

BISCOT - BOTANICAL IMAGES SCOTIA

RULES AND REGULATIONS, NOTES AND GUIDANCE, FORMS, MOUNTING AND PRESENTATION

1. This is a competitive exhibition held biennially by the Royal Caledonian Horticultural Society (RCHS - The Caley) and supported by the Scottish Society of Botanical Art (SSBA). BISCOT promotes excellence in botanical painting and illustration. It is open to both national and international artists and presents an opportunity to exhibit new and original botanical artwork in Edinburgh, Scotland.

2. AWARDS

At least four (4) pieces of original botanical artwork, painting or illustration, all executed in the same medium/media must be exhibited. Certificates in Gold, Silver-gilt, Silver, and Bronze categories are presented according to merit. In addition, the unique Mary Mendum Medal may be presented for an exhibit of particular and exceptional quality.

3. The Judging Panel adheres to strict guidelines, and, if they agree that an exhibit falls below the high expected standard, no award will be made. The judges' decision is final, and both written and verbal feedback is given to exhibitors.

4. AUTOMATICALLY ELIGIBLE ARTISTS

These are artists who

- (i) have previously been accepted to exhibit with BISCOT
- (ii) have exhibited at the RHS and attained a Gold or Silver-gilt award; or
- (iii) have gained a diploma with distinction from the following organisations:-

The Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh (RBGE); the Society of Botanical Art, (SBA); the Chelsea Physic Garden; the Irish Society of Botanical Art (ISBA); other equivalent international organisations.

Eligible artists should fill in the online form at: <https://biscot.org/eligibility-form/> which will be forwarded to the Artist Co-ordinator, (Alex Hazlewood) who maintains the ELIGIBILITY LIST, You will receive confirmation once accepted

5. ARTISTS not resident the U.K. AND NEW UK EXHIBITORS – SELECTION PROCEDURE

Artists who do **not** have eligibility status must submit to a selection procedure. (See note 4. above). These artists must send **four (4)** examples of their work, executed within the last three years, for assessment by the BISCOT assessment panel. These can be unfinished or works in progress and of any botanical subject.

Assessment works are to be submitted three (3) months before the start of the exhibition using the online form. <https://biscot.org/biscot-selection-form/>

Images should be jpg / png, We recommend images with dimensions of: Longest side: 2000–3000 px | Shortest side: 1200–2000 px. This should be reflected in the file size of 2–8 MB per image

Artists who pass the assessment will be kept on the Eligible Register for a further 6 years. An artist who does not exhibit at BISCOT within this period may be asked to resubmit for assessment.

6. APPLYING FOR SPACE TO EXHIBIT

A fee of £40 to cover administration costs is charged for entry. This fee should be sent with the appropriate entry form (Page 4.). Exhibitors who live outside the U.K. may pay their administration fee on arrival at the exhibition. Space to exhibit is limited and, if the exhibition is oversubscribed, a selection of prospective entries will be undertaken by the SSBA Exhibition Committee. Those artists who fail to procure a space to show will be given priority for space at the next BISCOT exhibition and their entry fee for the current exhibition will be refunded.

N.B. an artist who has gained a space to exhibit but withdraws must give notice of this in writing to the BISCOT COMMITTEE to arrive at least 28 days before the opening date of the exhibition. This is a strict timescale and any artist who does not comply will forfeit their entry fee and may be ineligible for space at future exhibitions.

Definition of Botanical illustration;

This is a genre of art which depicts aesthetically-pleasing, two-dimensional representations of plants whose accuracy of form, colour and detail allow the subjects to be identified definitively.

Judging criteria.

Works will be judged on Draughtsmanship, Botanical accuracy and the Artist's Plan of Presentation.

Draughtsmanship and Botanical Accuracy

- (a) Are the forms, leaves, stems, flowers and characteristic details clearly and accurately depicted? Are the changes in colour intensity, tone and shadow across the forms used sensitively to give dimension to them? Are the colours well-matched and varied enough within the ranges shown?
- (b) If the work is close-toned or monochromatic, are the marks used adequate, appropriate, bold or subtle enough to recreate the desired effect?
- (c) Does each work in the artist's exhibit reveal the character of the plant sufficiently for horticultural identification purposes? Does the inclusion of enlarged details and/or dissections improve both the composition, knowledge of the plant, and theme to the viewer? Are there visual references within each composition which convey extra information regarding e.g. habitat or connecting theme?

Presentation

- (d) Do all the elements in each individual work, including artist labels, combine together to create a pleasing composition?
- (e) Does the artist's complete set of works, arranged as they are, present a coherent themed exhibit?

BISCOT Entry Requirements Artists are strongly recommended to read the following notes.

1. FOUR (4) pieces of original work based on a common theme must be exhibited.
2. A minimum of two (2) must **not** have been shown previously in a competitive exhibition.
3. All works should be executed using the same media/medium.
4. All works must be at least life-size unless this is impractical. A scale must be shown in the illustration if it is not at life-size. This also applies for details in the compositions.
5. The 4 artworks must be accompanied by additional research material, in the form of written evidence regarding the choice of the theme, (Max. 500 words). This work constitutes an integral part of the artist's submission and will be considered by the judges. It will be shown near your artworks. (Kathy - I don't think it's clear here – i.e. as to what **format** Clause 5 takes – is it a mounted piece hung beside the exhibit of four artworks: and is it in addition to Clause 6 below – **we** know what it means, but I don't think it is immediately evident to readers. It's a new concept for SSBA/BISCOT and needs to be crystal clear at this stage.)
6. Further evidence of preparatory work must also be supplied with your main works. These will illustrate and support your exhibits and include graphic details, line drawings, cross-sections and other exploratory sketches. This work may take the form of a sketch book if that is how you work. These illustrations will be used to make a digital image presentation and shown during the exhibition.
7. **N.B.** Any illustrations and/or supporting research work which has been digitally generated, enhanced, or mechanically-produced will not be accepted for exhibition.
8. **Acceptable media** include: watercolour, gouache, graphite, coloured pencil, acrylic, ink, charcoal.

Mounting and Presentation.

9. The walls of the exhibition hall are pale grey in colour. The display boards are royal blue.
10. **Sizes** - individual works when mounted must not exceed A2 size nor be smaller than A3 size. A2 = 42.0cm x 59.4cms (16.5 x 23.4inches). A3 = 29.7cm x 42cms (11.7x16.5 inches).
11. The 4 paintings/illustrations will not be framed but must be window-mounted on white, off-white, creamy-white or pale grey mounting board – whichever shade is most appropriate, and affixed to a backing sheet 3 – 5mm thick. The illustration may be covered with acetate sheet for protection. See illustrations and notes of recommended method. Page 5

12. All exhibits must be labelled on the back with the plant name, exhibitor's name, email address and an arrow denoting orientation. (See information regarding the scientific Latin names at the end of these notes).
13. BISCOT will provide and make labels to place at the beginning of each display showing the Theme Title, the artist's name and email address (unless the artist does not wish their email address to be seen by the public). BISCOT will also provide and make labels of the individual plant names for each illustration. Artists must provide the necessary information and will be contacted about this in due course.
14. A **Plan of Presentation** showing the positions of the artworks in their display must be provided by each artist. This is required because the works are to be hung at the venue by SSBA officials who will replicate the pattern and spacing shown on each artist's plan.

SELLING OF WORKS

15. Promotional literature, price list of exhibited work and further information about the artist will be made available at a curated area near the entrance within the exhibition hall. This information should be provided to the organisers by email before the start of the exhibition. **N.B.** Each artist will be allowed space to place personal detail cards adjacent to, but not part of, their exhibit. These will be placed after the artworks have been judged and awards decided. They must not detract from the works.
If an artist wishes to sell their work, a list of prices and titles must be given to the organisers who will give it to interested buyers and direct them to the artist. A commission of 20% is charged for each sale.
16. Exhibiting artists' cards and prints will be displayed and available for sale near the entrance to the exhibition. These may not be displayed elsewhere within the building and must be given to the organisers by the artist or their representative with a list when they arrive at the venue.
Commission of 20% is due on each sale. Further information will be sent to exhibitors in due course.

17. SCIENTIFIC (LATIN) PLANT NAMES –

If in doubt about this subject we recommend the RHS (2026) Plant Finder on the RHS website <https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/search-results> Throughout the world plants have many local common names so scientific Latin plant names are used world-wide for plant identification. The simplest basic name has two parts. First is the genus or family name, beginning with a capital letter, followed by the species, which distinguishes that plant from others in the same family. Both must be written in *italics*. The genus name always begins with a capital letter and the species with a lower-case letter. Examples: *Rhododendron ponticum* *Quercus robur*. Other descriptive names can be added to denote a subspecies, variety or forma within the same family. These are abbreviated to f., subsp., var., (in Roman script), followed by the added Latin description (in *italics*), e.g. *Rhododendron* var. *rubens*.

Hybrid plants are the result of the crossbreeding of two different plant species. The resultant name is written in Latin (italics) with a cross (in Roman script) between the two names, e.g. *Daphne x mezereum*. Variations within species are known as cultivars. The added cultivar name is not written in *italics* but enclosed in single quotation marks e.g. *Sorbus aucuparia* 'Joseph Rock' – notice that capital letters are used at the beginning of each word in the cultivar name but not for linking words such as 'of', 'and' and 'the'.

18. INSURANCE

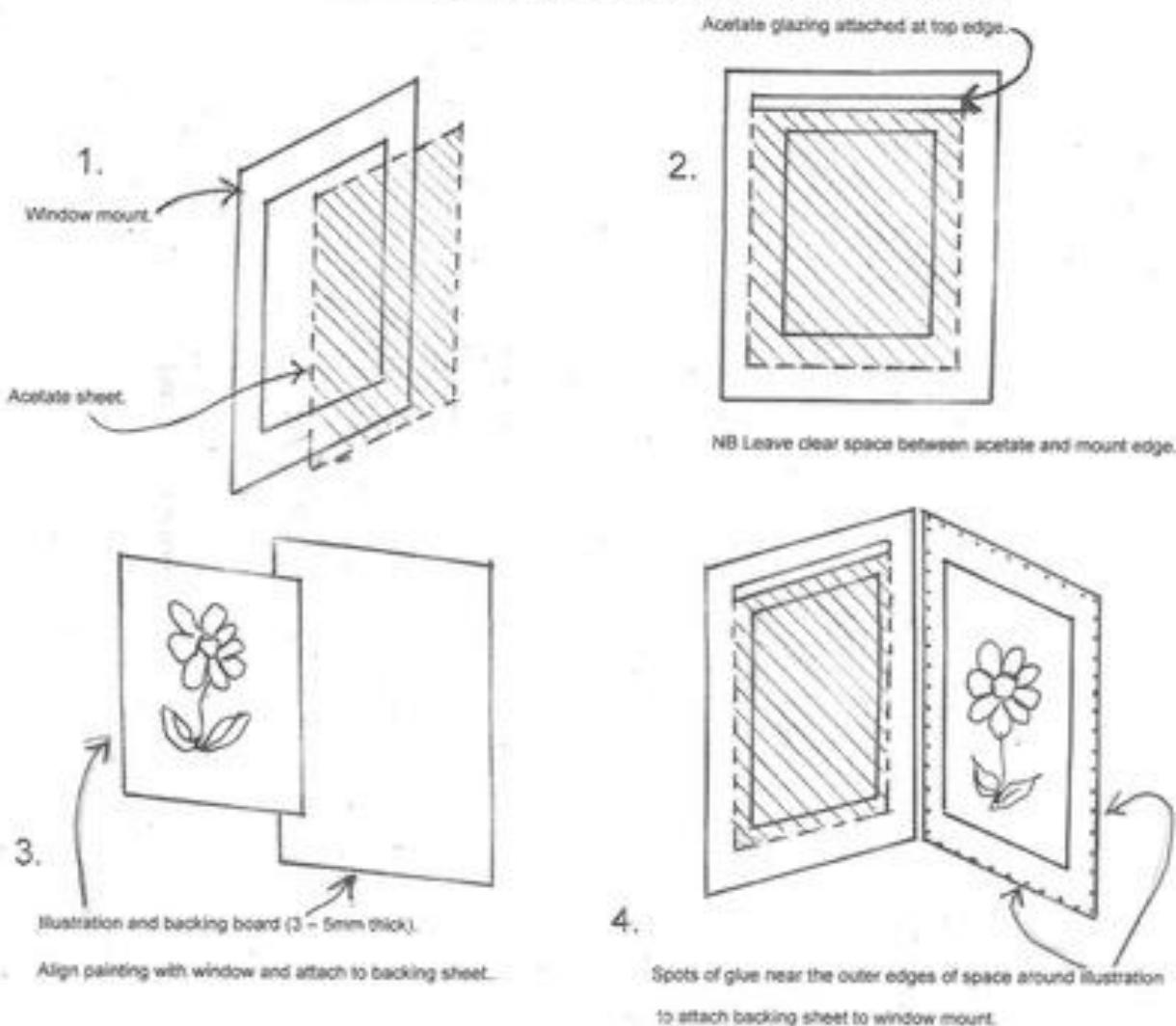
BISCOT bears no responsibility for loss or damage to any exhibits while on exhibition. Artists are advised to hold their own insurance. This should include cover for their artworks whilst in transit to and from the venue and for the whole duration of the exhibition including setting up and taking down of the show.

19. **COPYRIGHT** While the copyright of all works of art belongs to and remains with the artist, by submitting works for exhibition, **unless contacted by the artist in writing to say otherwise**, the

artist grants BISCOT permission to photograph and/or film the submitted works for press and marketing purposes only, including the right to free reproduction for any catalogue, poster, website or other non-commercial promotional material in connection with this and future BISCOT exhibitions.

20. CURATING AT BISCOT Artists exhibiting at BISCOT are asked to spend a portion of time during the viewing days helping to curate the exhibition. This assists the smooth running of the show, and allows the welcome opportunity to meet fellow artists and to talk about their own exhibit and those of others to visitors. They will be contacted nearer the opening date to arrange this.

BISCOT – Recommended method for mounting works for exhibition.



TIPS

Attach the acetate along the top edge first, then loosely tack it at the sides and bottom edges with a few small lengths of masking tape to allow it to expand and contract with any change in humidity

The weight or gauge of the acetate is important. Heavier acetate is less liable to 'cockling' wrinkling. A thickness of 0.25 gauge is much better than lighter gauges.

Use dots of glue when attaching the backing sheet to the window mount. This allows for easier dismantling and separation of the mount if it is to be re-used.

Acetate sheets may be obtained from art and craft shops and also on line

ALTERNATIVELY you may wish to enclose the whole of your mounted work in a transparent covering and not use the above method. If you decide to use this alternative protection method, the covering should be a really snug fit e.g. as if vacuum-packed to avoid excessive reflections. This is difficult to achieve and is best done professionally. Some picture framers offer this service.

