



exhibition **guide**

for the student artist

An introduction on how to submit artwork and install your first exhibition by bridging the gap between what you know and what galleries expect.

The Union Galleries function as an integral part of the Arizona Student Unions. Since 1973 the galleries have served the community by exposing students and employees of the University of Arizona and off-campus visitors to original art by regional and national artists. The galleries heighten awareness of both current ongoing issues and creative processes, which encourages open dialogue and personal introspection.

Approximately 32,000 people visit the Union Galleries annually.

Works in a variety of media are shown including painting, sculpture, graphics, ceramics, fiber work, and new genre. Every year more than twenty exhibitions are scheduled.

The gallery spaces have the prime advantage of high exposure in one of the busiest buildings on campus. Each gallery hosts a variety of educational and enriching exhibitions. Both professional and student artists are encouraged to show their work in these spaces.

Past exhibits include alumni art invitationals, juried student art competitions, student and faculty

shows, and traveling and curated exhibitions.

The galleries within the Student Union Memorial Center provide traditional and alternative spaces to exhibit art.

Exhibitions are chosen by the Galleries Curator and the Exhibitions Committee. Work is selected based on aesthetics, creative process, media, and strength in addressing current issues. Proposals for exhibitions are accepted on an ongoing basis throughout the academic year.

questions & answers

- Now that I have a consistent body of work what do I do?
- How do I know if I am ready to exhibit?
- What do I need to submit to galleries?
- Where should I apply for a show?
- Should I pursue a group or solo exhibit?
- Do I submit to traditional, commercial, or alternative galleries?
- What if I get the show?
- How do I deal with contracts?
- Who installs the work? How?
- What happens when the exhibit opens?

Now that I have a consistent body of work what do I do?

Now that you have a body of work, it is time to decide if you are ready to exhibit it. The first step is to see if you have all that is required.

How do I know if I am ready to exhibit?

Pay attention to where your peers are exhibiting. Go see their shows and gauge how you feel about your development in comparison to what you are seeing. Most importantly, seek the advice and criticism of a faculty member with whom you have established a rapport. Schedule a time that you can bring your work to them or arrange a studio visit that allows ample time to evaluate the work and have a conversation about the work as a whole.

What do I need to submit to galleries?

If you decide to submit your work to galleries, you need to be prepared to present the work and yourself in a professional manner. Most galleries will only look at your work if you take the time to professionally package it and include all necessary materials—so they have a strong sense of the work.

To include in your submission:

- Ten to twenty 35mm professional quality slides (*see the diagram on how to label*) and a slide list
- A short biography highlighting your development as an artist
- An artist's statement that discusses the themes and intentions you address in your body or work
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- SASE—self addressed stamped envelope for the return of the slide

When labeling your slides, include an indication of which corner is the top right. This will assure the gallery is able to view the work as you intended. Include numbers on the slides and a slide list.



Biography—Keep your biography short and to the point. If the gallery is interested in a more in depth biography, they will likely inquire. Biographies written in the third person are ideal and easily edited.

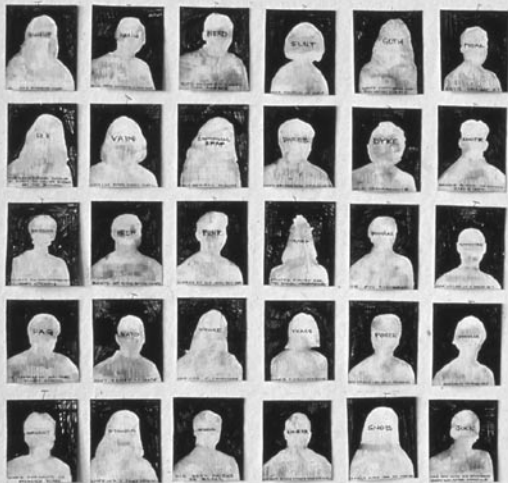
Artist's Statement—This statement is an important defining piece, so consider it in depth! This is where you need to know your work and determine how you want it presented to the public. Your intentions can be stated, but this is a personal decision you need to make. Some things you may address are: how was this work put together; what led you in this direction; and, why the work is significant generally, and to you as the artist?

Resume—Your resume serves as a supplement to the short biography. Focus on significant work experience, your educational background/experience, exhibitions (group or otherwise), and any highlights of your artistic development.

John Richey
Youth Label Culture 1999
Mixed media installation

Where should I apply?

Explore your options! Visit a variety of spaces. Look through local periodicals for calls to artists. What do the galleries you are interested in require to submit? If you don't have the required items, call or stop by the galleries to see if there are exceptions. Do not assume they will take incomplete submissions!



where to submit?

You will notice that group exhibits and many galleries focus on particular themes or issues. If your work fits their specifications, take advantage of the opportunity.

Should I pursue a group or solo exhibit?

Both. If you have a strong body of work and enough work to fill an entire exhibit, get it out there. If group opportunities arise they are worth the PR and connections.

Do I submit to traditional, commercial or alternative galleries?

Scout out galleries and spaces so that you have a sense of what

kind of work they typically show. If you are committed to showing your work and struggle to get a show, be creative. Seek out space that might not be considered traditional but has a lot of potential for appropriate audiences (coffeehouses, banks, public lounge spaces, etc.). Be proactive, be ready and most importantly, be professional.

What if I get the show?

BE READY! Do not misrepresent yourself or your work. If you don't have a significant number of worthwhile pieces you will be putting your reputation on the line. You will likely want to put some finishing touches on what you have

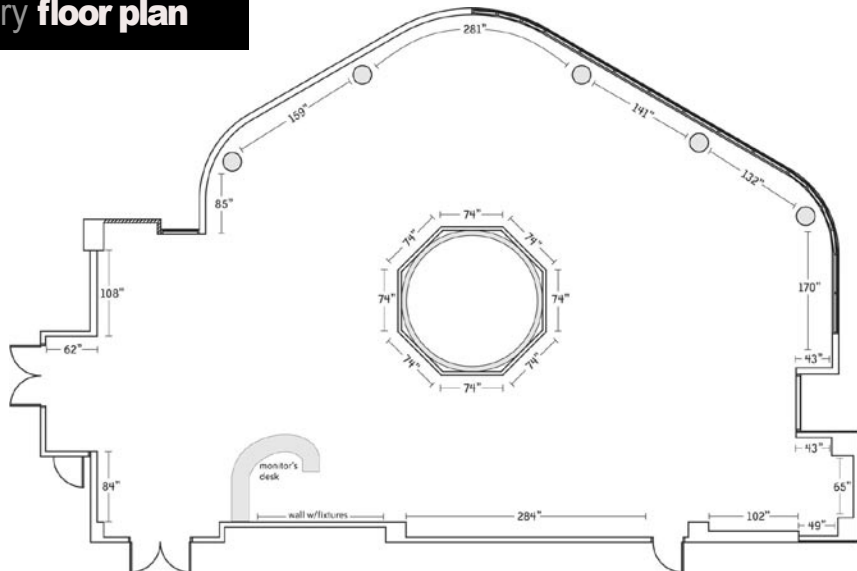
but the time line will dictate what you can do within reason. It could be anywhere from two months to a year before you exhibit. Keep track of what work you have, how you want to improve upon it and how long it will take to dry and/or frame. (Wet paintings don't go over well.) There will be lots of last minute details but when it comes to the artwork itself, curators often reserve the right to refuse any pieces, so keep the surprises to a minimum. Keep in mind that censorship issues plague most galleries. Have an honest dialogue with the curator about your images ahead of time because they reserve the right to refuse work for any reason!



Rachel Quinton
Untitled 1998
Monotype

Be considerate in returning any paperwork or contracts. Be conscientious of your responsibilities with PR and their deadlines because what you do will not only affect the curators mood, it will directly reflect in attendance and presentation. If PR is late, that may affect publication deadlines therefore alerting fewer potential viewers, buyers and dealers.

Union Gallery **floor plan**



How do I deal with contracts?

One of the most important things you can do is to carefully read and pay attention to the details in the contract. Be sure the dates on the contract will work with your schedule and ask questions if something on the contract differs from the original agreement.

Be sure any changes are initialed by both parties and all necessary signatures are obtained before the work is delivered. You can also provide the gallery with a written

description and photo of each piece to be included with the contract.

Be sure you receive a copy of the signed contract before leaving your work at any gallery. You need to establish both insurance values and sale prices. The insurance value needs to reflect Fair Market Value (FMV) and needs to include the cost of the materials and time involved in creation of the piece.

Have you sold many pieces? If so, this helps establish the value of the piece. When you price your work to sell, you need to take into account the

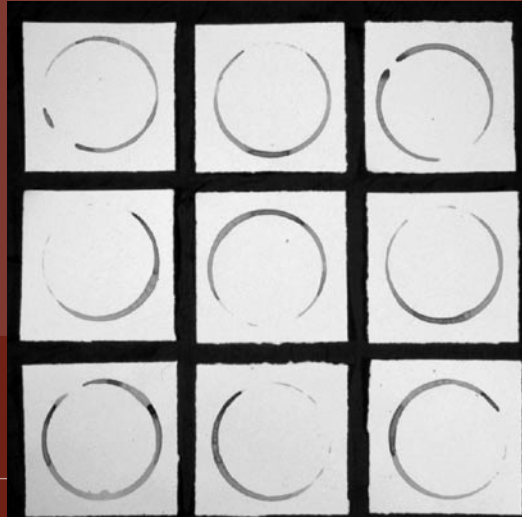
FMV and keep in mind that selling the piece means parting with it. Keep in mind, to establish yourself in the market you need to sell some work so consider your level of experience and be reasonable. If you have spent time visiting galleries you will have a better idea of a price at which it is likely to sell.

Compare the price per square foot of your pieces to that of other comparable emerging artists. No matter the sale price, insurance will only cover the FMV. In some cases proof of FMV is required.

how to **deal with contracts?**

Amy Dearbaugh
Coffee, Second Series 2000
Coffee, paper, raw silk

Be sure and ask if the gallery is insuring the work. If not, consider a renter/home owners policy that would cover the work no matter the location. To secure your work, you can leash the artwork with wire and screw this leash to the wall making it difficult to lift. You can also inquire at a framing store about security wiring. Ultimately, be sure you are confident with the gallery's security methods before agreeing to any exhibition.



Theresa Redinger
paper or plastic? 1997

Grocery bags, zipper, adding machine keys

Who installs the work? How?

From the moment you are asked to be in an exhibit, be up front with deadlines and responsibilities. Ask questions if you don't know. Some galleries will just ask you to drop off the work and hang it themselves. Others will welcome your participation during installation. Many, especially alternative spaces, will rely solely on you to hang work. In such a case, follow these installation guidelines: You will need hammer, level, measuring tape, pencil, paper, nails,



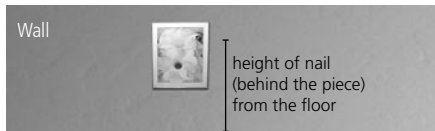
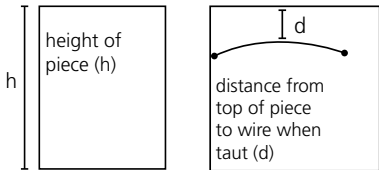
hooks, drill, drywall anchors, screws, double sided velcro (so your pieces stay level). Often times the lighting of a space will dictate where you hang or place work. There may be wall obstacles to contend with, but in a standard gallery, if you are hanging the show, place the work against the wall to consider what layout will work. You want a flow that will guide your audience. Again, know your work and decide the order that is most appropriate. Does the work look best if it is placed with symmetric distances between each piece? Should some pieces be clustered together? Are there locations in the space that are more obvious, less obvious, darker, lighter, etc.? If you would like each piece to hang at eye level, calculate the height of the ceiling. If it is high, consider an eye level of 60 inches or more. Lower ceilings a 58 inch standard will work.

how to **install?**

How to calculate eye level...

1. Determine **eye level** (ex: 60")
2. $\frac{(h - d)}{2} + 60 = \text{height of nail from floor}$

EX: $\frac{(20 - 3)}{2} + 60 = 67"$



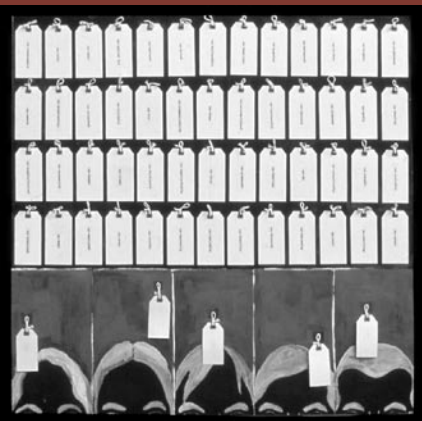
3. If you use a hook rather than a basic nail, you need the base of the hook to be at the 67" mark and the nail will actually be just above it.

how to install **two dimensional work?**

John Richey

Un. 1999

Mixed media on wood panel



Exhibition Application, Term & Conditions,
and Agreement are available at:

www.union.arizona.edu/csillgalleries

No matter your level of preparation and professionalism, you must remember there are only so many shows per year and it may take some time to get into a space. You must persist, prepare for rejection, and be ready! Your relationship with the curator will vary from space to space so do your part, be professional.



ARIZONA STUDENT UNIONS