

Banff & Buchan Arts Forum/COAST festival, 25th-27th May 2012, exhibition brief (open submission)

Exhibition title “Show Your Hand”

Background

Coast Festival of Visual Arts started in 2008 in the Aberdeenshire harbour towns of Banff and Macduff. With support from Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Enterprise an event was established to enhance the cultural life of the area, and in that way stimulate the economy and support the local community. Over the last 4 years many artists, local and national, have found a platform for their work, developing a new audience in the locale and drawing audiences from as far as the Scottish central belt. The Coast Festival is no longer core funded, and is now run by artists, volunteers and community organisations from the two towns. We want the festival to live on. This open exhibition is one way in which we will raise funds to ensure it will continue as well as enriching the programme of events.

Exhibition concept

Inspired by the “The Lost Hand” project which took place at the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (10th-18th September 2011) this year’s exhibition will confront the same issue, which is the risk we face of the collective loss of artisanal skills. We hope to build on the success of last year’s environmentally focused exhibition “Flotsam, Jetsam, Lagan and Derelict” which used found, foraged, recycled, salvaged, homemade or reclaimed materials.

Since industrialisation we have experienced an inevitable decline in the proportion of traditional skill-bearers in the community. This is not dissimilar to the loss of biodiversity in both the natural environment and among our domesticated plants and animals in that it carries the same potential threat of reduced capacity for adaptation in changing circumstances. In addition it is a cultural loss that diminishes us all.

For a variety of historical reasons the Western world has also had a long held dichotomous concept of “art” and “craft” negatively impacting the potential for creative innovation for craftsmen and the personal acquisition of manual skill for artists.

Our hope is that this exhibition will in a small way encourage artists to develop a broader skill base (beyond the accepted artists’ skills of painting and drawing) and give those who work in artisanal crafts the opportunity to exercise greater creativity in content. The submitted piece should function as an artwork whether it is an object of utility or not.

All pieces submitted must exhibit one or more craft skills as exemplified below. Artists may of course again choose to use reclaimed materials if they so wish.

Metal smith work techniques of any sort (black, white, silver or copper etc.).
Ceramics, enamelling and glasswork including stained glass.
Hard or soft stone carving.
Inlay, boullé work, mosaic etc.
Wood carving, marquetry, turnery or other skilled woodworking techniques.
Work in horn, antler or bone or other carved or engraved material etc.
Woodland crafts utilising coppice products; such as basket making.
Original advanced textile work (i.e. no kits or bought designs) embroidery, appliqué or tapestry etc.
Leatherworking techniques as used by harness makers embossers bookbinders etc.
Signwriting and decorative painting techniques such as hand lettering, marbling graining etc.
Paper making, and paper or paper pulp based constructive techniques such as quill work, carton-pierre and papier-mâché work of craftsman quality.
Any other work showing a display of real artisanal skills will be considered.

The Venue

The exhibition will be held in Macduff Town Hall, it will open on the evening of Friday 25th May and continue over the festival weekend 26th and 27th May 2012.

Exhibition structure

The exhibitors are to be a combination of approximately 30 well known invited contributors (both those celebrated as fine artists and established craftsmen) and an open submission which will be selected by jury, consisting of Bryan Angus representing COAST, David W. Hood representing BBAF and a respected expert in the fields of fine art and artisanal production.

Exhibition sales process

All exhibits must be for sale. Unlike last year, exhibitors of specific works will be identified by name in order to enable them to promote their skills. Sales will be by silent auction. Exhibitors may set a reserve price; we would recommend this be as low as possible above cost, to encourage buyer interest.

In order to encourage sales at the preview the exhibitor may choose to set a “buy it now price”. If you do so this amount must be higher than the reserve, an amount that you are happy to receive for the piece but please be realistic with regard to what is possible in the local market. You must also accept that if this is not achieved the item may subsequently be sold for an offer below this price but above your reserve.

Artists' brief

Each artist is asked to submit a work meeting the following criteria:

1. **SALES** All work must be available for sale. 80% of sale price will be remitted to the artist, a commission of 20% to be retained. At least 5% of gross income will be used toward funding for COAST 2013. Insurance of pieces submitted is the responsibility of the artist.
2. **SIZE & MOUNTING** pieces may be up to a maximum size of 24” in any dimension. We recommend smaller pieces as these will be more likely to find purchasers. Owing to the venue most exhibits accepted must be in some way wall mountable on the panels used to build a temporary white box gallery within the hall. Each work should be supplied with: mirror-plates, hanging cord or other suitable fixing. If the fragility, security or depth of the work requires a box frame, vitrine or shelf this should ideally be supplied by the exhibitor.
3. **NATURE OF THE WORK** The submitted piece should function as an artwork whether it is an object of utility or not. All pieces submitted must exhibit one or more of the craft skills.
4. All work submitted will be offered for sale.

Open Submission Procedure

1. Sending in days are 14th to 15th April 2012.
2. Each artist may submit up to 3 pieces.
3. Work to be delivered to:
BBAF COAST exhibition,
C/O Bryan Angus,
5 St Anne's Terrace,
BANFF AB45 1AW
Telephone 01261 812276
4. If you do not hear from us before the pick up dates below, assume that your work has been accepted for the exhibition.
5. Rejected works:- in order to limit exhibition costs as much as possible the preferred method of informing rejected artists is by email. **Please include an email contact on your entry form or if this is not possible a telephone number.**

Pick up dates for rejected works will be Sat 21th to Sun 22nd April. Any artist requiring work returned by post will be expected to pay the whole cost of postage and packing. This also applies to any unsold works not collected by the artist at close of the exhibition.

Last year we incurred significant costs in returning unsold pieces. Work not collected for which no return carriage has been paid will not be returned.

Please address any enquiries by email to COASTexhibition@twocrows.co.uk or telephone David Hood at 44(0)1771 653610.