

# SEATTLE EROTIC FESTIVAL

## **Artist's Guide to Packing and Preparing Artwork for Shipping**

### **WARNING:**

**Improper packing may result in damage to your artwork during shipping and handling, including work that is being hand delivered.**

These simple packing instructions will assist you in the proper preparation of your work for shipping.

If you are hand-delivering your work, we request that all art be wrapped at the minimum in bubble wrap or cardboard. Work wrapped in a towel and placed in a plastic bag has a much greater risk of incurring damage.

**Please write your name and artist number on all packing materials you want returned to you.** This includes cardboard, bubble wrap, corners, crates, etc. Packing materials that are not marked will be recycled or reused.

### **PROFESSIONAL PACKING**

- No one can guarantee that a package sent via a shipping carrier will arrive undamaged at its destination. However, with the proper precautions, you can minimize the chances of damage. You have some choices to make, the first of which is to determine the best packing materials you can afford.

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- If you take your art to a reputable packing company, such as Mailboxes Etc, or a similar business that provides professional packing services, many of your choices can be aided by knowledgeable staff. They will have the correct packing materials for almost every item, and if they're not too busy, will pack while you wait so you can watch and learn.
- There are also companies that specialize in the packing of fine art. This is the most expensive way to pack and ship your art, and is generally worth the extra protection.

## **DO-IT-YOURSELF Materials**

- Your objective is to create a package that is sufficiently cushioned. Make sure that the box fits properly; if it's too big the art will shift and if it's too small the tightness of the packing will put stress on the art.
- Lining the inside edges of the box with scrap bubble wrap is a good idea: the more padding you use, the less stress there will be on your work. (The Festival will recycle any materials not used for re-shipping.)
- The following materials can all be used to correctly pack your art for shipping: corrugated cardboard boxes, bubble wrap (large for glass/small for other), Styrofoam blocks or peanuts, foam rubber, packing tape (a tape gun is a great time saver), blue masking tape for picture glass, tools, (scissors, utility knife, markers).
- You can cut your costs by ordering in bulk from shipping supply companies. If possible, go in with a few friends to share the costs. Buying supplies from office supply stores will be the most expensive, but they sometimes have less expensive bulk options.

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- Reusing packing materials is always a great option for saving costs. Some business such as print shops, frame shops and art supply stores sometimes throw away packing materials that can be reused. Asking a clerk politely if they have any extra materials that you could have is appropriate.
- **The most important packing items that should always be used are cardboard picture corners.** The pre-folded ones available from frame supply stores are not always as sturdy as the ones you can make yourself. It's easy to do and a great way to utilize cardboard scraps or old cardboard boxes no longer in shipping condition. They protect the edges of the art during shipping and storage. We've provided diagrams (below) to assist you with creating your own corners.

## PREPPING THE ART

**Flat Art**—work on paper, canvas, or anything that doesn't have glass or a frame

- For paintings on canvas, frames are optional if the canvas edges are neat or incorporated into the piece.
- There should be no staples showing, and if the edges are painted, they should look as if intentionally finished that way.
- Flat art should be sandwiched in clean cardboard cut to the size of the work.
- If the surface of the work has lots of texture, paint, or relief, it should have something over

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it to protect the surface: small bubble wrap with the bubbles toward the face works well. If the surface is a high gloss varnish, the white foam padding for shipping is ideal. Of course, the painting must be thoroughly dry.

- Cardboard picture corners are especially important to use on unframed canvases.

**Framed Art**—work that is framed under glass or Plexiglas.

- These require the utmost of care. Plexiglas costs more than glass, and is recommended for work that needs to be shipped due to being lighter and stronger than glass. It can break if enough pressure is applied, but does less damage to the artwork in the event it becomes cracked or broken. It is more susceptible to scratches and cannot be cleaned with glass cleaner so be sure to note on the art label on the back "Plexiglas" so that we can handle it properly.
- If you choose to use glass, then we suggest you use **blue tape** on the glass itself. The reason for doing this is that should the glass break in transit, the tape will hold the glass together, and minimize the risk of the glass edges damaging the art (we've lost art because it was not taped), whether it's a photo, drawing, or work on paper. The 1" or 2" wide blue masking tape sold in hardware and paint stores is the best. It is easily removable (regular masking tape may leave a sticky residue.) We will ship back all glass finished art with blue tape.
- Tape an "X" from corner to corner, and then a centered cross (+) over that. **Take care not to tape the frame as it could pull off the finish.** A sheet of cardboard on the face and taped to the

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cardboard corners adds another layer of security. Then use two layers of large bubble wrap, commonly called 1/2" (referring to its depth). Wrap it around the package and leave just enough excess for the edges. Don't fold the excess over, but tape it firmly on the edge. Also, there shouldn't be any overlap on the face or back. Keeping it neat and as flat and uniform as possible is the key to its security.

- Small bubble wrap is not cushiony enough for wrapping glass, but is good for miniature items, jewelry, or for canvas surfaces as described above.
- Please be sure to write your name and artist number on any packing materials you want returned.

**Sculpture and 3D Art**—Anything with depth or multiple pieces that require assembly should take time to pack.

- Weight is a big factor, whether it's heavy or delicate. If it's metal and heavy, wrap the entire piece in large bubble wrap.
- Large chunks of styrofoam are excellent for large items and cheaper than peanuts, as well as less messy.
- If the piece is heavy, it's best to pack it in a wooden crate.
- Foam rubber is excellent to wrap on corners and smaller fragile elements and fills up the voids in the box.
- If the work requires assembly of any kind, please provide a detailed diagram in an envelope and mark it as *Instructions*. If

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the work needs some care in the unwrapping, include that information as well. Place this envelope on the inside top of the box, mark the outside of the box: "Open Here—Instructions Inside."

We hope that you find these instructions helpful. All the extra effort you put into packing your art will ensure that it arrives to us in excellent condition, ready to be installed. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to presenting your artwork. If you have any questions, please contact us via phone at (206)229-2185 or email at [artisthelp@seattleerotic.org](mailto:artisthelp@seattleerotic.org)