

## April Coaching Call Transcription

Cory: Hello everybody! It's Cory. If you can hear me say hello or type hello. Excellent. Good, good, good. Glad you can hear me. Cool. So welcome to The Abundant Artist Association monthly coaching call. Daisy Faith, I see you're here, congratulations Daisy on landing a sale last week and also having a promotion with Adore Your Walls or something like that? Is that the right name, this coming Saturday? So congratulations Daisy, that's awesome! She's participating in the Instagram challenge and that has gone pretty well for a handful of you. So well done. Alright. Let's dive into your questions, I think there's two questions that are already in here. If you do have questions, feel free to add them to your question section now. We'll start with the top question from Karen.

If she is here, it doesn't look like she's here, so Karen says "can you give me some advice on how to handle work that has been listed on social media for sale but did not sell? If I have a piece," oh she's here, okay. So yeah, "if I have a piece of art on social media and I didn't sell it, how can I re-list it?" Certainly you can just re-list it, that's not a problem, there's no reason not to do that.

Hi Karen.

Karen: Hi, I'm [unintelligible].

Cory: That's okay. So yeah, there's certainly no problem with just listing it. I would probably just delete it from your old posts and repost it. You know if it's an inexpensive piece, try relisting it in a week or two, if it's an expensive piece give it a couple months before you relist it. And certainly that's a perfectly valid strategy.

Karen: I just feel kinda awkward about it cause you know my work takes so long to create, so I don't have a new piece every two weeks, right? I have like a piece a month, so if it doesn't- I get all excited, I post all these works in progress and then I finally post that it's for sale and then if nothing happens then I'm always left with this like awkward feeling of okay now what? You know, now what? Now it's been, you know, two months and I'd like to sell it and how do I handle that? So-

Cory: So you can kind of treat it, try to treat it like a game. So like, on social media it's very common to do things like Throwback Thursday, right? So you could take some of your older pieces that didn't sell and post them on Thursday with the hashtag #throwbackthursday and say you know, hey, remember that time I created that awesome piece? By the way, it's still for sale. Right? Give us the story behind it, all the same stuff that you always do, but you know, it's just kind of a hey this is a cool thing that happened.

Karen: Okay.

Cory: Yeah. You can also look for opportunities to align your work with like holidays and themed days of the year, right?

Karen: Right.

Cory: So like, and this is not you, I'm just making stuff up, but if your work has to do with like offices or corporations or whatever, and there's like a secretary day coming up, right, like International Secretary's Day, then you can repost the work for that day, right? So there are some calendars that you can find that list like national holidays for every day of the year, right?

Karen: Right.

Cory: And so then you can find out, like, I happen to share a birthday with David Lee Roth, the former lead singer of Van Halen, right? So sometimes when I do like promotions I'll joke about it being a David Lee Roth birthday sale. So you can do stuff like that.

Karen: Alright, that helps.

Cory: Yeah, awesome. Well, anything else?

Karen: That's it, thank you!

Cory: Alright. Go forth. Conquer.

Alright. Susan, let's see- Susan says "I've only had one sale. How can I define my audience or ideal collector form this one sale?" So Susan, I would say first of all, make sure you go through the HTSYAO 101 program, because that will definitely give you some ideas. Susan's here- I'm gonna invite her onscreen to talk about it a little bit. But if you don't have a lot of sales, then you're doing guesswork. And it means you need to do some research. In addition to- hey, Susan. Have you gone through the HTSYAO 101 program yet?

Susan: Yes, yes I have.

Cory: And you did the worksheet? The workbook?

Susan: Yeah, so I went through all the exercises and I just seem to be going around in circles because I've had this one sale and I've defined my collector off this sale, but it's not enough information for me to do anything with it.

Cory Okay. So that's fine, yeah, you don't have enough information. So who do you think your ideal collector is?

Susan: Well, off this one sale it's obviously a woman who works in the healthcare industry and is looking for a life change. So I don't know- I'm sort of trying to target people, I was targeting people that were interested in the things that I do, which is you know meditation and yoga, but there's no real market for selling pictures in a yoga studio, it doesn't really quite exist here in Australia at least, you know yoga studios have blank walls and you know, Indian paintings. And they don't want to have any sort of art in there, I've tried doing you know, sales in there. So I don't know, this healthcare worker, I thought well maybe I need to be in hospitals, so I've got some work in a hospital in sort of like in Queensland here in Australia, and I haven't had any bites from that either. And I just don't know, don't know where I should be going.

Cory: Yeah, okay. So, and tell us a little bit about your work.

Susan: So, my work is, I call it digital art but it seems to be better calling it photographic art. So it's based on my practice of yoga and meditation.

Cory: Do you have a website or a portfolio where we can see the work?

Susan: Yeah, so it's just my name susanwishart.com.

Cory: Can you spell that last name for me?

Susan: Yeah, it's Wishart.

Cory: Okay. Your last name is Wishart? That's great. Okay. Alright. And pull up your portfolio here. And your latest work. Okay. Cool. So this looks like a little bit of, you do some photography and then manipulate that and make some collage out of it?

Susan: Yeah. They're based on my visions that I have during yoga and meditation.

Cory: Okay.

Susan: Yeah. It's kind of, I don't know. Everyone says "oh your work's really pretty, it's unique!" But nobody wants to buy it.

Cory: Okay. So I'm looking through your portfolio, I'm gonna share your screen so other people can see what I'm talking about. So I'm looking at your website here, and as I'm scrolling through your portfolio, some of them have like buy now options and some of them don't. What's the difference? Like this-

Susan: Yeah, so that's just you know showing it in situ picture.

Cory: Okay, so how come you have them on like separate portfolio items like this?

Susan: It's just the way the template is set up in Wix.

Cory: Oh, Wix. Okay. Cause you should be able to, even in Wix, you should be able to set it up, cause these really should be set up as the same product in your shop, yeah. But that's kind of a minor thing. The other thing, like, the buy now button here, like that's so, like it's just a link, it's not even a button. I would switch that.

Susan: Yeah, I haven't gotten ecommerce.

Cory: Ookay, so what would happen if I click that link?

Susan: It would just send me an email.

Cory: Okay. So the Hiscox 2017 fine art report just came out like yesterday, and one of the major problems that they saw that they're reporting is like, everybody expects, when buying stuff online, to be able to just click and buy. And especially for lower priced artwork, like if you can't just click and buy, people are really hesitant to go through the process of making a purchase, if that makes sense. So you have to, you have to set your website up in a way that other people expect to be able to do things online. All that said, the artwork is fine, I can see why some yoga studios might not want to have this kind of work there- there's probably some that are, that would be a fit, but I think that, have you looked at the corporate market, especially the hospital market?

Susan: Not in detail, no.

Cory: Okay. So we did a session on how to get into corporate markets, and it's basically, there's a small group of people who are hired to fill up hospitals and other health offices with artwork. Right? Those people are art directors. You can start just by calling hospitals and saying "hey, who's in charge of your art?" Right? And then talking to them and saying "hey, I have some work that I think would be a great fit for your hospital, you know, would you be interested in taking a look at my portfolio?" That would be a good place to start. And then finding, not just hospitals, but also like clinics and doctor's offices, I don't know, like I know Australia's healthcare system's a little different from the U.S., but every clinic and doctor's office should have like an office manager of some kind who can tell you who's in charge of putting art on the walls. Right? And start with the larger clinics, not like the individual doctor's offices.

Susan: Okay, so do you think I should be more focused on a city? Because I live in, oh boy, they call a rural area?

Cory: Yeah, you'll want to start with a city, whatever the closest city is.

Susan: Okay.

Cory: And you might do something where you set something up to go into the city like at like once a month at a certain time or something like that, and just let all the people know I'm gonna be in the city at this time, I can bring a handful of pieces to you, or I'm gonna be at this location and you can come take a look at some of my work there. Those are a couple ways to approach it.

Susan Okay, cool.

Cory: Yeah. Otherwise, so as far as filling out your ideal collector, it's gonna be a little bit of hunt and peck until you get it right, right? The, I think medical professionals who are in career transitions is a really good one, because lots and lots of medical professionals leave their careers and they have money unless they're, you know, drowning in debt. Doesn't work quite like that in Australia as badly as it does here. But you know, they make a decent living and they want art, and if it's resonant with that sort of transition phase of life, then that's really nice. I would find some social media accounts that are influential with medical professionals.

Susan: Okay, yeah.

Cory: Yeah. Find the Instagram account that has a bunch of doctors following it.

Susan: That'll be fun.

Cory: Yeah.

Susan: Cool.

Cory: Yeah, I'd highly recommend everybody read the Hiscox report because it said like 63 percent of people who purchased art online are using Instagram as their primary social media platform. So just tons of great info there. But, okay. Hopefully that helps you, gives you some ideas.

Susan: Yeah, it's all good. Yeah.

Cory: Great, any other questions that I can answer for you?

Susan: No, I just need to make some more sales.

Cory: Yeah, so tell me a little bit about- cause we have some times cause I don't see any other questions coming. Sorry, I'm just gonna spell out the.. tell me about what your routine looks like for marketing. How much time are you spending and what does that look like?

Susan: At the moment I'm spending a lot of time on it cause I'm trying to define where I actually am, and again I just seem to be going in circles cause I go down a path, I think yep, this all sounds great, and then I implement it, like on the Instagram, and then nothing happens and I get despondent.

Cory Sure, yeah.

Susan: So I'm spending probably, you know I spend a day a week just going through and doing Instagram maybe looking at media contacts, trying to write press releases, cause a lot of the media contacts I'm looking at, they're looking for press releases, so that takes up a lot of time. Writing is not my skill.

Cory: Okay.

Susan So I'm really struggling writing about myself and my art, so I've kind of given up and asked a copywriter, a local copywriter to help me with it, I've written a first draft and she's gonna help me sort of wordsmithing it. And once I have that then I can hopefully utilize that to send out to other media. But yeah I spend like a day a week.

Cory; A day each week? Okay. And you also have a job that you're using-

Susan: No, I don't. And this is the thing, I'm running out of money. And I need to make sales and I need to get somewhere with this, otherwise I have to go and find a job. Which I don't want to do.

Cory: Okay. So I totally understand not wanting to find a job. How long have you been at this?

Susan: Probably six months, full time. Yeah.

Cory: That's great. So you're six months full time, so you're spending one day a week marketing and four days a week painting?

Susan: I don't spend every single day. I try and do a little bit each day, but, because my work is not painting-

Cory: Making art, yeah.

Susan: Yeah, I do a lot of photoshoots, so I go and try and shoot things that I need, and then I spend time, yeah, on the computer, and, yeah.

Cory: So I have some bad news for you.

Susan: Go on.

Cory: You need to flip that ratio.

Susan. Okay. More marketing.

Cory: Yeah, more marketing. Like how much inventory do you have on hand? If somebody wanted to buy every image that you have, how many do you have?

Susan: I've got a lot of images, but-

Cory: Like a hundred?

Susan: Probably, not a hundred. Not a hundred.

Cory: Fifty?

Susan: Yeah, probably 50.

Cory: You've got more than you need.

Susan: So less art, more marketing.

Cory: Yeah.

Susan: No I had a feeling that's what I need to do is I need to get noticed. That's my aim.

Cory: Yeah. So especially if you don't have any other income sources, and you don't have, and you have all that inventory, you should be spending 90% of your time marketing.

Susan: Okay.

Cory: And so a couple of other ideas, I know, you don't like that idea, but like, the- and this is not just true of artists, it's true of everybody who is in like an inventor or a maker or anybody who has a thing to sell- you need to spend 90% of your time like selling it, until you get to the point where you have money coming in, and then you can like hire people to take up that time, right? So I'm really glad we got to dig into this, because identifying your target collector is actually only a small portion of your challenge, cause you need, you need to spend more time.

When you say you live in a rural town, how small are we talking?

Susan: Couple thousand people.

Cory: That's really small. Okay. Alright. Yeah, you need to go like move into the city.

Susan: Yeah, that was my other thing, is I'm looking to move because I thought I'm too far out. The other thing is in Australia there's no art markets. I've been looking for an art market to go to and join and there's nothing except for one, which is called the other art market run by Saatchi, corporation, and the outlay to be in it it's like \$2,000. Which is a lot of money. Cause then you gotta have inventory and prints and everything on top of that. So I'm like, it's not feasible for me. So yeah.

Cory: The other one in Australia called- what is it called? Hang on. There is- I'm gonna find it. If you go to our, in the member resources library, and you look up the online art markets, there's one in Australia that is independent, it's not- it doesn't cost anything to join. And it's Blue Fin or something like that.

Susan: Oh, Blue Thumb.

Cory: Blue Thumb, that's the one.

Susan: Yeah, that's the website that sells art, but they don't have an actual art fair and they don't accept digital art. So a lot of these things online they don't, they just want paintings and sculpture and ceramics.

Cory: Okay, I didn't know they don't accept digital art.

Susan: Yeah, it's a little bit difficult being in that photographic print sort of thing.

Cory: So the other thing that I would suggest you do, do you know, we've talked about a few times on these coaching calls we've talked about the living room strategy, do you know what I'm talking about when I say that?

Susan: Yep.

Cory: So throw yourself some art parties. And start with, just start with the people that you know, and ask them to invite some people.

Susan: Okay, yeah. I'd have to find a house for it. I've got a studio, I have one room. That's it.

Cory: Do it out of your studio. When I, when my wife and I first moved to Portland we lived in a 600 square foot studio, and I held networking parties in my studio. And we had 15 people for a dinner once in my studio. You just gotta do whatever you can do. It's totally fine, right? And in a way, it's kinda cool, because for people to get invited to like an art party, if they've been invited to an art part that's like in an artist's little studio and tis like this secret thing that only like a handful of people get to go to, they get to feel like they're in getting to know the artist before the artist is big, that kinda stuff. So it's all how you position it and think about it.

Susan: Okay, yeah. It may be an interesting possibility. I also need to move closer to the city.

Cory: I don't think you necessarily need to move closer to the city, it's not an absolute. But you should at least consider it, because you know even like, what's her name, I'm having a really tough time with names today, ya'll. And my brain, I've been braining all day. She painted flowers and she's really famous. Anyway. O'Keeffe, thank you. Georgie O'Keeffe. So Georgia O'Keeffe, she moved to NYC to get her career going, and then she moved out to the desert in New Mexico for like the last forty years of her life. She left New York City and just lived in the middle of nowhere. So you make sacrifices for your career to live somewhere you don't necessarily want to live, until you get established, and then you go bugger off and do whatever you want.

Susan: Sounds good.

Cory: Yeah. But you do have to put in the time, the one day a week's not nearly enough.

Susan: Okay. So more. 90%, every day.

Cory: Yeah. You gotta get out there and hustle. You listen to Owen Garratt's podcast with us, he literally sold his drawings door to door. He just went knocking on doors. So, and I'll also say, like I know you don't want to get a job, but getting a job is awesome because it gives you money to try stuff.

Susan: Yeah, that's the thing like I'm running out of money and I can't be as creative anymore with doing this, so I'm thinking, move to the city, get a job.

Cory: Yeah, get a job, and jobs are great because as long as your expenses are less than your money coming in, you can rent out a place and do a show and you know, there's no shame in having a job.

Susan: Yeah.

Cory: I mean, if I'm honest, like every once in a while I'm like I wish I had a job. Because sometimes stuff comes up and I don't want to deal with. And I've been doing this for 5 years full time, right? So. There's no shame in it.

Susan: Cool, thank you Cory.

Cory: Good luck.

Alright. That question is done being answered. We answered the crap out of that question. Anybody else want to go, this is your time. Yes Yingri, go for it, I'll invite you on here. It says accepted and connecting. Yingri Guan. Alright Yingri, let's see if we can get you on here.

Yingri: Hi, can you see me okay?

Cory: Yes I can, how are you Yingri?

Yingri: I'm good, how are you?

Cory: Good, so how do you actually say your name?

Yingri: You can call me ying.

Cory: Where are you from?

Yingri: From China originally, I'm currently in California.

Cory: In California, okay. [Chinese]

Yingri: [Chinese]

Cory: Excellent, good good good. What questions can I answer, I'm glad you're here on the call. I haven't had a chance to talk to you before.

Yingri: Yes, my first time joining, so I just want to send my website now. I launched my website on April 14 or 15, April 15, and then I made a sale the next day, and then I have been going on the Instagram challenge and stuff like that, but I haven't had any more sales since then, so then I have been like on the marketing part 2. So I have been sending out applications to exhibitions and stuff like that, but I haven't got into any exhibitions. So I'm just wondering so like what is the situation? I think when I heard Susan's situation I think I'm probably in the same boat, just in a shorter timeframe, but I just wonder what the next step for me to take.

Cory: What's the next thing to do? Okay. So how much inventory do you have?

Yingri: I have about 50-60.



Cory: Okay. Okay, so yeah, you need to spend a lot of time marketing. Do you have a job?

Yingri: Yeah, I have a full time job.

Cory: What's your full time job?

Yingri: Designer

Cory: Like graphic designer?

Yingri: UI/UX design.

Cory: Okay, cool. And where do you live?

Yingri: I live in California Bay area.

Cory: In the Bay area, so do you work for like some huge startup and they demand all your time?

Yingri: Yeah,

Cory: Okay. How much time, how much free time do you have in a given week?

Yingri: I think usually I will have about, I try to make four hours a day to work on my art, so producing artwork and sometimes marketing. And then on the weekend I try to spend one day to work on my art.

Cory: Okay. And why do you want to sell your art?

Yingri: I think, I think in the future like say two years from now I will be able to make that my full time career.

Cory: Okay. Why two years from now?

Yingri: I'm just being realistic.

Cory: Okay. But I'm saying, like what makes you think that you can do it in two years?

Yingri: Cause I read some of the blog that people post on your thing and I also read some, what other people have been saying, and it seems like it's generally two years to three years that they will be able to do it, so I'm just putting in a timeframe for myself. I don't know how long it will take.

Cory: So here's the reality about that. Like, hearing other people's stories are just anecdotal stories. And a lot of times the people that get featured on blogs and then written up and stuff, they are featured because their stories are remarkable, like Ann Ray, you know, she did it in a year from the time that she started selling her art. That almost never happens. Right? So not, I don't want to like depress you, but I just want like to be clear about expectations. Right? For most artists, what I've seen is from the time you figure out like, your style and who your collectors are, it's three to five years before you're selling enough art to make a living. Especially if you have a very demanding day job, you just don't have the time to do all the work. Right?

Yingri: Yeah, that makes sense.

Cory: Okay, so you have tons of inventory. So like, those four hours a day that you're spending on your art, I would actually flip that around and spend most of it on the marketing stuff.

Yingri: Yes.

Coy: Yeah. So you said that you've been applying to shows and you haven't gotten into any? How many have you applied for?

Yingri: I applied for about 20, 25 around there.

Cory: And you didn't get into any?

Yingri: No, I got into a show last year, but not this year.

Cory: Okay. Did you get any- were you given any reasons why you didn't get into any shows?

Yingri: No. I also applied to print magazines too. A variety of magazine and shows. Yeah.

Cory: Okay. So, definitely I can tell you're a designer cause your website's like. Your website's on point. You've got all your Photoshop stuff, like good to go. So no more tweaking your website. Not allowed. Alright.

Yingri: Don't even add more work?

Cory: You don't even need to add more work. What you need to go is talk to as many people in person as possible about- and show as many people as possible your work. And you need to expose yourself to talking to people about your work. And so every chance that you can take to do that is what you should be doing. So, your work shouldn't be at your house. It should be, it should be out at a coffee shop or a restaurant or some other place- any place that's not your house.

Yingri: Yeah, so there's an organization called Art Span in San Francisco, so I applied, like it seems like a really great option and then I didn't get it, so I was like okay I need to find more opportunities to get my work out there.

Cory: So definitely keep applying to those organizations, but don't only do it through organizations. Like approach coffee shops yourself, right? If you listen to, we did a podcast with Jesse Reno a couple months ago, and he used to do shows in like abandoned warehouses. Right? So he would like put up his show for the weekend, and tell all of his friends to come, and they'd throw a party, and then they'd take it all down Sunday night. Right? And he did that, like he was a mailman for like 5 years before his career took off. Right? So basically, and he had a thing where he would not allow himself to paint new work until he had contact at least ten people each week about showing his work somewhere.

Yingri: I see, okay.

Cory: So that could be a warehouse, it could be a coffee shop, it could be a gallery, whatever. But you, and farmers markets, right? Like going and setting up at farmers markets so you can practice talking to people about your work. And then- have you gone through our How To Sell Your Art Online 101 program?

Yingri: Yep.

Cory: You went through that, you did the workbook and everything so do you feel comfortable talking about your work?

Yingri: Yeah, I feel comfortable talking about it, I just wasn't sure, cause sometimes I'm just- I just want to spend my time on the most efficient thing, like maybe I should do it on social media because I can reach more people.

Cory: So social media is theoretically more efficient. The problem with only doing things on social media is it's pretty disconnected from people, right? So being in person with people and talking to them and seeing their reactions to your work I actually really helpful because you get to see in real time their reaction. Which you don't get on social media.

Yingri: Yeah, that helps with building an audience in like real life. I have been looking to business networking and stuff like that, do you think that's something good to do?

Cory: Yes. Yeah, go for it. So you're a UX researcher, or you're a designer, right? Treat this phase of your art career, like a UX research project. Yeah. Figure out what people actually want and how they react to your work, and go from there.

Yingri: Got you. And then a thing that I've been wondering, because I have currently I have been selling my prints, so CG Pro Print was the last print shop I've done, but I'm thinking of adding The Printful, but it seems like if I add The Printful, they're on the cheaper end, so it seems like people will be more attractive to the price, so if I share anything on social media-

Cory: Do you want people who want cheaper products?

Yingri: No. [laughs]

Cory: And also, like doing that just seems like more busywork that keeps you from talking to people. Right?

Yingri: That's what I'm wondering too.

Cory: You need to talk to as many people as possible about your work. All of your stuff is ready to go. You have fulfillment set up, you have your website set up, you have your social media, like you have everything that you need to have. Anything else is just procrastination. Yeah. It's just procrastination.

Yingri: That's a really good- yeah. Sounds good.

Cory: Alright.

Yingri: Thank you so much.

Cory: Good luck. Alright. Let's see- Beth says "what third party art selling websites are good to sell your art and possibly get leads, or do you not recommend it, and it isn't worth the time to set up?"

So Beth, it just depends on your style of work, and it depends on whether or not your style of work is a good fit for the third party site. So we're gonna start to see like some consolidation in the online art market, I imagine that Saatchi is probably gonna get bought either by Artsy or one

of the auction houses at some time in the near future. U Gallery might get bought, some of the other like mid-size or small art marketplaces are probably gonna get bought either by Saatchi, by one of the big auction houses like Christie's or Artsy. So you're gonna start to see some consolidation here. If you can find a marketplace, and we have a list of most of the marketplaces on the member library. Find the marketplace that is a good fit for your work, and sell it there. And in my opinion, like what I usually tell artists is put, you know, five to ten great pieces on those marketplaces, but spend the majority of your time driving traffic to your own website so that you're not building other people's businesses by sending them traffic instead of sending traffic to yourself. So I hope that answers that question, Beth. If you have additional questions, Beth, please feel free to type something in the chat and I'll invite you on and we can talk in real time.

Alright, Joe says "I've been reading recently about putting your why on your homepage, like why you make art. Your thoughts?" Yeah, absolutely. I don't see any problem with that, necessarily. I'll invite you on to talk about it if you want, Joe. But the, yeah. Like just having a couple sentences on your homepage about I make art because, there was an artist, gosh, like if you have something truly remarkable, like there was an artist a couple weeks ago who emailed me, she's a specific kind of cancer survivor, and she went through some wild tragedy in addition to that, and so her art comes out of all of that. So definitely, if you're in some unique position like that, definitely. And if you have like a really good couple sentences on why you make the art you make, yeah. There's no problem with putting that on the homepage. Again, like that should be on your about page anyway. And it seems like something that's so small that it's not really worth spending a lot of time on. I would rather spend way more time focusing on talking to people about your work and showing your work in various places. So I hope that answers that question.

Alright. All you late afternoon people, East coasters, I imagine you're getting ready to get settled in and binge watch something for the evening. And all of you Australians probably need to get on with the day. So unless anybody else has any other questions, we'll go ahead and wrap up here. I appreciate all of you taking the time to be here, I appreciate your questions and I'm glad I could help some of you. And we'll be running a, during the month of May we're going to be doing a live, several live sessions around the HTSYAO 101 program where we'll be doing weekly coaching calls, short coaching calls, for the artists who are going through that program. I anticipate we're gonna have a big influx of new members next week because we'll be opening up the Association for new enrollment next week, so say hi to all those new people and welcome them. We had something like 1100 people register for the Instagram challenge, so I imagine a good chunk of those will be joining us in the association next week. So thanks again everybody, and we will talk soon!