

Photographing Your Fiber Arts.

mostly summarized from Handwoven Sept/Oct 2023 article by Kelly Casanova

Since the judges at ANWG will be basing their award decisions on photos of your work before it ever arrives at the conference, good photography is critical. Here are some simple tips and tricks that can help you to show your work at its best.

BEST LIGHT

- Never use the flash on your phone or camera. The colors and warm tones will appear washed out leaving a harsh image.
- **Outside daylight is best** - but *not bright sunlight* at high noon. Too much strong light will wash out the colors and create high contrast shadows.
- The best daylight is just after sunrise or just before sunset to get the soft and warm light that enhances color.
- Indoors on a sunny day near or opposite a large window with indirect and filtered light is a good option. Also under an outdoor veranda with indirect light can work well.
- The goal is even lighting.

SHARP IMAGES

- If using your phone's camera, be sure it is on AutoFocus.
- Focus on the center of the textile and be sure it fills the frame rather than being a small image with too much background.
- Wait for the camera to focus on the item before snapping the photo. This may take a couple of seconds.
- Blurry photos are a result of moving the camera and/or low light. Keep the camera very steady. Some phone cameras have a 'live' feature. Click that off to avoid inadvertant movement when you click the button.
- A tripod can help if you have trouble holding the camera or phone still. A simple phone tripod is \$20 on Amazon.
- A blurry image may also result if the camera's AutoFocus is not squarely on the item when you shoot.

COMPOSITION OF YOUR PHOTO

- Arrange the elements of your photo like a piece of art.
- Be sure the item is pressed or steamed to remove distracting wrinkles.
- Display table linens and individual items on a clean surface.
- Clothing, blankets, and scarves may look best draped.
- Use a background that enhances not distracts from your piece. Remove any extra distractions in the background such as table edges, corners, dark shadows or other items.
- Choose a neutral or complimentary background color that lets your piece draw the eye. Try different color backgrounds (dark vs light) to see what enhances your piece.
- Leave sufficient space between your item and the background to minimize distracting shadows behind your piece.
- Draping your item on a manequin or other support can show off the lightness, color play or irridescence of fabric. Strategically using pins can help to keep the item in place.

PHOTO EDITING

- A poorly lit or out of focus photo cannot be saved with photo editing.
- If you have editing software, be very gentle with adjustments. Have your piece right at hand as you subtly adjust color tones to match the real thing.