



# Meeting Place

THE  
PORTFOLIO  
REVIEW FOR  
ARTISTS

March 10 - 19, 2024 | Houston, Texas

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## Preparing for the Meeting Place

Artists who benefit most from the Meeting Place are those who have at least one complete and cohesive body of work. Most of the artists who register for the Meeting Place are fine art photographers, documentary photographers working on independent essays, or artists using photography as a creative medium.

### BEFORE THE PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

#### SET YOUR OBJECTIVES

- Be clear with yourself about what you want for your work, but also be realistic with your goals. Knowing what you are looking for ahead of time will help you to be more intentional with your meetings, and in turn will give each reviewer a better understanding of how they might help you.
- Ex: Are you seeking technical advice and guidance? Information about clarity of content, print quality, editing, and sequencing? Are you seeking gallery representation for the work? Do you wish to have an exhibition? Are you looking to publish the work?

#### EDIT YOUR PORTFOLIO

- Limit the number of photographs you are showing. 15 – 20 prints in a body of work is a good range.
- Present a thematically unified or otherwise cohesive body of work. If you have more than one series with you, we advise you first show the stronger work, or the work you think that reviewer will be more drawn to. Usually, there is only time to adequately go through one body of work.
- Every image in your portfolio should be strong. Editing and sequencing your images is very important for how the reviewer will understand and experience your work.

## PREPARE YOUR PORTFOLIO

- It is very important to present your artwork in a professional manner. Bring original prints, not Xeroxes or laser copies.
- Printing images at the same size and on the same kind of paper will help make your work more cohesive.
- It is not necessary to mat your prints, and the vast majority of photographers do not bring matted prints. If you feel strongly about matting your prints, they should be well cut and clean.
- Do not show your work in plastic sleeves.
- If you are showing any video work that needs a laptop or tablet, you must bring your own device that can last off a charged battery. You will likely not have access to an outlet inside the review room.
- If you are showing three-dimensional work, you need to take into account the time it will take to pack and unpack the work, and the size constraints of the review table (72 x 30" / 183 x 76 cm).

## CONSIDER EASE IN HANDLING

- Package your portfolio so that you can carry it, open it, show it, and put it away quickly. We recommend a simple clamshell portfolio box, or a sturdy handled portfolio.
- Protect your work, but not to the extent that it takes a lot of time to wrap/unwrap each print. A simple glassine interleaving cut to the same size as your prints is a good option.
- The review tables are standard 6ft tables (72 x 30" / 183 x 76 cm). Do not bring 20 extra-large prints. Print your portfolio in medium sized prints, and if you need to show large exhibition sized prints, bring 2-3 large prints in a tube. There is limited space around the perimeter of the review room to lay out oversized prints during your individual review appointments. FotoFest will provide a dedicated space to store your portfolio overnight.
- Remember that reviewers are art professionals experienced in handling prints.
- That being said, accept the fact that your work may show some "road wear" by the end of the event. You are here to show work to as many reviewers and peers as possible.

## PRESENTATION MATERIALS

- We advise that you design and produce a simple promotional card with your email, mailing address, website, any relevant social media handles, phone number, and an image of your work that you can give to reviewers. The image is important – most reviewers will remember you more easily if there is an identifiable image in addition to your name.
- Make sure to bring enough cards for reviewers, fellow artists, and for anyone else you may meet.

## GET TO KNOW THE REVIEWERS AHEAD OF TIME

- Do your homework. Start by reading the reviewer biographies on the FotoFest website, but go beyond that – look at the exhibitions they curate, the essays they write, and what artists they work with or represent.
- When ranking reviewers, prioritize those who you think will respond best to your work and be most useful to your objectives.

## PRACTICE YOUR PRESENTATION

- Remember, you only have 20 minutes to introduce yourself and present your work. It's a good idea to run through your presentation with a friend or a peer ahead of time, not only to practice how you talk about your work, but to test the sequence of your portfolio.

## DURING THE PORTFOLIO REVIEWS

### BE PROFESSIONAL, AND REMEMBER WHY YOU'RE THERE!

- Be on time for your appointment! You will not get extra time if you show up late.
- Don't make the mistake of talking the entire time without showing your work. Reviewers can look at your work while you are talking.
- Be mindful of the time limit with each reviewer; you will want to have time within the session to receive feedback.

### BE READY TO TAKE NOTES

- Bring a notebook and pen or pencil. Consider bringing a sheet with thumbnails of all the images to mark which images reviewers responded to most strongly.
- If you prefer to audio record the reviews, always ask the reviewer's permission first.
- Whatever note taking or recording format works for you — do it. You want to take home as clear a memory of each discussion as possible.

### THE LAST FEW MINUTES OF THE REVIEW

- It is okay to ask the reviewer for their card. It's a good idea to take pictures of any cards you get with your phone in case you misplace them. Remember that FotoFest does not give out reviewer contact information.
- Ask the reviewer if you can add their name to your email list.
- If the reviewer requests more information, ask what format they prefer to receive — physical mail or email.
- If you have other materials -- booklets, exhibition catalogues, etc., ask the reviewer if they want it. Don't assume the reviewer wants to keep them.
- Don't burden a reviewer with a bulky packet or books to take home from the event. Offer to mail it to them at their office after the event.
- Be mindful of the appointment after yours; do not overstay your time.

## AFTER THE REVIEW

- Write a thank you note or email to every reviewer you saw. Do not expect that reviewers will respond to you. If they don't respond, it does not mean they don't like your work.
- If a reviewer asked for more materials, send them as soon as possible.
- Keep in contact with the reviewers who request it.
- Read your notes, and reflect on the advice you receive.

- Consider this experience as a chance to build relationships with professionals who respond positively to your work, and an opportunity to build a community of fellow artists. Prepare well, and you'll make the most out of it!
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**For questions about this guide or the reviews, please contact:**

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