**HUDSON RIVER POTTERS**

SHOW HANDBOOK

Updated June 2015

[**www.hudsonriverpotters.net**](http://www.hudsonriverpotters.net)

*SHOW*

*HANDBOOK*

5th Draft of 2008 Revision

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\*Email distribution of Appendix A is available under separate cover.

**OVERVIEW**

Each artist is a reflection of the whole group. When we exhibit as Hudson River Potters we are all elements of this whole.

If you are considering participation in a Hudson River Potters Show, please review this handbook carefully to understand the commitment involved and assess your willingness to take on these responsibilities. When you are ready, the camaraderie of a show is a wonderful experience that challenges you to maintain a standard and raise your craft to new levels of professionalism.

In order to join a show, you must have joined HRP at least six months prior to the show deadline and have a presence on the Hudson River Potters website. This involves submitting an artist statement and good quality images of your work for online presentation. HRP has someone who is ready to assist you in this endeavor. Check the website for current information and assistance: [***www.hudsonriverpotters.***](http://www.hudsonriverpotters.com)***net***

Although Hudson River Potters shows are currently not juried, our shows are the equivalent of a gallery exhibition and sale. Work presented must be of the highest quality.

# PART I:

# PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

**Business Cards**

Everyone should have business cards on their display table to be packed with sales.

Each artist will need at least 50 business cards. The easiest way to make a business card is to run some Avery#8873 cards through your personal printer.

# Digital Photos

Good quality digital photos are included in the postcards promoting the show. This does not mean that you must hire a professional to take the photos. Professional quality means a photo taken with a proper (preferably gradient) backdrop (not bed sheets). The photo should have good lighting and be **sharp** with the subject framed properly with some background showing. The photo will be used at the discretion of the publicity chairperson. Digital images submitted should be of a large file/pixel size. Participants should submit the largest best quality image they can (500 to 1 MB), lit PROPERLY (no harsh shadows, no hot spots) on a plain light gray fading to dark background similar to Ceramic Monthly covers (NO walls, NO wrinkles). If unable to photograph well, should use a professional photographer. This will allow the graphic artist to resize the image to the appropriate size and still keep the high resolution/pixel count of the image.

Any photos submitted will not be returned, but will stay with the publicity person for submissions to publications if the need arises.

Participants must submit images to designated publicity person as early as possible for inclusion in the postcard, due to timeline with printer.

If you have questions, please contact the publicity person.

**New York State Taxes**

Before participating in an HRP Show, each artist must obtain a sales tax collection authorization certificate from the New York State Dep’t of Taxation and Finance. A copy of each artist’s certificate must be provided to the show chair to be kept in a binder during the show, in case we are visited by a representative of the state.

Each artist is to collect the proper sales tax applicable to any work that is sold. You can either include sales tax in the sticker price or add it at the time of sale.

Remember to report all income from Hudson River Potter sales in your annual/quarterly sales tax return as well as your personal income tax return.

# Suggested Pricing Guidelines

HRP shows are a gallery experience, showing only the best work each artist has to offer. Please do not consider selling inferior quality work, even at reduced prices. *This is not a ‘seconds’ sale*. You may be asked by the show chairperson to remove such pieces from your display.

The following is intended to help you price your work appropriately. While the amount of work that goes into any one piece varies, we realize it can be difficult to determine how to price it. Prices reflect how an individual artist works; whether in production format or involved one-of-a-kind pieces, and anything in between.

This guide is the result of a random pricing sampling covering mostly functional items. The lower end of the range is for simpler less involved or perhaps smaller work. The higher end of the price range reflects the more complicated, intricate, and significantly larger pieces. **The key is to maintain our integrity as artists. Our pricing reflects how we value our art. Here are some *suggested* minimums.**

**Cups/mugs**

Cup without handles $ 10-16

Mug w/handles 12-25

Goblet 20-28

**Bowls**

Ice cream sized 8-20

Cereal/soup 14-24

Serving bowls 28-59

Display/extra large 53-125

**Plates**

Small plate or tray 4”-6” 9-20

Standard sized dinner plate 18-38

Large plates/platters 12”-14” 34-58

Platters/trays 14”-18” & up 53-110

**Vases**

Small 6”- 8” 18-35

Medium 8”-12” 30-63

Tall 12” & up 50-125

**Bottles** 18-50

**Covered containers/boxes** 27-60

**Casseroles** 48-89

**Teapots** 43-125

**Pitchers** 22-78

All prices should be clearly marked on each item in whole dollars, no cents. Minimum price $5.

**Labeling**

Each piece needs to have a label clearly marked with your initials and price. While “Removable” Avery labels available at Staples work well, you may need to secure with a piece of clear tape depending on the surface of your pot. Permanent labels are difficult to remove at the time of sale and leave a gummy residue.

**Sales Record Sheets**

All participants must submit Daily Sales Record sheets (see form in Appendix B) so that the Show Treasurer can allocate the venue fee among participating artists in proportion to the amounts of their sales. Plan to have each sheet 3-hole punched to file in the 3 ring binder at the show. This task must be completed by each person *PRIOR* to departing each day. Each sold item must be listed with a description of the items and price.

# Display & Lighting

You must cover your table with a clean & pressed white sheet. The sheet must reach the floor on all four sides. Standard tables are 6’w x 30”d x 36”h or 8’w x 30”d x 36”h. A king size sheet works well for a 6 foot table, while an 8 foot table will require two, or you may purchase plain white fabric. Wal-Mart supplies extra wide yardage.

To make your set-up more interesting you may wish to create levels rising above the table. Wooden wine crates work quite well. You can also construct a portable shelving system or create shelves by stacking, bricks or other sturdy material between planks of wood. Having the work on different levels makes it more appealing to look at. You can hide non-decorative boxes under a sheet and still achieve a look of staggered height. A piece of contrasting fabric laid across the white sheet adds another decorative touch. Consider using props to enhance the display such as dried flowers.

If your work requires a specific explanation such as the Raku process, consider printing up a short blurb and place it either inside the piece or in a stack on your table. Some people have created labels to indicate food or microwave safety, although this is not essential

Lighting for individual tables may be desired, with lights securely fastened to table stands or other fixtures. Extension cords, power strips, and lights are the responsibility of each exhibitor. Be sure to bring adequate duct tape to secure all loose cords safely to prevent tripping hazards.

Some sellers use table lamps, others clip lights or high intensity lamps, directed toward the table so that no pieces are in the dark, especially during evening shows.

 **DISPLAY: CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE**

Consider the following when planning your display:

* Is your display enticing to look at?
* Is your table covering clean and pressed?’” Do you use color contrasts to "show off" your work?
* Did you include flowers or fruits or music to add additional interest?
* Is your name card visible?
* Did you place business cards on the display?
* Is the display well lit?
* Is your display too crowded?" Remember additional pieces can be stored under the display. You must set up the "bones" of the display.

Please make small signs to communicate information about your work to consumers. Let them know if it is functional, decorative, fragile, lid removable, waterproof, etc. The signs will give them the answers they will be looking for. At the same time, if the piece is fragile and the lid is removable, it won't be a surprise. If the piece is decorative and not food safe, labeling is especially important.

**SEED MONEY**

Each participant will be asked for an initial investment (about $75) to commit to a show. **Payment to the Show Treasurer is due when photos are submitted for the postcards. Failure to send the seed money payment to the Show Treasurer on time will disqualify you form participating in the show.**

This front money covers general expenses related to the show (such as postcard printing and postage, flyers, signs, reception food, etc.) and will be deducted from total show costs after all bills and receipts are in. If common expenses do not exhaust the seed money fund, refunds will be provided after the show accounting is final.

Any participant who incurs a common expense for the show **MUST promptly submit a receipt to the Show Treasurer in order to be reimbursed**. *Show purchases made prior to the opening will not be reimbursed to anyone who fails to submit receipts to the Show Treasurer by the show setup day.*

NOTE: **Do not** send seed money or expense receipts to the HRP Treasurer.

**VENUE FEE**

HRP pays the host a fee that is generally 10% of total sales, though this may vary at specific venues (*e.g.*, Briarcliff’s fee is a flat $450). Each artist is required to contribute to the venue fee in proportion to the amount of their individual sales compared to the total sales in the show. The Show Treasurer will use the Daily Sales Record sheets to calculate the total show sales and each artist’s share of the venue fee. **Artists must pay their share of the venue fee promptly. Failure to do so will disqualify an artist from participating in future HRP shows.**

**SHOW MEETINGS**

It is important to attend all preparation meetings held so that each participant knows what to expect. Generally at least 2 meetings are called, with communication by email in the interim. At the meetings, details regarding the particular venue are discussed, as well as job assignments.

**COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATE**

When you choose to participate in an HRP show, you make a commitment to the other show members to follow through and perform your assigned task. A change of mind, such as to do another venue, can put an unfair burden on the remaining show participants. *If circumstances compel you to withdraw after the show postcards have been sent to the printer, you will receive a refund of half your seed money payment only if you perform your assigned show task and notify the show chair at least two weeks prior to the show.*

**Part II: GROUP RESPONSIBILITIES**

Successful shows don’t just happen. They are the result of much careful planning and cooperative efforts and require a commitment to share the responsibilities and tasks associated with the show as well as the personal commitment to make and sell your work.

Each potter participating in a show must send in seed money, attend all planning meetings, volunteer for one or more show tasks, participate in setup and cleanup, not just for your own table but including moving tables as needed and setting up check out and refreshment area, baking or purchasing cookies for the opening reception, as well as assisting the show chairperson when asked. Shows can be stressful, so please maintain a cheerful and professional attitude. Some tasks are much easier than others. Those potters with easier tasks may be required to do more than one task in order to equalize the responsibilities fairly.

**Set up and Breakdown of Show**

When participating in an HRP show, there are jobs and responsibilities other than setting up your own table. **It is a real cooperative effort**. Not all jobs carry the same weight but together they make our show successful. It is important for everyone to take an initiative and help out especially during the set up and break down of the show.

The days before show day:

* Label all your pieces (initials & price) BEFORE the setup day
* Make signs if needed to explain your work, especially if people need to be careful
* Bring any promotional material and signup book
* Bring your Business Cards
* Iron your tablecloths
* Pack pots with lots of padding
* Pack your car early
* Plan to attend Opening Reception and if unable to be present during the entire show, arrange for backup coverage to handle sales at your table

**SET-UP DAY**

* Be on time
* Stay cheerful and cooperative
* Help others as needed
* Store boxes under your table
* Let others know if you have extra work to be displayed if table empties enough

 **BREAKDOWN DAY**

*ALL artists must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to show end time* so displays and work can be removed and room cleaned in time to meet the venue’s schedule. Coordinate time of breakdown with show chair – don’t just start on your own. Don’t leave until the room is empty and swept clean. **You may not pack up your display before the agreed upon closing time, even if sales are slow.** This detracts from the appearance of the show and is unfair to the other participants. Failure to abide by this requirement will disqualify you from participating in any future shows.

**POST-SHOW EVALUATION**

Communicate with Show Chair anything you thought went particularly well, or could be improved. Offer positive suggestions.

**DESK DUTIES**

For 2014 shows, we started a new plan to resolve state tax filing rules. Each artist shall handle his/her own individual sales, and decide whether to accept cash, checks credit or debit as payment. Each artist must bring wrapping supplies and bags for their own sales. Common wrapping table(s) will be decided in the planning for each show. If you are unable to attend the entire show in person, you must either arrange for a stand-in when absent or request another potter to cover sales for your table while you are absent. I*f you are sharing sales duties with another artist, let the person who assigns table locations know well in advance of the show so your tables can be located near each other.*

Turn on lights, music and fans at beginning of shift; turn off at end of each day.

When customers come in, ask if they would like to sign our book to be put on mailing and/or email list. Encourage customers to provide a mailing or electronic address for our announcement of future shows when you fill out their sales slip. *Provide these addresses to the Show Chair at the end of the show.*

Rearrange table displays as necessary when sales leave display tables looking empty.

**CHECKOUT PROCEDURES** (see Appendix B for detailed procedures and sample forms):

1. Remove labels from pots
2. Place label on Daily Sales Record, enter description of sold item

 **WRAPPING POTS**

1. Make sure you use enough paper to cushion the pot – wrap as you would want someone to wrap an item you buy
2. Put artist’s business card in with each pot
3. Use correct size paper bag

**END OF SESSION CLOSE OUT** (see Appendix B for detailed procedures and sample forms)

1. Add up daily sales on Daily Sales Record Sheet
2. Leave Daily Sales Record sheet in show binder.

**Part III: JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

**SHOW CHAIRPERSON:**

Show oversight: maintain communication with site contact person; assign potter tasks; make sure all potters have all information needed to do assignments, provide email updates; be present for entire setup and breakdown to ensure it happens smoothly, monitor quality of ceramics displayed, complete inventory checklist of HRP supplies (see appendix) and record who is storing each. Consider offering welcome remarks at opening.

**PUBLICITY:**

Publicity is divided into **five** job descriptions:

**(A) Postcard design/printing/mailing**

This task includes everything from gathering photos, creating a layout, following up with printer, updating mailing labels, attaching stamps, and mailing 2 weeks before show date.

We have been printing all HRP cards at Overnight Prints. Their quality and delivery are very good (about $120 for 4x6 cards including normal shipping for 2000 cards with color on both sides). They have templates and instructions on their site. HRP must deliver to them a print ready PDF.

All participants should be represented by name on the card. Request an email digital image of recent work from each participant (500KB to 1MB).

Use Photoshop to resize and change each photo to CMYK, retouching where necessary, before fitting each into the layout. Request that each participant proof read before submitting to printer. Take special care to confirm accuracy of event address, hours, and map information. When the layout has been approved by all participants, upload it to the printer.

They say the turnaround time is five days, but it really isn’t. The approval process, once they receive the work, takes several days without changes. A change (and it could be something small and technical) adds several days to the job.

This job takes at least 10 hours of computer time to do. If there are problems or mistakes, of course it takes longer. If photos need retouching, it’s very easy to spend an hour on each.

 **(B) Maintain Mailing Database**

Maintain mailing list database. Update as needed, adding new contacts and deleting duplicates and returns of incorrect addresses. Print labels for show mailings and deliver to person designated to prepare and mail postcards.

**(C) Signs**

 **(ALL signs are responsibility of one person)**

1. **Flyers**

Design or update flyer and email to all participants.

Each potter makes copies and hangs as assigned. Post flyers everywhere possible.

 Tape to our car windows, so that everywhere we go, someone will see the information.

See Appendix A for a sample flyer. In the event that you have email addresses this can be sent as an email. In the event that you have a bulletin board at work, perhaps the flyer can be posted.

2. **Large Signs**

Design and order lawn signs from *www.VistaPrint.com*

 3. **A-Frames and Banner**

Locate large yellow banner and A-Frames (in storage from previous show). Transport to show. Contact Show Chair for placement location of banners and hang at show. Decide on placement of A-Frames and set out at show. Buy 6 helium balloons to be tied to the A-Frames.

**(D) MEDIA: NEWSPAPER/RADIO ADS**

Determine which publications are relevant to show area (Gather info from previous shows)

(e.g. Journal News Ad and local paper ad design and placement: contact ad sales person to confirm size, dates, and cost, which Journal pubs, usually Weekender and one add-on local paper)

Update contact list with most recent contact names, email, address, phone numbers

Write press release for monthly and weekly pubs

Send out press release and follow up with phone call to contact

Write short show blurb for direct placement in local and web listings

Take photos of potters and setups to send out during show for ongoing PR including email blitzes and web postings.

Update information and provide to next show chair via the general Show Committee.

**TABLE LAYOUT**

Make arrangements to see site.

**AT SITE:**

1. Measure floor space
2. Make a table count if tables are available and measure them.
3. Count electrical outlets.
4. Check out lighting situation
5. Make note of available wall space.

**THEREAFTER:**

1. Establish how much space each participant can have depending on how many are doing the show vs. space available.
2. Find out specific needs of participants: number of tables (space permitting), wall space (if available) etc.
3. Make grid of floor plan and make-up mock tables in respective sizes. Note: If tables are not available, arrangements have to be made to order amount needed and have them delivered.
4. Make a template allotting each participant a designated space.
5. Arrange table(s) for wrapping and one for refreshments.
6. **Set up and take down is a communal effort**. Coordinate Setup (be there first thing before everyone arrives) or oversee potter placement of own tables. Coordinate breakdown: make sure each seller helps. Breakdown duties must be emphasized, as all participants are naturally anxious to leave, *but each of us has a responsibility to clean up not only our own display, but to be sure the site is left as we found it and all HRP supplies have been accounted for*. Prepare inventory sheet of HRP supplies (signs, banner, etc.) and note who is storing each item.

**Refreshments**

Coordinate with Show Chair to determine what refreshments are needed.

Purchase ice, drinks, chips, paper goods, etc.

If all participating potters are to be involved, coordinate with each potter to bring cookies, preferably home baked or other items requested.

Bring tablecloth, napkins, cups, cooler, ice bucket and tongs, openers, platters, flowers, etc.

Set up table for reception.

Check table periodically. Straighten up and refresh platters as needed.

Empty garbage as needed.

Empty cooler as necessary (when ice melts).

Clean up and store refreshments if any will be put out for remaining sale days.

**Show Treasurer**

Accounting will be the responsibility of the **Show Treasurer**, and a detailed report will be submitted to the **HRP Treasurer** for processing of all debits and credits.

**Show Treasurer collects all expense receipts before the show setup** date and advises HRP treasurer who is entitled to reimbursement.

The Show Treasurer collects from each artist their Daily Sales Record sheet to tally the total day’s sales. At the end of the show, the Show Treasurer totals all sales, determines each artist’s proportionate share of the venue fee and reports to the HRP Treasurer the fee due to the venue.

The Show Treasurer collects the venue fee from each artist as well as any seed money deficiency. If there is a surplus of seed money, the Show Treasurer determines how much each artist is due in refunds (may offset part of venue fee).

**NOTES**

The overall Show Participants responsibilities include:

(a) Maintaining show material inventory to ensure a smooth transition from show to show

(b) Developing and providing guidelines so participants know what to expect

(c) Creating a show materials check off list for each show chair

(d) Exploring new venues for shows/sales

(e) Coordinating publicity/advertising

(f) Updating show handbook as needed

**LIST OFAPPENDICES**

**\*Appendix A** - Publicity

Samples: HRP Logo, Flyer, News Ads, Press Releases

**Appendix B** – Artists’ Daily Sales Record form

**Appendix C** - Show Inventory & Job Check List (ATTACHED)

Includes: Paper and plastic bags, Newsprint, A-Frames, Banner, Paper Goods, Cash Boxes, Pedestals

**\***Email distribution of Appendix A is available under separate cover.

 Appendix B – **Artists’ Daily Sales Record Form**

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Artist: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| Date | Description | Price w/o tax |
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Artist Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Appendix C – Show Check Lists**

**HRP Show Job Check List**

**Show Venue:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Dates:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Participating Potter(s):** | **Job Assignment:** |
|  | Show Chair |
|  |  |
|  | Postcard design/printing + email to participants |
|  |  |
|  | Postcard mailing list |
|  |  |
|  | Postcard Mailing |
|  |  |
|  | Flyers |
|  |  |
|  | Signs |
|  |  |
|  | Newspaper/radio/media ads & publicity |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | Table layout |
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|  | Refreshments |
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|  |  |
|  |  |
|  | Show treasurer |
|  |  |
|  | Clean up |
|  |  |

HRP Inventory Check List

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Show Venue: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Quantity needed** | **Item** | **Quantity on hand** | **Stored by** |
|  | **SIGNS**  |  |  |
|  |  Banner | 1 |  |
|  |  A-Frames | 5 |  |
|  |  Ground signs -“Portable”(varies by show) |  |  |
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|  | **REFRESHMENTS**: |  |  |
|  | Cups |  |  |
|  | Napkins |  |  |
|  | Tablecloths |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |
|  | **OTHER**: |  |  |
|  | Non-Financial table misc. |  |  |
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