



Introduction

Over the last decade, I have processed over 1,000 entries containing over 10,000 slides from artists entering TPS competitions. These submissions have arrived in packages that have varied from stuffing a slide sheet and 10 slides into a small postcard sized envelope to the bubble wrapped and

excessively taped 16"x20" Teflon coated box. The same can be said for the prints that are sent in for TPS exhibitions. This Tech Sheet will discuss the packaging of contest entry slides and exhibition prints thus increasing the likelihood that your slides/prints will safely arrive and eventually be

returned to you in a like fashion. A future Tech Sheet will discuss various mounting and over-matting techniques of your prints and offer some general guidelines for presentation.

D. Clarke Evans

Shipping Slides

It is most important to read and follow the directions. Sponsoring organizations have a method to their madness. They have figured out the best means to handle the incoming slides to make their competitions run smoothly. If you follow their directions you will be one of several hundred, doing the same and lessening the chances of anything going awry with your slides. When an artist deviates from those directions, problems usually arise. That substandard entry has to be handled differently from the other entries, thus increasing the likelihood that the entry will be misplaced or slides will be lost.

A brief discussion of how TPS manages the slide entry workflow should be helpful. Each entry is assigned a unique number the moment it arrives. This number is put on the incoming envelope and all related materials (slides, entry form). The now-empty slide page and return envelope are put back into your original shipping envelope. The slides are placed in slide trays in the order in which they are received. We keep each entry together and do not break an artist's entry between two slide trays. The juror is now free to pull slides out of the trays, look at them on a light box, and generally mix them up. Because the entry

number is on each slide, we have no trouble matching slides up to their original owner for return and identifying accepted entrants.

Our goal is to make the jurying process as easy as possible for the juror. That is why TPS requests that only slides representative of the image be sent in. It would be a taxing task to look at slides, then mounted images of various sizes, and several Compact Disks with images. While we may ultimately move to digitally-based entries, the slide format is still the preferred method for most jurors.

Packaging your slides

When entering an exhibition, it's simple to make a small package for your slides that provides protection and ensures that they will be returned safely. A huge envelope with bubble wrap is not needed. Use the following as guidelines:

1. Read and follow the directions as detailed in the Call for Entries.
2. Gather your supplies. (See list)
3. Label slides with a computer program or neatly print the information on the front of the slide mount with a Sharpie pen. Be sure that labels are securely affixed. Loose labels can jam the projector.



Supplies:

- Your best slides - 10 for example
- #12 envelope
- #14 envelope
- Slide Sheet - cut to the number of slides you are entering
- Sharpie Pen
- Slide Labels
- Return postage stamps
- 4-ply hand-made slide protector – see Onext page for instructions
- Call for Entries

4. Affix your return address and appropriate postage to a #12 envelope for return of slides.

5. Put slides into slide sheet. Be sure and trim the slide sheet to the number of slides entering.

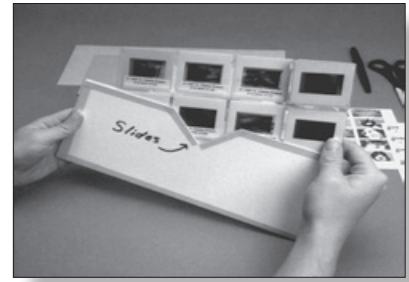
- Affix address and postage to #14 envelope and place the slides, return address envelope, entry form and check within it. This makes a nice small package that is easily returnable.

Making a 4-ply slide protector.

- Cut two pieces of 4-ply board (or medium weight card board) slightly larger than the sheet of slides. Make sure that the finished slide

- protector will fit into the #12 envelope.
- Tape the boards together on 3 slides. Leave the larger side at the top open for inserting the slides.

When entering 10 slides, fold over the last row of slides to fit into the slide protector. The entire package fits easily into the #12 envelope when your slides are returned to you.



The slide protector in use.

Shipping Prints

Again less is more. It is understood that you want your printed, mounted image to arrive safely in the hands of the sponsoring organization. TPS annually receives more than 100 packages of prints and ships out close to 200 prints. The artist has three basic choices when shipping prints:

- Take your art work to one of the businesses that specialize in packaging and shipping, such as Mail Boxes Etc or the Mail Center.
- Purchase a shipping case.
- Do it yourself by constructing your own packaging.

Do not use Styrofoam peanuts! Be careful if you select so-called "Packaging Specialists." I have found that many of these places will put an image mat-

ted to 16"x20" in a 12"x20"x24" box surrounded by the Styrofoam peanuts. Styrofoam peanuts do not protect the print. They settle. Because the box is thick and appears substantial, other boxes are easily stacked on top crushing the box. Cardboard boxes can be easily punctured, damaging the print.

One of the easier and safer options, although more expensive, is to purchase a manufactured shipping case. The more popular models purchased from Calumet (call 800-225-8638 for a catalog) cost \$69.95 for a 1"x16 1/4" x 20 1/4" Fiberbilt Case. The case will easily hold several prints and is virtually guaranteed to arrive safely. The prints can be repackaged, and sent back to you. The case can be reused numerous times.

For the do-it-yourselfer, I have found the simplest method is to purchase 15C chip board from an art supply store. This is a heavy board that is difficult to penetrate or bend. To hold the print securely, cut the board at least 2 inches larger than the mat. I cut an 8 1/2"x11" piece of paper into 4 squares and adhere the image/mounted print to the board by making photo corners. The photo corner is then taped down. In the odd thousand prints that we have sent out, only two have been damaged. The package is nice and flat. Flat is hard to destroy. To protect the print from moisture, don't forget to slip your print into a mylar print sleeve or polybag.



To make photo corners, cut a sheet of paper into four pieces and fold as shown.



Slip the print into the folded corner and tape down. Sandwich the print between two pieces of 15C chip board.



Alternatives:

- Tempered hard board for added durability instead of the 15C chip board.
- 16"x2" paper box obtained from local lab.
- Fiberbilt Case.
- Some artists, when shipping several prints, construct shipping boxes with screw down lids out of 1"x4" boards.

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D. Clarke Evans, a commercial photographer living in San Antonio, Texas, is recognized for his architectural, sports, and corporate photography. He has a B.A. degree from Brooks Institute

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The Texas Photographic Society is a nonprofit organization of amateur and professional photographers whose purpose "is to support contemporary photography as a means for creative expression and cultural insight." With over 830 active members from 33 states, TPS focuses on the education

and artistic development of its members and the community by providing exhibitions, publications, education and outreach programs. Tech Sheets, a benefit of membership, are edited by Jean Caslin and D. Clarke Evans. © D. Clarke Evans and the Texas Photographic Society. For information about the

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