

*THINGS WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND ABOUT ANY KIND OF ART, BUT
SPECIALLY IN THE GRAPHIC ART WORLD: WATERCOLORS, ACRYLICS,
OILS OR ANY MIXED MEDIA*

1. Most of those who try to make a living out of art; well, is an uphill ride without shortcuts. Is not easy and requires at least few things you need to understand.
 - a. A great deal of skills, which means you will need to practice your life out... Some have said that required around 10,000 hours to master any kind of graphic arts skills. That's means; if you decide to invest 3hrs a day on developing the needed skills, you will be investing around 3,333 days of your life on this matter. Basically, a little over 9 years as a minimum. When you add all the time needed to develop all the skills, you might be looking to at least 15 to 25 years. I can tell you that I have invest, only in the watercolors, from 2008 till today and still I am learning the medium. But I have been involved in graphic arts since my early teens when I was a student of "Maestro Azaustre" back in Puerto Rico in the 1970's.
 - b. In order to be able to sell, you have to study the market where you want to sell, your pieces will need to match what the market requires. In other words, most of the time you will be working on something you might don't like. You will have to treat your art as a business, and believe me, at this moment the FUN is OVER!!!
2. The great Van Gough in his lifetime, which was short, only sold one piece, to cover a debt. Today, the average price of a Van Gogh is on the multiple tens of millions, over 50 to be exact; but he never makes it on his lifetime. There have been others that did it, like Monet, Picasso, Dali and others; but how many Picasso's, Monet's or Dali's are out there? I have seen some with a great deal of skills in YouTube and other sites; are they doing well? I don't know, and really, I don't care... So, start care about yourself and forget about the rest. In reality, what work for someone it might not work for you... Ride your own path and be happy about it, because by been happy you will be consistent in your path, that's my recommendation.

3. If you want to start selling your art never, never try it with Friends and Family... Unless you are willing to give away your art, don't even try it. It will only bring you frustration and dissatisfaction. I have given away multiple pieces to my family and friend as gifts, and if they ask for a price because they really want to pay me whatever, I just request from them to purchase some supplies for me and that's it. In my mind I am happy and there are no frustrations to handle. Another little note to this: *co-workers, they are not friends and family!! But for sure they will try to be treated as so when comes to pay for your art... so be careful; they could be the worst detriment to your self-esteem..." Don't let it happen" ...*
4. Once I have stated the price of my piece, I will not discount it; because if I do so, is like I am not valorizing my very own effort. So, once the price is settled in my mind, that's the price... If I sell it, OK... If I don't, it's OK too.... Even bad situation brings us experience, you might lose a sale, but experience is a win situation always.
5. Never expect to receive your monthly cash requirements from art; so, you need a primary source of income, and gradually built your Art Business to your needs. (but if you are one those who have make it – GOOD FOR YOU!!!!, but never forget where you came from.)
6. When accepting commissions to do an Art Piece, request 50% down, then the rest at the moment the art piece is delivered. So, this is what I do: The prospect will give me a good idea, possibly a photo, of what they want... At that moment I generate a sketch and later on I showed it, if they agreed on the idea, then 50% of the value of the art piece is requires before I start laying down paint of the surface. Once the Art is finished, then the rest owed must be paid before the Art piece could be delivered. Now you need to be prepared for the possibility that they might not like the final result, if that's the case, then you need to be ready to refund at least 75% of whatever they prepay you... you will be entitled to retain a small (25%) for the effort you have put into it. So, it's essential that before taking a commission, you show a good variety of your actual art works to the client, so that they feel attracted to your art, and avoid those painful refunds.

Believe me when I say that I have been burn not once but..., let say, more than once in my journey through art. That's why I have decided to write this "Need to Understand" things about art, so that maybe someone will take advantage of my experience... Don't worry, this is free stuff!!!

I do prefer to see my Art **as a hobby**, that from time to time could bring me some money to cover my supplies. I am an accountant, and have been working since I was 15 years old; I am 60 now, and looking for my retirement so I can spend more time doing what I love – Drawing and Painting. Art have been an amazing journey for me, especially in the last 25 years or so. The use of watercolors has been the best time in my arts journey... So, I think that watercolors will be my medium till The Creator calls me to end my days in the earth... Maybe from time to time I will do some acrylics or oils, who knows what the future will bring to my table!!!

But... in the meantime, HAPPY Paintings you'll.... Practice, Practice, and then Practice again, that's "**the theme**" of this game... After all, art should be a joyful journey which bring us a lot of satisfactions and personal growth. In Kabbalah there is a word that can be pronounce as "Simchah" שמחה (the ch is pronounce like in German – that guttural sound on the back of your throat) and means Happiness, but is that happiness that grow on the understanding that some power bigger than us is controlling the universe and all that happen is actually good for us, that even in adversity, experience help us grow in a positive way. So, Be HAPPY, the Kabbalistic Way....

Walt.

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