

Western Loudoun Artists Studio Tour

Artists Handbook



2023

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Contacts

Contact for All Artists:

Artist Liaison — Meredith Hilt

If you have any questions or issues concerning the Studio Tour, please start by checking with another artist on the tour or post your question on the artists' support page on Facebook. The page is **WLAST 2023 Artist Support Group**.

You can also email your question to: **studiotourwlast@gmail.com**.

If you still have issues that need to be addressed, please call the Franklin Park Arts Center 540-338-7973 and they will work on getting you an answer.

Your Contact Information:

Critical information will be sent to you by email at various times. Please make sure we have a good email address for you, and that it is one you look at on a regular basis!

We will also post reminders to the WLAST Artist Support Group Facebook page and to our YouTube channel located here:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCovot8M5VtBv_6P7IvHQSzQ

WLAST Volunteer Planning Committee:

G'Ann Zieger, Chair	Terri Parent
Jill Evans-Kavaldjian	Jan Blacka
Elizabeth Bracey	Kellie Goossens
Liz Hall	Meredith Hilt
Jeanne Niccolls	

Questions, supplies, whatever you need throughout the Tour weekend:

Franklin Park Arts Center	540-338-7973
Round Hill Arts Center	540-338-5022

WLAST Mission and Goals

Loudoun County is incredibly fortunate in having such an amazing wealth and variety of artists living and working here. We want to give you, our artists, the opportunity for public exposure through the vehicle of a studio tour.

Mission:

To help promote Loudoun County as a scenic and cultural destination by producing a tour of our county's visual artists to celebrate their work and to provide an educational experience for the public.

Goals:

Visitors

- Visitors are given an opportunity to visit and support our artists.
- Visitors experience Loudoun's other attractions, restaurants, wineries, and shopping opportunities.

Artists

- Artists promote and offer their work for sale in a studio setting.
- Artists demonstrate their value as a cultural and economic resource for Loudoun County.
- The Studio Tour serves as a vehicle to bring the Loudoun County visual arts community together.

Community

- The Studio Tour becomes an annual tradition.
- The Studio Tour is recognized as a significant event in helping to brand western Loudoun County as an arts destination.
- Visitors experience personal interaction with professional artists and have the opportunity to view their work processes.

Dates and Deadlines

Mid-April	<p>Promotional ads begin on Facebook and continue daily through the end of May</p> <p>Artists new to the Tour must attend the <i>mandatory New Artist Meeting</i>. The date will be established by the consensus of the new artists as this is a mandatory meeting; watch for a planning email to attend this Zoom meeting</p> <p>Artists begin to promote the tour</p>
May 1, 2	Drop off one piece of artwork at Franklin Park Arts Center for the gallery show to introduce artists for 2023. FPAC is open 9 am to 4 pm both days
May 5	<p>Artist reception for start of gallery show, 5 pm to 7 pm at FPAC</p> <p>Artists will pick up all tour supplies (road signs, booklets, counter, etc.)</p>
May 5 – May 29	WLAST Gallery show at FPAC
May 30	Pick up all artwork from FPAC between 9 am and 4 pm
June 2, 3, 4	16 th Annual Western Art and Studio Tour
June 6, 7	<p>All tour supplies must be returned to the WLAST Storage Facility Valley Storage, 37721 E. Richardson Ln, Purcellville, VA 20132. Times are: 6/6/2023: 9:00AM to 1:00PM and 6/7/2023: 2:00PM to 6:00PM. Supplies not returned will be billed to the artist.</p>
June 9	Deadline to answer post Tour artist survey
June 21	WLAST planning committee wrap up/evaluation meeting

Studio Tour Support & Artist Benefits

Funding for the WLAST comes from contributions made by supporting partners, sponsorships, donations, grants, ad sales, and artist entry fees.

Supporters include the National Endowment for the Arts, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the Loudoun Arts Council, local governments, foundations, community businesses, and individuals.

Please thank our sponsors and advertisers when you get the opportunity!

Funding and in-kind contributions support expenses associated with printed materials (brochures, QR code signs), paid advertising, postage, promotional signs and banners, directional signage, and miscellaneous supplies.

All funds go toward promoting and producing the Studio Tour. Committee members are volunteers.

Benefits for Studio Tour Artists

There are a number of benefits for Studio Tour artists:

- Sales (including post-Tour sales bumps)
- Commissions
- Exposure
- Publicity
- Networking
- Class registrations
- Invitations to show their work
- Additions to email and postal mailing lists

Publicity

The Studio Tour is publicized in many ways to reach a wide local and regional audience. The Planning Committee follows a detailed publicity and marketing plan.

- **Advertising** is purchased in local and regional print and online media. Feature articles and other “free media” opportunities are also pursued, including online, radio, and print outlets.
- **Social Media** advertising, paid boosts and postings began in April and will continue through the Studio Tour. Please like, comment and share these to help give them more visibility on the WWW.
- **Calendar** announcements are sent to Calendars of Events in print and online media. Partner organizations post Tour information on their websites and send out e-blasts to their email lists.
- **The Studio Tour website is www.wlast.org.** Besides basic information for visitors and an interactive map showing the locations of all Tour artists, each artist has his or her own page with images of your artwork, information about your work, a map and written directions to your studio, and more.
- **Banners and signs** announcing the tour are posted around the county in advance of the tour.
- **Save-the-date email** about 6 weeks before the Tour; sent to the Tour email list and the email list maintained by Franklin Park Art Center.
- **Full color brochures** with artist photos, a map showing the location of all studios, and other important information for Tour participants are provided to artists. The planning committee and artist volunteers distribute these to various locations county-wide. The brochures are also sent to the mailing list compiled from former Tours.
- **Full color postcards** are provided to the artist so that they can send them to their personal mailing/customer lists in advance of the Tour.
- **T-shirts with the WLAST logo** can be purchased through this link — <https://shop.spreadshirt.com/WLAST> — letting you promote the Tour while wearing yours when you’re out and about.

**** Studio Tour artists are expected to distribute all the brochures, and postcards provided to them ****

Publicity (continued)

Word-of-mouth from you is one of our best publicity sources!

- Studio Tour artists are encouraged to post and share notices on the Studio Tour and your own Facebook and Twitter pages, Etsy sites, blogs, *etc.*
- You can copy and send the sample email below to clients, family, and friends.
- Always **include the link to the WLAST website in the text of your posts**, and **link to www.wlast.org from your own website**.

Sample Email

Greetings!

I will be participating in the 16th annual **Western Loudoun Art and Studio Tour, June 2, 3, and 4, 2023**. This event offers an opportunity for you to view and purchase some amazing artwork not only at my studio but also at more than 30 other studios around Western Loudoun. It's free and you could win a door prize!

I'll be available to discuss my artwork and creative process, and we'll be offering *[insert whatever is appropriate: demonstrations, hands-on activities, refreshments, music, etc.]* I hope you will come visit my studio and those of the other talented artists on the Studio Tour.

You can find my studio at: *[insert your studio name and address; give directions as needed]*.

My studio will be open: *[insert the days and times you will be open]*

Studio Tour hours are from 10am to 5pm. Tour brochures with a map will be available at my studio, at participating arts centers, and online at **www.wlast.org**.

Thanks – I look forward to seeing you in June!

[Insert an image of your work below the text]

Studio Tour Website & Social Media

Your webpage:

Each artist is provided an individual webpage, created using the information submitted in your application.

Online map:

Along with the printed map in the booklet is an online interactive map for Studio Tour visitors. **Check your location on the map on the website once it is published.** If it is not accurate, email studiotourwlast@gmail.com.

If you have your own website, blog, Facebook page, or Etsy site: **please add a banner link from the WLAST website.** Banners can be found at: <http://wlast.org/banner.htm> and there are several styles to choose from.

Questions about the website? Send an email to studiotourwlast@gmail.com.

Facebook Artist Support Group

If you are on Facebook, we have an artist support group page. You can find important information, see announcements, and keep in touch with fellow artists via social media. This is a great place to ask questions and get excited about the tour:

WLAST 2023 Artist Support Group

Artists' Responsibilities

1. Educate the public about the creative process of your artwork.

- Showing the creative process is a critical part of the Tour. It creates awareness and appreciation of art on patron's part and encourages them to seek art opportunities throughout the year.
- **All artists are required to demonstrate** or show stages of your process (ask someone to help so you're free to talk with visitors and sell your work) **OR display an exhibit about the process** (examples of your work in each stage, or step by step illustrations of the process).

2. In fairness to all Studio Tour artists:

- Display and sell **items only in the media you were juried in for when you applied** to be on the Tour.
- Do not allow the display or sale of work by other artists who have not applied to and who have not been accepted on the Studio Tour.

3. Help publicize the Tour by:

- Distributing printed media prior to & during the tour.
- Talking about the Tour on your Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Etsy site, website, blog, *etc.*, and including the link to the Studio Tour website in the text of your posts.

4. Directional signs, passport signs, booklets, and counters

- Place provided directional signs in the ground to lead visitors from major highways and roads to your studio.
- Place your Passport QR code sign in an easily accessible spot in your studio.
- Encourage patrons to complete Passport questionnaire on line by using the QR code. *These forms are crucial in helping us secure grant funding and other support for future Tours.*
- Return all artist materials (except any remaining brochures) in a timely fashion.
- **If all materials are not returned, there will be a fee to cover replacement costs.**

5. Provide signage at your studio site.

- Clearly mark parking areas and the entrance to your studio.

6. Conduct your own sales and arrange for your own sales help.

7. Be sure you are presented correctly in the Tour website and booklet.

- Proof your webpage contents and online map location promptly when you receive notice that these things are ready for your review.
- Proof your entry and your printed map location in the Tour brochure promptly when you receive notice that the PDF proof is ready to review.

8. Complete an evaluation at the close of the tour.

- *These forms are crucial in helping us secure grant funding and other support for future Tours. Failure to complete your evaluation will affect your future eligibility to participate in the Tour.*

9. Be prepared in case of rain or heat — the tour will go on!

Required Insurance Rider

The Western Loudoun Artists Studio tour requires all studios to have an insurance rider covering both days of the tour. Prices vary per insurance company but average around \$70-100. Guests should consider helping with this expense at their host studio.

Please contact your insurance provider for insurance information.

Directional Signage

The Planning Committee will provide each studio with directional signs for you to place in the ground to lead visitors from major highways and roads to your studio.

- The Planning Committee will provide suggested locations, but we encourage you to think about the best places to put your signs so visitors coming from different directions can find your studio. Talk with other nearby studios to coordinate placement. **If you think you will need extras, request them *at least two weeks before the Tour weekend*.**
- Be prepared to give directions to neighboring Tour Stops. You should know who your neighbors are, and know how to direct visitors to reach them. You should actively encourage visitors to visit your neighboring studios.
- To keep us in good standing with the highway folks, don't put them out until the day before the Tour (or even Saturday morning), and pick them up the day after the Tour (or Sunday night).
- If you live in the county (rather than an incorporated town) your signs will have a permit attached.
- If your signs are removed by any unauthorized person during the Tour, contact FPAC immediately; we will have extras on hand and will get them to you as soon as possible.
- **Return all Studio Tour materials (signs, counters, etc.) by the designated date to the WLAST storage facility. We will be coordinating volunteers this year to help with this process.**

Parking and Entrance Signs: Artists must provide their own signs to let visitors know where to park and to direct them to the studio entrance.

Studio Tips

While the Planning Committee will provide suggestions for setting up your studios, artists have full control of their own studio set-up. In an effort to assist you in making your Tour experience a success, consider the following:

- **Greeting your guests** and making them feel welcome will put them at ease and make their time in your studio more enjoyable.
 - *Each day of the Tour, please keep a tally of your visitors.* We need this information when seeking grant funding for the Tour. You will need these numbers to complete your *required* Artist Evaluation Form after the Tour. ***THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!***
- **Attractive entrance:**
 - Cleared drives and walkways.
 - Perhaps some potted flowers.
- **Arrange for assistance:**
 - Ask a family member, student, or friend to help out. This person can act as a greeter, explain the studio layout and invite visitors into the space. Your assistant can also help with sales.
- **Inside your studio:**
 - While a working studio is part of the ambiance and doesn't need to be totally neat, make it easy for people to move about and view your work.
 - **Display your work to its best advantage:**
 - Leave a little space around each piece or group of pieces to set them off (a kind of spatial frame).
 - Make your work easy to view — avoid stacking your work or hanging it where it is hard to see.
 - **Demonstrate or show the process of your work:**
 - Explain what you do and how you do it (video, step-by-step process samples, a series of photographs, *etc.*) so folks learn why they can't go home and do it themselves!
 - **Display:**
 - Information about yourself and your studio.
 - Your show and gallery schedule.
 - Your business cards.
 - Awards you have won or publications mentioning your work
 - Past artists: signs featuring your "new work."
 - New artists: a sign saying "new artist."
- **Have handouts available:**
 - About the process or technique you use to create your artwork.
 - About how to care for your work at home.

Studio Tips (continued)

- **Ambiance:**
 - Low volume background music.
 - Light refreshments (cookies, fruit, lemonade, *etc.*)
 - Flowers or other low-key natural decoration.
- **Supplemental activities:**
 - Hands-on activity for visitors.
 - Art activity or area for children.
 - Invite a musician to play some quiet background music.
 - **Partner with a nearby winery** to offer a wine tasting — we encourage you to invite a Loudoun County winery to do tastings at your studio.
- **Other amenities:**
 - A trash can.
 - A place for visitor umbrellas and doormat for wiping shoes in case of rain.
 - Bug wipes.
- **Private space:**
 - If you have areas you do not want open to the public, mark them accordingly.
- **Potential irritants:**
 - Your pets are YOUR pets — not everyone is a pet person. Dogs can frighten some people. Some folks are allergic. Please keep pets out of your studio and away from visitor spaces during Tour hours.
 - Smoking — please be mindful of allergies and health concerns of patrons.
- **Provided by the Planning Committee:**
 - Passport QR Code signage
 - Extra Tour brochures for any folks without one.
- **Safety:**
 - Please remember to remove or clearly mark off hazardous tools, supplies, and equipment. Please make sure all potential hazards that cannot be removed are supervised by you or your helper.
- **Studio Evaluations:**
 - WLAST Planning Committee volunteers may be visiting your studio during the tour to do an on-site evaluation.

Sales

Each artist will keep all of the sales revenue they collect during the tour. The Studio Tour takes no percentage of your sales revenue.

- **Sales assistance:**
 - ***Arrange for sales assistance!*** You need to be free to chat with customers and sell your work. They can also serve as extra security to safeguard your artwork and help folks who have questions. Help from a family member, student, or a friend is essential to have your studio and sales run smoothly.
- **Sales tips:**
 - **Price all your work.** Consider having items in a range of price points so you can offer a range (for example, turn your artwork into note cards, magnets, *etc.*); or offer a slightly lower price for two or more items.
 - Have appropriate **wrapping material** on hand to wrap up works you sell.
- **Credit card sales:**
 - The ability to make credit card sales is a proven advantage to Tour artists. While many Tour patrons will have cash or a checkbook with them, some will prefer to purchase with plastic. **Artists must make their own arrangements for credit card sales; try to plan ahead for this.**
- **Options for taking credit card sales:**
 - If you don't have dependable internet service in your studio, but you have access elsewhere, you can take down all the details you need for the sale by hand, then type it in manually when you can get on the internet. The transaction fee is closer to 4% in this case. You can use smartphone apps from Square, PayPal, and others for this (you won't need a card reader).
 - The Square app now allows for offline transactions (where you enter the transaction details and swipe the customer's card when you don't have an internet connection, but process the transaction later when you do).
 - With a laptop or desktop computer, you can use a Virtual Terminal solution.

Sales (continued)

- **Write up the credit card sale on paper by hand** and process it as soon as possible. Don't forget any necessary details or to get a signature!
- Keep the sheet until it is processed, then shred or destroy customer credit card information.
- **Artists assume sole responsibility** for accurately recording customer information and following up on any declined charges, and for destroying customer credit card information in a timely manner.
- **Individual Studio Tour Planning Committee members and Studio Tour partner organizations cannot be held financially liable for payments not recovered from declined sales.**
- **Two important suggestions:**
 - Set up and **test your credit card sales system ahead of time**, before the Tour weekend.
 - **Plan for emergencies** such as a power failure or disruption in cell phone service. You can always take down the information by hand and key it in later when you have service.
- **Temporary Sales Tax Certificate:**
 - If you are not a registered retailer under the Virginia Sales and Use Tax Act, you are required to report sales and pay the 6% sales tax for special events such as WLAST. You will need to use form ST-50, the Temporary Sales Tax Certificate/Return.
 - You can find an example online at:

<https://www.tax.virginia.gov/sites/default/files/taxforms/retail-sales-and-use/any/st-50any.pdf>
 - If you are registered, report your sales as you normally would.

Geographic Clusters

Again this year, the Planning Committee has developed a set of geographic clusters to help visitors grapple with the size of the overall Studio Tour, allowing them to focus on specific geographic areas when planning their days.

Cluster	Stop #	First Name	Last Name	Email
Catoctin Region	1	Shawn	Grove	woodfiredpottery@ymail.com
	2	Erin	Landavere	slateroofstudio@gmail.com
		Allison	Wiese	alibwiese@gmail.com
	3	Bryan	Mattraw	taylorstownpottery@gmail.com
		Robert	Mock	triplecwood@aol.com
	4	Deirdre	Chipouras	dchipouras@gmail.com
		Kaarin	Nelson	kaarin_nelson@yahoo.com
	5	Deborah	Maurer	whatsinyourbarn@yahoo.com
	6	Teresa	Jardines	teresa@ziadesignonline.com
		Kristen	Swanson	kristen-koch@hotmail.com
Waterford/Leesburg	7	Elizabeth	Hall	pintofoal@aol.com
		Jeffery	Hall	torsoarts@aol.com
	8	Carol	Clay-Ward	claywardstudio@gmail.com
		Jeffrey	Miller	jeffmiller2@yahoo.com
	9	Maureen	Alvarez	mo@chunkofhappiness.com
		Jill	Evans-Kavaldjian	jillunit@gmail.com
	10	Nancy	Ramsey	nancyaramsey@gmail.com
	11	Katherine	Riedel	kpjx2@aol.com
	12	Kathie	Ratcliffe	kathie@ninepatchstudio.com
	13	Lori	Goll	lori@lorigollart.com
	14	Marcia	Klioze	kliozem@gmail.com
	15	Andrea	Falzarano	amfmglass@gmail.com
		Ute	Gil	Utegil@att.net
		Jack	Nevitt	jnevitt47@gmail.com
		Amy	Manson	theclayandmetalloft@gmail.com
	16	Libby	Stevens	libbystevensart@gmail.com
		Bethany	Widom	bnuttywidom@hotmail.com
	17	Richard	Busch	glenfarmpottery@aol.com

Cluster	Stop #	First Name	Last Name	Email
Loudoun Valley	18	Samuel	Walton	walton.sam.art@gmail.com
		Amy	Walton	amy.artist@gmail.com
	19	Ed and Claire	Cutshall	carolyn@huntcountry.com
		Amie	Ware	amiecware@gmail.com
	20	Amy	Berringer	amyberringer@gmail.com
	21	Patricia	Taylor Holz	patotaylor1@yahoo.com
	22	Geoff	DeMark	gldemark@hotmail.com
		Lori	DeMark	ldemark@icloud.com
	23	Dana B.	Thompson	danathompsondesigns@gmail.com
	24	Brian	Kirk	bkirkstudios@aol.com
	25	Anne	Block	sns487@verizon.net
		Christine	Eddy	daecce@hotmail.com
		Hope	Hanes	hopehanes1@gmail.com
		Yousung	Largent	kangboc815@gmail.com
		Patricia	Stephenson	patricia@moononthemountain.com
Snickers Gap	26A	Christine	Dixon	cadixonart@gmail.com
		Meredith	Hilt	artmetal@meredithhilt.com
		Okcha	TeSelle	okchateselle@gmail.com
	26B	Terri	Parent	parent.terri@gmail.com
	26C	David	Mann	studio@nuovo.com
		Jane	Mann	jmann@nuovo.com
	27	David	Norton	nortonpots@earthlink.net
	28	Elizabeth	Dickson	edickson36@gmail.com
	29	Mark	Thomas	markpaulthomas@outlook.com
	30	Amy	Oliver	monkeytownpottery@gmail.com
		Karen	Oliver	karenoliver1art@aol.com
	31	Bob	Friedenberg	Dr.Bob@Not-Wolf-Productions.com
		Richard	Weidner	Rich.blacksmith1@gmail.com
	32	Judith	Thompson	schiphill@gmail.com

Passports

Purpose of the Passport:

- To capture visitor comments and important demographic information about Studio Tour visitors. ***** Collection of this information is crucial in attracting funding for future tours. *****
- To amplify the Studio Tour and artists' mailing lists. After each Tour, all of the addresses are compiled into a mailing list and we send information to this list prior to the tour each year.
- Digital passports only!
- Visitors will answer a three-question survey that will take less than a minute

Studio Artists' Responsibilities:

- Actively encourage EVERY visitor to scan the QR Code passport at every stop.
- Remind visitors that completing a Passport is the only way to win a door prize.
- Many times people are reluctant to fill these out; however, we have found if you mention it helps us with grant money to produce the Tour they are more likely to do it. Please mention they do not have to enter an email if they are concerned about internet safety.

After the Tour:

- Please promptly return all materials to the WLAST storage facility by the designated deadline. You will receive an email indicating the dates and times to return the supplies.
- The Planning Committee will conduct the drawing, contact winners, and mail the door prizes.

Evaluations

The Planning Committee is already looking ahead to next year's Studio Tour.

We ask four things from you that will help improve and contribute to the success of future Studio Tours:

1. **Encourage visitors to scan the QR code for the Passport** — we use them to capture important demographic information about our visitors. By using an electronic version of the passport our goal is to more quickly and accurately compile the needed information.

2. **Report the amount of your total sales** — it represents another measure of the tour's success. (Your total sales will be entirely **confidential**; we only use aggregate and average sales figures for the Tour as a whole.)

3. **Complete the Artist Evaluation Form** at the close of the Studio Tour.

- These will be sent to you in email with a link to the survey.
- The information you submit is **confidential** and is **vital** for future grant applications.
- Information from artists' evaluations, Planning Committee observations, and visitor comments on door prize forms will be compiled in a comprehensive Lessons Learned event report detailing this year's Tour accomplishments and areas needing improvement.
- The information will be used to improve the Studio Tour in future years and in writing grant applications for future funding.
- Failure to complete your Artist Evaluation Form will affect your future eligibility to participate in the Tour.
- **Please provide constructive feedback** on the Evaluation Form.

4. Consider **volunteering** for the Planning Committee or nominating someone to serve on the Planning Committee for WLAST. The Studio Tour has been organized by the volunteer planning committee for 16 years! Let's keep a good thing going!

**Thank you for participating in the
16th Annual Western Loudoun Art and Studio Tour!**