



The ABC's of Art Exhibition

A Practical Guide for Artists Who Want to Show, Sell, and Shine

An art exhibition is more than a display—it is a statement of presence. Whether you're emerging or established, your exhibition is where your voice meets the public. This guide walks you from concept to closing night using a clear A-Z structure you can return to again and again.

A — Aim

Define your purpose.

Are you selling work? Building a reputation? Supporting a cause (like programs through Matriculate in the Fine Arts)?

Your aim shapes every decision.

B — Body of Work

Curate with intention.

Your pieces should speak to each other—through theme, color, medium, or message.

Avoid randomness; cohesion builds credibility.

C — Concept

What is your exhibition *about*?

A strong concept gives viewers an entry point. Even abstract work benefits from a guiding idea.

D — Documentation

Photograph your work professionally.

High-quality images are essential for marketing, press, grants, and future opportunities.

E — Exhibition Space

Choose wisely.

Gallery, community center, pop-up, or virtual—each space has its own audience and expectations. Consider lighting, traffic flow, and accessibility.

F — Framing & Finishing

Presentation matters.

Clean edges, consistent framing, and thoughtful mounting elevate perception—and price.

G — Gallery Relationships

Build connections.

Curators and directors are collaborators, not gatekeepers. Be professional, clear, and respectful of their vision.

H — Hanging Plan

Map your layout before installation.

Balance sizes, colors, and visual weight. The room should guide the viewer naturally from piece to piece.

I — Invitation

Create anticipation.

Use digital invites, printed cards, and social media. Include date, time, location, and a compelling visual.

J — Juried Shows

Apply strategically.

Juried exhibitions can boost credibility. Tailor submissions carefully—follow guidelines exactly.

K — Knowledge of Audience

Know who you're speaking to.

Collectors, critics, community members—all view art differently. Shape your messaging accordingly.

L — Labels

Every piece needs context.

Include title, medium, size, and price. Optional: a brief statement to deepen engagement.

M — Marketing

Promote relentlessly—but intelligently.

Use email lists, social media, local press, and partnerships. Consider collaborations with organizations like Arts In Motion to expand reach.

N — Networking

Your exhibition is a social event.

Talk to visitors. Exchange contacts. Relationships often matter as much as the art.

O — Opening Reception

Make it memorable.

Music, refreshments, and a welcoming tone encourage people to stay—and buy.

P — Pricing

Price with confidence and consistency.

Research comparable artists. Avoid undervaluing your work—it signals uncertainty.

Q — Quality Control

Only show your best work.

A smaller, stronger exhibition beats a large, uneven one every time.

R — Resume & Bio

Have them ready.

Collectors and curators want to know your story. Keep both updated and concise.

S — Statement

Write clearly about your work.

Avoid jargon. Speak honestly about your process and intent.

T — Timing

Plan ahead.

Give yourself months, not weeks. Deadlines for promotion, installation, and press matter.

U — Unity

Ensure cohesion across the exhibition.

Even diverse works should feel like part of a larger conversation.

V — Visual Flow

Guide the eye.

Arrange pieces so the viewer moves naturally through the space.

W — Website

Your digital gallery.

Make sure your site is updated with the exhibition, images, and purchasing information.

X — X-Factor

What makes your show unforgettable?

It might be a bold theme, immersive installation, or emotional depth. Find it—and lean into it.

Y — Your Voice

Stay authentic.

Trends fade. Your voice is your lasting currency.

Z — Zero Regrets

Close strong.

Follow up with buyers, thank attendees, and document everything. Every exhibition is a stepping stone to the next.

Final Thought

An art exhibition is not just an event—it's an act of declaration: *I am here, and this is my vision.*

Master these ABCs, and you won't just hang art—you'll build presence, power, and possibility.

All rights reserved 2026 MITFA