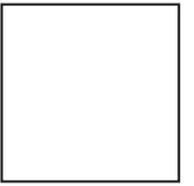


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the independent Artist



issue eight • fall 2010



Director Spotlight: Margue Esrock and St. James Court

In October of 1957, fifteen artists paid their half-dollar registration fee and agreed to donate ten percent of their sales to the St. James Court Association. Thus was the St. James Court Art Show born. One hundred fifty-seven dollars worth of art, hung from clotheslines, was sold at that first show, with one hundred dollars netted for the association's funds.

Taxed with preservation of Louisville's landmark St. James Court and its historic fountain, the association had created an enduring and beloved tradition that thrives to this day. By the time the show's founder, Malcolm Bird, chaired his last show in 1967, 200 exhibitors displayed their work to an audience of 40,000.

Over the years, several Old Louisville block associations cooperated in the management of the show, leading to many changes and expansions. Exhibitors were gradually added on Belgravia Court, where that section's director, Connie Light, has been in charge for over thirty years. Connie introduced several innovations, including a jury process for selecting artists. The Fountain Court and Fourth Street sections were added in 1975.

The Show expanded with the Fourth Street Association, the Third Street Art Fair, and the West End Baptist Church. In 1994, St. James Court Art Show Director Ellen Patrie collaborated with Connie Light to reach an agreement with the various block associations to create The Consortium. The group shares planning, problem solving, and resources.

In 1995, when Susan Coleman became director of the St. James Court show, she enhanced the show's operations with a professional artist selection jury, an on-line application process, replacement of the commission with a flat fee, and a more efficient set up and break down procedure. Surveys conducted through Sunshine Artist declared St. James Court as the best art show in the nation in 2003 and 2004. **The Independent Artist** recently interviewed Margue Esrock, Susan Coleman's former assistant and St. James Court's current show director.

Q: How long have you been the Show Director for St. James Court?

I have been Show Director for six years, and this will be my eighth year with the organization. The St. James Court Art Show is 54 years old.

continued on page 10



Steady Now: Tools and Tips for Canopy Security

by Holly Olinger, NAIA Board Member

On any given weekend this year, we heard horror stories about artists who lost their canopy, displays, and inventory to a furious Mother Nature. The aftermath of these episodes is exhausting emotionally and financially. While good commercial insurance is a necessity to help you bounce back from disaster, some new products specific to the art fair industry, some borrowed tricks from architecture design, and some cross-purposing of gear from other industries will help put you in a better position to avoid disaster during storm season.

The Geometry of Triangulation

Even those of us who are not particularly geometrically literate can understand a few basic principles and some terminology borrowed from the architecture and construction trades to help us protect our canopies. When strong thunderstorms swamp your display, the natural forces at work involve several components—down bursts, wind shear and puddling on tent roofs. The puddling is common place on the “instant” canopies and most people know hula hoops in the four corners are the cheap quick fix when you cannot afford the better canopies with barrel or dome roofs.

Tremendous wind forces are a more complex issue. Many shows located in dense urban environments have notorious wind tunnels that form between the high rises. Some show directors go to incredible lengths to help protect the artists with weights, circus-sized tents, etc. Often, however, we are left to our own devices. When there is no option for ground staking, the types of weights you use and how you reinforce your tent with webbed strapping can make a huge difference.

First, it's important to understand these physical forces and why, by their design, show tents are very weak structures. All geometric shapes have varying strengths under compression or during stress tests. Unfortunately, the square—your basic 10' x 10' structure—is the weakest shape possible under stress. In the construction trades, when natural forces bend a square or rectangle out of shape, it's called racking. Your square shape becomes more of a parallelogram, leaning like a certain famous tower in Italy. Add in the thin metal tubing supporting a canopy, and the next set of negative forces usually follows—shear and twist. The result: mangled poles and torn canopy tops (see photo above).

The simplest way to prevent racking is reinforcement through altering the square shape with “triangulation” bracing. Simply put: break down the geometry on each side wall by creating a series of small triangles within the square. The triangles reduce the stress to the outer structure and add exponential strength to your tent skeleton. It's all fairly simple to execute with common gear and a slightly different approach to anchoring the tent than most artists

continued on page 6

Hot Works – Patty Narozny, Show Director
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The Future Of Electronic Payment Processing

The Independent Artist is a publication of the National Association of Independent Artists (NAIA).

NAIA was formed following dialogue that began at the Old Town Art Fair in Chicago in June of 1995. The group's purpose is to enhance the economic well-being of people who exhibit their work at quality outdoor and indoor art and/or fine craft shows, encourage creative expression and artistic excellence, and expand public awareness, appreciation and acquisition of fine art and fine craft.

The NAIA actively works to be a valuable resource for not only artists, but also the organizers and directors of art shows.

To learn more, visit our website:

NAIA-Artists.org

Many thanks to the artists, collectors, merchants, service providers, and other professionals who generously took time to write articles for inclusion in this publication.

To advertise in future issues of *The Independent Artist*, contact:
IAAdvertising@NAIA-Artists.org

This publication was edited, designed, and produced by Sara Corkery, NAIA Communications Director.

Contribute!

To submit articles, letters to the editor, or ideas for future issues of *The Independent Artist*, phone 630.244.9406 or email Sara Corkery:
SaraCorkery@NAIA-Artists.org



You can join NAIA today.

See page 9 for more information about how NAIA serves as a collective voice for the art show artist.

A Letter from the NAIA Board Chair

Next Director/Artist Conference Announced

The NAIA would like to announce that our next Director/Artist Conference will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana, hosted by the Broad Ripple Art Fair, May 21 and 22, 2011. The conference is the 18 (meet and greet evening) to the 20. Show Director Iris Dillon and the Indianapolis Art Center will host our conference prior to their festival. Indianapolis has a vibrant arts and cultural scene and has recognized the value of the arts to the benefit of their community growth and character.

Conference details will be announced in the days to come. Our conference goal is to bring together artists and show directors to discuss the present state of art fairs and how we can work together to make them more successful for all involved. Mark your calendars for that week in May and arrange your schedules to take part in the conference.

American Craft Week

Craft Retailers and Artists for Tomorrow (CRAFT) have begun a project to celebrate the wonders of American craft. For ten days each October, they are asking all those who create, sell, display, promote, collect, or just plain love American craft to join them in publicizing, displaying, and educating.

NAIA is proud to have joined with CRAFT to sponsor American Craft Week and urge all of you to go to their web site at www.AmericanCraftWeek.com to find out more about the ten day celebration. Please note the "Crafting a Nation" an interactive conference co-sponsored by the Smithsonian American Art Museum will be held in Washington, DC, October 8 and 9. American Craft Week is a project that promises to be an annual event so, if you missed it this year, bookmark this page and look for the celebration next year.

Buy/Sell, revisited

The topic of buy/sell at shows that require work created by the artist continues to be on the lips on artists and directors alike. How do we really know what is buy/sell? What can we do about it?

A number of artists and directors have contacted NAIA at various times to report suspicions of buy/sell and we've investigated as much as we can. At present we're consulting an attorney who deals with such matters to find out what all of us can do to discover and report, yet be as protected as we can against legal repercussions.

This issue is going to take all of us making a concerted effort to make a difference. NAIA is doing what we can to field questions as well as facilitate discussions as to what artists and directors can do when they encounter buy/sell where it should not be.

Sharing information is most important.

At present, we've begun to encourage directors to take part in a discussion on the Show Director's section of our forum. Each show has its own policies in how to deal with those suspected of violating rules set out in their prospectus. A sharing of that information with other directors would be helpful so that others can know some options and caveats.

Artists go from show to show across the country and have opportunities to see things that directors don't. We see works and practices that sometimes simply don't add up. We can check business cards and web sites, then share that information with shows directors and each other.

This issue is important to everyone involved in Art Shows, from directors to artists and even customers, and we do not wish to cause any harm to legitimate exhibitors who are following the rules of the individual show. All of us are doing what we can to make a living and some shows allow artists to sell work that others don't. This is a matter of clear rules and requirements, diligence, and working together to make sure the artists and shows provide the public with what is promised.

Once we find out more information concerning procedures we can all follow when buy/sell is suspected, we will let you know. NAIA is taking the issue seriously and is working to formulate a course of action so that shows and artists can work together toward a solution.

Join NAIA and be a part of the "one voice" of the art show industry as we continue to be committed to integrity, creativity, and the pursuit of excellence, advocating for the highest ideals and practices within all aspects of the art show environment. ❖



Buy/Sell: Taking Action

Artists:

- Be familiar with a show prospectus regarding what kind of work is allowed at a show.
- If you suspect buy/sell, check the business card of an artist and look at the business web site.
- Give information to the director of the show.
- If you are a NAIA member, you may discuss suspicions on our forum. Other artists may know more about the artist in question.
- Remember that suspicions are not fact!

Show Directors:

- Make certain that your prospectus is clear on what is allowed at your show.
- Enforce the rules that are in your prospectus (artists recognize and welcome such action and the word spreads).
- If you are a member of NAIA, share your concerns and experiences with others on our forum. It is a networking device for you to connect and share stories with your fellow directors.

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The Medical Consumer: Keeping Costs in Check

by Cynthia Davis, Photographer, NAIA Staff, www.CynthiaDavis.com



There are now several web sites that help the medical consumer find out what the average price of a procedure or test is in their area and then the best prices. Some of the areas of non-urgent healthcare services listed are dental, medical, vision, cosmetic, walk-in clinics, mental health, weight loss, acupuncture, audiology, and even ear wax removal.

OutOfPocket.com

This site has really informative articles on various procedures and their average costs along with helpful hints like May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month and many clinics offer discounted prices during that month. March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

HealthcareBlueBook.com

This is an online consumer guide to help you determine fair prices in your geographic area for non-urgent healthcare services. While it does not have a list of doctors, it gives you a good starting point for negotiation especially if you pay cash.

NewChoiceHealth.com

Not all procedures are listed (did not list DEXA bone density scan), but for what it does list, it provides amazing information with benchmark prices by clinics in your geographic area. I was amazed to find that there was such a wide spread of costs for a colonoscopy in the Ann Arbor area: \$2,100 - \$7,200.

PriceDoc.com

Matches up health care providers and consumers. Health care providers sign up on this web site and agree to a discounted price for various procedures/tests. You print out a coupon with the price on it or request a cash price quote from the provider. PriceDoc.com suggests that prepayment be made in cash to "reduce office paper work and overhead." This site depends on which providers sign up. I searched the DEXA scan procedure and the closest was 217 miles away in Cleveland.

These are just a few sites to help you become a better informed consumer of medical care. If you are aware of or find others in your search, please let me know and the

NAIA will add them to our Health Care Insurance and knowledge page on the NAIA web site.

Cheap Prescription Eyewear

I recently lost my expensive, progressive lens eye glasses (yes, I am vain—no bifocal lines for me!) in the Huron River when our canoe overturned (don't ask...). Because it was an emergency, I went to my local chain eyeglass store where I got an immediate appointment for a new prescription exam and walked out with new glasses the same day—and also a large amount charged to my credit card.

But if you don't have an emergency, why not let your fingers do the walking on the internet? There are many web sites now where you can order prescription eyeglasses for a fraction of the cost. I found out that the eyewear industry can mark up prescription eye glasses up to 500%!

continued on page 12

Helpful Web Sites

As independent artists we need to keep our costs as low as possible and usually purchase large-deductible health insurance policies to keep our costs in check. More frequently many insurance companies are not covering certain non-urgent healthcare services, procedures and tests especially if they are just "recommended" by our doctors.

Recently my doctor recommended I get a baseline DEXA bone density scan and a baseline colonoscopy neither or which are covered by my large-deductible insurance plan. Inspired by an article in *USA Today*, I started to search the web.

BY

HAND ARTISANS GUILD

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COLUMBUS, OHIO

CLEVELAND
BY HAND
NOVEMBER 13-15, 2011

2010 ART FAIR SOURCEBOOK
TOP 40

WWW.BYHANDEVENTS.COM

Dialing It In: Accepting Credit Cards with Smart Phones

by Wendy Hill



The Companies Included in My Research:

PayNet
Mobile Merchant
Merchant Anywhere
Merchant On The Move
Intuit
Merchant Plus
Square

Doing the Research

Alright, it's time to share my research on Smart Phone credit card applications and services. I made a spread sheet with columns for important data: name, monthly service fee, transaction fee, monthly minimum/maximum, check card/qualifying rates, key-in/reward card rates, set up/application fees, swiper cost, and who does the actual processing. Did I miss anything?

After narrowing it down (damn, there are a ton of choices), mostly by cost, I came up with a Top Two:

1. Merchant Warehouse • 800-791-9715 (ask for Lee) • lmailloux@merchantwarehouse.com • http://merchantwarehouse.com/credit_card_software/merchantware_mobile_iphone_application
2. Payment Max • 800-979-0210 • salesgroup@paymentmaxhq.com • <http://www.paymentmax.com/about-us/comparison-chart.aspx>

Both services cost \$7.95 per month, and have no set up or application fees. Merchant Warehouse has a little better rates: 1.65 percent for almost all swiped charges—except for reward cards and keyed-in charges—which brings the percentage to 2.40. Payment Max is 1.99 percent, going up to 2.89 percent. The percentages are close enough that I feel the differences are pretty inconsequential. Merchant Warehouse has a .21 fee per transaction; Payment Max's is .20.

Here's what differentiates the two: both have a \$25 per month minimum, which is prorated (so if your fees are \$20, they only charge the difference). Merchant Warehouse, however, will let you put your account on hold, whereas Payment Max didn't mention any hiatus. I wonder about this, though, since neither of them require a contract—couldn't I just cancel the account from November through January and require checks for any purchases?

Another difference is the swiper, which plugs right into the audio jack. Both systems look easy to use and both send an email receipt to the customer. The swipers are optional; you don't need them to use the application, but it will make your rates lower.

Payment Max's swiper is called "ROAM" (<http://www.paymentmax.com/products/terminals/roampay-credit-card-swiper.aspx>). Of course, they have nothing but good things to say about it and it's only \$49. ROAM is available for iPhone immediately, and will be available for Droid very soon.

Merchant Warehouse's is called "MagneSafe BT90" (<http://merchantwarehouse.com/content/search?SearchText=smart+phone+card+reader&x=0&y=0>). It's a bluetooth device, and costs \$149. It was not yet available of this writing, but was scheduled to be out shortly.

I think this is significant: Payment Max does its processing through First Data, so it is more like a middle man. I also have had trouble getting their customer service on the phone, and have been transferred, on hold, sent to the wrong terminal . . . all of which does not endear the company to me.

So I've made a decision to go with Merchant Warehouse. The company does its own processing, with Wells Fargo as its back-up. I have talked with a man named Lee, and he's been available and personable, answering my zillion questions with clarity. Merchant Warehouse also has the highest Better Business Bureau rating, whereas I can't even find PaymentMax on the BBB website. Merchant Warehouse just strikes me as a more legitimate company, with 24/7 merchant support and people that actually answer the phone when you call.

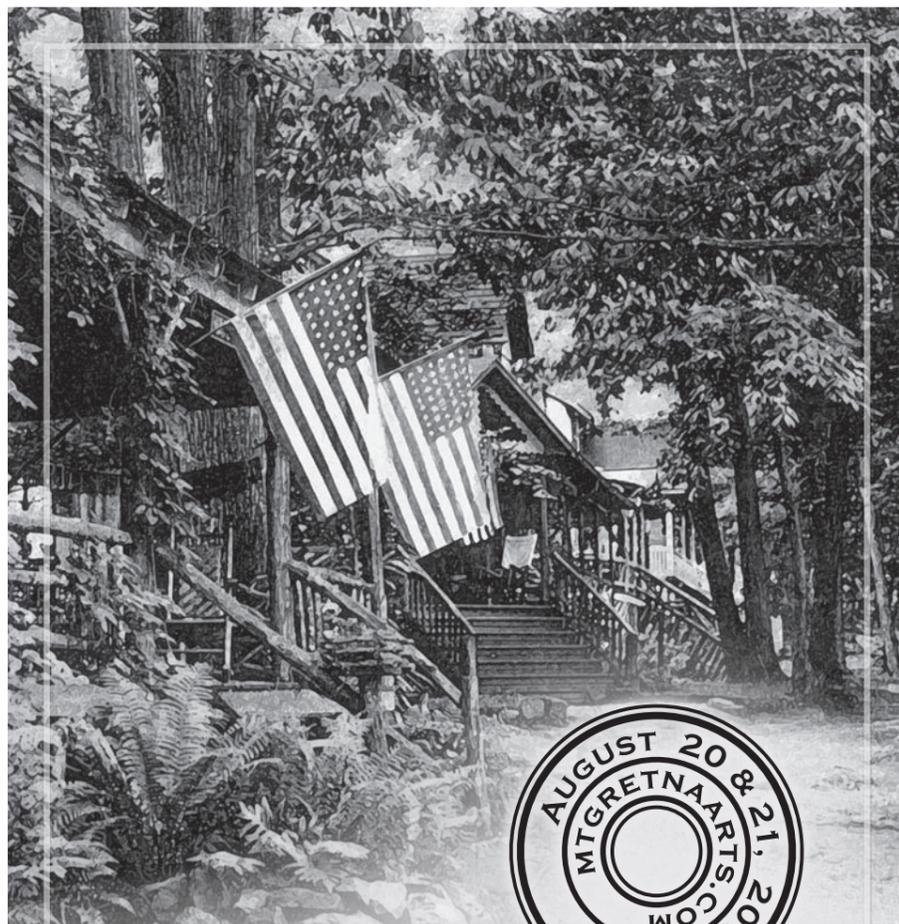
So, there you have it! I'm so relieved to have made a decision! If anyone has any questions, please feel free to email me—after all this work, I'd love to be able to share what I know!

Oh, and if any of you DO decide to go with Merchant Warehouse, please mention my name as a referral (Wendy Hill). There is a reward, which will help pay for the swiper :)

The Story on Square

I know folks with iPhones have been considering Square—here's why I didn't consider them: although they have (sort of) changed their maximum sales policy (it was \$1000 per week, which won't work for most of us), it was only marginally: any amount you make over \$1000 goes into a holding account and will be transferred to your account after 60 days. I informed the rather surly sales representative that they are the only ones I've found with that policy, and that this policy is why many people will not be using their system. ❖

Frequent award winners, blockprinters Marvin and Wendy Hill have made their living since 1990 entirely through the sale of their artwork at juried fine arts festivals and galleries across the country. Marvin died too young, but leaves behind a remarkable legacy of blocks that Wendy continues to print, color and exhibit. She remains on their 1850s farmstead in South Central Wisconsin, printing and painting blockprints in a converted chicken house studio.



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have been using (see illustration, right).

One of the easiest ways to create triangulation on an outer wall in areas where you can use ground stakes is to take your ratchet straps and go from top right to bottom left and vice versa. In other words, anchor your ties to the top corner of your tent and then, rather than tightening them directly down to the foot below, go to the foot at the opposite corner of that side. You may not be able to create these triangles on all four sides due to the arrangement of your entrance, but even if you only anchor your two side walls like this, the tent will be much more stable than if you anchor from top to bottom.

The most innovative new device we've seen for triangulated anchoring systems is called The Claw®.

Due to its unique three-sided design (think more triangles!), this ground stake provides enhanced downward pull to anchor your tent more vigorously than normal tent stakes or spiral dog ties. The design of The Claw® allows for quick and easy installation AND removal. Claws placed at the corners allow for triangulated side walls, creating excellent resistance to racking from sheer winds. Even if you choose to stay with the typical top to bottom anchoring method, The Claw® will provide you with a better likelihood of surviving "tent creep" in high winds. My ultimate tornado alley tie down would be claws on each corner—plus weights, which we get to in the next section.

Steady Now—Weights and Stabilizer Bars

Going back to construction 101, reinforcement is another important method of keeping our tents in place during a storm. For artists who can afford the Light-Dome® or TrimLine Canopies, the optional stabilizer bars available from the manufacturers are a valuable addition to your safety system. They give you the opportunity to lash your Pro Panels or mesh grid walls to both the top and bottom of your tent with bungee balls. Even better, you can lay heavy sand bags over the stay-bars for an inexpensive weight option.

If you are a tool-head like me, you can revel in opportunities to

modify your tent by adding optional awnings, hooks for hanging heavy art, etc. I have even welded and drilled stabilizer bars for square-legged tents in the past, but you don't have to work that hard. Anyone can order from the immense selection of tent fittings at Creative Shelters.

Their fittings are the exact materials and dimensions used by the canopy companies. You can retro-fit your tent to include stabilizers made from conduit poles from any DIY home superstore. This will allow you a lot of freedom to customize your individual display, including putting the stabilizer bars at mid-wall height to stop tent side flapping from bashing your interior panels. Creative Shelters also sells The Claw® system in a convenient two pack with carry bag.

Everyone has seen tents weighted down with concrete filled PVC tubes or cinderblocks. Aside from the less-than-polished appearance of the blocks, one drawback of these systems is that they only allow for the capacity to tie down from top to bottom. There is no triangulation possible with such a design. Happily, two new companies are offering heavy weight systems that will enable the user to create those safe triangles.

Happifeet™ weights were designed by artist Cindy Gordon in collaboration with an engineer friend. They provide thirty-two pounds (upgradeable) of heavy steel for each corner, but the really cool part is that multiple options for attachment to your tent legs allow several configurations, including placing the "handle" towards the middle of your side wall so you can attach your straps from the opposing upper corner to that foot. Triangulation and weight in a slim design that will travel easily!

Similarly, Eaton Canopy Weights have a clip system that holds their stackable weights in place around the tent leg resting on the foot. I believe it would be possible to anchor your straps to these clips as long as you have the clips oriented so the "closed" side of the clip is facing your strap. The Eaton weights are very unobtrusive, and, because of their stacking design, you can put more weight on the side of the prevailing winds.

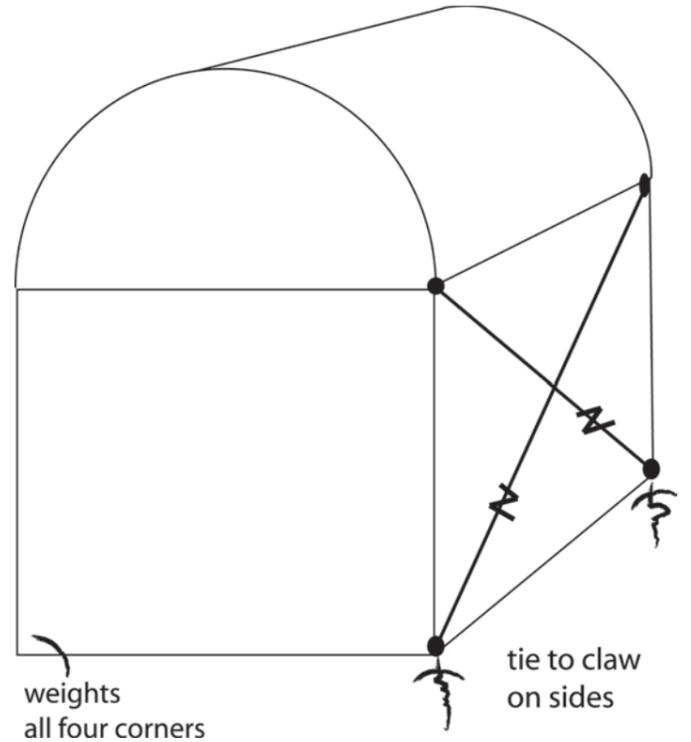
Low-Tech Creativity

Low-tech solutions are not all bad. Many artists choose sand bags for weights because the sand is cheap and readily available. The artists who like this option also save on gas by not carrying extra weight with them. They buy sand at each show location and then leave the used sand in flower beds or distributed across grassy park areas.

Depending on how many shows you do per year and how much sand you buy, this may be a good solution for adding weights to your tent. The negative aspect is the really poor design of the sand bags provided by most canopy manufacturers. They often provide only have tiny little holes for pouring in the sand, thus requiring two people and a funnel to fill them with ease or speed.

Borrowing from the sports world, I would like to recommend that any artist who wants to use sand bags go to the soccer supply site below to check out the well-designed, attractive, and rugged sand bags used for soccer goals. The goal anchor bag (product # GA-0335) is a sturdy nylon bag with handles and a zipper across the entire top side. These will be easy to fill and easy to dump plus you can put 45 pounds of sand in each bag. Now that is some super protection in an affordable, portable, and attractive package!!

Be safe on the road friends! ♦



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WHERE TO FIND IT

The Claw® • <http://www.theclaw.com>

Creative Shelters • <http://www.creativeshelters.com>

Happifeet™ • <http://www.happifeet.com>

Eaton Canopy Weights • <http://www.canopyweights.com>

Soccer sand bags • <http://www.soccersupplies.com>

Softening the Blows: Kudos to the Des Moines Art Festival Staff

Preparation and Planning Pay Off

Shortly after severe thunderstorms and high winds hit the show site during the 13th Annual Des Moines Arts Festival on June 25-27, 2010, words of praise for the Des Moines festival staff and administration began to appear on artists' forums across the Internet. *The Independent Artist* would like to take some space to acknowledge the advanced planning and post-storm work that helped to mitigate the pain of the storm.

Friday into Saturday . . .

After midnight on Friday, just as festival staff were leaving for the night, winds began to pick up and rain started to fall. With 70-mile-an-hour winds ripping down 12th street, the festival's emergency plan was activated. Festival staff are housed downtown during the event expressly for the purpose of enabling them to respond quickly to situations such as this. Some staff members immediately headed out into the storm, while others called in vendors responsible for the festival's power, generators, tents and other large structures.

Particular troubles surfaced on Grand Avenue, where artist tents were damaged, and on 12th Street, where an Emerging Iowa Artists (EIA) tent crumpled under the storm. Individual artist's tents were unzipped by the lashing winds and some tents flipped over. The artwork in several displays was completely exposed. Some festival staff clung to the EIA tents to hold them down while others gathered up artwork that had fallen to the ground.

In order to avoid the dangers of downed electric lines, power was turned off in the affected areas. Once the storm began to subside, staff notified artists of the damage and the actions being taken to retrieve their work. Artwork was gathered inside the festival's office where staff and artists began to dry and salvage what they could, wiping down framed work and hanging wearables. Several artists assisted staff in making phone calls, collecting artwork, and reassembling damaged tents.

"I spent all of Friday night at the Festival and was surprised to see all the help, even at 3:00 in the morning. There was a lot of damage done during the storms but it could have been worse if help would not have been there." —Bill Lemke, Photography, Waukesha, WI

Clean up continued throughout the night so that the festival could be up and running at 10 a.m. Unfortunately, four artists, including NAIA members Carla Fox and Dave Fox, had to pack up and leave the Festival due to the severity of the damage to their displays.

"Stephen [King, the festival's director] had to call us three times to wake us up in the middle of the night, bless his heart. We were here until 4:30 in the morning, and the place was so methodical, so organized. We were very impressed." —Carla and Dave Fox

Then Sunday . . .

Around 2:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, festival staff were called to the site by security for another round of stormy weather. The EIA and artist's tents were damaged yet again, along with the festival's giant metal entrance signage. The scaffolding was so badly mangled it had to be taken down for Sunday's opening.

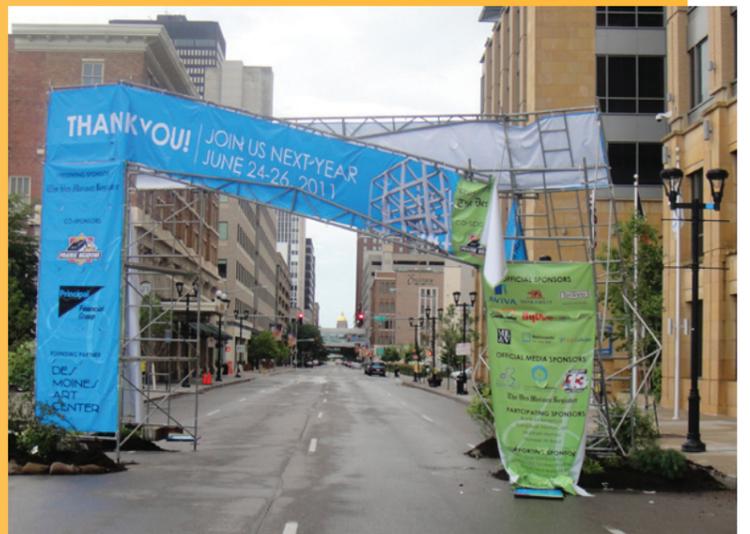
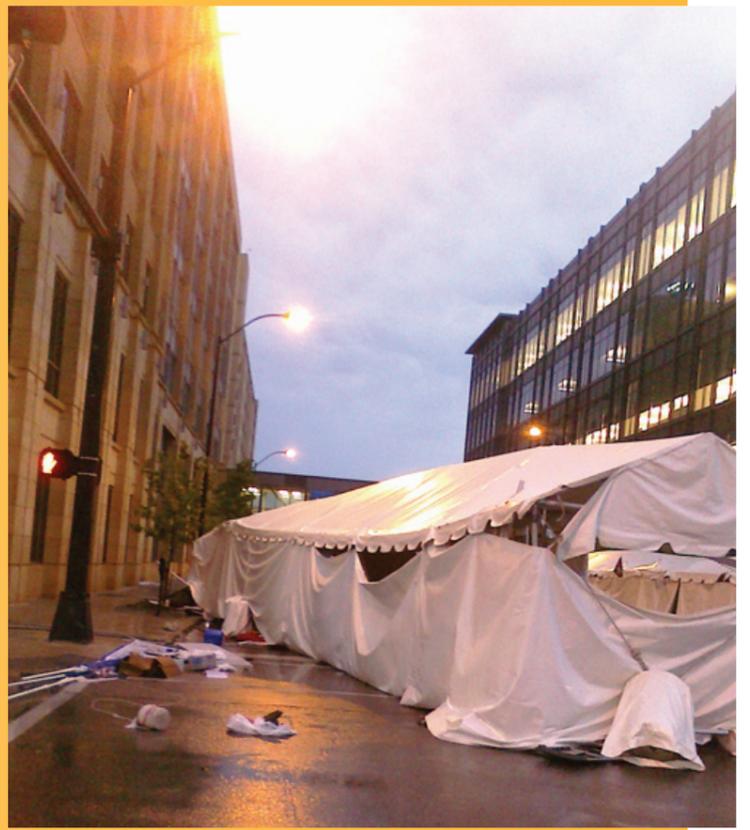
Thankfully, many artists had removed their artwork in advance of any potential bad weather on Saturday night, while staff took additional precautions with other areas of the festival. These proactive measures kept the damage to a minimum, so it ended up that only a handful of artists were affected, but there was still a lot to accomplish by way of clean up and repairs to ready the site for opening at 10 a.m. Many tents were ripped, poles were bent and broken, and banners and flags were destroyed.

"I think a lot of shows could learn from [Des Moines'] organization, treatment of artists, etc. It really is appreciated. Even in the face of an emergency, the festival team acted immediately and went above and beyond to help artists." —Amy Lansburg, 3-D Mixed Media, Valdosta, GA

Ultimately, the show survived the weekend of severe weather and no one was injured. To assist the artists affected by the storms, the Des Moines Arts Festival set up the *Des Moines Arts Festival 2010 Artist Relief Fund*, held at the Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines. The festival generously seeded the fund with \$5,000. Money will go toward replacing the artists' ruined displays.

It is heartening to see show administrators handle the volatile weather and its consequences with forethought, planning, and sensitivity to the artists. What a great example to set.

"The damage and devastation would have been so much worse if not for your quick thinking and savvy action of retrieving artwork before the rain came. My gratitude for that runs especially deep." —Julie Sutter-Blair, Drawing/Pastels, Belleville, WI. ♦



Photos, clockwise from top right: Festival Streetscape; Entrance Scaffolding; the EIA West Ten; the NSV Tent.



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From the Second Annual ZAPP™ Conference • Sept. 12-14, 2010

by Teresa Saborsky

Panel Discussion "The State of the Art Fair"

Topics: "The Impact of Generational Change (or the lack thereof)" by Larry Oliverson, photographer; "Trends in Audiences: Buying and the Economy" by Teresa Saborsky, Chair of Board of Directors, NAIA; "The Relationship of Fairs to the General Art World" by Reed McMillan, Director of the Artists Project New York; "The Festival of the Future" by Steve Schmader, President and CEO of the International Festivals Association (IFEA); and "Festivals and Community Revitalization" by Elaine Kroening, Executive Director of Positively Pewaukee, a non-profit organization and part of Wisconsin Main Street Program and The National Trust for Historic Preservation.

I was invited to take part in this session at the ZAPP™ Conference. We had a panel with five people, moderated by Stephen King (director of the Des Moines Art Festival), and Board of NAIA wanted to make sure that artists were represented.

Our panel took the form of a two-and-a-half hour discussion. As panelists, we were at a table with a moderator, and the audience was seated all around us. Audience members were invited to submit questions on index cards and hand them

to the moderator. He would then ask us some of their questions. The audience seemed to really like it.

None of us on the panel knew each other, though most of us knew Stephen. But we really seemed to click during the discussion. I think a transcript will be available online on the ZAPP™ website at some point.

We were each supposed to have five to seven minutes to talk before the group discussion started. Larry Oliverson spoke first. I was second. Larry talked about the impact of generational changes. Then it was my turn, followed by Reid McMillan on the role art fairs play, then Steve Schmader, and, finally, Elaine Kroening discussed festivals and community revitalization. Soon after I began my talk there were questions, so I never really got to present my remarks in the order I wanted; however, I did eventually get it all in during the course of the panel discussion.

Before the meeting, I received four questions in order to prepare for the discussion:

1. How does the current recession feel to you?
2. How are artists managing the recession?
3. As an artist participating in the art fair world, what significant trends have you observed over the years?
4. How can artists engaged in art fairs build a larger profile in their home towns?

continued on page 13

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What is the NAIA about?

"The mission of the NAIA is to strengthen, improve and promote the artistic, professional and economic success of artists who exhibit in art shows. We are committed to integrity, creativity, and the pursuit of excellence as we advocate for the highest ideals and practices within all aspects of the art show environment."

Who is the NAIA?

The NAIA is YOU! The NAIA is primarily a volunteer-based organization of artists just like yourself. The board directs the efforts through input from the membership while many other volunteers assist in providing the manpower to accomplish those goals.

What does the NAIA Do?

The NAIA provides a forum for artists to communicate with one another and with other people in the arts community with the goal of improving our industry. We help existing shows in their efforts to provide a viable market for selling art and crafts. In addition, we work with communities to establish high quality new shows. The NAIA works toward reducing threats such as imports and buy/sell. Our Artist and Director Conferences provide an opportunity for education and communication for artists and show directors alike.

What are benefits of membership in the NAIA?

The NAIA communicates with the membership via periodic electronic communications and a member newsletter. This newspaper that you are reading, *The Independent Artist*, is also an NAIA publication and is mailed to all members.

The NAIA Web site (www.naiaartists.org) contains a wealth of information for members. We are currently undergoing a major redesign of the site to make it more user friendly and easier to find important information. We will continue to have a Member Roster with links to members' own web sites as well as to art shows and other industry businesses that support the NAIA through their membership.

Most valued by our members is the password-protected Member Forum where artists hold a dialog about their concerns, ideas, inspiration, and the nitty-gritty of doing shows.

The NAIA Advocacy Action Line is a newly developed service available to NAIA Artist Members. Through the Advocacy Action Line the NAIA assists artists in resolving specific issues or problems related to the NAIA's official list of advocacy positions that the artist member may be experiencing with an art show.

Does the NAIA offer discounts on business services?

Yes! Over 15 arts-related businesses offer NAIA members at least a 10% discount—and we are working to provide our members with even more. Some of the businesses currently offering discounts include credit card processing companies, photographic

services, web design services, hotels and motels, car rental, and canopy companies. Using these benefits will more than offset the cost of your membership.

Why should I become a member of the NAIA?

Because the NAIA needs you NOW! There are important issues such as buy/sell, imports, and a sagging economy that are threatening the art show industry and artists' ability to make a living at what they love. We have listed many benefits and discounts above, but the most important reason to become a member of the NAIA is to add your personal voice to the collective efforts of the NAIA. Your financial support is integral to the success of these efforts. If you can volunteer in these efforts, even better! We welcome you to the NAIA!

How do I become a member of the NAIA?

It's easy! Simply log onto the NAIA web site at <http://naia-artists.org/join/index.htm>. You can join online or print out a membership form to mail in. The NAIA Membership Committee looks forward to welcoming you as a member! ❖



You can join NAIA online at
www.naia-artists.org

Please Note: If you are a member of the NAIA you should be receiving monthly updates and other important communications from us via email. If you are not receiving these, please contact Membership@NAIA-artists.org to make sure that we have your email address correct. Also, please make sure that your email program is set to receive email from the NAIA.



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SAVE THE DATE: NAIA Director/Artist Conference

Our next Director/Artist Conference will be held Indianapolis, Indiana, starting with a meet and greet evening on May 18, 2011. Conference sessions are scheduled for May 19 and 20, just before the Broad Ripple Art Fair, May 21 and 22. We'll be hosted by Show Director Iris Dillon and the Indianapolis Center. Stay tuned for details . . .



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St. James Court, continued from page 1

Q: What brought you to work in the arts and arts event production?

My mother was a watercolor artist. I remember as a child going to every art museum in a three-state area on weekends. As I got older, my mother would take me to the galleries she showed her work in. I also remember going to her life drawing classes and hanging out with the artists as they worked. I think all that somehow seeped into my bones, and, although I never sought out a career in art, it's always been a part of me. My two brothers are both in the arts. One teaches Art History at Southern Methodist University and the other is a Boston architect.

After graduating from The University of Kansas with a Journalism degree, I ended up at several advertising agencies as a traffic and production manager. After I had my first child, I had a part time job with an arts education company. Just by chance I found out about the St. James Court Art Show needing a part-time person to help the past show director, Susan Coleman. She hired me, and two years later she decided to retire. I was lucky enough to be hired as the new Director.

I credit my love for the artists and maybe my ability to understand artists to my mom.

Q: St. James Court has a somewhat complicated structure, what with the several different non-profits in the consortium that works together to mount the show. Please describe the special nature of the show, how it works, and the benefits and problems you encounter working with this arrangement.

There are five neighborhood associations and the West End Baptist Church that put on the St. James Court Art Show. These six groups work together all year long to produce the St. James Court Art on the first full weekend of October. These groups are Belgravia Court Association, South Fourth St. Association, South Third St. Association, 1300 Association, St. James Court Association, and the West End Baptist Church.

The Art Show Consortium, as we call it, operates off a budget that consists of sharing sponsorship dollars that help pay for operating costs like city permit fees, Metro Police daytime security, private nighttime security, port-o-johns, dumpsters, EMS services, signage, marketing and advertising of the show to the public locally, regionally, and nationally.

Each section (neighborhood association or church) then operates its own individual show off internal budgets that derive income from artist's application and booth fees and expenses like artist breakfasts, artist amenities, volunteer expenses, printing costs, office expenses, and staff salaries. The people connected with each individual section decide for themselves what they want to do with the money they make from the art show.

Here are just a few examples:

- St. James Court must maintain all green spaces, trees, flowers, and the fountain. The city of Louisville does not pay for these things. The fountain alone is undergoing a \$30,000 restoration this year. (see attached articles)
- After four years, the South Third St. Association has saved up \$75,000 and is giving it to a neighborhood elementary school to install a playground.
- There are many, many good things done with the money raised from the art show. Local non-profits, the neighborhood police substation, and the residents of Old Louisville benefit from having the art show here.

The St. James Court Art Show's footprint is approximately four square blocks. The city of Louisville asked us about 15 years ago to not increase the size of the art show. The city services that are used (e.g., police, fire, EMS) also have to contend with other city events that same weekend, like the University of Louisville football games and charity 5K run/walks.

It is a constant worry for any major event to keep things fresh and new so the patrons want to come back each year. After 54 years that is



especially worrisome. However, the jury process is one way we keep new artists coming in so the patrons aren't seeing the same artists each year.

Each section of the art show juries its artists. In all cases, there's a panel of jurors that view the images and score the artists. We all use a 1-7 scale. Jurors are a combination of local or regional artists, gallery owners, art collectors,

art professors, and neighborhood residents. A waitlist is established from those juried artists after the initial invitation list goes out. All artists can apply to as many of the sections as they want, however, once an invitation is accepted and a booth fee is paid, artists cannot exhibit with another group for that show year.

Q: Do you have any statistics or interesting figures to report in relation to your shows?

Last year's attendance estimated by the police was at 175,000. In my tenure as show director, I have been told it has been as high as 300,000. A lot depends on the weather. But typically the first weekend in October is a beautiful fall weekend in Louisville.

To learn more about each section and the application deadlines of the St James Court Art Show

ST JAMES COURT

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/st-james-instructions/>

FOURTH STREET

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/south-fourth-street-instructions/>

THIRD STREET

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/south-third-street-instructions/>

BELGRAVIA COURT

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/belgravia-court-instructions/>

1300 ASSOCIATION

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/1300-south-third-street-instructions/>

WEST END BAPTIST CHURCH

<http://www.stjamescourtartshow.com/artists-corner/west-end-baptist-church-instructions/>

The actual numbers of artists fluctuate right up until the first day but we usually hover at 725. We are due for a new economic impact study but our last figures indicated The St. James Court Art Show brings in about seven million dollars to the Louisville.

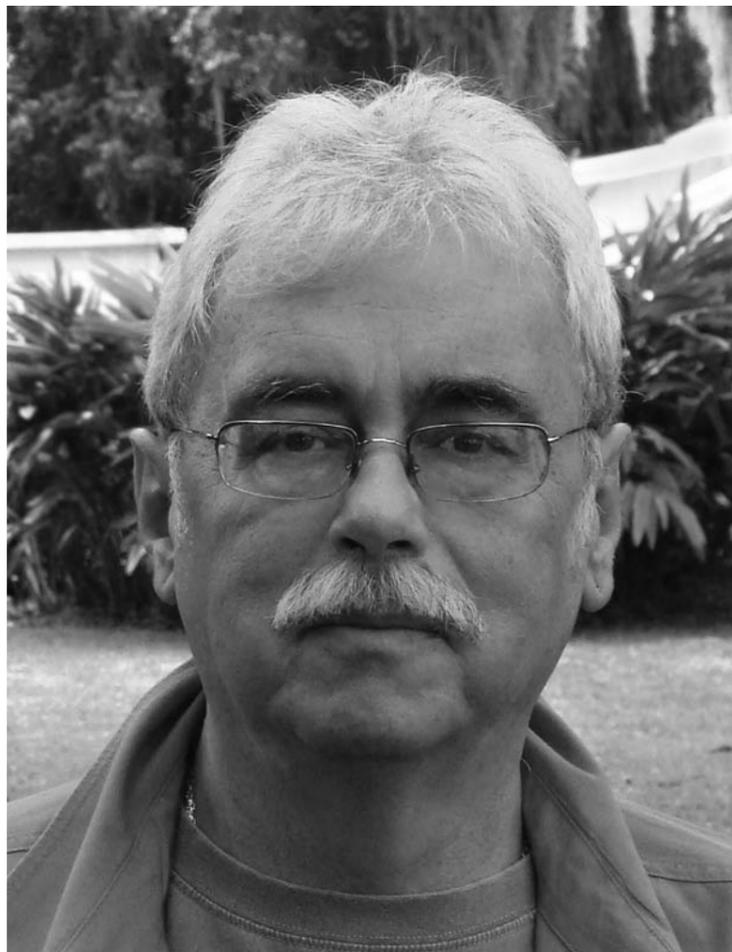
Q: Why should an artist want to apply for your shows?

From the outside I can see why so many artists don't want to apply to our shows. It does sound confusing

continued on page 14

Surveys: Their Importance for Art Festival Artists—and Art Festivals

By Marc Duke, Editor, The Art Festival Newsletter



and, most recently, Art Festival Artists: Who We Are.

The artists' responses—all confidential and anonymous—have been both illuminating and, to some degree, cause for concern. For example, fewer than two percent of artists believe that the jurying process for festivals is generally fair. Answers such as this can create a call to action for festivals and benefit all involved. Participation in the surveys is free, and artists, whether they participate or not, receive a report on the surveys, also at no cost. Further, the survey report is sent to nearly 1,000 festivals nationwide and is available to all festivals, again at no charge.

What does this mean to artists, and to festivals? For the artists, they can find out where they fit in the community of festival exhibitors, whether in demographic terms, sales results, progress in achieving acceptance into festivals, and a host of other subjects. They can compare their show choice and application methods to those of other artists, and see where they fit in age, location, and other career elements. The survey questions are all pertinent to knowing more about both who we are and how we pursue our art festival participation. And, yes, artists can give vent to their feelings about festivals—as a whole.

For festivals, the survey reports can inform them, motivate them to meet the stated needs of the artists—not only those who exhibit with them, but also those who may apply to their shows in the future.

The Art Festival Newsletter surveys

For festivals, the survey reports can inform them, motivate them to meet the stated needs of the artists—not only those who exhibit with them, but also those who may apply to their shows in the future.

—MARC DUKE

are the first ongoing effort to build and maintain a compendium of knowledge about our large, amorphous, far-flung and dedicated community of creative professionals (for example, our research shows that 80% of festival exhibitors are full-time artists, for whom the festival industry is their primary source of income). It is also the first time this aggregate knowledge, coming directly and without bias from a broad base of artists, has been available to festival directors, promoters, committees, and organizers.

At the end of 2010, we will be sending out a survey asking artists to tell us about their experiences during the year, from sales (we never ask for numbers), travel, and show quality to plans for 2011. Next year we will ask festival artists to report on the shows they do—again in aggregate, not specific festivals—and to define and characterize what they would consider a perfect festival.

The wealth of knowledge gleaned from these surveys, their importance to artists, and their potential impact on the festival business far outweigh the effort to create, produce, send out, analyze, and report on them.

For the first time, *The Art Festival Newsletter* national surveys provide

artists with a factual, unbiased, and truly communal voice in the art festival industry—created by the artists themselves in their interest, and the interest of art festivals nationwide.

To access the survey reports and learn more about *The Art Festival Newsletter*, go to: www.theartfestivalnewsletter.com. And to see the remarkable, and free, new homepage for artists, visit www.art-linx.com. We welcome your comments and suggestions. ♦

Marc is a Chicago native now living in Florida. He is the founder and editor of The Art Festival Newsletter. He has been creating fine art photographs for more than forty years and says he stopped counting the number of art festivals he has participated in after reaching 500. Over the last five years alone, his images have won more than 25 major awards at the nation's top-rated festivals. Marc is also the author of several books, including The Art Festival Handbook, which has garnered both critical and public praise. He and his wife and partner Linda have two children and three grandchildren.

By nature and inclination, artists are independent and private people, engaged in what is almost always a solitary career, often internalizing their opinions and viewpoints just as they internalize their experiences in life on the way to turning them into art.

It is a necessary and understandable characteristic.

Art festivals, by nature, and often by inclination, tend also to be private and—many artists would claim—an unapproachable group, loathe to hear the comments (often called whining complaints) from the artists who exhibit.

Thus, artists, and the artists who participate in art festivals in particular, have for far too long known too little about the artist community of which they are a part. Festivals, again for far too long, have had little in the way of reliable, broad-based information about their customers—the artists who exhibit in their shows.

Most artists sense a divide between themselves and the festivals in which they exhibit. Yet, in speaking with festival directors, I have found them more than merely interested in gaining information about festival artists; indeed, they seem hungry to learn what artists think, need—and exactly who their exhibitors are.

The sentiment is universal among the dozens of show directors with whom I communicate regularly. Show directors want to make their festivals successful, enjoyable events for everyone involved. Often they will hand out or email questionnaires to their exhibitors after their shows take place, with a few questions aimed at learning how sales were and how the artists felt about subjects ranging from artist amenities to load-in procedures to public attendance—a

variety of topics. While potentially valuable to the show directors, these so-called “surveys” are intrinsically limited, very narrow in focus, and rarely reported on to the artists who fill them out. Quite possibly they are read but, artists believe, rarely acted upon.

At the beginning of 2010, *The Art Festival Newsletter*, itself a new quarterly publication, inaugurated a series of quarterly national surveys sent to more than 5,000 art festival artists nationwide. The first three are now complete. Survey topics included The Great Recession, Art Festival Application and Acceptance

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**APPLICATION DEADLINE:
FRIDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2011**

My Trip Through the Jury Process

by Holly Olinger, NAIA Board Member

The Medical
Consumer, cont. from
p. 4

Volunteer = Student

I am almost finished with my third year of volunteer service as an NAIA Board member. This has been a riotous ride through the many sides of the art fair industry. It's been a lot of work and one of the most educational opportunities I could have had to further my career.

Mostly, like anything else, volunteering is what you make of it and I took the chance to do nearly every task I thought would help my career. I've written articles for the *Independent Artist*, helped organize the conference in Peoria, and boned up on all things accounting and bookkeeping.

Within the last six months, I have had three distinct but all inter-related opportunities to get a real-world look at the happenings of the jury process. From a tutorial on using the ZAPApplication™ software system to sitting behind the monitor, this article will detail the unique lessons I learned through this process.

It's Only Software

The mysteries and rumors surrounding ZAPP™ have existed from the beginning stages of the implementation of online jurying. Conspiracy theorists have imagined everything from cabals of canoodling biased jurors to blacklists for the wayward artist. I wanted to know more about the system and how show directors are able to interface with the software, so Leah Charney at ZAPP™ arranged for me (as a NAIA Board member) to sit in on a training session that was shorter—but essentially equivalent to—the training any show director would get upon signing up to use the system.

At the bottom of the truth is this—ZAPP™ is *software*—no different than using MS Word™ or Excel™. The software is designed to be used by participating shows in one of two ways—*monitor* juries or *projection* juries. The software is hosted online through the non-profit WESTAF (Western States Arts Federation) servers to enable collection and sorting of images into the media categories selected by the show. Beyond designing the software and providing training and support for its use, neither ZAPP™ nor WESTAF have any hand in how each individual show uses the product.

Directors have multiple options in toggle screens. They can choose everything from the names/numbers of media in the call for entry, to the number of words the artist is permitted to use when describing the work. The interface with the software is similar to working with any number of blogger templates in that the key data entry fields will be the same for every show. Only the parameters of what's been chosen in the toggle screens customize the entry details from one show to another.

The other piece to the puzzle is the support ZAPP™ provides to its users (shows) comes in the form of advertising. The huge database of artists who have signed

up for the service puts ZAPP™-user shows heads above other shows in their capability to alert artists to upcoming deadlines. Without ZAPP™, it's back to the old pencil-and-calendar system for us artists—not to mention the lengthy work of hunting down the show sites/application forms.

Westward Ho!

I got notice that the St. Louis Art Fair, presented by Cultural Festivals, was going to conduct the first portion of their jury in an open setting this past spring. It's a long drive from Virginia to Missouri, but fellow Board member Teresa Saborsky and I both paid our own way to go see this event. I had never seen an open jury, so there were many surprises in store for me.

On the first evening, a casual reception was held in the St. Louis Art Guilds' historic headquarters. The beautiful stone structure was also to be the site of the actual jurying process. During the reception, the slides of all the entrants were continuously projected, at random, in the jury room. There was no commentary or explanation of what we were seeing. You could stay and view all of the images or engage in casual conversation with the jurors and Cultural Festival's staff members in attendance.

The second morning, we got off to an early and hard-charging start. Cindy Lerick, the St. Louis show director, started off by explaining the rules for jurying and the standards she wished to implement, and issuing a strong warning for the audience to be quiet and let the jurors do their work.

With such a huge number of entries getting whittled down to a mere 165-plus invited artists, it seemed to me the process is much more about getting rejected in the early stages than about being accepted. All artwork images plus the booth shot were displayed in a row simultaneously. Everything is completely anonymous and—other than when one recognizes work by an artist that one has seen before—there is no clue as to the applicants identities.

The jurors were equipped with individual notepad computers where they registered their choices. The notepads were hooked into the ZAPP™ servers and the results immediately made available to the director so she could look for errors such as a missing vote for an entrant.

After a very long first day, the jurors and Cultural Events staff, as well as Teresa and I, were invited to a private dinner. I cannot say how appreciative I was at the honor of being included, as it is readily evident that St. Louis treats their jurors like an elite group whose vision and experience steer the final look of the show.

We got to enjoy a stellar dinner, but more importantly, just listening to the comments about the jury we had been watching—as well as hearing anecdotes about other juries

these pros had served on—was worth the investment of finances and time on my end. It was truly a one-of-a-kind educational experience for any artist.

The final rounds of jurying were closed, and I left St. Louis knowing that the chosen few would be as much a surprise to me as to the artists themselves.

My Turn to Vote

Shortly after I returned from St. Louis, I got a call from a smaller, local show looking for some new jurors. This was to be a monitor jury and quite a different situation than St. Louis where the jurors are brought to the site, hosted and fed. I volunteered for the job and also recommended a couple of people I know who had previous jury experience to help. We all did this from home and at our leisure. In my case, I spent nearly a week on the project. It takes a lot of time to go through all of the images and as a first-time juror, I really wanted to put in the time to make sure I was being professional and fair to each entrant. The show director asked us to provide feedback/commentary to the individual artists if we could. I tried to give nearly every applicant at least a one sentence comment—hopefully to help them strengthen their applications in the future. This feature is completely impossible with a monitor jury and probably why bigger shows do not give any comments or provide scores.

The fact that I could do this at home and also get online to research a few things made for some surprising discoveries. If a juror suspects buy/sell in a monitor setting, they have zero resources to confirm their suspicion. I did not have that limitation and can tell you it was pretty easy to weed out a few applications when I could find the same work on a wholesale or import site. Being smaller and less prestigious show, the applicants with horrible images and even worse booth shots were appalling. I guess folks thought a small regional fair wouldn't have high standards or knowledgeable jurors.

My Education and How it Applies to You

The promise of getting into a good show is usually accompanied by a good bit of personal denial leading to the huge number of applications for the better known events. You absolutely cannot compete at the very high level of these types of shows if you do not have the best work and photography PLUS the most innovative and compelling booth shot. I have seen three really incredible booth images in the last six months and amazingly, all of them were taken at night. Talk about setting yourself out from the indistinguishable pack. Lest every reader of this article decide to take a night time booth shot for next season—the images I saw were done by pros who not only had the right equipment to capture their image in challenging lighting, they also

already had incredible displays and work. This is the result of years of knowledge, personal investment and experience.

And Finally: The Do-Nots

... after a few beers in St. Louis, the jokes came fast and furious and it was probably the most enlightening three hours I've spend in 15 years. Take all of this as the common sense kinds of things we all should know better about, but somehow convince ourselves it's alright to do:

- **Don't** ever show yourself in your booth. Even worse—NEVER get a booth shot with yourself inside drinking beer in your chair. EPIC FAIL!
- **Don't** take a booth shot with customers inside. No one is considering if your work actually sells.
- **Don't** submit a booth shot with STUFF clearly visible behind your space. Clean up the clutter and pull down the awning.
- **Don't** start the description of your work by saying "I am inspired by nature/architecture/Frank Lloyd/Picasso", etc . Egad! You are striving to be unique and original. Start with something that stands out from the masses.
- **Don't** ignore the rules—absolutely no names/banners identifying the artist applicant. This will get you removed in round one.
- **Don't** describe your work in amazing technical terms if you don't actually show the piece executed with that technique. The jurors know what they are looking at and they know hot air when it comes rushing by.
- **Don't** assume you can keep using the same tired slides you've used the last ten years. The kids are coming on fast and they have a lot of very innovative new images hitting the circuit. Go out, make new work, and challenge yourself to be better than ever.

Above all, be a better artist and good luck in the jury room. ❖

All opinions contained in this article are solely my own and do not represent any official stances or recommendations by NAIA.

And you don't have to opt for just generic, basic or outdated styles but this is, frankly, where the best deals are. Some sites offer designer frames, antiscratch coatings, transition lenses, and other premium add-ons. But the more premiums you add, the less of a good deal you will get, if any.

You can upload a photo of yourself and virtually "try on" different frames. Some sites will also sell new lenses for your old frames, but, of course, you have to relinquish your frames for a while, so you need a back-up pair.

Some companies offer really cheap deals because they make everything overseas. It also takes longer to get. You might pay more with a US-based company, but you might be happier.

Here's where to start:

Prescriptions

Get your eyes checked by a qualified optometrist or ophthalmologist. You should have a prescription that is no more than one year old. Leave the office with your full prescription in hand. By law they must give it to you.

Glassyeyes.Blogspot.com

This is a great blog by Ira Mitchell that has everything you need to know about buying eye glasses online, including product and web site reviews and discounts deals on already low-priced web sites. What is PD (pupillary distance), why you need to know it, and how to get it. Hint: 39DollarGlasses.com has a downloadable pupillary distance reader.

Get the down and dirty skinny on Glassyeyes.Blogspots Google Group forum. If you are thinking of ordering your glasses on line, check here to see what others have to say about their experience with specific companies or problems they might have.

Search the Internet

Since new web sites are coming online all of the time, just search "cheap eyeglasses" and lots of sites will come up.

Fitting the Frames

When I have ordered frames from a brick and mortar store, I noticed that the optician does some tweaking to make them fit better. I found a series of videos by Expert Village on YouTube that shows how to adjust eye glass frames: search "adjust eye glasses."

Classified Advertising

Stackable cast iron canopy weights, 15 lbs. each. Sold in sets of 4 for \$125. Starter set with clips is \$150. More information at www.canopyweights.com

I posted the questions on the NAIA forum and asked for input and did have a few people comment. Five, maybe six new artists and veterans. Just before the conference, I also did two shows, one in Oregon and one in Colorado. So I asked the artists there same questions to get their feedback, then put it all together with my own observations as well as those from the NAIA forum to formulate my responses.

How does the current recession feel to you?

Across the board, all the artists I spoke to said this was the worst recession since the Great Depression. Most said that 2008 was bad but in 2009 they experienced a return of some optimism. But all said that 2010 is the worst. Costs are going up—booth fees, jury fees, travel expenses. Attendance is not too bad, although it is a little down generally. But nobody is buying.

The cost of materials is going up, sales are going down. Some said their sales dipped as much as 50 percent, but nobody reported less than a 30 to 35 percent drop. This recession has cut across the board.

How are artists managing the recession?

Not well. They are trying several different things, and not just taking it lying down. They love this profession they want to do it. So they're trying different things to make it work.

They're changing geographical locations, trying to figure out where their stuff sells better. As we've often heard, some artists are staying close to home to trim expenses, but that's not always the case.

Several people told me that Texas is still a good place to go, that it remains unaffected by the economic downturn. And some say Chicago is still good.

I did speak to one NAIA member who went from Texas to Chicago to New York. He lives in Texas and did great there, not so well in Chicago. He bombed totally in New York. Artists tell me that you can't plan a circuit around Florida, or around Arizona and Southern California like you used to. Out west, there are so few shows and lots of artists, so it's difficult to get in and hard to plan a circuit. Florida is just the opposite. In Florida, there's a show every weekend, and not enough of an economy. Many artists across the board are staying out of Florida.

Artists are also experimenting with price ranges. They're going for lower price range stuff to at least make expenses, but finding it's not making a huge difference. Folks with work that's low end already say they are doing okay, but those with higher-end pieces who lower their prices are not doing so well. Some people are still selling their higher-priced items, just not as often.

Another thing they're doing to stay afloat is expanding their opportunities: internet marketing, galleries, teaching. Galleries are hurting as well as art shows and many artists told me they're not doing as well in the galleries.

Another strategy used to be adding more shows, but people are finding out that these days that strategy is only compounding their expenses. In addition, with more shows, when do you have time to do art?

A lot of people are taking other jobs. I talked with a lot of younger people, artists in their early thirties. They're really upset. They want to make a living with their art, but find they can't pay their mortgage and bills. One man I spoke to has two young children. He was depressed after the show, saying he can't continue with this kind of income and raise a family. We're all concerned about the graying of art show artists. Well, young people can't do this and pay mortgages and support families.

What significant trends have you observed over the years?

Some of the artists have the impression that the public feels like it's a fad to be frugal now. Even people who might be doing okay are afraid to say so. They play a game of "Who's suffering most?"

The artists say they all hear customers' financial horror stories: "My husband lost his job." "I love this, I used to buy it, but I can't do it anymore." "We don't have the income that we had."

I heard more artists relate customers' financial woes, seeing people that love their work, then telling them stories about why they can't afford it.

There are also trends taking place within the shows themselves: special shows aren't so special anymore. Everyone understands that a show has to make money and fill booth spaces. But we used to have several very high-end, high quality shows. They're not there anymore. They're being overtaken by sponsors and hawkers. At one such show, an artist said that so many vendors were handing out "freebies" that the public were overburdened by them and weren't able to properly look at art, much less walk away carrying any. Also, with such vendors ever-present, potential customers were distracted in front of booths. Quality seems to suffer.

Some of the shows are expanding booth space numbers, and what they're filling them with is not necessarily in keeping with rest of show. One jeweler told me she was in a show with 150 booths, and 50 of those were jewelers.

Everybody has reported seeing an increase of buy/sell. During the conference, I discussed the difference between buy/sell and production, and how buy/sell undercuts us and is against the rules in many shows. I said NAIA was presently consulting with attorneys about what we can do to distribute information on how to identify buy/sell and what can be done once it's identified.

How Can Artists Build a Local Profile?

A lot of artists are doing local gallery exhibits as well as shows at public libraries and local colleges. There is increasing activity in local guilds where they can establish their own shows, and more cooperatives are forming.

Artists are finding local spaces at reduced prices or free, sometimes in empty buildings. Some are doing studio tours, workshops, teaching classes. One of the things that Elaine Kroening, who spoke about festivals and community revitalization, said was that they sometimes try to get artists who are going to be in an upcoming show to donate and display in stores.

I know I can't sell locally and have talked to a lot of other artists who don't. What you *can* do to help both yourself and your local art show is talk to local show directors about free publicity. Directors always need help. Sharing your experience and discussing what will be seen in art shows by going to schools, book clubs, garden clubs, etc. is one way to support the local art community and support shows. As artists we have knowledge that is beneficial to everyone.

Go to schools and talk about art there. Kids bring their parents to art shows.

One of the things I didn't get to say and wanted to, and did manage to say to several directors and artists later, is that right now there is a huge atmosphere of fear and depression, and pessimism. I think that's one of the reasons that we're being affected so badly. It's difficult for art to flow and creativity to flourish in that kind of atmosphere. We must see what we can do to turn it around and make it positive. ❖

2010 ACC: Jury Review

interview by Larry Berman

I believe that artists should have as much information as possible so as to make a more educated decision on which shows to apply to. To that end, whenever possible, I interview jurors for this ongoing series of articles. Within these articles you may find opposing points of view, so take what you read with a grain of salt.

The juror I spoke to (who prefers to remain anonymous) juried the home décor category. All the jurors juried from home. There were three general categories, home décor, fashion (which included wearable fiber and jewelry), and ceramics and glass. I've heard from another source that the ACC used to only jury in two categories, fashion and everything else. There were seven jurors for the home decor category and they were given five days to review and score the applicants. There were four exhibiting artists, one listed as an artist professional, the director of programs at Penland School of Crafts, and the associate director of the San Francisco Museum of Craft and Design.

Jurying

What I want to see first of all is quality of craftsmanship. I'm a real fundamentalist when it comes to looking at artwork. I had many year career in the gallery business and I enjoy looking at a lot of artwork. The quality of craftsmanship is the most important aspect I look for over style or subject or material. Creativity would come in second. I want to see somebody that's doing something new and innovative, and I'm seeing less and less of that in the galleries and in the shows. I do see some artists that are very creative but have very poor craftsmanship skills. A lot of artists try and pass off a lack of craftsmanship as being funky. And while funky is fun to some, it doesn't mean that it is true craft. When I look at artwork that interests me, I ask myself about the WOW factor or what stopped me to look at this piece of artwork and consider it in the first place. And will I like it in five years. That's been a good gut check when I'm making choices for the artwork I acquire or jury. And sometimes when I'm jurying I throw that in about the longevity of a particular piece of artwork. Does it hold substance or is the artist jumping in on a popular fad. Is the artist doing something different enough to make me say yes to this piece. These are some of the personal qualifications I consider when I'm on the fence about something. Over the years I've found that my initial instincts are pretty good when evaluating a piece of artwork.

With all the jurying I've done I think it's advantageous to have the jurors in one room so things can be discussed. But on the other hand, jurying at home without time constraints allows me time to read the descriptions without feeling pressured.

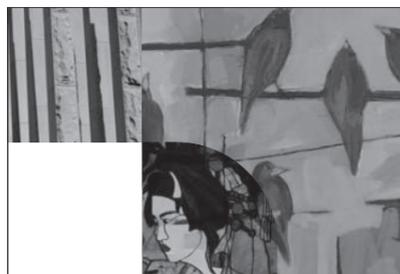
Recent Trends

A lot of good artists are not applying anymore, which is opening it up for younger artists to apply. When times were good, the ACC went really big and cut the pie really thin for artists so the chances of making substantial sales were diminished. Now when you throw in the economy we've had these last few years, the competition with the Rosen show, and the awkward timing with a week between the two shows combined with the way buyers are spending money, it's the perfect recipe for things to go downhill real fast for the artists.

One of the things I'm seeing is a greater emphasis on jewelry and fashion, which is fine except that it's mostly groups of women that come in to go through the jewelry and fashion. The problem is that there are many exhibitors that sell to couples and those couples are now far and few between. I'm seeing that the attendance is getting to be far more women than couples, even on the weekends where husbands used to accompany their wives.

A lot of the buyers from shops all over the country no longer have to travel to do their business with so much online they can do the research right from their desk and connect that way. There is now a generation of buyers that don't consider hands on an important aspect of their decision making. This makes me realize I've really got to get on the ball and work the Internet and get my web site updated and appreciate how important this may become to my business. ❖

You can read other jury reviews and get lots of information about the art show business and jury image preparation at Larry's website: <http://bermangraphics.com/>



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and too much trouble to figure out. But really any of the show coordinators are more than happy to visit or email about the differences between the shows. I have also included a quick guide for you (see box, p. 14).

Q: What is the level of support for the festival in the community where you are located?

We are so fortunate that this art show has become an established tradition for folks in Louisville. I get many calls at the first of the year checking the dates so people can plan to get off work. It's also become a big reunion type weekend with families gathering and enjoying the Art Show together. The Jefferson County Public Schools close the Friday of the Art Show because they were having problems getting substitutes for the classes because so many teachers were taking off! So now it is the start of the fall break weekend.

Q: What marketing strategies do you use to draw the crowd to your show?

We use print, radio, tv, internet and social media to spread the word. We also have a very active and fantastic Convention and Visitor's Bureau that help us get the word out. Good recommendations from art patrons and artists are the best form of advertising.

Q: What is your proudest accomplishment for the St. James show?

The St. James Court Art Show like many outdoor art shows, are special in that the patron can speak to the artist about their work. They (the patron), can find out the story behind a particular piece of work, the labor of love that went into it, and make a connection between another human being and a piece of art. You can't do that by buying art in most galleries, or a retail environment. We require the artist to be in the booth. The official artists wear special buttons identifying them as a St. James Court Art Show artist.

By talking to the artist, the patron has something more than just money invested in the artwork. Maybe now they have a story to tell their friends, or they intend to buy another piece from this artist. To me it's all about the human connection.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect of mounting the show?

I think it's probably just the sheer amount of small details that are involved in putting on a show of this size. We have an enormous responsibility to make sure the public and artists are safe with the amount of people that come here. All the coordinators in the

A Quick Guide

to the differences between the show sections at The St James Court Art Show

If you like small shows (with under 100 artists) you could apply to three of the sections: 1300 Association, Belgravia Court, or West End Baptist Church. If you like larger shows (over 100 artists), you can apply to St James Court, South 4th Street or South Third Street.

All six areas have good traffic flow. When a patron comes to the art show they don't really know when they are walking from one section into another. We don't advertise the different sections to the public. There are several differences that I like to tell artists about.

Applications:

- Four sections are listed on Zapplication and only take digital images and applications through Zapp.
- The other two sections, West End Baptist Church and 1300 Association only take paper applications which can be downloaded on our web site under "Artist Corner."

Booth Fees:

Each section determines their application and booth fees. Application fees range from \$25-30. Booth Fees range from \$425- \$525

Fine Art & Craft and Art & Craft:

- Belgravia and St James Courts tend to have the most of fine art and craft (approximately 90%). All the other sections also have fine art, however, there are art and craft exhibitors also.
- Both 3rd and 4th Streets used to have art and craft buy/sell but they have gotten rid of those people and have stepped up the quality in the past few years.

Parking:

- You can park behind your booth space all weekend long on 3rd St. (Both South Third St. and 1300 Association). The other streets have off site parking—first-come, first-served.
- Belgravia Court is pedestrian-only, so you will have to dolly your work in from your vehicle, but typically the distance is not very far.

Consortium work literally all year long to get four days perfect.

Q: What makes your show artist-friendly?

Louisville is one of the friendliest places there is. Our art patrons love the artists! The residents of Old Louisville love the artists so I think that reflects back onto the artists.

Q: What is the most important amenity any art fair can offer to the artists?

In my book it's patience and a smile. But I'm sure clean potties go a long way!

Q: Is there something you wish that artists understood better about producing an art fair?

I think artists and art directors should job share from time to time. It would be good experience for both of us! I guess personally I would like to see my comment sheets filled out. Good, bad or indifferent, we can't improve the show if we don't know what's wrong.

About a month after our show we have a big powwow and we review all artists' comments, volunteer comments and patron emails. This is our basis on which we start planning the following year's show.

I understand artists don't want to put their name on a comment sheet which is fine with me. I'm just looking for some constructive criticism or happy comments so me and my staff of volunteers know what to improve. ♦



St. James Fountain (photo courtesy of Greater Louisville Convention & Visitors Bureau)

The Repairman

by Larry Berman, <http://bermangraphics.com/>

How much do you know about the people who enjoy walking art shows and buying your art?

A few months ago we had a repairman come to fix our dishwasher and I photographed him for my visitors project (<http://bermangraphics.com/personal/house/house-gallery.htm>) and sent him a print. Then one day we came home and there was a note on the door from the repairman, wanting me to come to his house and photograph his flowers. His passion in life is planting flowers on his property and watching them blossom, sometimes staying up until 1:00AM watering them. He chooses flowers based on color and their growing cycle and plans their relationship to the flowers that surround them.

We talked about art shows and he told me about the piece that got away. About 25 years ago at the Shadyside art show, he saw a mosaic tile piece of a carousel and the horses looked like they were alive. He thought about it while walking the show and when he went back to purchase it, he found out that he was about ten minutes too late, it had just been sold.

For about an hour's worth of photography, we had our dryer completely rebuilt and it's like new again. And I made a new friend. ❖



CALL FOR ARTISTS

The Guild of Artists & Artisans 2011 Art Fair Season

Applications open October 15, 2010
Apply online at www.juriedartservices.com
Deadline to apply is January 12, 2011



The Guild of Artists & Artisans produces fine art and fine craft events. Guild shows are juried and feature exceptional attendance, advertising and artist amenities.

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Art Birmingham
May 14-15
Birmingham, MI

**Crocker Park
Fine Art Fair**
June 11-12
Cleveland, OH

**Ann Arbor
Summer Art Fair**
July 20-23
Ann Arbor, MI

**Levis Commons
Fine Art Fair**
August 20-21
Perrysburg, OH

FALL SHOWS

**Crocker Park
Fall Arts Fest**
September 17-18
Cleveland, OH

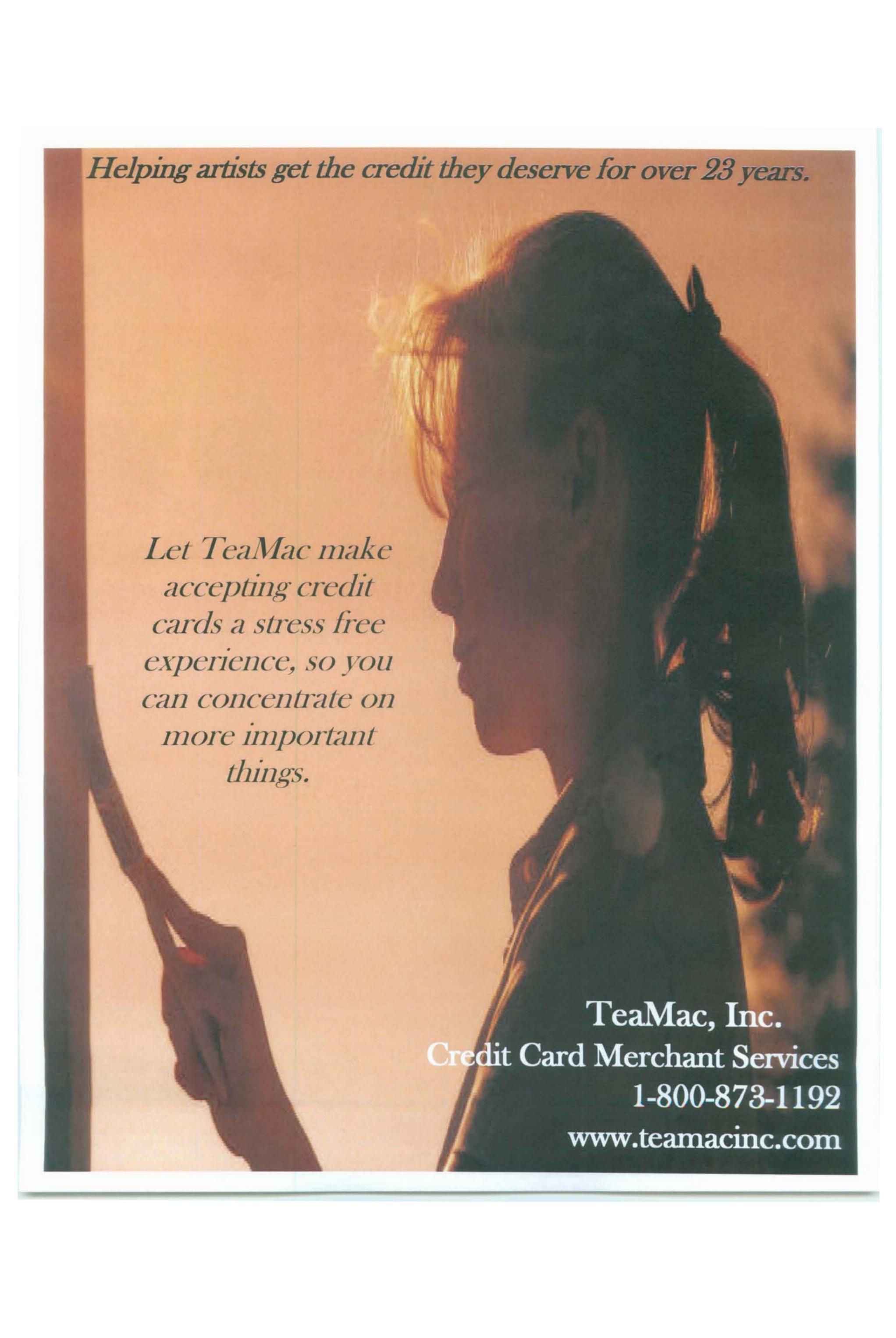
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For more information
contact The Guild:

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