

Tips for Photographing Your Artwork



It might appear as though it is relatively easy for any artist to photograph his or her own artwork. However, if you don't have the photography and image editing skills, you may be putting yourself at a disadvantage when you submit artwork that has been poorly photographed to an art competition. There are many professional photographers who can offer their expertise in capturing your images in the best way possible. You may consider hiring a professional to photograph your art; but, if you wish to do the work yourself, make sure to read the following tips offered to you by the Bath House Cultural Center:

1. CAMERAS vs. MOBILE DEVICES

Although many modern smartphones and tablets are equipped with advanced cameras, we discourage artists from using this type of device to photograph their entries. Most digital cameras will take high-quality images if you use their maximum settings. Refer to your camera manual to learn how to select the largest file size and the finest picture quality possible. Submitting high-resolution images will ensure that the colors and details of your work will be viewed and reproduced well.

2. LIGHTING

Artificial Lighting: Choose a room where you can shine the light evenly on the artwork surface. Good lighting will produce colors and textures that are accurate. If you are using artificial light, set one light on each side of the artwork. The height of the bulbs should be the same as the height of the center of the art. The distance of the bulbs from the work of art should be the same on both sides. You must adjust the distance and angle of the bulbs depending on the artwork. It is not advisable to use on-camera flashes because they generally produce uneven results.

Natural Lighting: Photograph your art outdoors when it is cloudy or with an overcast sky.

This type of natural indirect light will produce excellent results.

3. CAMERA SUPPORT AND ANGLE

For better results, use a tripod to hold the camera steadily. Set your artwork up so that you can take the picture from its centermost point. Your photographs will show signs of distortion if your camera is placed at an angle that is higher or lower than the center of the artwork.

4. BACKGROUNDS

Make sure that you use a background with a solid color that contrasts well with your art. Remove the art from its frame (if applicable) before you photograph it. Make sure not to include anything distracting in the background of your images. Your artwork should be the only thing included in the picture. Foreign objects appearing in the background make the evaluation of a work of art difficult.

5. PHOTOGRAPHING 3D ART

Photograph your 3D art by capturing the most interesting angles of the piece. Adjust the light as you move around or rotate the artwork. Most competitions will accept multiple photographs of 3D art that show a variety of views.

This document provides very basic tips to help you photograph your work. It is not intended to be a comprehensive photography guide to achieve professional-quality results. If you are interested in learning more techniques for photographing your artwork, make sure to refer to the many in-depth articles that are readily available for free on the Internet that are written by expert photographers.