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# So You Want to Be a Professional Artist? A 15-Day Guide to Professional Practices

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## Chapter 1 - Professional Practices

### Overview

(upbeat techno music) - Hi, I'm Lisa Solomon. I'm a working artist. I've been an educator teaching at the college level for 15 years now. There are so many different ways for you to be an artist in the world. And what we're gonna do in this 15 day challenge is try and give you some real tips on how to move forward. Because no matter which path you want to go down, there are some things that you're gonna need over, and over, and over again. In this challenge, we're gonna be talking about developing your portfolio, getting your artist statement together, business things like taxes, and getting a business license, pricing, and framing, social media. There's gonna be so much stuff to go over. This challenge is going to be packed with information. Take it in small chunks. There is a crazy, chock-full PDF for you to look at. Come back and re-watch things as you need them. Really just think about doing things step by step. Tackle one step at a time and I'm here to help you walk through it all.

### Day 1 - Portfolios

- Hi, it's day one. Today we're gonna be talking about your portfolio, which is basically the corner stone of everything. You can't get anywhere without a portfolio as an artist, and so we really need to talk about what it even means to have a portfolio, because I think people have different ideas. So in general you should be thinking about having 10 to 20 images that are a cohesive body of work. And that is the golden ticket. It needs to be cohesive. And I think some people get confused as to what that means, they're like, oh, I wanna show a portfolio of everything I've ever done over my entire life. No. (laughs) You want a portfolio of things that you've done recently, in fact most applications are gonna ask for things that you've done in the last three to five years. And I would say you wanna stick to things that you've done probably in the last one to three years. So it's not like, I wanna show you everything I've ever done in my entire life, it's, I'm gonna show you what I'm doing right now. That's what people are most interested in. And then in terms of cohesive, there are really just a couple things you need to think about. So it's not a, everything needs to be sculptures, or everything needs to be paintings, although that is one way to look at it. Because media specificity is definitely one way to think about keeping things cohesive. But it's not the only way. Really when you're talking about art and having a body of work that works together, you're talking about things that not only visually work together, but conceptually work together. So let's say that you're an artist that works with planes. And I'm picking something out of the sky, literally. It could be anything. If you do, let's say, ceramic sculptures of planes, and paintings of planes, and they all look like they've been done by the same person, like the color palette is similar, or the style of rendering the plane is similar, you've got yourself a cohesive body of work, okay? If you're working with planes and when you make them ceramically they're really neat and tight and when you paint them they're really loose and flowing and organic, that is not a cohesive body of work, okay? So when you're looking over a vast amount of work, you really want things that look like they're made by the same person, around the same time frame basically, right? Even if it's taken you five years to make them, if it looks like they belong together, they belong together. So sometimes I like to think about eggs as an analogy too. So you've got ostrich eggs which are really big, and you've got chicken eggs, and you've got quail eggs, they're all eggs, right, they all work together as eggs, if you saw them you'd

be like, hey, that's an egg! Those things go well together. If you throw in say, like a lizard egg, all of a sudden that egg doesn't match with the bird eggs, right? So again, that's one way to think about kind of putting together a cohesive body of work. And I think a lot of times people think, oh, do I need to only work in one style? Not necessarily. You just only wanna submit one kind of body of work. So you can be working on many different things simultaneously, but when you're say, applying for a gallery show, or applying for a grant, you don't wanna submit all those things at the same time. I'm gonna give you an example from an artist who's really well-known, Louise Bourgeois. Her work is all over the place, she's done work on paper, she's done really big sculptures, she's done work with fabric. So when you look at her entire career, she's incredibly prolific, and it's not cohesive. So we're gonna look at some examples, and see what we could do in order to make a cohesive body of work within her entire oeuvre of work. On my screen I've got a range of Louise Bourgeois's artwork, it's all different kinds. From, I think I got them mostly from New York MoMA's website. So I'm just gonna scroll through them, just so we get kind of an overview of what we're looking at, and then we're gonna talk about how to rearrange them into a better, cohesive portfolio. So we've got a prints, a sculpture, another prints, another black and white prints, a drawing, a detail from a sculpture, this really cool spider drawing, some hands, ooh, feet, some eyes, she's really into doing things with the body, we've got some more feet, and we have a giant spider. You may have seen these at SFMOMA, or, they're around the world, so maybe you've seen them somewhere else. Few more drawings, few more sculptures. This is a fabric woven piece, so it's a little different. Another fabric piece. Another sculpture. Spiders, okay. So, if she came to me, which she wouldn't need to, 'cause she has a crazy career, but if she came to me and said, I wanna submit to something, I would say, do not submit all of these the way this is right now. There's no order, there's no thought to it, we have all different kinds of different media together, thrown together in ways that don't make sense. So I think one of the easiest things to do would be to separate, say the spiders, right? All of the spider stuff goes together. So we've got this spider image. I'm gonna see if I can move this to the bottom, just to kind of organize. And we have a single spider drawing, excellent. There were a few more spiders in here, here's a big spider. I am working on a Mac laptop, and I'm working just with preview, which comes standard in Macintoshes. See, oh, spider. Yay, okay. I think that was it for spiders. Okay yes, all the spiders are together. So in looking at this I would say another really common thematic structure is the body. So we've got hands, and we had feet, so let's put the hands together. And there was the eye one, right, oh, here we've got some feet. While I'm doing this you might be thinking, I don't even have 20 things to put together for a portfolio, that's fine. In your future you will have more than 20 things. And so this is how you should start thinking about it. And actually, it may help you develop a body of work, if you're thinking, oh, I need to make 20 images that go together, 20 things that go together. And this doesn't have to be just for submissions for gallery shows or grants or residencies. You could be thinking about just putting a really nice website page together, right? And you wanna have, I don't know, I think 10 images is a good goal for a website. You don't wanna just have a website with one image on it. So again thinking about cohesiveness will not only help you but it helps your audience, it helps your audience understand who you are and what you're doing, and what you're making, and what's important to you. Okay, do I have all the body things together? I have all the body things together. Now I'm gonna be thinking about these guys. 'Cause these are totems, and they're fabric, and they all kinda go together, so let's stick all the fabric and totem stuff together, which already seems to have randomly happened. This guy can go down here too. Fabric fabric fabric. Okay. Oh, this is body, that stays with body. And then I've got a couple of kind of red and white drawings, and this is kind of the odd guy out. I don't

know where this guy goes. It's not red and white so it doesn't really go with the red and white drawings, it's not really of the body, it's not really sculptural, so I might recommend taking this image out altogether if you were putting a portfolio together. And that's gonna end up happening too, as you're editing you might have to ditch something that you love or that you think is really great but it just doesn't belong with the other guys. And that's okay, maybe it'll belong with another grouping in some other way. So let's just delete this guy. So command delete. Goodbye! Okay, and I really like actually where this thing ended up, we're gonna scroll through them again. And now you're gonna see that the like things are with other like things, and this guy's actually a really interesting transition between the red and white drawings and the fabric stuff. Okay, so let's scroll again. So right now we put all the body things together, we've got hands and eyes and hands and feet. And more feet, and more feet. Then we've got this sculpture, body sculpture, which could actually go with the fabric guys too, so this is kind of a, it could be a bridge between things. Then we've got this red and white piece, another red and white piece, another red and white drawing, and then a red and white sculpture, which also could be a bridge if you wanted to try and include the drawings with the sculptures together. Then we've got soft sculptures. Fabric work, fabric work, fabric work, soft sculpture, overview. This is also really nice and something to think about when you're taking pictures. This is a great shot, right, it shows more than one piece of work, and then you have a detail shot of one of the sculptures that's in that grouping. It's a really good thing to think about, because if you only have 20 images, you may wanna show more, or as much as you possibly can. This lets people see a larger picture but also lets them see a detail of one smaller thing. Okay, that's the last soft sculpture. Now we're gonna do spiders. So we've got a spider drawing, an iconic giant spider sculpture, another spider drawing, and another spider sculpture of more than one spider together. Okay, so we've now divided it up into these really good groupings. The next thing that you really wanna be thinking about is the order of your images. So if you're say, trying to get into a gallery show, or get a grant, or a residency, a grant or a residency space is most likely going to be projecting your images, 'cause there's gonna be a jury, there's gonna be a room full of people who are gonna be looking at your stuff. If you have access to a projector, I would highly recommend that you test your portfolio and project it onto a wall so you can see what it looks like. Keep in mind that everybody's computer screen is calibrated differently, every projector acts really differently. So the way that you're seeing them may or may not be the way that somebody else is seeing them. But if you practice, if you at least project your images once you'll see, maybe they're too dark, and need to lighten them all up. Or maybe there's a green cast on them and you wanna get rid of that green cast. So it'll give you an opportunity to color correct in a way that maybe you can't see on screen. If you only have a screen, that's fine, definitely check them on screen first. But you really wanna be thinking about the order in which you're presenting yourself. The order of your images is incredible important. The thing is, if somebody is looking at these they're gonna be looking at them very very quickly. People are not going to slowly scrolling through your images, it's not a leisurely walk through the park when they're looking at your stuff. They're gonna be looking like this. You have like three seconds to grab their attention. I know that's harsh. A lot of people are like, that's unfair, I spent all this time making work, yeah, they don't care. They're just gonna be looking really quickly and seeing if they respond to it. So the first image you put up there is the most important. If you don't grab their attention in that first second, it's kind of over, which is really sad, but it's the truth. So that first image has to be an amazing representation of what you do. So some people think that something grand or large scale or massive is a good way to go. That could be true, if that's how you work. Some people think that things that have high contrast in color is a really good way to go. That

could be great if you have that object. You know, something that is really high contrast. If you work in black and white, don't fret. Maybe you just wanna make sure that the first image is really clean and precise and represents you. And if you're not sure, ask a friend. Have somebody come over and say, hey, which one of these do you respond to the most? Or maybe poll people, right? Put a picture up on Facebook and say, which one of these do you like better? And find out sort of what a hive mind says. I mean all of those are valid ways to figure out what image to put first. Okay, let's take Louise's work and try to make a portfolio of 10 to 20 images with what we have that's all gonna go together and put it in an order that makes sense. I think we have the most of the fabric works, yes. And I feel like these red and white drawings might go with those, so I'm gonna keep those. I'm gonna ditch these black and whites. Sorry eyes. I'm gonna keep those hands for a second. Okay, we can ditch the spiders even though I love them and they're iconic. Okay, that's looking like it might go together. So now we have to decide do we wanna start with 2D work or intersperse 2D and 3D work? When I teach a professional practice class in a room full of people, each time we re-tool a portfolio, it comes out a little bit differently. So just keep in mind that there's not only one solution to this problem, right, it's a puzzle. And you might need to change the puzzle around depending on what you're applying for. If you're applying for a sculpture show, then you wanna include sculptures and not flat work, right. If you're applying for an outdoor show, you might wanna think about what would work best in that sort of scenario. So you really wanna tailor your portfolio every time you utilize it. It's not gonna be a one stop one solution. And then you also have to think that as you develop your work, you're gonna change your portfolio year by year by year by year. So it's not gonna be static in any way shape or form. Okay, so I'm trying to think what would be a good first eye-catching image. I kind of feel like it might be this one. Because you see more than one object in it, you get a really good overview of what's going on, so I'm gonna move that to the top. And if we're starting with that, then I feel like this detail of one of them should follow. 'Cause another thing you wanna consider is overview, detail, overview, detail. You don't wanna include too many details, but some work needs it more than others. Right, if you're doing like really tiny minute things, and you really need to see them up close, then you have to have a detail of that. If your stuff can be understood from further away you don't need to include a lot of details. Okay, so I've got totem grouping, totem singular, totem singular, okay. Now what do I wanna do? Oh, this goes too. Even though, we'll just pretend like this has a further away shot. Okay. Now I'm thinking, do we wanna transition to these flat fabrics, or do we wanna transition to the red and white? I feel like this is a strong image. So one other thing you wanna be thinking about in terms of order, you want that first image to grab people and be like, oh yeah, I'm really interested in that. Then you want something in the middle. Because they're gonna be scrolling really fast. So it's like, first image, yes! Boom boom boom. And then somewhere in the middle you need a, oh, this is interesting. Right, you need to re-grab their attention. So I'm gonna say that I think this not only works as a really good transition into some of the other red and white flat work, and into this figurative piece, but it also works really well as a good kind of, middle hump re-interest people in what I'm doing thing. Okay, so I'm gonna go with that. And I'm going to then go to the bodies. And then I'm gonna include these red and white body things, and I'm gonna break up the hands, and I'm gonna break up, I don't like these two guys back to back. Because they're too similar. Okay. I'm looking at these images, and I like the transition from this flat totem piece into this one, but we really also need to be thinking about the last image. The last image may be even more important than the first image, and here's why. When somebody is scrolling through all of your images, if there's a room full of people and they're projecting things, the last image is the one that they're gonna be staring at while they talk about

you. So while they say, oh yeah, I really liked that, or, I thought that was super successful, or, I don't know, they lost me in this part of the portfolio, it's this last image that's gonna be on-screen while they do that. So while the first image you wanna grab their attention and you want them to really pay attention, it's the last image that's gonna leave the longest impression, okay? When I'm looking at what we've done here, and I'm gonna start from the beginning and we're gonna scroll through them again, I really like how this is working. We've got a really strong group overview, detail of one, detail of another, close up, okay, we're transitioning into body stuff, this is good, I broke up the hands. The red and white stuff is going in, this makes sense, this is a really nice transition, we've got like a circular thing to an oval thing. Then we transition into the fabric stuff. That works. But do I really want this to be my last image? And I'm gonna say no. And I don't really know what I want to be my last image. When I'm looking at these guys these have kind of circular shapes that extend out, and when I look at these last fabric pieces they have similar shapes, so I'm gonna move those fabric pieces up. Okay. Do I like that? I like that. That makes sense. And then we can transition into the tower, and then we can end on this tower which I think is visually really interesting. Right, it's got mosaics, it's got a lot of color, it's a really strong singular image. If I were sitting in a room talking about Louise and her amazing qualities this would be a really nice thing to be looking at long term, and I think it would leave a really good lasting impression. And it relates back to the first stuff. Because we've got stacked totems. And then in the last image we've got stacked stuff again, so it's a really nice kind of full circle. Let's scroll through these really quickly one more time. I think that looks great. Much better than when we started, right? Everything really makes sense, it flows into each other, there's a good strong first image, there's a good middle image, there's a good last image. Those are all the things that we're really concerned about when putting a portfolio together. So yay, I'm gonna say we're done. The next thing you wanna consider is the quality of your images. So I have some examples here of things that you do and don't wanna do. And things that you should be considering. You can always tell when something was done in school, for a school assignment, right? It's really easy to spot. So I know this was a day when I had a model, and they were working. Also the color quality on this image is not very good, it needs to be color corrected. It's not that it's a bad piece of art, or that it's not something that you would wanna have in your living room, maybe it is. But it's not a good example for a portfolio for you. This next image, I think that this is a great piece of work, it's super interesting, but the quality of the photo is not so stellar. It's a little dark, it's a little bit out of focus, it's not really centered right, I actually cropped it so that part of the background of the work isn't showing, but in doing that the balance of the piece got shifted, so you really wanna make sure that when you shoot something that you give yourself enough space to edit it. This I think is a good example of something without a background that somebody really took the time and paid attention to crop it into the right shape. One thing to be thinking about is maybe you don't wanna shoot your things on a white background. So this piece of work in particular looks stellar on black. So maybe you wanna think about shooting your work on gray or on a color or on something other than white. That's not gonna work for everybody, but it's definitely something to consider. One thing to keep in mind though is if you start shooting things this way, you wanna make sure that you have more than one item in your portfolio that looks that way. You don't wanna have just one image on black and the rest on white. So you wanna make sure that there's a balance, so that again the flow of your portfolio visually works really well. You're submitting these portfolios to people who are highly visual. So just as you pay attention to the way colors work together or the way shapes work together the people who are making these decisions are also that visual. You need to be thinking about how you wanna play to that and make sure that

you're fitting into an overall picture. These last two examples, sometimes you'll get a application that asks you to put your information on the image, not separate on an image list. And we're gonna go over image lists in a second. But sometimes they want your name and your phone number and your email and other information on the photo itself. So I wanna show you two examples of that. This one I think is a good example. This is a little jar, it's been shot very cleanly on a white background, there's some nice white space around it, the way the information is put around the image makes sense. This is the same person, and the same portfolio, but this image doesn't work as well, right? It's really sort of toned down, it's got a lot of gray to it, the way it's been shot on that floor with the linoleum and that back strip on the wall is really unattractive, right? This is much easier and cleaner to see the jar. This is kind of dingy and doesn't do the piece justice. You wanna make sure that your images do your work justice. It's really important. In the PDF there's an overview of everything that we've gone over in terms of all the things that you need to think about when putting your portfolio together. Before we move on to labeling your images and making a corresponding image list, I wanna briefly touch on what you should use to shoot your artwork, like photography wise. So I have an SLR that I love, I like to shoot things raw so I have the most editing capability, but some people don't have that as an option. Your phone is a really good camera. When I think back to when I first started shooting my own artwork, I was taking slides. Yes, I am that old. It was slides. And you'd hold them up to the light, and you'd have to re shoot them because something would go wrong. Now everything's digital, which is great. And your phone is actually a way better quality than my first digital camera. It shoots at a really high resolution, it even has editing capabilities, right, you can change the white balance, you can crop, you can do all the stuff even in your phone, that's great. It doesn't matter what you shoot with as long as the images turn out well. So use your phone, use somebody's camera, borrow something, do whatever you need to do. Try and shoot everything you can at the same time. I find that's actually super super helpful. So set up all of your 10 to 20 things all at the same time of day, shoot them in one round if you can, because then the lighting is the same and you don't have to think about readjusting. You can if you want to go out and buy lights, a lot of people ask, do I need lights? Do I need flash? I like to shoot in natural light as much as possible. So I even like to things outside and just lean them up against my house, and then I crop up the house when I'm done taking photos, right. You can get rid of all of that information. Sunlight is your friend, it makes things look really good. Just think about glare, make sure you're not getting too much glare, and just make sure that you put things in the same place. It's super helpful, and then you'll have to do less editing later. The next thing you really need to think about is how you want to label your images. So some places are going to be very specific with how they want you to name your images. You wanna follow the directions. There's something I'm gonna repeat over and over in this class, it's research research research. So make sure that you investigate what it is that you're applying for or what it is that you want. And find out as much as you can before you put all of your submission stuff together. And the next thing is follow directions. If they tell you to stand on your head while submitting your images on the computer, stand on your head while submitting your images. Places are very specific with what they want. And it's an easy way for them to disqualify you. So if you label your images incorrectly, or if you don't submit four copies of something if they ask for four copies, they're gonna take your submission and throw it in the trash. You've just made their day, they have one less thing to look at. So however they ask you to label your images is how you're going to do it. If they don't say anything to you, because a lot of places don't say anything and then you're like, what do I do? Here's what I do, and here's what I recommend. You wanna label things zero one, zero two, zero three, in the order that you want them

to be viewed, right. And the reason why you use two numbers is because if you just use the number one, it's gonna end up one and then 11. And so your order is gonna be thrown off, so you really need to use that dual numbering system. The next thing I would include is your last name and your first name. And one thing you also wanna keep in mind is what kind of file type are they asking for. So in general JPEGs and PNGs are safe, right. But they may ask for something very specific, I've had applications that ask for TIFFs. I've had applications that ask for GIFs. So you really need to pay attention to what it is, what kind of file, and make sure that you save the file in the format that they request. The other thing to think about is don't put spaces in your names. I know a lot of people say, oh, but new technology, it doesn't matter. Yeah, but some of the places you're applying to have really old technology. And so you wanna make sure that your images are gonna be readable by whoever it is that you're supplying them to. So to be safe, you wanna follow naming conventions where there's no spaces, no special characters. You can use underscores or you can use periods to separate information. So, first name, dot, last name. Or last name, dot, first name. And then you might wanna include the title or a short abbreviated version of the title in the name as well. That way if for some reason they're looking at things and they wanna check with your image list they can cross reference, like, oh not only is this number one, but this is the sky is blue. Oh right, here it is, the sky is blue on the image list. So that's helpful for those circumstances. Okay. The next thing you wanna think about is the resolution of the images. So if you are applying for something and then looking on screen, you don't need to supply more information than what they need. Screen resolution is 72 dpi. Some places ask for higher resolution so that they can zoom in on your images, by all means provide it. But you don't need to send 300 dpi images unless they're requested. And actually, if you're uploading images it'll save you a bunch of time 'cause you won't be sitting and waiting for these really large images to go where they need to go. Old school resolution would be 800 pixels by 600 pixels. And again, most people say, laptops now have higher resolution than that. Correct, they do, but some of these places are showing things on screens that are really old, or they have very old projectors that don't go wider than that. So that would be a very good base minimum to think about. I think these days, 1440 by 900, so 1440 wide by 900 pixels tall is about the lowest or maximum that I would go. I wouldn't go much higher than that, and I wouldn't really go much lower than that. You can go anywhere in between, and again, if they give you different directions, follow whatever directions they give you. Some places ask for much higher res or much bigger images, do whatever they tell you to do. The last thing you wanna think about when submitting your portfolio is a corresponding image list. Some places ask for this, some places do not but it's a good habit to get into to have one when you submit a portfolio of any kind. So the image list is going to be numbered the exact same way that you number your images, oh one, oh two, you don't necessarily have to say zero, you could just say one two three, but you wanna go in the same order. And you wanna cover all of the information that is relevant to the piece that you're talking about. Which usually is a title. You can choose to put this in quotes. You can put it in italics, you can do whatever you want, just make sure it's consistent. So it's the same on the list from the first image to the last image. You wanna include the date that the piece was created, not the full date, not like March 3rd, 2018, but just the year that it was created. You wanna list the medium. So this can be very very specific. Like, colored pencil, acrylic paint, ink, graphite on a very specific paper, like Arches watercolor paper, or it can be very very general. Like, you could just say mixed media. Personally I like to know what a piece was made out of, so I tend to err on the side of making these lists really really long. So I list every single material that I used. You don't have to, but I find it's really helpful and informative when I know exactly what the artist utilized to make the work. You wanna

then include the height and the width. In inches or in feet, or in centimeters. Again you just wanna stay consistent. So if you start by using inches, use inches the whole time. If you start by using feet, use feet the whole time. You can use the shortcuts for inches, which is quotes. Or for feet, which is a single quotation. You can spell it out, you can use abbreviations, it's just consistency that's really important. And in general the art world likes to think about the height of something first, and then the width. So you always talk about this way first, and then this way. So three feet by four feet, or 22 inches by 24 inches. That's pretty much the last thing I think that you need to be thinking about? Yes. Some applications are also gonna ask for a very brief statement on the image, so you'll put all this information and then it'll say, I created this piece out of blah because I was thinking about XYZ. Some applications do not ask for this but it's a really good idea to think about what you might say if you had two to three sentences to talk about the piece. We're done with creating a portfolio, that was a lot of information. Remember there's a PDF that will help you that has sort of all the guidelines of what we've been talking about. You may not be thinking about getting a portfolio together to submit to anything, you might be using it to set up an Etsy shop, or to start your website. Everything that we've been talking about is applicable to almost any kind of way that you might wanna use your portfolio. Just keep in mind that this is something that you're gonna keep updating, and that you really wanna just keep track of what you're doing. So over the years, create an inventory system, create a digital filing system so that everything that you're doing you can keep track of and you can pull it up as you need to and keep everything organized. Just take it slow. You know, work on editing your images one day, and then think about putting them in an order that you like, it's a step by step process. And you can take as long as you need to in order to make sure that you have everything together.

## Day 2 - CVs

- Today we're gonna talk about a CV, which is curriculum vitae. For our purposes, we're gonna only be referring to things that have to do with your art career. So this is not a work history of your entire life, it's anything that is related to what you're doing as an artist or a maker. So the thing you want to keep in mind is that this may start as something that is really small. A lot of times when I teach this class out in the world, people say, "I don't have anything to put on my CV", that's totally fine. And another thing to keep in mind is that people often refer to this as a bio, for the purposes of our class in this format, we're gonna think about the bio as a paragraph and we're going to be talking about that later. This is just a CV, it's a list, it's a work history, that has to do with anything that is related to your art career. There are a couple of things you want to keep in mind, the first thing is kind of graphic design, some people say that they don't care what these pieces look like when they get a portfolio submission. Some people really care a lot. I say you do what feels comfortable to you. So if you're somebody who has some graphic design experience and you want to make these really beautiful pieces and components that go with your portfolio, by all means, knock yourself out. If you don't care at all or you have really limited computer skills, you don't need to worry. Although, there are going to be people who might be a little judgemental about fonts you're using and what colors you're using. In the end it's really about the information and how you're presenting the information. So usually there's a date and then there's some information. Again you just wanna make sure that everything you're doing is consistent. So if you wanna put the date first and then tab in three times before you get to the information, no problem, just make sure it stays that way the entire way down your page. If you wanna put the information first and put the date on the right hand side, again no problem, just make sure it stays consistent. Every CV needs



some very critical information and this can be something you design as well. You can place it at the top, you can place it at the bottom, you can place it at the side, it doesn't matter where you put it but you really need to make sure you include your name and your contact info. This can be your address, phone number, email. At the bare minimum I would say you want your phone number and your email. If you have a studio address you could use that instead of your physical home address, if you don't wanna be listing that on things that you're sending out in the world. But you definitely need a way for people to reach you. Right? Because if they're interested they're going to have to contact you. This should be on every single page, not just the first page but every single page of anything that you submit whether it's digital or physical. Particularly with physical because sometimes things get unstapled or papers get shifted so you wanna make sure everything is labeled. So if anything gets out of order or lost, they can put it back together the way you need it to be. In your CV there are certain things that you want to be thinking about and making sure that you're including. Some of these are optional, some of these are not optional. One of the first things you could start with is where you're born, you can put the date in if you want people to know old you are or you can leave that out. But you probably want to include the location. Sometimes it can be really interesting to know that somebody was born from outta the country or they were born in a really small town in Ohio. Maybe their work is about the small town they grew up in. Giving these kinds of clues to people is usually really helpful and interesting. Let's look over the PDF and kinda go over the generic types of information that you're gonna wanna include. The first thing is probably your education, this should probably go above anything else. So even if you're tailoring your CV for residencies, for gallery shows, or whatever, you wanna make sure and include your education as one of the first things that people look at. People are interested in where you went to school, A because they might know somebody that taught where you went to school so there could be a connection there or B they're just interested in the locale, like maybe you went to school in the east coast versus the west coast and that also gives clues and information as to who you are as an artist and a person. Nothing before college should be included on this CV, right? This is a professional CV, this is your adult CV. This is not what you did in high school and all the awards you won in high school for your art making which is great but not relevant to what we're talking about. You wanna make sure and include the date that you graduated, the degree that you got, so did you get a B.A. in Studio Art or did you get an M.F.A. or did you get an A.A. from a city college, all of that is relevant. The university or the school that you went to, the city that it was in unless it's, I went to San Francisco State, you don't need to repeat San Francisco twice and then the state that the school was in. So if it's San Francisco State University, California, if it's Yale University, Connecticut. Okay? Those are all the really important bits of information that you need to include about your education. Next you want to include your exhibitions. So exhibitions can get separated so the most important and kinda the heavy-hitting exhibition is your solo. So these are ones you've had by yourself in a space, only you, all about you. If you don't have any of those, don't worry about it. Totally fine. You can just start with a category that says exhibitions and they can cover everything. Next kind of in importance are two and three person exhibitions. Next in importance will be group exhibitions. If you don't have these sort of separations, or say you only one solo exhibition, you don't need to put one solo exhibition in it's own category. It kinda looks a little funny if there's just one little guy sitting there all by himself. So make sure that you have more than one in order to separate these. If you need to include them altogether you can just create a category and call it selected exhibitions. So it's almost like you're hinting, "Hey I'm not telling you everything, I'm just telling you the things that I think are really important, there's more to this list". Even if there isn't

more to the list you can just say that and it works really well. The next category that you want to think about are awards and grants. And again you put the date and then the name of the award, the city that the award you received it in and the state. So you're always including the city and the state of whatever it is that you're listing on your CV. The next category is residencies, again if you don't have any of these, don't worry about it. I'm just trying to make sure that you have all of these categories. I like to tell students at the very beginning of their career set up a word document with all of these guys ready to go and then as you need to, you can add them in. So you have everything set up, if it's empty you can take it out. But, at least it's there so that when you start to get these things you can start to fill it in. Next you can include lectures, panels, workshops and teaching experience. So if you have a lot of these you can separate them, you can say lectures and workshops and then teaching experience. If you don't have a lot of these you can group them altogether and again you want to include the name of the lecture or the class that you taught. You want to list the place that you taught it and then you want to include the city and the state. It's always that same information repeated over and over. Next we're going to talk about your bibliography, and as you get more and more into your career you may want to think about separating your bibliography. Again if it's the beginning and you have one or two things to list, just include it in a category. But books and catalogs are seemed sort of differently than articles online or newspapers and magazines. Books and catalogs are kind of high ticket items, if you have any of those you probably want to list them separately. For those you want to include the last name of the author, the first name of the author, the title of the book that you're included in or the name of the catalog or the exhibition title. The publisher, the date this was published. If there is an ISBN number, you can include that. And if you're in a very specific portion of the book like say you're on page 22 and 23, you can include those page numbers as well. That way if somebody is actually very specifically looking for this, they can find it very very easily. The other section of your bibliography is going to include articles, these can be online, these can be physical in magazines or maybe there's both. One thing to keep in mind is that you do not want to list articles on sort of "unknown publications" and this gets a little dicey with the internet, right? Because everybody's mother or friend or whoever has a blog and maybe they've written about you and maybe that was really exciting but maybe you don't want to include that on your professional CV. That said, maybe your mother or brother or whoever runs a really well known design blog and they wrote about you, in that case, yes, you can most certainly include it on your CV. This area can be a little tricky, it can get a little gray and muddy. I would say if whatever it is that's writing about you is known by a circle of people, maybe more than 20 people or is pretty well known on the internet, feel free to include it. If it's a very small publication or something that only you and a couple of people are gonna know about, then don't include that. These also need the last name of the person who wrote the article, the first name of the person, the title of the article, where it was published, either New York Times or Design Sponge as a blog. If there's a page number and you need to include that, that's fine. If not, don't worry about it. If it's an online article I really recommend creating a link. So that somebody can click to it. If you're submitting these things digitally and you are giving somebody a PDF, they can actually click directly from your PDF onto the internet and look at the article that you're talking about. This is super helpful and people actually really do this. So be sure and include the link. One thing also to maybe think about as you are generating your CV and keeping track of everything that you've been in, I highly recommend digitally downloading any links that may have included your work into it. So if you've been published say on SF Gate or on the New York Times, save that page as a file with all of its images on your computer because links change and things disappear. So a

publication that wrote about you 20 years ago might not be live anymore and you still want to have a copy of what it looked like. So make sure you keep track of all that for yourself as well. The next section is collections and people get a little bit confused about what it is when you say collections. These are places that have purchased your work, places and people. Most of the time I recommend only including public collections. So this is not my neighbor Sam Smith who bought a painting from me. It should be Microsoft or the Four Seasons Hotel or Starbucks or Maidwell or any corporations. A lot of them really have big art collections and again it's a little clue as to who's been interested in your work and people are curious to know about where they might be able to see your work outside of a gallery or outside of your Etsy shop or outside of whatever. These all need the name, the city and the state. If you've been collect by high profile collectors, some people like to include those in their collections list but I tend to advise people to only include public collections, not individual people. So remember to be prepared to tailor this CV to whatever it is you're applying for. If you're applying for a gallery show, list your gallery shows first. If you're applying for a residency, list your residencies first. If you're applying for a teaching position, list your teaching and workshops first. There's also another thing to keep in mind which is that I recommend that people have a one page version of this CV. As you get going in your career the CV is going to get really long, at least we hope, right? You're going to have hundred and hundreds of exhibitions and you only need to really let people know about the ones that you think are important or show your range. So what I mean when I say range is, usually you start showing locally and then you might show nationally and then you might show internationally. So you might want to be able to show people kind of all the different venues that you've been exhibiting your work. Again if you that, don't worry about it. But it makes for a nice CV. In that case you might want to pull, right? You might want to extract certain things from this list, you don't want to have a 10 page CV. You definitely need to keep all of that information so on your computer you want to have the CV that has everything. Everything that you've ever done in your entire life, in your entire career, it might be 50 pages long, that would be awesome. You want to have a three page version, three pages is actually a really common length when you're applying for lots of residencies or grants, they often ask for a three page maximum CV. So for the three page version you want to pull out what you think is the most important that fills up three pages. And then some places ask for a one page version. So again these are things that you're going to be updating constantly. When you get your first New York MoMA show, that is definitely going to be one of the most important things on your CV and you want to make sure that it's on all the versions. Just keep in mind that this is going to be something that you're going to have to keep on updating and altering as you move along. Let's look at some real life examples of CVs. I've pulled some up for people at different stages of their career. So this is an emerging artist, this is actually a former student of mine named David. This is the CV that's on his website so you'll see he's got education, solo exhibitions, group exhibitions and publications, which is another way that you can list your bibliography and a teaching section. This one is for Mia Christopher. She's a local artist here in San Francisco. She's a little bit past emerging, kind of mid career-ish. That's like a little technical art term that we like to use. So here we have again all of her information aesthetic, her name, her contact information is here, we have where she was born, her education, her solo exhibitions, two person, group exhibitions, scrolling scrolling, selected press, another way you can talk about your bibliography. And we're scrolling and then she also has a separate bibliography which I think is really interesting. Next we're gonna look at mine so I'm a little bit further along than Mia but not as famous as Louise Bourgeois. So here is my CV, I tell you where I'm born, here is my education, all the residencies that I've done, selected solo and two person exhibitions, three person exhibitions,

group exhibitions and you'll notice that I have live links to all the different places that I've shown. I like people to be able to visit, it's like a way to form community a little bit. Then I've got some grants and awards, I've got catalogs and books. I separated the podcasts because I was getting a lot of requests for like where have you been interviewed so I pulled out the podcasts separately so that it was easier for people to find them. And then all the other articles that I've been in. Here some public collections and I've done a couple of public commissions. I did a job for Starbucks and I did some Best Brunches in Oakland and so I separated those because I felt like they were a little bit different and then a bunch of the lectures and the workshops I've done over the years. So this is really long. I would never print this out and turn this into something that I was submitting unless they asked for a full history CV. But I like keeping it on my website. I've gotten feedback from people saying that they really enjoy being able to look through an archive of different things that I've gone through and they really like the fact that all these links are live and that they can jump around and find things. So again, just keep in mind that different platforms, different submissions you need different kinds of CVs. And then finally let's look at Louise Bourgeois, because she's super famous, had a crazy long career. This is one gallery she shows at many galleries that exhibits her work and they have a really nice CV. They talk about where she was born, when she moved to New York, when she became an American citizen and when she passed away. Her education, she was at several different institutions and so they list those. Although, they aren't listing the city and the area in all of them which I would if I were them. Here's selected solo exhibitions because if we were going to scroll through all the exhibitions that Louise has been in, in her entire lifetime, we'd be here forever. So we've got these broken down by year which is super helpful and then we've got awards that she's won and they also did this backwards. They did stuff historically first so they're starting with 73 and they're ending with more recent stuff. I always putting more recent stuff first because it's really kind of the things that people are most interested in, what have you done lately? I think because she is a historical artist and because she's passed away it makes sense to put it in chronological order. But I would not recommend doing that for yourself. Then they also have the place where you can download it so if you wanted a version of this so you could keep it, they have that as well. A lot of artists do that on their website, I don't tend to do that but it's something you could definitely think about. Remember that your CV is something that is going to change and grow as your career changes and grows. Hopefully this will help you get started.

### Day 3 - Bios and Artist Statements

- The next component that you want to get ready for any submission or portfolio packet are a couple of writing components. So the first thing we're gonna talk about is a bio, and by this I mean just a paragraph bio. A very short, little statement about you. It's narrative, it just talks about you and kind of introduces you to whoever it is that's reading it. The other way this bio gets used, and this is really funny if you think about it, is a lot of times when galleries or museums, or book publishers, or whoever, is going to do some press about you, they ask you to provide your own bio. They don't want to do the research and write it about you. You have to just give it to them ready to go. It's a really good idea to have several versions of these. You want a really short, like 100 word, if you've ever opened up Word and tried to type, it counts for you the number of words at the bottom, and you really want to keep track of that. So you want a very short, super sweet 100 word bio, and then you probably want like a 300 word bio, and then maybe a 500 word bio. And I usually have one that just includes everything, like everything I can think of that might be of interest. Things that happened a long time ago in the past, things that are super current. I just kind of keep updating

it, and then I cut and paste from it as I need to to make the shorter ones. So I have a Word document that says like everything. Where I was born, where I lived, where I grew up, the chocolate I used to eat when I was in junior high. No I don't know, just funny little tidbits about myself that I think might be interesting, I put them all into this really long document, and then I can just steal from it when I need to. So there are a couple things to keep in mind as you write this paragraph bio. This is the hard part. You write it in the third person, so you write about yourself as if you were someone else Lisa Solomon was born in Tucson, Arizona. It's weird, it's uncomfortable, especially when you first start doing it. But as you get going, you'll get used to it and it'll be okay. Just write about yourself in the third person. It actually might be helpful. You can just pretend like you're writing about somebody else, so maybe it'll make it a little easier, okay. Some things that you want to think about, and none of these are things that you have to include. Remember when I said research, research, research? Well you want to read as many bios as you can. It'll give you a feel for how they operate in the world. It may give you some ideas for language, because go ahead and steal somebody else's language, but just make it yours. Don't copy their exact sentence, but maybe they said something that you were like, oh yeah, that's like my work, and that might help you. You can take that sentence and then rewrite it so it becomes more specific to you. So read, read, read, read. I'm gonna show you a couple in a minute, just as examples, but you want to read as many as you can out in the world. Things that you could think about including are your education, so where you went to school, where you lived, places you like to visit, different locales like that. You might want to include different shows and residencies, and awards that you've won. You might want to again think about range. Like I've shown locally at this gallery, nationally at this gallery, internationally at this venue. You could also think about what awards or residencies that you feel like were particularly meaningful for you. This could be things that you think are prestigious, like this place is really famous and I got into this, and yay for me. Or it could also be just this place was really motivational, and it helped me create a new body of work. Things like that can go in your bio. If it's applicable, like if you're talking more about things that you're making instead of art shows, you can mention clients that you've worked with. Or if you work both as like a freelance illustrator, and as a fine artist, you might want to talk about both of those. Unlike your CV, which is really just a list, right? It's just straight facts. The bio is a narrative, so you can say some really cool things that you've done, or things that are interesting to you. Like say you're a cycling enthusiast. Maybe some of your work is even about bicycles, and it's about bicycles because you spent four days on a bicycle in France. The bio is the place for you to insert that information so that people can learn a little bit about you, and your practice, and what you're doing, and why you're doing it. You also, if you have space and enough energy to write about it, you could do condensed versions of what your work is about. So, again, say your work is about balloons. You can talk about where the inspiration for that came from, or you can talk about where you buy your balloons. Maybe you buy them from a very small store in Paris that's only open on the first Sunday of every month. The bio is the place for you to talk about that, because it's interesting. Those are things that people want to know about you and your work, and this is the place where they can find out about those things. In the PDF, I've included two bios as samples for you. One is from a very famous artist, James Turrell. It's a longer version one, it's multiple paragraphs. One, two, three, four, five, five paragraphs. So it's a great example of a long version of the bio, and then also I've included a older bio from Lisa Compton, who's a Creativebug instructor. And we're also gonna look at her current bio, because it's a little bit different than the one that I've included in the PDF, but I think the comparison will be really good because you can see what it used to be, and what it is now, and what she's changed in it. Let's look

at a few other Creativebug instructor bios online just to give you an idea of what to look for, what they look like, how long they are. So this is Lisa Congdon's current bio. It's on her website, it's very short, it's just a little paragraph. It talks a lot about clients that she's worked with, and books that she's been involved with. This is Jen Hewett's bio. Hers is also really short, but it talks about how she has a BA in English literature, which I think is really interesting. Sometimes people are fascinated when you haven't gone to art school, or when art hasn't been the number one thing in your life for a long time. Then there's August Wren's, or Jennifer, about page. Hers is a little bit longer. It also lists where she's represented, and some interviews and other things that she's done. One thing to keep in mind as you're doing research and looking at people's bios, you'll notice that the three that I've shown you so far are people who do a really wide variety of things. You should be researching and looking at people whose paths, or who are making things that are similar to yours. So these people, they have written books, they do fine art and commercial illustration. They do a lot of different things. Maybe you're focused on one area, which is fine, or maybe you're focused all over the place. If you find people that are similar to what you're doing, it'll help you craft a bio that makes sense. It can help you decide what to include, what to edit out. Maybe it'll even spark an idea, like oh I didn't even think that would be interesting. So be sure and just look all around. This is Jody Alexander's. You'll notice too that online a lot of people include photos of themselves on these bio pages. So if you're thinking about putting a website together, be thinking about that as well. And this is Sonya Philip's. So Sonya puts both her about little short bio, and her statement about her practice on the same page. The bio may feel hard, but the next thing we're gonna talk about may seem even more impossible. We're gonna try and tackle the dreaded artist statement. A lot of times people ask, do I really need an artist statement? Yes. You really need an artist statement. Every curator and gallerist that I've ever had come into my studio says that they actually read the artist statement, and they're really looking for parody between what's going on in terms of what they're looking at visually, and what an artist is writing about in terms of their own work. Sometimes people say, but my work isn't really about anything. That is not true, your work is always about something. Even if it's something as simple as the color red. My work is about the color red. That's something. You cannot get away with, in contemporary art in particular, saying that your work isn't about anything. Your work is about something, and the artist statement is where you get to write out and explain to people what it is that your work is about. It doesn't need to be really, really long. Do not try and write in art speak, unless that's how you talk about your work. I always tell my students in college that, feel free to use the word Peripatetic if you know what it means, and you would use it in everyday life, but if you don't know what it means, do not use it in your artist statement. Your artist statement should feel very genuine. It should be as if you were talking to somebody about your work. It needs to feel authentic. And it's hard, it's definitely hard. And this is also something that's not gonna be static, because every time you make a new body of work, anytime you try a new project, anytime you do anything new, you have to revamp your statement. Unless you're super lucky and you find one idea that you're gonna work with for your entire career, you are going to be continually updating and rewriting, and revamping your artist statement. So here are some tips that I've come up with that hopefully will help you. Work on this in small bits. Ask somebody to read it and help you edit. Read a lot of artist statements. Just like I told you to read a bunch of bios, go out there and read artist statements. Read them from people whose work is similar to yours. Read them from people whose work is incredibly different from yours. Read them just to get an idea of what kind of structure you like. Some of them are like really flowery and poetic, and some of them are very conceptual, and very informative. So the first thing that I always say is to start with very short sentences. I know that

seems counterintuitive, but it's actually really helpful for clarity. You can always add adjectives, right? It's like if you're cooking, you can always add more salt but you can't take the salt away. So I really think about trying to just clearly state what it is that you do. So for example, I make large paintings, right? One sentence, then you can start to add to it. I make large, predominantly blue paintings. I make large, predominantly blue paintings that are loosely based on Antarctic glacial structures. There, so we went from a very simple sentence structure to a much more robust one that's talking about what you're doing. But it's so much easier to start with just I make large paintings, right? It's not hard to wrap your head around. Okay, tip number two. Avoid using a passive voice as much as possible. So I'm gonna give you a couple examples, and again this is all in the PDF, so you can look at this at your leisure when you feel like it. So here's a sentence that starts with an I-N-G word, and this isn't necessarily incorrect, and it's not even necessarily passive, but a lot of times a passive voice uses a lot of I-N-G words at the beginning of sentences. So, having grown up in Santa Cruz, surfing was a big influence on me. Okay, that's passive. What you really want in your artist statement is to have an active voice. It's okay to use a lot of I's in your artist statement. I do this, I do that. This is the right place to say I, all the time. So I grew up in Santa Cruz where the surfing culture was a big influence on me. You can hear the difference, right? The first one isn't really about you. The first one is something that happened to you. And the second sentence is something that you're doing. You want the artist statement to be you in action. Also be cautious of the phrase, has been. So my work has been greatly influenced by growing up in a commune. That is a passive statement. You want to say, I grew up in a commune, which greatly influenced my work, right? When you hear it out loud, you can really hear the difference between those two statements. You know your work best. At least your side of whatever story it is that you're telling. You want to explain to your audience the things that they wouldn't know about you just in looking at the work. Those are kind of like the juicy tidbits that you want to know, right? When you go to a museum and you look at something, don't you want to know, were they in France when they painted this? Who did they go to school with? Where did they go to school? Maybe they were in Germany and that influenced something. Those are the little really great nuggets of information that you want to make sure and include in these artist statements. What do you want the viewer to get from your work, right? If you were able to mind meld with somebody, what is it that you would tell them? That's the information that goes in these statements. I would say aim for a page in length. It can be shorter for sure, but I feel like again start with more and edit down, right? Even though you're starting with short sentences and you're gonna end up with longer sentences, start with a page and cut it down to what you want it to be, right? Here are some things that you might want to consider in terms of what to include. If you are feeling stuck and you don't know what to start talking about, I really recommend making lists and writing things out. What you may want to talk about are the materials. So, are you an oil painter? Are you a ceramic sculptor? Those are things that might be a way for you to get started in terms of talking about your work. You could also talk about relevant facts about yourself. I was born here, I grew up there, I moved there, I traveled to Australia. Whatever it is that you want to say, just state it very clearly. Specific subject matters that you're interested in are also great talking points. So, what is the work visually about? Is it about balloons, is it about planes, is it about cars, is it about traveling? Right, you can start writing those ideas down and then building more sentences around it to describe what it is that the work is about, and why you're interested in that topic. You could talk about general ideas or the deep things, or the issues that your work is about. So maybe your work is political. Maybe you're motivated by the current president, or maybe you're motivated by something locally, like social

justice, or food, or bees dying. I don't know what it is that you might be interested in, or what your work is talking about, but the artist statement is a space for you to explain what those issues are and why they're important to you, and how your work is based on them. Other things that you might want to address. You could talk about traditions, so what influenced you, what your personal history is. Were there any specific teachers that influenced you? Or any specific art movement that influenced you? You can use those as an entry point in your artist statement. You might want to talk about a critical point of view in regards to your work. So, where does it fit in in say contemporary art? Or even art historically. What might be influencing you? What are you doing that might be different? So, if you're an abstract expressionist, how is your work different than say Jackson Pollock's? That might be something that you could include in your statement. You could also talk about what it is that you want to do in terms of your art, and it relating to other artwork around you. Because art doesn't get made in a vacuum, and a lot of times people are really interested. They want to know that you know where your art fits in. So, yes I'm working with recycled materials in the tradition of, say James Castle. And I'm doing it differently because I'm not collaging them, I'm building sculptures. So just even a critical point of view on your own work and how it fits into a bigger scheme is something that could be inserted into your artist statement. There's also techniques and style that you can talk about. So maybe you do something really differently that nobody else does. Maybe you pour acrylic medium into sheets, and you peel it up, and you cut it, and you make structures out of it. And you haven't seen anybody else do that. So your artist statement is a place to maybe reveal some secrets that you want to about your work that other people might find interesting. You can also just literally talk about the style that you're working in. I'm working in a trompe l'oeil so I'm trying to make things really hyper-realistic. Or I'm working intuitively. I like things that are really organic. It's really important to just kind of think about and focus on what it is that you think your work is doing. If these categories aren't helping you in terms of trying to get your artist statement going, in the PDF I ask you a series of questions. So you can scroll through those questions and just answer them, and maybe through the process of answering them you'll be able to develop what it is that you want to say. The PDF is chalk full of artist statements for you to read as well. Although really you should go online and read lots and lots, and lots of artist statements. But one thing I want to try and walk you through before we stop talking about artist statements, thank God, is a warmup that I like to do. You're gonna just try and pick 15 adjectives to talk about yourself or your work. And this is key, okay? If you hear nothing else, hear this. These adjectives should be incredibly specific. Do not use words like unique, or colorful, because as much as yes you are unique, because we're all unique flowers and rainbows in the world, that does not help me understand your work. Everybody's work is unique, and colorful really doesn't mean anything either. Because, the markers over here are colorful. The flowers over here are colorful. They're not the same colors. If you're working colorfully, describe the colors. I work a lot in reds, I work a lot, even if you say I work a lot in rainbow colors, right? That gives you a much better sense of what it is that I'm doing, instead of the word colorful. You really, really, really want to drill down and find some adjectives that are specific to you. So I'm gonna try and find some, maybe not 15, but a few that are very specific to me just to try and give you an idea of how you might get started. Okay, I'm thinking about my work. I actually do use a lot of color, I'm really interested in chroma. I like the word chroma instead of color, so I might write the word chroma. Okay, and I also like things in rainbow order. When I think about myself, the word that I always use is hybrid. I'm a mixed race woman. My mom is Japanese and my dad is Caucasian, and this whole hybrid, this meshing of two different cultures and ideas that come together have shown up over and over again



in my work. I like to mix media, oh wait I could write that down, in unusual and surprising ways. And I always feel like that links back to the word hybrid, so I'm a huge fan of hybrid. I also just want to think about descriptors, like what is it that my work does? I'm really interested in drawing, but with nontraditional materials. So let's write non. And you'll see some of these are not words. That's okay, right? I'm really just trying to make a list of things that relate to me. I like to draw, I also do installations. Once you have these words, get a thesaurus. Either a real thesaurus, or go online, and type them in. So let's start with chroma, and see what you get. I've got acrylic, color, cosmetic, dye, enamel, latex, makeup, oil, pigment. Hm, that's interesting. Coloring, flat, greasepaint, tempera, veneer, okay chroma is not helping me too much. Let's try hybrid. Amalgam, combination, bastard, hm that's not good. Halfbreed, also not good. Compound. I like compound, compound is good. You'll also get antonyms and then you'll get words that are related. So if I go down to assorted, I've got different, diverse, diversified, heterogeneous. There's hybrid, indiscriminate, miscellaneous. Miscellaneous is a nice word. So as you start to work through the thesaurus, you might end up going down a rabbit hole and looking up more and more words, and you might come up with more adjectives. Just keep writing them down, and then build some sentences around the adjectives that make sense. And then last but not least, if you're totally stuck, there's this really cool thing called Arty Bollocks online. It's a random artist statement generator. And it's kind of baloney, but it's really fun. So if you just click Write My Statement, it says, my work explores the relationship between postmodern discourse and vegetarian ethics, with influences as diverse as Derrida and Joni Mitchell, new tensions are distilled from both orderly and random narratives. You get it, it's funny, and it's a good way to procrastinate if you don't want to write the statement. But actually there is some structure here that could be helpful. If you used this, and plugged in your own words, it actually could be a really useful way to start your own artist statement. Good luck writing your artist statement. I know it's probably not something you're looking forward to, but it's really essential, and it's definitely something that you need for this packet.

#### Day 4 - Engagement in Traditional Venues

- If you wanna do anything with your work, you have to get involved. This means you have to seek out a community, you have to research, you have to look at things, you have to understand things about your own work, and see kind of where you fit in. This is hard and there's a lot of strategies, and this is not a one size fit all thing because I don't know what you wanna do with your work. Maybe, eventually, you wanna be in a museum show, or maybe that doesn't interest you at all. Maybe you just wanna have a show at your local cafe so that all your friends and family can come, and you can sell a few things, and have a really nice party. So, I think the first place for you to start in thinking about engagement and sort of how to get your work out there is to really think about what it is that you want. And, again, this is a moving goalpost. So, in the first year that you're making things, like maybe you're brand new to painting and you only have five paintings in your studio. Well, what's the goal? Do you want those paintings to be in a show? Do you wanna sell them? Do you want somebody to write a blog post about you? Do you wanna be interviewed? What is it that you want? And think about that and maybe write those down because I think that sometimes writing things down helps you manifest what it is that you want in the world, and that's really what we're talking about, today, is how to manifest what you want for yourself and your work. And the only way to do that is to really think clearly through it and then come up with some steps or some goals, or some ways to process what it is to get to that end goal. One of the biggest things, to use my favorite word, you're gonna do is research. You have to research. So, if you want a show

in a cafe, you have to find out what cafes in your area have shows and then you have to find out who's in charge of those shows. Is there somebody who works in the coffee store who's the curator of that space? Is it just a free for all? You sign up on a website and it goes in the list of the way that people signed up. So, if you're number 22, 22 months from now, you're gonna have a show. Who knows? You have to figure all of that stuff out. One thing that I think is really great is to look and see what's out in the world, and there are several ways you can do this. Obviously, now that we live in the digital age, you can look online. You can also go to a library. You can also subscribe to magazines. There are a million art blogs, and art magazines, and things that are out there for you to look at. I'm gonna give you a very short, condensed overview of some things that I like to look at, some things that I find interesting. There's a slightly longer list in the PDF of things for you to look at but really, there are millions of places and things that you can be looking at. And it's really all about figuring out how you wanna engage. There are different levels of engagement that you can participate in the world in. The first thing I wanna talk about is just some art magazines because I think it's really kind of cool to see what's going on in the contemporary art world. Whether or not you wanna participate in it. Maybe this will make you say, oh, I don't wanna have anything to do with that and that's great, that's fine. It's better to know what you don't wanna do just as much as knowing what you do wanna do. One of my, sort of, favorite hoity-toity art magazines is Artforum. This is their website. They have news, and shows, and things about the current issue. They also have all of these columns and they talk about music, and books, and top 10 lists, and there's videos, now. And they also have a Bookforum component and, for this site, in particular, the books generally have to do with art and contemporary art. There's just a lot of information, here. Even looking in the right hand side, here, at the galleries that are advertising on Artforum is really kind of cool and interesting. These are all big name, New York, important galleries. If you wanna know what people are paying attention to in the contemporary art world, these are the galleries that you wanna be looking at. So, just looking at this website, alone, can take you all day to learn a whole bunch of information. All of these websites also have email lists that you can subscribe to and then in your inbox, you'll get little tidbits of information. I've ended up unsubscribing from a lot of them but in the beginning, I subscribed to everything, and I was constantly looking at everything, trying to figure it out, which magazines, or which mailing lists or newsletters were interesting to me. I'm gonna show you one more art magazine but, again, there are hundreds of them, out there, and you can go to your library, and they may even have physical copies, so you can actually flip through them, too. This one's ARTNews. This is more newsy, hence the name. So, it talks a lot about curators changing jobs or artists and like the news aspects of what's going on with them. There's not as much, sort of, criticism. Artforum has a lot more criticism and conceptual thought around it. ARTNews has less of that but it's still fascinating and, again, there's all this information. They have market news because some people treat art like a business, and they're buying and selling things in order to make money, and so this magazine, in particular, talks about that. There are reviews, there's a retrospective section, there's an artist section, so if you are like, I don't know any artists that I like, go here and look at all the artists, and click until you find ones that you like, and then follow those artists to the galleries that they show. And look at the other artists that that gallery shows. So, you'll see how you just slowly build on your information. You just move from one website to the next, really trying to figure out what it is that you like and why you like it, and how it might pertain to you. One of the best ways to get engaged is to check out your local art scene. Almost every city, even small cities have at least one or two venues that you can go and see real art in the flesh. Maybe it'll even be an artist reception, so you can meet the artist, you can meet the people behind the scenes,

because that's super important. It's really important for you to be involved in your community. The way that opportunities organically happen is when you're involved and so you need to go out, and look at things, and talk to people, and again, I know this is hard. Maybe it doesn't seem like it but I'm kind of a shy, introverted, quiet person outside of this space and I don't necessarily go running around, and talking to a million people at openings but I do go to them. I support my friends. I go when there's something that is interesting that I think I should see or something that looks like something I've never seen before that I feel like I should be informed about. Here in San Francisco, there's a very straight-forward website called ArtBusiness.com and this guy Alan, who runs this website, has been going to and documenting openings in San Francisco for years. You can see all the pictures on the website. So, there's an archive but this is just the page for 2018 and then, down here, you can see, click to see all the 2017 art openings. And you can just keep going backwards and backwards. This is a really great way to check out not only the artists that are showing in these exhibition spaces but what do these spaces look like? Do they have four walls? Do they have 10 walls? Do they have movable walls? Do they have concrete floors? Do they have wood floors? All this kind of little bits of information that maybe you can't garner just from looking at a gallery's website, you might be able to learn by looking at these photographs. I don't know if every city has an extensive list like this one but I'm sure there are websites, wherever you are, that tell you about the galleries and what's going on in your local scene. One thing that I really wanna encourage you to do is to ask questions. I know sometimes the art world or the people in art, or maker societies, or whatever seem kind of closed off and maybe you'd like something that you can't get involved in but that's really not true. If you keep going to things and you show up, you'll become a familiar face, and then you'll find somebody who's like, hey. And then you can ask that person. Hey, how did you get your show here? Or how did you learn about this? Or, you know, whatever it is that you're thinking about or wondering about, just ask the question. I know that in my experience, generally, people are really nice and they're pretty open. And the only way to find out if somebody's going to be friendly is to ask them the question. If they're not friendly, fine. Move on and find somebody else who is but you really shouldn't feel too intimidated. Like really try and make friends, get involved, get yourself out there. One other thing that you could do in order to research art and artists in your area or internationally is to read reviews about art and art that's being made around the world. Again, I'm only gonna show you one site, here, but there's a PDF with more information and you can always Google, and those other magazines will actually lead you to more sites that have reviews. There's a local website, here, called Art Practical. They have a whole bunch of reviews on art that's happening here in San Francisco but they also have writers from all over the United States that are sending in missives and columns. And they talk about different events, so again, if you're not clear what's going on in your area, look for a page that describes the local art events, or the local dance events, or whatever it is that you're interested in. And all of these places, now, have Twitter feeds and Instagram, and places you can go where they promote events, and talk about what it is that's happening. Finally, let's talk about artists and them as a resource. So, artists not only have their own Twitter feeds, and Instagrams, and other things that you can look at, there are blogs that they write where they share really good inside information and personal experiences. One of my favorites is Joanne Mattera's Art Blog. She's been doing it for years and years. I mean, I think you could probably spend weeks reading her blog if you go back through the archives but she talks about what it is that she's up to, and she goes to shows, and she posts pictures from all the art fairs, and all the other events that she goes to. So, it's a really great way to learn not only more about her practice but how she engages with the world, right? You need to also see how other people get

involved in their local communities and maybe it's something that you can try on your own. Once you've figured out how you're engaged in the world, you wanna really start thinking about opportunities for yourself and for your work. One of the great ways to start is by looking for juried exhibitions. So, juried exhibitions are usually open to a public, a wide public. Sometimes, they're very localized. Like only women artists, or only artists living in Alameda County, or whatever it is. So, make sure you follow the directions and read who it is that can apply but those kinds of opportunities are really great ways to get your first shows on that CV that you're trying to build up. There are a couple things to keep in mind. You wanna see where the venue is. So, are you gonna have to ship work? You wanna see if you have to drop off things in person because sometimes they only accept work in person. You might also really wanna consider who the juror is. So, a lot of these exhibitions are juried by big wigs in the art world. Either other artists that are relatively well known or curators that are of some importance. Some of them work at local museums, some of them work at international museums, or they have all different kinds of connections. Here's something to think about. The jurors of the shows that you're applying to, a lot of them, especially the curators, are going to really remember what they're looking at. They may not pick you for their show, they may just say, oh, this work is really interesting and they are notorious for remembering names and artwork for years to come. So, I've had curators who have seen my work in something and five years later, they get in contact with me. I remember when I saw your work in this thing and do you still have that piece, or what are you working on, now, or can I do a studio visit, and it was all because they saw one slide in one thing at one point in time a long time ago. So, you can really be strategic about who it is, whose eyeballs are looking at your work, and juried shows are an excellent way to do that. The way that the internet is, now, you can always Google jurors, right? So, if it's a curator from a museum, Google them. What kind of shows do they put together? You can learn a lot about what kind of work that they're interested in, what kind of things they like to do outside of maybe the curatorial practice in their museum, maybe they also have side curatorial things. You can really start to think about, oh, if this person sees my work, I think they'll really like it. Another thing is, you can save yourself some headache. If you notice that this juror really only likes, say, abstract work with nothing pictorial in it and you're an illustrator, and you're doing straight up representations of people, maybe you don't wanna submit to that exhibition because they probably won't be that interested in what you're doing. Juried exhibitions sometimes have a fee. Some of them are free but some of them have a fee associated with them. So, if you've done your research and you know that your work isn't gonna be a good fit, you can just save yourself the time and the energy of applying. I wanna give you at least one opportunity website that shows a lot of different things that are going on. This is an international one. It's called Re-title. They constantly post about residencies and exhibitions but there are so many websites that do this and there's a long list of resources, not only in the PDF on this day but at the end of the PDF, there are also some other resources that you can look at to find some juried exhibitions that might be of interest to you. Another thing to do is to just look at websites and see if they have open submission criteria. So, this is a website for Southern Exposure, it's a San Francisco local non-profit and they have a whole page dedicated to how they are looking at submissions, and what it is their review process is, and how you can apply. So, just start looking out there and seeing if there are things that are open to you. If you start going down this route of juried exhibitions and looking for open calls, this website is key. This is Call For Entry or CaFE. This is where you can find things that are open to you where you can actually apply. They have a complete submission process, here, so if you find something that you feel like is a good fit, you can just apply right here on their website. You'll upload images, you'll upload your bio, you'll

upload your CV, you'll put it all there and it'll all be ready to go. And this is why it's so important that you put your portfolio together, that you have your CV ready to go, that you have your artist statement because all these different juried exhibitions or other open calls are gonna be asking for some of those components. Maybe all of them, maybe two of them, maybe only one of them, you never know but it's good to just have them ready so that if you need to edit them really quickly, you can make some adjustments and then just apply. Because it's really important that you just apply. Finally, there is this website called SlideRoom. This is another really commonly used submission process website. So, if you see something online that says click here and it'll take you to SlideRoom, this is how you're gonna apply for it. And, again, this is where you will upload your images, or your statements, or your project proposals, or whatever it is that they're asking for. You create an account. The great thing about this being all online is that a lot of times, you can start and stop, and save what it is that you're working on. So, if you're unsure about your statement and you wanna sleep on it before you submit it, you can do that with these. You can upload it, you can decide, you can delete it, you can re-upload a new one, and it'll remember everything for you and keep track of everything. It will even remind you, oh, you can't submit this because you haven't included this, yet. So, it'll give you a little alert if there's something that you need to take care of. If juried shows aren't your thing, you can consider looking into artist registries. These are generally online databases that have a bunch of different artists in them, and curators and gallerists will often visit these registries to find artists to fill holes in their shows or exhibitions. This is a really good way to get your work out there. It's relatively painless because you just send them information, you're not gonna get rejected or accepted, necessarily. You're just gonna be providing information and access to your work, and maybe something great will come out of it. How do you find where these artist registries live? This is one really great site. It's the Artist Help Network. They have a list of organizations and they're in alphabetical order. It's a great resource. This is a gallery called Pierogi. They're in New York and he actually instituted this really awesome system where artists sent him physical pieces of artwork that he kept in these flat files and you can still go visit them, today. They're in the back room of the gallery. He also put them out on exhibition all around the country and so they went from venue to venue, and people can come, and open up the flat files, and look through them. It's a really cool thing. I don't think he's accepting submissions anymore but I just love it as an idea. That said, there are still some places that are accepting submissions like that. This is one of them, this is Kentler Gallery and they accept proposals or pieces two times a year, and you can have your work in their flat files if you get accepted. Another great way to kinda get your foot in the door and create community, and get your work seen by a lot of people is to join an Open Studios. Here in San Francisco, it's ArtSpan that runs Open Studios. They usually do it one, actually, now they do it two months worth of weekends in the fall. So, wherever you live, check and see if there's a place, an organization that is sponsoring this type of thing. They also do it here in the east bay, it's a separate Open Studios, not run by ArtSpan. You're gonna set up and open your studio to the public. So, people have little maps and they walk around, and they come and find your studio, and they engage with you, and they look at your work, and they buy your work, and they find out more about you. A lot of gallerists and curators actually go to Open Studios when they're looking for new work or people, fresh faces that they haven't seen before. So, it's a really great way to make an introduction to a whole bunch of people. Open Studios has a different vibe than traditional gallery exhibitions. It's a lot more informal. People are gonna come and ask you questions, and engage with you, but it's really good practice because you have to get a price list together, you have to organize your artwork, if it needs to be framed, you have to get it framed, so it's a really good stepping stone to

sort of a larger exhibition. Also, it's a lot of eyeballs looking at your stuff and a lot of people are gonna take your card, and look at your website, and maybe find that through your newsletter or mailing list. So, it's a really great way to kind of put yourself out there. But not in a very intimidating format. Open Studios sites will often have a toolkit or something that will help you get organized. A timeline, what to do six months before, three months before, how to prepare, what kind of PR to get ready for, how to answer questions, if there's materials that you might want like business cards. Sometimes they will print things in conjunction with Open Studios so you could have your work with the Open Studios logo on it so people can take that away and remember what it is that they saw in your space. There's also social media tips and how to prepare your work. There's some really great information. The engagement part of this process may feel a little tricky or intimidating. Maybe you don't think you're a social butterfly or you don't feel like going out and talking to people. Trust me, though, you're in a room full of people who are probably more like you than you think. A lot of artists feel intimidated by openings or are uncomfortable going out and being around a lot of people. It's okay. Just go out there and do it. Figure out who it is that you wanna talk to, what kind of connections you wanna make, you'll be really surprised at how the small, little conversation that you had with somebody in the corner of the room can really open up some kind of magical door for you and can get your work out there the way that you want it to be seen.

#### Day 5 - Engagement in Nontraditional Venues

- Engagement is a really big part of your future as an artist or a maker. So I wanna go over sort of the players, who's involved in the art world, and maybe get into some of the places where you can end up showing. Maybe you've gotten your toes a little bit wet, you've been accepted to a juried exhibitions and now you wanna see what to do next. So let's talk about some of the places and people and spaces that you should be engaging in on the next step on your art journey. So there are sort of the big really well known spaces that you probably already are familiar with wherever you're living, like museums. Most people are familiar with museums as a place to go and look at art. Some people don't realize that a lot of museums these days have contemporary spaces where they show young, emerging, or even established local people, or people who might of interest to the community. That's really what museums are there for, they're there to engage with the community. It's not an easy venue to get access to, like you can't just call somebody up and say, hey, can I show in your museum? But if you start to know who the curators are you can make contact with them, they might come and do a studio visit with you. There's potential there to show in a group show or maybe some curator will watch your career for a while and as you move through your career they might ask you to participate in the museum in some way, shape, or form. There's also these spaces called nonprofit spaces and in a minute I'm gonna show you a couple examples of those, so you have a better idea of what they do and where they might be. Most cities do have some kind of nonprofit exhibition space that artists have access to. They're a great place actually to volunteer. If you wanna start to get to know people in your community it's really awesome if you volunteer at a nonprofit space. So here in San Francisco, for example, there's a place called Southern Exposure. They have a monster drawing rally where lots and lots of artists from the area come and do drawings that they donate the proceeds to the space for. They also have auctions and a lot of events and functions where they need help. So if you're willing to come and set up chairs or maybe take some photographs or doing some videoing for them you can make connections and contacts that way. So keep that in mind. There are also what are known as alternative spaces. So they really look for work that maybe can't be shown in other spaces. So if you're working on some kind of

project that is community oriented or is really ephemeral, isn't gonna last, maybe you're working on making art out of trash that's gonna degrade or you wanna have grass, living grass in a gallery space. Sometimes museums or commercial galleries aren't that interested in pieces that aren't going to be around for a really long time. Alternative spaces and nonprofits are venues that might be more interested in things that aren't traditional, like paintings and drawings. Then there are commercial galleries. And the thing to really remember and keep in mind when it comes to commercial galleries is that ultimately their goal is to sell artwork. So if you are, again, making things that aren't easy to sell commercial galleries might not be the correct venue for you. Or maybe if you can work in two different approaches, so you have things that you make for sale in commercial galleries and projects and other things that you do in alternative spaces and nonprofit spaces. That's when you would maybe start thinking about approaching a commercial gallery. When you have something physical that's easy to put up on the wall that somebody can take home, that's really the main focus of commercial galleries. Although I do have to say, there are a lot of spaces out there now that like to have things that are edgy and not necessarily traditional. It can be about balance and it is ultimately about connection. There are some gallerists who are interested in supporting installations or work that's ephemeral or social practice pieces. And there are some that are not. And the best way to find that out is to do your research. So there's our favorite word again, you have to research. Go online, go to the spaces, spend time getting to know what it is and who it is that they show. There are other types of galleries that exist in educational institutions. So every city college or university will have a space that usually showcases not only student work, but sometimes work from outside artists. It's a great way maybe to get your foot in the door and have a little bit of experience, especially if you could do something that the university can tie to some kind of lecture or event that makes sense on campus. So keep that in mind. There are also artist co-ops. So if you are having a hard time kind of navigating what to do, maybe you wanna actually get involved with a group of people. Some of these co-ops are studio oriented, so a bunch of artists share spaces and there's a gallery within that space and everybody gets a turn having a show in that gallery. Some co-ops are more motivational-based, so yeah, let's get together and do critiques and make sure that we hold each other accountable. Some people like to apply for shows together or some people like to try and curate exhibitions together and then put themselves in the exhibition, so that therefore they have something that they can plan for and work toward together as a goal. It makes it a little easier if you have some friends involved, right? There are also online spaces where you can showcase your work, like SoChi Gallery is an example of that, but there are a lot of them out there. One thing to definitely keep in mind is there are spaces and people and places that aren't necessarily reputable. So be sure and followup with people, ask questions, see if you know somebody who's shown at that space. The art world is actually really, really small and people tend to look out for one another. So an artist will often say, hey, watch out, I had a bad experience. Or a gallery will say, hey, watch out, I had a bad experience with this artist. So you really have to be careful about how you act and make sure that you act professionally. Lastly, let's talk about cafes and stores, because a lot of spaces now are offering artwork in those types of venues. And they're great. They're actually often really comfortable stepping stones. You can sometimes get commercial gallerists or even curators to see what you're doing when it's up in that kind of venue. And it's really sort of friendly and a little less intimidating than say maybe a big, huge gallery with clean walls and concrete floors and perfect lighting. There are some things to keep in mind while you look for these alternative venues. I think it's great to show your work in say a hair salon or a coffee shop or a store, but really think about who else have they been showing? Are they known for the artwork that they

show? Do they have a designated art space? Or is your artwork gonna be hanging above a rack of clothes? Not that that's bad per se, but if your work is really detailed and people can't get up close to see it, because it's 10 feet high on the wall and there's all these clothes in front of it that might not be the right venue for you. So really just pay attention, go to some of the exhibitions that they're having, see how many people come to their opening, see what kind of promotion the spaces do, see what you can also offer the space and see if you can put together some kind of collaborative effort, so that it's successful not only for you, but for the venue as well. I wanna talk briefly about the people who are involved in kind of a typical art world. So there's you, the artist and the maker, the whole thing doesn't work unless you make the things that you make and people are interested in what it is that you make. So you are key. There's also a traditional art dealer or a gallerist. They tend to run an exhibition space. A lot of spaces now go to contemporary art fairs or they do things outside of their commercial gallery space. That's something you might wanna pay attention to if you want your work to be exposed outside of your local area then you definitely wanna try and look for a gallery that will help you do that. Some galleries also help you make connections to other galleries or will help promote your work to the right curators or the right museums or other spaces. That's kind of a part of a gallery's job. There's also art consultants. They tend to work with private clients to help them build an art collection. Some of them also are curators for different exhibition venues. Most major cities have several kinds of art consultants that work in the area. They also work directly with galleries in order to help place your work. Then there are art collectors. These are the people who are gonna purchase your work, yay. We all need art collectors. Just be a little bit careful. There are some people who claim that they're art collectors and wanna come do a studio visit or might string you along and not actually purchase anything. Most collectors should or would deal with a consultant or a gallery or a coffee shop or something directly. If you don't have any of those people working for you, by all means, interface with collectors. Open studios is a situation where you might have face to face interaction with a collector. That's great. Just be careful, your time is valuable, you don't wanna be spending a lot of time having a ton of studio visits from potential collectors that may or may not work out. Then there are artist critics. And these are actually really important people too. Some of them actually are artists or makers themselves and they're just really interested in not only talking about, but writing about artwork. And they can help promote your work too. When your work is featured on a blog or in a magazine or in some kind of article it can help to explain your work and sometimes it's really awesome to have somebody else talk about your work instead of yourself. Oftentimes I find that a critic has insight into what I'm doing or has a way of explaining what it is that I've done that is completely different than how I see my work and it's really fascinating and actually really educational. So don't be shy, make sure that if somebody says, hey, I'm interested in your work and I'm thinking about writing about it, spend some time to talk to them. One thing to keep in mind as you start engaging with the world and we do want you to engage, you should go out there and ask questions and make friends and talk to people, but don't ask questions that you can easily find the answers for yourself. So say you're going to a gallery, don't walk up to the people and say, hey, can you look at my portfolio? Because they're really busy and they're working. Don't go to a space and ask, can I submit my work to you online? Because their website probably tells you if you can or can't submit online. If you go online and you don't find the answers to these questions and you can politely ask them, by all means do it. But if you can find the answers yourself you should. People have memories. When I worked in a gallery I completely remembered the people who interrupted me while I was typing something to ask if they could have a show next month. The answer was no, you can't. And then I would remember their name and when they



submitted their materials I was like, oh, this is the person who interrupted me when I was in the middle of something. So when you're in that store or a cafe and you like what you see, just organically start a conversation with the person who runs the store. Show up, make it known that you're interested in what's going on. Don't email a store halfway across the country that you've never been to and never looked online and say, hey, can I show my work in your store? Just do the research. Let's take a look at a couple of websites that you can use in order to start doing your research. So there's a website called Artnet and it not only lists fine art galleries in every category that you can imagine, 19th century European and British art all the way to urban art. There's a huge directory. You can spend days going through this website. There's also a list of art fairs, there's member gallery sites, so you can become a member and put your own work up there. There are also pages and pages and pages of artists themselves that are available on Artnet, so you can start scrolling through and saying, hey, I like this person's artwork, where do they show? And go down that rabbit hole of clicking and researching that way. I wanna show you this website, it's called Art-Support. Remember, all these are listed in the PDF, so you can find them there. This lists a bunch of nonprofit art organizations and art centers by state all across the United States. So if you live in Colorado you can click on Colorado and find out what might be available for you in that state. This is Southern Exposure, the place that I was talking about here in San Francisco that has a monster drawing rally. They have all different kinds of projects and exhibitions. They also help alternative spaces get grants. They have an arts and education program. They have a tab here about getting involved with their internships and volunteering. And here is where you would find information on open submissions for artists and open calls. So this is how you check to make sure and see if there's something that might be appropriate for you to apply to. I'm just gonna show you a couple other big name nonprofits that I know about across the country and I really like their programs. This is the Mattress Factory, this is Flux Factory. And then lastly, I wanna just touch on some of the art fairs that happen. There are a lot of them. And the big one in the United States and also in Europe is Art Basel. Art Basel in the US happens in December in Miami. There are a lot of other fairs that happen at the same time, but there are fairs that happen all around the United States in major cities. Art fairs are both a little tricky, it can feel a little consumerist as you walk around and people are just looking at art and grabbing it off the walls and taking it home with them. In some ways it's really exciting. But if that's not your thing, if you feel like they're really crowded, just be warned. They're a really great way to do research though, because you get to see a lot of galleries, often from around the world, in the same space at the same time. And they show not only really famous Blue Chip artists that belong in museums, they also show emerging artists or local artists. It's a really cool combination of all different kinds of art living together in one space for a weekend. So just to show you a couple other art fairs, there's Basel, there's Scope. They do one in Basel as well, but they also are all over the world. They do one in New York. There's the Art Market, which does things here in San Francisco. They do Art on Paper in New York, they have a Seattle project, and a Texas project, and a Miami project. They often ask for artists to do on-site specific installations. Some of these other art fairs do as well. Some of those spaces you need to have a gallery to help you apply for those, but some of them you do not, so just do your research and you might be able to propose something to be, say, at the opening of the art fair. Finally, just to touch on some other types of venues, there are craft fairs that you can participate in as well. And there are fine artists that often sell prints and originals at these types of venues as well. Renegade is one of the most well known. They're in New York, they're in Chicago, they do L.A., they also do San Francisco, but there are other craft fairs. Just do some research and find out if there's one that

might be easy for you to apply to. There's one last thing I just wanna touch on, I'm not gonna go over it, but it's here for you when and if you need it. Once you get that exhibition I'm giving you a checklist. So there's a list of questions for you to communicate with the venue, so that you know who's shipping, where to ship, timelines, what to do six months before, three weeks before, all that sort of information. So it's right here and you can go over it when you're ready.

#### Day 6 - Grants, Residencies, and MFAs

- Let's talk about grad school for a minute. I went to grad school about five years after I was done with my undergrad degree in art and for me it was a really moving and powerful experience. I went to Mills College, it's a small private institution and it really helped shape who I am as an artist today. It's not necessary for you to go to grad school. I think a lot of times people ask, "Do I have to go to grad school?" No, you do not have to go to grad school. It's not a easy or necessarily correct way or stepping stone that you need in order to be a professional artist. For some people though, it's really crucial and key. I know for myself, I didn't feel comfortable calling myself an artist until I had that MFA degree. For some reason, once I had the degree, I was like "Yes, I'm an artist!" But that may not be the case for you, and that's fine. In case you do wanna go to grad school or are thinking about going to grad school there are some things to keep in mind and some things that I think you should think about so let's go over those. First, I wanna point you to the US News website. This offers a ranking of MFA programs in the United States. Yale University is always number one. They have a world-famous art program, it's really small, it's hard to get into and it supposedly is the ticket, is the key to the magic kingdom of the art world. But there are a lot of other universities that are equally as good and I think you really have to think about things that are going to work for you. So what are those things? A, where is the University? You're gonna be spending two maybe three years of your life in grad school, so make sure that it's somewhere that you want to be. That said, don't discount areas that you think you might not wanna live. Say you're not interested in living in the Midwest, but there's a really good university there, you might wanna reconsider. It might be worth moving to an area that you're unfamiliar with for the connections or for the support or for the program. So B, what you really need to think about are the teachers, the faculty at the University. When you're in grad school, it's not like undergrad where you're even in say a 20 person classroom. There is a lot of one-on-one contact so it is, the communication, and the person, the faculty member, that you're gonna most get along with, or that you have similar interests that are really gonna influence you. You need to research the faculty. What kind of work do they do? What kind of reputation do they have as an instructor? Are you gonna get along with them? If your work isn't similar to theirs, is there still something that you have that you can communicate about? They're going to be there, sort of sitting over your shoulder talking to you while you're in grad school. It's really important that there's some kind of connection between you and that person. C, you really wanna think about the facilities. If you're a printmaker and the grad program that you're applying to doesn't have any printmaking facilities it might not be the right place for you. If you're a traditional photographer and you need a darkroom you better check to make sure because there are a lot of institutions that have eliminated some of those traditional practices in their program. If you want to become a teacher, particularly at the college level you are going to need to get your MFA. And I'm sad to say that I think in the near future, you might even need a PhD. There are a couple of Fine Art PhD programs, that have cropped up and because there are so many MFA, people who have MFAs who are interested in teaching they might start instituting a PhD requirement in order to teach the college-level. If that's something that you're interested in you're going to have to go out there and

get yourself an MFA. It is virtually impossible in this day and age to teach if you don't have an MFA. These days, getting an MFA can be incredibly expensive. I was really lucky when I got my MFA, I did not have to go into debt. I can't imagine what it would be like to be a young emerging artist worried about your career, trying to find your voice, make work and also pay off massive student loans. So this is something that you need to consider before you get an MFA or before you go to get an MFA. How much debt are you going to go into? Find out how much the institutions you're interested in cost. There are usually, some grants or scholarships that they offer. Some places ask you to be a TA and you get to earn a salary doing that. If you're interested in teaching, you probably wanna go to an institution that has TA-ships where you can be in the classroom because that's gonna be your first practice teaching and it's gonna make a difference when you go to apply for jobs. If teaching is not of interest to you then by all means look for an institution that doesn't offer that. You don't need that right. Those are the kinds of things that you wanna to be thinking about. You should also pay attention to again, the locale of the school, not only thinking about cost-of-living but your first connections, your first shows, your first people that you're gonna interface with in terms of galleries or museums or curators or collectors are going to be in that city that you're in, the one that you're going to grad school in. So it could be really important. If you know that you wanna end up in New York or in Los Angeles it might make sense for you to try and go to grad schools in those areas. Keep in mind that those schools might be more competitive, they might be harder to get into. I always tell students that they should expect not to get into any grad schools on their first round of applications. There are usually hundreds of people vying for very few slots. It's not easy, don't get discouraged if you don't get in the first time around. If you're older or if you've had another career and are thinking about switching to the arts, by all means don't be intimidated. You should definitely try to go to grad school, if it's something that interests you. It could be helpful in so many ways. Even if you don't go to grad school you really should consider how you wanna keep learning and growing as an artist and a person, right. There are lots of opportunities for you out there. There are lectures that you can attend You should be familiar with the museums and galleries in your locale. Just go out there and keep looking and learning. Contemporary art is a huge thing, and there's no way you can like learn everything and get to see everything and know everything. But it's important that you stay engaged, that you go out there. You need to have, you need to familiarize yourself and be able to have conversations. A lot of times, you might just be in a bar and you can start talking about the exhibition that you saw at the museum and it may spark an opportunity, you never know. Just make sure that you keep going out there and checking things out. Another way to think about furthering your education, whether or not you have an MFA or to get funding. Sometimes you need money as an artist, especially if you're working on projects. Or maybe you have a day job or maybe you're in between jobs and you want to help fund some time to just make artwork or maybe you want to go away to a spot where you can work on art for six weeks straight with no interruptions. Time is really precious when you're, when you're an artist. Time to focus on yourself, time to focus on what you're working. You're gonna need to know how to apply for funding, for grants or for residencies. Everything that we've been talking about, your portfolio your CV, your artist statement, these are all the things you're gonna need in order to apply for these types of funding and residency opportunities. You're also going to need to know how to find them because they're really are literally thousands of different things that you can apply for, it's crazy. There's a lot of money out there, you just have to really be willing to go find it and to apply for it. One of the biggest resources is the Foundation Center website. They have, so many listings of different kinds of grants and opportunities that are out there and I'm gonna show you once again the Retitle website.

They have a lot of international opportunities that are out there both for funding, but you should also consider looking smaller, looking more locally. I next wanna show you some of the major grants that are out there in the world. These are kinda the heavy hitter famous grants that artists are really excited about when they get them. There's the Adolph & Esther Gottlieb Foundation grant, there's the Guggenheim grant, like the Guggenheim Museum but this is just a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial foundation grant. It's a big grant. There's the Joan Mitchell grant, it's also incredibly famous. There's the Pollock-Krasner Grant, that's Jackson Pollock and his wife Lee Krasner. These are major, major grants. This is not where you should start your grant funding career but I just wanna show you sort of some of the heavy hitters so that you know what's out there. You should start looking locally, like, the San Francisco Arts Commission. They have artist opportunities on their website. They also have funding projects, small funding projects for artists that only live in the Bay area, so be sure and check what is happening where you are so that you can apply for things that are in your area. There's also things like the Creative Work Fund. This is a really awesome initiative that allows artists who collaborate with a non-profit to get funding for some sort of big community project. You have to partner with a non-profit, but say in the Bay Area, there's a place called Intersection for the Arts that purposefully seeks artists out to apply for grants like this, so check around and see who might be able to help sponsor you in order to apply for something like this. Unlike a grant, a residency is an opportunity for you to go somewhere. It's really about time. There are some where you pay to play, where you actually fund your own residency, there's often still an application process and some of them are still very competitive. There are other residencies that pay for you to come, so they might offer you free lodging or they might offer you a stipend to get you to where you need to go, say the residency is in Ohio and they will pay your plane fare for you. Some residencies will only offer you a space, so they'll offer you a studio and maybe an apartment but you have to get yourself there which if it's in driving distance isn't difficult but if it's say in Mexico that's something else you want to consider, but you could write for a grant, a travel grant in order to get to a residency so there's all different ways to kind of work the system. There are many many, many, many residencies out there. I'm gonna go over a quick small summary of them. You're gonna have to do a lot of research in order to find the ones that are applicable to you but I wanna show you sort of what the range is that's out there so that it'll give you some ideas and hopefully get you excited to apply cause there's nothing really as cool as going and being an artist-in-residence. I've done it a couple times and it's a great experience, it's really kind of magical and I really hope that this inspires you to try and apply to something. There are things like the Hamiltonian Artists program, this is specifically for emerging visual artists who have finished their academic training, so if you've gone out and gotten your MFA or if you finished your BA and you don't think you want an MFA, this program might be for you. There is The Drawing Center in New York. They have this amazing open sessions program where you can come and draw and work in their space. There is the Vermont Studio Center, this is a really well-known supposedly beautiful, (I've never been there but it sounds amazing) residency. Here in California there's the Djerassi. This is beautiful, I can attest, I've been there. It's this amazing space. The location is just gorgeous and the studios are awesome and they have nightly group communal dinners and it's not only visual artists, it's writers and other types of artists as well, dancers and that seems really appealing, at least to me. There's Yaddo, this is another really famous Upper State New York. This is the Headlands, this is also a beautiful space that's in an old army barracks. The buildings are amazing, the studios are awesome, the people that they get to come there are really cool. This is Kala, this is in the East Bay, they have a really cool artist-in-residence program. They have giant printmaking facilities and

access to huge digital printers, an entire screen printing facility. It's one of the only locales I think in all of the United States that has this much printing equipment. There's Ragdale. This is Playa, it's in Oregon. This is the MacDowell colony. It's a very famous place as well. Here in San Francisco and also in other locales, there is the Recology residency. This is one of the most unique residencies that I've discovered in the United States. You come and you get to go through the dump and you make art based on what people throw out. It's really cool and you have 24-hour access and some artists have made some amazing projects out of this residency. There's also a National Park Service artist-in-residence. I didn't know this existed, but it does. You can be an artist-in-residence in a United States National Park. How cool is that? There's the Santa Fe Art Institute in New Mexico, Center for Photography. Some of these artist residencies are very specific to media, so be sure and check that out. Skowhegan is a really famous program. This is La Porta in France and you get the idea right? There are residencies in every state, in every country, you just have to find the one that you really wanna go to and then get ready to apply. One thing to keep in mind are some of them are very specific, like the Virginia A. Groot Foundation offers grants to ceramicists, or, the Women's Studio Workshop offers grants and residencies to women, so be sure that you're looking for and finding things that make sense for you in your practice. Lastly, I wanna talk for a second about self-funding because there are a lot of crowd-source funding sites out there now and you can definitely raise money for a project or an art piece by funding it yourself. There's Hatchfund which kind of works specifically with artists to try and crowdsource fund. There's obviously Indiegogo and Kickstarter which you're familiar with. So if you have a project idea in mind and you can't find a grant that might help you fund it you could always try to fund it yourself. As you get ready to apply for these grants and residencies, there are a couple things to keep in mind while you're getting your packet together. Often times these types of places ask for a Statement of Purpose, instead of or in addition to an Artist Statement. These statements or Letters of Intent as they're sometimes called are a little bit different. You wanna think of them more like a cover letter, a way for you to introduce yourself to the place. I really recommend that you are specific with what it is that your intention is going to be with the money or at the locale when you're applying for a residency. Don't just say, "I wanna travel and explore new things" because everybody wants to travel and explore new things. If you can get incredibly detailed with what it is you wanna do. I wanna go to your city because in your city there is historically a tradition of this kind of specific ceramics and I want to learn firsthand what that looks like, what it feels like, the clay body is different in this city than in any other place those kinds of really intimate details are what's going to take your application to the next level and help you get accepted. I've given you a couple examples in the PDF, a Statement of Purpose of somebody who successfully applied to grad school, a letter for somebody who applied even though it was a long time ago and successfully received a Pollock-Krasner grant. And also a Statement of Purpose or Letter of Intent for The Headlands and this person also got into that space. So I've given you three different examples of people who were successful with their applications. If applying for grant you also need to be able to write a budget, so if you thought that you were never gonna to have to do math as an artist, I'm sorry to say, you're wrong. You do have to do math and some grants require you to be incredibly detail-oriented. You're gonna have to turn in receipts and specify exactly what it is that you want money for, \$200 for chemicals for photo processing. Some grants don't care how you use the money, they just say "Okay here's your money, do with it what you will." Make sure that you read and follow the directions. Every application will tell you specifically what you're going to need to do. There are a couple of examples of budgets here in the PDF for you to look at as well so that you have something that you can base yours on. Certainly grad school but

sometimes grants and often residencies as well will ask you for letters of recommendation. This can be anywhere from two to four letters from people who know you professionally and this is professionally as an artist. So these can be your former professors, if you work with a gallery, it can be the gallerist, if you've worked with specific curators, it can be those people. You're going to have to make sure that you kind of have a group that you feel comfortable reaching out to, asking them to write you a letter. When you ask for these letters be sure and give the people as much time as possible and definitely give them a heads up. There is nothing worse than being asked to write a letter that you had no idea was coming. I know on my end as a professor, when students ask me to write a letter, I definitely need sometimes more than a week to get it together, especially if I've never written anything for them before. If I've written for them before, I have a letter that I can kind of adapt and change. I take my letter writing responsibilities very seriously so when someone asks me to write a letter I ask for the visuals that they're applying with, I ask for a draft of their statement of purpose. I want my letter to reflect their application. I only wanna write letters for people who I really and truly believe in and think that what they're applying for is something that they should have and deserve and will be helpful for them as an artist and a maker. Make sure that you keep in contact with people who might be able to write these letters for you and remember that this is a favor you're asking them so try and be kind and polite when you ask for those letters.

#### Day 7 - Setting Up a Studio Practice

- If you're gonna be an artist star maker, you need a studio. You need a place to make stuff. Traditionally, we think of a studio as an outside building or a dedicated space that you go to, this is true. I have a studio in my backyard, it's its own building. I love it because I can leave a mess in it, but you don't have to have that in order to make things. You can have a tabletop. You can have a craft room. You can have your dining room table, where you shove everything to the side when you're eating dinner at night. You can do this however you need to do it. It's just really important that you think about what kind of space you need in order to make what it is that you wanna make. What kinds of materials you need. You need to set up whatever kind of studio practice you have in order to make it easy for you to do it. Couple things to consider, or some ways to think kind of outside of the box, in terms of studio, if you don't have the space to make a studio. I know for me once I started having a dedicated room I couldn't go back. So even when we were renting, I used to put plastic down on the floor and cardboard on the wall so that I would protect the room and we would get our security deposit back, in order for me to have a studio. You can also think about compartmentalizing. I have a friend who when her son was born put all of her different studio things into boxes. Her son would nap but it was really irregular and it was hard for her to find regular time to make things, to have a studio practice. But she knew he would fall asleep eventually, at some point during the day. So she would put all her material supplies in one box, she would have paper cut and ready to go in another box. She would have one box for things that she thought were done or were in progress of some sort and one final box where everything was complete and finished. And if she only had a few minutes, she might just look through the box that might need some attention or through the final pieces to see what she might want to work on next. If he was sleeping for a little bit longer she might pull out the material box and then start to work on a new blank sheet of paper. As soon as he woke up she would put everything back into the boxes and the boxes would get stacked in the corner so that he couldn't disturb them and it really made sense for her. Try and find someway, that makes sense for you. That's what's really important, it's not about what studio I have or what kind of studio Jackson Pollock had. It's about the kind of studio that you need in order

for you to get to work. That said, there's nothing wrong with being inspired by artist's studios. I love seeing other artist's studios. It's a treat. I love to see how they work, how they organize their spaces, what they put up on the walls, almost every artist I know has some sort of inspiration board and it's so cool to check those out and see what it is that their into. BoredPanda has a cute little page called "100 Famous Artists and Their Studios." You can see what Claude Monet's studio, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dali, what their spaces looked like. And I find it really inspiring, maybe you need an easel, maybe you don't need an easel, maybe you like to have a really messy space, maybe you like to have a really clean, minimal space. I am secretly a minimalist. But I live in a maximalist world. Check it out, see if there is something here that might inspire you. You have your space, but space is only part of the equation, you also have to get to work in your space and how do you do that? How do you get inspired? How are you disciplined? Cause really it's not just about inspiration, it's about getting to work and setting yourself up so that you have all the tools you need in order to make that happen. A couple things to consider, a lot of people find it very helpful if they have some kind of larger project that they are thinking about or working on. You can look at things like "The 100 Day Project," or "Inktober." Those are kinda small chunks of time, right, it's not too hard to do a drawing a day for the month of October. Or it's not too hard to come up with a project for 100 days to work on continually. You can think longer term, I have over the course of my career have done multiple daily projects for an entire 365 days. And while yes, it gets kinda exhausting and sometimes the last thing you wanna do is that thing for your project, it ends up being really helpful in many ways. Some of the biggest shifts in the work that I've made has come from those daily projects. I have learned about a material or I've found some little nugget of information or way of working that has informed my entire practice. Try that out if you haven't done it before. Look for something you can do on a day to day basis. If your feeling uninspired and don't know what to do for a daily challenge Creativebug has so many daily challenges that you can now check out and they might be the perfect inspiration for you. This studio is also a space for you to have your friends over, to showcase your own work, you can kinda set up your studio like a gallery so you can see how pieces are gonna look next to each other. You can also invite curators and collectors and people who might be able to further your career into your studio. You might need a few tips in order to get your space ready for those kinds of studio visits. You definitely wanna consider whether or not you want to have your space messy as is, if you want to clean up, you might need some additional lighting, you might want to think about having some snacks or some water. You can also think about having things for people to take away, like business cards or postcards or other print outs of your work. There's another thing in the pdf that has a list of studio visit tips that you can go over and you can kinda use it as a checklist to get yourself ready for these kinds of visits.

### Day 8 - The Business of Art

- As an artist and a maker, you are basically running a business. Do you know what that entails? There's actually kind of a lot of stuff to think about. And it's not fun stuff and I'm really sorry. Today is not gonna be fun or joyous or inspirational. Unless you really like math and spreadsheets and numbers. Not my thing, but that's okay! These are things that we need to discuss. You're running a business. How do you do that, what do you need to think about? Keep in mind that I am not a lawyer or a tax accountant. But these are things that maybe you wanna be asking a lawyer or a tax accountant, or things that you actually just need to be thinking about. If you haven't already started your business you are so lucky, because this might help you get started in a way that will keep you organized and keep you from running into any trouble. If you have already started, let's just walk

through some steps to make sure that you have everything in place so that your business life is really easy. You don't wanna be thinking about taxes when you're making artwork in your studio, you just wanna be thinking about artwork. But the taxes, every April, you're gonna have to think about them. There's a really great website called SBA.gov. It's a small business administration website. There's a lot of information here about planning your business, launching your business, managing your business, growing it. Chock full of good resources for you to check out. There are a couple steps you need to consider when you first get started. You need a business name. Could be your name. It could be The Solomon Studios. Whatever it is, you need to pick a name. If you are not running a business as your own name, you need to file for a fictitious business license. It means you're doing business as something. So say I'm doing business as Carnation Studios, I will need to file that fictitious business license in order to make sure that I'm covering myself in terms of legal issues. There's a website called Business Law, it's in the PDF. It has a nice post on do you need to file a fictitious business name statement for your new business. You can go here and find out if you do need to, and it should point you to places where you need to take care of that. Usually you have to list something in the newspaper that says "so and so is going to be doing business as such and such." And once you do that, you need to keep that on file in case somebody ever comes to ask you, "Hey, did you file for your fictitious business?" You can say, "Yes, I did, here it is." Other places you need to register yourself. Whatever city you're in probably has a business license administration. In the city of Oakland, there's the Oakland Business Assistance Center. In the city of San Francisco, there's SFGOV. You have to register yourself as a working business in the city in which you live. This is really important. If you don't do this and they find out that you've been selling goods or services, they will come after you, there will not only be taxes, there will be penalties involved. They will find out how much money you've been making, they will find out how many years you've been doing it and not registering yourself as a business, and they will say, "Hey, you owe us all of this money." It's not really that expensive for me to run my business. In Oakland it's 60 dollars a year. Because until you reach a certain threshold of earning income, they don't ask for too much in taxes. I don't know what the amount is in your city, but it's not too difficult to find out. Just make sure that you register yourself. After registering yourself with the city, you should check with your state, because there are also sales tax things that you're gonna have to keep track of. If you sell anything to an individual, not to a retailer or a store, you are going to have to collect the sales tax, and you're gonna have to report it, and you're gonna have to pay it. There are different ways that this gets done. Every state is a little different. There are a couple states that don't have sales tax. Lucky you if you don't have to deal with it. Check to make sure and see what the rules and regulations are in your state. Here in California, we have the State Board of Equalization. This is where you register your business, you get a number. You actually get a little license and certificate that you are supposed to post. So I post mine, along with my business license, which is supposed to be posted, in my studio. If you have a retail location, then those definitely need to be someplace visible. Occasionally state board equalization people come and check. So I haven't had a site visit in a really long time, but a few years ago someone came to my studio and they wanted to see these pieces of paper up in my studio. So make sure that you have them, and make sure that they're displayed properly. To keep yourself organized, you might want to consider opening up a separate bank account for your business. This way, if you're ever audited, everything that has to do with your business is in one location. Being audited is seriously my worst nightmare, and I'm gonna knock on some wood, 'cause it's never happened to me, but I know people that have had to go through that process and it really isn't fun. If you keep your finances separate, it makes it a lot easier, not only for



yourself, but for your tax preparator or somebody or a lawyer who might help you. This means that you should set up a bank account that is designated to your business. It doesn't need to technically be a business bank account, because I actually set one of those up, and they had to come to my studio and make sure that I really was a business. It doesn't have to be that, it can just be a regular personal checking account, but you know that it's for your business. So associated with that, you might get a debit card. You might even want to consider getting a credit card that is only for your business. Everything else, like your groceries and your gas and things that for your personal life, you can run through your personal account. Everything that has to do with your business you can run through this business account. Keeping things really separate will help you do the math at the end of the year, and it really is a time saver, and it makes life much easier. You might also wanna invest in some sort of accounting program or have a separate spreadsheet, so that you can keep all of these expenses separate from your personal life. If you have a day job, the money that you earn in that is different than the money that you're earning from selling any artwork or goods or services, design services, illustrations, whatever. And it is incredibly helpful if you can keep those separate. I can't stress that enough. Once you sell something you're gonna have to pay income tax. The IRS has a website, [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov), there's a lot of information there. Definitely use it as a resource. I'm gonna try and go over some tips that I use in my own practice and some things that hopefully will help you get ready when it comes time to file taxes. There are state and federal taxes, and those are separate from the sales taxes that we were just talking about. Some people pay their taxes quarterly, both sales tax and state income tax and federal income tax. Some people just pay them annually. A tax accountant can help you figure out what's gonna be the best solution for you. This is a really interesting year and remember that taxes change. We just passed a huge tax law here in the United States, so as of 2018, the numbers are completely different than they were for 2016, 2017. So this year, your standard deductions are different than they were in 2017. For individuals, it's \$12,000. For heads of households it's \$18,000. And for married couples filing jointly, it's \$24,000. These are almost double of what they were prior to 2018. So keep that in mind. The thing about claiming deductions on your taxes is you need to have deductions that are larger than these amounts. It's actually not that hard to get to, say you're paying for an outside studio. If your studio rent is four or five hundred dollars, you're pretty close to that \$12,000 deduction by the time you pay for a year's worth of your studio rent. So it's not like these numbers are really impossible, but it's something to keep in mind. If you're not paying for an outside studio, or if you're not gonna try and claim part of your house as a studio, you might not make it to this number. If you don't make it to this number, it doesn't make sense to claim deductions on your taxes. You also need to keep in mind that some of these deductions that you might be taking on your taxes are not a dollar for dollar deduction. There are things like meals and gas and mileage that it isn't a one to one ratio. If you spend \$20, you don't get a \$20 deduction. So be sure and talk to somebody, a tax preparator or an accountant who can help you figure all of this out. In the PDF there's a pretty robust list of things that you should be keeping track of. One of the things that people often get confused about is 1099s. So if you are an "independent contractor" which you are if you're an artist kind of running your own business, places, galleries, different people will send you 1099s. Those 1099s will help you report to the government how much money you earned. But some people forget to send those. And some people say, "Well, if I didn't get a 1099, "do I have to report it?" The answer is yes, you do. When you get audited and somebody is looking at your bank accounts, they don't care whether or not you received a 1099. They don't care if you only got \$50 for something that you've done. They're going to see that \$50 as income and you are going to have to report it. That's another common myth. People think that if

they earned less than \$600 and they didn't get a 1099 that they don't have to report that income. Every teeny tiny sale of any amount or any, if you're an artist and you given a lecture and you get a \$50 honorarium, you have to report that amount as income; it's crucial. And I don't know about you, but I don't wanna try and cheat the system and get caught. Not fun. As you keep working as an artist and you're filing your income taxes year after year, there are a couple things you need to keep in mind. There are these categories that the IRS considers in terms of business. There's a hobby category and then there's a business category. If you continue to take losses, if you're not making a profit, you still have to report your income but you may end up being seen as a hobby instead of a business. Because a business is technically, in our capitalistic society, supposed to make money, until you can prove that you can make that income, you aren't seen as a business. You can get away, especially as an artist, with claiming a loss for a really long time. In fact there was an artist, and I'll show you this website. The New York Times did an article on this artist who was victorious in court about saying that she was running herself as a business even though she wasn't making a lot of money. But that's a really tricky thing. And again, I don't know about you, but I don't want the IRS to be coming after me or to have to deal with them or to have to go to court because that seems like a very costly and very lengthy process. Just keep in mind that if you are claiming deductions, you need to be conducting yourself as a business. And the PDF that I've given you has some sort of tips as to what it means to be a business and what it means to be a hobby. There's also a really great resource online at Paper + Spark; she has some really cool business resources all over her website. She has an entire post that's dedicated to income taxes for business owners. You can check that out as well. As you're getting ready to do your taxes, not only do you have to keep track of your income, who gave it to you, where it came from, the amounts; you also need to keep track of all different kinds of expenses. And if you're brand new to this, maybe you haven't thought of everything you need to keep track of. In the PDF I have a very long list. It is not necessarily all of the things, but it's a lot of the things, and hopefully it will get you thinking about the things that you need to keep track of that you can deduct. So for example, the easy things like office or studio rental, you'll know about that. But you can also deduct, say, bank fees or travel expenses if you need to go somewhere for an exhibition. You should keep track of your plane tickets, your train tickets, your hotels. You should keep track of the meals that you're eating that are while you are working. So this is not the lunch that you're having with your friends on break. This is the lunch that you're paying for for you and your studio assistants while you're putting up your exhibition. So it's really clear that the things that you are trying to deduct are business related. You can also think about deducting any rental of equipment. So you need to rent a camera in order to take a video of something that you're working on, or memberships or dues to work related places or things. If you're an artist and you're paying membership to SFMOMA, that's deductible, that's part of your research as an artist. These are some of the things that you should be thinking about and they're not necessarily things that I thought about before someone explained them to me.

#### Day 9 - Contracts and Legal Considerations

- As you start to sell your work and get your work out there, there are gonna be some legal things that you need to consider. Let's go over a few of those. We're gonna talk about copyright separate 'cause it's kind of a big issue. But we're gonna start out with this thing called VARA. Congress in 1990 passed a law that allows artists to really claim ownership of their works. So it's not just about owning the copyright and preventing people from copying your work, it's about being able to put your name on something or take your name off of something. This is only for paintings and

drawings and original pieces of artwork or things up to 200 in edition. So if you have an open-ended edition, you're just printing and selling prints, or if you do an edition that's over 200, VARA does not apply to those things. But what this basically means, and there's a copy of the law and how everything is stated in the PDF, but what it basically says is that if somebody manipulates your work or changes your work or does something to it that you don't like, you have the legal right to go to them and say take my name off of it. So say you created a public piece of art, it's out in the world, in a public square, and somebody defaces it and puts graffiti on it and then the city decides that they're not gonna clean it up or take care of it. And there's a plaque with your name that says this piece of art was made by so and so, you get to go to the city and say, legally I want you to remove my name from this piece of artwork 'cause it doesn't represent my original intent. It's actually kind of a pretty cool thing and it's a little bit of protection that a lot of artists don't know that they even have. So keep that in mind. There are some laws in certain states that are also applicable to you as an artist. I'm gonna talk about the ones in California because those are the ones that I'm familiar with. But these are things that you could research and find out if there are different kinds of laws in the area that you live in. So say, for example, in California and only in California, if a gallery, or a store, or some place that exhibits your work sells your work for you, they have to inform you of the purchaser's name and location. And this is true even if the purchaser doesn't live in California. So you should be receiving a checklist at the end of any exhibition or when you sell a piece of work that says Jane Smith from Vallejo, California purchased your piece. They don't need to include an address or any other information, but they do have to tell you who bought your work. And this is not true in many, many states. In fact, there was a time where a lot of galleries didn't like to provide that information to artists because they were fearful that artists were gonna go behind their back and sell their work directly to collectors if they have the collector's name and contact info. But in California, places are legally bound to inform you who purchased your work. Also in California, there is an art resale law. If somebody purchased a piece of art that's yours, and they decide to resell it however many years later, and they make a profit on it, they are legally bound to give you 5% of the profit. Now this doesn't make a lot of sense if, say, they bought something for \$5 and they resold it for a hundred dollars. 5% of a hundred dollars isn't a huge deal. But if something of yours were to sell for a million dollars in California and that was profit, you probably wanna collect your 5%. Again this is only in California, so if this resale happens in New York, or in Texas, or in any other state, you are not legally entitled to a percentage. But in California, you are. It's hard sometimes to find out if somebody has resold a piece of your work but it's a good thing to know. So if you do find out that somebody has sold something of yours and made a profit, they owe you a part of that profit. As an artist, any time you're dealing with a gallery, or say somebody wants to commission you to do some work, or if you're gonna act as a commercial illustrator, you're going to end up needing to negotiate some kind of contract. This is really important. A contract protects not only you but the person who's hiring you or purchasing the work and it will prevent a lot of problems if they do arise. Here there's a website from the Artists Network that has a very nice long article on negotiating a contract. It's really, really helpful and offers a sample contract within the article. Also, in your PDF, I'm providing you with three different templates for contracts. There's a confirmation of an art assignment, as if you were being commissioned or doing an illustration for something. There's also a contract for artists and galleries. And a little side note on that, most newer galleries, contemporary galleries working today, do have contracts that they use with their artists but I have to say that even in my own experience, I have worked with some galleries that do not have contracts. They're kind of old school and they feel like an artist-dealer relationship is more like

a friendship, and this can be tricky and very difficult to navigate. But keep in mind that some people may be a little put off if you say to them, hey, I need a contract. And it doesn't mean necessarily that you should not do an exhibition or a show with somebody just because they won't give you a contract. That said, you should never leave your work in a space without some kind of documentation of what it is that you've left behind and what it's worth, and maybe with some stipulations about how you're going to be paid. It can be a little less formal than like this long contractual agreement that both of you are gonna sign and give each other copies of and keep filed away in a folder somewhere. It can be as simple as what's known as a consignment agreement. You should always though have a piece of paper that lists every single thing that you're leaving with the space. That includes the title, the date, the media, the retail price of the piece as well. So not a wholesale price but a retail price, what it's worth out in the world. Both people should sign this document. Other things you could think about including are who's going to be responsible for shipping the work, when you're gonna get paid if something sells. Galleries sometimes can take a long time to pay somebody. Some places like to wait even 90 days and that can feel like a really long time if you're waiting for a check. It's a really good idea to have all of that negotiated before you leave anything behind. And that consignment agreement or contract can help establish that. You don't necessarily need to have all of the stuff that you would put into a contract on a piece of paper. Anything that you communicate with like emails or texts or phone calls or messages, you can use those to act as a contract as well. So if somebody is a little gun-shy or doesn't wanna actually have this formal document in front of them, just make sure you ask all the questions, where's my work supposed to be, when am I gonna get paid, when are things gonna be delivered, all in email format, and that will serve as your contract. If you are feeling stuck and you need some help, there are lawyers out there for you to make contact with. In California, there's this really great organization called California Lawyers for the Arts. They have this really full website with information about programs, they can help hook you up with a lawyer, they run classes, they have tabs for artists and for attorneys. This site is so chock-full of information. I also know of an organization in New York, it's called Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts. Same idea, they have information for artists and lawyers. They have a calendar and classes that they run. So oftentimes these kinds of organizations will hold a class on taxes or will hold a class on contracts. So if you're really curious, sometimes they're free or they're sliding scale. You can go and take one of these classes and learn a lot of information directly from a lawyer who can answer any questions that you might have. I'm sure there are other organizations out there across the United States, just check and see if there's something that might work for you in your area.

#### Day 10 - Understanding Copyright

- Let's talk about copyright. As you make work there are certain things that help protect you, and certain things that are really confusing, and complicated, and convoluted. And I am not a lawyer, again, but I've done a lot of research on copyright, and I want to share with you some of the things that I've figured out that really you should be thinking about and kind of just be aware of as you're making work. So the first thing is that everything you make as an artist, physically make, not the ideas, not things out in the ether, but things that have some sort of physicality are copyrighted the second you complete making them. So you don't have to fill out a form, you don't have to run to the corner and shout at the top of your lungs, this is copyrighted! It is automatically copyrighted. That's one thing that you just should know off the bat. There's nothing else you have to do. You can legally pay a fee and fill out a form, and you can do this electronically, and I'll show you a link on where you

can do that, and declare copyright through the Copyright Office of the United States government. Why in the world would you want to do that? It basically just increases your legal standing. So if you are claiming that someone is stealing your work in some way, shape, or form, and you're saying, hey, that's my copyrighted work, I made it. You can declare that without that piece of paper that says I own the copyright, but the piece of paper is going to help you in court establish the fact that you took the time and the energy, and that you spent money in order to declare that this is your work. It's not necessary, but if you are making something that you are selling, maybe, to a corporation who's going to use that imagery you've licensed the rights to it, or there's something that maybe is blowing up on the internet that is yours that is being published all over the place and you want to make sure that your copyright is established in the strongest legal terms available to you, you might want to register a copyright. The US Copyright Office has a website, [copyright.gov](http://copyright.gov) Everything you could ever possibly want to know about copyright is located on this website. They have this great guide, a .pdf that you can download and keep called Copyright Basics. I'm just going to go over a few of the things in here just to help talk you through it. The first question is what works are protected? And examples of things that are copyrightable are literary works, music works, dramatic works, architectural works, things that you physically make. This does not include ideas for things, so just because you came up with the idea for something, if there's not something physically there, your idea cannot be copyrighted. Before 1978 copyright was generally secured by publishing a work with an appropriate copyright notice. US works that were in the public domain on January 1st, 1978 remain in the public domain. So if you're an artist who likes to collage, or utilize materials, there's a whole source of things that are in the public domain. This means they're no longer copyright-protected and you can use them as you need to. Places like Dover, the book publisher, often puts a lot of these resources together for you, but you do have to keep in mind that those books are copyrighted, so you might want to look for the original source of something in the public domain. I think Dover allows for up to five images from one of their publications to be used in something without securing any kind of permission. But just make sure and check so you know what you're getting into. What are your rights when you own a copyright? You can then make sure that people don't reproduce your work without your permission. You can try and prevent people from creating derivative works based on your work. You are in charge of distributing any kind of reproduction of your work. You are the only one who can okay any kind of use of your work for publicity. Those are all really important things. Copyright does not protect the ideas, or the methods, or the systems or processes, concepts, principles, or discoveries. Things that are not in a tangible form, so for example, things like a dance routine, if you just choreograph something and there isn't a physical notation, you didn't write down turn left, spin here, you can't copyright just the dance itself. You can only copyright an actual notation of what's happening. This might be really important, say, if you're a conceptual artist and part of what you're doing is a performance. The performance itself may not be copyrightable if it's improvisational, so you might want to make sure that there's a recording made, or that you type out what it is that you said afterwards, because those things can be copyrighted. Next we want to talk about who can claim copyright. You, as the maker of things, you own the copyright, but you can sell it or give it away, especially if you're being hired to do something. So when you're looking through that contract, say somebody's commissioning you to make an illustration, you want to check to see whether or not you retain the copyright, or if you are also releasing the copyright to whoever it is that's paying you. I generally recommend for artists, and commercial artists, and illustrators, and whoever, not to give their copyright away or sell their copyright unless they've been compensated very fairly. Somebody can

license your stuff, you can give them the right to use it, you can have an open-ended license. You can use this artwork in any way that you want, anyhow, any time, for the rest of my life, for the rest of your life, for the rest of the company's life, and still you own the copyright. And I would suggest that that's what you want to do. You want to be able to say, hey, stop using my work. Because a corporation or somebody else who is using your work might not be paying as much attention. So if somebody was to steal your work, or utilize your work in a way that you didn't want, they might not notice. If you still own the copyright, you can then go after somebody who might be misrepresenting you or your work. You might be asking how long does a copyright last. If we look in the copyright document that's provided to us from the government, right here it states that since January 1st, 1978 the term of the copyright is the life of the author plus 70 years after the author's death. So 70 years after you die your work is still copyright protected. This has a little bit of wiggle room. If there is an estate at play, they can ask to re-register copyrights after somebody's death even past those 70 years. There's a lot more nuanced information in this document from the Copyright Office. You can scroll through the rest of it to see what else you might need to know about. One thing to know is there is a term called Fair Use. And a lot of people are really confused. What is that? Does that mean I can fairly use anybody's work for any reason? Well yes, and no. So Fair Use is when you're using copyrighted material and it's okay, you don't have to ask permission, or get some kind of legal release from somebody. But there's some limitations on what you can use Fair Use. There's a really nice Wikipedia article about this, and you can scroll and read through all of this if you're curious. The other way that you can use copyrighted material without getting permission under Fair Use is for critical or news events. So if somebody is writing a blog post on your work and they've either used photographs that you've taken or they have taken photographs from the gallery that you're working with, they can use those on their website as long as they're talking about your work. So if it's a critical point of view, I really enjoyed this show, or even if it's a point of view that maybe you don't agree with, I thought this work was about X and it's really about Y, you unfortunately can't go to them and say, take my work down. They are allowed to use that copyrighted material because it's under that criticism or news. If it's a news organization that is reporting on your exhibition, you again, can't turn to them and say, take my work off of your website. They are allowed and entitled to use those images under Fair Use. As you're working, you may need source material or things that you want to use, and you may be asking yourself is this copyright-protected? Is it not copyright-protected? It's better if you safely assume that everything is copyright-protected. So if you're online and you're looking at a photograph and you might want to use it in some context, see if you can find who the owner of the copyright of that photo is and just ask them. A lot of times people are totally cool with you using their images as long as either a, you credit them, or b, you just ask them. Sometimes there may be a fee involved, like if you go to a stock photograph website, there are often pretty inexpensive images that you can buy and then use in whatever way you need. There's also something called Creative Commons, and they have a website. And it's notated anything that's under Creative Commons instead of a regular C, when you see a C it's copyright, the Creative Commons has two C's. Creative Commons can be a little bit tricky because people designate what's okay in terms of using their images. So there are times when you can use it for non-commercial purposes with no restrictions. So if you wanted to use a photograph and put it on a poster to maybe talk about a non-profit fundraiser, they would have no problem with that whatsoever. Some people have restrictions like, these can only be used in non-commercial attributions, or they may say you have to say where you got this image from, so if you're using it you have to claim in the corner this was provided to me by so-and-so. Some places

have a fee if you want to use something commercially, and when you're making artwork, that is commercial. If your artwork is being made with the intent to sell, or if some craft that you're making is made in order to sell in the marketplace, then that is a commercial use. You may think, oh, but I'm an artist. Doesn't matter. It's still considered commercial. So when you're looking around for Creative Commons make sure you're paying attention to whatever restrictions may be in place. There is a really long tradition of appropriation in the history of art, and what does that mean? People like Andy Warhol utilized Campbell's soup cans in their work. There's an artist named Sherrie Levine, and there's actually a whole website dedicated to a project where she rephotographed Walker Evans' photographs, and that's all she did. And she titled them After Walker Evans so you knew that they were not the originals, but she was really just playing with the idea of what does it mean to be an original, and what happens when you repurpose that original, and how do you claim ownership of an image in and of itself? In this digital age we are saturated with images, and it's pretty interesting to think about who made them, where they came from, who owns them, and why they're important, and the whole process of appropriation is part of that conversation. In making art you may need to, or want to, appropriate images in your work. This is great, this is fine. In fact, I often encourage my students to steal other people's artwork, or utilize other people's ideas or processes. There's just a couple things you need to think about. There are gonna be instances where it feels really wrong, and I think most of the time that's when you're not talking about where it is that you're getting these images from. So if you're appropriating in a way that makes sense, or is meaningful, then it's usually seen as an okay practice. This is a tricky line, and there are some legal things that you can get into trouble with. For example, it's really well-known that, say, Disney or Coca-Cola are highly litigious. If they see you utilizing anything of theirs that's copyright-protected, you are going to get a very nasty cease and desist letter, and you may even be sued by them, and I don't know about you, but I don't want to go to court against Disney or Coca-Cola. So just be careful in terms of thinking about how you want to move through this world if you want to appropriate images. I want to give you some tools and resources so that you can research this further. It's a really tricky thing, and there's a lot of information out there. Try and make sure that you're getting your information from reputable sources and definitely ask a lawyer if you don't know. There are lawyers that specialize in copyright and I definitely have felt really lucky when I've been able to ask a lawyer firsthand, hey, is this okay? Is this not okay? For example, a lot of people think that if you mail yourself a copy of your artwork that that postmark serves as a copyright protection, and it does not. That is completely a myth. The only way you can legally copyright something is to fill out that form, that extra bit of protection, besides the fact that you just made it and it's your copyright. So here we have a document called Excuses, Excuses. It's written by a lawyer, and it has a lot to do with different things that people have said. For example, I didn't post this photo, somebody else did. But if it's on your website, you're responsible. So make sure and check this out if you have questions. I'm also providing you a pamphlet that the Copyright Office provides on their website but I've just already downloaded it for you so you don't have to search for it, in terms of what to do if you want to make that deposit and pay the \$35 fee and register your copyright with them. You can now do that online. There's an electronic Copyright Office. You can create a login and then you can continually update and make copyright registrations if you want to. And then finally I want to show you a couple of articles that I find really helpful and interesting. The first two come from this website called Book By Its Cover, and there's this really awful story about this artist Lauren Nassef and this woman in England who basically ripped off her entire sketchbook and created textile patterns from it and won a bunch of awards. And luckily Lauren and a bunch of

friends of hers were able to point this out and the woman's award was sadly taken away, and then she was actually expelled from school, I believe. And I can't find anything about this woman, Samantha, on the internet ever since this has happened, but I think it's a really good cautionary tale, and it has some really good information. Also on A Book By Its Cover there's a blog post about copyright questions that were asked and answered by a lawyer, so this is a really good resource to turn to if you still have questions. Finally, if you are looking around the internet and you're not sure where an image came from, you see something really cool, somebody posted it on their Tumblr and they don't attribute it to anyone, there are some ways that you can try and find out whose image that actually is. So there's TinEye, it's a reverse image search. You can download the image to your desktop and put it up there, and they can maybe help you find the source of it. And there's also Src Img, and it's the same idea. They can help you try and track down where an image came from. And this is super helpful if you want to reach out to somebody and say, hey, I really like your boat picture, I want to pain it. Is that okay with you?

#### Day 11 - Public Relations

- Let's discuss PR, public relations. For some people, this is really easy, they are naturally outgoing and they like promoting themselves. For some people, this is really difficult. I'm actually one of those people. I don't like saying hey, I'm in this show! You should come! It makes me kind of uncomfortable. But it's really important, and you have to get the word out about what you're doing and how you're doing it. And these days, there are so many strategies to think about, there are online platforms, there are physical things that you can print out, there are mailing lists. So let's go over these one by one, and see if we can put them into some smaller chunks that you can take care of. The digital component of the self-promotion would be social media. There are different platforms, and keep in mind these are changing, so if you were watching this in 2020, if this is still live in 2020, things may be really different. Social media can change overnight, and you're gonna have to continually update yourself and figure out which platforms are best for you. A lot of times, students say: do I need to be on all of them? And I say no. No, you do not need to be on all of them. You can if you like to, if you're one of those people who likes to cross-post on things, then by all means, be everywhere all the time, but you don't. You can pick the one that is helpful to you, most meaningful to you, more successful for you. Basically, some things to keep in mind, you wanna drive people to something. Maybe you wanna drive them to your website, maybe you wanna drive them to a class that you're teaching, maybe, whatever it is, keep that in mind while you're posting on social media. One other thing that I always talk about is authenticity. You want your social media posts to really reflect who you are and what your business is, what your brand is. And I really don't like that word, brand, but it is what it is. You are a brand if you're an artist. Some people like to make sure that all their social media posts are very clear and true to that brand, but you don't have to follow those rules. I know artists that post what they ate for breakfast along-side the painting that they made yesterday, and it really is whatever works for you. And you have to figure out what your voice is and what that means for you. Let's go over some of the most popular social media platforms, even though you probably know what they are. Facebook is a popular social media page. It's great for creating events. A lot of people create a separate business account page for their art practice or their artwork. It's very useful. There's Pinterest. This is a really great way, actually, to look for yourself. You should search for yourself on Pinterest and see who's pinning your images to their boards. I find that really fascinating to see how that all works. It's also a great place to look for inspiration, or to actually make boards that are gonna be useful for your practice. I know for my



teaching, I make Pinterest boards of different painters, and sculptors, and ceramicists, so that I can show my students and have them at the ready really easy. Instagram! This one's my favorite. I like Instagram because it's so visual on the way that it works. It's a really nice community. There are people who have all these rules, I only post really big images that I cut up into nine shapes, nine squares, and I post them to make one big image in my feed. Some people shoot on the exact same background all the time. Some people really vary it up. In a second, I'm gonna show you a couple of blog posts that are out there, that talk about Instagram and how to utilize it. But this is a really fun tool, at least for me. There's also stories now, so you can do little snippets of what it is that you're working on throughout the day. You can even go live. You can go live on Facebook too, but you can show people what you're doing in the studio, or if people are constantly asking you questions like: what tools are you using? You could do a little live post about, these are the tools that I'm using and where I get them. It's really a way to keep people who are interested in your work, engaged. There's also LinkedIn. This is definitely more business-y work-related, but I know artists that post shows that they're having and also talk about different resources or things that they're looking for, maybe, like I'm looking for somebody to help me do a website, and sometimes people on LinkedIn will help you find those kinds of resources. I'm gonna show you Google+, not because I know anybody who uses it, but I think it's a really interesting way to think about how different platforms work for different people. I don't know any artists who utilize Google+ for their practice really well, but I think there's potential to do that. There are people who also use SnapChat or Twitter to help promote themselves and their art. Just really find what works for you. As you're figuring out how to put yourself out there, and you use all these different internet platforms to your advantage, there are some resources. This is a really great blog post. It's a couple years old, but it's still really relevant. "A Guide to Using Instagram for Studio Artists". There's also Meighan O'Toole. She runs a great online strategy website, and she also has a post on "Getting Started on Instagram: Tips for Artists". I think one of the biggest things you wanna be concerned with is A, what does the platform do? And how does it operate? So for example, on Twitter or Instagram, you might wanna think about how you hashtag your work. Hashtags can bring new people, new eyeballs, onto your streams, but they can also feel a little bit overwhelming. I know some artists don't like to use hashtags at all because they don't like the way the comments look when they have all those hashtags in. Those are decisions that you're gonna have to make for yourself, and think about what's going to be the best strategy for you. I think you also need to think about etiquette. So for example, don't inundate artists in the comments section, and say hey, can you like me back or follow me back. It may seem like that's a way to build community, but you really should trust the process and try to build community organically. I know that I've definitely made friends with people online when they've left me comments or asked me questions, but they're careful or they're considerate about what it is that they're asking me. They're not saying hey, tell me how you did what you did? They're commenting on things like oh, I like this too. Have you seen this? And they might actually inspire me or show me something different or new that I haven't seen. I think one of the most successful strategies online is to think about being generous. You wanna give people information. You wanna give back to the community. You don't wanna just take from the community or expect that a community owes you anything. It can be difficult and sometimes lonely and scary and unfamiliar, but that's okay. I really recommend that you find somebody whose feed, whatever feed, Facebook feed, Instagram feed, Twitter feed, look at people who you admire, who you like how they engage with people, who have followers that interact with them the way that you want people to interact with you. And take notes on how they do what they do. One last thing: some people are really obsessed with their stats. And

yes, there are things that can be beneficial to members on checking your stats and having some goals. In fact, Meighan O'Toole talks a lot about discovering how you want your online platforms to look and work for you, and that you need to have goals. I wanna increase my followers by a hundred per month. I find some of that a little intimidating, but I also think it's good to have those things in mind. If you meet your goals, great. If you don't meet your goals, figure out why that's not happening. And also, don't be worried if you lose followers, or if things change. People follow and unfollow for a lot of reasons, and I know it's hard not to take it personally. I take it personally too, but it's really not about that. Try and think of the bigger picture, and so you can have those platforms work for you. Some people find social media intimidating because there's so many platforms and they don't have the time or the space to create content for all of them. There are some things out there that can help you do this, and can manage social media for you. They can time your posts and make sure that things are going up while you're sleeping or while you're taking a nap, or while you're making work, which is the most important thing. So here's a few of them. There's this website that lists 25 top social media management tools for businesses of all sizes. Some of these are free, and some of them are not. So you can decide what's gonna work best for you. There's a company called Hootsuite that helps you manage all your social media in one place. So this is really great if you wanna post on Facebook, and Twitter, and Instagram. There's also Sprout Social. It does a very similar thing, or Airtable, that's also incredibly helpful. One of the things that I like to advise people is to not post exactly the same content across all the platforms. There are people who are gonna engage with you on different platforms for different reasons. If somebody is following you on Facebook, and Instagram, and Twitter, and you're posting the exact same things on all three of those platforms, they're probably gonna get bored. So you might wanna think about changing it up a bit. The content can be related, or you can post things that push people to the same place. So if you're about to have an exhibition, you definitely wanna post about that exhibition on Twitter, on Facebook, and on Instagram, but maybe you choose a different photo, or maybe you choose a different time of day. So you post on Twitter in the morning and you post on Facebook in the afternoon and you post on Instagram in the evening, and the visuals are not all exactly the same. So there's like an installation overview, there's a detail of one piece, and then there's maybe the storefront of the space where you're having the exhibition, so that if someone is following you everywhere, they're not gonna be like I just saw that photo. I don't wanna see that photo again. Finally, when you're thinking about understanding analytics and trying to set goals, and figure out how many followers you have or maybe what time of day is the best time for you to post, because believe it or not, people keep track of that kind of information, here's a blog post, and this will be in the PDF, that shares some different social media analytics tools that you can use and download to keep track of that information.

## Day 12 - Pricing and Selling

- When you're ready to sell your work, you have to determine your prices. I don't know about you but I find this really uncomfortable. I don't like thinking about or trying to figure out how much I'm gonna charge for things, but it's sort of a necessary evil. There are a couple things that I think you should be paying attention to. There are also some really great resources online that I'll point you to, but let's just talk about it for a second. I think the biggest thing, obviously, is to think about time spent and materials. You definitely don't wanna sell something and not make enough money to pay for what you needed in order to make the object. So if you're buying, say if you're me and you're buying 2,200 feet of cotton rope, you have to make sure that when you sell that piece, you've

earned the money to pay for that rope in the first place. That's the first thing. The second thing, and this part is kind of uncomfortable, is you definitely wanna think about making a wage of some sort, but I wouldn't advise you to think about expecting a lot of money in terms of an hourly rate. Don't be thinking you're gonna make \$100 an hour right when you're starting out. In fact, I know some artists who are incredibly successful, and sell their work for thousands and thousands of dollars. And when they think about all the time they spend on it, they're barely making minimum wage. That sounds awful, but it's true. And it's something you need to consider. Online, our friends at Paper + Spark offer a really great handmade pricing calculator. This is good, not only for artwork, but also for other things you might be making, like bags, or necklaces, or whatever it is. I've found it really useful to try and plug in some numbers, and see if they make sense. There's also this really amazing article on Artsy, Financial Advice for Artists from Four Experts. This is sort of a bigger scope picture about not only things you should be thinking about in terms of pricing, but other ways to think about saving for the future. They recommend for example keeping one piece for yourself from a show, so that that's kind of your retirement. You have something from the show that you can keep and sell later, when maybe your prices have gone up. It's really good advice. Finally, there's an article on FastCo.Design, and it's about how much should you charge for design work? And maybe you're a designer and this makes perfect sense for you, but I think some of the things that they go over in this article are actually effective and workable for artists and artwork as well, so check that out. If you have no idea where to start with pricing, you should do some basic research. You can start this online, looking on Etsy, or eBay, or other places, but I also recommend going out to galleries and looking at price lists. Every gallery, or store, or cafe, there should be a price list with the art listed, and what they're charging for it. You should be looking for people that are in sort of a similar zone to you. They've had the same number of shows, their work is the same media, it's close to the same size. This is a really great way to just kind of test the waters, and see what's going on in your area. Different areas have different pricing structures. And there are other things that you should be thinking about as well. I know some artists who want their work to be affordable. They want people their own age and their peers to be able to walk in and buy something on the spot, and it shouldn't feel like an extravagant expense, or something that's really difficult for them to reach. There are other people who argue that fine art, if you price it too low, you're devaluing your own work. I think both arguments are valid, and this is something you're gonna have to conclude on your own. You're just gonna have to spend some time thinking about it. How much do I feel okay with letting something that I've created go to somebody else? For me personally, when I started in my career, I was really adamant that people my age could afford some of the things that I've made. And we'll talk in a second about some strategies about how you might make that possible, if some of your things feel like they're too expensive. I wanna tell you a cautionary tale. I have an artist friend, who almost immediately out of school, got picked up by this pretty well-known gallery. He had a solo exhibition, and the gallery was insistent that he price his work at tens of thousands of dollars. It ended up being great, he sold almost the entire show of work, and made a lot of money, was really successful, had some critical acclaim. But then unfortunately, that gallery closed soon after his exhibition. And because his prices were so high, he had a really hard time finding another gallery to represent him. So it's just one example of where you might wanna think carefully about how you price your work. When you start working with a gallery or retail spaces, you also have to consider that they're probably gonna take 50% of the price of something that sells. That may seem a lot, but let me tell you, having worked on the gallery side, there's a lot going on behind the scenes, and actually, they deserve the money that they're getting. I know some artists get really irritated about

that, but it's just sort of a fact of life. When you're starting to think about pricing though, keep in mind that if in your future you wanna work with some kind of retail space, you don't automatically get to double your prices when you start to work with them. So say for example you're selling your drawings for \$100, and a gallery decides to pick you up. They may come to you and say, you're pricing is too low, let's raise your prices. And because of sort of the status of working with a gallery, that may work. But if you're pricing is already kind of at a higher level, say like \$1,000, you're not gonna get to all of a sudden double it. So you, if you are selling your work for \$1,000, are all of a sudden going to be making \$500 instead of \$1,000. And that's just kind of one of the things that you have to keep in mind when you start thinking about pricing. You also have to consider that you're going to slowly raise your prices. And you really can't go backwards, especially if you've started to sell work. So say if for example, you sell work for \$1,000, and all of a sudden, you have 10 pieces in your studio, and you wanna get rid of them. There are some ways to get around this only going up in price. You can have like a really special sale, where for this weekend, everything is 20% off, and that will work. But you can't all of a sudden say those \$1,000 pieces of art are now \$600. And the reason why, is that the people who've already purchased your work are all of a sudden feel like they've been cheated. If they've already spent \$1,000 on your work, they're gonna start asking, why didn't I wait until the price went down to \$600? So you have to keep that in mind as well. As you keep working, and you raise your prices incrementally, or if you're working with a gallery and they suggest you raise your prices, you have to think about whether or not it makes sense to do so. So it's going to be sort of this back and forth. If you start to sell out of everything at a certain price point, it certainly makes sense to start to raise your prices. But if you're not selling out of things at a certain price point, you don't wanna all of a sudden raise your prices, it's just not going to make any sense. So keep that in mind as well. One other thing to consider are extra costs outside of actually just making the work. If you're framing your work, or if there's some sort of special metal backing that you need, or some kind of shelf, or things that you're having custom designed to make your work, you have to think about making sure that you make those costs back as well. I can say that there are some galleries or collectors who will like to frame work on their own. Or you can also have a price for a piece, and then have an additional cost for framing. So you can say, this piece is \$500 unframed, and it's \$800 framed. And that way you can make sure that you make those costs back. One last thing to consider is having things at a different range of pricing and price points. You can make works that are smaller because in general, even though sometimes this seems a little silly, artwork that is smaller, sells for less than artwork that is bigger, even if the artwork that is smaller took just as much time as the artwork that is bigger. It's just kind of a fact of life. People are gonna say, hey it's smaller, it should cost less. So keep that in mind as you're making things. Maybe you wanna make a range of sizes. You wanna have small things, you wanna have medium things. Works on paper are generally less than works on canvas. Again, this is kind of a case-by-case scenario, but that's something to keep in mind. And finally, you can think about printing other things. You can make prints of your work, right? Replications, so they're not originals, and those always cost less and are more affordable. You can also do things like print on demand. You could do phone cases, you could do tote bags. There are so many options out there. And those things can be less expensive, so that you have things that fill this range of price points. I wanna show you a couple places where you can get these types of things made, just so you can see what's out there, and what might be available to you. There's Society6, they make wall art, and phone cases, and even comforters and backpacks, all with whatever design that you create to put on them. Similar to Society6, there's Zazzle. And again, they have water bottles, and tote bags, and watches, and lots of

other things that you can get printed with your designs. One of my favorite places is Spoonflower. You can have fabric made, you could do wallpaper which is really cool. And then finally, I'm gonna show you Social Print Studio. They have some really nice, odd sizes, and calendars, and they even print on wood. And their print quality is really high, and I can recommend them. There's a place back east called iolabs, and they're a real fine art print service. They do incredibly high-quality prints. And you can check them out as well. Finally, we're gonna return to the Graphic Artists Guild. If you wanna check out some pricing structures or ideas about pricing, they have some really good guides and resources on their website. And for fun, I wanna show you these two projects that I know about that work with artists to make specific goods that are not art, fine art, but more utilitarian. There's a place called Workshop, and they have these really cool ceramics, and chopping boards, and all these different items that they've worked exclusively with different artists to make. And then there's Open-Editions. They work with artists to manufacture wholesale and retail products that bring art to your daily life. Some of these places have submission guidelines, so if you wanna work with them directly, you could try and propose something to them. But I also think it's a great resource to research and say, hey, what kind of products are artists making? And maybe it might inspire you to make something too.

### Day 13 - Artist Etiquette

- One of the biggest challenges of being an artist, I think is just saying, "I'm an artist," is actually just being an artist, because everybody's life is really different, trying to figure out the balance of if you have a day job and you're making work or whatever it is that's going on in your life and I think that a lot of times people when they say, "I'm an artist," get some pretty strange reactions. - Absolutely. - Right? So I wanted to bring Courtney on today because I think it would be really fun for us to have a little conversation about what our lives have been like as artists and also because Courtney, you own a store with a gallery. We can get some first-hand knowledge and answers to some questions about what you maybe should and shouldn't do as an artist when approaching a space. Hi Courtney. - Hi Lisa. Thanks for having me. - No thanks for coming out. Okay Courtney, tell us what you do, all the things. - I work here at CreativeBug, I do the set design, and I work with amazing artists like Lisa to help develop their classes but I'm also teaching on this side of the camera often. I teach in-person workshops and I have a shop with a girlfriend of mine, Christina, she and I own a shop together called Long Weekend where we have a gallery and we show artists every five to six weeks so that's been happening for a little over the last two years. - Two years already? - I know. It's crazy. And I do a community drawing night with-- - Social Sketch. - Yes with Michael McConnell. - Famous Social Sketch. - So I definitely have my hands in all the pots just like you do. I think one of the things that so many people don't realize about becoming an artist is that you have to really cobble a life together. - Yeah it's hard and it might not look like what you think it was going to look like. When I was in school there were a few artists that I kind of had as inspiration, like oh, I want their life, I like their life. Did you have that? - I didn't. I think I was always wondering like, oh can you be the famous artist, what does that look like and do I have to live on an exposed mattress and eat Top Ramen for 10 years in New York to get there. I literally asked my paint professor that. I was like, "Be honest, am I good enough to keep going? "Am I gonna be eating Top Ramen for 10 years?" She was like, "I can't guarantee that you won't be "eating Top Ramen, but you should definitely keep going." - Keep going, yeah. I mean, do you remember, I remember when I was in school and people would say, "Hey you're an art major. "What are you gonna do with that?" - Absolutely, I mean, my family was super supportive but my dad's also a very realistic person, he's a small business owner, everyone in

my family has been an entrepreneur and he's like, you know you have to think about your retirement, no one's gonna pay for that for you, you have to think about your health benefits. Right, I heard you like (groans). - Yeah, because it's all the stuffs. - Do you wanna have kids, do you wanna buy a house is that important to you, maybe it's not important to you, maybe your life looks a little less traditional than you might have assumed. I think that's one thing just as becoming an adult, aside from being an artist, you have to constantly redefine what does it mean to be alive and doing things in the world, it's not what you thought it was gonna be when you were six or 10 or even 26. - And I bet, have some of those ideas changed for you, have you thought at one point this is what I wanted, and I mean I think for me there was this huge shift when I realized all of a sudden that it wasn't necessarily that I wanted to be a famous artist, because that seems really elusive and it seems tied to things that weren't possible, but I just wanted to be a working artist, like I wanted to be able to have a life and make my work and not have it pile up in my attic and like become a hoarder. - Absolutely (chuckles). Well I mean that's what's really interesting right, because you teach college professionally. You've been doing that for over a decade. It's all-consuming because you're responsible for these budding artists' careers and minds. But then you get the break of the summer, the nice thing about teaching and then you can go to Pennsylvania and install-- - Yeah yeah. - A huge show in a museum. - For sure, for sure, I mean summers are great. I feel like as an artist sometimes all you're doing is working to make time to work in the studio. And that sometimes the balance feels really off but if you know, oh I have summer. I'm gonna have two and a half months of five days a week from nine to five in my studio making work, it makes the other things more possible. How do you find studio time 'cause you work full-time and you run a store and you have a dog, and you have a relationship. - Absolutely, I don't have kids. I do have a very full life, very engaged with certain things and that's how I want it to be, I like to be busy. I like to be doing things and going to shows. I have dialed it back a little bit, 'cause right now I have one day off a week, and there are parts of your life where I think you work a lot, you work a lot more, you work harder, longer hours, and then there are parts where you need to scale it back and just do some self-preservation so that you don't go crazy. For sure I think that's a thing. - That's hard. - But you know I think when you're engaged and you're doing it, new opportunities present themselves. things that, I know for myself that I thought wouldn't ever happen, I was like, "Oh my God. "I wanna write a book. "I don't think it's ever gonna happen," and now I've written three. - It's kind of like a snowball effect, right, it's like once you start putting yourself out there, then you make the right connections and then things come to you that maybe you weren't expecting or they lead you down unexpected paths and all of a sudden you're like, oh, I never thought I was gonna write a book. - Yeah. - Who knew? - Yeah, and yeah, it happens. - But actually this reminds me because on your Instagram recently you posted, "I'm feeling kind of uninspired, "and I haven't wanted to paint and I don't," I feel like that's a really common struggle, trying to figure out that balance. What do you do when you're not inspired, because I think there's this grand romantic myth that artists walk around and, "Oh, I'm inspired! "And now I'm gonna make a painting." Yeah, that happens. I mean that does happen occasionally, you're in the zone and you're like, "Yeah, I'm doing it," and everything's great, but sometimes it's-- - But you're not, yeah, you're not inspired from like the first brush stroke, you know? There're a couple things that happen, like I heard, watching something somewhere and someone said novices or new artists or whatever, they wait for inspiration to strike and a seasoned artist, they just get to work. There's something that really resonated with me about that is like, oh yeah, there's not a perfect time, a perfect place, a perfect thing that you saw to spark inspiration. Sometimes you just have something and you need to sit down at your desk and you need to draw

or you need to paint or you need to be in the moment thinking about whatever it is that you're supposed to be working on. And even if you're drawing and painting the worst things ever. - Yeah it can be awful. - Those have to get out of the way before you can actually embark and delve in, and that first process, that first part of the process is necessary to kinda clear your mind. - Yeah I like to talk to students a lot about failure and how failure is actually, I think more important than successes, that it's through the failure that you get to the success, and you have to be kind of open and willing to fail, and you have to be like, yeah that's horrible. I think I'm gonna throw that out and nobody should ever see that I did that, but it might lead to something else. Do you have things that you do to warm up, or? - Sometimes with painting like last night, I'm kinda working on this new project because I was not feeling inspired, but I was like okay, I have all these paints, it's ridiculous. I just did a big move and so I was kind of exhausted from that and I was just like, everything's organized and ready to go, I just don't know what I wanna do. So sometimes just like making color charts can be a good way to start if you're a painter or working with your colored pencils doing little scribbles, and we both love color so just looking at color, pairing colors can be really interesting. - I often find just drawing what's in front of me, even if it's the stupidest thing ever, I'm gonna draw a cup, just because it's there, and then I don't have to think about it, because I think sometimes it's like, I have to find something really beautiful. No, just draw whatever it is. Draw the scissors on the table 'cause they're right there. - Absolutely, absolutely. Do the thing that's the easiest to do because once you get past that, then the rest kind of opens up. I think for me, line contour, I know I say this all the time. Line contour's a thing that, it's nice because it allows me to tap into a little bit of creativity and make something very quickly in the time that people are usually checking their phone or staring off into space or whatever. I like to do a little blind contour. Maybe that will lead to something else, maybe I'll paint it in next, maybe I'll be like oh, maybe I wanna add a patterned background. - And maybe you wanna do an (mumbles) print of it. - Exactly, and I think these things are important to remember that even the people that you see out there in the world that are famous artists or working artists or appear to be having the most successful art lives, they are still struggling for inspiration, they are still trying to figure out how to do the laundry and make dinner and see their parents over the weekend and be all those other things. - Right, feed the dog. One of the things-- - Walk the dog. - Walk the dog. (chuckling) One of the things that I like to do and I sort of developed this over the years is I leave something unfinished in the studio where I know what I wanna do next. - [Courtney] Oh that's a great idea. - So at the end of the day I'm like, okay, I'm not quite done with this painting but I know what I wanna do next is put red in it and I leave that so that when I come in the next day, I'm like oh right, I'm gonna add the red to that, it's all set to go, and then I don't have to think, I just get to start working 'cause sometimes I feel like it's just getting to work that is the hardest part, yeah. - Yes, that's exactly it. It just made me think, so Charlie, my puppy. He, the first two blocks of every walk, he never wants to walk, I have to carry him, the first two blocks, but then after, once we're two blocks in, he'll walk, he'll walk fast, he'll run, he's great, he's like engaged, he won't stop. It's an easy walk. But it's like those first two blocks, as an artist, it's those first two blocks. - Totally. - Putting the red gets you the two blocks and then it opens you up to kind of allow the creativity to start to flow. - Yeah, I know a lot of artists, do they really come up with a routine and we talked a little bit about that on another day but I feel like coming up with, I have this cup of coffee and I do this and then I check e-mail for two minutes and then I get to work. Like just making sure you kinda set yourself up for some kind of-- - And if that works for you, that works great. Figure out what works for you and establish the habit, establishing the habit is tricky but once it's done, then you can just keep working. - Okay, and while we have you here, because you're here and

you have a gallery and you have a space and I'm sure you get approached. Do you get approached by artists? - All the time. Our little shop's only open on the weekends, 'cause I'm here during the week and we have a great community of people who are regulars, neighborhood folks, artists, and people do ask all the time, how do you determine who's gonna show in your gallery and how far are you booked out? These are good questions to ask. I really appreciate it when somebody makes a point of coming in, I get to see their face, they introduce themselves. I think sometimes people think, oh the person working's not the owner, often they are. - Right, it never hurts to ask, right? - It's really nice to make the connection and it's even better if it's a familiar face so if they've come to an opening before or they happen to be a regular customer, you don't even have to buy something, but just that I've seen your face-- - Just not a cold flake. This is the first time I'm here and you should really show my work. - Absolutely, absolutely. And we do have a process, we do have a process for, I hand them a card, feel free to send me a proposal. But I up front tell them we change our our gallery every six weeks or so, we have an opening, everything gets split 50/50, we mostly show painting because that's what we kinda sell in the shop. - [Lisa] The space works. - So these are things to think about and also I would say that if you approach a place and you get rejected, it's like, I know you've been saying all month long, it's not personal, maybe they don't sell photos well and you're a photographer, and that's something to think, they want you to be successful, they want your work to be successful in the gallery, I know I would, so I wouldn't wanna say, "Oh yes, you make giant sculpture. "Our gallery is this big, we can fit one piece "and it's gonna be \$10,000." That's not gonna be a fit for us. - That's not gonna work for you, yeah. - Or for the artist 'cause it's not gonna sell. And you're not gonna be able to walk around it because it's a small space (chuckling). - Right. It's true, I love that space, but yeah, if there's a big thing in the middle of the room. - It would be hard to see it all, right? - Yeah. - So yeah-- - Research! People need to do a little bit of research. - That's my favorite-- - Place. It is, but I think it's great advice, I mean just like anything else, you're not gonna get the reward unless you do the work and so check out the space, be seen, introduce yourself, say hello if you can and get an idea, go to a couple shows. Does your work feel like it complements, not that it's the same but that it complements what's in the show there. - Right, right, and then have there been things that you've done in your life that you have felt have led to opportunities, like I always feel, some people are really good at having a business card or something with their work on it and then they pass them out and that works for them. I mean I have business cards with me but I'm not really good at being like, "Hey I'm having a show. "Come to my opening two weeks from now," but some people are so I think that's, I mean, do you have things that you do like that? - Sure, I of course have business cards, I don't always hand them out. I think the thing that's worked really well for me is actually Instagram, making a connection with people. Looking up their stuff, making a comment, saying like, "Hey it was great to meet you at this gallery this evening." - Right, right, right. Yeah-- - Keeping it authentic. - I think some people are so good at that. I remember I went to an art fair once and I met some gallerist and we had a really good conversation and he was like, "Hey are you on Instagram?" I'm like, "Oh yeah, it's just my name, "and it's spelled with all O's," and literally like 20 minutes later, he sent me a little message. Like, "It was really nice to meet you," but it didn't feel like weird. It felt really nice and I was like, wow that's a really good strategy (chuckling). - And it allows you to kinda connect the dots in your life. You might know somebody just through social media and then you meet them in person. You might have loved their work and seen it out in the world and meet them in person at their opening. I like, whatever way is easy for you, for me it's Instagram. I'm terrible at e-mail, I own up to that. I actually have an e-mail responder 'cause I'm terrible at e-mail, send me a text message if you need to talk to



me right away. You know what you're good at lean into it. I think the other thing I would say about opportunity is that if I rewound my life 20 years ago, I'm 36 now, I thought about when I was 16 or even when I was 26 and hearing people older than me saying oh it's all about who you know and being so terrified of that and thinking like, I am not the person that's gonna know everybody, and now at 36, one of my really good friends, our friend Alicia said, "You know what's great about "being in your 30s is that all the people that "you've grown up with or the people "that you're friends with, people you know, "they're like in charge of things now." (laughs) And it's not something-- - It's true. - That you necessarily, it's not that you have to know all the people, it's just that you have so much life experience, not all life experience, but you're at a point in your life where, the friends that you made 10 years ago are now the director of said gallery, or they own a shop or they do that and it's just through the natural, organic relationships that you make just by being a little bit engaged that will grow into opportunities. And I think that feels relieving to me. - Right, so you don't have to go out there hunting for people that you have to get to meet, it's more about just making the right connections. I also feel like as you get older, I know that I'm much quicker now about, oh you need to be connected to this person. And I just connect people because they need to be connected and not-- - Absolutely. I mean you're a great example of this. I think I have a lot of awesome friends who are very generous with their information and their connections and I would say be kind, be generous. - Yes. I mean I think that's one thing that I really learned, I think really young working in a gallery was that we always prefer to work with the artists that were nice. I mean if we had a choice, if we were trying to schedule a show and it was like oh it's this person and this person, we would sit there and say, "Oh that person's studio, "they were funny, they were easy to work with, "their studio seemed really organized, "they answered the phone and e-mailed promptly." - Right. - Let's choose that person over the person who maybe was a little standoffish or who seemed kind of demanding, like, "Are you going to have this "and this and this available?" I mean there are ways to go about things I think. - [Courtney] Yeah, absolutely. - To make other people comfortable. - Absolutely. And these are the things we learn and I think part of that manageable failure thing comes into play. You'll have a couple foot in your mouth experiences-- - Of course. - And you learn. - And I mean, you can't be nice all the time. Or sometimes it's not appropriate even. - Yeah you don't have to be artificially nice, I just think-- - No, I don't think it's like brown nosing, you don't wanna do that. - Yeah I think it's, you make friends, like I said, organically, remember people, you're willing to kinda connect them with other when you think it's a good fit and I would say the other thing is if you're feeling nervous or scared, the thing that's helped me, or even uninspired, the thing that's helped me is do a project with a friend. Social Sketch is something that started as just two friends drawing, me and Mike, and it's ballooned and now it's-- - It's huge thing. - Four years later. So these are things that, I think that's what creates opportunities, you make a tiny little step in what you think is the right direction, be open to the direction changing, but also be open to things like opening up and new things happening and it's that evolution I think. - I think feeling like it's okay to be vulnerable, right? - Yes. - That's a big deal. It's hard. - Back to the failure thing. - Totally, I mean sometimes I'm like, I don't know if I should share that, that seems really personal, but then you do and something happens because of it. - Absolutely, yeah, yeah. And also you're your own worst critic. We're talking about the actual art. - Oh sure. - I think people are more terrified about how something's gonna be viewed and actually people can be really kind and generous and open. And so yeah if you think it's really personal and you feel kind of intimidated to share it or just there's trepidation and then somebody says something so kind and you're like, I'm so glad I put that out there. - Yeah I mean I think your first instinct on that might actually be wrong.

Sometimes I feel like oh I'm feeling really stuck or I feel like I'm gonna fail or I feel like that's too vulnerable. Then in the back of my head I'm like, oh then you should go that way, like run towards that, even though it feels really wrong, it's like running into a burning building instead of running away, but sometimes it's counter-intuitive, but I think that's super important. - Yeah and I'm sure that's turned out really well for you. - For the most part. I mean sometimes it doesn't work out but that's how it goes. - With your installation, your knot installation. You do a lot of things in multiples, like 1000 of something. There's a lot of repetition, which is so impactful to see in person but when you tell me about it, we're like in the car and you're like, oh yeah 1000 of these things to get out and I'm just like, girl, why'd you do that to yourself? - I know, it's true. - But then you see it and it's magnificent. - Well it's about the endgame. And also I don't know I, in the studio, I like doing things over and over and over again, because actually I get to watch movies and do things that I don't get to do in other aspects of my life so I'm doing this really boring, repetitive thing, and it works for me. - [Courtney] Yeah, I mean that's your process. - Yeah it's not everybody but-- - Whatever works for you, that's what you should do. - Lastly I wanna talk a little bit about just sort of being professional and sort of what that means because I think people really underestimate that. I think they think, oh it's art, everybody's kind of like chill and relaxed, but I think it's super important to be on time-- - Absolutely. You need to make a good impression. - Yeah, right, I mean, it's like a job-job. If you were working at even Starbucks, you wouldn't come to your shift late. It's just impolite to the people you work with and eventually you might get fired for doing that. - Or not asked to do a show again. - Yeah, right. - And I know you've said the art community, although it's huge is also a very small community and things, word does travel if somebody is hard to work with or they're consistently inconsistent or-- - Right or-- - Don't show up. - If a gallery doesn't pay people, people know and then artists don't wanna work with that space. I think a couple things to think about too, I don't know how many artists you've had come to the store that need maybe some special tools or some kinda-- - Oh yeah, I'm always so impressed when, I mean we have the general nails and hammer, level, ladder, I'm not expecting artists to come with a ladder, in most cases, but it's nice when I'm like, "Hey, what can I grab you?" and they're like, "Oh I've got it, I've got a little sketch "of what I'm gonna do, I've got all my tools and materials. "I have these special nails that I wanna use for my piece." That's always really impressive and I'm like, oh, they're so easy-- - They're on top of it. - Quickly, yeah. So that's always nice on the other side of it, to see it. - Okay cool. - And to feel prepared. On the other side when I'm installing something, I like to feel prepared. - Oh yeah. - Bring your Windex and make sure there's no dust on your work. - Yeah or sometimes I just need to ask somebody. "Hey do you have scaffolding?" which I'm always like yes, but if they don't, then I prepare something else. Okay I can use this instead. - And I would say don't be afraid to ask questions. Don't ask the same question over and over, if you've already been given the answer. - Right, yeah, don't say, "Hey can you send me that e-mail again?" for the 50th time. - Right. - Yeah. - I would just say that maybe expect the unexpected. It's not what you think it's gonna be. It's not gonna be the easiest, nothing ever is, but all the things, things that you can't even imagine happen will happen if you put in the work. - Right, okay, one last question. If you went back to your student self and somebody was like, "So what are you gonna do "with your art major?" What would you answer? This is something we actually spend a lot of time talking about when I teach a professional practice class in college is that whole like yeah, my roommates don't understand what I'm doing, my parents don't understand what I'm doing. I mean I was really lucky too, my parents were were like huh, but they were supportive, they knew I would figure something out. But if you don't have that and you're in an elevator, and like, "Oh, what do you do?" "I'm an artist." "Oh, what's that?" What do

you say? - Talking about what you do, you have to find what works best for you, and I think being a working artist, that can mean a lot of things. You can say you're an author, artist, a workshops instructor, (mumbles), a crafter. There's a lot of maker versus art, there are these lines that we're always drawing in the sand, right, about like is this fine art, is this craft, what is this? - That's a whole-- - Other topic. - Another conversation. That's like a day-long class in and of itself. - I think you read your audience and answer appropriately. Never be apologetic for what you do. - Yeah, I think that's huge. - Yeah it's like, I'm just an artist. No I'm an artist. I'm not just anything, I'm an artist. - Yeah, because actually, using an X-Acto knife is a skill. - Yeah, all the things are skills. The things that people assume, just find it easy and like, oh I did that in the first grade. It's like, it takes a long time and a lot of hard work because there is no formula. In a math problem, there are these things that you follow and then you get a certain answer. In theory right, but art's not like that. - It's not a one path. - And it's completely driven by you. - I think my favorite response that I've ever given to that question was, yes, I did it. I was talking once to this guy and he was like, "So what do you do?" "I'm an artist." "Oh." Oh and then sometimes I say I'm a teacher and they always assume I'm an elementary school teacher, and so often I'll say professor. Not that it matters, I think elementary school teachers are awesome but that's not what I do. I'm like, "What do you do?" and he said, "I'm an engineer." And I said, "Oh then we're really similar." - Oh. - And he was like, "How so?" I'm like, "Well don't you spend all day problem solving?" He was like, "Yeah," I'm like, "Yeah that's basically what I do." "I problem solve all day long." - Exactly. - And then I walked away like yes! (laughs) - Victory! - Yeah. - It's true, probably more than anything else, it's about troubleshooting and being innovative in your-- - Critical thinking. I mean I think art making is basically just a giant box of critical thinking. - We'll leave you with that. - Okay, there you go. Chew on that. - Thank you for having me today. - No thanks for coming, that was great. - Good luck to you guys.

#### Day 14 - Installation and Framing

- One thing that I get asked a lot in classes is, "How do I hang my work?" So if you're working on a canvas and it has little ledge on the back of it, you just put a nail on the wall and you hang it, but there are others ways that you can make work and other ways to think about not just framing, which we'll go over in a second, but alternative ways to put pieces onto the wall. I have here an array of different things that might be useful. This is by no means, every single thing you could ever use to hang anything ever, but maybe it'll give you some ideas to think outside the box instead of just hammers and nails and regular pushpins. When I go to the hardware store, I like to look for all different kinds of nails. I, in particular, love these little guys. They also come in brass, sometimes they come in copper. So you could think about changing the color of your nail to make it match the work that you're working with. This handy dandy box comes from IKEA. It's got these great hanging devices. If you're putting wires on the back of your artwork like D-rings or even just stretching a wire across, this is probably the best way to hang the work. There's also these cool little plastic versions. They hammer directly into the wall, so you just take your hammer and nail these guys into the wall and then you have this cool little hook to put wire on or a D-ring on. They have these really long versions too, and this is great if you're not sure what height you want to hang something, so you can hang it from this bottom hook or you can hang it from the top hook and you can move things around based on that. One of my favorite ways to hang paper directly to the wall if you're not framing it is with magnets. So we have these really cool assortment of magnets. These have white and black around them but you can also buy them with just the metal part and then these guys, this little bag, which is gonna be really hard for you to see, has the world's tiniest magnets in

them but they're actually strong enough to hold paper. If you take a really close look there's this teeny, tiny little magnet right there sitting on top of the other magnet, it's that small but it's strong enough to hold things to the wall and the way you do this is you take a pin like this. These ones happen to be enamel coated in white and they actually come in a lot of colors, so if you wanted green ones, or red ones, or yellow ones you could get those too. You put this in the wall first and then you place your drawing, and then you take the magnet and it holds the paper directly to the wall. It's pretty seamless and it's kinda cool and really contemporary looking. I also like to use florist pins, they're really strong. They're stronger than you think and they're a really nice length, especially if you want to leave a little bit of the pin sticking out of the wall. These guys are really cool, they're little L-pins and you hammer these directly into the wall. You can actually use them to hold a piece of paper like this directly in place or something a little bit thicker, like these would be great for a panel that doesn't have a backing on it that you want to hang directly onto the wall. Little map pins, these also come in a wide array of colors. They're super great. T-pins, also come in crazy different lengths. You can push these all the way into the wall, so they kind of act like these L's but you can also leave them hanging out. I also like to use just regular sewing pins. These are a little fragile and they bend kind of easily but they're a really nice look, they kind of almost become invisible. These are specialty really cool little clips that I found. I found them here at a store in San Francisco called Maido, it's a Japanese stationary store but I have seen them in other places. You might wanna look in like an architecture type store. ARCH here in San Francisco, I think has some of these, as well. They're super tiny and this little pin is what goes into the wall and then these unclip and you can put little pieces of paper or big pieces of paper, big drawings. If you're working really large, you might need, maybe, three or four of these across the whole span of paper. But these little plastic ones really disappear. You can also just use pins and regular binder clips. So I found these plastic clips at Daiso. This is kind of a strange configuration but it could be really great if you wanted to do a grid of drawings and so you wanted to space them. You could put a drawing down on this side and a drawing up on this side and then this part would create your grid space. There's also clear plastic binder clips. Again, if you're looking for something that maybe is going to disappear into the wall this might do that, say more than these silver guys, which also work really well, just put a nail or a pin in the wall and hang the clip on them. These are really useful if you're trying to figure out spacing because you can move them really easily. These are from IKEA too. These are actually meant to hang curtains but they work with artwork just as well, these little clips, and you have this big silver hook. You could even take the big hook off and there's a teeny little hook that you could use instead. As you get working you make be getting ready for an exhibition where you need to frame everything. This can be really expensive or time consuming, say you have 20 pieces, maybe you don't want to send them out to a frame shop and spend the money to have them all framed. You could do it yourself and I want to show you a couple ways to do this that might make it easier for you in the long run. Most contemporary artwork doesn't use mats. You'll notice as you walk around and look at artwork in the world, that a lot of things are floated in frames. This means that the artwork doesn't touch the glass because you don't want anything touching the glass. It's not actually good for paper or for any kind of artwork at all. So things have what's called a spacer and most frames that you buy, say in a big box store, or at a thrift store or any place that you might be going to get your frames, do not come ready for you to make this floating situation. There's a company out there called FrameTek, and I'll show you their website in a minute, that makes these things called spacers and I have three examples here, they have one version that has a piece of sticky tape on it. You peel this off and you stick it directly to the glass and it creates the space. They

also have these versions and when you buy them you end up seeing that there's actually all these different sizes. They have some that are only an eighth of an inch and they have ones that go all the way up to three quarters of an inch. When you're getting frames, you have to check to see if you have enough space in the side to fit the spacer. So in this frame, for example, this is probably the biggest spacer that we can utilize. So just kind of keep that in mind where you're looking for frames and when you're online trying to order the spacers. These guys have these little ridges, so one of these ridges holds the glass and this other ridge holds the paper, so it kind of acts like little ledge to keep the paper in place. Okay. You'll probably also want to get some kind of self-adhesive or hinging tissue. There are some that you wet. This kind sticks on it's own, which is really helpful. Just make sure that anything you're putting into the frame is archival, so that includes the mat board that you're gonna be mounting your work to. You don't want anything to have any acid in it because that will turn your paper brown. If you're gonna utilize this FrameTek system, you're most likely going to also want to get some Framer's Points. This is gonna make the back of your frame look really professional and you need this tool. It's called a fletcher in order to push these points in. You can also use tacks or nails or even a staple gun if you don't want to invest in these materials but these are really gonna make your frames look professional. Lastly, you'll need some pruning shears. These are a little bit different because there's one side that has a flat bottom. These are what you're gonna use to cut the plastic FrameTek pieces. If you go to their website, they have a whole video and they explain exactly what you need and how to use them. I've take this frame apart. This is actually from IKEA. I'm gonna ditch this mat because I don't need it. I'm not gonna use it. I've already cut a mat that fits into the frame. So usually there's a piece of paper that comes in the frame, I used that as a template in order to cut the mat. This is just a little fabric piece that I sewed on my sewing machine and we're gonna frame it. You're gonna need the hinging tissue to attach this but I'm gonna show you how to set that up with masking tape because it's a little bit easier to see. Let me show you how we're gonna hinge this or how we would hinge it. You could take your tape and just literally fold it over and make a little hinge and it can go behind your piece. This would be at the top but I'm just doing it at the bottom because this part's already hinged, and you would push it down. And that holds the piece in place. You can do them in the top corners if it's a really long piece you might need to do three or four across the top. If the bottom is really heavy and you don't want it sort of flapping while the frame is sitting on the wall, you can also hinge the bottom. I'm gonna show you another way to hinge. It's a little bit stronger, so if you have a bigger piece of paper you might want to hinge this way. You need two pieces of tape and remember, I'm just showing you with masking tape but you want to be using the archival tape. You're gonna put one larger piece of tape down and another piece of tape vertically over it and you're creating kind of a cross, and then you would lay your paper down on top of it. If this is a really large framing job, you can put some little marks, pencil marks, where the corners are gonna be so that it's very clear as you're pushing something down where the corners of the piece of paper are supposed to end up. That'll help you make sure that everything's straight. So now we're gonna add our FrameTek to the glass so that we create that floating space. I would remove the glass from the frame. For something this size, because it's pretty small, I would just use these little FrameTek spacers and this is the stuff that has the removable and there's adhesive on here and it's actually really strong and because I've already done this, I can't take this off and show you how I would but it's all on here. You use the pruners to cut the FrameTek. If I wanted to make a larger floating space, I could use this stuff. It's the same thing. You would put it directly onto the glass and you would make sure that it's the right size and then you would move it around. And again, you don't have to worry about corners

mitering. You'll notice right here that they just fit into one another that's totally fine because they're gonna end up hidden here in the frame, so when you turn it over, you're not gonna see anything at all. So now let's put this together. So you start with your frame and you need to put your glass in and now is the time that you would clean this glass really thoroughly, at least the inside. You can always clean the outside later but you don't want there to be any fingerprints or any dust or anything inside so you can blow, (blowing) make sure it's super clean. I'm not gonna do that, but just pretend like it's really, really clean. My hinged piece of artwork is ready to go. I'm gonna make sure that none of these strings are gonna get stuck. I'm gonna turn it over and plop it into place. Okay, I'm gonna check. Right? I would be checking for dirt, checking to see if it's straight, it's not perfectly straight we're gonna pretend that it is. And then I'm gonna reuse the backing that came with the frame. Most of the time, these frames come with a bunch of hardware and you will probably have to remove it because it's gonna be too low down in the frame once you've put the spacers in. So I've pulled all of the hardware out with a pair of pliers. I'm gonna get ready to put my Framer's Points in. They're tiny. Keep in mind that you don't need a million of them. You just need enough to secure the back into the frame. You're gonna need your fletcher tool to put the Framer's Points in. You might have to adjust it. It's pretty easy to do this. You unscrew this and slide this around so that when you squeeze it, it ends up tight up against the frame. Okay, you put the point down in this little spot. It's magnetic so it's gonna stick there, which is really cool and then you place your point. So on a frame this size, I would probably do one, two, three, four. If you were feeling like you wanted it to be a little more secure you could do two and two. So you're gonna hold the fletcher tool down and you're gonna squeeze the point in. It takes a little bit of strength. And that's it, it's in there. If you want this to look super professional, you can put a piece of brown craft paper and cover the back. You can also use archival tape and tape over really nicely and neatly, all the edges. This is gonna keep any dust from sneaking in behind the backing. So I would, at the very least, tape the back of the frame and if you have the time and the energy cut a nice piece of paper and put it in on the back. Lastly, you wanna think about hanging devices that you might want to attach to the frame. This IKEA frame came with a modified sawtooth hanging device, which would be great, a nail will fit right in there and it'll be really secure. You can buy similar hardware to this at the hardware store. It's called a sawtooth hanger, in case you're interested. You could also use these types. This is sort of like a sawtooth but a little different. You can hammer this into the back of the frame. Make sure you measure, so that it's centered. And then lastly, I really recommend D-rings. They're super secure. They're gonna make sure that nothing falls off the wall. These you need two and you need to make sure that they're small enough to fit into your frame. You can attach these with a screw in this little hole right here. And you can either hang directly from this, on those little hooks that I showed you, or you can run a wire between two D-rings and secure the frame to the wall that way. When you go to hang your work there are a couple tips that you might need to know about. Usually a space has a designated eye level. This is usually anywhere between 56 and 60 inches from the floor. Some people like to hang vertical things at one height and horizontal things at another height. You should just check with the space that you're showing at. But some spaces have no conventions whatsoever, so you can walk in and say I like my eye level at 60 inches and you can determine all of that. It's a little bit tricky to hang things at eye level, so I kinda want to diagram you through it so you understand how this process works. Here's our floor. We're gonna think that eye level 56 to 60 inches that means that we want the middle of this frame to be at eye level, so we have to determine the middle of this frame, so we're gonna take our measuring tape. This frame is eight inches. Gonna write that down over here, so I don't forget. Half of eight inches is four inches,

so we want the four inch mark to be in the middle. One other thing we have to consider is how we're gonna hang this. So if you're hanging from a wire or if you're hanging from a sawtooth, you have to measure the distance because you're gonna subtract that from your total number. The middle of the sawtooth is one and a quarter. Okay, so I've got, if I want the middle of this at 60 inches and the middle is four inches, we know that the top of this is gonna be at 64 inches, but then I need to account for my one and a quarter inches, so 64 minus one and a quarter is 62 and three quarters. So if I was in a gallery and installing this, I would measure 62 and three quarters to the top. Make a little mark. Make a point for me to put my nail in. Put my nail in. Hang my piece and then eye level would be at 60 inches. After you're done hanging all of your pieces, you wanna make sure everything is level. Use one of these guys. This is a teeny one. I have like a four foot long one that I love to use, but this great, you could just put it on top of your frame and make sure that the bubbles end up in between the little black lines and then you know that everything's level and good to go. In your PDF, you're gonna find links to all these resources but I'm gonna go over some of them right now. So this is FrameTek, this is the spacer that I was showing you. They also have crazy PDFs and instructions and videos, so that once you buy their materials, they walk you through the process of how to use them. It's really helpful. If you're looking for frames, one of my favorite places to go is IKEA. They actually have square frames and there aren't very many places out there that you can get square frames. I happen to like working in squares. There's also Cheap Pete's. They have an online shop and they also have some locations here in San Francisco. Pottery Barn, West Elm, all those places, also big box stores, like Target, have a lot of framing supplies as well, or frames that you can then change out to do the floating thing. Dick Blick or other art stores also have a lot of different kinds of frames. They have metal frames and wood frames. Dick Blick also has all the tools you need in order to put those frame points in, these are the point drivers. This was that fletcher tool. There are several different kinds out there. This is the type of anvil pruner that you need to cut the FrameTek material. Remember it has that flat side. These are some screw eyes, you can use these instead of or with D-rings. Here's the entire page of D-rings from Home Depot. All different kinds, all different colors, all different sizes, make sure when you get the D-rings, that they're not gonna stick out from the back side of your frame so you don't see them. Here are some of those picture hanging hooks that I showed you. The ones I had were from IKEA but you can also find them at hardware stores. Here's those sawtooths. And here's some of these teeny, tiny magnets. I think these ones in particular are a little bit bigger than the ones I showed you but this is just an example of how they come. If you don't want to tackle framing yourself you can go online, even. There are places like Framebridge that offer a lot of different options, different woods, different colors. They also will do floating. It's an additional fee but it comes out really nicely and all you have to do, they send you a box, you put your artwork in, you send it back to them, and they send it back to you in a beautiful frame. It's super easy. If you're an artist and you know you're gonna frame more than one thing, they'll even set you up with a wholesale account so you can save a little bit of money. As an artist you spend a lot of time making your work, make sure you use spend as much time on the presentation so it looks really good when it's all finished.

### Day 15 - Dealing with Rejection

- You made it, we're on the last day. I just wanna remind you that there's a lot of resources in that PDF. There are also, when you have more time, a whole list of books that you can dive into if you're looking for more information about this whole professional practice thing. This is an ongoing resource for you to check back with. There's a ton of books and there's a ton of information out

there. And I wanna leave you with maybe, a little bit of philosophical advise because, one thing that you're gonna have to get used to as an artist, well maybe you won't, maybe you'll be super lucky and everything will go great from beginning to end, but probably not 'cause I know I still get rejected. We're gonna have to talk about that, rejection, because in order to get engaged and get your work out there and be involved, you're gonna have to get rejected from things. And there are a few strategies that we can talk about in order to maybe make it sting a little less. I know I still fell crappy when I get that letter, it's usually not very thick, or that short e-mail that says, "We're so sorry, there were so many hundreds of applicants," and while your work is fabulous, you can't be in this." And it doesn't feel good. It feels like, oh no, they didn't like me, but it's actually not about you and I think that's one thing to think about is that rejection, especially in the arts, might not have anything to do with the quality of your work or you as a person at all. And I know this from first hand experience. When I worked in a gallery, we would be looking at submissions all of the time. Sometimes we would make different piles, we would have a pile of no's and those people would get nice little letters that said, "Thank you for submitting, "but we're not interested at this time." And then there would be a pile of maybe's and then there would be a pile of yes's. And we'd wait maybe three to six months and look at the pile of maybe's again and some of those would turn into yes's and some of them would turn into no's and sometimes we would ask ourselves "Why was this even in the maybe pile? "This doesn't make sense for us." But other times we would say, "Why was in this in the maybe pile? "This should have been in the yes pile "from the very beginning." Often times, I like to joke that what somebody had for lunch might influence how they might react to your work. That may or may not be true, but there is this sort of thing where, you can't control how somebody's gonna look at your work and it could very well be that your work is being shown right after somebody's work who was awful and there's still kind of like a bad taste in people's mouths and so they're not responding to your work either, and you have no idea what's going on behind closed doors. You may be rejected from something solely because they already accepted somebody ahead of you and your work just kind of looks like theirs, it's not even that it's exactly the same. Maybe they've decided that there's only five slots for painters and they've already accepted five painter submissions, and by the time they get to your submission as a painter, they're like oh, this work is really cool, but we've already decided on these five painters, they have to go in the no pile. Just keep in mind that you can't control that aspect at all. Just remember that the work that you're making and submitting may not be the right fit for whatever it is you're applying for, but it might be a good fit later. And trust the process. Know that the jurors, if they're interested in what you're doing, or a gallerist, if they're interested in what you're doing, may have a long game in mind. So they may contact you much later than when you first turned in that proposal or that application. One other thing you can keep in mind is, the idea that you can flip this whole negativity around rejection. Again, this isn't easy. It's not like woo, I got rejected, but you should try. I have some friends who decided that they wanted to collect rejections and so they purposefully set out goals for themselves. "I'm going to apply for 10 things this month "and I'm gonna put all of my rejections into a binder "and I'm gonna celebrate them." Because in reality, the more things that you apply for, the more times you're gonna get rejected, but it also means the more possibilities that you're gonna be accepted. So you really have to think about, hey, this is okay. It's okay for me not to get everything because if I got everything, I wouldn't have enough work for it anyways. If you're accepted to everything you ever apply for, your studio's gonna be empty and you're gonna be working until midnight to make new art for all the things. Overtime, this is gonna get easier, I promise. I still don't like being rejected, but I have a little bit thicker skin than I did when I was say, 18



years old and starting out. One more thing I wanna point you to, there's this beautiful YouTube video by Ira Glass. It's not beautiful in quality, it's kind of grainy 'cause it was shot a long time ago. But I don't know if you know *This American Life*, it's one of my favorite things on NPR ever. I listen to it all the time in the studio and Ira is somebody I find really, really inspiring. He talks about the idea of this gap, that if you're a maker or any sort of creator of things, you have taste and you have this desire to make things that are at a level that maybe you can't quite reach yet. So you are starting out and you're making paintings and you're looking at say Gerhard Richter's paintings and you are like, oh my god, those are so beautiful. I'm never gonna be able to paint that way. And there's this gap between what you're capable of doing and what you want to be able to do, and that's okay. That gap, actually recognizing that gap, is really important and it's everyone has that feeling, I wish my work was as good as so-and-so's work. Just accept the fact that as you keep working and making things, that gap is gonna close. And maybe even, you're gonna change you mind. You can still love Gerhard Richter's paintings and wish that you were a painter like him, but maybe you're gonna find your own voice. And I bet anything they'll be somebody who's younger than you that's gonna look at your work and then say, "I wish my work was just like theirs."