

Photography Audition Guidelines

How to apply:

To apply to the photography program, applicants must submit a portfolio of 6-8 images. Adjudicators will be looking for applicants who have a good understanding of photographic technique (e.g. composition, use of light, contrast) and whose images tell their artistic point of view. Images may be conventional and/or digital photographs, but all photos will be submitted digitally in JPEG format.

Portfolio Guidelines:

- The photos must have been taken AFTER March 1 of the prior year, and former OSAI students may not submit work produced at OSAI.
- If you are submitting darkroom work, we recommend that you scan the images at the highest optical resolution provided by your scanner, THEN scale the resulting file to 1200 pixels on the longest side.
- If you are submitting digital work, please keep in mind that judges will look at the metadata embedded in the photo file to assess your technical abilities. (i.e., If you are shooting every photo in fully automatic mode, it will affect your score.)
- Once you are ready to submit your portfolio, save your files in JPEG format, and scale your work to 1200 pixels in the longest dimension. (This is the equivalent of 300 dpi when the longest dimension is 4 inches.)
- Ensure your name or other identifying information does NOT appear anywhere in your portfolio images or their metadata. Do not worry about your file names. The OSAI audition portal will automatically rename the files for you when you upload them.

Portfolio Tips:

DO include images that show a range of interests and photographic abilities.

DO display your understanding of photographic technique. Pay attention to composition, use of light, and contrast.

DO think about the images you've selected for submission and what they say about your point of view as an artist.

DON'T rely on special effects and other image editing tricks.

DON'T submit work done for class assignments. The judges are interested in self-assigned creative work as opposed to yearbook or student paper photographs.

DON'T submit clichés. While your family pet or younger sibling may be cute, most photographs of such subject matter are considered snapshots rather than art.

Using images from a smartphone or tablet:

Although photographs shot with a smartphone/tablet are acceptable, please consider the following:

- Images taken with a smartphone/tablet will have to be resized and renamed with an image editor.
- Instagram filters and other stylized effects may look trendy and familiar, but they're usually little more than a fad. Judges will rarely be impressed by heavy doses of stylized image editing.
- Because most smartphones/tablets lack manual exposure control, camera phone submissions will typically do nothing to demonstrate your knowledge of exposure theory. If you choose to submit photos taken with a smartphone/tablet, it is strongly recommended that you also include some images that demonstrate exposure control.

Judging Criteria:

Please note: Auditions for all disciplines are as blind as possible, meaning that judges will not have applicants' names, ages, hometowns, etc.

Composition – 30%

Does the applicant understand how to place objects within the frame and work with geometry and light to achieve a compelling image, including consideration of color, line, shape, scale, texture and value?

Creativity and originality – 30%

What is the applicant doing beyond technique? Is there a unique vision, personal style, or original idea expressed through the work? Is there something unusual or especially insightful in the approach to the subject matter?

Technique – 20%

How well is the image executed? Does the applicant display advanced technical ability?

Potential – 20%

To what extent does the applicant display insight or ideas that could be strengthened with training?

[Read general information about our adjudication procedures here.](#)