

To Sell or Not to Sell?

This question is asked frequently, so the following information spells out options for artists to consider relative to the opening of the 2023 *Birds in Art* exhibition.

The Woodson Art Museum is an art museum, i.e., we exhibit and collect artworks; we don't sell artworks. Art galleries and artists sell artworks, and because gallery owners and artists need to make a living, selling artworks is a good thing.

This distinction made, there are a couple of important nuances to understand and consider regarding your artwork in *Birds in Art* and on view at the Woodson Art Museum:

- While the Woodson does not sell artworks, the Museum does buy them from time to time. Therefore, we do retain the “right of first refusal” to consider *Birds in Art* artworks for the collection, which is done by the Collections Committee shortly after the opening weekend.
- Further, the Museum recognizes that many artworks in the exhibition are for sale and we do assist artists in a number of ways, without taking a commission or percentage of a sale.

Consider these scenarios:

- Your artwork is identified as “collection of the artist,” which is generally “code” for “available for purchase.” If the Museum does not acquire your artwork (decisions communicated to artists within two weeks after the opening), artists can and should pursue expressions of interest in their work . . . especially if someone approaches you during the opening weekend (i.e., you can explain the circumstances to a potential buyer and then follow up).
- Visitors to *Birds in Art* occasionally express interest in specific artworks . . . in those cases, we ask these potential buyers to write a note to the artist/s, which we send on (we don't share artists' addresses, etc.) and then you/the artist contact the potential buyer and “do the deal” with the Museum out of the loop . . . although we do need to know about sales (and in writing) because a sale does impact the loan agreement that the Museum has with you, the artist. We will send you a new loan agreement for the new “lender” to sign.

Because the Museum does not take a commission on sales as described above, many artists who have sold artworks as a result of *Birds in Art* have made contributions to the Museum (always greatly appreciated!) and/or become Woodson Art Museum members at varying levels (also greatly appreciated!).

Business Cards . . . Another Dilemma

As for handing out business cards, you may certainly discreetly share your business card should someone ask for it. That does not mean “leave them around” for people to pick up – again, the Woodson is an art museum, not a commercial venue – but if you are talking with visitors and they ask if they can contact you later, by all means share your business card!

This information is provided to clarify potential confusion. If questions remain or if there is a situation not referenced here, talk with Matt Foss or another staff member. We want to be helpful as well as accommodating to artists and visitors.