

Advice for graduate artists

You've made the work, you've studied the craft. So, what's next? We have spoken to one of our talented artists, Marcus Aitken, to put together a collection of tips that we think will help support you in your next steps as an artist.

1 Think tactically

Many artists/creatives think along the same lines – I'll make some great work and then someone will find me. Take it from us – they won't. You need to find them – and you need to keep on looking until you do.

2 Use tools available to you

As Oscar Wilde once said, 'Every man of ambition has to fight his century with its own weapons.' Social media must be everyone's weapon of choice in this century so far, not least because it's completely free. Use all the platforms that are available to you, get your friends to help and post and share your work. It takes a group effort to get some traction going.

3 Get involved

Immerse yourself in the art scene as much as possible. Go to shows that aren't just your mates' brother's solo graduating show in a bunker in the depths of New Cross! Don't get us wrong, that kind of event is fun, but if you want to build your career in art, you need to network intelligently and be prepared. You need to carry business cards with you at all times, have a decent website and be able to talk about your work to anyone. Selling yourself is as important as doing the work. It's irrelevant whether it should be the case or not. It just is!

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4 Get a job

Don't just hang everything on the hope that you'll make it as an artist. Get a job, make sure you're not living on jam sandwiches and feeling sorry for yourself because you can't afford a meal out or a trip to the pub with your mates. Like any job, you will thrive if you're busy, happy and healthy.

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5 Apply yourself

Enter every art competition you hear about. It's not about winning (thought that wouldn't do any harm!), it's about exposure and getting your name out there. If you can get someone to see your work more than once, they will be likely to spend more time reading into and about your work.

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6 Make your art sellable

Try and think from a buyer's point of view about the presentation of your artwork. Good quality materials, framing, packaging and documentation can be almost as important as the work itself in telling your story properly. And, in order not to be a one-hit wonder, create a body of work that shows your range and embodies your art signature.

ARTIQ is the UK's leading art rental consultancy, offering expertly curated art collections for workplace, hospitality and residential sectors. Fair treatment for artists is fundamental to our ethos, with 'art rental' offering artists a regular income and exhibition space for their work. We currently represent over 150 artists as well as working with some of the nation's leading museums, galleries and archives.

Each year we run The Graduate Art Prize, open to BA and MA students graduating from art colleges and universities across the UK. Find out more here: www.graduateartprize.com

We are always keen to meet new artists. Get in touch to share your work with us, we can't wait to see it!