

Portfolio Tips for Visual Artists from Contemporary Curator,
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Before submitting a portfolio:

- Make it as easy as possible for potential dealers/collectors to see your work (*NOTHING* is better than one on one contact)
 - Clean, clear, concise website to direct everyone you meet
 - No fancy fonts, avoid too much flash programming
 - Include updated images, CV/bio, artist statement
 - Simple business cards directing people to your website. Again, no fancy fonts, etc. This is about making seeing your work as easy as possible.
- Learn about potential venues.
 - Attend all openings of galleries/venues you are interested in
 - Attend during off hours or make an appointment to get more info on the space and those in charge.
 - Introduce yourself, make yourself memorable but don't just jump in with "I want to show my work here."
 - Learn about the gallery's program. Does your work fit conceptually with what they are trying to do?
 - All the above is about networking and has nothing to do with the artwork. That's the next step.

After a more personal relationship has been established:

- Consider applying for a secondary space or exhibition to get your foot in the door.
 - Ask if they have a summer group exhibition which may be open for submissions. If they have a specific exhibition policy (like only online or at specific times per year) now is a good time to find out.
 - If they have a smaller or "project" space you may want to submit for this area first.
 - Tailor your submission to the specific space and how it fits in with the gallery program.
 - Complimenting a dealer about the work they show never hurts.

The portfolio

- As before - simple, straight forward and easy to read.
- Submit your latest/best work – not a sampling from everything you have ever done. YOU CAN ALWAYS SUPPLY MORE INFO LATER.

- Include at least one or two high quality printed samples of your work – you need to visually catch a potential match as quick as possible.
- CD with professional quality digital images
- Checklist of works on CD with thumbnails to make following CD as easy as possible.
- Artist statement regarding this body of work, CV and bio.

Artist Statement

- RULE NO 1: Have many people read your statement. Anything you are putting out to the public needs to have multiple people look at it. And not people who always think you are great – get some criticism.
- Needs to be honest, concise.
- Not too wordy or full of art speak. If you have a couple of influences that is fine but no one needs to hear how every artist you studied in school has inspired you to come up with this wonderful idea.
- Read it out loud. Your statement should almost be conversational. You'll need to be able to speak about it concisely at openings too
- Conclude with a brief bio about yourself if appropriate.
- Refer to rule number 1!!!!!!!!!

Resume/CV

- Act like you are applying for a job
- Best stuff goes on top
 - Education
 - Solo shows
 - Group shows
 - Collections
- Not more than two pages – again unless it's your only solo-show and you're fresh out of school leave off the coffee shop you showed in.
- Get creative and build your resume
 - Decide who amongst your friends has the largest dining room, give it a catchy name and start doing shows.
 - If you're showing good work and a little buzz starts, that will attract curators and art dealers to your space.
 - You're not only building your resume but we have come full circle back to personal contact, which is your best chance of getting a show.