



2024 Courtroom Artist Contest Artist Information

The event will take place May 2-4 in Wilmington, Delaware. If you have any questions or comments, email the courtroom artist committee at courtroomartist@nationalmocktrial.org.

- Artist Preparation:**
 - Review complete rules in the [NHSMTC Rulebook](#).
 - Watch prior to orientation at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L7B3Dnt0xg8&t=9s>.
 - Communicate with your state team lead regarding communication plans for the event – you will need to know your team/state code.
 - Review the scoring criteria.
 - Artists must provide their own art supplies.
- Courtroom Artist Orientation - May 2 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm:**
 - All artists must attend.
 - Chase Center.
- Practice Drawings – May 3 - Round 1 at 9:00 am & Round 2 at 1:45 pm:**
 - Sketch practice drawings at your state’s trials.
 - Round pairings will be posted prior to trials.
- Official Drawing - Round 3 on May 4 at 8:30 am:**
 - This is the official round to sketch your official drawing during your state’s trial.
 - The round pairing will be posted prior to the trial.
 - During introductions, introduce yourself as the courtroom artist with your name and team/state code only. Do not identify your state or school.
 - Once you are in the courtroom, you may not have any communication with anyone.
 - You must create your drawing completely independently without the help of any source or person.
 - The sketch must depict an actual courtroom scene observed by the courtroom artist. Artists are reminded not to focus too much on the background.
 - The drawing must be on paper with dimensions 11” X 14”, with a horizontal or landscape format.
 - At the end of Round 3, turn in your sketch to the presider.
 - Only drawings submitted at the end of Round 3 to the presider will be entered in the contest.
 - The art submission must have the label provided with the team code and student name only. No name/signature is allowed on the front of the submission.

Tips & Ideas

- Let the viewer know right away that this is a courtroom. Include one or two items (seal, flag, microphone, etc.) that convey that this is a scene from a courtroom, but **do not focus** on sketching one of the items instead of the witness on the stand.
- Artists should focus on sketching the people (facial and body expressions) involved in the trial. The artists can sketch the participants standing or sitting.
- Remember to tell as full a story as possible. The drawing should represent what you see but also, through the drawing, tell a story.
- Find the most newsworthy action that occurred in the courtroom. Perhaps there is an “ah-ha” moment, an intriguing witness, a shocking development with which to capture the emotion of the trial. The artist must remember that this is true reporting and must be the “eyes of the court.”
- For pictures of sample courtrooms, go to <https://wilmington2024.nhsmtc.org/courtroom-pictures/>.

Each courtroom art entry will be judged based on the following criteria:

Telling the Courtroom Story:

Does the illustration give the viewer an immediate feeling of an event taking place? Does the artwork evoke an emotion or show action? Does the sketch provide enough information to hold the eye for a period of time?

Composition:

Is there a definite indication of the Courtroom interior to describe the place? Are the figures in the illustration large enough to focus on yet small enough to be placed within the structure of the courtroom? Are the elements of witness, judge, attorneys, etc., placed in an arrangement proportionate to the page and creating balance on that page?

Color/Contrast:

Is the illustration harmonious in the distribution of line, color, and tone? Are there good balances of dark and light that play off each other to give the artwork richness? Is the medium of choice, such as colored pencil, marker, etc., used to the best advantage in documenting the illustration?

Authenticity:

Does the artwork convey a professional feeling without seeming cartoonish? Does the illustration, no matter the style—sketchy, ultra-realistic, highly rendered, or loosely drawn—convey the idea of adhering to a respectful, convincing depiction of a courtroom event?

Holistic Evaluation:

Provide the artwork with a holistic score, taking into account the evaluator’s thoughts on the above criteria, plus professional expertise in illustration, art, and storytelling.