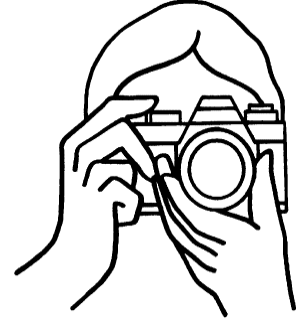# Photographing Your Artwork

A good photograph of your art may mean the difference between getting into an exhibition and making that important sale. It is worth it to take the time to get this aspect of your art presentation done the right way. Here are some helpful tips to get you started.

• You do not need an overly expensive camera to get good photographs of your artwork. A standard "point and shoot" camera works just fine.

• Photograph your art outside when it is cloudy or with an overcast sky. Outside is a "natural" light and will provide the best representation of your art. Being outside during an overcast day also provides indirect light which will highlight your art better than any other light. You must make sure that it is indirect light. If it is not overcast, photograph you piece in the shade or in a light shadow of a tree. If you cannot go outside, photograph with your artwork in the light that is coming through a window.

• If there is no natural light, you will need to use the lights around you and then fix the color if needed in post-production

• If possible, hang your artwork on a wall or use an easel. This technique will provide you with the best angle for photographing your artwork.

• If the piece you are photographing is a sculpture, the best tactic is to use a white wall or white sheet as the background. Also display the sculpture on a white pedestal or if need be a white sheet as the ground. This provides an all white background.

• If the subject of your photo is jewelry then use a jewelry stand if possible. This will allow you to get the best angle and really highlight your piece. If a jewelry stand is not available use a white or black sheet to set the jewelry on so that the piece stands out.

• Use a tripod or any other device (boxes, table, ladder, etc.) to hold the camera steady if needed. Steady shots are important so as not to create any blurring in your photograph.

• If it is impossible to photograph your art straight on you will need to match the angle of camera with the tilt of the art that is propped against the wall. This gives the appearance of a straight on shot. An angled photograph will not portray the art as it is really seen.

• Be sure to fill the frame with your art. Get close enough so the art nearly fills the viewfinder. This way you will be able to make the best use of whatever resolution your camera has. This eliminates the need for expensive cameras.

• If at all possible when shooting your art DO NOT have it framed with glass or plastic. It is very hard to get a clear photo without any reflections in the glass. If it is framed with glass or plastic make absolutely sure it is clean as possible. You will also have to use an angle where you will not get as much glare. This goes against shooting from an angle and thus it is a better practice to remove the glass if possible.

• DO NOT use the flash on your camera. While flash is a nice tactic to light up a normal photograph it should never be used when photographing your artwork. Possible complications include but are not limited to: glares, changing the colors of your piece, create "hot spots" (white spots that are near impossible to remove), and a variety of other issues. Just remember: FLASH IS BAD.

• Check is that your edges are straight when looking through the viewfinder. What you see in the viewfinder is what the finished product will be. If it is crooked there, it will be crooked in the final product. If you cannot get this correct, it is possible to take care of it in post-production. (Photo-editing)

• Finally, In order to eliminate all background distracting (wall, easels, frame, etc.) use a postproduction tool on a computer to crop and touch up your photo. Some easy and free ones you can download include:

   ❖ Picasa – http://picasa.google.com
   ❖ Fotor – http://www.fotor.com
   ❖ Pixlr – http://pixlr.com

You can also use the picture editing software that comes with your computer; it will have the cropping option and simple color correction that you may need.
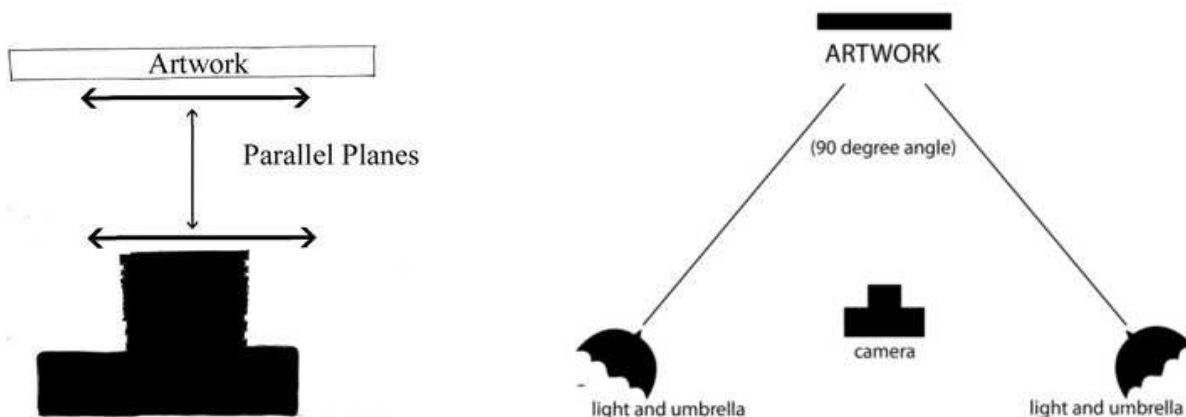
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