

## Understanding the Expectations for ISSA Active Level Jury Process.

If you have an interest in becoming an Active Member of ISSA, we would like to encourage you to apply. Most applications for Active Membership are accepted if the Applicant is using scratchboard as an artistic medium and shows a basic foundation of technical scratchboard skills. Active Membership is ISSA's entry juried level, and as such, jurors are not looking for highly advanced skills at this stage (we understand that you may be new to the medium). Advantageously, as an Active Member, you will have the opportunity to apply for juried shows, and to submit artwork for inclusion in non-juried shows (such as our online show). Thus, we expect all Active Members to demonstrate a skill level high enough that the artwork will be a good reflection on ISSA, as a fine art organization, in such shows.

First, all artwork submitted must conform to ISSA's definition of what scratchboard is, which is as follows:

*The Scratchboard technique is a two-dimensional subtractive process. It involves the use of abrasive tools to directly remove a surface layer of one value (typically dark) to expose a second layer (typically white). The values within the artwork are predominately achieved by varying the amount of surface layer that has been scratched away or left. The texture and form of all key compositional elements within the artwork must be created with subtractive removal, not exclusively by the addition of paint or ink. Reapplying transparent mediums over the scratching is permissible, but the underlying scratching must remain visible. Works can be color or black and white.*

Second, these are the foundation skills all applicants should demonstrate to become an Active Level Member:

- **Basic Technical Skills\*** – The artist should appear to have basic control of their scratching tool(s) and be able to convey a range of textures, values, and shape/form with their scratching techniques. Artists are expected to be using line quality and line direction with intent. If color is used, it should be done with care and attention.
- **Growth Potential** – Jurors look to see improvement in the works submitted, showing a potential to improve with more experience. If some of the works are not as strong, but a couple are better, that shows growth potential, and a juror is more likely to pass you.
- **Following the Guidelines** – Does the artist submit works following ISSA's guidelines (i.e., correct sizing of images submitted; clear images (scanned or photographed); image files named correctly (artistname\_image name\_size)? We can help you figure this part out, if you don't know how to resize or rename your files.
- **Overall Quality** - Will the artwork presented in your portfolio represent ISSA favorably in a non-juried show? If at least one or two works submitted are suitable of the quality of work that ISSA represents, usually the juror will pass you. If none of the works show that skill level, we will suggest that you work on the skills listed in "Basic Technical Skills" area a bit more, and apply again in the future.

### **\*More Details on Basic Technical Skills-**

- *One of the most important basic skills we look for is control of your scratching tool(s). Do you pay attention to the direction your scratches are going? Are you able to control your tools enough to create a range of textures with scratches? Do your scratches start and stop in a meaningful way, or are there a lot of messy scratches going places they shouldn't be?*
- *Part of basic tool control is the ability to create a range of values with your scratching. Have you demonstrated the ability to scratch highlights, mid-tones, and shadows by varying your scratching style, width, or pressure?*
- *If the work is representational, then we expect at least basic drawing skills be demonstrated with correctness to the general shape/form? While no preference is given to stylized or realistic rendering, if the subject matter looks like it should be recognizable, then it should be drawn close to correctly shaped. If distortion is added, it should appear intentional? If the work is abstract, was thought given to the drawing/layout. The drawing skills needs to be correct enough that it is not a distraction to the enjoyment of the artwork.*
- *If you chose to use color, do the scratches still show through? Is the color completed in a way that it is an asset to the work, or is it messy and distracting? Use of color should not be the primary way you are defining your values, but rather an asset to the values achieved with your scratching.*

Questions? Please email: [scratchboardsociety@gmail.com](mailto:scratchboardsociety@gmail.com) before applying.