

Tips on How to Display Art

These tips are things that you might want to know for our VAL shows. They are merely suggestions; you are not required to assemble your display in the manner described here, except for covering the table.

Instructions for a Two-tiered display: Cover the table with a cloth that will hang down and cover any boxes, etc. you may have under the table. If you don't have anything that wide, purchase some cheap black (or navy or white is OK too) fabric (lining cloth) for \$2.99 a yd. at Jo-Ann's Fabrics, and use that. If you buy 11 yards, it should be just right for the display I will describe below. For a 2-tiered display, purchase 4 plastic milk crates to use as a second tier for some paintings. Cut off 8 feet of fabric for the milk crate cover. Cut the remaining piece in half across the width of the fabric. Sew the halves together along the length of the fabric to make the table cover, but in a pinch, you can just tape them to the table with masking tape. It is suggested that you plan ahead for other shows when getting this cloth. Some rec. centers have 8' tables (like Savannah) but Lake Miona has only 6' tables. So, you should cut your fabric in 3 pieces (1 to cover crates, 2 to sew together). On a 6' table, the fabric will be overlapped in the middle, but for an 8' table, you won't need to overlap the 2 halves. Put your tablecloth on first, then arrange the milk crates. Put a piece of stiff cardboard the entire length, and on top of the crates so that the easels will have a solid footing under them. If you are against a wall, put the milk crates on the backside of the table, and cover them with the 8' piece of fabric. It makes a nice 2-tiered display, which can also be used if your table is in the center of the room. If so, just place the milk crates in the middle so you can view the display from either side. Do a trial run by setting up your display at home to see how it all fits together, and then take a picture (or make a rough sketch) of how you placed the paintings when you're satisfied with the arrangement. Bring the pictures (or sketch) with you so you know how to recreate this display at the rec. center. The middle leg of your easels will fit into the holes of the milk crates, and it sort of anchors them out of site.

After you've set up your display at home, put the paintings in a couple of rolling suitcases or a dolly to take them all inside. (Saves the back and several trips in and out.) Remember, you'll also have 4' (or 6') of floor space depending on which Rec. Ctr. the show will be in. In any case, your space will total 12' in either rec. center. You can set up floor easels and/or browse boxes in the space if you wish.

Bring a little "tool box" of items you may need: masking or other tape, pens or markers, price tags, VAL tags, scissors, extra business cards, etc. Anything you think you might need. Start collecting large plastic shopping bags for paintings, and the small plastic bags that newspapers come in can be used for small items like note cards. They will be greatly appreciated by your buyers, especially on a rainy day.

Of course, you'll see many different types of displays, so the above may not be right for your display. Take some time to check out other artists' displays. Take a camera and take pics of displays you especially like. Ask the artist how they put their display together. You'll learn more each year as you see how other artists display their works.

If you choose not to have a table, you have many options also. Some people use several floor easels or an art tree. Others use a tall interlocking grate system. Each grate is about 18" wide and about 6' tall. The sections can be clipped together to form one piece, which you would zigzag a bit to allow it to stand up properly. Each piece can fit several paintings, depending on size. Do a rehearsal at home and either take a picture of it or mark where each painting will go with masking tape. Some artists have a more elaborate "wall system," which works well if you have many paintings.

Have a great day and make lots of money!! Speaking of money, you should have some small bills with you (1's, 5's, 10's, maybe a couple of 20's, and coins if you have items that are not priced to a full dollar), but whether you accept checks is up to you. Most artists accept checks if they're from a local bank, and we've never heard of any bounced checks. Have checks made out to you. All the money from sales is yours to keep - there's no "commission" to the VAL. If you can get someone to cover for your table, take time to walk around and see all that's happening in various rooms. It's going to be a fun day.

There will be monitors who can give you a bathroom or lunch break, or you can arrange for a friend to come in to sit with you for a while. GOOD LUCK and HAVE FUN!