



## Gresham Area League for the Arts (GALA)

### Mission

GALA is dedicated to fostering a vibrant collaborative art community by promoting accessible exhibits, events, educational opportunities, and culturally rich artistic diversity.

### Understanding Your Audience in a Multi-Use Gallery Space

Given the City of Gresham Council Chamber gallery's unique location within a family-friendly public workplace that includes schools and public safety offices, your artist audience needs to be highly attuned to the specific sensitivities and diverse demographics present. This is not a traditional gallery setting where the audience is exclusively art-focused; rather, it's a shared space where art intersects with daily life, work, and education.

**Here is a breakdown of the key audience considerations for artists exhibiting in the Council Chamber venue:**

#### General Public & Workplace Professionals

- **Diverse Backgrounds:** This audience will include employees from public safety offices, school staff, parents, and a wide array of individuals visiting the building for various reasons. They likely have varying levels of art exposure and appreciation.
- **Contextual Awareness:** Art is encountered within their daily routines. It is not the primary reason they are in the building. This means artwork should be accessible and ideally provide a moment of pleasant visual engagement rather than requiring deep, sustained contemplation.
- **Professional Environment:** While family-friendly, it is still a workplace. Artwork should not disrupt the professional atmosphere or be a source of distraction or discomfort for those working there.

#### Families and Children

- **Age Appropriateness:** With Gresham-Barlow school district on-site, a portion of the audience may be children and teenagers. Artwork must be suitable for all ages. This is paramount.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Art that sparks curiosity, encourages dialogue, or subtly teaches can be particularly impactful in this setting. Think about themes that resonate with younger audiences or offer a positive message.



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- **Safety and Durability:** Consider if any pieces could be easily damaged or if there are small, detachable parts that could pose a choking hazard for very young children.

### Public Safety & School Community

- **Respectful Themes:** Given the presence of public safety offices, avoid themes that could be interpreted as controversial, overly dark, or disrespectful to law enforcement or public service.
- **Positive and Uplifting Messages:** Art that promotes community, safety, education, or positive social values will likely be well-received and align with the ethos of these institutions.
- **Non-Disruptive Installation:** The artwork should not impede foot traffic, create safety hazards, or interfere with the operations of the offices or school.

### Key Sensitivities for Artists to Consider:

- **Content:** Absolutely no nudity, gratuitous violence, overtly political or divisive themes, or anything that could be interpreted as offensive based on race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Subtlety and universal appeal are key.
- **Subject Matter:** Favor themes that are broadly positive, uplifting, contemplative, or that celebrate nature, community, human connection, or abstract beauty. Local themes or imagery related to the community could also be very well-received.
- **Messaging:** Is the message clear and generally positive? Does it enhance the environment without creating unease or confusion?
- **Scale and Placement:** Consider how the art will fit within the existing architecture and the flow of people. Large, overwhelming pieces might feel out of place, whereas thoughtfully scaled works can enhance the space.
- **Durability and Maintenance:** In a high-traffic public area, artwork should be robust and require minimal maintenance.
- **Artist Statements:** Encourage artists to keep their statements concise and accessible, focusing on the positive aspects of their work and its connection to the community or universal themes.

By understanding and respecting these audience considerations, artists can create and exhibit work that not only enriches the Council Chamber space but also resonates positively with the diverse population that utilizes the unique venue daily.