

Seminar 3: art industry from a business perspective

Transcript

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Hi everybody, hope you're doing well. My name is Viktoria Pikovska and I'm the founder of Victory Art. Today we're going to have our third session of the webinars which will be focused on Art Industry. I would love to pinpoint that these seminars are organized in cooperation with the Norway Fund. First of all, I would love to tell you about Victory Art. We are a team of enthusiastic people who are focused on helping artists from Central and Eastern Europe. Our whole goal is to break stereotypes and build new perceptions about Eastern Europe and talented artists from there and basically help them grow and show the world how talented they are. Today is already the third session of seminars and I would love to ask you as well to be mindful again of others that will be speaking, if there's a question & answer, please feel free to talk and actually ask your questions. In any case, please feel free to put it in general questions.

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Main thing is that, please have fun. If you have any questions, even after this seminar, you can always reach out to us. So, as I mentioned, this is our third seminar which we're organising, and this seminar is actually focused on 'Art Industry from a Business Perspective' and how you as an artist can take advantage of this.

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First of all, we'll be talking about a few main things. So, about the Art Industry from a business perspective, how to find your style and take full advantage of that. The last thing will be how to balance your life as an artist, your life as a an 'Artpreneur', we discussed this term before. So, from a business perspective, it is important to know how to make your art reach the right audience. While pursuing a passionate career in the art market, doing business is another vital—point that an artist should take into consideration. This is one of the biggest mistakes some artists make. They only focus on creating amazing art, but nowadays it's not the only thing. You as an artist need to work on many different things like, your marketing, branding, PR, business development relations, management. It's a much more complex thing than it used to be.

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Aside from the creative aspect, how to eventually make your artwork reach people is also very important. You should ask yourself a few questions. For example, 'what is my style?' 'What is my value on the market?' 'What am I willing to do to really pursue my career as an artist?' 'How can me, as an artist, make the most out of it?' This art journey, focusing on your career should be something you feel very passionate and excited about. It should fulfil you.

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So, these are the few basic questions you should know, but at the same time, it should be about more than just this question and mainly about you. Another critical point is pricing. Is it something you are very critical about? Is it something you're objective about? Your price has to as well match the time you spent on your artwork. Now, as well the time you spent before. It should as well depict the effort you put into your artworks. The pricing, we discussed previously, is a much more complex thing because pricing can be influenced by more than 42 factors within the art industry.

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But these are very few points you should take into consideration. So, we should look back into the session last week. We discussed 42 factors influencing price, this is another thing which are influencing price, basically the time and effort you spent, in progressing yourself because you as an artist should progress on a personal level in order to make your art more interesting for people and easier to connect. At the same time, you should progress your technique which can only progress if you work regularly.

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Another pricing style we can consider is counting and measuring the sizes of your artworks. This is one of the simplest ways to properly price your artworks. Whatever fits you, but always make sure that you are relevant for the market. That you're not over or under-priced. What we discussed before was that if you price yourself too high in the beginning then go lower it shows your clients that you don't feel confident in yourself as an artist. It's always better to start lower then go to a higher price than go higher and then lower. A very important thing many people are forgetting about, this is something that big brands are forgetting, but this is what's making the difference between being good and great is, the aftersales service you offer your clients.

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So, what's the packaging? How do you package your artworks? How responsive are you to your clients? Can you sacrifice something for your clients? – by that I mean if you need to deliver your artwork to a city which is next to your city, are you able to come in the evening, are you flexible with these things? One of the most amazing things you can do for yourself is ask your client for feedback and put it out there on Facebook, Instagram, Website, LinkedIn. Ask them to maybe make videos for you. Always leverage these aftersales things. In terms of positive feedback, this is tough at this point for everyone. People usually like to complain but not say when something goes good or positive. So, try to motivate them. The way we're motivating them is that we're giving small discount for the next purchase or offering them free consultancy or delivery. These are amazing ways you can motivate them more.

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Definitely consider it because once you get your client there's a very high chance that the client will be interested in getting more pieces from you once they're satisfied.

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In terms of style. This is kind of a tricky thing for many starting artists. They feel that they want to do everything, and they want to get as many topics as possible. They want to test techniques, and this is amazing. You as an artist should do all the creative things, test things and work on different topics. However, it does not mean everyone has to see it. Let's say one day you're publishing flowers, the next day landscape, another day complete abstract, next day its' impressionist. No one will ever understand your art. No one will understand who you are or your brand. I don't want to dive into this that much because we will discuss it next week, 'Branding and the way you should show yourself and your brand towards the world but think consistently with the topic and technique is very important for you as an artist. So, when someone comes to your social media, they will be able to see 'this is artist Kate' and I can see in every painting her special signature.

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It can maybe be that you're using a special colour, or you ended with a specific brushstroke, or you do a line across the canvas. There can be so many things but there must be consistency. The only way to really get this specific signature is for you to create as much as possible in order to find your style and perfect your technique.

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Well, understanding your style will definitely help you be more strategic about your audience and market it more properly. What this means is that if you're doing street art you probably won't want to exhibit in a 5-star chic hotel which is more targeted towards older clientele. This will not be the correct audience for you, people won't appreciate or look at your art. They won't find it interesting.

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So, once you are able to specifically define your style, afterward you're able to think properly about to reach your audience. We at Victory Art are strongly considering this. We're thinking about it pretty often. We of course, learn from our mistakes when we tried to sell artworks in the beginning to people who would never purchase them. This was not because we pushed them, it's because we just didn't know that this wasn't the audience we needed. At this point, when we're thinking about organising exhibitions in the future, we are always looking for perfect venues where we can naturally reach our clients.

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This is something I will be talking about in the part about galleries. There are much better ways to get traction for you as an artist than being in a gallery. So, think about where you can find your clients, what they would want to see from you, and how you can target them. Ask yourself are there elements of the design that your piece fits or is the team you show up with, are they relevant for this space, or what kind of subject you're interested in, what kind of art you really enjoy creating because if that comes from the depth of your heart it won't touch your clients.

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I know this with some of our artists, it's a reoccurring topic. Clients keep asking for specific artists and we have to say that this artist is that successful because they create from the depth of their heart, and they really make their emotions physical and put them on paintings and it just works. People feel it.

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One of the other ways you can figure out your style is that you really think about ways you can distinguish yourself as an artist. It can be the fact that you're working on a specific limited edition or working on a specific topic for a year. That's one of the ways so, there are really multiple ways you can separate yourself but really think about it. If you keep chasing trends all the time thinking now water colour's interesting and last year's trend it was maximalist, this year it's minimalist. If you keep changing it like this, you will never be able to find yourself as an artist and communicate it with the world.

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In terms of experimenting, I don't want you to think that you cannot experiment at all in order to become a successful artist. It's more that there should be a signature and based on that, you can experiment. For example, last Tuesday I was at a lecture about the Art Industry, and there was a very successful artist who was discussing his work with the audience. His work really caught my attention because it was not consistent, but you could feel the signature of his work in the object's he was creating. So, everything he created was disruptive and always disrupting the space, the person who was receiving, it was provoking the viewers. His style was actually to not have a style but make people feel slightly angry towards him because he was provoking viewers and buyers to feel emotions.

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This was his style so maybe you as an artist want to do something provocative. You want to communicate your opinion with the world, and this might be a perfect way to do it.

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What's happening with the many artists, especially young artists, is that they feel very demotivated when receiving negative critiques. If you want to be professional, you will receive many negative feedbacks and opinions. You will hear your art is not good enough or you're not good enough, or that you should not be an artist. There will definitely be these types of people who say this to you. It's very important to remind yourself that art is personal. What someone likes you don't like and what you like someone else doesn't like so it's fine. Nowadays the market is so broad that you will be able to find your buyers once you're able to target them properly.

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The commitment for your artworks and the creation of them is one of the main things. That's the only thing that actually matters in the long run because if you're not consistent with what your art career will probably not go anywhere. So, keep it on your mind that these things are very important.

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How you can practice your technique or creativity, or style, is that you can always have a small notebook with you. You can do sketches and envision what you would love to do. Sometimes you're in a restaurant or you're sitting in front of the TV, and you get this creative moment, and you want to create something amazing. If you feel like that, then you should definitely start drawing even if it's not what you're necessarily doing but this is when you're working on yourself or working something you'd like and you're able to support your creativity. So, do not hesitate to do this small thing. Even when you're somewhere on the move and you don't have your notebook with you, you can always take a picture of it and get to it later. So, always be open minded about this and do not feel like you only have to do one thing in order to work on yourself.

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One of the ways you can get inspiration is at exhibitions, museums, galleries, art fairs, biennales. There are so many ways you can get inspired and educated. You can not know, as an artist, what to work on and how to progress yourself as far as you do not know what's happening around you. So, staying in the loop with the art market and knowledge about the art market and knowing about what's happening out there is very important.

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NFT became a big boom, and if you're not educating yourself about NFT then you cannot know what advantages it can bring you. NFT and Blockchain can give you massive advantages and in general new technologies for you as an artist. If you want to know more about this, do not hesitate to book a free consultancy session with our team and we can sit down and discuss what your options are and how you can work on yourself. At this point Victory Art is also offering augmented reality paintings on our website. So, you can just go on our website and have a look at any painting and you will be able to see AR.

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If you feel very motivated to try to create this specific art piece, go for it. At the same, be careful because this can be illegal. It's actually art crime, art fraud. We personally had this experience where someone came with an amazing art then two weeks later, we found out that this artwork was copied from another Russian artist. Be careful with this. This is illegal and you can actually face very high charges.

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Well, as I mentioned before, it's very important to let yourself experience and test things. Maybe when you want to do something with paper even, you never know, just go for it. Do not feel pressured to show it to the world. You don't have to put it on the marketplace it's fine. Just do it for the pleasure, that you really want to do it. Sometimes it's perfect to let your artwork sink in, come back to it in maybe a week or a month and maybe redo it. I know many artists who paint something then look it at in a month and think 'I really hate it, and I'm just going to do this painting from scratch' So this is normal. This is an amazing way to work on your creative process. So, let it sink in, let it feel like do the colours look good, could this technique work.

I know of an artist who focused their art piece for 10 years. At this point, everything is out of you.

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Always think about your strengths. If you know that you love painting with acrylic colours, but you do not necessarily enjoy or are good enough in water colours, then it's fine. Just learn where your strengths and weaknesses are and use them as your advantages. If you can paint beautiful flowers, go for it. If you do not well with faces don't do it if that's not something you want. Really take advantages in what you're best at and keep repeating it. That's as easy as it is.

[23:51]

When we're thinking of the value of your art, we're going back the topic last week about pricing. It really depends on your background and experiences, and what you're willing to do in the future. Very simple factors which are determining the value of you as an art. What you experienced before. Did you study at an art academy? Did you exhibit somewhere? Did you get scholarship or funding? Did you get some art venue where you could exhibit or create for a week? All those things really influence your art value. Think about it and as far as you're a young artist, or in general who wants to achieve these things. Even when you're older it's fine. I personally know artists who started at 50 and they're successful, and they're doing really well.

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So, do not feel pressured because you're older, it's fine. You can still make an amazing impact; this is the beauty of the art industry. About commissioned jobs. This is very difficult topic in the sense that some artists specifically love it, and others completely hate this. Once you get commission work, you probably can earn good money that's the first thing. Second thing is the client will probably have something to say about it. So, this is the negative part about this topic, the fact clients can be part of the creative process. I know that some artists are perfectly fine with it whilst some hate it. Think about it because this can get you in amazing collections but if you do not feel like you want to sacrifice your creative process don't do it.

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So, if we think about what it means to find your style and what might come afterwards is that when you find your style, you'll be able to create better art pieces where you will attract more of your desired clients. That's one of the things you have to think about, that's the first thing. It will not be easy all the time. I know one of our artists sometime sell 5 paintings per month, sometimes nothing, sometimes 20. It doesn't necessarily mean that it's going to boom completely but it will definitely help target the right people.

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Art is never just one way of perceiving things. Complicated question which is here for centuries is 'what is Art?' Everyone wants to know. There are many critiques of the Art industry saying that Art is whatever the Art industry says it Art. This is partly true but partly not. So, you have the power to define what your art is and use it for yourself as your advantage.

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Even when you feel your art is not fitting in this modern era. It's not contemporary enough, not crazy enough, trust me, you can always find clients who will enjoy your art. Many people don't feel so confident to purchase contemporary art because they don't understand it. Contemporary Art has so much depth that it requires many descriptions and many explanations, and some people just want to admire a piece of art. So even though you feel that this is not necessarily what your art is, the modernist trend. It's fine. You will find people who will love it.

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So, the term 'Artpreneur', as I mentioned before, is becoming an artist and entrepreneur at the same time. Artists, nowadays, have to know how to brand, market, be the business developer, negotiator all for themselves. Here's what they did, Art industry really works this way. So, the fact that you're creating art is not enough. What you can do is build personal relationship with some art dealer or professional who can help you with that. But when you're becoming an artist really sit and think about your strategy and you're art as a small business. Think about it as a thing which will make you stand out. Every business needs a unique selling point and that's what your art is as well. That's the technique, the style. That's what makes you different from your competitors, your fellow artists.

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Think about the way you're going to ship your products to your clients. That's very important. When they receive it what's the infrastructure you have? If this is something that is confusing for you, do not hesitate to reach out to us at curator@victoryart.eu because we will be offering free consultancy sessions with artists, so if you need something we can always sit down and discuss it together.

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While creating art, and at the same time being absolutely caught with this business artpreneurship thing, it's always important to find the balance because you as an artist have to create. If you will be too caught in business, then you cannot freely create. This is the time when it's important to find the balance to know when you feel inspired. When you feel like you want to create something and not spend it on accounting perhaps?

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If you were an artist talking about accounting, you would probably be a very successful artist, be your own accounted for your business. So, think about it from that perspective, let it flow. Do it on at own pace. Let go of perfectionism because if you're going to be too caught in the details, you might let go of many other important things. So, nothing will ever be perfect. Your technique and artworks will never be perfect because nothing is perfect at the end of day. If there's a small percentage of imperfections let it be, that's what makes it unique. Set deadlines and goals for yourself, that helps a lot because once you're a freelancer you probably have to already have a certain work ethic to manage it. Go to the forest, parks, unplug yourself and let the creativity flow. Get inspired and maybe take your canvas or colours outside and you can create there.

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Make sure that you are focused on the creation in the moment you're creating. Sometimes if you're exercising or meditating it helps a lot. So, think about those things and limit time wasting activities. Sometimes artists do everything except what they're supposed to do, something everyone does, procrastinate. But it's important to set boundaries and devote specific time to work on your art.

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Start from small things. If you're a starting artist, it does not mean you have to start with 5 paintings a week. Is this really what you want to do? Find what you need to do, really understand, and know yourself. Make a schedule because once you set a certain goal, you can set a certain vision about yourself as an artist for your career. It's going to be much easier for you than to just say that 'someday' which results in you not doing it.

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As mentioned before balance. Find time for creativity and for the business task you need to do as an artist. We're at the end of our session today, and next week we're going to talk about the brand and marketing. How to create a consistent style. Are there any questions at this point?

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I would love to say you can always approach the victory art team at curator@victoryart.eu and my team will help you. You can book free consultancy session which is going to be happening from next year onwards but in the meantime if you need something, let us know. If there are no questions for today, I would love to say thank you so much for joining us here it was lovely having you. This was our third session and I'm looking forward to meeting you next week here on the same zoom link. Thank you, bye.