

EXHIBITS POLICY GUIDELINES

Art exhibitions educate, entertain, stimulate, inspire and engage visitors. Through exhibitions, the Emerson seeks to provoke visitors' thought, broaden their understanding of their world, and spark their curiosity and imagination. The Emerson engages public appreciation of the visual arts by curating and hosting art exhibitions of significant community value. The Emerson seeks exhibitions that interpret not only regional topics, but bring in national and international issues, with a diverse range of timely subjects.

The Emerson displays a wide range of exhibitions showing a variety of contemporary techniques, media, and content, with the intent of appealing to diverse audiences. Each exhibit has a specific target audience and may also appeal to the general public. As part of its goals, the Emerson is committed to increasing the understanding of the visual arts through educational outreach such as artist presentations and workshops, gallery text, catalogues and brochures. Emerson's current exhibit venues include the Jessie Wilber Gallery, the Lobby Gallery, and Weaver Room Gallery.

CURATING EMERSON EXHIBITS

Curator's Responsibilities

With input from the Exhibits Committee, the Curator solicits, selects, and schedules exhibits for the Emerson's three venues. These venues are open year-round and feature changing exhibits. Selections are based on regional research resulting in featured works by exceptional artists of the west, both established and emerging, depending on the specific venue. Occasionally artists from outside our region will be featured in an exhibit. Committee members and the community at large are encouraged to suggest artists or themes for possible upcoming exhibits.

When possible and with approval of the Committee artists of international and national renown are solicited by the curator for solo or group exhibits. Qualifications would include their artwork being shown by reputable national art museums or inclusion in the permanent collections of such art museums. Emerging and established regional artists are welcome to submit a proposal to exhibit their artwork. A submission link is available on our website. Proposals are reviewed at the Committee meetings that are held biannually.

The Emerson also hosts juried exhibits to which local and/or regional artists can apply. These "Call to Artists" are communicated through press releases, brochures, e-newsletter, and by word of mouth. Works from these submissions are selected by the Emerson curator, guest curator, guest juror, the Committee, and/

or Emerson staff. Guest curators may also be invited to select specific invitational exhibits, with guidance from the Emerson curator. Artworks are assessed on the basis of quality, diversity, community interest, relevance, and appropriateness for each of the Emerson's venues.

The Emerson's niche is contemporary art. To avoid redundancy, we typically do not display artwork already adequately represented by commercial galleries in downtown Bozeman or in Galleria Hall. When occasionally we do show artwork by an artist having exclusive rights agreements with another local agent or gallery, it is the responsibility of the exhibiting artist to obtain written approval from such agent or gallery before the Emerson will exhibit the artwork.

“Schools & Seniors in the Gallery” exhibits

Within this framework, two outreach shows are specially featured each year in conjunction with our “Schools & Seniors in the Gallery” program in which students enjoy docent-led tours of our exhibits, followed by optional hands-on art activities. The target audience for our fall show is K-8 and the target audience for our spring exhibit is high school – university students, although there is considerable overlap. A body of artwork from each chosen artist is selected through digital images by the Emerson curator and the Committee, when available. The review process includes the educational value of the exhibit. These shows are scheduled for 2 – 3 months in duration to provide time for scheduling and conducting tours and community outreach.

Due to changing art availability, new undocumented works, artworks not adequately represented by digital images, installation requirements, constraints of exhibit design, gallery size limitations, and ADA requirements, the final selection of artworks are made by Emerson staff members at the time of installation.

Education and Exhibits Committee Responsibilities

Regional artists from Montana and surrounding states are encouraged to submit exhibit proposals to the Emerson. The Emerson's Exhibits and Education Committee evaluates artist proposals at biannual meetings and shares their impressions with the curator. Based on this information the curator will then select and schedule exhibits. The Committee also suggests and reviews upcoming exhibit programming.

The Committee is comprised of Emerson staff, Emerson Board members, community members, artists, and educators

Viewer Response

Emerson staff will address exhibit content and aesthetics during the curatorial process. Any works that might be perceived as inappropriate for a specific venue will be evaluated Emerson staff, before they are accepted and installed. Once approved and installed, artworks will not be altered in ways that deviate from the artist's intention unless written permission is provided by the artist.

In the Wilber Gallery, no objects shall be placed in such a way to obstruct the viewing of the artwork or to change its intention. except during programs in which a screen is temporarily lowered to view films or presentations. Emerson staff members are available to help the viewer interpret and understand the artworks on display. The view of artwork in the Lobby and Weaver Room galleries may occasionally be obstructed, due to the multiple-use of the spaces and renters' need. However, the artwork will not be physically touched or moved once installed.

Ethics, Conflict of Interest and Appearance of Impropriety

The Emerson will not exhibit artwork to promote a living artist's work, promote the political agenda of any government agency or lobbyist group, influence the market for any type of object, in exchange for any product or service, or to ingratiate the art center with a lender. These guidelines are put in place to avoid a perceived conflict of interest. Emerson Board members and Emerson staff members will not be selected to have solo exhibits with the Emerson until the conclusion of their specific association with the Emerson. Such exhibits scheduled before the artist's change in status will be upheld. (i.e. if a person is chosen for a solo show and later joins the Board, their solo show will be honored) Board members and staff members may be considered for inclusion in Emerson group exhibits.

The Emerson will not establish itself as a sales gallery in competition with for-profit galleries, although sales may occur.