How to Photograph your Work

A guide on how to photograph your work so it looks the best it can be in the judging process.

Why do I need to photograph my work?

Photographs of your work are what the judges use to decide if your work should be put through to the exhibition. We cannot view each artwork in person, so we use photographs instead. Therefore, it is important that you provide us with the best possible image of your work, so it can be judged fairly and accurately. It is difficult to understand what an artwork looks like if it is blurry, has reflections or shadows in the photograph of it.

For 2D artwork, for example, a painting or drawing, you should submit one image.

For 3D artworks, such as sculptures or ceramics, two images of different views of the work should be submitted.

What sort of camera do I need?

You need a camera that you can hold steady and one which can cope with different lighting conditions. You can use your mobile phone. You do not need a large, expensive camera.

What do I need to think about before taking a photograph?

Consider the lighting of your location. Strong indoor lights have a yellow cast and can alter the colours of your work. Try to photograph in daylight, preferably an overcast day. This provides an even light, which is not too strong and does not alter the colours in your work too much.

Also, try to keep the camera as stable as possible. The best way to do this is to get a stabilising structure, like a tripod.

What size should my image be?

To ensure sufficient quality, your digital image needs to be a minimum of 1000 pixels and a maximum of 3000 pixels along the longest edge (with a maximum file size 5MB). A full-sized image taken with your mobile phone will usually produce an image large enough.

Avoid sending an image(s) from a messaging app folder, e.g., from WhatsApp, Telegram, Discord, Instagram etc. These apps compress images resulting in images of poor quality when enlarged. If sending images from a mobile phone, ensure that your phone settings are set to send an image as a full-size file. Some mobiles are pre-set to automatically compress images when sending them.

How do I photograph my work?

Here are few tips on how to get the best image. These tips are useful for 2D and 3D work:

- ✓ Hold the camera parallel to the artwork. This avoids distortion.

- ✓ Do not hold the camera too close, this can cause the image to bow. Hold the camera at a distance then zoom in slightly if you need too.

- ✓ Avoid reflections as they distort the image.

- ✓ Make sure the camera is focussed on the artwork. If the image is not in focus, it produces a blurry image. This makes it difficult to judge the artwork at the selection process. On a mobile phone, you can accurately focus on the artwork by touching the corresponding work in the screen before taking the photograph.

- ✓ Try to get the whole artwork in the picture frame, plus a little bit of space around the edges. If needed, the image can be cropped after taking the photo.

Do I need to edit the image before sending it?

You may wish to crop the image. If you crop the image there are two choices:
- o It can be cropped to include some of the background. This looks best if the background is plain.

- o Or the image can be cropped to fill the screen, completely removing the background. This is best done in the camera than as an edit afterwards. This is best if the background is distracting.

Avoid editing the colours of the image too much as it can wrongly represent your artwork.

Do not add watermarks or copyright on the work. This obscures the image.

Image File Name

Before uploading the image(s) to your application, you need to rename the file so it is in the following format: the jpeg/jpg filename must begin with the initials of the artist in capitals, underscore and then the title of the work in lower case.

E.g. Jacinda Smith's work *Trees in Winter* would have the filename **JS_treesinwinter.jpg**.

Image files sent from mobile phones must also be renamed.

Is there any more information?

If you would like more tips and advice, check out these short videos:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vpj28da03JQ
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKgWIzvm3Hs