

February Selling Prints Challenge Transcript

Cory: Hey there everybody, it's Cory with The Abundant Artist, and I am here with our special guest Jeremy from POV Printing. Jeremy's a cool dude, we've talked back and forth for probably a year about various projects, and Jeremy owns a print studio which he'll tell you more about. They do everything from you know, small print-on-demand stuff up to large custom projects and a whole bunch of different printing services, so he's our guy for teaching us all about how printing works. And we're gonna talk a little bit about how to make money from prints today. So if you can hear me type hi, because I want to make sure that you can all hear me, great. Okay. Make sure that you can actually hear me. Alright cool, thanks everybody. So tell us a little bit more about you and your studio and then let's go ahead and dive in!

J: For sure. My name is Jeremy, my company's called POV Evolving, our site is fineartprinting.la. We're based in downtown Los Angeles, been here, well we've been doing this since 2008, it's been quite a while now, and over the course of these years we've moved quite a few times and gone through a number of studios and grown to be what I'd like to think is a pretty well-known fine art printing operation here in LA. We run out of about a 7,000 square foot production facility here amongst our neighborhood, we're kind of like the anomaly in our neighborhood. The people around us sell oranges and piñatas. So it's kind of fun. And we're the ones making art prints. So we've, I'm glad to be here, cause like you said Cory, we've talked for a while and I really appreciate the mission that you have to empower artists overall, and help them learn how to just operate and make a living in the world, cause it's- nobody, you know, whether you go to art school or not, nobody really teaches you that stuff and there's a lot of misunderstandings. And artists being inherently doers generally do figure things out. But I think once you end up spending a lot of time making a lot of mistakes or doing things, connecting with people overall, I mean over time you end up figuring out how best practices might be, so I like to, for our studio, we're very much a printing service and yes, we like to make money selling prints and such because it costs money to operate the company, but we really like to also be a hub of information. And we like to dispel a lot of the misunderstandings that come along with the realm of fine art printing. And we can also help people honestly learn really quickly by skipping some of the mistakes that often seem to be shortcuts, but really end up costing you more money. So the, I know you had on the agenda a couple things. Where do you want to start? Yeah, I can talk about any of those. Tell me where you want to go.

Cory: Let's start with talking a little bit about the basics of what an artist needs to know in order to sell their prints. And before we dive in I just want to give a quick shout out to Tom Harold, who's an Association member, he's a sculptor, he quit his job last week, so I don't think he's mentioned it in the Association community, but he quit his job, posted this awesome picture of his quit date with his sculpture materials on it. So that's over on the blog, just a little more about that on the blog. And then also a shout out to Patricia Vargas, who we had on the podcast in December, and she is probably a great example of what we're gonna talk about today, she's an artist who makes quite a bit of money, the majority of her money off selling prints. We did a, if you want to see what this looks like in practice for an artist, we'll throw up a link to her podcast episode here towards the end.

So let's start with just the basics- if I'm an artist and I'm like I want to sell prints, but I don't know if I should print from home, if I should do print-on-demand, or if I should like pay a printer to do a run of prints, how do I figure out what I'm supposed to do?

Jeremy: Yeah, I think regardless of the direction you want to take, whether you're printing yourself or paying someone else to print, there are some things that you can definitely do that are gonna save you a lot of time and money. One of the largely overlooked things has a lot to do with color management. And nobody really teaches color management honestly, I mean maybe there's some specialized school somewhere that does, but one of the things we often run into is the fact that consumer grade monitors are, color-wise, when they come to you, are much more blue. They're much more cool, they're kinder on the eyes than a calibrated monitor. And it's not that a calibrated monitor is like gonna make you go blind or something, it's just warmer, unfamiliar territory if you're used to looking at commercially supplied monitors and TV screens and such, overall. So and the other thing is that we're very much used to staring at our iPhones in broad day light with the screen blaringly bright, and a lot of people like their computer screens really bright, so when we're working with people remotely we often run into things where people will say you know, there's a couple ways. Some people want a proof, and then we make a proof and they'll come in and say "why is it so dark, I don't understand!" Well let's talk about your calibration. Do you have a calibrated monitor at all? "Well no, what's that?" And a lot of times it becomes an education process of helping people understand that we can't send you a proof by photographing something and texting it to you. Like that's just not how things work overall. Screens degrade over time and a number of other issues that come up. So I think before somebody starts selling prints at all it's really understanding the importance of color management and finding out that you either make a decision to I think regardless, make a decision to really calibrate your screen, because it's- if you live in a digital-only world, it doesn't matter. It's always on the screen, it's gonna look slightly different elsewhere, but when the file is going to have to be put onto paper with ink at some point, you have some responsibility to yourself and your wallet to do it right. So that's definitely-

Cory: Okay, so if I want to get the right digital files for printing, is this something where I can just hold my painting up next to my monitor and compare the two and make sure they're exactly the same before I send it off, or is there something else I need to do?

J: I think, before you even do that, it gets into, my photographer here in the studio always says garbage in is garbage out. And that goes for a lot of things in life, but it also applies to digital capture and fine art printing, because we've, you know, we get people who have photographed their artwork in their studio with fluorescent lights or with their iPhone and they're like I need prints! I'm like well, here's a disclaimer, this isn't the best way to start, you know. So a lot of, if you're doing small-format work and even up to like 12x16 or 20x30, you can get scanner, a really good, like an Epson scanner that.

Cory: Just to make sure that you're clear, when you say 12x16 you mean inches, right?

J: Yeah, inches.

Cory: Okay, because we do have people from the UK and outside the US on the call.

J: Yeah, I'll speak in inches in general. But yeah, Epson and Canon both have good flatbed scanners, kinda prosumer type flatbed scanners, and is there a problem with the streaming?

Cory: No, I'll manage that stuff down below.

J: Cool, cool.

Cory: And just for those, you mentioned the Epson printer.

JL Scanners, yeah.

Cory: We do have a blog post on theabundantartist.com on the best scanners and printers for printing at home, so if you're looking for more detail on that kinda stuff, there's more there.

J: Yeah, we have for our in-house here we have an Epson 11000XL scanner that we do for small-format work, and then for larger format we're doing a digital capture process with Canon 5DSR and a very controlled lighting environment. You know, if for people starting out, you can do something as simple as take something outside in like early daylight as long as you have full, nice full light, get on a ladder, and shoot something. You know that's like, not everybody starting out is going to be able to afford to pay a photographer to do something, you know, so there's always going to be ways to do it. I would say you know, don't use a flash, that's a disaster usually unless you know something about, unless you know about lighting somehow. But in general, making sure you have a good digital file is super super important, or you'll never get a good print. And you know, that's- learning a little something about resolution check, because there's a, oftentimes, an immediate aspiration to print something really big. Cause there's something exciting if you're working in a digital world, you're like I want to print a 4 foot by 8 foot print. Well it takes a certain file to be able to do that, and a lot of people don't necessarily know that because nobody's taught them. So one of the things that we publish on our site, which I can let you even put on The Abundant Artist if you wanted to, is really, it's a table of resolutions that show, and even goes down at the bottom we address the iPhone questions of like, how big can my iPhone photo print, because there's' actually, there's quite a few examples of people who have made a very good living just shooting photos on an iPhone. So that's not to make less of the iPhone in any way, but in terms of a digital capture method of paintings it's not the best bet overall. We get the iPhone question a lot, and some of your people here may know that apple, when you really zoom into a photo from an iPhone of any generation, it's actually, they're running a filter on it, and it's not sharp at all. It's like, it ends up looking like a little painting at the end of the day. And that's how you can blow something up so big. It's not because it's a giant amazing file, it's because it's kinda more of a painting of sorts. So.

Cory: Yep. Cool, yeah, we would love- I would love to see those printing settings and we'll definitely publish that when we post the recording.

J: Cool cool.

Cory: Okay, so you get your pictures done, and by the way there's a photography guide on the website as well, we have like a how to take photos in indirect sunlight guide on how to get good photos. You get the good photos, you get your monitor calibrated correctly, and we have a good digital file that we send you. So, or either print ourselves or send you. So once I have a good digital file,

how do I decide you know, print-on-demand, print at home, you know, do a print run in advance, what's your take on that?

J: Well I think before you even get to that, there's the decision of what do you want to print on? Because you know, many studios in my experience will have like, here's couple matte fine art papers, a cotton rag paper, here's maybe something that kinda looks like watercolor paper, and a canvas, you know. Those are the common things. But for us we have over 45 papers, we have glass, aluminum, silks, we have like I think 40 something fabrics in general, we print on wood, so when we put people in our showroom one of the common things that happens is people have to come back, cause they just leave with their head spinning trying to figure out what to even print on overall. But let's say once you figure all of that out overall, I think the decision of print-on-demand versus buying inventory, it's partially informed by what, it is partially informed by what do you want to print on? Cause if you go to a place like The Printful, I think they list it as art print. And it's always just killed me, cause it just says art print. And I can tell you it's printed on Epson premium enhanced matte, which is a relatively terrible paper. It's filled with something called optical brighteners, that paper- if you let that paper sit without anything happening, just in open air, it will change color in less than 6 months. It's like, it's crazy. And so I just, I wish they would just call it "paper print" or something, like not art print, you know? And there's some good places, like CG, and this is even though we do print-on-demand, there's a million places who do it. I just like to differentiate between general printing and fine art printing, and there's another place that does it really well, CG Pro Prints out of Colorado. And they're a massive company, and they can support really high volume. They're still relatively limited in their selection, but they do have really good selection and they're pro, they are super pro. And their prices are damn good overall. And so there's a lot places that have print-on-demand at this point because it's becoming a lot easier, but I would encourage people to just learn about what important- like do you want your prints to last a long time, or are you simply just trying to get your hustle on a sell some damn artwork and make some money? Like it's fine you know, because at the end of the day, like you know art is, you can sell art for whatever you can get people to buy it for. You know? I mean we don't have to go down the discussion of art pricing, because that's a whole other-

Cory: That's a whole other thing.

J: A whole other year of discussion, and heated debates, so

Cory: That's a completely separate subject. Yeah. So there is a concern about quality, like how long do I want this print to last, what do I want to be able to charge for it, you know, how custom is it, cause on top of whether you're printing on paper or canvas or metal or some other surface, there's also the, a process question, there's printing with like an ink printer, but then there's also like lithograph, which is screen-printing, which is far more custom, far more intensive, and then there's giclée printing, which you know, those are all different processes, can you maybe talk a little bit about those for those who aren't familiar?

J: Well the one that jumps right out is to dispel the mystery of giclée printing. It goes back to the beginning of digital printing, and some guys here in I think they're based in southern California at the time, it's a guy, I think was Jack Duganne and Dave Coons, who's a good friend of ours, who now run a company called ArtScans, those guys were using a printer called an iris printer

back in the day, before all this is what it is. And he's looking for a fancy word to call this new application of digital technology to fine art printing, cause most people are doing regular etchings and lithographs and other wood block prints and linocuts and traditional printmaking, and here he comes using a commercially oriented machine to create a digital print, so giclée by definition, I don't have it off the top, it's something like, it's a French word that means like to spurt or to spit or something like that. And it's really a generalized term that has, it's become associated now with – little squirt. It's become associated with quality, which is interesting, cause we have people like do you do giclée? You know people really fancy with how they pronounce it and stuff. And I'm like it's all inkjet really. It's an inkjet print at the end of the day. So that's what we focus on here. And but within, within the world of where it gets messy is that I've seen people just call giclée prints that come off of a solvent-based printer, prints that come off a latex printer, I've seen, and most commonly it's what we're doing is a water-based pigmented ink, which is the most stable ink for fine art printing overall. So when people ask me do you do giclée printing, I really, I very kindly just go and get out of the way and discuss like, we call them archival pigment prints, because it really is the most current technology in ink sets that, if, we'll see if we have to go down the archival discussion. If well-treated before in terms of paper, when it's printed and then thereafter how it's hung, etcetera, it can be the most archival type of process using these pigmented inks.

Cory: Right, and that just means like, when we say archival that just means that the chemistry of the printing substance and this and the substrate that it's printed on is such that it degrades slower over time.

J: Yeah, that is correct. None of this stuff is gonna last forever at the end of the day. I mean it's um, the newest generation of Epson inks they say I think black and white inks they say 400 years or something, they say color is 200 years, the trouble with it is there's only, there's two research institutes right now that are doing the testing. One of them is called Wilhelm research, you can go there, their website's really terrible, and dig through their just years and years and years of testing on things. It's really like you gotta be really on the nerdy side of things and really care to dig through the reports that they do.

Cory: The point is no matter what you do, as long as you're using like archival quality stuff, it's going to last the lifetime of the person who buys it and-

J: For sure, and then some for sure. And I just always encourage people when they're working, cause you have people all over the place that work with you, obviously, and when they're going to their local print shop, become educated on what archival means, cause I've seen shops sell the notion of archival really carelessly. And like, we'll talk to people about like actual contents of paper, and it's like you can have the best paper, well I think some of the best paper in the world right now is Hahnemuhle for printing, and they have some papers that are filled with optical brighteners, because they need to be- and optical brighteners for everybody, it's chemicals that are put into papers to make them really bright white. And paper isn't, paper especially cotton rag, it literally comes from cotton rags. It's not naturally really bright white. So to get it there, they kind of, it's not bleach but it's kind of like bleaching the paper. And these chemicals degrade over time, and your white point is gonna shift. And so you know, anytime somebody says archival print on so many websites and then I see what actual paper they print on, I'm just

like man, it's like, it's not very cool to do that to people. Cause it's perpetuating a misunderstanding, really, and it's selling something that's just not true, you know.

Cory: Okay. So assuming, so now we have a good digital file, and we've got good digital paper, and good archival, or- not digital paper. Good archival paper and good archival ink and all that stuff. So now I'm like okay, I've got the quality product as good as I can get for my budget, and where I'm at. So now what? What's my next step? I'm gonna ask you again- do I print at home, do I do print-on-demand, do I you know, do a print run buy inventory, or is there still another step before that?

J: No, I think it's a decision- if you print at home you're gonna have a lot more control. You'll definitely have control but I would say- when I first started printing at home before I had very many printers at all, it was like a really wasteful process because I didn't know anything about anything. And it was a lot of looking at the screen, you print something, you're like augh, why doesn't it look the same, make some changes, relative changes, and that process can become very frustrating. And if you're interested in going down the road of like really educating yourself on color management and learning about papers and seeing like the nuances of how different paper surfaces and that whole process of learning that is really interesting to you, then I'd say do it at home, you're gonna spend- I mean, printing is high-margin business over all. And you'll make way more money as an artist doing it yourself. And you can start off with like an Epson like P800, which is like a 17-inch printer, I think they're like \$1100 bucks or you can get them for like \$800 or \$900.

Cory: Yeah, I think our guide on our blog has them for like \$800 on Amazon.

J: Yeah, the P800 or the Canon Pro1000 is a good one as well, and you can make a lot of money selling things that are less than 11x17, you know? That's definitely a really viable business. Now when you want to get into larger format, you may have to go to another print shop, but even print-on-demand, a lot of places aren't even printing much larger than 30x40 because shipping is challenging beyond that overall. So the question of at home or print-on-demand I think really comes down to how much do you want to invest in learning overall and how to do it properly, you know, cause studios are doing print-on-demand have to have figured it out for the most part, obviously. And have taken out your learning curve.

Cory: Yeah. So there's, you know we have a variety of artists that are listening right now, some of them have studio spaces at home with room for a printer, a good friend of mine just got, he's a sculptor and makes like mobile sculptures, and so he has a lot of like small parts that move in his sculptures, and he actually just invested ten grand in a laser cutter for creating his parts at home, but that's like a pretty advanced business, right? So there's certainly a lot of value, especially if you're just getting started and you don't have a lot of space, to doing print-on-demand or doing a run first. And what I'll usually recommend to artists is you can do print-on-demand to get started, or if you want to do a limited edition run and make it like a super high value limited edition run, instead of paying for it all yourself up front, do a pre-sale.

J: Yeah.

Cory: Right? Have you had artists have success doing something like that?

J: Absolutely. We work with artists- and you could probably work with your local print shop to work out deal, say hey I'm gonna do a pre-sale, let me pay for one, photograph it really well, get like angled photos and like the texture of the paper, just do really good product photography, and then tell the print shop hey, if I sell ten I'm gonna come order ten, if I sell a thousand I'm gonna come order a thousand, get your pricing sorted out in advance so you know what you're gonna look like and how much money you might make. And in terms of, it's kinda like I feel like pre-sale is a good way to go before POD, honestly. If you can connect with a local print shop, you're able to then go proof things, you're able to look at the quality of the paper, you're able to ask a person questions instead of just being like somebody in a customer service queue hoping to get an answer. I mean some of the places you can call them, but we get so many people that have worked with like they'll go to like RitzPix or like Nations Photo Lab or all these like online places, and they're like it's cool, but I need to be able to feel paper and touch something, you know? So going in to your local print shop is definitely a beneficial thing. For sure.

Cory: Yeah, that's a really good idea. And we have a bunch of resources in The Abundant Artist on pre-sale campaigns, which are by the way, essentially the exact same thing as crowdfunding campaigns, like all crowdfunding is is just pre-sale. So the crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter and Indiegogo and stuff are a great way to pre-sell your stuff, yeah. Okay. So you make the decision to pre-sell or to do print-on-demand, I do think we need to touch a little bit on pricing, because there's several questions about pricing including a question from Angela, so Angela is, she says, "selling prints is something I've been considering for ages, but I can't make my mind up. I've been thinking about doing a limited run of 80 prints," so we just talked about pre-selling that, right? And I want to talk a little bit about limited runs, right? So a run, limited runs originally started because the cost of printing was so high that the artist could only afford to pay for x number of pieces, right?

J: Yeah, there's a number of reasons, some of it is with certain types of printing the plate is only gonna last so long before the integrity of the print is going to actually be, not the integrity, it's going to change over time, after a certain number of impressions. And a limited run of course is a lot of it is about exclusivity, it's gonna run out, supply and demand, things like that.

Cory: Yeah. So at this point with technology the way it is right now, a limited run is mostly a marketing thing, right? Like the technology and the physical limitations are mostly gone. Yeah. So it's just a matter of whether or not you want to market it that way. And if you look like photographers like Peter Lik, he does a thing where he'll do a limited run of 12 prints of a photograph and each time one sells, the rest of them go up in price. You have to have an audience and a demand for your work in order to do something like that. So a lot of times what I'll tell artists is if you want to do a limited run for marketing purposes, there needs to be something else besides the fact that it's a print for calling it a limited run. Maybe you signed very one, maybe you offer a seal of authenticity which we're gonna talk about in just a second. But she says "for a run of 80 prints I've been thinking of basing the price on a percentage of the original price of the same size." Is that what you typically see artists do? So for example, a 24x24 inch original sells for 750 pounds because she's British, 20 percent of that equals, a 24x24 print selling for 150 pounds. 20% seems about right to me, but what you have seen other artists do?

J: I've seen every random calculation that it's so tribal and it's like people, it's like in little groups and circles, it can be a percentage or it could be, I mean, people make up crazy mathematics, like the original took me this much time and like, it's like pfff! It's nuts. I mean I get down to like really simple economics. I'm just like, how much do you feel, or how much do you feel like you can sell a print for? Okay, good. And if you think it's a certain amount of money and I say how big of a print do you want to sell? Okay, good. You look at that. What paper do you choose? How much does it cost? Is your cost of production at minimum, like just, half of what you hope to sell? Because you don't want to make- you know, you don't want to do 20% margins or 10% margins. I tell people-

Cory: You should be looking at 40 or 50% margins on your prints, right?

J: Bare minimum. I tell people you'd better be doubling. If I sell you a print for \$10 you'd better be selling for \$20, you know? Because I want artists to be making money at the end of the day. Making ten or twenty percent on something, it's no- the thing that I've found as artists are really good at is forgetting how much time and residual resources like I drove over here or you know, I'm meeting with these people to make a project happen, all these things, like if you quantify the time that you feel like you should be making to consider yourself and your own little world successful, not related to anybody else but in your own little world, then you should really think of how to quantify your time. And that whole thing is super important. And so I don't think you should ever sell a print for- you should double your costs at a minimum. I see people go way above that, for sure.

Cory: So double your cost, so if the printer sells it to you for 10 it should be at least 20, and then what I'll usually tell artists is make sure that your prints cost no less than 5-10, that your originals are 5-10 times the cost of your prints. If you sell a print for 20, which is way too low, 5-10 times that is 100-200 dollars, and I think that if you're selling a \$20 print it probably means that you're a very beginning artist and you don't have much demand for your work and you probably, you know, I think ideally you'd only ever do like one run of prints that cheap because your next run is probably gonna be, you know they're probably gonna go for \$50 or more.

J: Yeah, and we also get people asking us what size print should I make? And especially in an ecommerce environment or a POD environment what I often tell people is think about that, some people are only gonna have, it comes down to like, does the customer have wall space, in a lot of cases? Some people are going to want just a small print, some people want maybe, I usually tell people three sizes- pick a small one, pick a middle one, and pick a really large one. Do a lot more small ones, little less of the middle ones, really exclusive large ones, and that's generally a model that I arbitrarily created. In my world, seems to make sense and that's what we often advise people on. It works out well, cause you want to be able to hit price points. So it's really like the small one, the medium one, the large one, and then way beyond that is the original. And you want the original to really stand out cause you don't want to undercut your own sales of original work, obviously. You know. You can't eat yourself alive.

Cory: Yep. Dan Cleary says he sells prints to 8-12 times the cost. That's great, that's great.

J: Yeah. And if you look at if you're printing your own, 8-12 times that, that shuffles things even different. Like that's maybe 8-12 times what you're paying a printer, for example, cause I can tell

you, you know, like some of the papers, they'll, I think it's like, we end up paying about a dollar, \$0.80-1.00 a square foot. Our ink cost is anywhere between like \$0.25 to like \$0.37 cents a square foot. And so you know, my cost as a printer for one 12x12 would be a couple dollars. An artist should be able to sell that for way more. Quite a lot more. So.

Cory: Yeah. Printing costs really are pretty small, a small number at this point. Like I had an artist that I was talking to two years ago, he was, he's a southwestern like cowboy artist, and he was doing 20-30 grand a month in print sales. And his margin was 60%. After, like after paying all of his staff for doing all the work and everything, like his cut was 60%.

J: Well after staff and overhead, that's pretty good. That's really tough. That's running a good hustle right there.

Cory: Yeah, he essentially had one full time person who did all of the shipping and worked with the printer, and yeah. It worked out really really well. So okay. The next thing that I wanted to talk about what sort of creating a process for selling your prints. So what I see a lot of artists, where I see them start to fall down is when you start to get demand for your work, when a lot of people are excited about what you're doing and they start buying from you, I see artists get stuck in a hamster wheel where they're essentially like, printing and running and trying to ship every single day. And that can get exhausting really quick. So do you have any tips or tricks for the artists that you see that are successful selling prints to make the process better?

J: I think the pre-sale model, once you have real demand for your work, I mean I would look at somebody like James Jean, look at how he does prints. I mean he'll sell thousands in like 24 hours. Or one of his friends, a friend of mine, he sells a lot of prints. And he'll maybe release 2-3 prints a year, and you know, he might sell a few hundred, but they're big, big prints overall. You know, so some of these guys could make twenty-thirty grand off of a print run in 24 hours, you know? And that's, you know, for many artists that keeps you going for quite a while. So running a viable business off of just print sales, print pre-sales is really a pretty good way to go about it, I think. I mean the other, you know the other option, you see a lot of artists that'll do the hustle of I'm gonna add stuff to Society6 and RedBubble and Etsy and all these places and running crazy multi-channel chaos and it's like little bit here, little bit here, little bit here, and then they're like adding up their little pile of little bits of revenue. It's not a bad model, we have a client that just reached out to us for Etsy production, has 10 Etsy stores and he's doing half a million dollars. One guy. And his wife. Half a million dollars a year. Selling personalized maps. So it's just like regional specific personalized maps like "You're the Best Grandma" and all these different things, it's really, it's amazing what you can do with this very simple idea. And then you scale it across a lot of these POD networks.

CL Nice. Somebody just posted links to esao.net and jamesjean.com. Definitely check them out. We'll have to see if we can get them on the podcast.

J: Yea, Esao's a little, well Jame's Jean super famous and exclusive so he might be a hard one to get.

Cory: Sure.

J: Esao's really um, he's a bit of, he's an introvert. A bit of a social introvert. Maybe. I'll connect you and see if I can get him on.

Cory: Yeah, we'll see. Sometimes I'm surprised at who I'm able to get to come on and talk. So-

J That's awesome.

Cory: Okay, cool. Oh one of the other things I was gonna mention, so you've got the print-on-demand option, like you were talking about Society6 and RedBubble and all those, they do everything print-on-demand, so like if you can have a little bit from each one that's great. A lot of times what I'll tell artists is focus on building up traffic to one channel at a time, get that one up and running so it's selling and then focus on the next one. Don't try to do- don't try to grow all of them at once. The way to make yourself crazy.

J: And it's a way to feel like you're not getting much done.

Cory: Yeah

J: It's a way to get frustrated, for sure.

Cory: Yep, there's also if you go back and listen to some of the interviews we've done, we've had Owen Garratt on the podcast a couple times, and also we had a session with him for the Association last September I think, and what Owen does, is all of his prints are actually the same size. So all of his prints for all of the pieces that he sketches, cause he's a pencil artist, are the same size. So that means that he buys the same matting, the same glass, and the same frames that are all the same size. So then he can buy in bulk, save himself a bunch of money, and then his team who's tasked with putting all that together and shipping it, also knows, like they don't have to like be retrained on different sizes and different processes. Some little streamlining stuff there.

J Yeah, some of the standardization is definitely a good move, I mean that's like if clients come to us and they have super odd sizes and for us it's fine cause we'll do custom prints, but it definitely, if you're doing it at home, that makes things way way easier if you're doing it at home. Just you know with a 17 inch printer for example, you could have 17x22, 13x19, and 11x17. You know? And it's like, pull a sheet out of a box, in and out, maybe you trim it, maybe you don't even need to trim it if you're doing the format really nice to the paper. There's definitely ways to keep it very simple to start.

Cory: Cool. So I want to dive into some questions cause there's quite a few. So Janice says "what are the best ways to connect with art consultants who represent and buy prints for hotels, hospitals, restaurants, etc." So corporate print buys? Do you have any experience doing that or is it mostly the artists?

J: No, we're really artist direct. The challenge with the, we were just out at the West Coast Art and Frame Show. And what you have are these companies that are paying artists from all over the world, and a lot of times they can get people in like the Far East or other places to like really just bang out a ton of artwork in a specific style. They license it, they own the image, they make a massive, massive library of categorized assets, they just becomes assets at that point, and it's really, hospitality, home décor, architects and graphic designers, or interior designers, go to

these companies. Usually they really just pay them a subscription, and you can just download a bunch of high-res files. So getting into that world is, it seems like a double-edged kinda thing, honestly, because as an artist you're not necessarily gonna make a lot licensing to these people, and I think going direct and selling your own art to people who passionately want it is gonna make a lot more money. It becomes a grind, honestly, we worked with another artist that, she did bedding. Amazing, amazing illustrator. And she was selling to like Bed, Bath and Beyond and these other places. She had to make her own samples in India, she had to put out so much money for maybe an upside, so it's one of those things that feels like you're chasing a big dream, but damn, it's a grind.

Cory: Yeah, in all reality, I have a coaching client based in LA, who, she has done, she's probably got about fifty pieces licensed to Target and some other, and Anthropologie and some other big stores. And her commission, her royalty rate on those pieces in 10%.

J: Yeah. Crazy.

Cory: So, you think you know you get into Target and you're like I'm rich! But Target will sell a few thousand of those pieces each year, and you make 10%. So you know, it's gonna be a few thousand dollars, but you're not gonna get rich licensing to the big corporations. The other thing that I would encourage you to think about, Janice, is if you want to sell like large format prints to hotels or other corporate places, what you want to look for is the art director who's in charge of the building project, who runs the art budget for the architecture firm. And a lot of times if you go to the building permit, the office of the building, what am I trying to say? The government office that handles building permits for your city. If you go to those companies, or those building permit offices and you look through and see who the permit is issued to and who the architecture firm is on that permit, then you can call the architecture firm and find out who the art director is for that project, and you can reach out to them directly and sometimes you'll score big there. Okay.

Alright. Running a busy print studio there. Alright, Alex says "how important is it to educate potential customers on the nature of on-demand prints in terms of they're really just inkjet," and of course you just said that they're all just inkjet. And then so we'll start there, like I would say most customers don't know the difference between inkjet, giclée, whatever. But you can call them giclée, because it's all the same. Do you have any additional thoughts there?

J: I partially agree, and partially really disagree. Cause I think- I really think that if, you know, artists at the end of the day are toiling away pencils or paper, paint, and working to make these materials become something magical by learning about them. And when you really master a medium you can talk about it to no end, you know, how it works, you know, what it does, you know, don't put this color on top of that color, don't try to paint on top of this paint with a different paint, I meant here's a lot of things you learn. And I think part of becoming educated with an additional realm of your work is knowing about printing. And the idea, it's like saying I make paintings. Well what kind of paint do you use? O you know, it's paint. I just put paint, you know. I find it to be ridiculous. I really, and I find it to be irresponsible of companies to not tell people what it is, overall. I mean, I think websites that offer print-on-demand should have equipment lists, I think they should have actual paper information, it's like no equipment on the art print? I'm like come on guys, you can do better than that, you know? It makes me feel like

it's just like, it's the bare minimum to get somebody to use your service to sell prints because the company makes money. It kills me.

Cory: Sara says "this guy prints."

J: I like Sara.

Cory: Okay, so then the second half of Alex is if selling a limited edition print, provide some sort of written guarantee or certificate. So do you guys do certificates of authenticity there in the studio when you print?

J: Only when requested. I mean, artists sometimes will design their own. Companies like Hahnemuhle, for example, we don't use these, but they have these cool holographic certificates where you get the certificate, you can peel off the sticker and you put that on the back of the print and it links the certificate to the print. I meant here's some cool things that people are doing. There's even some Blockchain things happening with certificates of authenticity.

Cory: Blockchain art is so cool right now. Like it's so weird and wile, but that's like a separate thing.

J: I'm not even getting into it at all, so. It's just, you know, on request. Cause people handle it totally, everybody handles it differently. I think that if you, I would use James Jean as an example, again, or Ron English, if you look at the prints he's done, some of these guys have done really- ahhh,

Cory: We'll get to that in a minute, Cory.

J: But if you look at Ron English, he's done some incredible certificates. I mean I think if you do it right, like with letterpress and foil stamping and you make it like the certificate is like a damn nice certificate, then it's cool. Otherwise we have clients who are printing on just like regular crappy paper and they're like it's because I signed it and didn't want to sign the print or something. So.

Cory: Yeah. So if you are offering a certificate of authenticity, one thing we didn't touch on earlier is some print studios will offer a drop-shipping service, where you drop off the file and tell them how many to print and where to ship them, and then the print studio will print it, package it, and ship it for you. Obviously you pay more so your margin goes down a little bit if you do that, but then you don't have to do it yourself. So any additional insight there?

J: Yeah, and that's one of those things you can really do yourself, I mean you can go to your local like, box store, buy some cardboard tubes or use one of the several places that sell packing materials, I'm not gonna pitch any particular one. But what I would say there is I don't know if you have it on your blog, but we get a lot of questions- how do you pack artwork? How do you pack it?

Cory: We do have a blog post on this as well.

J: Yeah. And if you take time to learn that, cause I'll tell you, if you're trying to save money and you do it yourself and you get a return cause the post office crushed all your prints, you're gonna be bummed. The other hand, on the other side of things, you're getting some traction, you're becoming a successful artist and you're like look, I don't have time to pack 400 prints, I want

somebody else to do it, and it could be that you'd rather be creating and let someone else do it. So it's really- where are you at, how much money do you want to let go, to have somebody else do it, or some people just really like repetitive tasks and you want to just do it yourself anyway.

Cory: Yeah, the artist that I mentioned earlier, the sculptor, you know he's got a line of retail pieces that are this big or so, and he sells hundreds of those every year, maybe thousands, and he has a full-time person who just all he does is come into the office and package and ship stuff. And it's like a side-project for him, and I said fulltime, he's part time. It's like a side gig that he does to make a little bit of extra money, and then he's got somebody, he doesn't have to package it all himself.

So SoundImages asks "on presale, do you discount the artwork?" Not necessarily. I don't think you necessarily need to discount the work, you're just pre-selling it.

J: I don't think you should anyway. Don't discount your work. It's not like the 99 cent store, you know? Keep the value high.

Cory: Yeah. Cool. Let's see. Okay, Mario says "is it the case that once we choose to do prints of an artwork, we will likely lose the chance to license or lease it?" Not necessarily. So it just depends on how popular your work is, and how much demand there is for it, Mario. A lot of licensing situations are based on the media, so you could sell prints of your work and then somebody else could pay you for a license to use that same work on bedsheets or some other product. There's all kinds of ways that you can use the images that you've created.

Let's see, Amira says "I'd like to buy some ads targeting wellness and yoga practitioners. I've done a couple of limited time launches that raised about a grand, how do I broaden my audience? Also do you have any ideas for daily posts on social media for a limited time launch?" So Amira, I would suggest, I think you're new to the community, so I'd love to hear a little bit more about your art business, and welcome aboard! We just enrolled a bunch of new people this week. So Amira, I would say that the first thing that I would suggest you do is go to The Abundant Artist course section on our website and go to How to Sell Your Art Online and look at the 301 course. Which is all about how to grow your audience, including social media as well as other media. So I think that there's probably room for you to find some niche media within the wellness, yoga, and healthcare niche and reach out to those media. Okay.

Let's see- Emily says "are there any print-on-demand apps that you can plug into your website?" Are there any- so you kind of ragged on Printful a little bit, do you have any other, like are there any others that you would suggest?

J: Let me go the other direction- The Printful is awesome because they have really put a lot of money into technology. They do make- early on it was a pain in the ass even with The Printful. But they've made it a lot easier. But I would say for like really automated prints, there's one called, there's obviously The Printful, there's CG Preprints has one, you could look at Scalable Press, has it as well, there's a couple. And you can, you know, there's a lot of ways to, I tell everybody there's a website called Order Desk, it's orderdesk.me, I think, let me double check really quick, hold on. Orderdesk.me, yeah, let me post something here in the little chat for everybody. Look here. You can go to this, their integrations page, and they have a tab for print-

on-demand, and there's quite a few that are doing it now. And I would say research, order some samples from people, to find out really what their quality is like. But there's a lot that are actually doing fairly well. I'm a total print snob, I know, shamelessly say that. And I just really believe in like a higher tier of what print-on-demand should be at like a, it's more of a professional level as opposed to a common consumer level. And there are a few people doing that. And that's where, you know, I don't want to race to the bottom and be selling like crappy paper to people, you know? So there are a lot of good places, I don't mean to sound like the elitist jerkface over here that only thinks his studio's the best, cause that's definitely not the case overall.

Cory: Cool. Let's see, Harmony says "Do color management concerns apply to monochrome graphite work on a white background?"

J: Very, very, very much so. Graphite is some of the hardest things to print and reproduce for the fact that it's actually a reflective surface, so digital capture, scanning, becomes even more challenging with that. One of the questions that we ask when people are putting orders in through our site, if they select scanning, very specifically we ask if there's any graphite or reflective surfaces for that reason. Any metallic- like metallics, foils, fluorescents, and graphites are like the problematic things for printing and the type of printing that we're doing.

Cory: Cool. Thank you. So we're coming up on- I mean we've got a few more questions, but I wanted to give a chance if you had any, so somebody asked do we get any discounts for using POV? If somebody's not in LA, can they still use POV?

J: Yeah, for sure. We have clients all over the US. For sure, we have clients overseas, all over the place. It's really a challenge in the beginning if somebody's not well color managed, is really just coordinating properly. We can provide ICC profiles for people to be able to soft-proof, but that requires people to have a calibrated screen. But we can also do it old-fashioned, like give me what you think you got, I'll send you a test print, you say thumbs up or let's change something, or, and we'll, you know, there's a lot of ways to work remotely with people, for sure.

Cory: Cool! And the best way for them to reach out to you and get started?

J: You can just email me direct. You can send it to our site. You can send it to info@povevolving.com. I'd say you know check out our site, a lot of the most common thing that we find is you know I've personally built our website, and there's so, and Cory I'm sure you get this too, there's so much information on there, if people would just like search for it. But you get the same questions very much over and over and over, so I would still encourage people to check out the site. FAQs answer so many questions that we get over and over. And let me answer.

Cory: Sara says is it info@POVevolving.com? Great.

J: And the site is fineartprint.la.

Cory: So then you mentioned a couple of times, you talked about a specific brand of archival paper that you like, it begins with an h?

J: Yeah, it's a German paper called Hahnemuhle, they been around they say since I don't know, 1500s or 1600s or something, it's like a really really amazing paper company. They have some of our favorite papers right now, Moab, Moab actually makes one of our most popular papers, which is called Entrada Rag, it's a bright white, which does have the optical brighteners in it, there's Entrada White, and it does come in two weights as well which is nice. Canson makes some really great papers. We only use really one, it's called Rag Photographique, that's a really good smooth right white paper that doesn't have optical brighteners. Let me think. If you want Japanese papers, there's these awagami papers that are everything from like rice paper to like really like textured handmade mold-made Japanese papers. So, and it's like, anybody has questions just about like, this is- the world of papers is massive at the end of the day. And I can, we could talk about papers for an entire hour. If you wanted to.

Cory: But...

J: But yeah, Hahnemuhle is a really good one for sure.

Cory: Cool. So Daniela Glassop says "how long does the toner last for an Epson printer," and my take on this is it doesn't matter because your margins are gonna be so good with selling your own prints that you just buy more toner with the money that you make for selling prints.

J: Well yeah, for one, for clarity, it's not toner, it's really, it's a pigmented ink, it's really a liquid, whereas a toner is oftentimes like a powder that gets put on in a different process in a laser process. But it really depends on I mean, the type of paper really does matter, overall. A cotton rag paper is going to absorb a lot more ink than like a glossy photo paper.

Cory: Sure. Yeah. But either way, you should be making enough money that that shouldn't be a problem, yeah.

J: Yeah, for sure.

Cory: Okay, so Dan Cleary says "do you have a paper list on your website?"

J: Yep, and I just posted it for him there. There's a lot of details there as well. As you can see by hearing me talk all nerdy about this, we put all sorts of tech- we even have spec sheets you can download for our paper. So a lot of info there.

Cory: Alright, and so for those who aren't on the chat live, it's fineartprinting.la/explore to see their list. Alright. So here's an interesting question, so in the chat they're talking, Sara O'Connor's work is highly textured. It's oil painting, and it's built up with quite a bit of texture. Do you have any recommendations for her as far as creating a print that people get really excited about, that closely approximates that sort of texture?

J: This goes down a pretty fun route. And I'll tell you, so the short of it, for basic inkjet printing, what we're primarily doing now, is, you know, you can get a textured cotton rag paper, there's a Hahnemuhle one called William Turner which is really a textured paper. You're still printing a flat image onto paper. That where, there's a growing trend right now, it's mostly kind of in like R&D stages with printer companies and a few researchers, where I just got a demo from an Italian company called Metis, I'll put it in the little chat. Metis scanner, it's about a \$200,000 scanner that puts a painting onto a flatbed surface, you scan it, you rotate it 90 degrees, you

scan it, you rotate it 90 degrees, and it builds a full elevation map of a painting. And I got to play with the software the other day, and it's absolutely insane. You move these little sliders and the lighting changes and the texture changes, and you can essentially set a high end threshold and explore the layers of this painting. And so we're in a process of getting a printer called a, it's called Swiss Cube Print.

Cory: Sara just said YES.

J: That's amazing. So we're gonna have a flatbed printer here soon, it's a 4x8 machine, that's UV flatbed printer, and the inks you can lay down layer by layer, and one of our big missions is to be able to do exactly this, is reproduce the texture of painting, because you can lay down, use all the inks lay down layers of texture and then overprint it with proper color, and then it even has spot varnish that can hit the glossiness that you want to. There are ways to do it, it's not very common right now, we're excited to start experimenting with it when the machine comes here.

Cory: I think this is the same printer, I saw a machine that was able to do a stroke-for-stroke recreation of Starry Starry Night.

J: Yeah, that's the guys at, I have that bookmarked, that's one of the guys, he's using two Nikon, I forget which model, two Nikons shooting at an angle with a polarized projector in the middle to capture this texture layer, and they printed that on like a \$500,000 Canon machine called an [unintelligible] And those, you know. Not everybody has access to access to a half a million dollar printer, so that's a little challenging you know?

Cory: Yeah, cool. Well hey Jeremy, I don't want to take up any more of your time. I really appreciate you taking the time to chat with us and educate us on how to get a good print. And we will talk more on the Association on sales channels and presale stuff, but I really appreciate your time.

J: Absolutely, I really appreciate all the questions and the opportunity, and yeah. Hit me up any time!

Cory: Alright, thanks so much everybody, bye.