

Your art is high quality, so photographs of them should be too. If the photo is too small or out of focus, or if there are issues with colour, lighting or shadows – then you're not showing a true representation of your work.

We think the best approach is simply to hire a professional photographer. Obviously, not everyone has the budget or resources to hire a pro so if you plan to take the photos yourself, be sure to review the following tips.

### Buy (or borrow) a good digital camera.

The camera should have a few basic settings:

- Ability to select ISO (always use the lowest ISO setting. The higher the ISO number the grainier the image. Some recommend a setting of 200 ISO)
- Good Auto Focus.
- Ability to adjust white balance – The type of light you're shooting in may produce white light with slightly different colour tints. The white balance setting make white objects appear white in your images.
- The auto balance setting is the simplest option.

### Buy (or borrow) a tripod

- Essential to taking a in focus photo of your artwork.
- Ideal way for you to make sure that your camera is aligned to your artwork.
- Allows for zero camera movement which in turn will result in the sharpest image possible.

### Lighting

Lighting is extremely important.

- Use bright, indirect natural lighting
- Natural light fluorescent bulbs can also be a good choice
- Avoid deep shadows and dappling effects
- Position the lights and the artwork carefully before taking the photo
- Make sure there are no shadows concealing parts of the piece, and that there are no problems with high contrast, which will give you an image with very dark or very light patches that will detract from the impression of the work itself.
- Soften the glare and intensity by diffusing the light source, e.g: by bouncing it off a white surface such as paper.
- Avoid direct sunlight; aside from the fact that it's probably not good for your artwork, direct sunlight can create what are known as 'hot spots' on reflective surfaces.
- Don't use a flash – this can also create a reflective 'hot spot'.
- Avoid mixing light sources, as different style bulbs give off different colours.

- If the work you are photographing is behind glass, it is best to take out of the glass. If you can't you will need to angle the light and camera to minimize reflection and glare.
- You can purchase professional lighting sets at most online retailers, which include light stands and umbrellas to reflect and soften the light.

### Positioning

- Avoid shadows and messy framing, by making sure that the piece is level against the wall.
- Whenever possible, you should fill the frame with your work, trying not to show any background.
- When your artwork is non-rectangular or 3D keep the background simple without distractions.
- Frame the piece against a neutral colour – white or black are the perfect background. Colourful backgrounds can alter the colour of your piece by reflecting onto it.

### Camera set up

- Clean your lens. Having a speck of dust on the glass can mess with your camera's automatic focus.
- The tripod should be set so that the camera is the same height as the centre of your artwork. If your work needs to be on a slant to stand up against the wall – tilt your camera to match the angle.
- Set the zoom lens so that there is minimal distortion.
- Position the camera at some distance from the object, and then zoom in as needed. It will give you greater control over the images you take, and will help you maintain your own perspective. You can try different levels of zoom for different shots. However, note when your camera switches over from optical zoom to digital zoom, you may be risking the sharpness and overall quality of the image.
- Set the ISO to the lowest setting
- Using the RAW setting of your camera, which means you'll have all of the information saved, in as high a quality as possible. From there, you can work with the images and re-size them or make other changes, if necessary.

### Taking the photo

- Make sure the camera is firmly attached to the tripod.
- Use the timer – so that you won't accidentally cause the camera to shake.
- Take lots of shots – and choose the best. You might have thought you got the perfect shot, but it could turn out to be overexposed, or perhaps a movement somehow ruined the image at the wrong time.
- Don't trust the preview on your camera's screen – this preview is often too small to show some of the most important details.