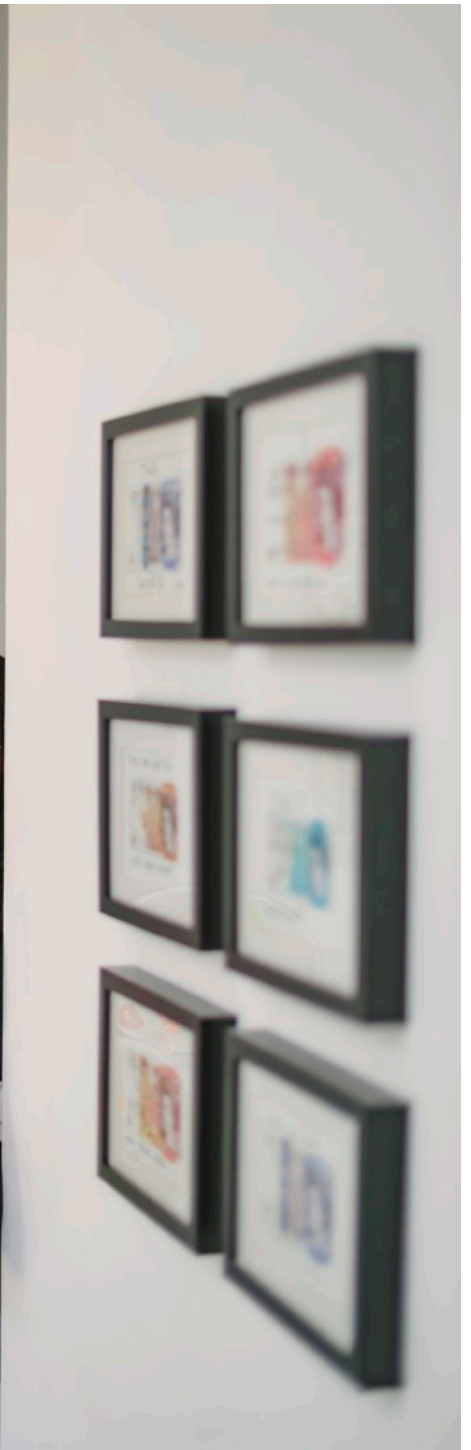
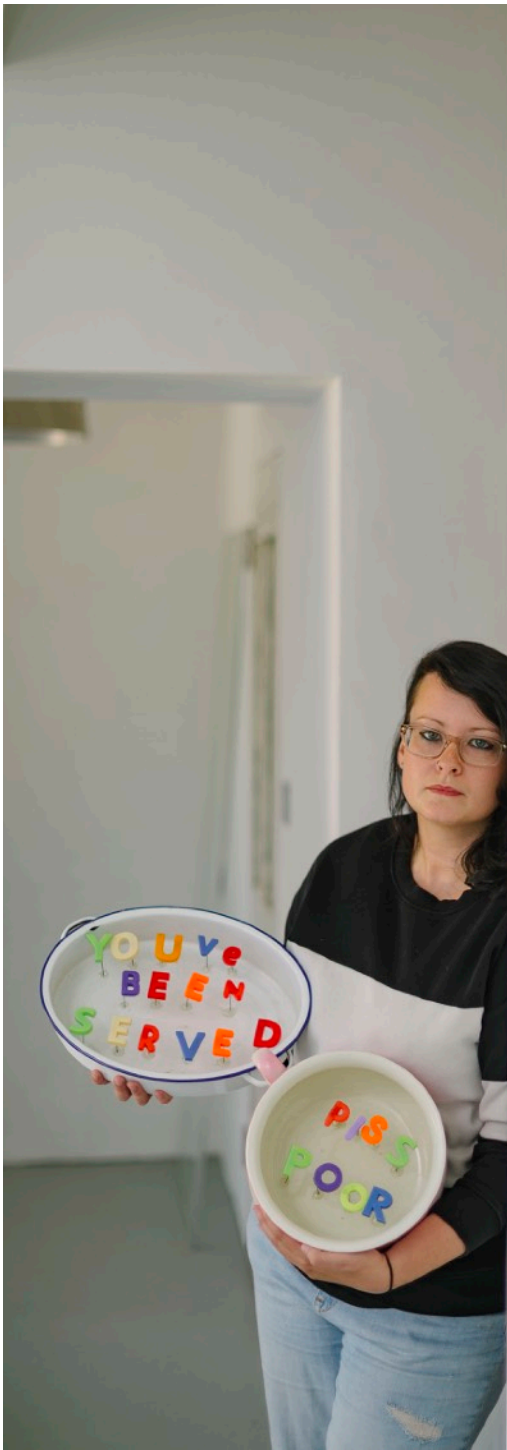


# **ARTIST GUIDE:** CREATING IMAGES TO PUBLICISE YOUR WORK



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**SOW**  
somerset  
art works



# INTRODUCTION

Great images are vital for showcasing your work to audiences and potential buyers. You can use photos and videos on your website, on social media, and to send to the press for articles in newspapers, magazines and online.

If people are considering whether to visit your studio, attend an exhibition or buy your work, they need something to inspire them, and there's nothing better than an image which gives a taste of what they're going to see.

This guide will help you to create photos of your work. You may need to look up some of the terms to find out more info, and there are plenty of online sources to help you.

# KIT

## Camera or smartphone

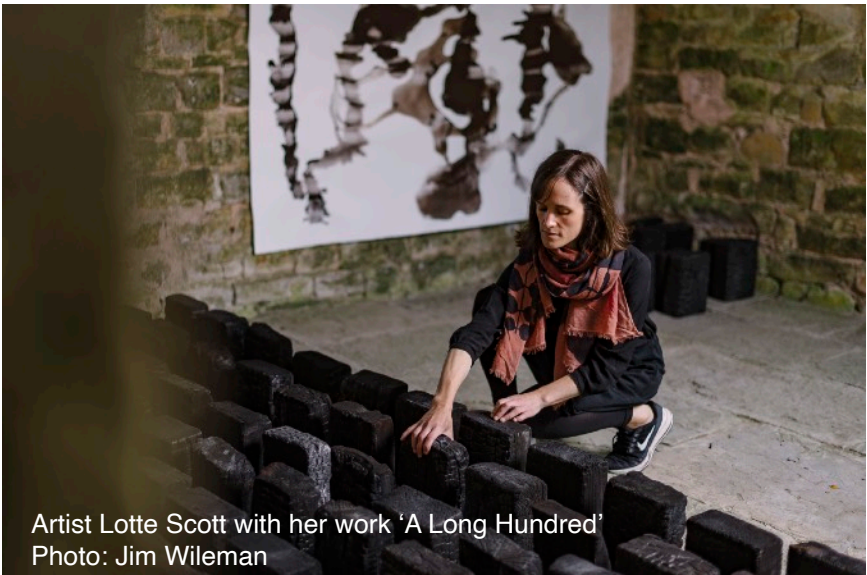
It's not essential to have an expensive camera to take good photos. A DSLR or mirrorless camera will give you more options if you know how to use it well, but it's also possible to take great photos with your smartphone.

## Tripod

You might want to invest in a tripod, particularly if you're taking photos where the light isn't good. A tripod is also useful for recording short videos of yourself making work. Inexpensive tripods are available, and if you're using your phone, a light one is perfectly adequate. To use a tripod with your phone, you'll also need to get a small adapter which mounts on the tripod and attaches to the phone.

## Lights

You can purchase lights, which can also be useful for making videos, although natural light is usually the best.



Artist Lotte Scott with her work 'A Long Hundred'  
Photo: Jim Wileman

# CONTENT & COMPOSITION

## What do you want your photos to say?

There are a number of things to consider before you capture your images:

Where are you going to use the photos? Have a look at other photos used in similar places. Which ones attract your attention? What is it about those photos that make you want to look at them?

## What should be in the photo?

Do you want a simple product shot which shows off the work for sale? Or maybe you want to show the work in a home setting – a painting on a wall, or a vase with flowers in it. Images of artists creating their work can also be fascinating; one of the attractions of buying direct from an artist or maker is a connection with the person who made the work, seeing how they created it, and finding out something about them.

Artists' studios are also interesting – people love to see the place where the work was made. Your brushes, sketch books or boxes of materials may seem ordinary to you, but to others, they're all part of the experience.

## What shouldn't be in the photo?

Make sure that the background isn't cluttered so that the viewer will focus on the piece of art that you want them to be looking at.

## Rule of thirds

The rule of thirds is familiar to many artists, and can help you compose photos by placing points of interest in the intersections of the thirds. Many smartphones have a grid to help you do this.

## Lighting

It's best to photograph your work with natural daylight if possible. This is likely to give accurate colours and also uniform, bright light. You might do this outside, or by opening curtains and doors to let in as much light as possible, and by moving the art nearer to a window or open door.

When you set up your shot, make sure that there is as much light as possible falling onto the subject, and no bright light sources behind it.

If it's not possible to use daylight, there are inexpensive lights which can help, and it's a good idea to use at least two of these to provide a more even light. Make sure that there are no sharp shadows falling on to the artwork.

## Product shots

To take a basic product shot, you'll need a plain background.

For 2D pieces, you can simply place the work onto a flat white background. Take care to get the perspective right. This is particularly noticeable in square or rectangular pieces where you'll need to make sure that the camera is at the same angle as the art. Most smartphones have a grid option which helps you to line everything up. You can also use software such as Photoshop or an app such as Photoshop Express to correct the perspective, but it's best to get it as good as you can when you take the photo, rather than relying on editing software.

If your work has a frame, you'll probably want to take photographs before it's framed to avoid reflections. If you

feel that the frame is important to show, you could take the photos with the frame but before the glass goes in. You might need to do this at your framer's workshop.

For 3D work, the easiest way to create a plain background is to use a piece of white paper or thin card with one end taped to a wall to create an infinity curve. For larger items, you could use a sheet.

For some more texture or interest, you could use a textured background such as linen or wood, and add simple props, maybe to give an idea of scale

To show potential buyers can how your art might look in their home you could create a stylised product shot; a ceramic bowl with fruit in it or a sculpture on a shelf, for example.

### **Press shots**

Good images greatly increase your chances of gaining coverage in the media. It's best to have a variety of shots available.

The product shots described above are useful for magazine articles such as "Ten Ideas for Christmas" or "Five local craftspeople", where an image shows the item, accompanied by a short description.

For longer features and coverage in newspapers and online news sites, photos need to be more creative. A good press photo should tell a story; as well as showing your art, include a person, some action, and maybe an unusual setting. It could be a photo of you creating the work or installing it in an interesting location. Something brightly coloured can help to lift an image, the artist wearing a red jacket, for example. Always take a range of shots, including close-ups of detail, shots from unusual angles, and both landscape and portrait formats.

# SENDING YOUR PHOTOS TO THE PRESS

- Send photos as colour.
- Include a range of images, usually between five and ten so that the journalist has a selection but doesn't have to work through lots to find the best ones.
- Include both landscape and portrait format.
- Make it clear that the images are press photos which are free to use.
- Include a caption with your name, the name of the work, dimensions, medium and any other important information. This makes the editor's job easier and could make the difference between having your work featured or not.
- if you have the facility, add this into the Photo Info in Photoshop so that it stays with the image
- Include your name in the filename eg  
JConstable\_Haywain\_OilonCanvas\_1.3x1.85m
- Make sure that you're sending high resolution images – 300dpi
- If possible, select 4K on your smartphone.
- Send your images as jpgs
- They should have a width of 2000 to 3000 pixels
- As a guide to resolution and size, your image file size should be 1 to 2MB. If it's a lot smaller than this, it's likely that the image is too small and/or the resolution is too low
- Send photos as links eg Dropbox or Google photos. Don't send large attachments which will fill the journalist's inbox.



This photo shows the work, but there are other things in the background



The perspective on this photo isn't right.



This photo is correctly proportioned without any clutter in the background.

The filename is:

PaulNewman\_AConfluenceofWaters\_Graphite\_20x15cm.jpg



This image of artist Emilie Taylor was taken by photographer Jim Wileman. The caption saved in 'file info' reads:

**\*\*IMAGE FREE TO USE \*\***

Picture By Jim Wileman - Food poverty has inspired the creation of a series of large ceramic pots by Emilie Taylor. Her work is displayed in an historic Tithe Barn for Somerset Art Weeks Festival.