

NAIA

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT ARTISTS

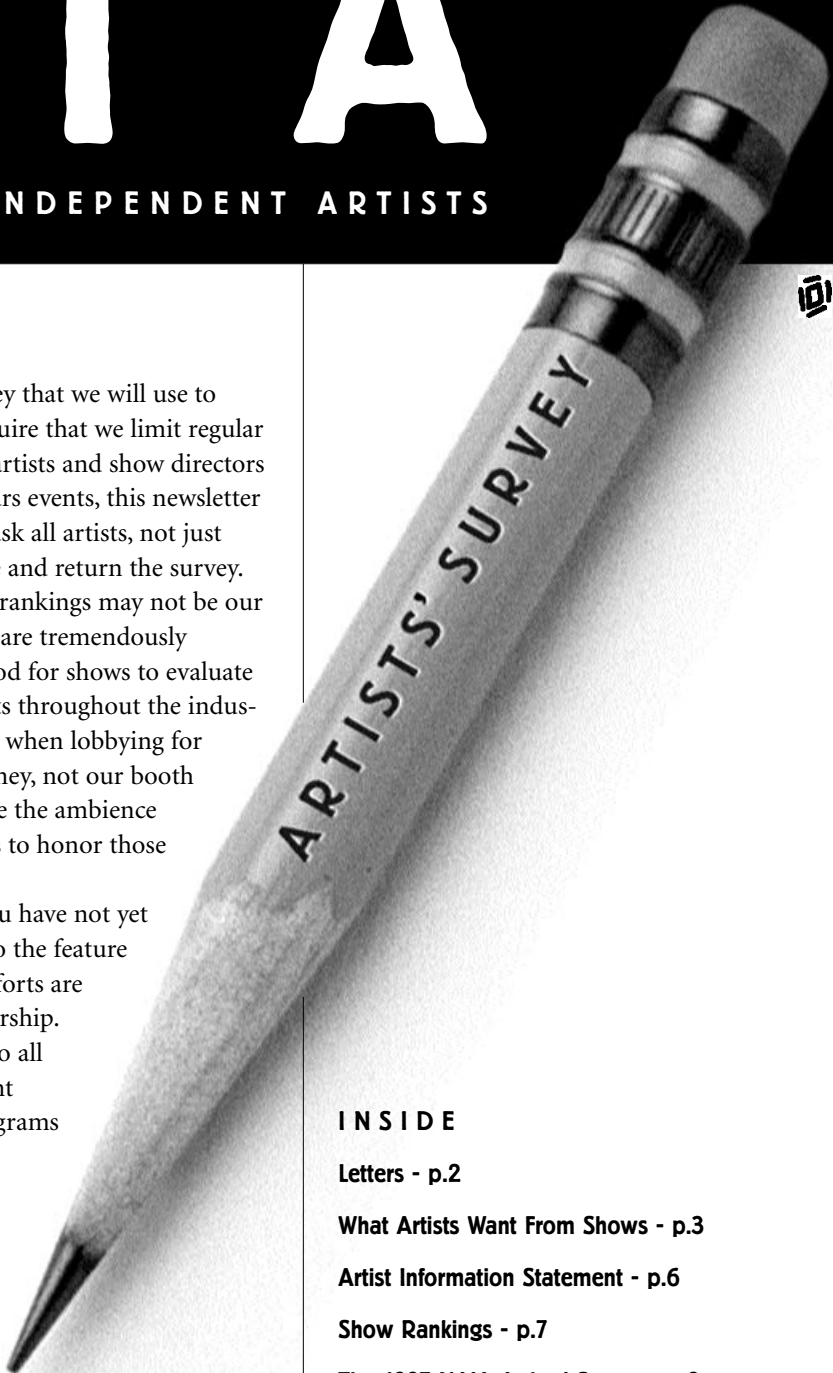
Editor's Introduction

The first NAIA newsletter of 1998 contains a redesigned survey that we will use to evaluate the 1997 art festival season. Financial constraints require that we limit regular mailings to our membership but in the interest of providing artists and show directors with the most accurate and comprehensive ranking of last years events, this newsletter has been mailed to over 4000 artists around the country. We ask all artists, not just NAIA members, to take the few minutes required to complete and return the survey. We cannot overemphasize the importance of doing so. While rankings may not be our main criteria when choosing the shows that we apply to, they are tremendously important to the shows themselves. Rankings provide a method for shows to evaluate their successes and shortcomings relative to comparable events throughout the industry. Shows that receive high rankings will use that recognition when lobbying for community and corporate support. It is that sponsorship money, not our booth fees, that allow shows to increase their advertising and provide the ambience and amenities that we enjoy. This is our opportunity as artists to honor those events, large or small, for their efforts.

If this is your first contact with our organization, or if you have not yet made the commitment to join us, please pay close attention to the feature articles in this issue. If you like what you read, and feel our efforts are working for your benefit, please support us with your membership. The NAIA is not elitist or exclusionary, membership is open to all artists and crafts people who support our goals. To our current members, we thank you for your ongoing support of our programs and hope that you will renew your membership for 1998.

Along with the survey, a major focus of this issue is the NAIA representation at the International Festival and Events Association convention in Montreal last October. For those show directors who were unable to attend, we report on some of the highlights of our presentation. Banister Pope addressed the issue of what artists want from shows, gleaned from their comments on last years survey. Kathy Eaton was involved in a panel discussion on the subject of show rankings, and she reports on the methods used by several well known ranking systems. She also provides details on how we arrived at our list of the best shows. Larry Oliverson provides a summary of his remarks on policy recommendations that were developed at the photographers conference last summer. It is a goal of the NAIA to assist show directors with the formulation of policies that will insure the integrity of the work being displayed while being respectful of the legitimate need of all artists to have a financially successful show.

Ray Hartl 



ARTISTS' SURVEY

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NAIA MISSION STATEMENT

We exist as an advocate for the economic and professional well-being of our membership, to educate, and to foster the health and growth of the visual arts.

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Published by the National Association of Independent Artists, P.O. Box 334, Dundee, Ill. 60118

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Letters

To Lawrence Oliverson National Assoc. of Independent Artists,

On behalf of IFEA, I would like to thank you for your tremendous contribution of time and expertise in speaking at the 42nd Annual IFEA Convention and Trade Show in Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

The following page is a compilation of the attendee evaluations for your session. Please note that your average score is based on six being the highest score possible.

Thank you again for contributing to the continued success of IFEA's educational Programs.
Sincerely,
Bruce Skinner, CFE, President

Visual Arts Affinity Group Affinity Topic: What Artists are Looking for From Show Management Banister Pope and Lawrence W. Oliverson

Average Score: 5.6

Session Comments:

- Very Informative, Good Info, Much Needed
- Very Helpful (2 times)
- Seems like NAIA is doing a great job addressing the concerns of both artists and shows.
- It would be great to have NAIA back as concerns change.
- Need more time for discussion about process of artist survey. (5 times)
- By far the best workshop I have attended.
- I have learned so much.
- Both very good. Just what I needed.
- We have been going around in circles on some of these issues. Can't wait to hear more details of the NAIA surveys.
- Excellent!
- Artists are an unbelievable source to tap!
- We need more of these.
- Thank you.
- Very focused and informative.
- Excellent information and handouts.

Dear NAIA:

It has taken me a couple of months since my festival (August 1-3) to get to my reading material... your spring, 1997 newsletter included.

Having just read it "back-to-back:" I want to express my appreciation as a show director for the time and energy you as individual artists are putting into educating your arena. In fact, the newsletter prompted me to immediately make changes in our show's application which is currently being typeset. I am changing the format for slides to your standardization model, my "date due" to

"postmarked date", listing the approximate number of spaces which will be available for new applicants plus extending my time for refunding space fees.

Also, having formed an association of arts and crafts festival directors in the Twin Cities this past year (for similar educational/upgrading reasons as yours), I will be sharing your first two newsletters with them at next month's meeting and encouraging them to join NAIA.

Thank you also, for including information from directors of art and craft shows as part of your editorial focus. There is no better way to improve a show that to learn about others.

Kudos to you all

Cari DeWall,

Executive Director, Minneapolis Uptown Art Fair

Dear Folks at NAIA,

Your newsletter is interesting and informative, and we support your efforts at sharing information, communication between artists and shows, and more standardized application procedures.

We've enclosed information about our organization. Let us know if we can be of help in any way.

Sincerely,

Judy Hammond, Fair Coordinator,

Rest of the Best Fest,

A Public Service of the

Craft Cooperative of the Northwest

Dear NAIA,

During some show last summer, perhaps the Cherry Creek Arts Festival, I picked up a NAIA Show Directors Survey. After looking through it, I placed it aside for future, more serious consideration.

Now, I must write to applaud your efforts to offer a common venue to discuss the issues facing artists. "Independent" is a term quite appropriately attached to artists and being of that nature, it goes against the grain to organize and unite any group of highly creative people. But in fact, we as artists can become aware and realize the strength of common goals through your publications. I would hope that you will address the daily concerns of artists with common sense discussions and an offering of solutions. As I prepare my applications for this year's shows, the standardization of slide presentation, comes to mind.

This is a perfect example of your ability to bring a simple issue to the attention of both artists and show promoters. We all know the enormous time and energy that could be better spent by this simple standardization. So, what has been the response?

I have enclosed my check for membership in the NAIA. I would like to receive any and all information, surveys, lists and other benefits afforded by my membership. I would also offer my professional views as a gallery owner and director of thirteen years, now an artist making a livelihood with my work. If past newsletters are available, please send them along.

Enclosed, is further information about my work. Eagerly awaiting more news, I am,

Yours truly,

C.T. Whitehouse

WHAT ARTISTS WANT FROM SHOWS

The following is pretty much the text of Banister Pope's remarks to the collected representatives of Arts Festivals from around the country at the IFEA convention in Montreal this past October. Banister and Larry Oliverson were invited, as representatives of the NAIA, to speak on "What Artists Want From Shows".

In late April of 1995, there was a disquieting incident at Springfest in Charlotte. Springfest is a downtown music and arts celebration that attracts a couple of hundred thousand people. On Saturday evening, some kids in the crowd set off firecrackers and yelled "gun," sparking a stampede of frightened people. In the panic, artists' booths were overrun. Pots were smashed, displays were trampled and whole inventories were looted. Regrettably, the police on hand were unprepared and by some reports, unresponsive. Many artists packed up and left. Others stayed and the show went on Sunday as planned. There were no more disturbances but a question of "who's looking out for us?" hung in the air.

Six weeks later, a group of about 25 artists, most of whom were in town for the Old Town Art Fair, met in Chicago to discuss the state of affairs. Discussion focused, naturally enough, on artists' safety at shows, as well as on the decline of some major shows, the need for new ones and on the need for opening channels of communication between artists and show committees.

I wasn't at that meeting and I don't know exactly what was said but the atmosphere was apparently charged. A handful of artists decided to pursue the idea of an artists association. I was recruited by Rick Bruno at Atlanta that year.

We formed a steering committee and decided what we thought our association should be. The idea of finding some consensus among artists who are by nature independent sorts seemed unlikely but it happened easily. We said, "don't you think it's time we had a collective voice?" And they all said "yes." I won't torture

you with the details but a lot of people worked hard, so here we are.

The one thing I hope all of you know is that the NAIA is made up of artists who care about this industry. Like you, we want your events to be wonderful. Your success and our success depend on one another. We want to erase the "us and them" division between show directors and artists and replace it with a sense of partnership. I hope you're with me on this.

I won't spend but a minute talking about these surveys. In order to know that we were speaking for the majority on these issues, we conducted several surveys, the last one published in our newsletter being the most extensive.

Most, if not all directors solicit feedback from the artists who participate in your shows. Some are very basic while others are quite comprehensive. You must experience some degree of frustration in realizing that for reasons ranging from indifference to fear of some sort of reprisals, the artists are often less than forthcoming in their responses. It's understandable that an artist who depends on participation in an event for a portion of his or her income will be reluctant to offer information that is less than complimentary.

Because the likelihood of any backlash is removed from a survey that is not affiliated with any event, the NAIA survey elicited plenty of uninhibited responses. The most interesting thing about the survey results was how unified the artists were in their thinking. On many of the issues, 80 and 90 and even 99 percent of the artists agreed. Copies of the surveys are available in our newsletter.

My job this morning is to stand up here and tell you what artists want. So I'll try to do that.

Recognition – I don't mean pats on the back. I mean recognizing who we are. Art festivals are not just something that happens on the fringe of the art world. Our industry is an art world of its own. We are not dependent on the blessing of the museums, nor on the sanctioning of academia, nor on coverage from a handful of art magazines for our success. Over the last 30 years, we evolved into something quite distinct from all that. Beyond the artists at its core, our art world includes everyone who contributes. The directors, their staffs, all the volunteers, the media, the patrons and the communities that host us. *The festivals and fairs are our institutions.*

There is something artists would like to see set straight. There is the ugly misconception that street fair artists are somehow less credible than gallery artists. What a joke! I don't know an artist on the street who isn't approached by a dozen galleries every year, and while many of us do participate in museum shows and work with select galleries, the artists who exhibit at outdoor festivals choose to do so. We choose festivals over galleries because we enjoy interacting with our public and knowing who our collectors are. We choose festivals over galleries because we're better at representing our work than they are. We choose festivals over galleries because we see a larger audience than they ever will and we choose not to give them 50 percent of our earnings. We'd like to see this publicized. Galleries have their place, but they're no benchmark for us.

Another thing that goes largely unnoticed is the tremendous educational impact artists have on communities. Where else can a family see two hundred artists who are each willing to spend a minute with them discussing the nuances and techniques particular to a variety of mediums. Kids learn the possibilities of expression, students see a standard of consistency and quality against which to measure their efforts. Adults gain

confidence to explore the museums and exhibits that may have intimidated them before, and the crowds already comfortable with art are beautifully entertained. With public arts funding being axed at every turn, what community could afford its citizens an opportunity like that? *No other group in the United States does more to educate the public in the arts.* We do it gladly, in exchange for a 10 by 12-foot space in a weekend market. This should be publicly recognized.

Representation – Maybe the single most important thing festivals can do to solidify good relationships with artists is to afford them the same respect you do any other arts professionals. Do this by making them a visible part of your process. Include at least one exhibiting artist on your slide juries. Employ them as peer jurors on-site at your events and seek their input as advisors. Involving artists in this way sends a big message, it says *you recognize their expertise, you value their experience and you trust them.* Consider the message that excluding them sends, when eighty-four percent of the artists responding to our survey were in favor of having artists on the juries. The argument most often given against this is a concern that artists will favor their friends or slight their perceived competitors. *It is far more likely that they will exhibit professional impartiality and integrity equal to anyone's.* Nothing else you can do will generate better word of mouth promotion of your event among artists. You not only get respected and savvy jurors, you gain instant ambassadors.

Several shows have put together artist advisory boards and we encourage you all to do this. Shows in every region can find artists who have national experience doing shows and who would be willing to serve as advisors. They can be sounding boards for your ideas, problem solvers and your best recruiters. Several of our members serve on such boards and would be willing to provide you a good model of how they work. We are currently discussing the formation of a national advisory board comprised of

NAIA members from each discipline that events could access through telephone or e-mail.

Information – Our surveys gave us lots of feedback on the information artists want from shows. Most of it could be provided on your prospectuses. To facilitate this, we assembled a guideline for an ideal prospectus/application, (call for entries, whatever). We have copies of this for all who are interested. Most notably, artists want to know how many spaces are actually available through the jurying process and how many applicants you had the previous year. They want to know the compositions of your juries and how their work is projected. Lots, and I mean lots of artists feel that jury results are manipulated after jurying so that directors can accommodate enough local artists or adjust the balance within categories. In order to quell this suspicion, we suggest that directors just reserve a few spaces to assign at their discretion and put it in the prospectus. You probably all need the leeway.

Here's some information that artists feel really strongly about receiving. They want feedback from the jurying process. Twenty or twenty-five dollars is a lot to pay for notification saying only yes or no, no matter how politely it's done. They want to know at the very least what their score was and what the cutoff score for their category was. The N.A.I.A. fully supports this idea. We realize that the different jurying processes you employ make this easier for some shows and nearly impossible for others, but we encourage any show that can manage it to begin doing it, and we encourage you to share your methods with others. Just a note that says "you're in, you're out, or you're wait-listed. The cut-off score for your category was 50 points and you scored 49 or 51 or whatever". Please do this.

Protection – Artists want protection. They want great security at shows. We assume that shows have a crisis management plan. We also assume you'll let us know about the weather so that we can



protect ourselves and our work. During the hours an event is underway, we all pretty much watch out for each other.

Where security really matters most is *after hours*. Can you safeguard our booths? Are we safe going to and from parking areas and are our vans safe? Jewelers appreciate a lock-up for their inventories. Artists rated security as a top concern. It should be a priority as you plan your events.

The other form of protection that concerns us most is what we do together to protect the perception and integrity of our events. We want you to feel confident in using superlatives to describe us and our work. You have rules and guidelines to govern what's exhibited and how it is presented. Make them clear. We accept the parameters when we sign on.



Banister Pope and Larry Oliverson at the IFEA convention

Ninety-nine percent of the artists returning surveys said they felt it was important to enforce your rules, so we encourage you to have a mechanism in place for doing so. This protects everybody.

Understanding – Here's what artists want you to understand. It's a tougher way to make a living than most people suspect. Because there are so many good artists competing for spaces in so few really worthwhile shows, there are no guarantees that we'll win a space anywhere. Artists who choose to exhibit in festivals must, like farmers, make hay while the sun shines. They can't afford to take a week off. So to fill their schedules, artists are forced to apply to more than

one show on a weekend. If they're accepted at only one, no problem, they go there. If they are accepted at both, they must choose the one that makes the most sense to do. Which means they must cancel the other one. When artists are confronted with policies that say "acceptance is a commitment to show, no refunds," they shake their heads. Who can afford that? Some shows do, but all shows need to consider the artists' dilemma. Cancellation and refund policies should allow the artist the time it takes to finalize her schedule. It's reasonable for shows to withhold \$25 or even \$50 to cover the costs of calling in someone from the waiting list and making a new sign, but if the space is filled the show should return the artist's booth fee. After all, the wait-listed artist knows he's too late to be included in the program or benefit from publicity, but he steps up and pays the full fee. What does the show lose? Some shows give the argument that they don't want to encourage cancellations, especially for the artist to accept another invitation elsewhere. We think they should change their policies to show more confidence in their venue and more consideration for the artists they hope to attract.

The best solution we've come up with is for shows, all shows, to make the booth fee due upon acceptance before a certain date. Space requests should accompany the fees and be honored in order of the postmark date.

It would be helpful if shows which are locked into conflicting dates would work together. They could agree to notify artists by a given date and in doing so, eliminate much confusion.

For a lot of artists, money is tight. It's hard to have several \$250 and \$300 checks in limbo. If you can design your policies to ease the financial burden on artists, you can bet they'll appreciate it.

Amenities – Obviously, artists want more than amenities but we can't say enough good things about the shows which continue to show increasing consideration for their exhibitors. Their efforts to provide us with easy

access during set-up, close in parking, electricity, bathrooms and booth sitters are wonderful, as are the pre-negotiated hotel discounts.

Some shows really go all out to make us feel appreciated – volunteers who bring ice water, rest areas out of the heat, really attentive staffs, big parties and great food. What we want to say on behalf of artists is "Thank you," "Way to go," and "That's the spirit!" Artists realize of course that not all shows have the same resources. The point is that we recognize the quality of the effort. We like to know that events value our participation.

One artist on our survey said that he didn't care how bad it was, "if the sales are good, I'll be back." I guess that's a viewpoint that can't be totally overlooked, the nicest thing you can do for artists is to be sure you attract plenty of the right people. Thanks.

Note: since returning from Montreal, we've been encouraged by the calls we've received from shows indicating their intentions to implement our suggestions but the convention's tight schedule of seminars left us little time to engage event representatives individually. A fact of effective communication is that people usually need to hear things several times, so we ask that as the opportunity arises you make these points again and again.

In addressing artist's concerns, we limited ourselves to those areas in which we were able to present a consensus of opinion. I know there are a lot more issues out there and that there are some unique perspectives as well. We've got a great spot on the net for continuing dialog. Please send your comments. www.avocet.net/naia/forum, or e-mail and snail-mail addresses are on the front of the newsletter. Thanks, Banister

Artist Information Statement



Responses to our survey last year indicated that a majority of artists feel that misrepresentation in one form or another is a big problem. Everyone realizes that the negative word of mouth that misrepresentation generates is a threat to the general perception audiences have of us, our collective integrity, and the value of our work. Show directors echo our concerns. Why do we put up with it? The NAIA encourages shows to enforce their rules and to eliminate problems (and problem exhibitors) as they surface, but they're hobbled by the reluctance of many artists to speak up, and by the difficulty of gathering proof.

From the outset the NAIA has refused to be the 'police' and we're not about to start. But we can be pro-active in leading the way toward eliminating any dishonesty out there by including in our displays a brief, straightforward statement about our work and our processes. Not only will this immediately raise the level of comprehension among visitors to our booths, if enough of us begin to offer this disclosure to our audiences, eventually the omission of such a statement will become obvious to patrons. The intent here is not to dictate a standard or acceptable manner of producing work. It is to insure that the public understands what it is seeing, who made it, and how.

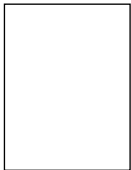
*The text should describe succinctly and clearly any information about your work that might be important to consumers, judges, show committees, or other artists. The purpose of the disclosure statement is to **identify, inform, and educate**. The size and layout can vary, with diversity and creativity being more desirable. It is vitally important, however, to be as inclusive as possible.*

All the pertinent aspects of how you produce your work should be disclosed.

Some factors various artists should consider:

- *Identify your medium and the process you use*
- *Explain specifically how the work is produced.*
- *If assistants are used, a concise description of their involvement should be included.*
- *It should be stated if an outside source such as a foundry or printing lab is used.*
- *Where appropriate, identify materials and unique methods of handling the materials.*
- *Include any educational information you feel is important.*

Artist Information Statement *(sample)*



Artist Photo

Name:
Address:
Phone:
eMail, web
address, etc.

Medium

Method of Production

Materials

Education Statement



Show Rankings

Art fair rankings have been used by many artists, especially those entering the business, ever since they began to be published. How are these done? What is their purpose? How are they used? What can be done to make them more accurate, credible, useful? These are all questions that surfaced during the session 'Publications: Hows and Whys of Ranking Events' that was held at the IFEA convention last October. The panel consisted of Greg Lawler, publisher of the Art Fair Source Book; Christi Ashby, representing Sunshine Artist; and me, as the person responsible for the data entry and calculations for the NAIA rankings.

Sunshine Artist has been doing rankings since 1993, when their 200 Best List first appeared. The magazine represents nearly 13,000 core readers who are either subscribers or newsstand buyers. However, only the current subscribers (approx. 10,000) are eligible to submit ballots that are bound onto the April issue. Their rankings are derived from these surveys. To insure the integrity of the responses only original ballots are accepted. In the past some shows have copied and distributed ballots that have been sent to the magazine. These do not count toward the rankings although comments included on them may be used in the narrative portion of the 200

Best article. The only criteria for rankings is artist's sales and their purpose is to serve as a resource for their readers. However, it is important to note that different lists are devised for sales in three categories - fine art, fine craft and traditional craft. Since Sunshine Artist represents a wide variety of working artisans (from fine art watercolorists, selling single works for thousands of dollars, to Christmas ornament crafters selling \$5 items) they felt it would be unfair to only rank one type of show. When the ballots come back the information is entered into a database and the average sales figures per show are computed. The rankings are figured on how each show compares with others. In compiling the write ups every bit of information on hand for each show is considered. The results are published in the annual 200 Best Issue.

Greg Lawler's Art Fair Source Book grew out of a card system he developed as an exhibitor to keep track of shows. When other artists began to ask to see these to help in their own planning, he started to formalize the system and make it available on a commercial basis. His method is to send evaluation cards to art fairs in order for them to, in turn, distribute to their participants. The fairs that receive these cards are those that



offer a reasonable expectation of the possibility that an artist will make a minimum of \$1000 in sales for that event. Below that, it would not be likely that artists who make a living in this business would participate. Artists are asked to mail the completed cards in after the show. The returned post cards are kept together until the rankings are tabulated once a year. Sales per event are then averaged and fairs are ranked accordingly. The number of days per show in relation to average sales is taken into consideration when the rankings are done. The results are included in the next year's source book.


Although the Harris List was not represented at the convention, it is the oldest rating service available to artists. The list began in 1978 when its originator, Larry Harris, attended a disastrous although highly recommended, show in Winfield, Kansas, where he endured 120 degree heat and lost \$300+ dollars for the weekend. At that point he decided that he couldn't afford to do a bad show again and created his own list of recommended shows. In his publication, shows are ranked on several criteria. Most important is feedback from participating artists. In addition, he has carefully studied show programs for many years and determines the quality of the show by who repeatedly returns and by how far they travel to the show. By reviewing changes in show applications, he can tell

whether a show will improve or not. All the following examples will indicate a show in decline: (1) a significant decrease in award money (2) the addition of 20% or more exhibitors which reduces the average sales for each artist, and (3) a major change in show dates and/or location.

The NAIA rankings were only a part of a comprehensive survey of artists opinions concerning the art festival industry, that was sent to approximately 1500 artists in January of '97. We asked participants to base their rankings on a variety of criteria that influenced their estimation of shows, including, but not only their sales. The surveys were entered in a database, a computer program, that counted how many artists ranked each show in what place (1 to 15). The place rankings were given a numerical weight: 15 pts. for 1st place, 14 pts. for 2nd, 13 pts. for 3rd, etc. down to 1 pt for 15th place. (Few artists ranked 15 shows – the more typical respondent only ranked about 5 shows) These were then entered into a spreadsheet program, a computer program designed to do large calculations. The results were tabulated and the shows ranked according to their cumulative point scores. Our rankings were separated for 2D and 3D media in order to obtain a better understanding of their merits, especially since a few of the highest ranked shows do not accept 'flat' art. In addition we separated out the

10 most highly regarded shows for the 4 media that received the most returns.

In the discussion following the presentation at the IFEA convention it was brought up that the current rankings were never designed to serve a public relations function for shows; a factor that seems to be increasingly important as shows compete for community support and corporate sponsorship. They are mainly produced for artists to help with planning their exhibit schedules. The NAIA is new to rankings and our format tried to serve the functions of not only being a resource to artists but to give shows some feedback as to their relative success. Some of the representatives attending the convention felt it would be helpful, in future surveys, to rank shows on individual criteria such as awards, hospitality, location, amenities, treatment of exhibitors, etc. It was brought up that shows in locations that do not have a strong art buying public try to make up for that lack by providing other amenities for artists and a sales only ranking system shuts them out completely. The survey in this issue of the newsletter tries to address these problems by having shows ranked on 12 separate criteria, in hopes that it will encourage all shows to develop artists friendly policies. The discussion on rankings is sure to continue but it is our intention to broaden the arena by with the '97 Artists' Survey.

Kathleen Eaton 

Photographers' Meeting Results and General Policy Recommendation



The content of Larry Oliverson's presentation 'What Artists are Looking for from Show Management' at the IFEA conference is summarized in the following article. It is a combination of specific conclusions of the photographer's meeting and general policy recommendations.

When the NAIA surveyed show directors and artists, one of the primary needs that surfaced was the development of standards or guidelines for the various media categories. Since each of these categories has its own unique qualities which are best known and most thoroughly understood by the practicing artists within that category, it was felt that their input was crucial in formulating recommendations. Business, marketing, and fairness issues needed to be addressed but it was of utmost importance not to inhibit the creative process or artistic integrity of the medium.

In June the photographers held the first 'formal' category meeting. We reached out to all photographers, not just NAIA members, and encouraged input via letter, fax, email, or (best of all) attendance at the meeting. What actually transpired at the meeting was extremely interesting. In the process of discussing the various issues, consideration was given to

1) historical precedent, 2) purpose, 3) enforcement, 4) the various perspectives of the general public, museums, galleries, and collectors, and 5) the specific venue of art festivals. As each issue was discussed and recommendations were suggested, it became clear that the best recommendations were those that applied to all categories. There were some suggested that were specific to the photography category, but the majority were cross-categorical. This result was particularly appreciated because it was consistent with one of the broad objectives of the NAIA which is to help create and maintain a level playing field for all categories.

It should be noted that much of what our organization does is based on an assumption that we feel is shared by both the festivals and the artists. That assumption is the desire to expose communities to the best aesthetic experience possible through original art. The "big picture" objective is to find simple, reasonable, and enforceable policies that can serve as guidelines to accomplish that experience. These policies would address most of the problems and accomplish most of the goals that each show may have, while being fair and respectful to the participating artists.

We arrived at three basic fundamentals that should help meet the desired criteria and also eliminate the need for numerous specific restrictions. These three fundamentals are:

1. Slides (work samples and a booth slide showing overall presentation) – These would serve as the artist's 'Contract' with the show. The artist would commit to exhibiting work that would be in keeping with the work samples submitted for jurying. In addition, he/she would commit to an overall presentation that would not significantly deviate from the submitted booth slide.



2. Disclosure – An artist statement with photo I.D. should be displayed in each booth. This statement should briefly provide such information as a description of process and whether or not assistants are used in the production of the work. If assistants are used, a specific description of their involvement should be explained. It should also be stated if an outside source such as a foundry or printing lab is used. In short, any information that might be important to consumers, show committees, or other artists should be disclosed. This disclosure would serve to identify, inform, and educate.

3. Enforcement – An on-site evaluation by the show committee, aided by the slides, disclosure statements, and peer jurors should be used to identify violations. In the event of a minor infraction, the artist should be given an opportunity to remedy the situation. If the violation is significant (e.g. a proxy exhibitor), the exhibitor should be asked to leave the show and not be allowed to apply for a set period of time. *Please note that enforcement is not meant to be over-zealously applied. It should be used in a rational and prudent manner to maintain quality standards and effectively deal with flagrant violators.*

In addition to the three fundamentals, we arrived at some additional recommendations that could deal with or eliminate potential problems.

- It was suggested that a copy of a photo I.D. accompany the booth fee and be compared at registration. This could be used to eliminate multiple applications under different names and serve to eliminate proxy exhibitors when the artist is required to be present. When combined with the photo I.D. on the disclosure statement, it would assist the show committees in enforcing that the artist be present for the total duration of the show.

- The establishment of a viewing committee, peer jury, or the use of judges' on-site jurying scores is recommended to evaluate an artist's work at the show. Most artists prefer to have their complete body of work along with their overall presentation evaluated rather than just a few slides. This evaluation could be used for return invitations. The Ann Arbor Street Fair currently uses a viewing committee that includes two artist peer jurors. Coconut Grove and the Plaza Art Fair (Kansas City) both use peer jurors. Cherry Creek previously used the judges' on-site judging scores to determine their return invitations. These are

all premier shows that have consistently had some of the highest quality work of all the festivals. This should indicate the value and effectiveness of on-site evaluations and return invitation policies.

- It is recommended that Artist Advisory Boards be established at both a local level and a national level. Virtually every community has a number of experienced artists that have a wealth of knowledge. These artists can be an invaluable resource to show committees. If perhaps a broader perspective or a second opinion is desired, the national board could be consulted. It is generally understood that show committees and artists working together produce the best results.

Finally, more specific to the photography category, there are two issues that the attendees of the photographers' meeting thoroughly investigated. The two issues are **limited editions** and whether or not photographers should be required to do their own **printing**.

Consensus was reached on the issue of limited editions in a remarkably short time. In attendance were both photographers that used limited editions and those who did not. It was generally agreed that the motivation behind this issue is to discourage an overly commercial appearance. It was felt that imposing a limited edition requirement did not adequately address this concern. Instead, the use of disclosure, booth slides, site jurying, and enforcement could more directly handle the problem. The decision to use limited or unlimited editions should be that of each individual photographer. In reaching this conclusion, the following reasons were prominent among those discussed:

- 1) Historical precedent – Most significant photographers historically have not limited editions of their work.
- 2) Museums and collectors acquire photographs based on artistic or historic merit regardless of whether editions are limited or unlimited.
- 3) Each photographic print is considered an original and may vary from the next because of darkroom work. The negative contains an artistic concept which is open to reinterpretation each time the negative is printed.
- 4) If limited editions are done properly, all photographs of an edition should be printed at one time and the original negative/transparency destroyed or defaced. Virtually no photographer does this.
- 5) Because many photographers sell their work through other venues such as galleries, consultants, and museums, it is unfair for one venue, in essence, to control that marketing.
- 6) If some 2D artists are restricted to edition sizes then, to maintain equality, artists in other media should also have a limit on how many times they may repeat a design.

The second issue specific to the photography category is whether or not photographers should be required to do their own printing. There are strong arguments on both sides of this issue. The primary difference is an interpretation of where the final step of creative input occurs. The one side feels that the capturing of the image on the transparency or negative is the final creative step. An exhibit of the photographs of Henri Cartier- Bresson at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts supports their position. Bresson is regarded internationally as one of the best photographers in the world, yet he did not print his own photographs. The other side feels that creative decisions are continually being made during the printing process. For them the print is the finished product and they feel the need to be actively involved in its production. A vote taken at the meeting was virtually an even split with only a slight preference for requiring photographers to do their own printing. The issue was revisited a few months later. Although a second vote indicated a somewhat stronger preference for the same result, it was felt by many that this vote should be viewed as preliminary and that a broader base was needed to accurately determine the position of the category. It was unanimously agreed that adding the phrase “under direct supervision” to any printing requirement was virtually meaningless. It may send a good message but in practice was so broadly interpreted that it was the same as not having any requirement. As a final recommendation, requiring a disclosure statement in each booth stating who printed the work would be a way to handle the issue. This would eliminate the need for a specific requirement that would be difficult to enforce.

As an organization, we feel strongly about the recommendations we have made. We understand that improving our industry will continue to be a fluid process and realize that the best way to accomplish those improvements is through a working partnership between the artists and the festivals.

ADDENDUM NOTES

1) *It should be noted that the extremely tight scheduling of presentations did not allow for a constructive dialogue or feedback on our presentation. This could have been an extremely productive opportunity. The organizers recognized this fact and are planning to rectify it in the future.*

2) *Since the conference, an additional focus has been put on the issue of limited editions and photography. After a more in depth examination, some shows are understanding that the impact of limited edition requirements exceed their intent and are eliminating the requirement. In addition to the reasons presented above, some practical aspects were considered. If one show selects an arbitrary number of an edition and a second show felt strongly that the number should either be larger or smaller, the photographer would be prohibited from exhibiting at one of those shows. This restriction would not be based on the quality of the work but on an arbitrary determination of a size of an edition. A second practical consideration was that any photographer that does not currently use limited editions would be forced to produce a completely new body of work between the issuance of a prospectus and the time of the show. Since most photographers require years to build a body of work and most do not use limited editions, this would be an unfair imposition. Also, an inherent characteristic of the medium is that it is a medium of multiples. There is a distinct difference between multiples and reproductions*

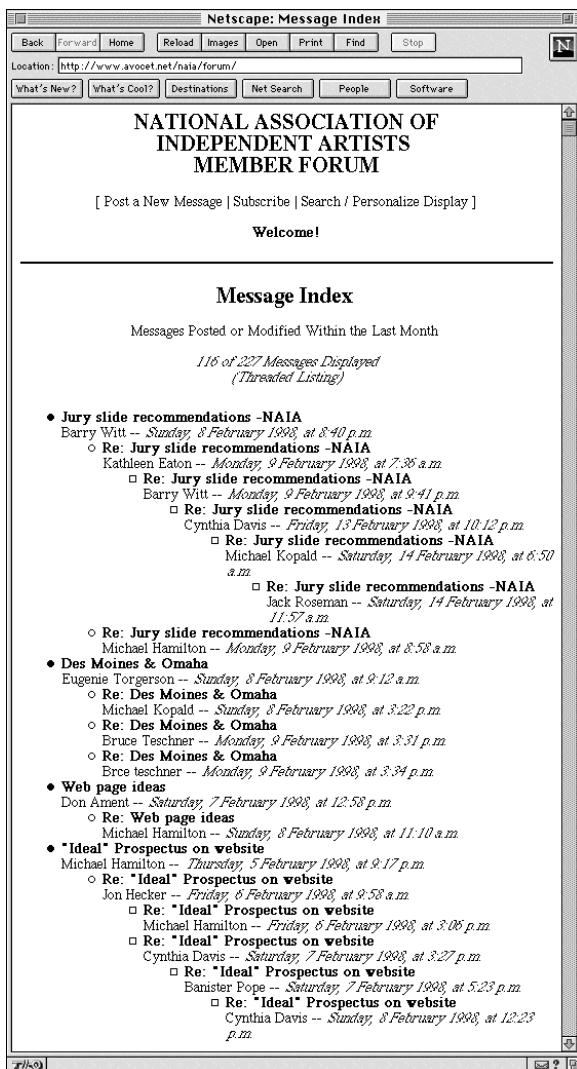
3) *One of the problems show directors mention often is the difficulty they have in dealing with exhibitors who jury into their shows with fine work and then display a predominance of low-end items or an overabundance of browse bins, circumventing the show's aim to achieve a consistent aesthetic. We're familiar with this complaint because we hear it from other artists all the time. The solution we've proposed is that shows pay closer attention to booth slides and that they be specific in requiring that booth slides be representative of the artist's entire presentation. The slides then serve as a standard for comparison should the show need to address a flagrant violation. As shows begin to rely more heavily on booth slides, many of us will need to make newer or better slides of our presentations. Actually, it seems that the only presentations ever called into question are the ones with an overly commercial ambience, but protect yourself. If you use browse bins, include them in your slide. If you show mostly mugs or offer tons of earrings, show that. Everyone knows that making booth slides is no fun, but it gives us something to grumble about, so don't forget your camera as you head out this spring.*



The NAIA Forum

www.avocet.net/naia/forum

On the internet the place to go for art fair news, travel information, where to stay, how to get there, and exchange ideas is the NAIA forum. This site is not indexed to the public so 'bookmark' the location and check it out daily. You can also receive messages that are posted automatically by email by filling out the free subscription form at the Forum site. The forum is for the exclusive use of artists and should not be confused with the NAIA Home Page www.avocet.net/naia which is a separate eye-popping, internationally accessible web site.



The screenshot shows a Netscape browser window displaying the 'NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT ARTISTS MEMBER FORUM'. The browser's address bar shows 'http://www.avocet.net/naia/forum/'. Below the browser window, a list of messages is displayed, including topics like 'Jury slide recommendations -NAIA', 'Des Moines & Omaha', 'Web page ideas', and 'Ideal Prospectus on website'. Each message entry includes the sender's name and the date and time of posting.

Show News

Prior to the IFEA conference in Montreal, Jon Hecker spent many hours distilling the information from over 150 show applications into an **NAIA Ideal Prospectus**. Any show interested in seeing this please contact us for a copy or it can be viewed on our web page in the **area for show directors**.
www.avocet.net/naia

Shary Brown has been named executive director of the **Ann Arbor Street Art Fair** succeeding Susan Froelich who resigned to accept a position with the University of Michigan Office of University Relations. The new director has been the Interim Executive Director of the Michigan Guild of Artists and Artisans and for nearly ten years has served as the Guild's Art Fair Director. Ms. Brown is a native of Ann Arbor and has had a life long involvement with the Ann Arbor summer art fairs. Her primary interest is the visual arts but she is also on the board of the Blues and Jazz Festival. She graduated from the University of Michigan and Wayne State University Law School, and in October 1997 completed the Certified Festival Executive course, a four year course, offered by the International Festival and Events Association and Purdue University.

The new executive director of the **Michigan Guild**, Josephine Kelsey, comes to this position from the Center of Creative studies in Detroit. She will guide the search for a new director of the Summer Art Fair.

The **Arts Festival of Atlanta** is moving its next show to June 11-20, '99. There will be no fall show in '98. The festival cites financial difficulty as the reason for eliminating the fall venue. Representatives of the NAIA are hard at work on an alternative fall show.

The Computer Category

Springfest, in Charlotte, North Carolina will not be held in 1998. Their Board of Directors will participate in a task force to study the future production of uptown events. In the wake of the 1995 incident, the Springfest organizers took the very positive step of moving the art and fine crafts portion of the festival to a lovely park several blocks from the performance stages and beer vendors. The move was applauded by the artists and drew the more genteel portion of the crowd, as hoped. 1996 was a good start for the new location but the 1997 show was plagued by rain and was finally called off on Sunday. Charlotte is a great city that deserves a first class show. We wish them all success with their reorganization.

The **Cherry Creek Arts Festival** has made some changes in the category definitions listed in their current prospectus. Under the category of Mixed Media, the second sentence should be deleted [*the work has relief or depth of not more than one-eighth (1/8") inch*]. Under the category description of *Photography*, disregard the last sentence [*Prints must be from limited editions signed and numbered by the artist*].

Computers aren't going away so let's deal with it. Computers won't make a bad artist good but they can be a great tool in the hands of an artist who is good to begin with. As their role in art making inevitably increases they will, if they don't already, command a category of their own. We've been doing some research to try and forestall controversy and confusion and arrived at the following guideline:

If work already exists (as a painting, photograph, intaglio or relief print, drawing, ...whatever) and a photocopy or digital impression is made, that copy is a second generation or reproductive image; a 'reproduction'.

A first generation (original) digital print is made directly from a newly created digital file in which the computer is used to generate or manipulate images that differ substantially from preexisting examples.

Send your comments to the newsletter or website forum:
www.avocet.net/naia/forum

Show Awards

As mentioned earlier in this issue the NAIA will begin recognizing shows for excellence and for their efforts on our behalf. What shall we call these awards? Ideas offered so far have been:

- Canopy Awards
- Keystone Awards
- Audreys (for Audrey Feinberg, the founder of the Cain Park Arts Festival and the driving influence behind their artist-friendly policies)
- Harvey Awards (for Harvey Feinberg her husband who was instrumental in producing the same show)
- The Feinberg Awards (for both of them)
- Beacon Awards

Obituary

Harvey D. Feinberg, co-founder and director of the Cain Park Arts Festival in Cleveland Heights died of cancer January 22, 1998. A vivid personality, he was a stalwart advocate for artists and with his first wife, Audrey, particularly championed our efforts to earn our livelihoods by making what we love. Shows, such as the Cherry Creek Arts Festival, patterned their artist-friendly policies after the procedures introduced by the Feinbergs at the Cain Park Festival.

Harvey was born in Cleveland and graduated from Cleveland Heights High School. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and earned a bachelor's degree from Western Reserve University in 1949. After working as an account executive for a local advertising firm, he and his first wife, Audrey, started the Ad-Vantages advertising agency in 1965, representing area manufacturers and service companies. He was named University Heights Citizen of the Year in 1984 and was inducted into the Cleveland Heights High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. He served on the school board from 1972 to 1980, including four years as board president. His first wife, Audrey Feinberg, died in 1992.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Audrey and Harvey Feinberg Scholarship Fund, c/o the Cleveland Institute of Art, 11141 East Blvd., Cleveland 44110

New Associate Members



People News

Valerie Hector's article 'Prosperity, Reverence and Protection: An Introduction to Asian Beadwork' was featured in Vol. 7 of **Beads**, The Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers. She will also be presenting a lecture 'Invoking the Aso: Dayak Beadwork of Borneo' at Bead Expo '98, the International Symposium & Bazaar in Santa Fe, New Mexico March 25-31, '98.

The photography of **Norm Darwish** is featured in a line of greeting cards produced by Gina B Designs Inc. and sold throughout the country.

Kentucky fine art photographer **Don Ament** has been awarded a 1998 Al Smith Fellowship from the Kentucky Arts Council. Ament was one of 20 fine artists selected for the grant, from approximately 200 applicants across the state of Kentucky. Ament may use the \$5000.00 award for any purpose that will support his professional artistic development.

Judy Hammond
Best of the Rest Fest
1916 Pike Place, Suite 146
Seattle, WA, 98101
206-363-2048

Hal Brainerd
821 Bluefield Ave.
Bluefield, WV 24701
304-327-9330

Bill Charney
384 Milwaukee St.
Denver, CO 80206
303-321-3190

Heidi Wright
Coca Cola River Place Arts Festival
P.O. Box 10555
Greenville, SC, 28603
(864) 370-1795

Carolyn Williams
Columbus Art Festival
55 E. State St.
Columbus, OH 43215
carolyn@gcac

Cari DeWall-Obst
5249 Drew Ave. S
Minneapolis, MN 55410

Eileen Kunzman
Magic City Arts Connection
1128 Glen View Rd.
Birmingham, AL 3522
205-595-6306

Carl Richardson
**League of New Hampshire
Craftsmen Foundation**
205 North Main St.
Concord, NH, 03301
603-224-3375

Doris Walker
**Mill Avenue Merchants
Association**
520 S. Mill Ave. #201
Tempe, AZ 85281

**Powers' Crossroads Country
Fair and Art Festival**
P.O. Box 899
Newnan, GA 30264
770-253-8180

Saint Louis Art Fair
Two Mark Twain Circle
St. Louis, MO 63105
314-746-0420
cprost@swbell.net

**Santa Fe Community College
Spring Arts Festival**
3000 N. W. 83rd Street
Gainesville, FL 32606
352-395-5355

Harriet Hoxton
Director of Programming
Three Rivers Festival
2301 Fairfield Ave. Ste. 107
Ft. Wayne, IN 46807
219-745-5556

Letters

continued

*(forwarded by NAIA member, watercolorist,
Gary Curtis)*

**To the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce
Fairhope, AL**

Dear Ms. Ward:

I am writing with regard to my application to the 46th Annual Arts & Crafts Festival. I have participated for several years in the Eastern Art Association show where I have been a top award winner. I was concerned about the loss of traffic over the past few years while the Chamber show seemed to thrive. As I began to fill out my application for the 1998 show, I decided to perhaps do your show instead. Since I did not have an application, I called the Chamber of Commerce to have one mailed. I was told that the deadline was passed, but that I could still apply if I sent an additional forty dollars with the application. I thought that a bit odd, but sent my slides, jury fee, application fee and space fee. Yesterday I received my notice that the show was full. My space fee was returned, but my slides, the twenty-five dollar jury fee and the forty dollar late fee were not.

I have been doing shows for seventeen years. I am a professional artist and have been accepted in the largest shows in the country. I do not say this to boast of my credentials, but to let you know that I have a great deal of experience applying to and exhibiting in art festivals, from Ann Arbor, Michigan to Winter Park, Florida. I have never been so misled by an art festival. If, as your letter states, "the number of applicant responses has exceeded the available booth space by far," then I should have never been encouraged to send my application after the deadline. I understand that any artist can be rejected from a show and that the jury fee is an expense of doing business. But to keep a late fee for an application that has not been considered is less than honest. I have no evidence that my slides were even reviewed, except for the fact that you kept my jury fee. Exorbitant jury fees have become a fact of life for us who make our living doing art festivals. I only reluctantly agreed to send a late fee, but that only seems reasonable upon acceptance to the show.

I hope you would reconsider keeping late fees for artists not accepted into your festival. It appears that artists are being encouraged to apply late only to receive their additional forty dollars. I do not believe that the cost of looking at my slides exceeds the twenty-five dollar jury fee. I also hope that in the future you would not encourage exhibitors to apply beyond the deadline unless in fact you do not have enough applications to fill the show. Also, I would appreciate you sending back my slides since I sent you a self-addressed stamped envelope for that purpose. They, also, are a costly expense of doing

art shows. As a member of the National Association of Independent Artists I am very concerned that industry wide standards can be set that benefit artists as well as show promoters. I assure you that this policy would never be approved.

I want you to know that this is the first time I have ever written to a show for any reason whatsoever. I hope you do not merely attribute it to sour grapes. I am simply concerned that outdoor festivals that expect professionals to exhibit with them need to run their shows in a professional manner. I have seen too many good art shows die a slow death over the years because their indifference toward artists eventually affected their quality. Thank you for your time, and I wish you success with the 1998 festival.
Sincerely,
Gary D. Curtis

Dear NAIA,

Could you please print something about the response I received from the Spring Green Arts and Crafts Fair, Spring Green, WI.

In corresponding with S.G.A. & C. F., secretary S. Foraker, sent a follow up letter stating I was the only artist questioning their policy of not releasing jury committee names, and that since I am the only artist who has made this request, thus the policy probably would not change, at the request of the six people who are the jury committee.

Please enlighten me, other shows and fairs of quality are more than happy to reveal this highly significant information, since a jury fee is requested with the application to the show.
Thank you,
M.J. Gerwatoski

P.S. I also asked if jury people, if not from 1998's show but from former years could be known, but no comment was made about this.

(The NAIA requests that shows describe only the composition of their juries. Is it important for us to know the names of the jurors?)

NAIA Logo Competition

The time has come for us to adopt an official logo and we invite artists to submit design ideas.

The logo will appear on all NAIA materials and should work in both black and white and color.

Submissions should be finished, if not camera ready, and accompanied by a signed note granting the NAIA ownership of the logo design. The winner will receive something wonderful in addition to our thanks and recognition.

Entries should be addressed to NAIA Logo, P.O. Box 334, Dundee, IL 60118 and postmarked by May 15th, 1998.



In future issues there will be:

FREE CLASSIFIED ADS TO MEMBERS

Mail to P.O. Box 334,
Dundee, IL 60118
or Fax (847) 426-3608
or email Eatonart2@aol.com