

Feedback Wanted

from all artists entering regional juried art exhibitions for Images & Objects

Please send completed forms to:

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Name Emily Mattson Phone # 759-4552 Region Peace - Liard

Your regional juried exhibition and Images & Objects are **your** shows. Help us to continue to serve you by filling in this form; share your thoughts, both positive and negative, with us. It is not necessary for your work to be selected into Images & Objects to give us your opinion. If you are a member of a regional network, perhaps you would discuss these questions/ideas at your next meeting. Your evaluation provides the basis for ongoing and new programming. **Please complete after your regional show.**

Recently, the Assembly has both coordinated and been involved in several exciting meetings. Discussions have revolved around some mighty big topics, concerning not only regional shows and Images & Objects, but the value of Festivals in general and the jurying process in particular. Please participate with us in considering these issues by reflecting on & answering the following questions:

1. What do the words *amateur*, *emerging*, *professional* mean to you when used in describing artists? Are these useful categories? What do the words *Sunday Painter*, *non-professional*, *community-based* mean to you when used in describing artists? Are there other words that may better describe you as an artist? Please discuss. an emerging artist is one who is work

becoming more "focused" developing purpose in their work. Professional to me means
making money that saleable work or commissions. A Sunday painter is one who dabbles, not
taking the work that seriously. My observation is the general public views the "professional" artist as the one
most legitimate valuing the work by the money made.

2. How do you define *visual artist*? Does your work cross into other disciplines (music, performance, film/video)? my work doesn't

in fact, in my region I have seen no artists (visual) using other disciplines. The work up here
tends to be very traditional & "safe".

3. Are you more concerned with selling your work as a product, **OR** having your work shown because it makes a necessary statement to/about society, **OR** that there be opportunities for artists to be actively and economically connected to their community (such as solving/identifying challenges, such as mine tailings, clear cuts; being on council to implement policy; having input and being involved with construction of public buildings; being involved with community-based projects). Why?

I am more concerned about having my work shown in galleries (public). I see my
work as recording my life experiences & those around me. I'm not consciously
political. altho my bias may show through. I don't feel I have the time
& energy necessary to do art and be on councils to implement policies.

4. Do you think public funds should be available for the support of artistic works that are commercially marketable? Why or why not?

I don't think one should consciously not make saleable art. I think it's a matter of purpose
rather than monetary. If funds were only available to those that can't sell work. it would be
too confining. lines drawn. what is commercially marketable today, may not be tomorrow
& vice versa.

Please attach additional sheets if necessary.

please turn over



page 2
being called. The Academy sponsors the jurors to travel to each of the 13 regions in BC for two days — one in which they jury the work, selecting a set number of works which go on to Images & Objects, and the second in which they meet with artists to discuss the works. From here, selected artists are eligible to attend Images & Objects (this year in Campbell River), receive subsidies and attend three days of free professional development workshops. Realize that Images & Objects, the exhibition, is only installed for five days; it does however take 14 days to construct and install and three days to strike — at great expense. A catalogue, posters, invitations & opening night festivities all add on to the expense of hosting an exhibition.

5. Thinking about the current situation, do you think it should remain the same? Why or why not? *This has been my 5th year*

having been "selected" (which probably colours my view) I have found this event to be very stimulating ... in fact the major happening in my year. It has opened up my "art world". To have work seriously critiqued for what I'm actually trying to do... altho' I haven't attended all "images & objects" conventions... they have been a very big part of my growth as an artist... so you ask me should it remain the same? ... I think it's a wonderful event! ... especially for those of us living in more isolated areas.

6. Below are several suggestions for change. Please respond.
A. Do you feel it would be useful to send a resource person who would remain in residence in your community for 2-4 weeks, meeting not only with artists in your community, but also with institutions, such as schools, libraries, municipalities, parks and rec commissions, private businesses? Why or why not? *It could be useful... as long as there was access to this person on an individual basis.*

I find some of the organizations... altho' necessary & appreciated also put a lid on growth... especially in smaller populated areas. There is a tendency, I think, to label artists as worthy more by their social contributions more than the quality of work they produce.

B. If you had the option to have your work installed in your regional show & again in Images & Objects, OR to spend time with a resource person (a person with the qualifications of a juror, but not called a juror) sent to your community for several weeks, which would you prefer? Why?

That would be a hard choice... I guess a resource person in the community would be a more just way of sharing knowledge & opportunities... as long as "groups" didn't unconsciously exclude those individuals that aren't involved in councils societies etc. I don't have anything against anybody, I'd just find it pretty very difficult for some to conform to the already established group.

C. If we had to decide whether to install Images & Objects, the exhibition, OR host three days of professional development workshops for provincially represented artists, which would you prefer? Why? *altho' I find the exhibition exciting to see all the different*

media used & ways to visually communicate ideas... I think I'd choose the workshops... to actually see & follow "serious" artists careers; to get good advice as to direction; the support with other artists is what I need right now.

D. Do you think it would be a good idea to only install Images & Objects every other year, and use the saved revenue for something else? Why or why not? If why, what should we use it for? *that would be difficult here... that would mean Dawson Creek*

for example, would host the regional show only once every 10 years. It's hard to get much hype built up... if the period of time is so long. There are still a lot of people unaware of the event as it is.

E. If Images & Objects were installed bi-annually, should we still program provincial workshops, so artists could still come together annually? Why or why not? If there were no regional juried shows, how would we select which artists could attend? *because I feel*

that continuity is important, I think an annual event is better. I suppose artists could be "selected" by organization... but I think you'd find artists ^{selected} on the merit as a group works, not necessarily on the merit of their artistic endeavours. Maybe they could be selected thru' portfolio presentations? ... still a ^{juried} selection process I suppose.

F. Should regional shows be held annually, whether or not there is an Images & Objects? Would residencies be better? Why or why not?

7. What do you think of the jury process in general — not just for Images & Objects? Juried shows must charge entry fees to cover administration costs — what do you think about that? If you dislike juried shows, can you suggest an alternate model?

the jury process, is pretty subjective, I suppose... but I feel it pressures the artist to analyze ^{his/her own} intentions
... the biggest complaints I hear, are the choices made. ^(by jurors) In most cases, I feel these complaints are unjustified.
To be challenged to visually communicate ideas to a selected few people can be frustrating I suppose,
but I think being uncomfortable sometimes creates change.

8. For those artists/coordinators who have knowledge of or attended the BC Festival of the Arts, do you think Images & Objects should remain part of the current Festival? Why?

~~the concept of having all the arts celebrated at the same time is a good one~~ but for my part... it wouldn't make any difference to me if Images & Objects was a separate entity held at a different place, a different time. When attending the convention everything happening around us is irrelevant... the issue seems to be the workshops, speakers, exhibit w/s, I'm involved in... it's all I have time for.

9. What other structure could this or an alternate Festival or program have?

have the opp. at an Emily Carr.

~~artists chosen at regional shows~~
~~have access to workshops, or tours of studios outside their region,~~
... in other words some way of experiencing a broader art scene, ~~island~~ than the one we live in. 5 at an art college.

10. Do you think a provincial visual arts organization would be beneficial? Why? What needs should it address?

It could be perhaps a network of challenges & contacts... could be developed. A system network of challenge of and reward would be set up. There must be a way of acknowledging the fact that making art is ^{to a} ^{occupational} worthy thing to do, no matter where one is & the younger the better.

11. Is there anything, positive or negative, that you wish to share about your regional juried exhibition this year?

^{My 2 sons had their work selected}

work that had it been shown in the local gallery... (in my opinion) would be almost overlooked because of style... It was exciting to see the realization they had that their own individuality is good... to express themselves in their own manner was acceptable. How fortunate they were, to experience this reality at age 19 & 23. ~~This~~ selection of work, not necessarily realistic at its best, with life or without... is like a breath of fresh air! ... but the down side of this, are those that don't understand... make comments or choices... etc.

12. Are you a member of your arts council? Active in your arts council? Involved with your arts council in anything other than your regional show? Are there other ways your arts council could/does serve you and vice versa?

I have been involved with the local art society... but I honestly find my life almost too full to contribute much of my time raising money... there are some very dedicated individuals in D.C. who have done this type of work most of their lives... much to the credit of our community. My observation is, however, they have been unable to juggle the art making & the artists networking very equally. I'm not prepared to forfeit art making to other causes. At present I'm on an advisory committee to make positive changes in our local gallery.

Please attach additional sheets if necessary.

please turn over 

General Comments: I am aware that the type is very small on this questionnaire, and there are lots of questions to answer! Please know that the responses we receive from these forms are the basis on which we plan our programming. The intent of our programming is to assist you, the artist. If you do not take this opportunity to tell us what you're thinking, how can we know? Whether you have opinions about the previous questions or not, you all should have some opinions about this one final series of blanks!

Please share feelings/concerns/ideas about your regional show, Images & Objects, the state of the artist or the arts in your own community — anything which will tell us what is truly happening in the regions. It is our hope that with many of you sharing both the issues you are faced with and the dreams you have, we may be able to identify areas for collective action which we can begin to address together. We thank you in advance for your input.

We have a lot of advantages being artists in a rural community. For example there has long been active organizational groups that have established a unique public gallery. This gallery is available for all local artists to share, with ~~very little~~ ^{rejects} almost no ~~objections~~. Art work here is also saleable especially if one has been established as "the local artist". Although this gives one a great start with lots of encouragement . . . it also has it's down side. There is very little experimental work attempted; local viewers tend to be by the majority "art illiterate." There seems to be a "lid" on creativity.

As in all avenues of the arts, the organizations need money. To make money you need volunteers. Most of the volunteers have been doing it for eons . . . so they are considered knowledgeable. In a small population, there is a small percentage of people involved . . . so with the combination of a small group of organizers who have been doing it forever (bless their souls) we have again a "lid on creativity".
I don't know what the answers are . . . I know I'm not prepared (as I already ^{consequently} ^{it is hard to get your} ^{share of} ^{mentored}) to spend most of my creative time trying to make the organization float. I would soon ^{be involved in promoting real creativity - - experiments!} ~~know this is selfish. I am willing to give a small part of the time.~~

^{challenge} ^{controversy} ^{is raised}. The reason I think the regional show is so good is for the very reason the publicity is good enough. There are still alot of people who are unaware of the event . . . artists & viewers. Maybe "selection" is wrong . . . but the challenge isn't ^{else} ~~it~~ for the life of me . . . how can we come up with something ^{else} ~~it~~ ^{that'll push us} ~~to get out of our comfortable rut.~~ Maybe we need a local festival displaying art from different regions. That is, for example, Peace and shows in the Okanogan & vice versa . . .



28x 40'

Thank you

G B.

It is my opinion, that a good many people don't take advantage of this type of thing, unless they belong to already formed groups. It would be nice to include those unaffiliated with established groups. I think we need new & fresh involvement.

E. ^{But it could} ~~but it would~~ challenge our local artists to higher self expectations & maybe motivate & focus & purpose.

