

There are 2 parts to being an artist – 1) making the art, and 2) disseminating to the world the art itself or art as part of a context.

- 1) Making the art. Be focussed and driven about making your art. Write a short biography (paragraph about your CV containing training, awards and exhibitions). Write a statement about your work – keep it clear and avoid ‘art speak’. Ask a friend or someone who knows you to help you basically describe in a paragraph your work (either current body of work or your work in general, or both for sending to different applications depending on their purpose). VAI run courses on getting your biog and statements right. You need this as your basic marketing tools to promote your work. We will do a session later in the year on using facebook/VIMEO/ youtube to promote your work without giving away copyright. **(NB Members Book 2010 has great examples of the variety and strength of GSD biographies and statements)**
- 2) Make a plan or what you want to do with your art. You want to make it, what then? Start local (local authority), then think national (Arts Council, and then plan international (Culture Ireland). There are major opportunities out there for artists right now. Money is tighter and the grants are getting more competitive. You will face rejections – but keep trying. There are other opportunities, such as bursaries, residencies and studio spaces such as vacant shops.

Local Authorities. There are four local authorities in Dublin (Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council). Every county has its own local authority, and some also have a city council (Limerick and Cork). All these have arts officers, and these have (shrinking) arts budgets. Their aim is to support artists in their area (ie where you live). Get onto your local authority arts register. Make sure your arts officer knows who you are, and what you do. Send them invites and catalogues. They fund artists MEMBERSHIP FEES, MATERIALS, and sometimes more. Apply for individual grants for your materials, any exhibition fees, and add in your annual membership fee of the studio. The worst that can happen is they say no – the best is that you get your fees paid, some materials, the offer of a residency and or local exhibition.

The Arts Council: The Arts Council has had its budgets slashed, and money is extremely difficult to get. However, the world turns, and artists still make art. Apply for funding, and at least get the experience of going through the process. Once you get familiar with applying through this system, you will have self taught yourself how to apply for any bursary in the world. Register on the ONLINE system with the Arts Council, and apply under the heading Visual Arts (or other if you do education work/ work in prisons etc.). If you are applying for support for an exhibition you will need to supply a budget which balances (ie your income that you seek/raise matches the cost of the project). I attach a basic sample:

Sample Exhibition Budget:

Cost:

Invites/design and postage:	€1,000
Framing and installation:	€1,000
Documentation/Photography:	€500

Income:

Sponsor	€1,000
Arts Co. money sought:	€1,500

If you are invited by a venue to exhibit they will (should!) cover invigilation, promotion (including invites I have listed above), exhibition opening, insurance, and also give you a % commission of sales. In some venues there is also a fee towards the artist, or subsidy towards a brochure/catalogue.

See: www.artscouncil.ie

Culture Ireland: Culture Ireland promotes the exhibition or presentation of Irish work abroad. It does not cover residencies or development work. They have four annual deadlines, and you must supply an invitation from the host venue abroad, budgets of the project, and an outline of how the promotion of the work takes place. The deadlines are February/May/August/November. See: www.cultureireland.ie

Do's and don'ts:

Do apply – don't be disheartened by rejections, thousands apply for the same bursaries – you get better with practice.

Do be focussed about what you are doing – and write that down.

Don't write anything that is not honest about your work (ie don't make up art waffle because you think its what a panel want to hear). Write passionately about what you do, and why you do it.

Do plan to go ahead with your project even if a funder falls through –scale it back and do a smaller version. Then inform the funders – they see you have a track record of following through on your convictions.

Do use facebook/twitter etc to tell people about your art (don't upload all your images – unless you want to give away copyright, and that's part of the work...)

Lastly, staff in Graphic Studio Dublin are here to help you. Examples of where we can be really helpful is getting you a reference to say you are a member – e-mail me any time you need one of these. Paula's session on photography was excellent at getting basic photos of your work for applications etc. See the following document:

Digital Photography for Artists

Every camera is different but most consist of a circular button, which have all the different modes (P, A, S, M) that your camera has and an on screen menu.

To start I'll introduce you to a few definitions that will help you know your own camera and also help with the reading of your camera's instructions book.

What is ISO - International Standards Organisation – previously ASA

In Digital Photography ISO measures the sensitivity of the image sensor. It's a numbering system originally measuring film speed. The same principles apply as in film photography – the lower the number the less sensitive your camera is to light and the finer the grain. Higher ISO settings are generally used in darker situations to get faster shutter speeds (for example an indoor sports event when you want to freeze the action in lower light) – however the cost is noisier shots. More light – lower ISO number, clearer shots with less noise.

Depth of Field (DOF) is that amount of your shot that will be in focus. Large depth of field means that most of your image will be in focus whether it's close to your camera or far away, and the opposite for small DOF.

White Balance: the reason we adjust white balance is to get the colors in your images as accurate as possible. Different lighting affects the colour that a camera sees, therefore by adjusting the white balance settings, gives a more accurate colour.

Automatic Mode - AUTO

Auto mode tells your camera to use its best judgment to select shutter speed, aperture, ISO, white balance, focus and flash to take the best shot that it can, however you need to keep in mind that you're not telling your camera any extra information about the type of shot you're taking so it will be 'guessing' as to what you want.

Portrait Mode

When you switch to portrait mode your camera will automatically select a large aperture (small number), which helps to keep your background out of focus (i.e. it sets a narrow depth of field – ensuring your subject is the only thing in focus and is therefore the centre of attention in the shot). In some cameras there is an Indoor Mode – helps with setting shutter speed and white balance. Not that common however.

Semi Automatic Modes that could be used for photographing artwork

Program Mode (P)

Program mode is similar to Auto but gives you a little more control over some other features including flash, white balance, ISO etc. Check your digital camera's manual for how the Program mode differs from Automatic in your particular model.

Aperture Priority Mode (A or AV)

Aperture is the size of the opening in the lens when a picture is taken.

The aperture of a lens is the diameter of the lens opening and is usually controlled by an iris.

The larger the diameter of the aperture, the more light reaches the image sensor.

This mode is a semi-automatic (or semi-manual) mode where you choose the aperture and where your camera chooses the other settings (shutter speed, white balance, ISO etc) so as to ensure you have a well-balanced exposure. Aperture priority mode is useful when you're looking to control the depth of field in a shot (usually a stationary object where you don't need to control shutter speed).

Aperture is measured in f/numbers – for example f/2.8, f/4, f/5.6, f/8, f/22 etc. Moving from one f/number to the next doubles or halves the size of the amount of opening in your lens (and the amount of light getting through). The smaller the F/number (or f/value), the larger the lens opening (aperture).

One thing that causes a lot of new photographers confusion is that large apertures (where lots of light gets through) are given smaller f/number and smaller apertures (where less light gets through) have larger f/numbers. So f/2.8 is in fact a much larger aperture than f/22.

F/number also known as f/value, f-stop, aperture value

The rule of thumb is this:

Select a large aperture (or small f/number), e.g. f/2.8, to obtain a shallow DOF

Select a small aperture (or large f/number), e.g. f/8.0, to achieve great DOF

The way I remember it is that small numbers mean small DOF and large numbers mean large DOF.

Shutter Speed (S) is the amount of time that the shutter is open. It's usually used to control movement, sports photography or night images.

Fully Manual Mode (M)

This is a mode that gives you full control over all the settings on your camera.

FLASH

A flash should only ever be thought of as a secondary light source. In almost every situation that you will want to photograph there will be some level of existing ambient light. This light is important, as it is the natural light of the scene you're trying to capture. Your flash should be used to supplement existing light rather than as the primary way of lighting a scene. If you use a flash as the primary source of light it will look artificial.

WHEN USING A FLASH

1. Take a Step Back

One of the simplest ways to decrease the impact of the light coming from your flash is to put a little more distance between you and your subject. Stepping back further away from your subject doesn't mean that you can't fill the frame. You could use your camera's zoom lens (although this can increase the effect of camera shake) or simply crop the shot later on your computer.

2. Diffuse It

If your digital camera doesn't allow you to have any control over how much light it outputs (which most don't) you might want to consider manually making some changes that limit or diffuse the light coming out of your digital camera. One of the most effective ways of doing this is simply to find some semi opaque material to place over your flash. Stick a little white tissue paper over their flash or a little piece of cello tape (magic tape). Just remember that the color of the material that you use will impact the color of the light that comes out of your flash (and therefore the color cast on the scene) – so white tape or tissue paper will give a more natural light than red or blue!

3. Redirect it

You can redirect or bounce the light coming out of their flash off another surface. Professional photographers are able to do this by using these flash units that are able to be swiveled and shot into different directions. If you don't have the umbrella type facilities that professional photographers have then you could try taking a small piece of white card and putting it at an angle in front of the flash so that the flash is redirected up onto the ceiling.

This will need some experimentation to get the angle of the card right and the results will vary quite a bit depending upon the situation that you're photographing (distance to your subject, how high the ceiling is, how much ambient light there is etc). Again, the color of both the card you use as well as the ceiling or wall that you're bouncing the light off will impact the color cast in the shot.

4. Add Light

By adding a little more light on the scene can help the situation. At an extreme level this might mean turning on all the lights in the room or it could mean moving your subjects to a better-lit position near a lamp or light or window.

Another way to increase the impact of ambient light on a subject is to think about reflective light. Putting White card behind your work to be photographed is a good idea.

5. ISO, Shutter Speeds and Aperture

One last way to decrease the impact has on a scene is to tweak some of your camera's exposure settings – particularly those that impact how the camera treats light like ISO, Aperture and Shutter Speed.

ISO – increase the ISO setting and you increase the camera's sensitivity to light. Keep in mind that increasing ISO also increases the grain or noise in your shots.

Aperture – as you increase the aperture of your camera you increase the size of the hole in your lens and more light is able to get in quickly. So increasing aperture (this means decreasing the f/number) can be something to experiment with.

Shutter Speed – lengthening the amount of time that your shutter is open increases the amount of light hitting your image sensor. This is another factor in exposure that you might like to experiment with. Keep in mind that if there is movement in your scene (even small movements) that the longer the shutter is open the more blur you'll get in your shot.

PHOTOGRAPHING ARTWORK DIGITALLY

The biggest difficulty with photographing artwork is capturing the full range of colours, textures and tones of the original.

The first thing to consider is **setting the ISO** to its lowest setting, and the **resolution size** (image size) to its largest setting. The lower the ISO the less noise there will be in the final shot and the larger the image, the more possibilities there are in post-production.

Resolution can be changed with the format you will shoot in (raw, tiff, jpeg). Raw files will contain the most information and allow you to choose colour sharpening, colour balance, contrast, and saturation after you have taken the shot with no degradation. TIFF files are less common but every digital camera has JPEG format. These files are smaller but you can still get excellent results from them. SQ, HQ and SHQ are JPEG picture quality options. They stand for "Standard Quality", "High Quality" and "Super High Quality", in order of increasing picture detail, and decreasing jpeg file

compression levels. That is, the SHQ setting offers the highest JPEG picture quality for the end user with the least degree of JPEG compression. The HQ setting provides for high quality JPEG images that are suitable for, as a general recommendation, good quality prints up to 8x12 inches (A4 size) with 8MP cameras like the E-330 and E-500. For larger than A4 size prints, SHQ is recommended. SQ jpegs are typically suitable for pictures meant for web use or PowerPoint presentations.

It's generally best to select the picture quality setting based on the final usage /application of the picture - for instance, the largest print that the user will likely make. If the end user requires both large sized prints and need the same pictures for screen-only viewing, he could use the best in-camera JPEG setting such as SHQ for prints, and resize these pictures to appropriate screen-use resolutions later. Depending on what your camera is capable of will dictate what format you can use.

You should use a **tripod**. No matter how steady your hand is movement is the one thing that can really affect an image. No matter how colour perfect the photograph is, if the image is blurry it takes away from the original. A tripod will also help with alignment. Angle any light you use so that each points to the far side of the artwork.

A **barrel effect** can sometimes appear when taking photos. If you're using a zoom lens, check to see what part of the zoom range is least likely to introduce that effect and keep it set there when you shoot. A quick test is to point your camera at a wall, keeping the top of the wall and a bit of the ceiling at the very edge of your frame as you slowly zoom from wide angle to small.

Good **lighting** is so important. In the studio you have great conditions upstairs beside lift shaft, and in the gallery I take the photos upstairs with the skylight overhead.

If you are using lighting, 2 lights work well. Unless you are diffusing the cameras flash, then turn off your built in flash. Again I rarely use a flash as it can introduce glare but this works at your own discretion. Hang your art on a wall, or lean against, and position your lights at a 45- degree angle, aiming each light at the edge of the artwork farthest from it. If art is under glass you will need to take it out. If the ink is glossy, move the lights closer.

White Balance: To reiterate – the reason we adjust white balance is to get the colors in your images as accurate as possible. Light has all different colours or temperatures. We don't generally notice the difference in temperature of light because our eyes adjust automatically for it. So unless the temperature of the light is very extreme a white sheet of paper will generally look white to us. However a digital camera will need us to tell it how to treat different light. If you can choose or feel comfortable changing the white balance on your camera, this can help greatly with getting colours closer to the original. Choose the tungsten or incandescent setting. It generally cools down the colors in photos.

Position your camera so the work fills the frame or close to, keeping the camera perpendicular to the wall, with the sensor parallel to the art. This is more difficult than it sounds, as photographers usually compose their pictures by intuitively pointing the camera, but any deviation will cause perspective distortion in copy work. Measuring from the floor to the center of the artwork will give you the exact height your tripod-mounted camera lens should be at.

With the camera set on your **mode of choice, bracket your exposures**, giving the subject a range of exposures above and below the "correct" exposure that your camera suggests. Light artwork can be easily underexposed, and dark artwork can fool the camera into overexposing, but by shooting several frames with more and less exposure you will be sure to get one right on. Don't rely on your camera's LCD alone to proof your shots; the brightness of the image on it relative to the room you're in can easily mislead you. The more you can get correct in camera, the less post-processing will be necessary and the higher the quality of the resulting image.

Once you have good shots you need to begin the **post-process**. Always begin by copying your files to at least two different folders. One set can be safely archived while the other goes in a working folder. Choose the best shots. If you shot raw files this is the time to select the precise color balance, sharpening, saturation, and contrast that will most closely match the artwork. If you shot JPEGs save

them as TIFFs or in another lossless file format as soon as you open them. Never re-save an image file as a JPEG unless you are finished working on it and have already saved the same file in an uncompressed format. The more times you re-save a jpg the more information you lose, and eventually this can blur your image.

So in short:

Find a wall, or any place really, where you can prop up your artwork so that it stands almost perfectly upright. Natural Light is also perfectly good, if using artificial light use 2 light sources, pointing them at the edge of the opposite side.

I'd suggest using a tripod with your digital camera to make sure that you're taking perfectly steady shots. If you have no tripod, a box works just as well. When you take the photo, remember to tilt the camera slightly down to match the angle that the artwork is leaning - this will help minimize distortion of the original image.

Many people have trouble with their artwork looking like it swelled up. That's an issue with the camera lens, but it's easily fixable. The solution is to use the "zoom" on your camera, and then back farther away from your art. This will create a more natural amount of depth to the photo and keep those edges from bulging outward.

Be sure to fill the viewfinder of the camera as much as possible and then check to see that all the edges of your work are parallel with the edges of the viewfinder. Take several pictures because it won't always be as easy to tell on the viewfinder whether or not there's any distortion. Once your images are up on your computer, you'll be able to see for sure which photo is best.

When you've uploaded the photos to your computer, bring them up in Photoshop or whichever photo-editing software you use.

Other Useful Bits:

If you want to see your work as similar to what it will look like when printed you need to calibrate your monitor. You can find it on a Mac in System preferences, display, and then colour. Or look at this link: <http://www.wikihow.com/Calibrate-Your-Monitor>

Also all cameras take photos in RGB format. RGB (red, green, blue) is perfect for on screen and if being printed by a camera/photo specific printer. However if you are using your images for invites, magazines, book publications etc, the images have to be provided as CMYK (cyan, magenta, yellow, black). This can change the colours of your work quite dramatically so be careful with this. If you don't change them, printers can refuse to print or worse, print anyway and the image is grayed out.

Also worth knowing that all printed material i.e. Invites, magazines etc, need images that are of a large size. Depending on where your image is being re-produced, the smallest size image should be about 3MB for printing.

Dpi – Dots per inch. Basically, the more dots per inch that make up your image the smoother the image will print. Therefore printers recommend that 300 dpi is standard for printing and most won't accept anything below this.

72 dpi for on screen images, photographs on most standard cameras usually save as 72 dpi automatically.