

Online Networking

These days it is very important to have an online presence. Your art must be visible if it's to be credible. Is that too harsh a statement? I wish it were.

It's important to focus on visibility. And to do that you have to showcase your art and develop your brand.

Your website.

Do you need one? The answer is: Yes. Websites (or online blogs) are part of the 21st century branding media. They provide a portal between the artist and their public. Your website can showcase examples of your work, lead others to your artist statement and resume.

A website doesn't have to be expensive. Have a look at how easy it is to build a website by visiting one of the free sites such as Wix. On your website, you should always have a way for people to sign up and allow you to send them your newsletter and updates. This will help you to grow your "list".

Slide registries

These are free databases that allow artists to register and upload their artworks. You can post your artist statement, resumé and email address, and link back to your website. Registries provide exposure and create traffic to your website. Investigate these: www.myartspace.com and www.bluecanvas.com

Articles/ blog posts/ newsletters

This communication with your "list" (the people who have given you their email addresses so that you can contact them) is vitally important. Regular communication with those who want to hear about your art is imperative in these days of short attention spans and information overload. You don't want people to forget about you. You can use your newsletters as reminders of upcoming exhibitions and other events.

Referring your followers to articles that may interest them is a good way

of regularly giving them valuable information. There are many ways of finding interesting articles; for example, you can get Google alerts set up for topics that are of interest to you, then send some of the links to your followers. You can also do this on social media. If you do this consistently and well, you will gain a reputation for reliability and trustworthiness.

There are websites that make it easy to send bulk emails and well-crafted newsletters. Have a look at MailChimp or Aweber.

Don't forget to email your followers if you have a success. Remember to share your great reviews!

Social networking

Social Media is an important networking and marketing medium. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest are currently, in 2018, the ones most used by artists. However, the world is changing constantly, new platforms are being developed and social networking methods may evolve in new directions in the future. In the meantime, it is a hard decision as to which you should use. These sites are an excellent way of promoting your brand, but you can't waste all your time on Social Media; you need time to create your art, after all. Most artists these days find that Facebook is the most popular platform for art-related issues and themes, but maybe this is something that you can survey your followers about. Ask which social media platforms they follow and concentrate on those. Stick with the platforms that are used by the majority of your niche market.

Video marketing.

Videos are becoming an increasingly

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popular way of showcasing your art. You can make the videos in person, or do a voice-over using slides of your art. These can be posted on social media and on your website. They allow your loyal supporters to get to know you in person. YouTube is great for artists!

Webinars

If you like the idea of teaching, you can do this online from your home or studio. More and more artists and artisans are teaching via webinar. This allows people to attend your classes from all over the world. If you think it is something that you could use, there are many facilitators out there. Check out www.gotomeeting.com.

As the online world grows, many more opportunities will develop that we can't even imagine today. It's an exciting area which every artist should be ready to embrace as part of their creative world. Remember, visibility is the key: if people can't find you, they can't buy your work.

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