

# What galleries should do and why they deserve their commission



- by Always Art Staff

In the last few decades, the art industry has shifted dramatically due to advancements in technology. The impacts of the internet, social media, and mobile devices have also contributed to changes in the roles played by galleries and artists. Social media has granted power to artists which has offered them the option to grow independently. As a result, some emerging artists might wonder if partnering with galleries is even worth it.

Our answer? In short, yes, artists should continue to partner with galleries. Here's why.

## The role of galleries before the internet

Before the internet, galleries were playing a critical role in shaping the art industry, as they were the main link between artists and collectors. Artists were entirely focused on creating art, while galleries would go above and beyond to find collectors to buy their work. Galleries traveled the world to find new artists and invested in promotions in newspapers and magazines. However, when the internet became ubiquitous, these previously unique roles played by galleries were now accessible for artists directly.



## How the internet rebalanced the power for artists

Artists have been empowered to independently gain exposure, share their story with the world, sell their creations, prepare show documents, communicate with collectors, build their own community, and more. Technology has made possible many opportunities that used to be nearly impossible to achieve alone. Third party digital platforms have also further eliminated artists' dependence on galleries as they offer marketplaces, payment processing, document creation, etc.

Let's face it, these tools make a convincing case for giving up on galleries. If all these opportunities exist for artists today, what unique value are galleries bringing to the table?

## What galleries offer today

One of the most important opportunities artists want is to have the time to create art. Yes, the internet is facilitating many opportunities to be self-sufficient, but that also brings a lot of distractions to artists in the shape of extra responsibilities. In a perfect art world, artists should only focus on creating art without having to worry about the business side of their career. Although that ideal is impossible to achieve, striking a balance is still preferable. This is where galleries come into play. Artists can let galleries take responsibility for some of the business elements, while they focus on making art and working on their social media, building and nurturing their personal brand, and look for opportunities to grow.

Being with the right gallery can help escalate your career, especially when you are first beginning. Galleries are supposed to represent artists, be the advocates of their work, promote it, handle paperwork, answer questions from collectors, curate shows, set up gallery events, assist with networking, get your work seen in person, and guide you through sales. Plus, working with a gallery adds prestige to your name—having their support can open many doors for you because they have already established their credibility and can help you benefit from that. Even just being represented by a good gallery can give you publicity.

Artists should also know that galleries have many costs to cover. They need to have a physical location that they need to maintain, and when they expand geographically, that adds more costs. Galleries also have employees to pay, technology subscriptions to cover, and other business overhead costs. Most importantly, they invest heavily on marketing which can include paid social media and website ad campaigns that you as an artist will benefit from. Finally, they cover travel expenses for their team when they attend art events and fairs.



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