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WEBINAR SERIES – STRATEGIES FOR MOUNTING A LOW-COST
EXHIBITION

3:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M. (ET)

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(Standing by)

>> Hello, everyone, and welcome. This is Lisa Damico, the VSA Affiliate Coordinator at the Kennedy Center and I'm so happy you could all join us today. This is part of a monthly webinar series that comes out of the Office of VSA and Accessibility that focuses on topics related to arts, disability and education. Before we get started today, I'd like to let you all know that I will send out a copy of Sonja's PowerPoint presentation to all the attendees as well as a recording of today's presentation, so no need to worry about frantically taking notes. If you would like to access live captioning of the Webinar, you can visit the link that you see on the screen here and that's also in the chat box on your control panel to the right of your screen. So for today we have Sonja Cendak who is the Assistant Manager of VSA programs and I'm going to turn it over to you now, Sonja.

>>Sonja: Great. Hello, everybody, welcome, and thank you for joining us here on this Webinar. This is "Strategies for Mounting a Low-Cost Exhibition," and general questions about layout and design, which I'm sure some of you already have some ideas about, but it's just better to have some questions to consider as you're preparing visual art exhibition.

As Lisa said, I'm the Assistant Manager of Artist Services here at VSA and Accessibility. Just a quick background - some of you, if you attended my previous Webinar, know that I have nearly 15 years' experience in the museum and art world, both as an exhibits designer, exhibition coordinator and manager, and I have organized and curated shows both large and small in a variety of institutions here and in Southern

California which is where I'm originally from.

This Webinar is going to broadly cover the following five topics that you see in front of you, which is assessing the art inventory that you want to display. Assessing your display space, and then we'll talk about exhibit design and layout, how do you make that artwork fit in the display space. We'll talk about installation, labor and staffing. And lastly, I'll go over a couple points about security and legal concerns to think about when mounting an exhibit.

What I also wanted to mention is topics I'm not going to cover -- finding artwork for your exhibit, jurying or curating an art exhibit -- I'm making assumptions about this group that we all have the artwork and ideas in mind; we're just going to be talking about nuts and bolts. I also won't be talking about specific exhibit design decisions. That, again, is really up to you. We're just talking about execution and logistics.

As I mentioned, I hope to provide you with some nuts and bolts of mounting an exhibit display, and lastly, I wanted you to know that the most important assets you have when working in your gallery is your own creative thinking and crafty staff members, or the crafty folks that support your gallery that work with you.

Let's start the Webinar with a quick poll question just so that I have an understanding of who is out there. Lisa, if you want to administer this.

>>Lisa: Sure. I'm launching our poll now. So our first question is who is in attendance? Please select one of the following. Administrator in a small gallery, Sonja defined a small gallery as being a space less than 1,000 square feet. An administrator in a mid-sized gallery that would be a space that's larger than 1,000 square feet. An artist or other. I'll give you all 30 second to select the one that best applies to you.

All right. I'm going to go ahead and close our poll and share the results with everyone. Sonja, it looks like we have 13% that are administrators in a small gallery. 3% that are administrators in a mid-size gallery. 35% that are artists and 48% that are other.

>>Sonja: Okay. Great. Nice to know some demographics and hopefully I'll be able to address all of your questions in my Webinar; and if not, like Lisa said, please submit your questions to her and I can certainly do a more targeted e-mail that wraps up any loose strings or questions that may come up as we go through.

So the first topic we'll be talking about generally is assessing your art inventory. What kinds of questions could you ask or think about as you're preparing to launch an exhibit? Naturally what kinds of media are being represented? Is it two-dimensional works: paintings, photography, prints? Will the artwork be framed or unframed? Who will be responsible for framing? Is that something your gallery does or are you requesting the artists provide the work framed or unframed for the show?

Three dimensional works: Sculptures, books, book arts. Do the pieces require special mounts or bases? We'll talk more about that in subsequent slides. Videos, DVD, or projection-based digital works, that's obviously a rising media in the art world. Some things you have to think about is what equipment is needed for video and digital work? Who is supplying the equipment: the artist or the gallery? I think these days, video artists burn everything on DVD as having a TV/DVD combo is so inexpensive from Costco or Best Buy. It never hurts to have these in your gallery roster of

equipment.

Lastly, there's also in the other categories: fabrics, textiles, clothing, etc. Again, how fragile is the artwork and does it require mounts or bases? We'll talk more about this later.

Going a little deeper into each category - special mounts or constructions. If it's a large sculpture, does it require a raised platform or could it rest on the ground? I personally like the idea of raised platforms, as you see in the picture to your left, because while it may not provide an actual physical security barrier, it does provide a mental security barrier in addition to elevating the work and giving it a bit of a highlight than just being something that's plunked on the ground. While you can't stop a toddler from running and touching something that might be out in the open like these sculptures that you see here, the general museum and gallery goers are faced with that border that risers and low platforms create, elevates the piece, elevates your exhibit and gives it an air of distance to look at that keeps people from accidentally bumping into it. Talking about smaller sculptures, do they require -- usually they require pedestals and Plexiglas covers, again for security measures, keeping hands off of it and protecting more delicate pieces.

Next smaller, different types of works - textiles, books and delicate objects, different kinds of mounts to think about. If you're displaying an artist book or fragile piece, should you get some sort of book caddie, a prop to help keep it open safely? The antique jackets that you see in the picture in the upper left, again, simple mount created with a wooden dowel and fishing wire. Creative ways to think about how to display items. After you look through your artwork inventory, assess the display space. The picture that I have on the bottom is actually a bird's-eye view floor plan of an exhibit we did last year that I'm just using as my example which shows your available floor space. When you think about your available wall space, how many linear feet do you have where the actual works fit with enough breathing room around each piece. You have to worry about dead space, fire lines, windows, doors, strange objects that artwork cannot be hung on.

That leads us to exhibit, design and layout. Think about the flow of the space. Is there a natural beginning point for your exhibit space? Is there a natural end point? Is it not really clear? And then that's where your exhibit signage will guide visitors through a direction, if there's a particular direction you want your patrons to see the artwork.

Think about if you do have sculptures and pedestals, where are those components going to go? And lastly, think about exhibit signs and text, where are those going to go? The little green rectangles on the screens show introductory panels. This space had a secondary entry, so we decided, and had enough in the budget to do so, to make a second sign so that people didn't just walk into an exhibit and then find out after the fact what they had been looking at.

Also when we talk about exhibit design and layout, the idea of -- or the option of temporary additional walls, sometimes we're working in nontraditional spaces or small spaces where you need to create more linear feet to hang more objects. We've seen temporary walls in museums that are floating in the center of the space, and you need to panel out walls if it's, again, in a nontraditional or unusual space. Temporary walls

can be prepared from planks of MDF which is a medium density fiberboard engineered, kind of a very strong plywood, or you can do it with one-inch plywood. I've also created or had created temporary walls from plain doors that you sometimes can see at larger stores, like Home Depot. When I talk about creating these walls it's not just putting one panel up but boxing it out as I tried to depict here in the pictures below. For the temporary walls, I suggest you weight it with a weighted base, as you see on the left, where the wall fits into a low riser. Cap it with two short end walls which actually then gives you a few more linear feet. You can hang more artwork there. Or include sturdy feet. Again, all of these sturdy baseline items you can weight with sandbags or you can add wire using a mid-weight wire. If you're in a space that has a low enough ceiling, you can put some eye hooks at the top of your temporary wall and run some wire up to just give it a little more stability and this might add a little visual flair to your space.

Also when we talk about temporary walls. I want to throw out the idea of preparing walls accordion style, connecting them with door hinges. I've done that in the past and those are single panel walls connected with regular single door hinges. I apologize for the fuzziness of the pictures, I wasn't able to find exactly what I was looking for and my design program here at work wasn't letting me design what I wanted to show you, but you get the picture. Think of it as a Japanese screen. This also has the added benefit of being easily stored. If you prepare it correctly you can have a three, four, or five panel hanging screen that can be folded accordion style and hopefully stored much easier than a bulky, bigger temporary wall.

When talking about temporary walls, a simple way to create them with materials that are out there, I just wanted to give one example, is kind of doing a free mount. What you see here is actually, believe it or not, from IKEA, Gorm. It creates more stability. If you panel it over with a simple piece of MDF or thick plywood, I've seen panels over trellis if you want to have a different type of look. If you panel all the sides - front, back and sides - you have an incredibly sturdy temporary wall with a little spackle and paint if with the frame-out, you can leave one of the sections open so you have shelving for items or hanging next to it or panel the back of it. Craftiness, creativity, there's a lot out there that you can do to create extra space, extra hanging room for the works you want to show.

I also wanted to mention a premade display system since it has come up in past discussions. These type of display systems are traditionally used in trade shows, but trade shows are also heavily marketed to museums as portable ways to pop and show your exhibits, maybe upstairs and stuff. They're typically fabric walls so they're not very sturdy, not -- I don't think the most durable in the long run depending on the kind of work that you want to show and naturally work with pieces that are most likely unframed, not very heavy. But they are available, they are out there, and can work with the right combination of types of pieces. And I mean, if you pay enough money you can certainly find a vendor that does really sturdy types of temporary walls such as this.

So once you know the components you need - pedestals, shelving, a wall - how am I going to get this on my budget, how am I going to find these items? Strategies you need to obtain the components of your exhibit - I always recommend partnering

with another small institution, perhaps there's another gallery or gallery consortium you're part of in your neighborhood or your city that someone else can loan you the pieces for a small rental fee or in exchange for services. Also the idea of splitting the cost of building half a dozen pedestals and three temporary walls for future share or exchange. I know that a lot of small galleries, a lot of small or mid-size spaces just don't have the storage space, you know, to make three pedestals and then where are you going to put them? Well, perhaps if there is another gallery that needs them, those pieces just move around, used as needed, and then you kind of always have it in your library exchange.

Production options, I list below in order of least expensive to most expensive. I totally recommend getting in contact with your local community college or trade school or woodworking program. High school wood shop. This is an exciting way for students to apply their knowledge and to get really decent quality work for a minimal price. Again, having a handy or crafty staff member that has a decent set of tools in their garage, the wall set up that I showed you in the previous slide from the IKEA frame-out and with a plywood could be simple using supplies from your store. The handler I'll talk about in the next slide. The most expensive certainly doesn't mean you get the quality for what you pay for, order it through a local vendor.

Other elements to consider when talking about exhibit design and layout. I'm sure you thought about all these things, I just want to plug a few more -- float a few more ideas in your head. Exhibit introductory text, you know, everyone always has their exhibit title, intro text. This is something that can be printed most economically at Kinkos or your local printer. I've seen it done in galleries just on foam core or heavy weight board. Gatorboard is a kind of the high quality foam core. If you select it in black it can really look nice, and it's hung really well. Tailor the presentation. Is it a print or art exhibit? Maybe have it on newsprint or archival paper or some other interesting way. A textile exhibit has its screen on fabric where it's involving an artist or an intern that's crafty or interested in that and having a unique display that really would give your exhibit a lot more punch without it costing a lot.

Object labels, again, you always want to label each of your pieces, if that's what you do. Some people create a notebook that is at the front table which is fine, but again, object labels if you're going to have them on the wall. Easily done on a personal computer or printer, and most importantly, keep it simple and use simple graphic treatment.

I wanted to mention some high impact design elements that I've done in the past that are at minimal cost. Painting one accent wall can really add some pop to your gallery and really can be done with one can of paint depending upon the color. Strategic use of vinyl lettering. Vinyl lettering is not something reserved just for large scale museums. You can order things on line and they're fairly decent quality, not perfect, but I think it's really about applying it cleanly without too many wrinkles. Use vinyl lettering for your title, if you want to add artistic quotes, directional text, you know, the possibilities are endless and there's -- if you just do an Internet search for museum vinyl lettering, that's a huge business out there where you type in the text that you want, you pick the font, it's really self-service. It might be worth testing out for a future exhibit.

Other high impact design elements at a minimal cost, so simple but I see rarely in small galleries is providing a bench or seating in a gallery. Especially during a gallery walk time, it invites your visitors to linger more and have a deeper experience in your space. I also suggest putting a public feedback area in your exhibit. This can be as small as a book. You can paint a wall with chalkboard paint and invite your audience to write something if they have a question, or cover one section of a wall with corkboard and have push pens and paper. If you have an exhibit that really invites thought process and you want feedback, it creates an element of interaction, it also draws a lot of them back in for repeated visits because people like to see how these walls change, how are other people responding, what things are being said, it keeps to your dynamic and allows people to engage further with the artwork and with your space.

So moving on to installation, labor and staffing. A straightforward installation which I define as artworks of all one media, let's say paintings that are just hung by one screw and if it's less than 20 works or 30 works, that's really something that two competent people can do in one or two days. That's hanging the works. Obviously you need to prep the gallery with painting and whatever kind of wall work, a little spackling that needs to be done in advance. An exhibit that has artwork diversity, painting and works, I think it's worth investing in one art handling professional or retaining one art handling professional that could lead a team of volunteers or staff that you have on hand. Retaining this labor for installation, I mentioned the world of freelance handlers and installers. Contact, again, other galleries in your area for referrals of folks, you know, art students, artists themselves who support themselves by installing and de-installing exhibits at galleries downtown, this is a huge freelance market, except for the large, large museums, very few arts organizations have an art handler full time on staff, so we have these folks that travel from venue to venue as needed. Certainly always keeping in mind the high points of art season, beginning of fall and the beginning of winter, kind of book your help in advance. And also if you build a relationship who gets the flow of your gallery, you like the work they do, it's good to just kind of keep them -- if you know your gallery's advanced schedule for the next six months, book those folks in and you have the help that you need.

I've also found really wonderful labor through Craigslist. It does have another layer of going through the interview process, but again it's worth it. You want to create a pool of talented folks that you can call on and you want to have more than one or two people what if they are booked? If they're full, you want a pool of freelancers. Some the freelancers are consolidating to service vendors. There are not a ton of those out there but there are kind of freelancers that have banded together to form their own kind of business units. The plus of that is a lot of them are licensed and insured and bonded and maybe whatever things they do that really offers a lot of protection should there be, God forbid, an accident or something that happens during the course of installation, but with that comes a price, so certainly they can be more expensive.

I would also open -- or if you already have an intern program going on, perhaps open that up to an intern specialization. If there are art history or art students that want to give hands-on help, these are eager folks that I've worked with in the past, and having one lead professional you hire to guide and train with two or three interns - you have an installation team at minimal cost. Advertise with your local college career

center and offer to sign off on course credit or whatever they might need -- whatever makes the internship more appealing and helps you.

Lastly, involve the artist to assist in hanging their work depending upon how large or small or casual a location you. Many artists would be happy to help with that and want to make sure their piece is hung in the manner that they're comfortable with. So that is always an option.

Talking now about security and legal concerns, really basic simple, cheap ways to secure the work on the walls, if needed. Very few of us, I imagine, have someone on site at the gallery all the time. These are simple ways to create some deterrents. For paintings, purchasing hanging rings or mending plates and attaching them to the back of the work so that one end is using a very short screw screwed into the frame of the painting and the other end screwed into the wall really does keep a painting in place. Obviously someone strong enough with enough -- you know, a crowbar can get it off, but really, who's going to do that? It's a deterrent, it keeps it sturdy and stable and it only offers a really minor little poke through. See with the arrow where the hanging ring appears underneath, that's probably bigger than the actual size and you can paint over that.

Security measures for sculptures. Let's just talk about museum wax and museum putty which I think should be used all the time regardless of how it's being displayed or where it's being displayed. That keeps any kind of bowl, glass, or structure safe with a very large footprint; it keeps it anchored in the event if you're in earthquake country or if there is a distracted museum or gallery visitor that bumps into wherever the sculpture is located - that really does add a level of stability.

Then for an added level of security deterrence, there are simple ways you can modify hardware, like the L-hook you see pictured to the right. Let's say you have a bowl on a pedestal, mark everything with a pencil first you can drill in that L-hook to the side of the pedestal and have it hook over the edge. I would actually in this particular concept that I'm presenting put a second L-hook on the other side so the bowl is visually secured in two locations. Now, I am absolutely aware that this is not the highest level of security, something that everyone would have, security alarms or sensors and everything, which I don't expect anyone here actually uses, but think about in the past. Remember when the clubs that we put on steering wheels for cars were popular? Even though a teenager could tap it three times and it would fall off, the fact it was there would provide a deterrent because it would add 30 seconds a potential thief doesn't want to spend trying to steal your car. Adding a few visual deterrents adds that additional deterrent so there should not be an issue.

Museum wax provides stability if there's an absentminded visitor that bumps into the space. The caveat for all this I really don't think L-hooks and hardware is necessary if the display is covered by Plexiglas. But I think museum wax and putty is -- it's something easy and cheap -- that keeps something like this bowl -- security is one thing, people bumping into the work or pedestal is another.

Talking more the legal side now, I'm sure a lot of you do this already, but want to reiterate some points. It's in your best interest to draw a contract for each artists' work that's going to be displayed in your gallery. Things to consider in your contract or letter of agreement. It should include insurance value so you are aware the artist is claiming

this is worth -- how much they would claim it's worth should there be any damage or issue and that leads to a damages clause. Who -- what is it? Are you going to abscond all responsibility or liability should something happen in your gallery? An artist would have to sign off on that. What are you responsible for, what is the artist responsible for? What is your fine -- do you have a fine art policy? What is that responsible for? It's just important, it's better to state it than to leave it unstated.

In your contract or letter of agreement I would also suggest including that the artist is giving permission for you, the gallery, to photograph the artwork and use the photography for advertisement. You can photograph the piece for a postcard, something you're not going to be selling. If you want to use the picture of the artwork on a mug or sell in your gift shop or a fundraiser that's a separate contract that should be put out or a separate contract to be made with that artist. Also in this note about the artists' permission for photography, if you can swing it, get the permission to use that artwork photography in perpetuity. You can use the exhibit to be seen for future end of year report, board notes, other marketing tools, that way you're constantly growing your artwork, your image inventory that you can use for publicity and other noncommercial use.

Also clearly state your exhibit information, opening, closing dates, artwork delivery and pickup information, when does the artist need to drop off the artwork, what is the deadline, what are the consequences for deadline, who is picking it up? If they don't pick it up within 30 days does it become your property? Are you dumping it on the side of the road? Does it belong to the gallery? I'm giving strong examples but things to think about because I have been in situations where artists forget, they move, they don't tell you, then you just have a growing pile of artwork, while lovely, you don't have the space or the resources to take care of it in the way that it needs to be taken care of.

Lastly, terms about how you handle the sales of artwork. Is there a cut that you expect of the gallery? Is it all in the artists' camp that they have to provide you with business cards that then you pass on to interested patrons and they have to work it out? How are sales inquiries going to be handled?

So that is actually towards the end of my Webinar. I went quite fast through this, I didn't mean to go that fast, but I certainly wanted to reiterate the important aspects in mounting this exhibit and then open it up to any specific questions. And again, it's really about creative thinking and having really crafty staff, volunteers and supporters. And with that -- with those two pieces in mind, you can bring any vision you might have to fruition. And at this point I would be happy to answer any specific questions that folks might have about their exhibit quandaries or something that I talked about before. I can go back in the slides if need be.

>>Lisa: I have one question thus far. Do you have a sample artist agreement to share?

>>Sonja: I can dig one up. I can't really share it right now through the Webinar, but I will find one and then we have all of your information and we can have that e-mailed out to you. But know that artist agreements, again, can be as simple as a letter on your letterhead with both the gallery director's signature and the artist's signature, and it just lays out what you both have agreed upon. So it doesn't have to

include some of the lengthy legalese that I see in some agreements.

>>Lisa: I have more questions that are starting to pour in. Any creative thoughts on cheap solutions for lighting a space?

>>Sonja: Thank you. I'm sorry I overlooked lighting. That is -- I hate to throw all the business their way, but that is something that IKEA is really good for. What I would suggest is you can find a lot of small bell lights at IKEA that can be mounted, clip lights that you can put on -- if you put a 2 by 4, nail it to the top of the wall. And that is thin enough that a clip light could be attached to and then you can point and direct it where you need it to go. If your space is not that terribly huge you can also run, again, 2 by 4s or some sort of track, a wooden dowel across the ceiling in which more lighting can be attached. So it's really going the way of the clip light and whatever you can find at a bulk rate is worth it. Always buy more than you think you need if you find a good price because inevitably things are going to break and burn out, so that's my best suggestion for lighting.

>>Lisa: Next question. Any thoughts about artists renting a space and doing a pop-up show?

>>Sonja: Oh, I think that's a great, great idea, I've done that in the past. There are so many creative opportunities to do that, it's just finding the owner of the space, not knowing what space you have in mind, but some event spaces are certainly rentable, are dedicated for renting for special events. I think that's great, because a lot of those spaces have a lot of these -- might have some of these preexisting components, especially when it comes to lighting, you know, the appropriate electrical needs and what not. Everything that you're doing that I have described here, bringing temporary walls, painting, using vinyl lettering, can be used in a temporary space. The downside is knowing that I have to paint those walls back. If you want to keep it simple maybe it's -- instead of painting your entry wall a bright blue that you have to paint back, find an awesome large piece of like fabric that you staple very tautly. Other pop-up spaces, in neighborhoods, there might be empty storefronts. In exchange for cleaning it out, they might give you a weekend to mount some sort of special event. Other ways to have a pop-up exhibit is again partnering with a local coffee shop, clothing store, independent clothing store that might want to populate their walls with artwork and have some sort of exhibit in these spaces, especially like a bookstore or a clothing store which I've done in the past, I've curated something for their walls, you have an awesome reception that brings in a diverse clientele, not only the mailing list of the store you're working with, but your art list in mingling these two populations, so for both in terms of exposure, recognition, and in terms of sales. Hopefully that long answer to your short question made sense.

>>Lisa: We don't have any other questions. I'll give you a few seconds, if you had something in mind and you want to type it out to me, I'd be happy to share it with Sonja.

Can you expand on the sale agreement?

>>Sonja: The sale agreement. Well, you determine how you want to handle sales with the artist that you will be exhibiting. You know, there are commercial galleries out there who everything, any exhibit that they do, if you're an artist, as part of their exhibit you must be willing to sell your artwork and they might have predetermined

sales percentages. The gallery takes 20% of whatever profit cost and if a sale is made. It's good to know how much that is because that guides how the artist might mark up their piece if they need a minimum amount. Are you going to tack on an extra 20%? Administrative fee. Sales is important to discuss because what if it's a sales negotiation that becomes protracted and you're going back and forth and if the gallery is having -- the artist had asked the gallery to do a lot of that negotiation then you should be compensated for that. If you don't want to deal with sales at all, that is perfectly fine, then that should just be noted in the agreement and it's just a matter of if you have a visitor that's like, "hey, I'm interested in this painting here, here's the artist's name and number and their e-mail address, please contact them to do that." And then that keeps you out of it. But it's really something for you to determine as a gallery owner. What is your mission, you know, do you not need to get any money from the sales? That's perfectly fine. A lot of organizations are there to really support their artists and maybe just take a minimal 5% flat fee to cover basic administrative costs. So it's just establishing your own sales protocol and how is that -- and then that just can be standard language that's included in any sort of exhibit agreement you have with an artist.

>>Lisa: All right. Do you recommend selling products such as prints, T-shirts, mugs with the artwork printed on it at the show?

>>Sonja: I think that's not a -- that's certainly -- that's not a bad idea, but I would be very specific and judicial about what sort of products you choose. I think if you had mugs, pencils, erasers, notepads, pencil holders, T-shirts, posters that looks a little overkill and I think commercializes the artwork a little too much. I don't think galleries spend as much time really designing engaging exhibit postcards. They use a title, it can be quite perfunctory. You can kind it as a poster. I went on a tangent about postcards, not about sales. I think selling at the gallery is appropriate, but I would pick one or two types of products that really connect with the artwork or make sense. Think about supply and demand, if you have a bunch of items in some ways that may not promote sales. If you made it into a pencil or pencil eraser that wouldn't be something people give a dollar for. I think a well printed print with an option to frame it. Mugs I'm kind of on the fence about, it depends on if it makes sense, again, if it's close to the holiday season or an appropriate gift-giving time then that motivates people as well. I would test it with your audience and see what the response.

>>Lisa: Questions are really starting to pour in. How do you feel about cost of pay to play distribution?

>>Sonja: I'm honestly weary of that. This is my personal answer to this question. It really depends on, you know, do your research. If it seems like a really interesting opportunity research the promoters or who's hosting this particular event and you are absolutely welcome to pen these people back with questions about where your money is going. What do you get for this pay to play? If you get full labor help, a clean painted wall and three pedestals for your choosing then that might be worth it because if the cost you're paying pays for these support systems you don't have to provide, that's a plus. Investigate the legitimacy of these organizations, and what is their track record? What sort of past exhibits have they put out and how successful were they? So I'm weary of those -- especially when they're unsolicited, they're just

throwing their net wide, and do your homework. I think it's better if you're going to invest your money to do it your way with an audience in a venue that you have vetted out. It can be more rewarding, more beneficial than being plugged into these other machines without really doing homework on them, so it's really just do your homework.

>>Lisa: Thank you. Any tips or ideas for thinking about universal design and accessibility with your exhibits?

>>Sonja: Absolutely. I apologize I didn't mention this before. Some tips, and what I can do there was an article in 2010 in the Washington Post by Philip Kenikut who viewed one of the exhibits. He talked about the design elements, it was the first time an article was really reviewing an exhibit that was clearly thinking of universal design and accessibility. Basic things in an exhibit outside of the stand ADA regulations make sure your space around sculptures and between walls is the appropriate inches width for folks to navigate through. Standard painting hanging is to be centered at 60 inches. In my time at VSA I tend to shift that down by 2 to 4 inches. So I've typically gone 50 centering a hanging work at 58 inches or 57 inches. Depending upon the size, the bigger it is I think the lower you can go. The same goes with pedestals. Pedestals are typically about 33 inches high, supposed to be thigh high to the average height person, but if you really want it to be inviting and visually accessible to folks of all heights and all accommodations, again, you can shift that down to, I would say no lower than 29 or 30 inches. Again, depending on the work. And these minor shifts in scale in hanging height and size really makes it accessible, you know, universally as universal design applies because it allows even tall people to be able to look down over a sculpture, you see it from different angles. Other things to think about are font sizes when you're creating your text. Typically you don't want to go on an object label lower than 13 or 12-point font. You want to keep it San serif. Arial is San Serif, you want to keep things as clean as possible to read. We don't use cursive or fancy font too much except for maybe the exhibit title because that sometimes can be a graphic brand, but for informational text, you want to keep it legible, readable and clean.

>>Lisa: I have two questions that go hand in hand. What are advertising and promotional ideas? And how would you go about getting sponsors for your art exhibit?

>>Sonja: Advertising and promotion, I purposely avoided this topic because I addressed this in my previous Webinar and also that's just a general publicity and marketing question that my answer applies to any sort of promotional event. Advertising your exhibit I think the basic straightforward methods are if you can afford to create a small postcard that you send out to your mailing list, you have an e-mail list that you've been gathering, that's where that comment book in your gallery is really helpful, ask people to leave a comment and their name and e-mail address and then you instantly start growing your marketing list. Your local newspapers are city papers, I'm trying -- those of you in Los Angeles - L.A. weekly, the voice, L.A. has the Stranger, those kind of local papers versus L.A. Times, New York Times, all have listing sections that don't cost anything as long as you get it to them 2 to 4 weeks in advance. I would take advantage of those and then craft a good press release and start building relationships with the writers at any of these papers so that when they see your calendar listing come in maybe you'll get the highlight that week and a little more traffic. Do you have a website? You know, updating your website. And the calendar listings

are also all digital as well. It's more important to really find your regional publications and it's also getting to know the important art folks in your community. You know, did it have a blog? Is there a blog that everyone reads? There is a nationwide network blog called the IST.com. There's DCist, there's quite a few cities, you might want to look it up, I can't check it right now because I'm in the PowerPoint mode, but the, IST network is heavily trafficked and they have a "submit your list" button. They have online sites they want you to get connected to. Even if they don't highlight you this time, keep your information and name out there. There's a lot of competition out there, just knowing who your regional, local bloggers, writers, people who know people making contact with them, getting out a really well-crafted press release, having, you know, 3 to 4 great images of the art works in advance. If you have the time to do that have part of your artist contract fee, you must provide one high resolution digital image of the artwork in question. You don't have to pay money to have a photographer professionally photograph it. They should have that anyway. Get it from there and use it in your publicity and you have your press packet halfway there.

>>Lisa: I think we're coming to the end of our hour, so I'm going to switch it back to my screen. Thank you so much, Sonja.

>>Sonja: You're welcome.

>>Lisa: So I'd like to thank you all for joining us today. A post Webinar survey will appear after you exit the Webinar. There are only eight questions, so it's very quick and it would be helpful to us if we could have your feedback from today's presentation. A script of the Webinar is also available upon request. You can write to me, Lisa Damico, at LVDamico@Kennedy-Center.org, to request this. You will also receive an automatically generated e-mail with a link to the recording from today's presentation.

Thank you very much. Goodbye.