

Case Study

Montserrat College PR Highlights



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Montserrat College of Art PR Highlights

Since April 2010, we have provided PR to Montserrat College of Art (MCA) on a regular basis that has resulted in several major milestones.

The Challenge

MCA's media environment covers three general colleges that had much more to talk about than exhibits by art students and an occasional faculty show. The College clearly needed to step up its efforts in the public relations arena or risk being perceived as a bit player in the world of art.

The Solution

Starting with the 2010 Annual Art Auction, we provided information, materials, and access to all local (North Shore) media outlets, consisting of daily and weekly newspapers. Only two weeks into the initiative, when the Auction was held, we had generated so much coverage that at least 150 people walked in who only knew about the event through publicity.

The next major PR milestone was the annual Encaustic Painting Symposium, hosted by the College since 2007. As the event was being launched, a famous painting by famed artist Jasper Johns, done in the encaustic medium, sold for \$26.5 million – a record for an American work of art – all of which proved very attractive to the media.

Dr. Immerman consented to an interview by the Boston Business Journal that resulted in a full page, full color article that had direct impact on alumni and general giving to the College.

Class of 2011 graduate Corinne Reid was recognized by the national Society of Illustrators with a \$5,000 scholarship, for which she bested more than 10,000 entrants from all over the country. Publicity pickup thanks to our efforts -- even in New York media -- was impressive and went all the way to NY media.

2011's PR efforts were capped by an unusual symposium called "For the Record," a multi-day event displaying how artists expressed their feelings about war and conflict. One of the most moving -- and popular -- pieces in the exhibition was "September" by world-famous painter Gerhard Richter. Almost a month before the event, the Boston Globe's art reviewer did a FULL PAGE on the painting, and of course covered the upcoming symposium in the art section.

The Results

Thanks to PR, Montserrat College of Art was the hub of the encaustic painting universe, hosting the 4th Annual International Conference on the campus grounds in 2010. The publicity generated by us reinforced Montserrat College of Art's "brand" as the center for this technique. Additionally, we generated coverage of the event in all major New England newspapers and nationally, as a syndicated segment on PBS stations around the country.

In 2011, MCA was delighted with the Globe coverage, which was ongoing until September 10, when there on the FRONT PAGE, was Richter's "September" and the photo caption mentioned Montserrat College of Art in big, bold type. The article carried over to page 15, for a FULL PAGE discussion of the event, which ran from September 12 to September 19.

Through the services of McDougall Interactive's PR professionals, Montserrat College of Art received publicity from media where heretofore it had never been covered:

- WGBH-TV (in Boston and syndicated nationally)
- Cover and features in ArtScope, Art New England, and Art News
- Boston Business Journal
- The Associated Press
- Boston Globe (frequently for exhibitions) major FRONT PAGE coverage of "For The Record."

Now for the first time in its 40-year history, Montserrat College of Art has a waiting list of applicants. And the media are now calling MCA directly to ask, "What's new?"