

HAMPSHIRE
COLLEGE
ART GALLERY
HANDBOOK

2018 – 2019
1st Edition

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INTRODUCTION

This guide was created by Hampshire College Art Gallery staff to be a helpful aide in planning & installing Division III exhibitions, as well as detail Gallery rules, regulations, community expectations, and available resources.

If you have questions or suggestions to make this guide more useful to future Division III students exhibiting in the Gallery, we would love to hear them! This document will evolve over time to best reflect the needs of our students and the Gallery.

A Note on the “Standards” and Suggestions presented in this guide:

Any curatorial standards and suggestions mentioned in the Gallery Handbook are meant as a starting point, rather than hard and fast rules. These standards and suggestions are simplified versions of industry standards and based on what we have found works best in the Gallery.

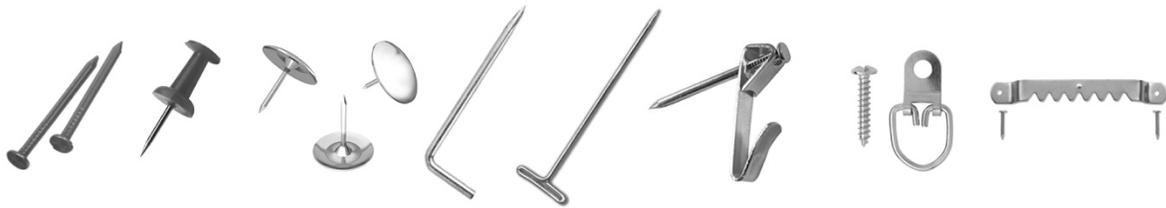
Many industry standards are designed to put the largest possible focus on the artwork itself, and to have all other elements of an exhibition act in support, but not distract from the audience’s experience of the work. These standards are generally what an audience will expect, and deviations from them will be noticed (or cause unconscious disruptions in your audience’s level of focus) and will affect the read of your work.

Deviating from standards can be essential for a body of work and amplify a show in a variety of ways, so if you feel strongly about going against them, we encourage it! Just be intentional about the ways you are disrupting expectation, or things can end up just feeling “off” and distracting from your work. If you do not want your exhibition presentation to be noticeably engaged with “art space” traditional expectations, or do not have strong feelings about the supporting elements and style of your presentation, we recommend sticking to the basic standards.

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INSTALLATION



Nails | Push Pin | Thumbtack | L Pin | T Pin | Picture Hanger | D Ring | Sawtooth Hanger

Pins are often used by our students with printed paper works. L & T pins tend to be common for hanging photo prints, and will generally look more professional than visible thumb tacks. However, clear, gold or silver push pins can look good too. Try out different options in advance and see which you prefer.

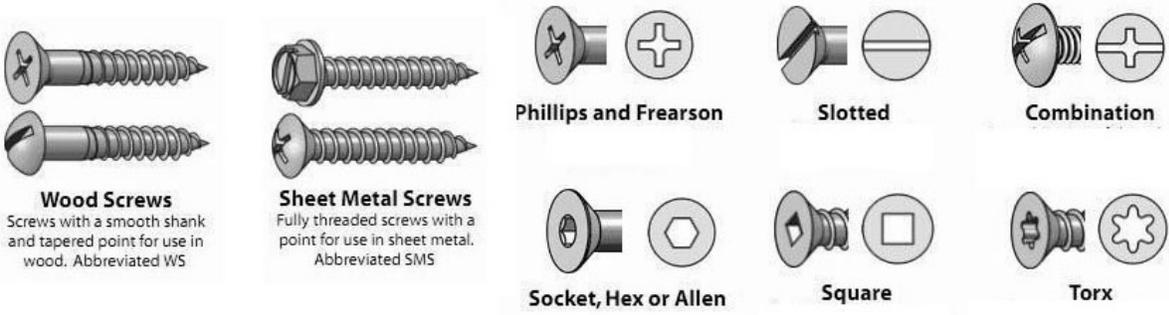
Picture hangers, often used in conjunction with sawtooth hangers and D rings (which are both attached to the backs of frames or other solid works) are great for hanging framed work.

Screws: The gallery has a large variety of screw types and sizes available and drill/screwdriver bits to go along with them. When installing or removing screws with a power drill, avoid letting the screwdriver bit spin around without catching the grooves of the screw head. This will strip the grooves off the screw and make them near impossible to remove from the wall without specialty equipment. When in doubt, go slow.

* Please note that not all the equipment shown is available or in stock for use: check in the Gallery storeroom and purchase screws, nails, magnets etc. as required.

A note on choosing hardware:

When picking hardware to hang your work on the walls, we ask that you choose nails or pins over screws whenever possible. Nails in conjunction with picture hangers can accommodate more weight than you might expect (always check manufacturer weight capacity recommendations), and framed work will rarely be heavy enough to require screws for installation. Screws are of course acceptable to use, but they tend to cause more damage to our drywall and are more labor intensive to patch. Instead of grabbing whatever hardware is closest to hang your work, we ask that you be considerate of our repair team when picking your hardware.



Wood Screws
Screws with a smooth shank and tapered point for use in wood. Abbreviated WS

Sheet Metal Screws
Fully threaded screws with a point for use in sheet metal. Abbreviated SMS

Phillips and Frearson

Slotted

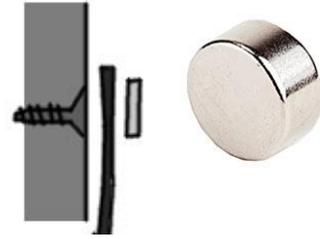
Combination

Socket, Hex or Allen

Square

Torx

Magnets are also an option for hanging paper or very lightweight artwork (eg. textiles) on the walls. They are fairly visually unobtrusive and are a great option if you aren't wanting to poke holes in your work. To hang with magnets, measure out and place steel nails or screws (check that they attract the magnet before installing!) in the wall, and sandwich the artwork between the magnet and screw or nail. This takes a lot of precision up front but looks very clean. For very large works, you may want to install a metal strip (with holes for screwing in) corresponding to the top (and bottom) of the work so that you have an ongoing magnetic surface behind the work along which you can place multiple magnets.



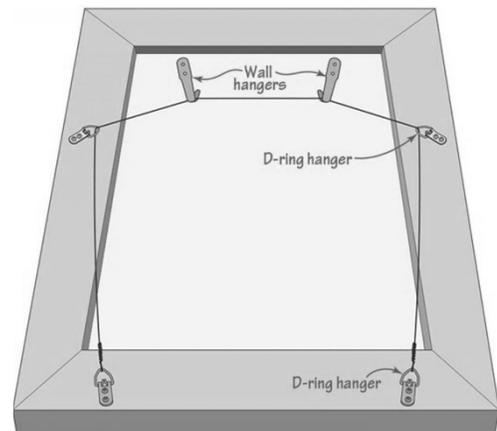
Binder Clips are another common choice for hanging lightweight works and are typically used in conjunction with pins or small nails. Binder clips will generally impart a more informal look to your installation, so use them with intentionality. Be aware also that the ventilation in the space may cause your work to blow up slightly at the bottom.

Adhesives can be destructive to the Gallery walls and usually require a lot of repair during the de-install process. Strong adhesives like Velcro and Command products often tear off the drywall when they're removed, requiring multiple coats of spackle and paint to make the walls smooth again. If you have explored other options and still feel strongly that you need to apply adhesives to the walls, please reach out to Amy and Ray who can help you brainstorm alternatives and approve the use of adhesives if necessary.

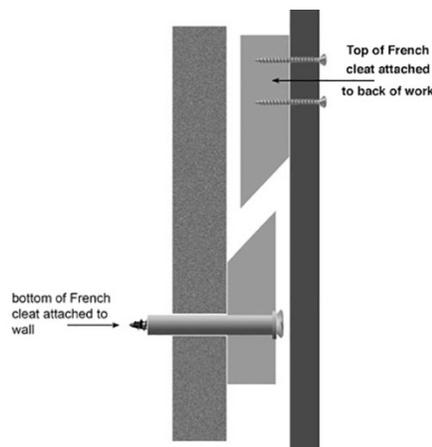
HANGING HEAVY WORK

Underneath the drywall in the gallery, the walls are clad in plywood and the old wall material. This means that it is generally unnecessary to look for wall studs. Most heavy work can be easily accommodated by the appropriate heavy-duty hardware or screws. When in doubt, consult with Amy or Ray for hanging ideas and restrictions.

See the diagram to the right for one method for appropriately hanging heavy work; though the example is a framed work, this method could be useful for any piece with a flat back which can be screwed into.



French cleats are also very useful for hanging heavy works on the walls. These can be purchased at most hardware stores and they can be fabricated at the Art Barn or Lemelson.



ABOVE:

Attach your hardware to the back of your artwork in the arrangement shown. This distributes the weight to the bottom of the frame, with tension pulled only from the sides. Always angle the hangers on the frame and the wall to properly spread the weight. Place at least two hangers in the wall to ensure the frame stays level.

PAINTING THE WALLS

Please contact Amy and Ray to discuss painting on the walls. This is usually okay, but you have to take into consideration how this will affect your de-install. You will need to plan plenty of time for repair and repainting before the next student begins their install. Painting with strong colors will require using a quality, high-coverage primer (such as Kilz) before the standard gallery white can be repainted at de-install time. You are required to supply this primer if you are cleared to paint with strong colors. If you are planning on painting smaller designs or writing as opposed to painting one entire accent wall, you may need to spend time sanding and applying multiple coats of paint to ensure even coverage.

WALL REPAIR

Typically, the Gallery will have a team in place for wall repair and painting after every exhibition. Unless you have been notified in advance that you will be required to patch the walls after your show, please do not attempt to do it yourself.

Should you need to patch a hole during install, you may use the spackle, sanding blocks, paint, and putty knives available in the gallery store room. Be sure to clean your tools before returning them to the store room.

We usually stock two types of spackling compound: one that is quick-drying and “fluffy,” and one that is slower-drying and more “wet.” The fluffy spackle is best for small holes, and the wet spackle is best for larger holes or damage. Based on the size of the hole, choose which spackling compound is right for you.



To spackle a hole in the wall:

Using a hard object (such as the head of a hammer) *gently* indent the hole and a small portion of the surrounding drywall. Remove any flaking paint or drywall surround the hole by scraping or sanding.

Scoop a small amount (a little more than you think you need to fill the hole and indent) out with a putty knife.

Using the flat side of your putty knife, “smoosh” your spackle into the hole.

Using the edge of your putty knife, held perpendicular to the wall, scrape the excess spackle from the surface, making the surrounding wall and newly filled hole essentially level and as smooth as you can get it by scraping the surface. Repeat this step if you see parts of the hole without spackle in it.

It will not be perfectly smooth at this stage, but don't worry! Let it dry completely, this will take 1+ hours, depending on the size of the patch and the type of spackle compound. DO NOT paint over the patch at this point.

Gently sand the patch spot so that it is smooth to the touch and flush with the rest of the wall.

If there are still indents visible, apply another coat of the spackle and repeat the drying and sanding process. Small nail holes may not need a second coat, but almost all screw holes or larger holes/damage will need 2+ rounds of spackle and sanding.

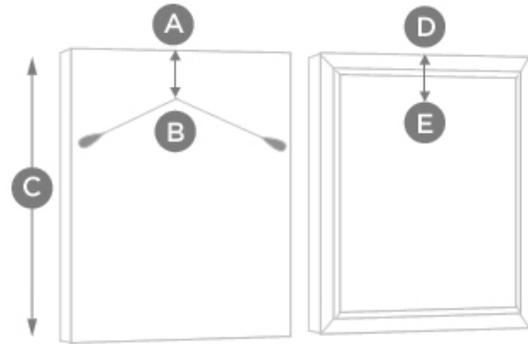
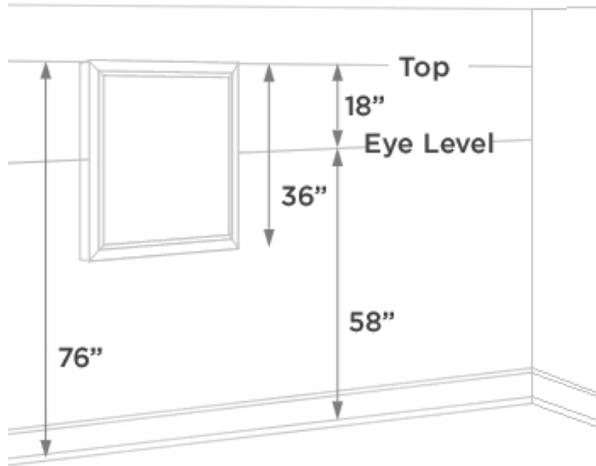
When the patched area is texturally invisible, paint over the area. Be mindful of visible brush strokes and feathering the edges of the repaired area into the rest of the wall.

HANGING HEIGHT

It is generally recommended to hang work with the center point of the artwork at a height of 58" from the floor (average eye level).

See the diagram and instructions below for a basic tutorial on how to find the right height for placing your hanging hardware when hanging a piece with picture wire attached at two points on the work.

TIP: If you are hanging several pieces on center at eye level, we recommend temporarily marking (with painters tape or string) a sight line at 58" high along the walls. Once you find the center point in your artworks, it is easy to measure up or down from the line to determine where to place your hanging hardware.



1. Measure the distance between the wire at full tension (B) and the top of the frame (A).
2. Measure the height of your frame (C) and divide the result in half.
3. From the floor, measure up the wall to 58" (average eye-level) and make a pencil mark.
4. From the mark, measure upward the distance recorded in step 2 and make a second light pencil mark (E).
5. From this mark, measure downward the distance recorded in step 1 (D).
6. Place nail and hanger here. Make sure that the bottom of your hanger is resting on the line when you hammer your nail in, rather than the nail point. This is where your wire will rest (on the crook of the hanger).

HANGING FROM CEILINGS

The Airport Lounge Ceiling has been occasionally used by students to suspend works. Making that happen is complex and typically will take a long time to approve and get the necessary support with installation. See “Specialty Installation.”

Ground floor Gallery ceiling tiles are easily damaged but can work for super light pieces; consult with Amy and Ray to determine if your pieces could hang from ceiling tiles.

Concrete portions of the Gallery ceilings are a great place to suspend larger or heavier pieces. In general, we prefer not to make any new holes in the concrete portions of the gallery. There are several pre-existing anchors in the concrete, and we ask that anyone wanting to hang from the concrete check (and ideally plan around) if any of these anchors can work for your needs.

If you feel that you will need to add new anchors to the concrete, please reach out to Amy and Ray for possible approval. If you are approved for adding new anchors, you will be required to supply the hardware, masonry drill bit, and labor for installing them.

MEDIA

There is a wide array of monitors, media players, projectors (for ceiling mounted and pedestal use), audio and other media equipment available from Media Services that can be reserved and checked out for your installation. However, supplies are limited and must be reserved in advance as students in multiple other schools are also using them. Please consult with Media Services and the Media Alumni Fellow to determine what is appropriate and available for use, and how it may influence how you go about making and installing the work. The Gallery has a small supply of earphones that can be loaned for works with a sound component.

Be aware that each choice will have corresponding constraints/expectations that you need to factor in. For example, you may need to export in a specific file format and aspect ratio, or consider how to control the lighting so the space around the monitor is dark (there is a lot of natural light in the gallery). In addition, each choice contributes to the visual effect of your exhibition: a vintage cathode ray monitor (CRT)* on a pedestal “reads” very differently to a sleek, wall-mounted flatscreen.

* CRTs are not part of the usual Media Services circulation but can be loaned through John Bruner in the Media Labs.

FREESTANDING/3D WORK

The gallery has a number of pedestals and stands available for DIV III exhibitions. They are typically located down the stairs near the bathrooms on the ground level of the Library building. They vary in size, shape, and condition. Most require repainting, so plan accordingly. We recommend looking at what we have far in advance to determine if they will work for you.

You are responsible for communicating with your exhibition group around sharing the available pedestals and stands.

Many students choose to fabricate their own pedestals and stands to their specifications. For example, you may wish to make floor pedestals for sculptural works so that they don’t lie directly on the concrete. Connect with the Arts Barn or Design Center for help with fabrication.

PRACTICING INSTALLING WORK

You can't anticipate the full visual effect, or the potential challenges, of your installation choices until you try them out. We highly recommend that you reserve a space in the Arts Barn or FPV building to practice and play with installation: measure out space corresponding to your section of the Gallery (as negotiated with peers), try different hanging mechanisms and juxtapositions of work. You may wish to do a "pre-install" like this in time for a committee meeting or meeting with Ray/Amy for feedback.

CURATORIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND LAYOUT

Some things to consider when planning the layout of your exhibition:

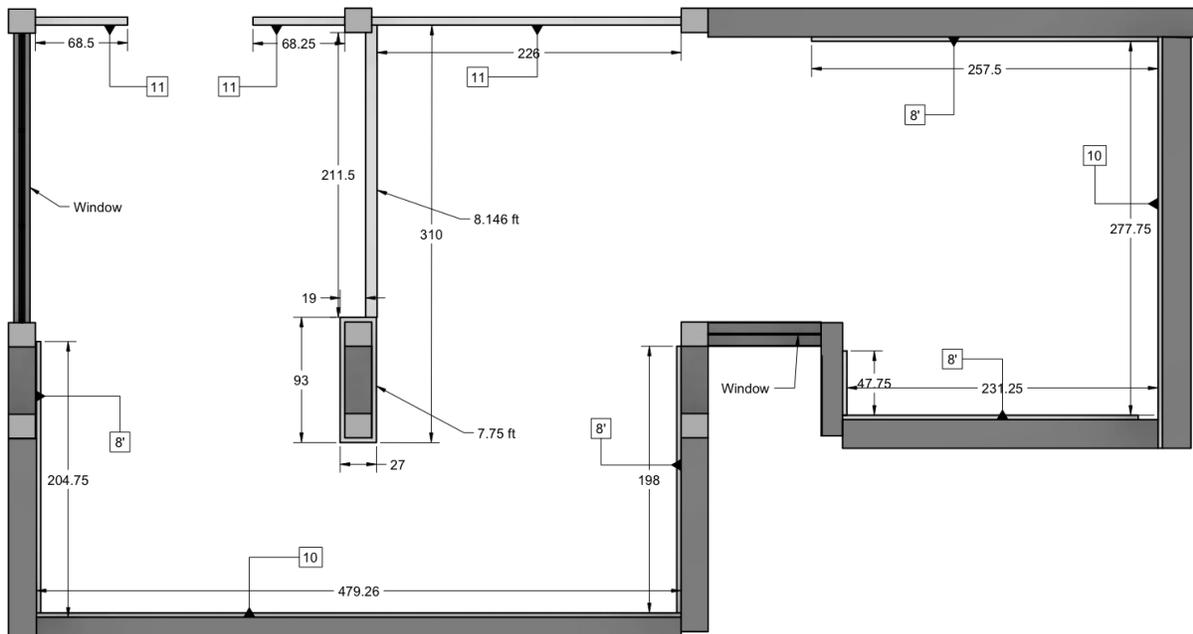
- How will the placement of your works, interacting with the architecture of the Gallery, guide your audience's path through the exhibition? If you would like to "cue" people in to moving in a particular way/encounter your works in a particular order, how can you arrange your work accordingly? For example, can you draw their eye with a major work as a starting point, or where do you place your exhibition title?
- How do your works' proximity to one another cause them to "speak" to one another? An exhibition is more than the sum of its parts (so think carefully about combination, sequencing and grouping), as individual works gain new resonances through juxtaposition. Consider how placement and sequencing produces a narrative by which the audience might "read" your work, and the connections/relationships within it.
- Do you need to show EVERYTHING you've ever made? Consider whether a tighter selection of your best work might better serve the argument/story you want to tell. Showing fewer works with more space for contemplation is generally a more successful strategy.
- Is there a place in your exhibition where you want to encourage longer contemplation? Think about how you use "silent" space: you don't have to fill every gap. Providing seating, or singling out a work or small collection with extra empty space surrounding it can be ways to guide your audience's attention.
- Where along the path/flow through your exhibition will text, such as your title or artist statement, come into play? Do you want that to be the first thing your audience sees, or do you want text to act as a contextualizing "closer" for your work, or is it interspersed? How does the aesthetic appearance of textual elements interact with your artwork?
- It's a great idea to speak with the other people you will be sharing the Gallery space with to see if you can collaboratively plan the flow of the gallery as a whole.
- For wheelchair accessibility, all pathways should be 32" or wider. It is also important to note that most people will not want to walk through openings narrower than 32," for fear of knocking over artwork.* Culture surrounding art institutions has created social norms that subtly encourage viewers to be more physically cautious and conscious of personal space; tight squeezes that may be completely overlooked in day-to-day life can come off as off-limits within

Art Spaces. If you have an area of freestanding pieces that you would like your audience to walk among, space them accordingly.

*Artists have intentionally pushed this social norm within gallery and museum spaces by creating art that forces their audience to engage with their bodies in uncomfortable or unexpected ways. This can create a performative experience that often ends up a focus of the work.

- Do you (not) want people to touch or interact with things? How will you signal or communicate this? Don't expect this to be clear unless you make an effort to "cue" people in: for example, creating neat boxes around floor sculpture with black insulation tape provides a cue that folks should not walk beyond the tape. Or, if you want folks to pick up and read your books, consider making a space with comfy chairs that will encourage durational engagement.

Some people choose to make models of the gallery to plan exhibition layouts, and to make to-scale placeholders for their artwork to play with the layout of their exhibitions. At the minimum, we recommend taking measurements of your artwork and comparing them to the dimensions of the gallery to generally determine where things could fit well. Below is a diagram of the Gallery's floorplan.



LIGHTING

Lighting an exhibition well tends to take a lot of adjustment and playing around to find what looks best – plan to spend at least a couple hours on lighting, and build that time into your schedule for install day. Make sure you have at least one person to help you with lighting: have one person on the ladder and one or two passing up lights fixtures and stepping back to instruct around lighting direction. There are ladders for use in the gallery store room or under the library stairs by the ground floor bathrooms. **When moving ladders, be careful not to hit the lights.**



The Gallery has **Juno track lighting** available for lighting exhibitions.

To attach lights to tracks: line up with track then turn until the fixture clicks into place – this requires a little practice.

The Gallery has 3 light diffusion angles available:
15 degrees (spotlight),
25 degrees (medium diffusion)
40 degrees (widest diffuse light)

Some fixtures have the lighting angle marked on the outside, some will require removing the internal lighting globe, or testing out on the track to check what angle globe it has.

- The light fixtures should be shared amongst your exhibition group – unless you have previously agreed upon a different proportion of lighting distribution, the lights should be shared as equally as possible.
- If you would like to change the tone of the lighting for your show, consult with Hampshire Theater Dept. Technical Director Amy Putnam to potentially borrow color filters/gels or additional lighting.

Lighting Tips:

- If you're having difficulties telling exactly where your lights are pointed, pull out a cell phone camera! These cameras will typically show more contrast in lighting situations, so you can see where the "hot spots" (brightest areas) are in relation to your work and adjust accordingly.
- Keep shadows in mind when lighting your exhibition. Frequently step back and check to see that the shadows are not disruptive to viewing your objects, and keep in mind that multiple light sources will create multiple shadows (and placement/angling of lights may cause one to get in the path of another). Generally, it is standard to try to keep shadows as symmetrical and minimal as possible.
- High contrast, spot, or low lighting can alter the "mood" of the gallery, and will often have a dramatic effect. This can be great for a body of work, but also might distract from what you have created.

OUTLETS

There are power outlets across the floor (under the brass circles: these can usually be opened with a special opener kept in Amy's office or by a turning a quarter in the groove - do NOT use a screwdriver or remove the screws) that can be used to plug in video works etc. Please note that not all are working so check before you plan all your curation around a single outlet. There are also MANY and MORE RELIABLE outlets just below the drywall along the outside walls of the gallery at short intervals: you will have to get down and look for these along the black strips at the bottom of the outside walls.

SPECIALTY INSTALLATION - RISK ASSESSMENT OR MULTIPLE DEPARTMENTS

Consult with Amy & Ray to determine if your project is a "specialty installation." Any complex project that may require assistance, permission, or review from building managers, grounds, or health/safety requires filling out a [Student Projects form](#) far in advance.

An example is Riley Ames' bathroom tile installation in Spring 2018: he wanted to remove existing tiles in the restroom-with-urinals and replace them with handmade tiles he had designed around issues of urinal etiquette. This ended up involving an environmental hazard inspection to check for asbestos, an asbestos abatement project, a carpentry intervention and more (and also had associated costs)! Yet, because he started early and identified all the associated people, challenges, and resources, the project was able to go ahead.

FRAMING & MATTING

Here are reasons you may want to frame your work:

- Framing work can make it appear more "resolved"
- Framing can help bring aesthetic unity to a range of diverse/divergent works or identify a unified series
- Cynical note: framing typically makes your work more appealing to potential buyers as it's more mobile and "finished"

Two typical "contemporary" frame finishes are thick white frames, and light wood (e.g. maple) frames.

*Note that matting your work may provide the same "finishing" effect as framing without the cost.

Standard size frames can be found for purchase at a variety of local stores stocking home goods, including Target, Walmart, & Michaels, located in Hadley. (This requires producing work that fits in Standard size frames or that can be "matted up" to those sizes).

Custom framing, dry-mounting, float mounting, & matting services can be found at these Amherst businesses:

Hope and Feathers
Valley Frameworks

Frames can be fabricated in a variety of materials with staff and faculty support at the Art Barn and Lemelson. If this is your plan, start months in advance to accommodate time for fabrication and necessary equipment and fabrication training.

Tip: You can get glass for frames cut inexpensively at most hardware stores and can be a huge cost saver compared to glass from custom frame shops. If you choose to go that route, we recommend triple checking your measurements in advance, and measuring your cut glass pieces before you pay for them to ensure they were cut to the correct dimensions. Some big box stores who do in-house glass cutting aren't the best at attention to detail, so save yourself a return trip and check their work.

TEXTS & PRINTING

LABELING & ARTIST STATEMENT DISPLAY

There are a variety of ways to approach text within your exhibition, each with their own curatorial resonances. For example, having a large introductory text printed onto 24 x 36 foam core encourages the viewer to see it as a key part of engaging with the work, while small labels adjacent to each work just with titles and medium (called a “tombstone” label) provide a much more limited scaffold for text as a source of meaning. Or, you may not want anything on the walls but you may wish to make a small zine as an accompanying guide that viewers can choose to use, or not. You get to choose how much text is in your exhibition, how it is presented in relation to your artwork, and how prominent you want it to be as a component of your exhibition, but in general it’s helpful to provide some amount of writing. As much as we like to think our art “speaks for itself,” a little bit of text is helpful in providing entry points without what we call “overdetermining” all possible interpretations or encounters by suggesting there is one singular meaning.

FONT STYLES

Be intentional when choosing font(s) for any text going along with your exhibition, as they will impact the way your work is read. In general, it is best to stick with 1 or 2 fonts to keep continuity throughout your show. If you are using more than one font, use ones that have stylistic similarities, or use stylistic contrast intentionally. When using more than one font, typically only one should have a strong visual impact, and the other(s) should not compete visually. Try to find a font that feels stylistically synergistic with your work, or use contrast carefully. Sans-serif fonts tend to appear more contemporary-looking than serif fonts, and serif fonts can feel more formal and old-fashioned. When in doubt, keep things simple, classic, and legible. Fussy fonts often feel amateurish.

TEXTUAL SCALE & LENGTH

Museums try not to use less than 19pt font for wall-mounted exhibition materials for ADA compliance (accessibility standards for visitors with visual impairments), though you will likely want larger titles.

Based on (limited!) audience attention spans, museum educators typically suggest that individual work labels have no more than 150 words and major exhibition intro texts do not exceed 200 words.

PRINTING RESOURCES: ON CAMPUS

The film/photo building has professional quality inkjet printing equipment, and is occasionally available for DIV III students to use for printing material for their exhibitions. Because of limited resources, these printers and materials are mostly available for students within the Film/Photo/Video department. Exceptions have been made before, and can be negotiated with Film/Photo faculty/staff. Do not assume that you will be able to use the printers there, always ask as far in advance as possible.

Hampshire Duplications:

Inexpensive, on-campus printing services are available for posters, invites, texts, and materials for your DIV III exhibition!

There is a **minimum 24-hour advance notice** policy for jobs to be completed at duplications. Print jobs are often done much sooner, but that can depend on the time of year. At the beginning and end of the semester, wait times for print jobs are up to 3 business days. Plan accordingly!

We also recommend sending your pdfs in a few days earlier than you think you need to, just in case there is a mistake or your prints don't look how you wanted them to look. Do not expect Duplications to do copyediting for you: have a friend check for typos etc.

Payment for Printing Services at Duplications: If you are charging a job to an account, provide the account name and account number at the time of the request in the Notes section. Other forms of payment accepted at Duplications are cash, checks made out to the Trustees of Hampshire College, or student IDs (must be present).

To use the Duplications department's online request system:

Create a PDF of the file you need printed. Word documents, jpgs, and other files are often distorted or unable to be re-sized. The ideal file size and resolution for printing is 300 dpi or more, and as close to the actual print dimensions you're looking for. Files which are too small may appear pixelated or low quality when printed.

Log in or create a log in on the [TRAC system](http://hampshire.ricohtrac.com) [hampshire.ricohtrac.com]

Click "Copy," then "Copy Request Form." Click to accept the Terms and Conditions.

Fill out the Copy Request Form to indicate the information below, then click "Next."

Fill In:

- number of copies
- color or black and white
- 8.5x11 or 11x17
- single or double sided
- regular weight paper, cardstock, or colored paper
- 3-hole punched, stapled, comb or spiral binding
- folding, cutting, padding, lamination
- any other special request/information you believe is necessary

PRINTING RESOURCES: OFF CAMPUS

[Collective Copies](#) 71 S. Pleasant Street, Amherst • (413) 256-6425
93 Main Street, Florence • (413) 586-5829

[Amherst Copy and Design Works](#) 37 E Pleasant St., Amherst • (413) 549-2854

[Staples](#) 125 Westgate Center Dr., Hadley • (413) 253-2599

[Paradise Copies](#) 21 Conz St., Northampton • (413) 585-0414

VINYL LETTERING

Vinyl lettering or design for exhibition titles and your name, commonly used by galleries and museums, can elevate the perceived professionalism of your show. Vinyl is just one of many ways to display your exhibition title, name, and/or other textual and design elements. It won't necessarily work for every exhibition, but if you have the budget and no other specific plans, we recommend looking into the option. Should you choose to use vinyl in your exhibition, we recommend **Sunraise Printing** or **Amherst Copy**.

You will need to choose your font, size, and the text you want. You can also send the printing company a send a vector file. You will likely be asked to provide a letter height in inches instead of a font size, so you may have to make some calculations depending on the distance you would like your text to be legible from, and the amount of room you have available for it.

If you are struggling to decide on sizing, we recommend going in person to talk out your order with a shop employee.

Vinyl pricing is generally per letter and font size - for just a title and artist's name, the total cost should be between \$20 and \$50. For full artist's statement as wall text, it will be much more expensive (and more time consuming to remove upon deinstallation).

To Install Vinyl:

Your vinyl will come sandwiched between a backing paper and transfer tape.

Once you have determined where you would like your vinyl, use a level to ensure that it is straight. Using painters tape, tape the top edge of the sandwiched vinyl to your surface. Check that it is level again, and re-adjust as necessary.

Flip up your vinyl to expose the backing paper.

Gently and slowly peel off the backing paper; do not allow the sticky underside to touch your surface yet.

When you have fully removed the backing paper, slowly stick the back side to your surface, ensuring there are no air bubbles.

Leaving the top layer of transfer tape on, rub thoroughly over the vinyl areas.

Finally, gently and slowly peel back the transfer tape to reveal your vinyl.

*Vinyl can generally be only installed once & is very difficult to adjust once adhered, so be gentle and go slowly. Look up YouTube videos for a visual guide to installing vinyl.

WRITING AN ARTIST STATEMENT

Written in the first person, an artist's statement is a piece of writing (by you) that helps the audience access and understand your artistic work. The artist's statement represents you as an artist, even - and especially - when you are not there. Despite your embeddedness in your artistic practice, writing about it doesn't often come easily: it will likely take a lot of revision to hone your thinking and writing into a concise and evocative statement. But doing so will serve you in multiple ways: it will help clarify your thinking about your work (and your ability to articulate it for others), provide entry points for viewers, and become foundational material that you can repurpose for multiple uses, including applying for grants, creating a website or portfolio, or looking for gallery representation.

Prompts/questions for consideration:

You may want to have a friend who doesn't know your work ask you these and other questions; or, start a mindmap and allow your thinking and writing to branch and grow without too much editing as you go along!

- What media, processes, and techniques are involved in your work? Will these be immediately obvious to your audience, or would it help to give them a little insight? Does something about your working process illuminate something about the results (e.g. how a specific printmaking process such as etching affects the quality of surface marks) or contribute to the ideas it communicates?
- What are the key subjects or underpinning ideas, themes, and goals of your work? Can you describe them succinctly in 1-2 sentences?
- What influences are at play in your work? These could range from personal experience to theoretical readings, historical events or artistic traditions. Art doesn't emerge from a vacuum.

Structuring your statement:

Typically, for an exhibition text, you should aim for no more than about 200-250 words.

Your statement could be longer for a grant, but should seldom be more than a page.

Try limiting your statement to three paragraphs:

Introduction/
broad thesis statement/
basic overview

Unpack or develop elements of your first paragraph. For example, include more detail about materials, process, influences. You may want to draw attention to one or two specific works or physical/visual features that highlight major points/themes. These will help anchor viewers in specifics.

Conclude or combine elements from paragraph 1 and 2. Potentially gesture towards future projects, goals or aims for your work on view, or leave the reader with a resounding question or thinking point.

You may wish to deviate from this structure if you really feel that a particular form would better support or communicate your work (e.g. a poetic form or formal manifesto). However, a tightly structured piece of prose is generally the best approach for communicating with a broad range of viewers/readers.

Stylistic Tips for Artist Statements:

- Use strong, specific verbs: In my work, I explore/navigate/interrogate/question etc
- Aim to grab the reader's interest with the first sentence
- Vary sentence length, phrasing and structure (e.g. avoid starting every sentence with "I...")
- Watch out for jargon: while specific terms related to areas of art historical tradition, contemporary politics or academic theory can be useful, they can also alienate people who aren't familiar with them. If they are integral to your thinking, find a way to use them *and* explain them in your text so as to take readers along with you.
E.g. In my work I explore Freud's concept of the "uncanny," in which something is experienced as simultaneously strange and familiar.
- Avoid vagaries/roundabout language: "I am trying to think about ideas surrounding the concept of..."
- Avoid extensive academic quotations: a short, powerful guiding quote or epigraph from an influential academic or literary text can be a useful entry point, but don't drown your reader in words that aren't your own.

RECEPTIONS

We encourage students to hold a reception in the gallery to celebrate their hard work with friends, family, professors, and the Hampshire community. Here are a few things to think about when planning your reception:

Alcohol Contracts for Receptions:

Gallery receptions are one of the few opportunities a student has to serve beer and wine at an event on campus. If you would like to serve alcohol at your reception, you must complete the Beer and Wine Service Contract and meet with Janine Knight, Assistant Dean of Students/Director of Campus Leadership and Activities.

Approximately two weeks before your reception, log into **HampEngage** and complete the Beer and Wine Service Contract [FORM](#). After you submit the form, one person from your exhibition group needs to meet with Janine to review the information, which takes about 15 minutes. If you are exhibiting with other students, only one of you needs to complete the form for the group. If you do not intend to have alcohol at your reception, you do not have to fill out this form.

The information you will be asked to provide includes the basic logistics of date and time, and also number of people you estimate will attend, then of those in attendance, how many do you estimate will be 21+. You will see there is a formula for determining how much you can serve. You are also required to serve non-alcoholic beverages because not everyone is 21 or chooses to consume alcohol. When alcohol is served, food is also required. If you don't know what food will be yet, do your best to answer. The food and beverages are all paid by the student(s) hosting the reception.

Beer and wine service requires hiring an approved bartender to serve at your reception, who you pay in cash the day of the event. Each server determines their fee, its best to estimate \$15-20 per hour, depending on how long the reception is. They can't put out a tip cup, so their payment is what you pay the server.

Below is a list of approved bartenders at Hampshire; we recommend emailing them in advance to see who has availability to work your receptions. If you have someone else in mind who is a bartender and you want to work your event, the person needs to contact Janine Knight to set up a meeting and provide a copy of their certification before they are approved to work campus events.

Approved Bartenders: [Current as of Fall 2018]

Elizabeth Levick el15@hampshire.edu

Alexis Cesepedes avc16@hampshire.edu

Phill Parks pnp16@hampshire.edu

Soe Herman-Dunphy sh15@hampshire.edu

Arella Rosals ardr15@hampshire.edu

Suggested Scheduling for Receptions:

You will want to give yourself enough time to complete install; it will almost always take longer than you anticipated. We wouldn't suggest planning your reception on the same day as you install, give yourself at least a one day cushion in case of unforeseen problems. It's also not recommended that you have your reception the day that you need to de-install or you will be up all night trying to get out of the gallery.

It's best to plan your pass meeting with your committee for before your reception, that way you are able to celebrate with friends and family without having to worry about your pass meeting in the back of your mind the whole time.

Cleaning up after your reception:

Receptions generate a lot of mess and trash. You are expected to remove all trash and debris, and clean any spills after your reception (cleaning up spills while they are still wet rather than sticky makes it a lot easier!) Collect recycling separately (e.g. beer cans and wine bottles) and empty into the large recycling depot behind the Library. This cleaning must be done on the same day or evening as your reception so that the space is clean by the time the gallery opens the next morning. You are also required to ensure that the hallway outside the gallery is left clean; you will likely need to vacuum it after your reception (there is a vacuum in the Gallery storeroom), as a lot of extra dirt and debris are tracked in during crowded receptions. Facilities staff are not there to clean up after your receptions; anything more than the standard cleaning needed creates a departmental strain and isn't fair to facilities staff.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFO FOR YOUR EXHIBITION

Key Access & Responsibility for Gallery Opening/Closing/Public Hours:

During your Div III exhibition, the Gallery is YOUR responsibility to open and close. You will be registered to check out key 105 or 106 at the Library circulation desk.

Please be aware that the Gallery is a public space, and is advertised as open from:

Monday – Friday: 10:30 am - 4:30 pm & Sundays 2 pm – 5 pm

You may have it open for longer periods, but it must be open BY 10:30 am on the days of your show (excluding install/deinstall days). It is recommended to hang an “Gallery Closed for Install/Deinstall” during those days so the public knows not to come in while you are working.

Safety, Security, & Insurance:

All art is shown in the Gallery **at your own risk**, and the College takes no responsibility for damage, theft etc. During your show, you may wish to ask peers to take shifts monitoring the space if you are concerned about theft or damage.

Selling Artwork & Swag:

The Gallery cannot market or sell art on your behalf. If you wish to sell works on your show, these must be private sales. If you are selling related items (e.g. photobooks or printed t-shirts), please ensure they are CLEARLY marked as FOR SALE (ie. not free), and that you or someone else is available to handle transactions during any time the sellable goods are on display. In the past, there has been a lot of confusion as various students include free or for-sale items in exhibitions and visitors can't always tell the difference (resulting in people "taking" the for sale items).

HELPFUL CONTACTS

Amy Halliday – Gallery Director [ahalliday@hampshire.edu]

Ray Mendel – Gallery Alumni Fellow [rmLO@hampshire.edu]

Facilities – 413.559.6614 [facilities@hampshire.edu]

Greg Kline – shelves, pedestals - go to his office hours or find him in the sculpture studio

Neil Young – Manager of Media Services [Make an appointment by going to media services]

John Bruner – Advanced Media Coordinator - Contact for borrowing vintage CRT monitors or other advance media help [jdbLO@hampshire.edu]

Lena Abraham – Media Alumni Fellow [laaLO@hampshire.edu]

IT – go up to IT on the Library 3rd floor, or enter a Help Ticket online

Amy Putnam - Theater Dept. Technical Director [aputnam@hampshire.edu]

ALTERNATIVE EXHIBITION SPACES ON CAMPUS:

*** The Gallery is not responsible for securing/reserving these spaces**

Roos-Rhode House

Centrum Gallery

Prescott Tavern

Film/Photo Installation Room

Model Gallery

Black Box Theater

GALLERY COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

Using the Hampshire Art Gallery to showcase the work you have done during your DIV III year is a fantastic opportunity, and a privilege. We continually are working to elevate the space to a high professional standard. With approximately 1 in 6 Div III students doing a Div III exhibition, the space ends up used by a large number of people in quick succession, causing wear and tear.

To minimize negative impact on the gallery facilities, supplies, and resources, as well as your fellow students' exhibition experiences, it is paramount that the space be treated with respect and care.

Here are some general community guidelines to follow:

- Follow the install and de-install time schedules that are given to you. Arriving early to install will stress out the team who handles preparing the space for you. Getting you & your work out of the gallery by the expected time is essential to keeping our tight repair and preparation schedule on track. Not adhering to approved schedules hurts your community of students and gallery staff.
- When you are finished de-installing your artwork, check your space and remove all trash or debris. Put back any pedestals or equipment used. We do not have the budget or staff capacity to clean up after you outside of standard hole patching jobs. Remove all hardware from the walls, and dispose of it appropriately or, if it is reusable, put it back into the storeroom where you found it.
- You are responsible for respectfully communicating with your exhibition group to make decisions about how the space is divided and used, as well as planning events.
- If something seems broken or damaged, tell Amy, Ray, or (if it is an emergency) Facilities as soon as possible.
- Projects that involve fire, glitter, live animals, bodily fluids are generally not allowed in the gallery.
- If you have a project planned that has the potential to be excessively destructive, messy, noisy, or in any way dangerous, you are required to consult with Amy and Ray in advance. It is unlikely that we can accommodate projects like this, but with appropriate planning and negotiation, we may be able to work something out.
- Do not block the entrance/exit.
- Put all unused or reusable tools and hardware back in the gallery store room in their appropriate containers or drawers. Your peers rely on being able to find and use those tools, so please don't let them end up in your dorm, the Arts Barn etc.
- If you are doing anything that seems outside the norm in the gallery, please talk to us instead of assuming it will be fine! We are generally very accommodating but need to be able to plan in advance.

To summarize: Use common sense! Be respectful of the space, your colleagues, and Hampshire staff! If you don't know, ask!