



Southwest Florida Fine Craft Guild

Conducting Stellar Exhibits: *Preceiving*

One important guild objective is to provide Stellar Exhibits – to show only the finest quality pieces and ensure its artists maintain high standards. **Stellar exhibits benefit Guild members by:**

- Continuing to grow Artists through higher standards which should result in expanded clarity on the exhibit-readiness of work and how to improve their craft through collaborative peer reviews
- Establishing a stronger reputation in the community and attracting a wider audience at each exhibit resulting in increasing sales, sponsors, members and exhibit venues

The SWF FCG Peer Review Committee (PRC) has been working to put together these introductory quality guidelines for the guild membership for entering exhibits we refer to as “**Preceiving**”. This is not intended to cover every possible area of media quality checks and this document will continue to evolve and “age”. **Peer reviews are offered free to guild members** to present pieces to the guild and discuss particular questions and focus on areas of interest.

All members should be concerned with quality – good quality pieces attract people to shows and to artists. Some of our best artists and craftsmen have failures and reworks before achieving what is seen in the show. This is why many pieces have a very high intrinsic value to the artist. And, consider: if you walked into a show that had pieces with glue showing or broken fragments, scratched frame, dirty or dusty piece, and spurious edges, you would not give the piece or the show your full attention and certainly would not buy anything. Time is valuable – if visitors see the flaws, whether it is immediately registered or not, they will pass the piece by – it will distract from your reputation, the guild’s reputation and the exhibit.

The guild does its best to enlist strong judges with credentials to evaluate work, but most judges will not be expert in all media and do not have the time to put ‘hands on’ each piece. Quality is the first level the artist must pass to enter a show – this is also referred to as Level 0 in the Peer Review assessment on pages 10-11 of the 2014-2015 season’s yearbook. After the quality check, the judge will look at the other critical areas including the originality, design, thoughtfulness, creativity, method, technique, and beauty of the piece (Levels 1 to 3). Lovely pieces have had to be rejected for quality issues so it is critical each member entering a show understand this level.

The PRC offers guidelines to consider in each of the SWF FCG’s media. While nothing is set in stone, consider the judge’s viewpoint. Look for precision, cleanliness, and avoid distractions. While there will be exceptions to the below based on the individual piece, if you are not sure or want to know how to correct issues or need additional insights, **schedule a peer review!** As always, please send any comments or suggestions to: archerartpost@gmail.com so we can continue to improve and evolve this paper.

General (all media):

- In general, consider whether the method of developing your piece is obvious and distracting to the piece. Better to let the observer enjoy the piece and then consider how you developed it.
- Keep the piece clean, e.g., no visible glue marks, dust, kiln wash or unintentional finger/paint smudges.
- Ensure there are no unintended embedded or spurious materials, e.g., unintentional loose threads, fiber paper/materials; wax, clay, kiln wash or other mold materials.
- If a frame is used for wall art or display stand is used for 3D art:
 - Consider the display as part of your piece. The frame or stand should complement your piece and not distract from it.
 - 3D pieces (with stand, if used): Bottoms should be smooth and flat, no rockers.
 - Ensure the frame/stand is free from scratches or unintended marks and is clean.
 - The display can be commercially purchased or made, but should hold the piece exactly as intended – e.g, not: crooked, loosely held, unsightly gaps or unstable.
 - All display stands should be sturdy, stable and hold the work properly.
 - If mounted in a picture frame, the borders should be balanced – e.g., 2” borders all around with a 3” border on the bottom to leave room for signing.
 - No distracting glue marks or exposed tape or wire (when hung).
 - Frames should have a sturdy wire hanger in the back that will not show when the picture is hung. No saw tooth or loop type hangers. The hanger hardware in the back should be covered in electrical tape to protect the gallery walls. The back of the frame should be neat / clean.
- Smooth edges – e.g., able to run finger around edges, no roughness or sharp edges unless part of the design and not dangerous to the handler
- No pieces made from mass produced components or commercial kits that are the focal point of the design.

Glass:

- Ensure slumps and drapes do not have undesired / unintentional over-draping, folds or gaps/holes.
- Well-fit pieces. e.g., construction with other materials is done cleanly with no visible glue, unintentional gaps or uneven edges.
- Smooth stained glass soldering (no pitting/bumps), no gaps or incompatible edges.
- No undesired and visible marks – e.g., casting seams, cut marks, coarse grinding/lathing marks, errant etching marks, spurious sand blast marks, patchy, foggy, and cracking, flaking, cloudy or scummy surface.
- No unintentional defects: e.g., blisters, cracks, breaks, bubbles, bumps.

Clay:

- No visible cracks or chips unless a planned part of the method/design.
- All forms should fit, i.e., lidded objects.
- No sharp edges on functional pieces, i.e., mugs, plates.
- If the form is functional, it should work: e.g., pitchers and teapots should pour properly, handles must be placed in the proper area to pour.
- No glaze runoff or grind marks.
- No unintentional glaze faults; bubbling, crawling, pinholes.
- No unintentional warping of flat ware or tiles.

Jewelry & Metal:

- No visible solder seams or solder spread.
- No firescale unless part of design.
- Bezels should be clean and well done with no puckering or gaps unless a part of the design.
- Stones should be evenly set, not off kilter or loose.
- No sharp corners or edges that can cut or scratch.
- All pieces should be cleaned and finished.
- All jewelers should consider signing their work.

Fiber & Wood

Fabric

- Sewing is neat and tidy with no loose threads or glue showing.
- Prints and textures in scale.
- Originality – some fabric is copyrighted.

Baskets

- Weaving materials such as cane or reed should be trimmed to remove frays/hairs etc.
- Bases should not rock; they should sit flat.

Sculpture / Stone:

- The piece should be properly balanced. Whether sitting on its own or on a base, it should be sturdy and safely hold its weight and structure.
- There should be no visible repairs.
- The beauty of the stone should be brought out - this is accomplished by the skill of the artisan....The finished sculpture could be smooth, have a textured surface, and/or raw untouched areas of the original stone incorporated into the final design. These methods are all acceptable.

Mixed Media:

- All framing and matting must fit properly.
- Clean cuts on matting. No tear marks, dirt, dust or fingermarks.
- Frames should have proper wire hangers on back that do not show when hung.
- Hardware should be taped to protect walls.
- No saw tooth hangers.
- Photos and framed glass should be clean, fingerprint and dust free. The hangers on backs of aluminized photos should be wire hung unless noted by gallery.
- If a special hanging is required, check with the gallery venue well before the show.

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PRC “Preceiving” Guidelines (for Reference)

These “preceiving” guidelines are to identify obvious problems prior to exhibits. When in doubt, one should pass through to the judge(s). This list is not all-inclusive, will evolve over time and is abbreviated from the PRC preceiving paper. Always refer to the individual prospectus for each exhibit for specific instructions..

All Pieces:

- **Look for visible evidence of a method that distracts from the intended design**
- **Look for safety issues (sharp edges, sturdy stand/frame)**
- Sturdy/stable stand/frame –
 - All displays and/or stands should be able to hold the weight (for years!)
 - displays piece correctly (e.g., if in frame, the borders are balanced)
 - Frames are wired and wire is not exposed where it can scratch gallery walls (no sawtooth frame hangers)
 - Well-fitted pieces – e.g, no warping, Piece should sit/hang flat & level (e.g., framed - not crooked, 3D - not rocking) and functional pieces should fit and work (e.g, no mis-fitted lidded teapot or a necklace without a working clasp)
- Clean piece and stand/frame
 - No dust, fingerprints, smudges, marks, et.al.
 - No unintentional embedded/left over materials (no tape, kiln wash/dust, glue, fiber paper, marks, wax, clay)
 - Pieces should be clean and finished (no unintentional grind marks, chips, cracks, seams, ...)
- Inappropriate design (Obvious):
 - No pieces where commercially-produced elements are the primary part of the design (e.g., mass-produced beads on a necklace or using a mold/kit that became the primary design element)
 - No instructor-led pieces (e.g., a class where the instructor provided the design)
 - No copyright infringement pieces

- No sharp edges or corners that can cut or scratch (unsafe)
- No visible repairs such as glue, sculpture materials or covered cracks
- No undesired visible marks such as seams, cut marks, coarse grinding/lathing marks, errant etching marks, spurious sandblasting marks, etc.

Metal & Jewelry (incl. Stained Glass, Jewelry, Sculpture, some Mixed Media)

- Smooth solder seams - no visible solder seams, pitting or blisters; no gaps or incompatible edges
- No firescale unless part of the design
- Evenly and firmly set stones

Glass

- No blisters, cracks, fractures, holes, breaks, bumps
- Slumps and drapes are done to the shape desired (no folds, gaps, holes)

Sculpture & Stone

- Ensure pieces are properly balanced – it may sit on the base, but the base should safely hold the piece if lightly bumped

Fiber and Wood

- Sewing/weaving materials are neat and tidy with no loose threads, frays, hairs or fibers;
- No obvious stitching/weaving problems
- If using nails to attach rims, they should be cut and pounded to remove sharp edges

Clay

- No glaze runoff or grind marks;
- No unintentional glaze faults; bubbling, crawling, pinholes

Mixed Media (incl. Photography, Mosaic and Collage)

- No unintentional tear or scratch marks