

Maintaining a studio practice



How does one 'art'?

Maintaining a studio practice doesn't simply mean spending hours at the easel. It is more akin to a series of small habits, making consistent, regular efforts to develop yourself as an artist.

But what exactly does an artist do?

An artist does more than just “make art.”

By maintaining a studio practice, artists can develop good art-adjacent habits like planning, resource management, and presentation.

For the next few slides, take note of your answers.

Researching

An artist reads, listens, observes, sketches, and plans. An artist also tests, makes color swatches, and seeks out new experiences.

Creative output demands quality input. What are you taking in? From where do you draw inspiration? What will you need to make your idea a reality? What opportunities have you found recently?

Creating

Working with materials, making molds and waiting for paint to dry – a lot of studio time is spent creating. How does an artist deal with time limits? Or technical limits? Can you hire a studio assistant? Could you outsource fabrication? Is it important to build your own canvases, or create your own glazes? How do you feel about working in collaboration with another artist?

Documenting

An artist's portfolio is not limited to the physical artworks themselves. It also includes good documentation. This might take form as high-resolution images/video, or accurate written records.

With good documentation, promotion and presentation become much easier.

Would you buy your own camera and lights? How are you with Photoshop? Does your artwork document easily? Would you hire a professional photographer?

Will you track your artwork catalog using Excel? Is your CV up-to-date?

Display

Part technique and part chemistry, proper display can protect your artwork.

How do you want viewers to experience your artwork? How should it be installed? Do you have your work professionally-framed? Do archival materials matter? Would you build your own frames or pedestals? How can you protect the artwork while it is on display?

What is your online presence? Do you use a premium account, or some other form of enhanced promotion? How would you go about getting and maintaining a website? How would you design the online experience?

Critique

Feedback is invaluable.

Do you talk about artmaking with other artists?
Would you invite a studio visitor? How are you
with taking constructive criticism?

Do you apply to open calls?

Do you put yourself out there?

How is your studio practice going?

How did you answer? How are you already maintaining a studio practice? How could you develop it further?

Research > creation > documentation > display > critique

Where to go now?

A studio practice is about more than making a single artwork. In contrast, an artist's work is the product of a lifetime.

Research > creation > documentation > display
> critique