



Tip #89

Part 4

Keeping an Art Blog

Alyson Stanfield on Blogging for Artists



Alyson B. Stanfield with workshop participants in Lake Forest, IL.

Photo credit:
Michael Brown

Q - I've gotten your newsletter and have one of your books, so I know a bit about how you came to do your ArtBizCoach.com and ArtBizBlog.com sites. Could you offer a quick overview for our readers?

A - I'm a former museum curator and educator with an MA in art history (who started as a painting major!). Early in my museum career, I had a great boss who brought local artists into the fold of the museum. It was at that point that I really began connecting with artists.

Helping artists with their businesses wasn't part of the grand scheme, but I listened to signs after I left my museum career to live in Colorado. Now I help teach artists how to promote and sell their art through my free newsletter, blog, online classes, CDs, workshops, and my book, *I'd Rather Be in the Studio! The Artist's No-Excuse Guide to Self-Promotion*.

Q - How long have you been doing the coaching site, and how did you build awareness for it?

A - ArtBizCoach.com (<http://www.1automationwiz.com/app/?af=974667>) is 7 years old and was built almost exclusively by delivering the weekly Art Marketing Action newsletter. Now people find me through social media sites just as much as they find my traditional website.

Q - How can blogging help an artist to market their art, and what do you see as the advantages to blogging over other more traditional sorts of marketing? (If you do!)

A - Blogging can be an effective tool in the artist's marketing arsenal because it helps them:

- Get to know their art better because they're consistently writing about it. The words will come in handy!
- Connect immediately and authentically to fans and followers. Web 2.0 is all about building relationships with people and that's the kind of marketing I preach -- because I think it works better than advertising and cold calling.
- Demystify the artistic process. Any time you can educate your audience, you've brought them that much closer to buying from you.

Q - Do you have advice for artists who want to sell from their blogs? How do we balance writing interesting posts vs. selling our art?

A - First, you shouldn't ever hesitate to sell from your blog. It's YOUR blog! People don't have to read it. If they don't like your selling, they can leave. Besides, think about all of those people who are dying to know how to purchase your art. You don't want to deprive them!

Now, on to the question of balance. I think every post could feature a work of art that is for sale, but you also have to say something of value to your readers. I believe that people spend time on blogs to connect with new people (expand their universe) and to be informed, entertained, or inspired. If you do these three things at least 75% of the time, you'll be okay.

Q - What's your best advice for the blogging artist?

A - Blog with purpose. Blog as if the whole world is watching -- because they are. Blog as if your words will be kept forever -- because they will be. Blog deeply because no one wants to spend time reading a bunch of superficial mumbo jumbo. Blog with lots of pictures of your art. Make friends by visiting and commenting on other blogs. Respond to comments on your blog. Ignore and feel sorry for the mean people who don't have anything better to do than to make snide comments on your blog. Then delete the snide comments.

Q - Do you find other network connections, like Facebook, MySpace, etc., to be helpful?

A - Every artist should be on Facebook because over 275,000,000 people are on Facebook. You must be there. I think MySpace has worn out its welcome, but you might also check out LinkedIn (great for groups and asking questions) and Twitter. I'm a huge fan of Twitter, which I think is a great traffic-driver and friend-builder when used correctly.

Please feel free to visit my own original blog at <http://katequicksilvr.livejournal.com/> or my new gallery blog at <http://cathyjohnsonart.blogspot.com/>!