

TIPS FOR ARTISTS

We hope you will find the following advice helpful when participating as an artist during the Birmingham Art Crawl.

Create "multiple touches." It typically takes three or more interactions with potential clients before they're ready to buy. While Art Crawl is one day a month, the buying experience can take place any time.

- Have business cards available with your contact information so potential buyers can get in touch with you after Art Crawl. (For affordable printing, try vistaprint.com.) If you don't have a website, don't worry, start a Facebook page. Make sure your settings allow people to view photos of your work.
- Get in touch with them! Capture potential customer information and follow up. Set up a guestbook. Send personal emails thanking them for stopping by or add them to an email list for regular updates on where you'll be showing next or new works available.

Make the experience comfortable for potential customers.

- Selling is very personal. If allowed, set up a "comfort" barrier, such as a table, between you and the potential customers. This makes you more approachable and will naturally increase both your and the buyer's comfort level.
- Make pricing obvious. Use clearly marked price tags that are visible at a glance.
- Here's a good rule of thumb: if a potential customer stops at your display, engage them. Say hello. If people touch your work, it's a likely sign they're interested.

Make the experience memorable.

- Keep the presentation of your work consistent so potential buyers remember you from month to month.
- Your display helps create the perception of your work. This doesn't mean you need expensive easels. Items like table covers and creative stands set the mood and give potential buyer cues on how to view your work whether it is classic, edgy, etc.

Know what to show.

- Your Art Crawl audience is diverse, so showcase the breadth of your talent. Have a wide array of landscapes and portraits? Showcase a few key pieces of each and keep additional similar pieces easily accessible in stands or bins for people to thumb through.
- Keep back stock handy and know your inventory. Be ready to offer up similar suggestions to potential customers who may want more options.

Keep cash in mind when pricing your work. More expensive pieces typically require more "touches" between you and the buyer and some planning on the buyer's part to bring cash, unless you take credit cards. Consider your friends - how much cash do they carry with them? Try to include some pieces in this price range.

One last fun tip: Buying art is an emotional experience. Look for couples in the crowd, as they are more likely to buy "gifts" of art to please each other.