

## **Open Studios Ayrshire:**

A guide on how to photograph 2-D artwork

When advertising your artwork, it is vital to have a good photographic image which will allow your audience to see your work in its best light, to promote your work as of a high and professional standard and so that Open Studios Ayrshire can best promote you and your art.

### Camera

An SLR camera which can take images of a high resolution would be best. The minimum size requirement of photographs of your work for the OSA website, brochure and advertising is 1920 by 1080 pixels. Photographs from phone camera would only be acceptable if they are large images as stated.

### Positioning your work

Prop the work up as vertically as possible where the wind can't catch it or use an easel to secure in place. Adjust the angle of the tripod for the camera to be central to the work. Aim to line up your camera with the middle of the piece, lining up any vertical and horizontal edges to be straight through the viewfinder.

A better image is achieved by holding the camera as steady as possible. With a tripod, you can not only hold the camera steady but it can be adjusted to the correct height for your art work. Hand-held cameras set on vibration-minimising mode is ok.

Take at least 5 images of each artwork so that you can select the best one in your computer.

### Lighting

Good even, overall light is essential. Unless you have specialist lighting, photographs taken in ordinary indoor electric lighting will give uneven and yellow tinges. The best lighting, without specialist equipment, is outdoors on a sunny, wind-free day in direct sunlight. Take care that you do not cast a shadow on your work.

A basic photo- editing app or programme is usually required to crop, adjust contrast, colour hue or straighten the image to match the original work as closely as possible. Do not reduce the image to send it to a committee member. If it is too large to send by email, place it on a thumb drive (USB stick) and post to the relevant person.

### Don'ts:

Never photograph framed pieces behind glass which tends to cause glare or reflections. The whole image must be clear.

Never take the photograph from an angle which skews the corners.

Never have the picture frame in the shot (unless the frame is an integral part of the piece) as a valuable pixel space on a frame which would be edited out. In addition, displaying a variety of different frames looks messy on OSA's website.

Never have background showing around the artwork in your photograph. This looks very unprofessional and again wastes pixel space on the jpeg. Basic free photo editing packages will offer cropping as an option.

As a rule of thumb, ask yourself, does this photograph look like the original art in colour rendition, crop, saturation of colour and uniformity of lighting? If not, it's not good enough. The image you use needs to be a close representation of the original.