

## Preparing for Art Fairs

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We have all been eager to experience the art, buzz, and social engagements at art fairs again. Well, the good news is that the season is here once again. The bad news is; we might all be a little out of practice in terms of what it takes to make sure your art fair experience is a good one. Here's a quick overview of some things to keep in mind as you prep for participation.



- **Assess your risk management ahead of time.** If you have consigned artworks or are lending, keep in mind that there are various insurance implications that your broker can help you with. Your fine art insurance broker will be working to secure certificates of insurance, field special requests from consigners on insuring transits, and checking that transit limits and limits of liability while at the fair are adequate. They'll assess whether changes to your policy need to be made for the specific fair, or if existing policy limits adequately cover fair liability.
- **Slow down.** Most claims we see during art fairs stem from handling and transit. Gallery owners are under tight time constraints to set up their booths amidst the commotion and things that are out of their control. Remember that handling art is an art itself and needs to be done meticulously.
- **Design your booth with purpose.** Thoughtful booth design can mitigate losses and accidental damage. We've seen galleries create beautiful displays incorporating risers around the perimeter of the booth to create a physical barrier in front of the art, and a pedestal in the middle section to create a wide swath of protection around a sculpture - without sacrificing aesthetics.
- **Curate wisely.** Some vendors try to squeeze as much as they can into a booth by adding sub-walls, but spatial awareness goes a long way. When curating a collection

for your exhibition area, be aware of how much physical space a person takes up. People are used to seeing art in galleries and museums which have ample floor space for viewing. It's not uncommon for viewers to back into art while looking at the piece in front of them.

- **Plan ahead for shipping.** Most insurance claims arise from damage that occurs in transit. With so many galleries attending the same fairs, you don't want to wait until the last minute to hire a shipper. There's a limited number of qualified art shippers, and they book up fast. Get your ducks in a row months beforehand to make sure you have reliable movers. If you buy works at the fairs, make sure that a reputable art transport company is moving, storing, and/or installing the new works.
- **Know your inventory.** Keep a detailed record of inventory you are bringing to the fair. Label your inventory. Keep records of shipments. Inspect all objects in your booth at the end of each day to confirm there are no changes in condition. If you discover any damage, take photos of the piece and the packaging, note it on any shipment paperwork and notify your broker ASAP.
- **Consider COVID guidelines and restrictions.**

Oh, and one more thing - always work with an experienced fine art insurance broker to support you through the planning process.

*Want to learn more?*

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