

Making Space for Art

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For AALA April 19, 2007

AGENDA

ART GALLERIES AT USA LIBRARY
ART SHOWS OR SPACES GENERALLY
APPLICABILITY TO YOU

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Library Gallery

- Planning – 2002/03
- First show – March 2003
- Two galleries – 1st & 3rd floors
- Struggle booking artists until 2006
- Success! Goals met
- Booked 2 years in advance & artists contact me. Some periodic / repeat shows

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USA's GALLERY SHOWS

- Emphasis: USA students & faculty, local/regional artists
- Children's art
- Special shows
 - Percipio
 - Eastern Shore Art Center (art therapy)
 - Marine Resources
 - Helen Keller

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ART AS THERAPY

Major theme of three shows by Nancy Riai – Eastern Shore Art Center

- Blue Faces of Katrina
- Hurricane Hair
- Trees of Ivan

Librarians are not therapists, but can work with counselors in time of crises, special needs cases, etc.

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Philosophical Questions

- Why have an art gallery or space in the library?
- Why should it be a goal, take-up your time, etc.?

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How do I answer critics:

- ***“Librarians are not art curators & should not spend time having shows.”***
- ***“Having art shows is not part of the library’s mission.”***
- ***“Librarians who spend time managing art shows could not be providing good library service.”***
- ***“Artists & art teachers should concentrate on art and librarians on reference.”***

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Rationale:

USA University Library will:

- Be a “hub” for art - a cultural resource for the Mobile area
- Feature USA students, faculty, local artists, children’s art who don’t normally have the opportunity...
- Use art as a
 - fund raising tool
 - maximize PR for the library

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Rationale cont.

- Academic libraries have always purchased art books & a-v
- “Read View Listen” mantra -- IMC
- Many libraries of all types have used display cases and had displays of various kinds for decades.

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Rationale cont.

- Both artists and librarians generally value and want to share knowledge about art, art history, and art appreciation with the public.
- “Libraries are transitioning from a center of information to a center of culture”
 - From OCLC report: “The Future of Libraries: Beginning the Great Transformation.”

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Rationale cont.

Artists, photographers and librarians do library research
Libraries provide books, articles, photographs, slides, or other research material that support the artist’s research

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Rationale cont.

- Children = next photographers, sculptors, artists,, art teachers
- Winning a prize in an art contest is motivational
- Seeing shows are motivating, instill appreciation for art
- Use attendance for extra credit.

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Rationale cont.

- Both reading & the fine arts broaden our experience, stimulate our minds, raise our emotions, make us more interesting and knowledgeable, promote life-long learning
- Sponsoring art shows in libraries is a more enlightened view of the role of libraries in society
- Librarians should encourage engagement in the arts and cultural activities

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Rationale cont.

- Both reading & art are educational and can broaden our experiences as to techniques (watercolors, acrylics, oil, etc.), or types of art (abstract, landscape, multi-medium sumi-e, microscopic).
- Both result in an intellectual and emotional responses
- Both build connections

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Rationale cont.

- Both art and reading are expressive for the author/producer and bring out their creativity or emotions
- Both contribute to the self-esteem, knowledge, etc., of the individual
- Libraries and art galleries are both learning spaces

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BENEFITS TO LIBRARY?

- > Gifts
- > PR
- > Visual appeal
- > Traffic

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SHOW MANAGEMENT

POLICIES SHOULD COVER:

- Location
- Selection procedures
- Publicity
- Security
- Permissions
- Set-up
- Budget and fund raising

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MANAGEMENT cont

- “We will emphasize regional artists, USA faculty & students...”
- “...framed water colors, acrylic, oils, photography at least 16” x 20” but may also include unframed art & photographs, jewelry, sculpture, ceramics in display cases.”

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Management cont.

- “The library does not sell art but artists can post prices & contact information.”
- “...not responsible for damage or loss....artists must have their own insurance.”
- “Artists must pick-up their works....”

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Management cont

...reserve right to reject any or all...
...not acceptable if they depict extreme violence, sex, or if they make negative comments about racial, religious, or ethnic groups.

Standards for art display items are stricter than standards for library books because display items are seen by everyone and viewers cannot decide for themselves to view or not view displayed works.

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Fund Raising Ideas

- Many businesses, restaurants, PTOs, banks, etc., are willing to sponsor small art shows of student works
- Apply for grants to fund framing
- Print notecards, postcards, calendars and sell – ask printer for discount or freebie

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