



# What Was That Juror Thinking?

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*“Why wasn’t my work accepted in the show?”*

*“What can I do to get accepted?”*



**G**ood questions! I often ask the same things myself when my best efforts seem to go unnoticed! So, first let me dispel any underlying feelings that there may be some secret in the selection process.

## A Myth

**“The juror was personally selected by (fill in a name) because...”**

We do not select jurors based on any personal connection or favoritism. Our selection process is always grounded on a juror’s expertise, experience, and credentials in the art community.

Using those criteria, we canvas museums, galleries, past jurors, and curators in the area where our exhibition will be located. The process is long and begins a year or more out from the scheduled exhibition.

We research any number of potential candidates. Once we have a short list, the board will review and rank each resume. From that list, we are confident that we have chosen the best possible professional.

Please know that we vet our jurors carefully and pointedly select ones who have a track record and broad range of art experiences in various genres and media.

## A Misconception

**“If I had known the juror liked that kind of work, I would have submitted a different entry!”**

Once the juror has been selected and our prospectus is published, his or her brief bio is available to you. You have the option to research that juror online and



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in printed art materials. By doing a little research, you may get a better feel for what the juror would select as a body of work to create the show. However...

You should not enter artwork to appeal to a particular juror. Professional jurors select works that hold together as a cohesive exhibition and not those based on their personal preferences. If that were the case, we may end up with a show of all landscapes or portraits, etc. We expect jurors to select work that meets the standards of CPSA and shows the versatility of our medium. So deciding which piece to enter should be based on your best work; not what you think the juror will like.

## A Frequent Request

**“Ask the juror to provide a critique of the individual entries.”**

Wouldn’t that be great! It might help artists improve and increase their chances of being accepted in the future... or it might just give you the opinion of one juror.

We receive more than 500 submissions to our International Exhibitions. Paring down this large pool of entries to approximately 120 is a laborious task. It would be daunting to expect any juror to notate why each piece was or was not accepted. We do, however, ask the juror to provide a critique of the entire show—that should give you some insight and understanding of why the juror selected the pieces that comprise the exhibition.

Of course, artists always want to know why their work was not accepted. You can work to appeal to a particular juror or mimic another artist, but that won’t guarantee success—it’s always better to create work unique to you.

Do what you love and what is natural for you. I encourage my students to find their own voice and sing loud. You may not get all the high notes, but you will have fun and that’s what it’s really all about.

## Try a Critique

I do believe critiques help us grow and improve. If you feel that a critique would be beneficial for you and your group, why not plan a critique session by a guest artist from a nearby art school or college?

Each member could bring in a past entry that was not accepted and have a “retro show.” Keep it upbeat. I am sure that not only will everyone have fun, but grow as artists.