

September, 2020

Dear WAF artists,

First the sad news: because of continuing limits on indoor gatherings due to the pandemic, we are not able to hold the Women's Art Festival in person this year. I kept thinking about having to limit the number of people coming in the doors and having to line people up outside to wait their turn – in December in Minnesota? I think not!

Now to the happy news: I have found a great way to continue the Women's Art Festival in 2020. I am excited to partner with Booth Central to offer a virtual event! BoothCentral's virtual event platform will allow us to create an online marketplace where customers can both shop and join you face-to-face in your virtual booth through video chat. Your online "booth" allows you to share images of your products, an intro video, contact information, live chat, and links to your website or online shop to complete sales.

We are setting this up as a one-day event with live interaction, just like our in-person festivals in the past. As usual, this will be the second Saturday in December, **December 12, 2020**, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. In addition, we will likely offer some preview time for guests to view the booths and click on sales links, but without the live chat capability. This will also remain available for some days after the live event day. I will create the same gallery and directory pages as I usually do on the [regular festival website](#) which will stay up all year as another way for customers to find and connect with you.

**In order to participate in this virtual festival, you will need the following:**

1. An established online sales site (your own website with sales capability, an Etsy page, or other platform that can accept secure, electronic payments) and capacity to ship items after sale.
2. Four or five professional photos of items that represent your work and that will entice guests to look further into your booth (see the registration site for size requirements).
3. A device with a camera and high-speed wi-fi connectivity in order to participate in live chat on the day of the event.
4. (Highly recommended) A short video that will further pique interest in your work. This can be you giving a tour of your booth or your studio; talking about your work, your creative process or your experience; or a slideshow of samples of your work with nice music. I would be glad to discuss specific ideas.

**What to Expect From the BoothCentral site:**

When guests enter the site, they will see a live stream of musicians, artist interviews or demonstrations, and a welcoming, festive, experience. Below that, on the home page, each artist will have their own booth "tile" which will have photos of your work, an optional video, a link to your online sales site, and a button for guests to click and be connected with you on a zoom chat. You can design your virtual booth any way you like. When people click to chat with you, you can show them your work, take an order and have them pay through paypal or venmo or other secure means, or you can direct them to your sales site to place orders. Everyone participating must have some way to accept secure, electronic payments. (You will be able to make some sales directly through the chat feature, but most will be on your regular sales site.) Booth Central has compiled a Frequently Asked Questions document ([click here for FAQ](#)) to answer any other questions you have.

**How does it work?**

The technology is simple. During the registration process, you will upload photos and a short video, and enter a short, written description of your work and a website link to your store. This will all automatically

populate your “booth.” That’s it! On the day of the event, you will open your account and be ready as guests click in to your zoom chat. Booth Central offers lots of tech help, including video tutorials to help you set up your account and your photos, online support to help you get ready, and live tech help on the day of the event in case you or any guests have questions. I will most likely also hold a “practice” time a few days before the actual event, where we can go live and trouble-shoot any issues so that you’re ready to go on the day of the festival.

Have I caught your attention yet? I realize that this is a new way to hold a festival, so I’ve put together some information to get you more comfortable. You can learn more about virtual art festivals by watching this [short demo](#).

### **How Do I Apply?**

The process to apply is simple. [Click here](#) to view event details and apply. (Watch [this tutorial](#) if you have questions.)! In addition, read the document titled Registration Step-by-Step found here on the festival website. **REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS November 1<sup>st</sup> or earlier if full. Please have your “booth” set-up complete by December 1<sup>st</sup>.**

If you have any questions, you can contact me at [NLSiegel@aol.com](mailto:NLSiegel@aol.com) or at (612) 250-5097. BoothCentral also provides great technical support, and helpful resources to ensure that you are well-prepared for the event. Please read all of the available info so that you are ready and able to participate actively.

Finally, a few words of wisdom:

- Because it is close to the holidays and people likely will be buying gifts, you will need to ship items out as soon as possible, or offer curbside pick-up or delivery for local buyers. Keep this in mind as you set up your price structures.
- As usual, spaces will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis within categories. Please choose the category that best fits the bulk of your work.
- Your registration will be accepted once payment is received. BoothCentral offers credit card payment, but I have to pay the fees, so would prefer that you pay by cash or check. I do accept Venmo for safe and instant cash transfer, or you can mail or drop off your payment to me, though this will slow down your registration acceptance. Instructions for each of these methods is obvious within the registration process.
- I will market the festival and, as always, will appreciate your help in spreading the word. It is always true that those who spread the word have people coming to look for them and have higher sales. I will create content for e-blasts to your mailing lists, FaceBook, Twitter, and Instagram, which you are encouraged to use in your own feeds. For accuracy, consistency, and quality purposes, I ask that you use the Facebook event I create rather than making your own. Thank you.

Remember: The (virtual) Women’s Art Festival will be on **Saturday, December 12 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.** The registration deadline is November 1<sup>st</sup> or sooner if your category is full. Even if we can’t be together in person, let’s get creative and make this a successful, fun festival this year!

Creatively yours,

Naomi