

Approaching galleries – Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- **Get to know the gallery** you are applying to. Go to some openings. Get a feel for the space and the work they show. What sells? How much for? Are they a good fit for you?
- **Send good photographs** of your work. Show your work in the best possible way.
- **Send recent images** of the work that you plan to include in your show.
- **Be friendly and professional** in your correspondence and communicate well. Every email will tell the gallery something about you. Textspeak is not cool!
- **Approach the gallery through the proper channel.** Request a form and respect the systems in place.
- **Join as a member** and enter some Member's exhibitions (applicable to community galleries) before you apply for your own.
- **Support other artists** and get yourself known. When it's your turn you'll feel, the love reciprocated.
- **Be ready** - When applying for your own exhibition it's essential you're confident and happy with the body of work you've produced.
- **Be open to ideas and flexible.** The gallery may have suggestions - you don't have to like them but you should listen.
- **Consider the work carefully** – The work you exhibit should be your best work not everything you make.
- **Make it more of an event** – alongside the exhibition hold a talk, demo, or find a cause?
- **Consider the presentation of your work.** One of the most important aspects in selling work is how it is presented. There are many options so look at lots of other work in galleries. Bad frames can make a good picture worse!
- **Consider your motivation for exhibiting.** Ask yourself - what do you want?
- **Have an online presence.** Galleries will check your profile. You don't need thousands of followers but if you are invisible on the internet you're less likely to have people at your opening. Sad but true!
- **Pricing - get real!** Hourly rate x time spent painting **doesn't** = price for art work
- Read: <https://www.jacksonsart.com/blog/2015/07/29/art-competition-selection-criteria/>

DON'T:

- Assume that never having exhibited before is a bad thing. Galleries love 'discovering' new talent.
- Apply to every gallery at the same time. It's a bit like trying to arrange multiple dates.
- **Be too needy.** Gallery staff are busy. They're not your mentor or your mum.
- **Be pushy or put people on the spot.**
- **Apply for an exhibition until you are part of the way to completion.** You don't want to feel too pressured so be realistic with the timeframe you suggest.
- **Send bad images of your work** (did I say that already?) E.G. Images shouldn't include your feet.
- **Be too disappointed if you're rejected.** There may be many other factors in a galleries decision. But perhaps consider if you did all of the Do's above.