.

K. Most importantly, you need to set aside a specific amount of time each week to look for opportunities. No excuses.

Appendix III

A word about publicity

Send press materials as soon as you have found out that you're in the show.

Do this even if they didn't ask for it. If a quote from an artist's statement or an image is needed for publicity, yours may well be the one that is used if it is at hand.

Your **press packet** should include the following:

1. **An additional set of images** of work accepted, and/or a
2. **C.D. with digital images** both large TIF and smaller JPG (and items #3-6 listed below)
3. **Image description** (See Appendix I)
4. **Artist statement** (send both a printed copy and digital versions)
 - a. Written specifically for *this work* in the show
 - b. Tailor the Artist Statement for the *audience* of this particular show
5. **Resume** (send both a printed copy and digital versions)
 - a. **Remove your address** if this show will be held at a gallery
 - b. **One page** – updated with recent and relevant information
 - c. **Past articles or reviews** of similar work might give the sponsors text for their press release or ideas for developing a "human interest" type story
6. Sending this information as **attachments with an introductory email** is also a good idea.



Appendix IV

Slides Image labeling information:



Slide mounts should look neat, conforming to the prospectus instructions.

The slide film can be removed from your slide mount and inserted into a new slide mount for new labeling according to the instructions. Fine point Sharpie works the best on plastic mounts.

If the instructions do not require your name on the front (for example, some shows use a number system) try to put your name in some other area that does not require information (like on the back.)

Information to appear on your slide label may include:

TITLE of the artwork

DATE of artwork

DIMENSIONS: height, width, depth

MATERIALS/MEDIA (example: Type of print, acrylic, wood with decoupage... Sometimes "media" simply means your craft - jewelry, ceramics, etc. Better check to make sure you know how much information they want. Avoid using the term mixed media - specific information regarding materials can make all the difference.

TYPE of OBJECT (example: bowl, teapot, plate, box). Even if it is simply a non-functional object, that fact needs to be recorded.

An UP arrow indicating which direction is up

NUMBER of the image entry, corresponding to the entry form if appropriate

PHOTO CREDIT (this could be on the back)

Artist's ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL or WEB ADDRESS (this could be on the back)

Mark your slides or transparencies as 'original' or 'dupe.' Your original slides are irreplaceable! Send out only duplicates and retain the originals in a binder or slide file clearly marked as such. Put these in a safe or safe place such as a safe deposit box. Only upon request for publication use should you send out your original slides. They are important documentation of your work, even when the work has sold or no longer exists. A back up plan might be to store one complete set of original slides with a friend or family member.

Adhesive labels need to be very securely attached or avoided completely.

They can come loose or snag when taking the slides in and out of the slide sheets. Sometimes they fall off or the glue deteriorates from the heat of the projector. Slide labels should not extend past the edge of the slide mount. A slide that "sticks" in the slide carousel and won't drop into the slide projector during jurying may be excluded. Avoid "stacking multiple labels" one on top another on slides, it makes the label too thick and increases the likelihood that the labels will come off and jam the carousel.

If you are sending slides, send them in a full-page slide sheet, if possible.

It is not recommended that you use the cheap throwaway kind of perforated slide sheets. The slides fall out too easily. Use a whole *archival* slide sheet or a good-sized portion of one. Cut your business card to fit into one of the empty slide pockets, then your sleeve is easily identified as belonging to you and your contact information is easily accessible. Another idea is to use a sticker label (clear or opaque white) on one edge of your slide sheet. The clear slide labels with your name, address, phone number and website can look very neat and tidy.

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