

The Institute™ Or, What We Do for Love Installation Guidelines

These guidelines are provided to assist curators and installation personnel to identify overall exhibition requirements when installing *The Institute™* in a given space. They may be useful as well in feasibility discussions to determine if a particular venue is suitable for this project.

General Guidelines

The Institute™: Or, What We Do for Love is an interdisciplinary project consisting of four main components: An installation, a web-site, related wall works and ‘Dreadful Songs’. These introduce the viewer to the National Institute for the Arts, a chain of artists’ residences situated in former hospital buildings across the country. A government re-training programming has prepared unemployed cultural bureaucrats for new careers as *Institute™* staff members, where they now minister to the needs of the artist residents. The result is a classic ship-of-fools situation, a personal and professional cauldron in which the imperatives of two disenfranchised constituencies, the cultural sector and the health-care system, meet and raise questions.

Based on experience to date, *The Institute™* project lends itself successfully to three general configurations: a small-scale, mid-scale, and full-scale version. The version a curator or gallery director selects will depend on available space, technical and personnel resources.

Each installation is adapted to its site, taking on something of that space’s “personality”. Depending on the scale chosen for the work, this can mean locating and integrating various items of furniture, décor, and other elements that originate from the host institution’s own milieu.

In designing a typical installation, visitor experience is the most important consideration. Availability of gallery staff for visitor assistance, desk and sale copies of the catalogue and other helpful printed information, careful balance of lighting and sound levels, and proper credits for any photographs used, all contribute to that experience. While *The Institute™* installation and the on-site gallery crews work as a team to install the exhibition, the installation crew usually handles the computer stations, projectors, networking, and sound, while gallery staff organizes the hanging of wall works, and the acquisition and positioning of furniture, signage and props and the printing of support materials.

Good documentation is required, both with and without visitors, on completion of the installation.

Space Requirements

Exhibitions of *The Institute™* require dry indoor spaces with basic electric and networking facilities. The size of the space is variable, as a typical installation can adapt

to any context from a small room to a large multi-floor gallery, depending on the configuration undertaken by the artist and curator/programmer. Installation design can be successfully realized via on-line image exchanges.

It is highly recommended that a floor plan of the gallery with clearly noted space designated for an installation of *The Institute*[™] be provided to the artist and her team at least three months ahead of the opening for planning purposes.

Typical Installation Materials

A standard gallery installation toolbox with basic power tools and hanging material is needed for any installation of *The Institute*[™]. In addition to this, the following items are recommended:

- Tin snips and/or sheet metal nibbler
- Multi-meter
- Power tester
- Computer and network cable testers
- Network cable crimp sets in case network cables need to be modified or built to suit.

Video

Installations of *The Institute*[™] require video/data projection onto large projection screens from selected computers in the gallery. These enable visitors to observe and interact with others as they browse through *The Institute*[™] website. It is the gallery's responsibility to provide the projectors, cables and screens used in the exhibition. *The Institute*[™] installation crew can position and secure projectors and screen and do all necessary cabling to the computers.

Generally speaking, the specification for projector brightness should be no less than 1500 lumens, and preferably greater if projection is to be very large or originating from more than 20 feet away from the screen.

Network/Internet Access

Although a typical exhibition of *The Institute*[™] runs mostly off-line with most website files stored on the exhibition computers, three key sections of the website require Internet access: 1) The Creativity Questionnaire which allows visitors to assess their eligibility for *The Institute*[™], 2) the Greeting Card section, in which visitors can select and send Institute online greeting cards to friends and loved ones, and 3) the AI section, in which visitors are able to enter chat rooms *The Institute*[™] residents. In addition, on-site Internet connections are required so that *The Institute*[™] installation crewmembers can update the show computers with new content as it is developed.

A hi-speed Internet connection is recommended, preferably T1 or T3. Cable or DSL connections may also be used, although their connection speed is slower than the recommended level. As well, a network hub with up to six connections is required, depending on the number of stations taken with the show.

Computer Equipment

The Institute[™] tour project can provide computers for up to five stations in the exhibition. These are available for a modest rental fee of CDN\$100 per station for up to two months. Each station consists of the following items:

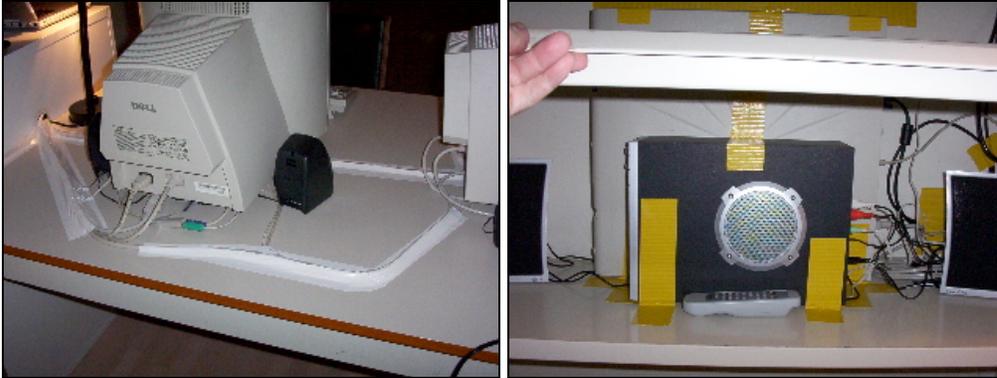
- Desktop PC, Pentium2, 800Mhz, preloaded with Institute files and supporting applications, virus protection and firewall software
- CRT monitor
- Keyboard
- Mouse
- PC speakers
- All cables, including power and network

Any computer requirements above and beyond these items, as well as shipping and insurance, are the responsibility of the gallery.

Rigging

Rigging refers to the process of connecting cables to their appropriate hardware, arranged and masked in such a way as to be unobtrusive, maintaining sightlines of elements in the installation. See pictures for typical examples of rigging.





The Institute[™] installation crew typically handles rigging responsibilities, with the assistance of gallery staff. A list of recommended materials is below:

- Gaff tape in white, black, and clear – or any other colours that will help hide cables.
- Nylon cable ties – 6in and 12in.
- Cable wrap or split wire loom (also called split corrugated tubing) to help consolidate wiring and make things neater.

Shipping

Institute artworks and equipment are to be shipped by the gallery's own shipper. If the gallery does not work with a standard art shipper, we recommend Pacart (416-754-0000) or Bren Art Packers (416-461-7537). Insurance coverage should be arranged with the shipper to cover theft and damage to the contents while en route.

Certain items are shipped in crates owned by *The Institute*[™] tour project. These items should be returned in the same crates in which they were shipped. If additional crates are needed, this will be discussed with the gallery before a contract is signed.

All shipped items must be accompanied by a packing list itemizing all materials, noting in which box/crate they are located, each accompanied by a [condition report](#). This can be checked against the inventory list provided by the tour project at the time of shipping from Toronto.

Insurance

It is the host venue's responsibility to provide all exhibition insurance during the run of the show, to a value of at least \$1 million in general liability. Most galleries have this as part of their overall operations to cover any exhibition in their space, and while typically also suitable for an installation of *The Institute*[™], this should be confirmed in advance.

As noted in the shipping section, the gallery must also provide shipping insurance to cover theft of or damage to contents while en route.

To assist in the valuation of all materials and equipment provided as part of the exhibition, a Materials and Declared Values list will be provided to the host gallery either on-line or by mail before the show opening.

Blank copies of the Condition Report form can be downloaded [here](#).

Electrical

Floor plans provided to *The Institute*TM team during planning stages should indicate the location of all power outlets, location of power breakers and voltage if outside North America. This will assist in determining electrical equipment needs and the placement of certain items such as individual workstations, lights, lengths of power cable required, and so on.

Lighting

Lighting is a key component in setting up an *Institute*TM exhibition, and is often fine tuned right up to show opening, striving to achieve a balance between the light requirements of various aspects of the project.

We prefer to begin with a darkened gallery with a configurable lighting and dimmer system. Tungsten lighting is preferred over halogen or fluorescent lighting, and floods rather than spots. As well, during configuration, a raked lighting effect is preferred rather than direct light on wall works and computer station.

If your gallery finds it difficult to carry out these preferred lighting specifications exactly, we can try to accommodate the on-site lighting capabilities as well as possible. This should be discussed with the artist and her team early in the planning stages.

Audio

There are up to three different audio sources in a mid to large scale installation configuration:

- The sound from the individual computer stations during website viewing,
- The three “Dreadful Songs” (CD), which play in a loop. This CD is provided as part of the show, and is to play continuously as a form of ambient sound, when the gallery is open to the public.
- The sound from one additional computer station or projection that contains *Artists in Residence*, Frenkel’s CBC radio work introducing and providing context to *The Institute*TM

The Institute provides all audio equipment for the computer stations, and the gallery is asked to provide a small portable stereo system on which to play the ‘Dreadful Songs’ CD.

As with lighting, sound balance is usually fine-tuned right up to show opening, striving to achieve an ambient mix of music, voices, and other sound sources.

Final Note

As the project travels and we learn more about the ways in which it has worked in different contexts, we will incorporate your comments and suggestions.