

Building relationships and networking



- by Always Art Staff

Like any other field, having connections is key for maximizing career growth and opportunities. As an artist, you will need to meet new people and focus on building relationships. Getting out there and interacting with others will help you explore new possibilities and increase your own exposure. Talking about your work and witnessing other people's reactions in-person will boost your confidence and level of recognition. Networking face-to-face brings advantages that an online presence alone cannot achieve. Here's how you can network and what you will gain from the process.

How you can network in the art industry

For artists that have gallery representation, you can begin by attending shows and events your gallery hosts for other artists and occasions. By doing so, you immediately make a good impression on the gallery and your peers.

Beyond that, look for other gallery events in your local area and join them. You can also attend art fairs, festivals, conventions, museum events, etc. When you attend a particular event, ask the people you meet what other events they recommend attending.

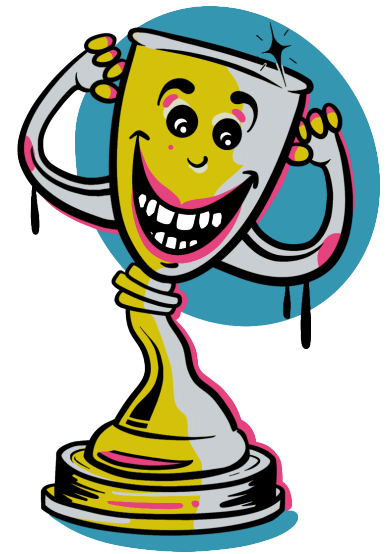
If you have an art degree, take advantage of that and stay connected with your professors and peers. Join in on alumni events or those hosted by your alma mater.

Finally, you can simply take advantage of the opportunity to meet people in your everyday life. Let your local community know that you are an artist, be nice to them, and they might help you get your art sold or introduce you to interesting people, you never know what can come from a single interaction.

Fortunately, the art industry is full of events, exhibitions, and social networking occasions. But do not limit your network to just artists. Expand your horizons and connect with individuals from other industries. To overcome geographical constraints, leverage online artist communities and art social media groups, and be active within them.

What you win from networking and what to expect

Ultimately, you will gain the recognition, admiration, and respect of your network. They can introduce you to opportunities you never expected. Additionally, you can simply gain exposure and allow new people to discover you and hopefully to support you. Your connections can get you commercial projects, collaborations with brands or print houses, invitations to art residencies, gallery representations, or merch manufacturing partnerships. Great opportunities may come your way, just keep at it. Do not network and expect immediate results.



What to prepare for networking events

At a networking event, you interact with others with the intention of exchanging contact information to assure future engagement and communication. That is why you need to have your business cards with you. It would be efficient if you have a QR code of your Instagram account or your website to make it a fast process for others to follow you and see your work. You also need to work on your elevator pitch where you explain who you are and what you do, in a couple of sentences. Work on it until it perfectly represents you and catches the interest of others.

Next steps after collecting contact information

So, you have the business cards of the people you met, now what? If they provided you with their social channels, make sure to connect with them there. For instance, you can congratulate them on their achievements and engage with their posts. Email them your recent creations and send invitations to events you organize. Do not be pushy or harass them with too many emails or texts. Only reach out when you have something worth sharing. Let them know about exciting events that you intend to participate in and ask them if they will join you.

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