

POSITION YOURSELF FOR SUCCESS:

Moving to art cities vs. non-art cities

- by Always Art Staff

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CLEAN BREAK

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Where you choose to live can significantly impact your art career. This is because your city will provide you with a community and network of artists and professionals in the area. Choosing to live in what is known as “Art cities” can bring advantages and disadvantages to artists.

Living in an art city

Art cities are areas that are dedicated to the arts and are known for having art as a central component of their culture. Some examples are New York, San Francisco, Austin, Los Angeles, Boston, Atlanta, Marfa, and more.

What are the advantages?

There are many benefits to living in an art city, including

👍 **Access to art institutions:** You will be able to visit galleries, museums, and cultural organizations where you can meet other creatives, pitch exhibitions, network, and get inspired by the work of other artists.

👍 **Networking:** In a location with a population of artists, there will be more opportunities to meet artists and industry professionals you can collaborate with or work with to advance your career.

👍 **Demand for art:** In an area with an appreciation for the arts, more potential buyers or viewers will likely be eager to see work from new or unknown artists.

👍 **Events:** Art cities host festivals, art fairs, exhibitions, and other creative events that broaden your horizons and offer professional opportunities.

Choosing a non-art city

A non-art city does not mainly focus on its artistic culture or contribution. Some of these cities include Kansas City, KS; Brownsville, TX; and other small towns and cities scattered across the country.

What are the benefits?

Although it may sound isolating to live in a non-art city, there are some advantages:

👍 **Affordability:** These cities tend not to be the highest cost of living areas, so you will likely be able to get by with less income and rent a studio space and an apartment much cheaper than the larger city counterparts.

👍 **Less competition:** With fewer artists in the area, you may be more likely to gain opportunities as you aren't competing with thousands of experienced art professionals for every project.

👍 **Ability to stand out:** Away from the hubs, you may be able to develop a unique artistic voice that isn't too focused on trends and therefore has a chance at standing out among other artists when you submit applications to various opportunities. You also may be able to find your true artistic voice away from the chaos of the art world.



What are the challenges?

While there are benefits, there are also downsides:

✘ **It's harder to network:** Without major art events or institutions, there will be fewer exhibitions to attend, and it will be harder to network. You may even find there isn't anyone in the area who you can network with in person.

✘ **Less access to the industry:** Without museums, galleries, and art events, you will have to travel to keep up with the industry and connect with other professionals and inspirations.

✘ **Fewer potential buyers:** Most collectors and art lovers live closer to art hubs, so finding people to sell your work may be more challenging.

Positioning yourself for success

There isn't necessarily a correct choice or answer when it comes to picking where to live. Choosing a place that suits your needs and priorities as an artist is most important. Carefully weigh the pros and cons of your options and develop a strategy for success based on your chosen location. Balance the financial factors with the opportunity for growth to help you figure out which setting is best for you now, and remember that the decision doesn't have to be permanent if you want a change down the line.



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