

## **Artcraft 2010**

prepared by Helen Mears, Judy Goodman, Jan Smith

### **Mandate**

The mandate of the Artcraft Committee is to operate, at Mahon Hall, a juried summer show and sale of art and fine craft by Southern Gulf Islands' artists.

### **Major Goal**

Artcraft's purpose is to operate a successful summer show that benefits artists and the community and provides a cultural destination for locals and visitors.

### **Background**

*"If you always do things the same way, you always get the same results."*

We are doing things differently and getting new results!

2010 was a year of change. The Artcraft Committee and the Board set out to change the way Artcraft had been conducting business. In the spring of 2010, the Artcraft committee made a commitment to be a better retailer.

This transitional year marks the beginning of a new look for Artcraft and a new approach by expanding the jurying process. This change ensures to improve the quality of work exhibited by participants.

Over the past 10 years Artcraft has experienced a decline in revenues. There are many factors at play. No one can control economic ups and downs but we can improve Artcraft and our performance as a retailer. The renewal of Artcraft is a three years project

### **2010 Goals / Objectives**

- Upgrade the quality of the work through re-jurying. This means introducing re-jurying on an ongoing basis for categories of work and selected participants as well as new participants
- Move Artcraft away from the crowded busy market table look. Artcraft is not the Saturday market. We need to create a sophisticated retail environment that enhances the customers shopping experience and visit to Salt Spring.
- Emphasize gallery component that offers one-of-a-kind artwork.
- Create ambience with displays, visually appealing merchandising, flow, music and attentive customer service.
- Inspire customer confidence to purchase multiple items as well as higher price points.
- Strengthened the ArtCraft brand by continuous exposure in advertising, marketing and promotion throughout the season.
- Target new artists

- Improve marketing and sales

## **Risks**

- It may be the economy and not the business-as-usual approach that is causing the decline in revenues. However, not implementing changes at this time could have a negative impact on sales.
- “Time to get it right” Any change needs time to develop and to be accepted by participants and marketed to the public. One season is not enough time to get it right.

## **Actions**

- The Artcraft committee and manager implemented the board directive to re-jury the entire show and for the Artcraft manager to set up the display. This was implemented with 2 days of jurying in selected areas; the jurying will continue in an annual rotation by category. The participants no longer set their own work up and this year the display and work was set up by the manager and volunteers under her direction.
- Redesigned the space
- Brought in new borrowed fixtures (ladders, tables, etc.) for display to enable us to change the look of the show.
- Purchased of new display material as budget permitted
- Jewellery displays refreshed and harmonized.
- Updated the small gallery with a new floor, uncovered the windows, painted the walls
- Changed/ refreshed the display on an ongoing basis
- Designed and printed new rack cards
- Continued partnerships with local business in obtaining showcase sponsorship to reduce advertising costs.
- New Artcraft banners and hanging floral baskets to increase visibility
- Continued use of old flags to assist with creating a street presence.
- Repainted sign to increase street visibility
- Face Book page created.
- Refinished the stage floor
- Painted the walls in the main hall

- Refinished and/or painted plinths
- Improvement of outdoor entrance making it more attractive and welcoming with comfortable chairs and decorative floral baskets.
- The manager, Helen Mears, actively recruited new participants.
- Helen contacted customers by phone and email to invite them in to see new work; this personal approach proved quite successful both with sales results and positive comments.
- Obtained second student grant to enable us to do more tourism related marketing.
- Effective and courteous resolution of participants' issues concerning the changes and fears about possible financial impact.

### **Creative and Operational Successes**

- The physical changes to Artcraft are a great success and we have received continuous positive feedback from customers: "The best exhibit of Art and Craft they have ever seen" "Beautiful exhibit" "Looks great in here" "Great stuff".
- Artcraft Committee and Artcraft staff are working well as a team.
- Day to day operations has run smoothly.
- Participants with concerns or complaints have been handled professionally and courteously.
- Display: positive comments from the public on how great the show looks
- Showcases: have a good financial return and generated excitement and energy
- Increased turnout at openings
- The committee has confidence in the manager and sees she has the knowledge, experience and commitment to continue to improve and upgrade Artcraft.
- We are working as an effective and efficient team; and are excited and energized about the future of Artcraft
- Higher priced items had strong sales this year: Joanie Patterson paintings: value \$650-and \$1200, Paul Burke carvings: value \$300-\$750, multiple MD Hennessy sculptures: value \$300-\$450, Michael Surman furniture: value \$400-650, as examples.

## **Financial Success Measurements**

- We have achieved our financial goals in 2010 and there is a small profit
- Artcraft provides revenues to island artists and businesses while not showing a loss. Our sales of ArtCraft were \$152,163.00, the portion paid to artists being \$99,000.00. In addition from monies generated from the two shows we also paid out \$42,000.00 in wages. This is money that remains in our community. Our door donations are a total of \$2,000.00. We also received \$2,700.00 in business and in kind sponsorships which helped underwrite the advertising and openings costs for the showcase exhibitions.

## **Plans for 2011**

- We look forward to another successful year as we further implement change.
- Focus on moving forward with the vision to create a sophisticated retail environment that creates a great first impression and response with customers-local and visitors and enhances the customers shopping experience.
- To continue to emphasize a gallery component offering one-of-a-kind artwork
- Make sure that the work is increasingly interesting and evocative.
- Continue to target some new artists.
- Continuing to build on the trend of eco friendly/green art and craft, one of the five showcases scheduled for 2011 will be a 100 mile furniture show. In addition we will inform customers about the materials used: if recycled or local.
- We are targeting where we advertise and look of the advertising. We are continuing to study the effectiveness of our advertising and be selective with advertising expenditures.
- Continue to develop increased volunteer base and effective use of volunteer skills

There is more work to be done and there are more improvements to be made.

We look forward to another successful year as we further implement change.

Alvaro Sanchez - Artcraft Committee Chair