



the
WORKING
artist™

SOCIAL MEDIA

Advice from
The Working Artist Alumni



Introduction from Crista Cloutier

This is an incredible time to be an artist.

There are now more opportunities and venues to show and sell your work than any other time in history. The gate-keepers have been dismissed, creativity is at the forefront of every conversation.

But it's also a terrifying time to be an artist.

The paradigms keep changing, the rules are impossible to decipher.
This platform! That platform!
How do you find your audience?
What do you do with them once you've got them?

Do you really have anything to say?

Relax. It's all okay.
It is overwhelming and anxiety-provoking, yes.
But it's also manageable.

I wanted to create a handbook to help artists maneuver the world of social media because social media is such a powerful tool for building an audience. And I understand how confusing it can be.

I thought it would be fun to include the voices of other artists, working artists who have taken my online course. When I put the call out to them, I was overwhelmed by their generosity.

This is their advice to you
– from one artist to another.

After completing The Working Artist Masterclass (which I found most instructive!) I learned that it was important to post items that give a more well-rounded perspective on myself as an artist.

Previously I only posted a new painting or a successful prize entry, but I came to realize that it was valuable for people to gain a sense of my social and personal values.

I've begun to post items related to my interests and inspiration. While my images still receive the most responses, people do let me know that they find the other issues interesting. So I've learned to be courageous about sharing more.

Deborah Walker

“I have changed in a number of ways after taking The Working Artist. I learnt that the issues that I regarded as secondary to my professional life were as important in presenting my intentions as the artwork itself.”

What I say to other artists is that if you feel stuck it's valuable to ask for help. Just because you might have a degree of success, there's always room for expanding and strategies for greater opportunities.”



Deborah Walker
www.deborah-walker.com

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I started my Facebook Page one year ago with a 30-day Facebook challenge that's really paying off. I'm almost at 1000 followers and my reach and engagement keeps growing.

It started going in a good direction after I clearly defined my ideal client. I write my posts for this one person I now have in mind. She feels like a friend, so my posts are more personal which encourages more people to respond.

I post about 6 times a week. Every Sunday I share a blog about something or someone who inspires me for #inspirationsunday. Every Thursday is #throwbackthursday.

On other days I share pictures and videos with work-in-progress, behind-the-scenes, and finished work.

Kathleen Steegmans

“For me, The Working Artist Masterclass came at the perfect time. I liked that the course was a combination of practical tips, inspiration, and insider information about the art world.”



Kathleen Steegmans
www.kathleensteegmans.be

Be flexible with social media.

I chose Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to test the best response rate. I had early success with Facebook but as interest dried up I focused more on Instagram and Twitter with much better results.

The best time for me to post was either 5pm or 7pm as a lot of people seemed to be on at those times.

The best responses I've had are to my ideas on something I'm working on and how I came up with the idea and what I'm looking for in the finished work.

If you haven't got anything new then put up some early work, even if they're just sketches.

Also, post a picture of you doing something fun other than your art so your followers can see you aren't one-dimensional.

Stephen Simmons

“ My advice for other artists thinking of taking The Working Artist is – go for it. This course is not long nor as expensive as many others and it's great value for the money. Your confidence will grow because of the new skills you'll have acquired to sell your work and I still receive regular updates and ideas from Crista at no charge!

So, do the course, you will not regret it. ”

Stephen Simmons
www.ssimmonsart.com



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- Do your research to work out which platform is best for you. It's not just about how much traffic the platform gets, it's about whether your target clients are active on that platform.
- Pick one or two channels and do those well, rather than doing 4 or 5 badly. I started out on 5 social channels and was immediately overwhelmed. Now I'm active on Facebook and looking to build my Instagram next.
- Use #hashtags so that people can easily find your projects. It also helps people to accidentally come across your work.
- Boosting key posts can be an effective way to get more followers, but you need to be very clear about who you're targeting. Not everyone is going to love your art so don't waste precious money targeting the whole world.
- Create an "avatar" of what your ideal client looks like and use that to set the parameters for your target audience.
- Follow people and pages that are really interesting to you, and interact regularly. Build connections.
- Be generous with your knowledge and start to build your reputation as an expert. Answer as many questions as you possibly can, no matter how stupid, especially as you become more established.
- Grace and kindness will get you far in life!

Karen Thurman

“I signed up for the Working Artist not long after I decided to take up photography full time. I was filled with doubts about how to go about getting my work seen and the Working Artist gave my confidence a great boost. When you join the Working Artist you're not just signing up for a course, you're joining a community of like-minded artists who, along with Crista, will continue to encourage and support you long after you've finished the assignments. You'll learn how to present yourself and your work professionally, how to price it, how to reach out to people, how to get seen, and much more. It's worth every hour and every penny you're going to spend on it.”

Karen Thurman

www.thurmanovich.com



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I started my Instagram account a little over a year ago, where I post works-in-progress, completed works, details of paintings and forthcoming exhibitions.

I've found a really welcoming community of like-minded people who have been incredibly supportive, and have given me a lot of encouragement in showing my work.

I've done giveaways of small original paintings when I've reached significant numbers (500 and 1000 followers). Because I want these to be a genuine thank you for support, I don't use giveaways as an overt opportunity to try to garner more likes or followers (such as... just tag 3 friends!...) because I think this can leave a bad taste.

Through Instagram I've been able to meet up some artists who live in my area, and we're planning to develop a local artist network for shared exhibitions, mutual support, an exchange of ideas and probably lots of cake!

Jane Elizabeth Cullum

“Before I took The Working Artist, I was almost at the point of putting away my paints altogether; I'd do one exhibition every so often, maybe sell a painting but then had no idea what to do next, or how to promote myself.

As a result of taking The Working Artist, I now have a professional- looking website which I created myself. I feel much more confident about approaching galleries. I've joined artist communities. I've sold work!

Most of all, and maybe most importantly I feel like my work has really developed. In summary I'm really happy about what I've achieved as a result of The Working Artist.”

Jane Elizabeth Cullum

www.janeelizabethstudio.com



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Learn in small bites - I listen to a few marketing podcasts to help me improve my social media marketing. Several months of regular listening means that I have enough knowledge to be proactive.

Have a plan and take one platform at a time.

Write down your passwords. It sounds daft but it saves tons of time!

I use Buffer.com to help me schedule my posts. There's a free package and it saves me so much time when I'm trying to communicate about my latest piece of artwork across social media.

Everyone's talking about video and how important it is – but use it only if you feel comfortable. You don't have to hop on every bandwagon.



It does take time to build a following and for reactions to happen. The founder of Social Media Marketing said that it took him 5 years to build an audience that he felt was substantial - and he did this full-time!

That made me feel a lot better and I personally think that the key is connecting with the audience that likes your work – not pure numbers for number's sake.

Lynne Forrester

“It took a long while for me to make the decision to sign up for the Working Artist. The course helps you think about where you'd like to exhibit, what kind of artist you'd like to be. With that in mind, I've been more selective with the people and spaces I've approached - and more successful in the outcomes as a result.

Personally and professionally, I'm delighted I took the Working Artist course and look forward to retaining contact as one of its many alumni in the future.”

Lynne Forrester
www.lynneforester.com

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A close friend told me that the only way to learn about Instagram was to use it. She was so right!

It can be so scary but I learned how to edit my posts, delete things, watermark my images and tag people.

Just get your feet wet with the social media that speaks to you most. I'm only scratching the surface so far, but people respond to color and layout and video. People also respond to emotional or personal stories accompanying the picture, but they also just like images, too, without text.

And watch what other people are doing—use some of their hashtags, follow them, make comments. Find other artists from your online classes and then follow them on social media too.

Natasha Zahn Pristas

“The Working Artist was the homework I needed to do to get my art business moving again. It was a framework—all of us participating in the course were doing different things, but having some structure to rely on really helped me see what I did and didn't want to do with my art.”

My confidence has grown, my opportunities have grown, and even my style has grown.”



Natasha Zahn Pristas
www.natashazahnpristas.com



I often read of artists selling on Facebook and other social media platforms, but until recently had never done so myself. I say “until recently” because I have started putting as much effort into my social media as I do into my online galleries – and I recently sold more on Facebook than my online galleries!

In fact, I’ve even sold paintings on there within minutes of loading!

Suthamma (Ta) Thimkaeo

“When I took The Working Artist, I was working incredibly hard and getting nowhere. I looked at a lot of online courses but it was emailing Crista my questions that made me sign up.

I worked hard on the course, listened to every word Crista spoke and read everything she wrote. I also read a lot of stuff from other artists on the course and got a lot of good advice.

Since completing the course last year, I’ve increased my sales and my exposure, I’ve been accepted to online galleries which previously rejected me, and I’ve been invited to join other online galleries. I was even asked to write an article for Art & Museum Magazine – me! a girl from the rice fields of Thailand!

I don’t live in London, New York, Monaco, Amsterdam or Hong Kong. But I’ve now sent my work to these places, in fact, my work is now in 17 countries. I’m very proud of that.

I have no doubt that taking The Working Artist got me to success a whole lot quicker than had I done it on my own, and for that I will forever be grateful.”

Suthamma (Ta) Thimkaeo
www.artgalleryta.com

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Since following The Working Artist and hearing Crista's advice about social media, I've also set up an Instagram account in addition to my Facebook page.

Instagram's feed is visual with only short comments, which means you are basically looking through a bank of images – it's perfect for artists.

Many professional artists, photographers, art galleries and museums post regularly and I follow several of these, which means that I am being exposed to work that is up-to-date, trending and out there every single day. This is proving to be a fascinating education and I'm sure it's having an effect on my own work.

It's easy to post. Just take a photo with your phone and you can upload it directly to your Instagram page. The image can be posted simultaneously to your Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr pages, so you can get multiple postings for the effort of one.

Advice for Instagram:

- The more first-rate artists and galleries that you follow, the more you will get out of it. But it does take time. Set yourself a time limit – say two sessions of 15 minutes a day.
- Instagram is fast moving. The feed is being updated continuously. Post an image every day if you can.
- Posts that have received the most likes have been close-ups of my paintings that are colourful and bright and show nice little details of brushwork. My most popular photos have been quirky ones. Basically you need to try to find something unusual or personal to you that will stand out.



Beverley Johnson
www.beverleyjohnson.com

“I have definitely become more confident about introducing myself as an artist since taking The Working Artist Masterclass. I have more clarity about the materials I need to present my work in a professional context. I've become more organised. I have also gained insight into new markets for my work. In addition, I have branched out in social media.

I want to stress that perfecting the tools required as a working artist is an on-going process. It's not something that will be all done and dusted in the four weeks. As your work develops, your materials will develop too. But it's easy to access Crista's advice on each topic from the dashboard, so the support continues to be there once the course is completed.”

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I researched Instagram for two weeks before actually opening an account and it's been the best thing I have done for my career (other than The Working Artist of course!).

I almost fell into the trap of caring about how many followers I could get, but it's important to understand that making deep connections is more valuable than making as many connections as possible.

Through Instagram, I have made priceless friendships, I am constantly inspired, and it's also been an invaluable space for me to hone my communication skills.

Jessica de Soria



“When I invested into The Working Artist Masterclass, I knew right away how lucky I was to have Crista as a teacher and mentor. Her own professional experiences in the art world are perfect for teaching artists to sell their work and be a part of a community.

Now I have a clear multi-directional strategy in place. Using the tools that were taught, I've successfully been able to dodge the many obstacles that come my way. I was wading through quick-sand before Crista's class!

The Working Artist teaches you the art-world rules, because only when you know the rules can you know when to break them. This course spans the foundation of being an entrepreneur to being an artist, and how the two come together so that you can be a successful Working Artist.”

Jessica de Soria
www.JessicaDeSoria.com

As an emerging artist, I've been taking social media in steps.

The first step was to set up my "business" pages and decide what type of content I want to show. I have Instagram, Facebook, Wordpress, LinkedIn and Twitter. However, LinkedIn is limited to professionals, so I am more selective what I post there and do so independently of the others.

The second step was to research #hashtags on Instagram. It requires googling multiple hashtags to see what comes up. You want to choose hashtags that are in the same vein as your work.

For example, as a painter, my target markets might be interior designers, galleries and art collectors. I would look up those hashtags first.

Then I would think about the interests of my audience and research again. #countryclub, #winery, #vineyard, #yacht, #artdistrict, #studio, etc.

Then choose hashtags for what you do. #abstractart, #abstractpainter, #artist, #artistlife. The key is to find hashtags with a range of followers. You will get lost in the masses if you only choose hashtags that already have millions of followers.

The third step was to post daily, check back frequently, respond to comments and follow. I try to follow only those people who remind me what I'm doing and why.

There's a craft to drawing attention to your page by commenting on other pages. I've seen it done on my pages and it works though it requires research and strategy in targeting potential followers. Try it!

Andi Schoenbaum

“My testimonial for The Working Artist is encased in a pink leather notebook that's filled cover to cover with notes from the Masterclass and ideas that it has spawned. It's been a joy to keep in touch with Crista on social media, her emails, and the surprise alumni coaching calls she offers. It's amazing to grow as an artist with her nurturing support and the expanding Working Artist Network.”

Andi Schoenbaum
www.Andischoenbaum.com



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I post photos relevant to the mood that I feel represents my sculptures, even though the photos are sometimes images that have nothing to do with sculpture. I like to think my messages and my image are consistent with the style of art that I produce.

Kristina Kossi



“For me, The Working Artist’s step by step process helped to define all the material that one needs to develop to create the business side of being an artist.

It’s absolutely wonderful to get lost in creating art, but when you want to make a profession out of it, it’s a different story.

Crista’s guidance was perfect, well thought out, tried and tested. I also liked her personal availability and the optional one-on-one session.”

Kristina Kossi
www.kristinakossi.com

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As an introvert, I really struggle with social media. However, the people that seem genuinely interested in my work have told me that they find it useful when I share insights online about specific works and actual stories about what I do and where my inspirations come from.

Because my work is very often either abstract in nature or highly symbolic, it helps me to connect with my audience if I share these kinds of details once in a while. Therefore, my advice is to open up to your audience in a meaningful way that goes beyond the surface and gives them a glimpse into your core artistic nature.



Michael Pierre Price

“The Working Artist Masterclass is highly valuable because it is systematic, hands-on, understandable, practical, and specifically tailored to artists seeking to navigate the larger art world.”

Crista’s professional experience in the art world gives her the insights and credibility to provide substance and quality. Crista’s giving personality adds both encouragement and useful feedback that’s often needed when personal challenges arise during the course.

The hands-on lessons require participation, so the course isn’t just an intellectual exercise. It spurs commitment and progress to moving forward. Also, having other artists to interact with online and in weekly phone conferences allows for camaraderie and a wider perspective of what others might be working on in their careers.

The ongoing nature of The Working Artist may be one of the most valuable aspects of Crista’s vision, because those who participate become part of a greater community of artists.”

Michael Pierre Price

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*To learn when the next session of
The Working Artist Masterclass is scheduled,
be sure you are signed up for our mailing list.*



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