

EXHIBITION INSTALLATION, MATTING & FRAMING STANDARDS LITTLETON MUSEUM

The Littleton Museum is dedicated to exhibiting works of art using museum industry best practices and standards. Requiring high quality installation and framing allows the museum to elevate the quality of the exhibition and maintains the security and safety of artists' work. Agreeing to protect one's artwork with quality framing and glazing is part of the artist's responsibilities as outlined in section 13a.iv of the Exhibitor Agreement, and juried show Legal Agreement outlined on the application website, callforentry.org.

The Littleton Museum retains the right to reject artwork upon delivery for improper framing and matting or inadequate hanging hardware. As an alternative, the museum may request that the artist reframe the artwork or redo the hanging hardware to meet the appropriate standards. Artists' cooperation with these standards will ensure a smooth delivery, installation, and exhibition. Most importantly, it will elevate the Littleton Museum visitors' experience and meet the museum's goals for high quality and safe fine art display.

The following standards and guidelines are designed to yield secure and successful presentation solutions that highlight the artwork. They are not designed to be cost prohibitive and artists are encouraged to discuss any framing or matting issues with the Curator of Exhibits in advance should they find it difficult to find cost-effective display solutions.

Gallery Specifications:

The Fine Arts Gallery in the Littleton Museum consists of 2 plywood backed plaster walls, and 2 large sections of semi-permanent Mila walls. Additional moveable Mila walls are added as needed depending upon the exhibition and display space required. Additional specifications to note and adhere to are as follows:

- The Fine Arts Gallery in its most basic layout provides about 135 running feet of display space and 1,800 square feet of floor space. Additional Mila walls can be added for increased 2D display space and an additional 150 running feet.
- The gallery has in-floor electricity limited to the location of outlets.
- The gallery has security cameras in specific locations that may or may not be blocked depending upon the location of the temporary walls. There are no gallery attendants or security staff monitoring the gallery, but security hardware can be utilized if necessary.
- The gallery has grid ceiling tiles; artwork requiring suspension from the ceiling may be rejected based on weight, stability concerns, etc.
- The Littleton Museum has a small selection of exhibit cases (both floor and wall), and matching vitrines. Additional cases and vitrines may be built or ordered as needed but require advanced notification and must fit within the overall exhibit budget.

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- The use of organic matter in exhibitions is discouraged to prevent pest infestation. Use of organic matter is subject to the approval of the Littleton Museum Director, the Curator of Exhibits, and the Curator of Collections.

Installation Guidelines:

Artwork that requires specific or unique installation, other than a standard hanging hook or basic pedestal, should be discussed with the Curator of Exhibits prior to delivery and installation. In most cases, the artist should provide the specific hardware or exhibit furniture that is required, or request in advance that the museum assist in obtaining or creating the appropriate display materials.

Framing Standards:

- Quality and standardized frames - The Littleton Museum hosts two juried group shows a year. In order to make the exhibition feel cohesive, the museum prefers that submitted artwork be framed in modest frame moldings with clean lines and black, white, neutral, or natural wood finishes. Curated exhibits also look best when framing amongst all pieces is cohesive, similar looking, and simple, allowing the artwork to be the focus, rather than the frames. Simple but elegant framing also increases the chance of sale.
 - Frames should be new or new looking with minimal scratches, dents or chips.
 - D-rings with hanging wire should be securely installed. Improperly mounted hardware can lead to failure and a risk of artwork falling off the wall.
 - Ready-made frames are discouraged. Single-source hanging systems used on ready-made frames are frequently not sturdy enough or of high-enough quality.
- Plain matting – Photographs and works on paper should be matted, unless there is a specific artistic intent that requires the work be presented unmatted. Mats should be plain white or off-white, as colored and/or patterned mats detract from the artwork.
 - Single mats are preferred. Colored/patterned mats or mat liners are discouraged.
 - Mats should be well cut (no overcuts).
 - Please be sure to clean the mat and remove any debris between the mat and the glass/glazing.
 - Float-mounting the artwork over a mat or backerboard, so the edges are seen, is an option for artwork with a deckle edge or that is constructed with handmade paper. A spacer within the frame should be used to keep the art from touching the glazing.
- Clean glazing - Photographs and works on paper should have proper glazing to protect the artwork from potential damage by visitors and regular exposure to environmental conditions while on display. Glass, Plexiglas, or acrylic glazing should be cleaned before delivery of artwork so that smudges and smears are removed. The museum staff does

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not typically clean artwork glazing before mounting the exhibit for display. Glazing with significant scratches, chips, abrasions, or cracks detracts from the visitor experience of the artwork and should be minimal or artist should replace glazing with a new piece prior to artwork delivery.

- Sturdy hanging hardware – For ease and security of installation, all 2D artwork (including framed works, canvases, and panels) must have d-rings with sturdy hanging wire attached prior to delivery. If the work is exceptionally large or heavy, a French cleat may be an alternate suitable hanging hardware choice
 - The D-rings should be installed so the flat portion is on the frame and the ring is hanging over the backing of the frame, between one-third and one-quarter of the way down the piece, on each side. DO NOT attempt to install D-rings on the cardboard backing of the frame.
 - Wire should be looped through the d-rings and twisted around itself several times. To ensure secure hanging, loop a portion of the wire back through itself.
 - Wires should be tight, so the work hangs close to the wall. Be sure to install your wire low enough so that when it is placed over the hook, the top of the frame will not be lower than the hook.
 - Plastic-coated stainless-steel braided picture wire works best for smooth hanging, deters rusting, and does not break easily.
 - The Littleton Museum and the City of Littleton cannot be held responsible for negligent framing, slipped or broken wire, and/or screws or screw-eyes that pull out from the frame that causes damage to your artwork.
 - **Do not use sawtooth hangers.** They are not strong enough to support the weight of most frames safely and are hard to center and level.
 - For framing hardware installation tips, please visit littletongov.org/museum.

Additional standards:

- Ready to hang:
 - All works should be ready to hang/place for exhibition **upon delivery**.
 - Backs of all works should be as flush to the wall as possible with no screw eyes or other pieces that will result in the frame leaning or sticking out. Hardware should also align with the frame edges on the sides of the frames.
 - The finished presentation should not be flimsy. It should be strong enough to support its own weight.
 - All artwork must be finished and completely dry.
- Weight - All 2D and 3D work should not weigh more than 100 lbs, unless previously discussed and approved with the museum curatorial staff.
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- Dimensions - Work must not exceed 60 inches/5 feet in any one direction (length, width, or height), unless previously discussed and approved with the museum curatorial staff.
- Photographic artworks - Current printing methods allow for a variety of substrates to choose from when making prints of digital photography. Consider the following when selecting the print material for your work:
 - Paper printing - Paper is the most traditional choice of substrate for making photographic prints. Images printed on paper look very high quality. Be sure to identify your printing method and type of paper in your entry under "Medium."
 - Metal printing - Photographs or digital images printed on an aluminum substrate must have a sturdy hanging system. Nielsen frames mounted to the back, with attached hanging wires are ideal. A cleat system is an alternative option.
 - Canvas/giclee prints – When printing photographs on canvas, make sure the canvas is tightly stretched. A finely woven substrate canvas showcases work best.
 - Size - For digital photography, be sure that your image file is the appropriate resolution for the size you intend to print it at, especially for enlarged prints.
- Works on canvas:
 - When framing a stretched canvas, no glass or acrylic glazing is required as the canvas needs to breathe.
 - Large oils or acrylics on heavy-duty stretchers with a gallery wrap do not need to be framed. The canvas should be stapled on the back edge, and side edges should be painted or finished.
 - Float frames with no glazing are also suitable and can make a work look very polished.
- Sculpture (wall):
 - Sculptural works meant for a wall must have strong mounting systems. If special hardware is required, the artist must provide it, along with complete instructions.
 - Artists are welcome to help install their work if special instructions are necessary. Please plan with the Curator of Exhibits to schedule a day and time.
- Sculpture (floor or pedestal):
 - Sculptures requiring a pedestal should be identified as such in the juried show entry or in curated exhibit planning discussions.
 - Typically, the museum will provide the bases and pedestals as well as a vitrine if additional protection is needed. However, sculptures can be displayed on pedestals provided by the exhibiting artist upon consultation with the Curator of Exhibits.
- Textile/fiber works:
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- Quilts and other fiber/textile works should include a sleeve or other container for hanging hardware as well as instructions on how to properly hang the piece.

- Pastels:
 - All accepted works in pastel must be framed with glass (anti-reflective), to protect the works.

- Water media:
 - All accepted water media works should be framed with appropriate glazing to protect the work.

For additional questions on artwork display standards, please contact the Curator of Exhibits at mcasey@littletongov.org or 303.795.3953 or visit littletongov.org/museum for helpful tips and resources.