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Create a Brochure for Your Art

Art Marketing Action
archives for members of
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Laura K. Aiken asks about artists' brochures: Do artists have brochures? What's in them? What makes a good artist brochure?

Yes, artists have brochures. Some are better than others. Most are a waste of paper because they're poorly designed, flimsy, look homemade (in a bad way), have poorly photographed art, or are considered by their creators to be a magic pill that will solve all of their marketing woes.

The only reason I can think of to have a brochure is if you need to give the same information to a large group of people in a compact format. Maybe you're sending a direct mail piece to your niche market (garden centers, the wine industry, women's groups). Or, you teach classes and workshops and want to leave your schedule at targeted locations. Or you participate in a lot of art festivals and people are always asking you for something more substantial than a business card or postcard. All of these are good reasons to have a brochure.

Reread the first sentence in the paragraph above and note the phrase "same information." If you have one body of work that you promote to one group of people and a separate body of work that you promote to another group of people, you need two different brochures.

Don't expect huge returns from your brochure. Think of it as an investment—a way to put your name in front of people again and just one component (just one!) of a *marketing plan*.

Incidentally, I'm teaching a quick-and-easy marketing plan for your art at this month's smARTist Telesummit.

When you create a brochure, or any marketing piece, always keep your audience in mind. Your brochure should do the following.

1. Describe what you do and your UQ (uniqueness quotient)—how you're different from other artists. If you have a fascinating story or great sense of humor, use it!
2. Have only the best photography in it. If you don't have good photos of your art, either get them or forget the brochure.
3. Explain what you offer the recipients. How will their lives be better if they sign up for your workshop? Why will they be happy they selected you to design their anniversary poster instead of someone else? Why should they purchase from you right now?
4. Include all of your contact information: Name, Address (or studio address), Phone Number, Web Site, and Email. If your art is available at galleries, include gallery information. If you have open studio hours, include those along with a map.

Even though three of these items are written text, the emphasis in your brochure should be on the art (#2): great work, the best photography, and images large enough to make an impact.

Artist David Castle sent out a handsome "Catalog of Original Art and Holiday Gifts" to his collectors' list last fall. It's a simple 8 1/2 x 11" piece of cardstock with a 5 1/2 x 8 1/2" insert. It looks like he printed them himself, but it's very well designed and printed on good paper on a high-quality setting. It has not only information about art for sale, but also his open studio schedule and a map of where to find the studio. David is allowing me to share his full brochure with you in today's entry on the *Art Biz Blog*.

There will be more on presenting your art in next week's newsletter.

KNOW THIS—~> A brochure is an investment and part of a marketing strategy. It is not the answer to all of your self-promotion woes.

THINK ABOUT THIS—~> Do you really need a brochure?

DO THIS—~> Create a brochure for your art—but only if you really need it. As I said, you need different brochures for different audiences. Don't try to put everything in one brochure. Instead, target the message. Hire a graphic designer to lay out the basics for you so that you can drop in new images or update text as needed.

Tell us about your brochure, give us a link to it if you have a picture online, and listen to the podcast on the *Art Biz Blog*.

