

# Photographing Your Quilt to Enter a Special Exhibits Call or Proposal

With the abilities of today's cameras, you do not have to go to the expense of having your quilt entries professionally photographed. You can do it yourself. Remember, your quilt's image is all that the jurors/selection committee see in evaluating your quilt, so the quality of the image is extremely important.

Digital images must be submitted online with your entry/proposal.

## TAKING IMAGES OF YOUR QUILT

We recommend using your camera on the highest resolution setting and saving as a JPEG file. Consult your camera or phone's instruction manual to learn how to set your camera to take high-resolution photos.

Lower megapixels and resolution settings can produce poor results that will eliminate a quilt because its color, design, and detail cannot be viewed clearly. It is not uncommon to see a wonderful quilt eliminated, because the quality of the image submitted is so poor that it is impossible to properly evaluate the piece, especially the details.

## SAVING YOUR IMAGES

Please crop the photo so that there is minimal background, and please be sure all edges of the quilt can be seen in your full view photo.

- If you open your photos in image editing software to crop the background, you will be asked how to save the photo when you are done. Save as a JPEG, RGB color (the default setting in most image editing programs), standard or baseline setting, and set the quality to maximum. No CMYK images or progressive setting JPEGs will be accepted.
- The finished image should be at least 2400 pixels on the longest side.
- Please label the images with the artist's last name, the title, and the width x length in inches if you are sending them to special exhibits.
- If you are submitting the pictures in the Judged Show the system will automatically identify them for you.

## SUBMITTING YOUR IMAGES

- Upload one full view of the completed quilt and one detail view. Quilting must be visible in the detail, and the detail should also highlight any important portion of the quilt.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR GOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

- Make sure the entire quilt is visible in the full shot.
- There should be no objects, people (including fingers holding a quilt), pets, or scenery in the picture. Do not try to take a “pretty” picture with gardens, trees, mountains, etc. in the background. The background will distract from your quilt and be a liability, not an asset.
- Do not drape your quilt over furniture or lay it flat on a bed or on the floor.
- Take photographs on a light neutral wall or background.
- Have the quilt hang as flat as possible. Pin it to your design wall if you have one.
- A solid background that does not blend into your quilt is best. Use white, black, or gray as the background color.
- If your quilt is white use a black background.
- To take the photo, position yourself directly in front of the quilt so that you have a straight-on angle.
- Lighting should be as even as possible across the front of the quilt. Sometimes, your best lighting is outdoors, but be careful about the time of day. Direct sunlight on the quilt can cause shadows or a glare that obscures details in the photo and can bleach out the color of your quilt.
- Look for glare and subtle color changes caused by shadows.
- Make sure your camera is focused. If your hand is shaky, use a tripod or a solid surface for the camera.
- Quilting stitches and design must be visible in the detail shot. It is helpful to choose a section of the quilt that relates to an important aspect of the quilt and to the category entered.
- Check the photo before taking the quilt down. Look at it in the computer to make sure the photograph is clear and in focus. Retake the photograph, if necessary.
- Learn how to crop your picture (in image editing software) so that a minimum of the background shows. Practice first on other quilt images to learn what to do. Remember,

there is almost always a way to undo a modification such as cropping, if you don't like the results.

- Save the original as the master. Make a copy to use if you have to adjust the image size. Always start with the master photograph.
- The artist's name or ribbons should not be included in the images.

## **IMAGE SIZE**

Read the rules or instructions for the call or submission carefully. Are the pixels in your image close to the number requested? You may always reduce the number of pixels in your photograph. If you increase the pixels it will result in a fuzzy or out of focus picture. 2400 pixels is requested for the longest side for the call and proposal submissions.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

We recommend the following book for user-friendly information about taking digital images of quilts. This resource has been developed by quilters for quilters to help them take better photos of their work.

- "SHOOT THAT QUILT! DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR TEXTILE ARTISTS" by Andy Baird and Holly Knott