

## Managing A Juried Art Show By John O. Cheney

You have been asked to run the technical aspects of a juried art show. You realize that this is an impressive job with lots of twists and turns even if everything goes the way it is supposed to go.

First of all you realize that you must use your computer, but what software? Basically you need a data base program. In the PC World two excellent choices are Microsoft Excel® and Microsoft Access®. There are choices in the other computer systems, but I am not familiar with them and will not comment except to say that the software you choose will considerably affect the speed and efficiency of your job. Also just choosing the data base program is not enough, you must be able to use it and understand what you are doing.

Briefly the process starts with entry intake. Then, you send the images to your juror for selection of the entries to make the show. This is followed by notifying the entrants which art pieces are to be delivered to the show. After that you should prepare the data for the intake team to accept the correct art. You may or may not be involved with the judging, but a list of the pieces and their artists are helpful. You also may be involved in making the show brochure. Finally the take down team needs to know which pieces go to which artist.

In scheduling this work, a few time considerations should be made. The prospectus of the show needs to state the following dates: Entry deadline, notification letter mailing date, display intake date, and show take down date. The key dates you should help define are the entry deadline date and the notification letter mailing date. As is common in these things, the dates are more or less setbacks from a later date. The notification letters need to be mailed about four weeks before the display intake date to allow the artist adequate time to prepare the art for display and shipping delays.

Setting the entry deadline is a little more complicated. You need to have enough time to prepare the juror selection package. (It is a human trait for entrants to wait until the last minute before they get the entries to you.) You must give the juror adequate time to make selections and send you their response. Finally preparing and packaging the notification letters takes at least a day or two. I like to allow a four weeks to a month for this process.

The first thing you and your computer must do is store in retrievable format the name, phone numbers, and addresses of your submitting artists. It must also be able to save the title, sizes, media, entry fees, and prices of each piece of art and a means of locating the image of the painting. Finally, there must be a way to trace the art from entry intake, to the juror, to the show intake, and the show take down. In addition, it is advisable to have a means of keeping notes for any problems pertaining to each entry.

Having selected your computer software, you also need to contact your juror and find out how that juror would like to receive the images and subsequently transmit which entries have been selected to be shown. Your data base software can help here to prepare a list for the juror to use to mark the selected entries.

I have found that a very good way to submit these entries to the juror is to put the electronic images on a Microsoft Power Point® (or equivalent) display and include individual image files and an index that allows the juror to display the individual piece. One juror took these individual files and sorted them in three file directories. As she looked at the image she decided if the art was one she definitely wanted, definitely did not want, or wasn't sure. She then re-reviewed the wasn't sure file and made choices until she had enough entries to meet the show requirements.

Once you have decided how you are going to send your images to the judge, it is time to start processing entries. It makes it a lot easier if you take each entry, log it in to your computer, review the entry for rules compliance, logging any discrepancy, and place the image in a file (if electronic), and/or converting it (if a slide and you are also taking electronic images).

When you have received all of your entries, use your software to build a check list for the juror. Package this list, your image files, and a juror instructions note, and transmit it to the juror. Normally all of these are put on a CD along with a slide box (if using only slides) and hard copies of the image list and juror instructions.

After the juror has made the choices, notifying the artists is the next major task. I found that having the computer program create these notification letters and include a print of the image of the successful entries is the best way to go. This not only tells the artist what entries are expected and takes away the chances for accidental substitution. I found that the data base program could generate a rather terse yes or no for each submittal and then on the back put congratulations and submittal instructions for those letters that had one or more successful entries. On those letters that had no successful entries, the letter encourages the artist to keep trying, especially next year.

The check-in sheet needs to list the artist, work, and the image of the wanted piece. This image reflects what the judge saw and liked. If the piece presented for display, doesn't look like the image, the show manager can refuse to accept the submittal. (This should help discourage those artists who might consider doctoring their image to improve their chances of making the show.) The check-in sheet should also include ways of contacting the artist in the event they are possible no shows at the entry desk. (Sometimes they have forgotten the date or misunderstood the time or place of entry.)

During the judging of the show, either the judge or the show manager (or both) needs a work sheet to note the prizes and possible disqualifications to help with the awards presentations.

The final major document is the checkout list. This list should include all submitted entries, save any removed due to purchase prizes or disqualifications.

Other features of your data base could provide is a way of listing the successful entries with the artist's name and price for the show brochure and another list that includes the artist names and the entry fees paid. Also a summary of the problem entries (including the nature of the problem and what, if any, resolution was made.)


One of the major points of this article is to show that there is considerable work here and that a good computer program can make much simpler. If you are doing this job, ask your techie to help you find and implement such a program.

Below are some of the computer outputs used by me in the Richardson (Texas) Civic Art Society's 2009 Regional Art Show. The data base software was Microsoft Access based. The shown forms and contents were created by this copyrighted software. Any art images used here are from art submitted to this show and copyrighted by the creating artist, Barbara Mussett, who graciously consented to its use in this article.

<b>Juror Work Sheet Serial Number Identity</b>				<b>Review</b>	<b>Accept</b>	<b>Deny</b>
Water Color						
<b>Artist</b>	20x27	13x20	<b>Id</b>	<b>W079</b>		
<b>Painting Name</b>	Spring Fireworks			___/	___/	___/
<b>Image File Id</b>	W079Spring Fireworks					

Sample Of Partial Juror Worksheet

In this version of the work sheet the artists names were suppressed as the show allowed artists to make multiple entries and the juror had the freedom to select any or all of them. Another version of the worksheet lists artists' names.

Dear Barbara Mussett	03-Feb-09
Thank you for entering the 2009 Regional Art Show.	
The results of the selection process are listed below.	
Sunflowers	Thank you but the entry was not accepted CD
Spring Fireworks	Accepted. Congratulations
Juicy Fruits 3	Thank you but the entry was not accepted CD
	

Sample Of Notification Letter

In this sample the artist submitted 3 images on a CD, but only one was accepted.

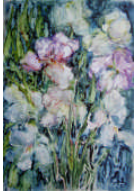
## 2009 Regional Art Show Entry Check In

Artist

**Barbara Mussett**

**Will Accept Purchase Award**

\_\_\_ **Entry Rcvd** Street Address, Some City, TX 75000



**Phone #** (nnn) nnn-nnnn

**Painting Name** Spring Fireworks

**Paint Value** \$ 350

Typical Check In List Entry

## Judge Work Sheet

**Artist** Barbara Mussett

**Ser No** W079

**Will Accept Purchase Award**

**Painting Name** Spring Fireworks

\_\_\_\_\_

Typical Juror Worksheet Entry

Barbara Mussett

Spring Fireworks \$ 350

Typical Show Brochure Data Entry

I wish you the best of luck with your show. The feeling after a successful show is one of euphoria, at least until next year.