

Cory: Hey there everybody, it's Cory. If you can hear me type hello or hi or something. Excellent. Alright. Good to see all of you here today. Let's see, let's jump into questions. Couple things- so a lot of you already know about this, but our book on producing and selling fine art prints is proceeding along, we should have the cover finalized this week. I appreciate everybody's votes and input. We are also going to be asking for your input on the title of the book, I'm gonna post a poll in the Association later today, so be checking for that. Also, what's the other thing I was gonna say? And then of course everybody in the Association will be given the opportunity to download the book for free. So we're just hoping that you'll tell all your friends about it.

Okay, let's dive in to everybody's questions. Hello from London and Devon and other folks who are abroad. Okay. Let's see- Fiona, let's dive in to your question first. So Fiona says "is there some kind of rule of thumb-" Oh, by the way, for those of you who are new who just recently joined the Association and haven't been to one of our Q & A calls yet. This is an opportunity for you to ask any question you want, to get some personal coaching while you're here live on the call, and yeah. Any questions you want, just about anything is fair game. Okay. So back to Fiona. "Is there a rule of thumb for how often you present your work for sale on social media? I notice on Facebook that The Abundant Artist seems to cycle through information produced over the years and re-promote it which makes sense, and of course I'm just aware of my smallish following and don't want to bore them by seeing the same stuff again and look desperate and unsuccessful at sales."

So Fiona, I'm gonna invite you onscreen here. Oh I can't, apparently you're not here. So Fiona, I'll just say- the answer to your question is there's no set rule, it's just how often do you, like, it kind of depends on how much content you have, right? If you are an artist who's got a hundred pieces or several hundred or even a couple thousand pieces, then just cycle through it at a steady pace. And it also depends on how hot you are and how hot the demand is for your work, right?

So if your work is constantly selling, then you're going to be, you know, maybe once a week or so you might do a Throwback Thursday to look back at work that has already sold, that kind of stuff. The real thing that I would concentrate on is how can you build a connection with your followers? So don't think how often should I post my work for sale, it's what's the best way that I can form a relationship with the people that are following me, right? And if you have a tiny following then maybe look through who those followers are and see- you know, go look and see, are any of them collectors? Are any of them art enthusiasts? Are any of them not artists, right? Are any of them your ideal collectors? And then, is there a way that you can reach out to them and maybe partner with them for something, do they own a coffee shop or a gallery or a studio or something, where you might partner with them on something? Do they have some other connection to you, maybe you share some hobbies or something like that. Form connections with your existing audience. And especially if you have a small audience, that's probably where I'd put my focus.

Otherwise, posting a couple times a week, once a day on Instagram or Facebook or whatever is probably the right answer. Alright.

Joe says "I was considering having my home page why do I paint, a brief explanation along with a photo of me, the idea being that it might be a good way to draw people in." Yeah, I don't think that – that's not a thing that's gonna make a huge a difference, right? That's not a lever that is going to be worth spending a lot of time on, sure, put it there, try it, see if it does anything. And I wouldn't expect any big result there, but sure. Give it a try. I don't think it matters all that much. Whether there's a brief why do I paint on the homepage or it's on your about page, probably doesn't matter either way.

Okay, Sand, great question. Sand says "do you agree about the statement 'Instagram is about brand building, Facebook is about discussion and newsletter is about sales?' I think in general that's probably true Sand, I'll invite you onscreen if you want to talk about it more. I think in general that's probably true, but Instagram, you can certainly make sales in all of those areas, even the newsletter is going to be the more likely place that you're gonna make sales just because you're gonna be able to contact people in their inbox which is where people are more likely to make a purchase, people spend a lot of time on social media but they usually don't go there to make a purchase. Unless they are an art collector who's purposefully trolling Instagram to look for new stuff to buy.

Okay. So hopefully that answers that question. If you want to elaborate or expand on it you're welcome to come on and do so. Okay. I would love to hear from, Hi Sand.

Sand: Hey. Can you hear me?

Cory: Yeah, did you hear my answer?

Sand: Yeah, yeah, great. The additional question I have is how do I prioritize those, I like Instagram, but it doesn't have a lot of leads for me and I realize that Facebook has more traffic. I focus on my mailing list because I think that was some of the advice you had for us and I think it's great advice because you get a very strong relationship but at the same time, you know, how much can you get new audiences, that's the problem.

Cory: Yeah, so obviously when you're building a business there's all these different things that you can do, and you have to figure out what your priorities are, right? So my question for you is, first of all, do you have like a day job that you're working while you're working on your art business?

Sand: No.

Cory: Okay, then what do sales look like for you right now?

Sand: It's in the twenty thousand per year. And my audience are mostly HR people and lawyers.

Cory: HR people and lawyers, okay, great. Okay. So then probably the, you know, twenty thousand then obviously, is your goal more sales right now? It seems like that would be the goal right now.

Sand: Yeah.

Cory: Okay, where do most of your sales come from right now?

Sand: Commissions.

Cory: Commissions, okay, and where do those commissions come from?

Sand: Referrals.

Cory: Referrals, referrals from-

Sand: -in person.

Cory: Okay, great. Then I would look for ways to give yourself opportunities to talk to more people that are in your target audience, right?

Sand: Yeah, mm hmm.

Cory: So if your collectors are lawyers and HR professionals, those are two distinct groups. Great groups, by the way. So lawyers talk to other lawyers, they all spend hours talking to each other, and they talk after work and all that stuff, and then there's professional associations for lawyers and continuing education programs for lawyers. So figuring, like figure out what bar all of the lawyers drink at.

Sand: Yeah.

Cory: And make sure that some of your work is hanging in that bar and that you go there every once in a while.

Sand: Yeah, that's a great idea.

Cory: Yeah, and then the other thing that I'm thinking about is as far as like social media and digital marketing goes, I don't know off the top of my head whether lawyer, and you're in France, right?

Sand: Yeah, I'm in Finland.

Cory: Finland, oh okay. I don't know if in Finland there's a particular social media platform that lawyers spend time on.

Sand: Okay, so I need to find out.

Cory: Yeah, talk to your buyers and say you know, do you spend time on Facebook or Twitter or Instagram? Obviously your mailing list is the primary method of growth as I was talking about earlier, but yeah- talk to your people and find out where do they spend their time, what do they do when they're not working, and when they buy art, what are they, why are they buying it? The people who've paid you for commissions so far, is it like family portraits, or is it like something else?

Sand: No, it's, I've these concept of emotion portraits, so I translate what they feel for nature or horses, and I use nature as a mirror, so it's very specific.

Cory: Okay, great. How much do you charge for that?

Sand: Between one thousand and six thousand dollars.

Cory: Okay. One thousand's not enough for something that specific.

Sand: I agree.

Cory: Yeah. So then, because what you're doing is kind of unique and is a collaborative process where you're interviewing them and things like that, I'm assuming so, is that correct?

Sand: Yeah, definitely

Cory: Then you need to be having ongoing conversations with them, with your audience, with these lawyers where you're talking about the process and gathering testimonials and case studies from previous collectors, from previous commissions, so that you can share those in your email and on your website and stuff. Because lawyers are very analytical, right, and they want to know what is this and why is this? Right? So you're gonna have to spend a fair bit of time just talking to them. So go buy a suit and talk to a bunch of lawyers. But buy a really colorful nice suit because you're an artist.

Sand: Yeah, of course. Thanks, it was very helpful.

Cory: Good! Good luck. Okay. So many of you already know that next week, technically it's already open, but next week for members outside of the association we're opening enrollment for How To Sell Your Art Online 201, and in 201 we're gonna dive in to, this is all included in your Association membership, but in 201 we're gonna dive in to sales funnels, what to say to people once they're on your mailing list, how to build a mailing list that converts people into buyers, all that stuff. And so if you want to sign up for that, I'll be, you already have access to it, you can just go to theabundantartist.com/courses and click on How To Sell Your Art Online and then click on the 201 program. All the course content is already there and you can access it. The, what's the word I'm looking for, I'm gonna post the link to the coaching calls for the 201 specific programs, oops, here we go.

So here in the, here we go. There's the link for the 201-specific coaching calls. If you want to join us to talk about mailing lists and blogging and content creation, all that fun stuff. Okay. Anybody else who is on, those of you who are here from London, from the UK, I'd love to hear what you're up to and see what kind of help you might need. I'm going to invite you onscreen if you want to join us and talk a little bit and let me know what you've got going on, and if anybody else has questions, you're free to join us as well.

Does anybody else have any questions about what they're working on in their business? I know everybody's been working hard and -post the 101 program, I know that a lot of people are just working hard on implementation.

Beth says "you've said before that artists still sell the most when people can see the art in person. I heard that millennials aren't looking at art and are not buying art. If they have extra money they value vacation experiences over art. Do you have any data on how much millennials are buying?"

Okay, great question Beth. And so as far as millennial-specific information, the, what's it called, the TEFAF report, I'm gonna see if I can find a copy of it here cause I have it. Here we go. Okay, so I'm gonna share in the chat, I'll share a link to the TEFAF report there as well. Hey Beth.

Beth: Hi.

Cory: Okay. So the best source of information that we have about the art market in general and demographics and what people are purchasing and stuff is the TEFAF report, which is The European Fine Art Fair report, I just shared a link to it, and then there's also the Hiscox Online Art Trade Report, which talks more about the state of online sales. So those two reports are pretty interesting, and fun to dig through and I'll let you dig through them on your own time and everybody else dig through them on their own time, but in general it is true that younger people are buying less art, but that is like a generalization, right? Now millennials are 18-35, so like I'm right at the top end, I'm probably not considered a millennial, I'm in that weird in-between stage.

Beth: Is that like Y generation or something like that?

Cory: The Xennials or whatever they're called. So people my age, like I was in New York last year, and I was at a private dinner party with this very successful group of entrepreneurs and the lady whose condo it was, she had some art up in various places and she's like super successful, has quite a bit of money, and she buys art, right? But the discussion that we had, it was she finds it really hard to figure out where to buy art. Because one, she's so busy with her career. But two, she doesn't hang out at art galleries. Like, art gallery parties are boring, right? And they're super intimidating if you're not in that world.

Beth: People just don't like the gallery scene, it's intimidating, people are snooty, blah blah blah.

Cory: Yeah. So what I see artists doing and having some success at is just doing living room parties.

Beth: Mm.

Cory: Where you throw a party for ten or fifteen people, you know you try to make it the people who are in your ideal audience, and you just have a party and you have your work on display and you talk about it for five minutes, but then you just have a party for an hour or two and hang out with people. And you kind of grow it that way.

That said, it is a really good idea to find ways to create experiences where people can interact with your art and purchase your art, right? So have your work on display at parties in vacation destinations, there's a weird like thing where people go on vacation and suddenly they're willing to spend all their money.

Beth: There is that. Yeah, they're just like throw it out the window.

Cory: Yeah, so if you go to the Oregon Coast where I live, if you drive down the coast, you know, it's several hundred miles to drive coast-to-coast all the way down the state, and there's probably twenty art galleries on the Oregon coast if not more. And a bunch of them are just like in the middle of nowhere. Because people specifically go to the Oregon coast to buy art.

Beth: Oh, I didn't know that.

Cory: And it's all like ocean paintings.

Beth: Yeah, that's what I've noticed too, yeah.

Cory: So that's a weird thing. But I think don't let that information discourage you, like the demographic information about millennials, don't let that discourage you. It's really more about figuring out what your audience is doing and finding them and talking to them.

Beth: Yeah, okay. Yeah, like I showed my work twice now at the airport at the Portland Airport, actually, and I've gotten more leads and sales from that than any gallery show or you know, anything like that. Like just normal people are walking by and they're busy and I'm still getting leads, you know?

Cory: Yeah. Well there's just so much more people, so many more people at the airport than there ever will be at an art gallery.

Beth: Right. And it's sort of an unintimidating and it's-

Cory: Yeah, and thinking about, you can't really see it, but like this piece over here on the wall over there, I got that piece here in Portland at a First Thursday, and then thinking about like other pieces that I got here, I found this one online, these two were both First Thursday, and these were online as well. And this one I got from Gwenn Seemel, was a gift from her. So like I shop online, I buy art online, and I'm not that special.

Beth: Right. Right.

Cory: So yeah, there are lots of people who buy online, and when I'm looking, thinking about the shopping habits of my friends, like my closest group of friends here in Portland, we all buy almost everything online. Right? So I have an Amazon Prime account, everything gets delivered to me within two or three days. Usually next day. So especially when it comes to regular stuff, delivered. So I spend a lot of time just looking online.

Beth: Yeah, okay. That's good.

Cory: So hang out on the internet and maybe you'll sell some stuff.

Beth: Yeah. I need to integrate my portfolio site with the ecommerce site. That's my next thing. And I have it available online, but I just want to integrate it so I'm gathering all the customer information myself and not giving it to someone else. So. Yeah, that's my next thing.

Cory: Alright, good luck.

Beth: Thanks!

Cory: Thanks Beth. Okay, whoops. Alright. Tom says "I'm wondering about how to find and attract clients who are more affluent. I have a good number of followers on Instagram, but many of them cannot afford my art." Yeah. Okay. Great question Tom. So as far as specifically targeting people who are further up the socioeconomic food chain, the first thing that I always think about is where- you know, in the physical location that you're in, hey Tom. So it's Indianapolis, is that right? Yeah. Where is the wealthy section of Indianapolis? Do you know?

Tom: I guess on the North side of the town.

Cory: Okay. You can probably go online and find government statistics that break it down by zip code. Or if not government statistics, somebody keeps that data. Because they do. So then the next

thing I would do is set up a display piece in as many high-visibility locations in those wealthy zip codes as you can. You know, take, do you still have like the piece that you were showing at the library, or other similar sized pieces?

Tom: No, unfortunately I don't have anything right now to show. I'm so buried in commissions that-

Cory: Yeah, I hear ya. Okay. So then the thing that I would do is ideally you would have a piece or two in some publicly visible places in those wealthier areas.

Tom: Okay, this is the question I should ask first. You're talking about publicly visible places, and aside from like the library that commissioned my stuff in the first place, how do I find a place to show my work like, you know what my stuff looks like, so a whole lot of places the minute I show it to them they're like they'll say like nope, that's too noisy or they just don't want to deal with it cause they're- I guess cause it moves.

Cory: Yeah. So one things I was thinking, I've always wondered if you could build a plexiglass cage around your stuff so that kids can't actually touch it. But then people can look at it. That's one thought that I had. And then the other thing would be just literally going out and networking more, cause you have videos of all your stuff on your phone or your iPad or whatever. So just going to events where wealthier people are, which is going to mean moving out of your comfortable social circle.

Tom: I don't really have a social circle right now.

Cory: Sure. Okay. Well this is an opportunity for you to go out and practice your skills from how to win friends and influence people.

Tom: Yeah not so much. That's a pretty tall order. That's gonna be really tough.

Cory: If you want to sell to rich people you're gonna have to learn how to talk to rich people.

Tom: What's a good first step in that direction then? How would I start doing that? Cause I don't-

Cory: Yeah. First things first is I would literally read how to win friends and influence people. It's a great book, it's like a core foundational book for just how to interact with people and how to treat people. And also I would like, don't let the fact that people are wealth intimidate you. Because wealthy people are just like you and me. They really really are. I have a number of pretty well off friends now, and they still have like, I go on these retreats, these business retreats with some of my very successful friends, we're talking about people who do 10 million dollars a year or more in their business. And they have the same insecurities and life problems that the rest of us have. Marriage problems, you know, even what's the word I'm looking for- Imposter Syndrome, right? Imposter complex where they're afraid that people are gonna find out that they're a fraud even though they've had these very successful businesses or whatever.

So where as far as where do these people hang out, think about chamber of commerce functions, think about city, what's the word I'm looking for, like in city hall there's always meetings where people go to talk about lobbying issues and zoning issues, all that kind of stuff. And then showing up at museum events would also be a good one, so like museum fundraisers and museum member events.

There's also probably, so like most cities have- there's gonna be some organization like the Daughters of the American Revolution or some other like the, what's the word I'm looking for, it's a volunteer organization that organizes like- anyway, they put together like service projects and it's right on the tip of my tongue. But look for service project organizations in your city. And just go to a few of the meetings. You don't necessarily have to pay up to join the organizations. A lot of time you can go to the event and it might have a ten or fifteen dollar cover or something. But just give yourself some practice to go to the events and meet a few people. And when people ask you what you do, I'm an artist. What are you working on right now? I do these big giant rolling ball sculpture and I have my next commission is whatever this place is. Right? And I promise you, if you can say that to somebody, if you tell somebody I make a living making sculptures, like the way people see you, you're automatically gonna become an amazing person.

Tom: Okay.

Cory: Just because people think that that's like the coolest thing ever.

Tom: It's pretty cool, that's why I wanted to do it in the first place.

Cory: Yeah. People will have a positive reaction. Some people will be like, oh, well how do you make a living? And you can be like actually I've been living off my sculptures for x amount of time and I have commissions booked out for the next year. Then people go oh shit- then people go oh, you're a real artist. And then people will want to start introducing you to other people. Right? and you can be honest with people too- you can say you know, I'm an artist, this is what I do, I'm looking to get outside of my existing professional circles and meet other people from other backgrounds. And you can be honest with people about that. And the really good connectors, the really good people will go "oh, cool, you should meet so and so." Right? I do that in my life when I'm out at events like this and I meet somebody who is awkward or doesn't, you know, is out for the first time at these events I will try to connect them with somebody else in the room so that they can feel comfortable. And that's what you're looking for, is you're looking for those connectors. Just one relationship in those kind of meetings can be really helpful.

Tom: Okay. Alright. That sounds like good stuff. Thanks, appreciate it.

Cory: Good luck, thanks Tom.

Okay. Sara says "where do I find thriving gay communities?" Oh boy. Sara, you are asking the wrong person. So you don't want to go live, okay, that's fine. Okay. Hi Sara. You're sick. Okay, you don't have to talk if you don't want to. Okay. I say you're asking the wrong person, but the theatre community, as cliché as it is, is super gay. So show your work in like the big theaters in town.

Sara: Mmhm.

Cory: So like, where, what city are you in again? You're in the Midwest, I forget.

Sara: I find that Richmond is a little bit too like landscapey- way too conservative for me, but it's nice to be close to D.C. and blah blah blah blah. So Richmond hasn't been amazing for me, but it's a nice hub for where I go.

Cory Yeah. Okay. So there are two large theater companies here in Portland that their lobbies act as art galleries- right? One of them is specifically a gallery for senior artists, it's called the Geezer Gallery and it just strikes me as weird every time I go there. But they have probably fifty pieces up in their lobby every time I go in there. And I know that it sells because I talk to people that show there. So the theater companies in the area is a great place to start. The, also, as Donna said, gay magazines. Out magazine is a good one. I don't know if they're national. They might just be regional. But Out magazine is one. Then finding, just look for any LGBTQ events, right? They definitely group themselves all the time, so you can find on Facebook and other places, those kind of like gay events, lesbian events, themed events, all that kind of stuff. Gay bars.

Sara: Yeah. I'm thinking kind of bigger scale. I found that you know, Pittsburgh pride week with Three River I just roll in it. Dogwood, they have, if any of you guys are around Dogwood, Piedmont Park is fantastic and I've just found where there are gays, I do really really well, so I want to like, the, whoever you had had on a podcast with the wedding, not hopas, oh, the ketubah. Yeah. I almost feel like it's very similar thing for me that I can use that as leverage and it's not just gay people who buy my art, but I find that wherever they are, it's my demographic of people are located. It's a fun little thing that I've found over two years of selling live. Okay.

Cory: You got what you need?

Sara; No, but it's okay. I'll be doing some research.

Cory: Yeah. I really think you're gonna find the events that you want just by integrating yourself into the community.

Sara: Yeah.

Cory: And it has to be seen in an authentic way, it can't just be you're going in to sell to them. Because they'll definitely sniff that out.

Sara: Oh no, it's just kind of where they are is where I should be, pretty much.

Cory: Yeah. So go make some gay friends. Ideally some wealthy gay friends.

Sara: I mean fortunately I've got two gay uncles and my only two cousins are gay. So I'm rollin' deep in it.

Cory: Okay. Well go ask them.

Sara Thanks, have a good one.

Cory: Alright, thanks. Bye. Okay. I'm really glad that Tom mentioned this in the chat if you're not reading the chat I just want to point it out. So Sara pointed out that it's a shame to be buried in commissions. And Tom said that "it's a good problem to have but it's still a problem and this is absolutely true. I'm finding I'm having little time to market which means if I don't do something about it then I'll wind up with all of my finished commissions and no new commissions and I'll be out of work." Yeah. So what I usually tell people is if you are booking commissions, if you're booked out doing tons of work, try to book yourself at like 60% capacity so that you still have time to continue networking and marketing yourself. Because building and expanding outside of your existing social network is super important and that takes time. You have to build

relationships. Especially if your work is very expensive, like Tom's is, and as Sara's is becoming, you, it does take time to build up outside of your social network and you have to get to know some people.

Okay. Sara, you're spontaneously making my own throat dry. Okay. Does anybody else have any questions? Sounds like you all are cruising along, working hard. Alright. Well unless anybody else has anything we will call it a day. I appreciate you all taking the time and we will talk to you again. The next call is July 2nd, I think that's right. July 2nd. Yeah, July 2nd when we start diving in to the How To Sell Your Art Online 201 course coaching program.

So thanks again everybody, and we will talk to you very soon. Bye.