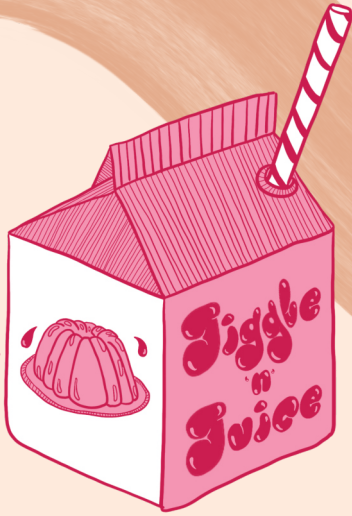


About Jiggle + Juice



Jiggle n Juice is a collective formed by artists + best friends, Shae Myles and Georgia Tooke. The pair met in 2019 at Gray's School of Art, where Shae was studying and Georgia undertook her exchange semester. Jiggle n Juice is a platform dedicated to engaging in discursive and critical conversation, and showcasing creativity. We aim to foster a support system for creatives by producing materials that help to bridge the gap from art school to professional practice.

jigglenjuicecollective.com / [@jigglenjuice](https://www.instagram.com/jigglenjuice)



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How To: organise an Exhibition

This guide will cover:

Logistics and Practicalities
How to Promote your Exhibition
Digital Shows
What makes a successful opening night?
Venues ~ *thinking outside the box*



How to: Organise an Exhibition

With precarious times comes... a lack of opportunities. And with the gradual opening up of the world, "opportunities" are coming back! YAY! But these "opportunities" like studio spaces, exhibitions, funding etc are sparse, with just as much competition (if not more). So, you want to do something about that and make your own opportunities? Good for you!!! We hope we can help with this Support doc. Consider it your ~handy little guide~ that acts as a starting point for when you want to organise an exhibition for yourself, or for yourself and some pals.

First things first: where are you in the world? At first glance, this might not seem relevant, as art and viewing art is universal. But the actual organising of such an event might differ from place to place in terms of logistics and practicalities, but G and I have done some digging into both Scotland and BC. I hope that if you're reading this and you're not based in either of those places, you'll still find this useful.

Part I: Logistics and Practicalities

First things to consider:

- ~ Do I have a concise theme/concept for my show
- ~ What work will be put in the show?
- ~ When will my show be open? Dates/times etc
- ~ Do I have a venue?
- ~ Do I have pals who can invigilate/gallery sit for me? Can I realistically do that myself?
- ~ How will I afford this exhibition? Is there funding I can apply for?
- ~ Will I be selling my work? How? What will be for sale?
- ~ Do I have a curation plan/theme/an idea for how it's gonna look?

These questions should be answered before anything else, to form the groundwork of your exhibition.

Public Liability Insurance

Scotland

For typical exhibitions, you'll need Public Liability Insurance. This sounds scary, but it's actually definitely not. If you're a graduate (or non-student in general), you can become a member of either of the following organisations, which offer very thorough PLI within their memberships!

~ Scottish Artists Union

£60.00 p/a, also payable at £5.00 p/m, or for a recent grad it's only £3.00 p/m.

~ a-n (UK wide)

£38.00 p/a (Student membership is only £16)



Canada

If you follow this [website](#) here you'll find you can get a quick n easy quote for PLI!

I went through and selected Commercial General Liability and Host Liquor Liability; including the agency fee it came to \$185 CAD. There's a couple customizable q's so you can adjust it for the type of show you're having!

What is Public Liability Insurance and why would I need it?

You need PLI in case you are pursued by a third party following your exhibition or event. PLI is an essential thing to have, which will cover the cost of any legal fees, compensation, or settlement money you have to pay out if something happens at your exhibition or event. It will typically cover injury or death of a third party, or damage to a third party's property.

Public Liability Insurance applies to all businesses, and thus artists, as it is the most basic essential cover. It will not stop someone from being able to sue you, but it will provide the financial backing in the event that there is a claim made against you.

If you want a more in depth read about this, I like [this](#) article, and if you're a member of SAU or a n (or similar), they will have some in depth, artist related info that you can refer to as well.

Risk Assessments

You also will probably need to complete a Risk Assessment. This might, again, sound scary, but it's typically just a lot of common sense. Risk Assessments vary from event to event, and depend on your venue, situation etc. You basically have to identify potential hazards and risks, and evaluate them.

A couple of v handy docs:

~ How to carry out a risk assessment - [here](#).

~ An [example](#) (it's a bit old, but I really like how clear the format is and how thorough it is - it might help you to be like "Ahhh I almost forgot about that!!" as it covers things like low roofs, slip hazards, the gallery shop, toilets etc. (It does not, however, cover COVID measures, which will need to be considered.)

Press, Publicity and Photographers

All three of these Ps are super important to organise.

Press and Publicity: What does this mean exactly? Press generally refers to print media such as newspapers, magazines, but for the sake of this, we can broaden this to include blogs and other virtual written work. The easiest way to get the word out about your show is obvs to post about it on your insta but this is only going to reach so many people. So you might want to consider broadening your audience by getting in touch with some press sources to write about or share your press release on their platforms.

First things first, you're going to want to consolidate all the relevant info:

1. A rllly good quality photo that accurately represents your show (visually or thematically)
2. Practical stuffz: your name, title of show, venue, location, dates, contact info for you and your venue



3. A paragraph about your work (artist statement)
4. A paragraph about you (artist bio)
👉 👉 👉 *Check out our other support doc to find out how to write both of those!*
5. Further info; your website or online portfolio etc.

Then, instead of emailing a blanket press release to every media outlet you can google, pick just a couple that resonate with you. Ones that you might have a connection with - it doesn't have to be the type of connection like you know someone there but rather you like the work they do and can articulate that when you reach out to them. That will make it more likely that they'll want to work with you and showcase your press release.

Writing a press release:

Make sure you have some good quality images of the work you are going to show to share online and a blurb about each artist that you are showing to give people an idea of the stories behind the works. Remember to design flyers/posters that promote the show that will also encourage people who are just passing by to come in. [Here's](#) a great guide on how to write a successful press release.

Invite specific people!

Make a list of your ideal guests and personally invite them to the show. Other artists, your old profs, big names in the art world near you, collectors, curators, etc! Even if they don't come, you'll be on their radar - shoot for the stars!!!

Photographers: Having effective documentation of your show is almost as key as having the show itself. Pix or it didn't happen, essentially. As sad as that might sound, it's true. You'll regret not properly documenting the hard work you've put in!

Make sure that you hire a photographer to:

1. snap away at the opening night (to capture the hustle and bustle, any cool things like talks/workshops etc)
2. as well as document the empty show (to showcase the work in situ)

Both of these kinds of shots are lovely to have on your website, when applying for future exhibits, and just help to enhance your professional practice. It might also be nice to get some video footage too, to bring the event to life again digitally.



Part 2: How to Promote Your Show

If you think about when YOU as a viewer are wanting to see some art, where do you look? Social media? Newsletters? A simple, quick Google? Flyers posted up in coffee shops? As a viewer, which of these ways are most helpful for finding art to look at? Apply this thinking to how you would promote your own show.

Social Media

You can always reach out to accounts like.. *ahem* *US* to promote your show. Ask your (art and non-art) pals to share on their socials, particularly because their audience will probs be in the surrounding area and they'll be able to make it! If you have a budget or can afford to do so, running an instagram ad might be helpful too, as you can tailor it geographically and to ensure you're reaching the right people!

There's also great people such as the Victoria Arts Council, Look Again (Aberdeen), The Skinny (Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee) who you could get in touch with to help promote!

Newsletters

Contact local arts organisations to see if they'd be keen to feature your show in their newsletters. This will also be great for reaching a whole new audience, and meeting some lovely new people!

Physical Things!!

If you have a bit of a budget and can afford to do so, promoting your show out and about with posters, flyers etc is another good way of connecting with different people. Research some local print shops (they're usually more affordable than you think!!!) and pop in to explore your options! You could paste them up in your fave coffee shops, book stores etc (ask for permission first obv).

Victoria/CA

Metropole/Vic Poster - printing service, who paste your posters in high traffic areas downtown
Prowly or Cision - service that will take the imagery/text you provide to different media outlets
(make sure to budget for this if you are writing a grant proposal)

Suggestions for Printers

Glasgow: Good Press

Aberdeen: Peacocks

Victoria: Zap/student printers (pro-tip is to go to printers on a uni or college campus bc ppl who work there are typically more patient and helpful if you don't have every logistical detail figured out - some other printers won't help you if your specs aren't perfect first), or Print Lab (for cold press, photos)



Part 3: Digital Shows

If you would prefer to host your exhibition online, there's plenty of platforms that you can use to do this successfully. We've compiled a wee list of some options below, most of which, you have to pay for, but one of the benefits of a virtual show is that you eliminate a lot of costs that would incur if you had a physical show.

For a standard White Cube space:

<https://www.kunstmatrix.com>

<https://www.artsteps.com>

<https://vrallart.com>

<https://www.oarbt.com/exhibitions/3d-examples>

For more control over your site:

https://webflow.com/?utm_campaign=brandjs

PROS of a digital show:

- ~ cheaper
- ~ no need to find an actual space
- ~ more control over curation and being able to achieve things that aren't possible irl
- ~ can still get "in situ" shots without paying to, for example, get prints made up

CONS:

- ~ not all work will necessarily translate (e.g. sculpture; *3d rendering is hard*)
- ~ everyone's a bit bored of virtual shows bc of the surge of them during covid
- ~ sometimes buggy/difficult to navigate + build

Some great examples and inspo can be found below:

[Groock's Gallery](#)

[Gradcurate](#)

[Profile Gallery](#)



Part 4: What makes a successful opening night?

Opening Night: Things to Organise and Keep in Mind!

1. **Refreshments** (everyone loves a mini beer, a paper cup of box wine, or unbranded fizzy juice at an opening night!!!! This doesn't have to be anything fancy, and you don't have to spend a lot.)
2. Potentially a wee artists talk - this might be a bit nerve wracking, but it gives the viewer some more insight into the work, and allows them to get to know you better! It's also nice to schedule **special events** to encourage people to come to the opening! (You don't have to do a talk necessarily, it could be a Q&A, a performance etc)
3. Plenty of **documentation**! We've already covered this above, but it is crucial!
4. **Chat to people!** Branch out and make sure you're engaging with your audience/guests. They've made the effort to join you, and you never know what opportunities might present themselves to you from a single conversation!

a) Following on from this, it's a good idea to have some answers prepared for some basic questions about the work. This doesn't have to be rehearsed or too in depth, after all, you know your practice better than anyone!

Questions might arise like:

- ~ what was the thinking behind this work?
- ~ which is your favourite piece?
- ~ who are your main influences?
- ~ what would you like people to take away from your work?

5. Set out a **guestbook** to gather feedback/comments from your visitors! If you have a mailing list, you could invite them to check a box to give permission to sign up, or even follow up with a DM or email thanking them for coming!
6. Have **business cards** readily available - these can be sat next to your guestbook or flyers for people to grab, but it might also be useful to be carrying some with you during your opening. Key info like your name, who you are/what you do, and contact information are essential, as well as a visual that sums your practice up best and reminds the recipient of your work.



We chatted with our wonderful friend [Cassia Powell](#) to help with this! They are a visual artist and curator, and had their first solo show (!!!!) at fifty fifty gallery in Victoria at the end of last year!

Their tips:

This part of my show is seriously such a blur. I was trying to appeal to a demographic of young folk who haven't gone to a public art event in like 2+ years. Here's all I can say:

- Get a good poster
start plastering it around a month / 3 weeks before opening night.
- Have a good playlist (please)
- Have alcohol available (also please)
- Late afternoon-early evenings is the best time for an opening; it's good for folks getting off work/starting their night out. Ideally, 7PM - 10PM
- Wear something that makes YOU feel confident. I wore too many layers on my opening night and was too nervous to take anything off. Don't be me.. Know your sweat capacity..
- Be ready to talk about yourself a lot. Have a few talking points ready for when people want to know more in depth about your practice. Have a few talking points ready for those who have never thought critically about art before. But have it ready, so you come across as professional and prepared.

Eg. for talking to people who have never thought critically about art before: *"Which one is your favourite? :) I like that one too!"*

"Did you know that I painted this one live in the middle of a packed bar?"

"When I was installing this one, I didn't realize I was nailing into brick and absolutely fucking destroyed the wall. Let's keep that a secret between you and me."

- I was told that I didn't have to do an artist talk, but I had one prepared just in case.
- If you are going to briefly talk about your show in front of a crowd, here are some tips:
 - ~ 5 minutes or less (please)
 - ~ If you can, have someone introduce you - either a gallery member or someone who works closely with you / who knows you well
 - ~ Land acknowledgement.
 - ~ Thank the gallery, thank the people who helped install.
 - ~ 2-5 sentences; I started this project because... These works represent... I hope you take away...
 - ~ Ok! Thank u! bye!



Part 5: Venues... Thinking outside the box!

If you aren't feeling it, or like us, are sick n bloody tired of white cube spaces, you might want to do something a lil different.

A great example of this is an event from 2019, hosted by Tendency Towards, an Aberdeen based collective. [HOT TAKE](#) really inspired me to think about where art can be discussed and seen. TT described this idea as: "a meandering crit open to practitioners based in Aberdeen, moving between the multitude of spaces emerging artists occupy."

The idea of a travelling crit could be extended to a travelling exhibition, where you can display your work in a few places (indoors or out), or you could gather some pals to open up your homes/studios to use as a venue.

Another example of thinking outside the box was Georgia's event *PEARLESCENCE: A Night of Performance and Process*. Here's what she had to say:

"After seeing my performance art piece and Raquel Wilson's improv musical performance, the owner of a new LGBTQ+ bar invited the two of us to have a meeting with him and discuss how we could bring the arts scene into the LGBTQ+ restaurant & bar space. This just goes to show you that you'll never know where opportunities will come from and putting yourself out there is the most important thing you can do for your professional career! After a long brainstorming sesh (and a couple colourful cocktails) we came up with a three-part evening. The first was having artists make their work irl in the space to show their process and get to know other creatives and art lovers in the community. The second part was musical acts and poetry readings happening on the main stage. And lastly, the owner offered his guest apartment up to be used as a "live museum" performance art space for viewers to explore and interact with the four performance artists upstairs. Including Raquel and myself there were 20 artists and performers that shared their talents with the city that night. It was such a special collaborative event and really made me think about viewing and experiencing art in a whole new way. Sometimes all you need is a couple of friends, a couple of drinks and the audacity to put together something you're really passionate about!!

Advice from Sweetpea Gallery (Victoria, BC)

We asked SP for some advice on finding a venue because they've had exhibitions in a variety of different spots, some that were in a more traditional galley space to a small plant shop with a massive outdoor "backyard." Here's their tips:

- **Get creative with spaces**, think about what you are really trying to accomplish or show. If you want to connect with people about your work, think about spaces that are social. If you want to show off specific works, think about the lighting and space that would suit them best. If you're trying to sell work, try out a space that feels more commercial.
- **The cost of the actual space should only be a portion of the cost of the actual show** - install materials, advertising, printing, opening booze/ food as also a part of any show. Remember this when you are budgeting! Oftentimes, the cash you put into creating a fun



and comfortable environment can be more powerful than just the rent.

- Cold-calling landlords and spaces around you can work but really depends on the area you are in. **Think about taking whatever opportunities come to you, building connections to find the right kind of spaces.**
- **Establish exactly what you are looking for when you cold call** - have a firm budget, timeline, and what you need ready.
- **Expect the unexpected and be flexible with your plan.** Give yourself the time to respond to the space how it actually is when you get there vs. the floorplan. Sometimes lighting, air flow, people flow, or unexpected details mean that the location of work needs to change on the go - everything will find where it needs to go, trust the process!



Okay so! That's all the tips we have for you on how to organise an exhibition!! To condense the info above, we've made a lil worksheet for you to print out and use as a starting point. There's also an annotated example of how it was intended to be used.

Remember these are just some tips to get you started, and that we're both learning and growing with you! If you think we missed anything in this guide, just let us know!

Lots n lots of luv,
Shae and Georgia xo

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