

**SENSIBLE ADVICE ON WHAT TO ASK
OF A NEW GALLERY**
by Kevin J. Casey, Gallery Owner

When an artist is accepted to a new gallery venue, there are many, very important points that need to be revealed by both sides to insure that the coming relationship is founded in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. After reaching an agreement for initial representation, there should be a frank and honest discussion between both parties to establish ground rules upon which a successful business relationship will be based. Among the topics that should be discussed at that time are artists' expectations concerning inventory, insurance, retail pricing, promotion and advertising, gallery/artist split percentages, possible artists' costs for planned exhibitions and other points relevant to that particular venue. Artists should be very forthcoming about their personal expectations in the new venue and should pursue an evenhanded exchange of questions and answers from both parties.

- What are the galleries' expectations concerning the artists' inventory at that particular location?
- What type of artwork does the gallery believe would be most successful at their location?
- Are there a minimum or maximum number of pieces expected?
- Are these pieces acceptable unframed?
- What style of framing, if required, is suitable for this gallery?
- Who pays for this framing and when?
- Will the gallery be asking for a dramatic change in style, subject or size from what the artist is accustomed to?
- What are the parameters for establishing an acceptable retail pricing strategy for that gallery reflecting its location and status?
- Are artworks bought outright or are they consigned by the artist to the gallery for sale?
- What will be the gallery/artist split after a sale is completed and what is the time frame acceptable for the artist to receive payment?
- Does the gallery discount the listed retail price for any reason?

Other important points to consider are: Is there a legal contract involved? What terms are described in the contract to benefit the artist or gallery? Are any contractual demands negotiable? Is there an expiration date? Is the contract overwhelmingly gallery friendly? There should also be a system in place where the artist is given gallery receipts for every artwork that is consigned listing the individual pieces with identification (titles) and listed retail or artists' net price for each artwork.

Further considerations: Are there any charges to the artists for gallery exhibitions or advertising, local or national? When and how are these charges implemented? What are the gallery plans for your promotion? What are gallery policies on local and national advertising? Are you expected to furnish photographs, slides or transparencies of your artwork? Who is responsible for artists' biographies and updates? Most importantly, ask the gallery what you are expected to do for them to advance your career and implement your success at their location.

Remember, your new association with the gallery will be much like a marriage with continuing plans and discussions for the future being considered along with everyday problems and concerns.