

# Seminar 10: Building partnerships with galleries for collections

Transcript

[00:00]

Hi, everybody. Hope you're doing well. My name is Viktoria Pikovska and I'm the founder of Victory Art. Today I would love to welcome you to one of the final parts of our seminars. Firstly, I would like to mention that these seminars are supported by Norway Grant, and this is part of 12 seminar sessions where we discuss different topics about the Art industry. So, Victory Art is all about breaking stereotypes and building new perceptions. We're working with artists from Central and Eastern Europe, and we help them break into the global art market.

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Welcome back to our seminars. I would love to ask you to be mindful of other speakers if please keep your microphone off and if you have any questions, feel free to turn on your microphone in the end, or you can always put your questions in the chat, and have a good time. As I mentioned, these seminars are supported by Norway Grants, and if you have any questions, you can as well go to our website to the seminar section where you can all previous recordings.

[01:14]

Everything about seminars, previous presentations and even transcriptions. My name is Viktoria Pikovska and I'm the founder of Victory Art, I used to be a passionate photographer but now I'm a full time CEO. However, this allows me to learn a lot about how business works, and that's why I'm sharing it with you right now, because I know how tough it is to make it in the Art Industry. Today, we will be focusing on building partnerships with galleries for collections.

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Last week, we were discussing building partnerships with galleries in general, basically talking about building portfolio what you should be careful about, and the do's and don'ts. Today we're going to be doing kind of similar things. However, this time it will be focused more on specific collections. So, partnerships part one, as I already mentioned, it was all about how to approach galleries. However, right now we're going to be focusing more about how to enter the business world.

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We will be focusing how to create corporate partnerships for you as an artist, how to gain more visibility, grow your business and sell your art at the highest possible price – of course a fair price. Pricing we already discussed a while back. So if you have more questions about pricing do not hesitate to go to our website and check seminar about pricing or you can also contact us at [curator@victoryart.eu](mailto:curator@victoryart.eu). So, before we discussed mainly about business to consumer or like you as an artist to consumers.

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So it meant more like a small collectors or people who wanted to just purchase artwork. However, if we're discussing business to business (B2B), that's quite a different topic. So placing your art in public places can really help you gain more exposure, especially if it is done in a great way. Especially if you have a great venue because not all venues are the right venues for you. So let's say you are exposing your artworks in ice cream place where people are just passing by and you know that they're usually spending €2 for a coffee or €1 for ice cream.

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That's probably not the best place to exhibit your work. However, if you, let's say, exhibited in high end office spaces, that is already a better indicator and there's higher chance of you actually selling artworks. Nowadays, not everyone attends galleries, and I can tell you from my personal experience, majority of people are not attending galleries, and they're scared to go into galleries because they feel they do not belong there. They feel that they do not have enough knowledge to go and look at artworks.

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I personally think this is very mistaken perception. However, you have to work with this. People really feel this way, and this is not how you want your clients to feel. Mainly you want people to really look at your artworks and the best way you can do this is to showcase your work in a natural environment where people are randomly passing by, preferably your target clients, people who are able to buy your artworks and they interact with your work on an unconscious level.

[04:56]

On the other hand, about B2B companies, they very much profit from buying artwork. So, there are all of those tax benefits there as well, all the benefits for their employees. It's benefiting as what they see as our corporate social responsibility. So, this is actually a really great target group for you. However, let's start from the beginning. You can start small, and you should start small because you will be learning about how to approach bigger companies while approaching smaller companies. Think as well about places you've visited, places where people interact with your artworks, places where people go to look at artworks, you know, item and galleries that maybe you were passing by a high-end store or street in your city.

[05:57]

Or maybe you were in the public hall or a city hall and saw artworks there, that can be a very good place for you. You never know. So, definitely do your research, have a look who is in charge of selecting art and who is in charge in general, taking care of the facility and maybe facility management and try to get in touch with them. We already discussed before on how to get in touch with clients, but this can be done through emails.

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If you're good in finding the emails, usually that are publicly available whilst some are a little bit hidden. Another platform you can explore is LinkedIn which is sometimes even better than email. You can also try to get in touch with the local architects or interior design designers for small projects, and you can just start working with them and see where it goes, because if you have already a few people you're working with or are even interested in working with you in the long run this can help you build your reputation as an artist.

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So, when you're doing B2B, make sure that you really have specific deal or specific vision in your mind because you, as an artist, you will have to put a lot of work in this and make sure that it benefits you as well as your partners.

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So please always be professional. When you're in business make sure you are acting like a businessperson because if you go somewhere and you don't speak the business language you will be perceived as unprofessional within your industry. As a result of this, people will not take you seriously. So keep it in your mind. Even if you're an artist who's really passionate about art and you feel like you don't know everything, that's fine but still make your presentation professional, make people understand or make them feel that you know what you are talking about.

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Give them this kind of reassurance. The best thing you can do to prevent people from taking advantage of you is to really have set up a really great contract. This might be intimidating and complicated for you but it's not. You can even now go to different websites and download contract templates for about €1, €2, €5, it really depends on you.

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In the beginning, you don't need extra fancy, personalized contract. In the beginning, when you find something on the internet, which talks about, for example, the termination of the contract. What happens if the sale goes through? What happens if there's damage? How long this operation will last? All these details, then this is more than enough for the beginning. So before approaching, make sure that you also have a portfolio and document set up.

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So, before we already discussed how to create a portfolio, however, make sure that it's really up to date and your documents are done professionally and your documents really show that you are skilled in your industry.

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You can even use inventory to manage and keep track of your files or your artworks. It really depends on what you are most comfortable with. I would also not suggest you push yourself to do things you don't understand or feel comfortable with because that can create more confusion. When you are selling artworks, people will always keep asking you additional questions and that's good. When people are asking you questions, even if they say no, in the end, it's still good because you know that they are already somehow interested in you.

[10:46]

So the sale might not happen in a day, it can happen in three months, in six months. Maybe because of corona they are not in the right place. However, if you keep talking with them and keep them updated, then there's very high chance that it happens. I can tell you that even a past client we had, I spoke to this lady, I think a year ago and three months ago, and then she came and she was again ready to purchase right now.

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So, you really don't know who your clients will be. About the target group and selling to the right audience. We discussed this in depth before, but it really depends on your art. It really depends on your pricing. It depends on your style and really think about the right place for your art, because let's say you are doing street art like what you see right now on the pictures on the right side. Well, this kind of art will probably not be the best art for a very over modern, minimalistic place, this will disrupt it.

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So, think about what's the best for you. It can even maybe be a doctor's office that can really happen. We had one client from Switzerland who was the owner of a high-end clinic for very VIP guests, and he was interested in art. So, it really depends who you're working with. Keep this in your mind and make sure that you educate yourself in aesthetic and know the benefits of your art.

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So how other businesses will benefit from your specific art? Do not forget that the whole marketing strategy depends on who you are targeting. You cannot use the same language you use to communicate with your friends, to your parents, to your teachers, to your colleagues, to a partner. You know, there

are different ways to communicate with different people. So, you have to make sure that you choose the right communication tool for a specific audience. If you need help you can hire or meet with an art consultant.

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In the beginning, it can be pretty scary place to start in the art market and you might feel a bit lost but that's why they're there. Many arts or business consultants and even Victory Art is going to offer consultancy for artists in the upcoming period. So if you're interested in consultancies as an artist you can sign up right now, and we will be starting on the 1st of January. So contact our curator at [curator@victoryart.eu](mailto:curator@victoryart.eu).

[13:52]

Well, building a business takes long. So I would definitely suggest you start as soon as possible because it takes time to get attention and it takes time to develop relationship and it takes time to as well think about the strategy. So the best way you can start right now is to really sit down and think about what you want to achieve as an artist. In terms of art dealers and galleries, they get a lot of application from different artists.

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We discussed it as well in the previous session last week, and we discussed how to properly approach galleries. So I'm going to repeat it briefly. You should really do your research no matter if you want to approach your client or if you want to approach other galleries, you have to do your research. We're getting a lot of emails from artists all over the world who don't go and check our website properly and don't understand we're only working with Eastern European artists when it's clearly on our website.

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Those people usually don't even get a response from us because we see that they did not put effort into sending us an email. So always make sure it's personalized. You don't have to share necessarily your whole portfolio; I would recommend you first just ask they are open to something like that then based on their response you can approach them further.

[15:32]

So there are a few reasons artists fail when they're in this business, and that's because they don't do their research. They will send hundreds of galleries the same email whilst not checking them properly. So, if you're giving people no information about your background, you cannot really expect them to be interested in you because you are not someone who is known yet. If you were known, you would not be looking for a gallery to help you.

[16:22]

So definitely tell them something about your background because they don't know you. Don't share a link to your pictures or your website because that makes you seem unprofessional so please don't do that. That's not good enough. You have to always think why the gallery should be interested in working with you or why you're special. So, for example, for me personally, I really like when an artist who is very productive comes to Victory Art.

[16:53]

We love it. We literally love it. So be as well proactive because that's going to help you to build your career. It's really up to you to follow up on galleries and clients and really think how they will benefit in the cooperation with you. So show the gallery and the collection that you really belong there. Know, based on the site.

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Take a bank like ABN Amro, a company we've collaborated with before with, they have a massive collection of artworks. In this massive collection, they have only one Czech artist, and we don't know exactly how it got there because we were never able to find out, but that's the only one, and the rest are Dutch artists, I think Belgium, Luxembourg artists and I think Germans. Another big company everybody probably knows of is ING. ING has this massive art collection here in the Netherlands.

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However, they recently started building massive collection in Poland as well. So, if you're an artist in Poland, they really love going to exhibitions and see paintings live. So, think whether you are even fit and do not hesitate to ask them and mention specific details about your art. Especially when someone is purchasing art for collection, it's usually an artist who already has a certain level of success and has a proven track record.

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They have to see that you're working and that your collection or art has a specific vision. If they see that you just splash something on the canvas and there's not really anything behind it, they will not purchase it because they can't understand the art. It's not a problem because not everybody will understand you.

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If you don't have vision behind your art, people will sense it. So think about this. For some people, you even have to fight about the vision. The last point which really will help you grow and be more successful is to make sure that everything on your social media, portfolio and website is consistent and updated.

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If someone comes to your social media and see your last post was a year ago, this will not work for them. In terms of presentation limit the number of artworks, don't show everything show only the best. Also don't show collections that are too different. If your style is being inconsistent then that's fine but if you're still finding yourself as an artist, be very specific and show only the best works and what's relevant to them.

[20:56]

You can even list the relevant artworks and explanations which fit them and why, this will help you understand how you fit. You can also repaint pieces, or show collectors the process behind your art. About the pricing, which we also already discussed. Having pricing ready is very important. Don't make any sudden changes because you will come off as an unreliable and unprofessional artist. And be clear about all charges around your artwork because people don't like hidden charges – shipping, packaging costs, things like that.

[22:15]

Another great thing you can do is to have a certificate for a specific artwork and based off of this certificate you create pricing off your other artworks. It often happens that artists don't have good pricings for their works because they don't know themselves. This is a very big red flag. Firstly, no one is going to ensure your art unless it's sold, or you have a certificate of a specific value.

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This certificate has to be done for a specific painting so only one can be insured. However, insurance companies won't ensure art that has not sold or does not have a certificate. I guess you as an artist will not pay for the certificate. But the best thing to do is to obtain at least one certificate for a painting and

based off that create pricing for your other artworks. This certificate will give you more legitimacy as an artist to your clients.

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In terms of how you present yourself please be organised. Be helpful to your clients and guide them. If they don't know something make sure they know that you're there to help with things like framing the artwork because majority of art buyers don't know how to do it. If it's a big collection, they might have an idea but if it's a small one they might need a bit of help. This can open more doors for you.

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If you're focusing on a specific collection, make sure that the specific vision behind the theme is shared with your clients. People love to purchase entire collections from specific artists. So, make sure you're able to offer something like that as well. If we're really supposed to think about you and your career, how to showcase yourself properly is by doing it in series.

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For example, you start with a series of 5 or 10 artworks in a collection, the more consistent you are, the more professional your portfolio and CV is, the more likely people are to purchase from you as an artist. So, the portfolio is usually not the most complicated thing to do. However, you do have to think about it and what makes you unique. Don't be humble, tell people directly why you are a good fit. Be strict in what you believe in and what you have to offer.

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If you have specific conditions for your art, then say it in advance because you don't want to risk people backing out of a purchase. For example, if you want your art to be sold to museums in the next 20 years say it in advance so the buyers can also see if they are the right fit. This will save you, and your clients, a lot of time.

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The gallery needs to know the history behind your art, who you are, and where you want to go. The best thing you can do is to be responsive with them. For example, right now, Victory Art is working on a dashboard to track the history of our Artists and based off this we are able to see who is most successful, who has the best probability. From some artists we receive information which is great but from others we don't receive anything and for us we use this as a way to differentiate the professionals from the amateurs.

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For us as a gallery if a company comes to us looking for something exclusive, we're going to offer them the professional artists because we want to present ourselves in a good light. I wish more people were aware of this. So, to wrap it up, put time and effort in the way you present yourself. Be ready and make sure to have read your documents. Don't just jump to any collaboration that comes your way unless you've done proper research about it.

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Be clear about what you can bring to the gallery, what they can bring to you, and what you want from them. Don't forget to personalise your approach. Make sure all these things are there. Well, we've reached the end of our seminar and next week we will be talking about how to build and maintain relationships with your clients, and skills to develop if you want to be successful.

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We already discussed how you as an artist needs to develop yourself as an artpreneur, so we will continue with this next week at 19.00 CET. Now there's space for questions and answers, so if you have any questions, you can put it in the chat or turn on your mic. Or you can also email us directly at [curator@victoryart.eu](mailto:curator@victoryart.eu), and our team would love to answer any questions you might have. So, if we don't have any questions at this point, I would like to remind you to sign up for our free consultancy sessions which will be starting next year from January 1st and you can sign up at [victory@victoryart.eu](mailto:victory@victoryart.eu). So, don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you so much for joining and have a great day.