

## NUMISMATIC EXHIBITING

Anyone can prepare a winning exhibit; the key word is prepare. A winning exhibit takes work and some talent—but it does not have to have exceptional numismatic material.

### **Purposes of exhibiting—**

- to educate (the exhibitor and others)
- to interest other collectors in the material or period
- to interest the public in collecting
- to brag about what you own
- to win awards.

To do these, an exhibit must—

- attract and hold attention
- present information
- be understandable.

**Competitive exhibits** face another hurdle—they must do these things for knowledgeable numismatists (the judges).

If you exhibit for pleasure, there are few rules.

If you want to exhibit in the “big leagues,” you have to play by the rules.

Competition requires a tradeoff—ease of viewing vs. depth of presentation.

### **Preliminary steps**

Get the exhibit rules for the show at which you want to exhibit.

Choose a category within which to exhibit.

Apply for exhibit space.

### **Building the exhibit**

Select a theme—choose the story that you want to tell.

Bring relevant material to your story; it is not necessary to show everything that you own.

Fit the theme of the exhibit to the exhibition categories (if necessary).

Perform research

Read primary and secondary numismatic references (take notes).

Read background sources (history, biography, criticism).

Talk to others (collectors, scholars, users).

Cull essentials from the mass of information.

Write your text and captions

Write carefully and edit skillfully—let it gestate.

Tie the numismatic specimens to the text (make it easy for the reader to follow the exhibit).

Write stimulating captions—draw the reader back into the story.

Stick to the chosen theme, in text and specimens.

Lay out the exhibit and check for physical space/balance

Reduce text and/or specimens if necessary.

Allow space for titles and for non-numismatic collateral material.

Keep the exhibition rules in mind—number of cases, external props, lights, and so forth allowed.

## NUMISMATIC EXHIBITING

Prepare the final text, captions, backgrounds, titles

Proof read.

Use artistic skills and readily available aids (art papers, laser printers, die-cut lettering, ribbons).

Prefabricate as much as possible, to minimize setup time at the convention.

Lay out the exhibit in final, complete form

Make a map.

Critique, proof read again; get another person to examine the exhibit.

Make necessary changes.

Package specimens and props for ease of transport.

Triple check for completeness—it's frustrating to arrive at the convention without a key item.

### **At the exhibition—**

Check in with the exhibit chairman; get labels for all cases.

Check available display space (if choices are available) for best lighting and viewer accessibility.

Emplace the exhibit.

Double check everything for proper placement (it's easy to show the wrong side of a small item).

Stay with your exhibit until the cases are closed and sealed.

Examine the other exhibits.

Attend the exhibiting seminar (if one is offered).

Attend the judges' training seminar (if one is offered).

Collect your ribbon or trophy.

### **After the exhibition—**

Write an article using your exhibit's text (ask for assistance in preparing illustrations if necessary).

Improve the exhibit and move up to higher levels.

At the ANA level—you will find narrower categories, variable competition.

### **Rules of thumb—**

Be neat and keep things simple.

Use correct grammar and spelling.

Don't brag, but do inform the reader.

Be as brief as your theme will allow.

Ask for and accept criticism.

Relax and enjoy yourself.

Contact me if you have any questions:

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