Artwork: technical requirements

SIZE: (digitally) 24 x 24 cm.
DPI: 300dpi.
format: JPG or PDF.
             Photoshop or Illustrator files also are accepted.
color: don't convert. RGB to CMYK conversion will be done
             by the printer.
Bleed: if at all possible: 5 mm.

You don't know about DPI's yet?

DPI means: Dots Per Inch. For ease of use you can also think of it as
PPI: Pixels Per Inch (we'll translate 1 pixel into 1 inkdot).

All colors in print are made up by (very) small ink dots on paper. The more
inkdots you use, the finer / better the print is. Dots on paper far exceed the
pixels on your computer screen. As a rule of thumb: most monitors started out
with 72 pixels per inch, while most book prints ask for 300 dots per inch.
Very fine high quality print wants 450 dpi (some even more).
Most printers at home will do brilliantly with only 150 dpi.

You simply 'tell' most scanners (through software) what resolution you want to
scan with. For this Droomwevers project we will use 300 dpi.

You don't know how to check your dpi?

Well: if your work is vector-based you do'nt need to worry on dpi if you
supply us with an pdf-file, or the vector-based file (illustrator file) itself.

If your work is pixel-based (as in: photoshop, scan, photograph) you do want
to be able to check the resolution yourself. It's easiest if you save the
artwork as a jpg. You can then find the width (and height) in pixels and
do some easy calculations: Divide the number of pixels found by 300 and
you will have the dimensions of your artwork in inches when printed
@300dpi. 1 inch = 2.54 cm.

Or measure the artwork in inches (24cm = 9.45 inch) and multiply by the
desired ppi and see what you should have:
9.45 inch @ 300ppi = 2835 pixels.

It works the other way around too: artwork measuring 24cmx24cm but
scanned in @ 150dpi will only measure 12x12cm when printed @ 300dpi.

It's easy enough if you own a calculator!
(As always: I have not included the necessary bleed in this.)

Or you could simply open your work in Photoshop and look it up (which
sadly is not possible when you save your work as pdf. Although you can
look it up in some screen hidden in the advanced menu in Acrobat).

About bleed

When you want a picture to show as big as possible on the available paper you
tend to use all of the paper available. Which means you run into the problem of
'bleed'. For no professional book printer can print right to the edge of the
paper: the printing presses are not capable to do so.
Printers the world over solved this problem the easy way: they simply print
on paper slightly larger than the intended (book) size. When the printing is
done, they simply gather up all the printed paper and cut it down to the de-
sired size. And because this also cannot be done without some slight margin of
error, text is surrounded with a generous (white) border so none of it is cut
of accidentally (and slightly askew cuts don't show too clearly). Illustrations
are also printed slightly (3mm) too large and are also cut to size so you can't
really tell if they too are printed slightly askew or not.

So: The whole point of working with 'bleed' margins is to try and prevent a
small rim (/border/band/margin/...) of white paper showing on the edge of a
sheet of paper (or for that fact: showing a small bit of white paper in between
an illustration and its surrounding box (/lines/band/etc.).

See also: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bleed_(printing)

Bleed in a illustration means the colouring of the background goes on for a
little bit beyond the interesting part of the image or illustration itself.
When I need to cut or trim, all that is cut off is a little bit of the not-so-
interesting background. No white showing and all important bits of the image
still whole. (and yes: we graphic designers tend to cut of all this not-so-in-
teresting stuff in situations where no bleed is required.)

So: adding a white space round an illustration just won't work: it's the white
we don't want to see: adding more white just means I have to cut more of in or-
der to end up with only interesting stuff (ie. the illustration).

Below this 3 samples of illustrations where the area that is cut away (trim
area) is highlighted. See if you can spot the difference between an artist who
has taken this fact into account, and one that has not.