

Forging a Career as an Artist: Considerations & Recommendations

by

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Introduction

Artists of every medium are often held to a certain *unprofessionalism* that other occupations and fields are not. Many consumers of these mediums believe that artists can only exist outside the workplace, in a recreational sense. Artists of every level desire to build their craft into something fulfilling. Aspiring authors wish to be on the shelves of a bookshop. While filmmakers want their stories to be seen on the big screen. These are dreams and wishes that every artist has imagined to some degree. In school, education was limited to technical art skills. Even if those art skills were minimal, most students are rarely taught to use them. For most young people, the thought of being an artist as a career often seem like a fantasy. This is in part due to the way in which art is presented to students in school. Teachers rarely consider the possibility of a career in art and, in conversation on the subject, there is often no discussion of financial and professional stability in art. So few consumers of art, view art in a low-light already, it's so simple to see fame and wealth before thinking about the purpose, intention, or impact an artist or piece has. Doctors are looked at as heroes unlike artists who are visualised as poor, lazy, and on rare occasions, overall worthless. But, so many people are intrigued by the concept of art and wanting to pursue it. According to USNews.com, 9% of the student body at Purchase College is enrolled as either a Dance Major or Theatre Arts, specifically (usnews.com). That adds up to about 375 students of the 4,164 registered. There is no question that there are hundreds more Purchase College attendees creating art even if they are not enrolled as such. These statistics are based on the enrollment patterns of those at Purchase College. Everyone at Purchase College is an aspiring--something. Some of the students however, are held to a different standard than others based on what type of program they are enrolled in. For example,

students in the BFA Acting Conservatory have different requirements and must meet different standards than students in the BA Theatre and Performance program. In the world, there are 5 Million people employed as artists in arts and cultural based industries; many of which hold second jobs to try and support themselves further. Among these 5 million artists, many are self-employed. As stated in the 2019 Statistical Portrait on the National Endowment for the Arts website, artists are growing to be a large portion of the workforce. Throughout the last decade there has been fluctuation between an increase of jobs being open and a steep decline. But, as the statistical report from the NEA states, between 2019 and 2026 there will be approximately 7,400 jobs for those in the acting department. To top that, there will potentially be 14,100 jobs open to producers and directors (arts.gov.). The increase is due to the desire to create new stories and expressions. Television shows and movies rarely go out of style. Series that have been on air for years and years do need to come to an end eventually. When that happens, the ones invested in those shows are interested in filling those voids left by fiction. Purchase College is a jungle gym for artists of all calibers and experience levels. Success to each and every student has a different meaning. This includes ideations about being successful that may differ from their parent's perspectives and professor's perspectives. Matthew Kopsachilis, a technical third year student who has transferred into the Film Conservatory, believes "success is [compiled] of failures that worked." Kopsachilis has a focus on film but his idea about how success comes to be can be applied to every major, every art form. Uncertainty is the anthem of artists, even those who have achieved a large paycheck. But, students like Allen Dennis, another SUNY Purchase attendee believes that art is about personal passion. Artists have an easy time emotionally attaching themselves to details in their lives. If those emotional attachments are positive, negative, or neutral, they will still have an impact on whether or not art is created at all. Regardless of

intention: financial stability, reputation in an industry, or a personal goal-- artists of every level love what they do. Art means something on a deeper level to those who live to create. "Artists have an emotional attachment to their art because [it's something they love]" (Allen Dennis). But what does it actually mean to be successful? A frequent comparison is made among older generations within their opinions on professional artists. Doctors work hard to save lives everyday after 8+ years of education. Is it difficult? Yes. Artists work hard to make people happy, to feel any emotion they can, while trying to make a name for themselves. Is that also difficult? Yes. Society has the idea stuck that doctors, lawyers, and business people have the most professional, successful aesthetic. Many of the high up positions and occupations that parents could often only dream their children would pursue, are referred to using words and phrases that deem their worth in society. Through years of consuming art, creating it, and attending school, certain vocabulary about the subject, appears in lessons more than others. When others talk about success it is in the form of: "he's a successful...doctor," "she's a successful... lawyer," and so on and so forth. That is not to say that those doctors and lawyers are not successful. But, when those same people talk about artists, they associate it with fame: "he was a famous musician," "she was a famous painter," "they were a well known band." Where is this line between? According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary website, success is a "degree or measure of succeeding." Or another definition is "favorable or desired outcome" with the subdefinition of "the attainment of wealth, favor, or eminence [a position of superiority]" (MerriamWebster.Com). It is possible that humans determine success based on income. Maybe desire is a part of what we deem as successful because there are certain fantasies that almost everyone was raised into wanting.

Financial Success

It is rare to hear someone talk about the painting they saw and admired on the museum wall. What does this have to do with what they value and deem as successful? Looking at the salary of those in the film industry versus visual art may provide the answer. According to Phys.org, an article presented by the University of Australia in Sydney, obtaining any form of recognition either in an award format or otherwise is a tell-tale sign of success. If an actor receives an award for “Outstanding Lead,” it is clear the actor in question brought something memorable to the screen. With that said, financially speaking, a movie with a terrible plot-line could still be considered successful depending on how much of a profit was made after opening day (Phys.org). *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak was a beloved book first. It focused on the struggles of being a person of Jewish descent during World War II-- the Holocaust specifically. Production companies saw an opportunity to create a story from pages to screen that had a decent reputation behind it. But for the production companies, it was about adapting a story that would bring in some revenue. For reference, the book was originally published in 2005. The film was released in November of 2013. The budget alone was on the smaller side-- \$19 Million USD and was produced by 20th Century Fox. But, opening nights proved that the film would be a success. “On the Numbers,” a website that contains financial information for all films within the database, includes that of *The Book Thief*. The domestic box office brought in \$21,488,481. Since there was a profit margin it could be considered a financial success. According to multiple articles, it seems like the best way to be successful in film is by surpassing the budget number. To a degree, this is true. The film version of *The Book Thief* clearly did that alongside the international box office values of \$54,598,230 bringing all box office value to \$76,860,711. In general, yes, the film was a success. However, if one compares that to a larger franchise like *Harry Potter* (the

original seven), there is a visible difference in numbers. Individually each film brought in over \$100,000,000 by themselves. Opening weekends of each movie generated a range of \$77,108,414 - \$169,189,427. Box office sales continued to exceed the original budget amount of each film (thenumbers.com).

Taking Visual artists into account, someone like Damien Hirst who is a professional artist most likely endured some uncertainty. It is more common for visual artists to have a full-time job and then struggle to find time to create. The reason often circulates around the idea that visual artists don't make enough money to support themselves. While income differs through every industry and a variety of art styles, people like Damien Hirst never have to worry about having enough money. He might as well be a certified billionaire. Hirst has the capability of encapsulating so much that he's able to sell entire shows worth of pieces, like in 2008. He sold his collection titled "Beautiful Inside My Head Forever," at an auction. Of course, not every artist has the ability to sell in mass capacities like Hirst can (finance101). Damien Hirst based on that fact alone as well as him being able to sell one piece for over 20,000 US dollars can help him to be titled a successful artist (artsy.net). Not everyone is so lucky. But for those who are fortunate enough to gain wealth and some form of a steady income, will owe their success to the amount of money they are making. People from the outside may believe so as well.

Reputation

Film in all formats, is the type of art that mainstream society associates with everyday life. There is nonstop talk of the shows people have been binge watching or the movie someone went out of their way to see. As an example, Twilight is compiled of a few books, some spin-offs, and films. Suppose fifty percent of the population that has watched or consumed the

story in some way will consider the story terribly written, strange, and overall a waste of time. With that in mind, those same fifty percent of people will still likely watch it. While it has a reputation of being awful, it is still consumed daily by hundreds upon hundreds of people. After 10+ years of the Twilight Saga being released, the series has gained traction enough for everyone to continue to talk about it. All types of associations with the films and books create a reputation slate for this type of franchise.

Marvel films are also another franchise that has a reputation behind it. First of all, the stories have been around for ages and the comic books are one way to consume the stories on their own. But, taking a look at Robert Downey Junior as an actor, he has major Hollywood credit. He is known for portraying the role of Iron Man; one of the most well known superhero stories. From the beginning, fans of Marvel have seen themselves in RDJ's character. It doesn't stop there; the actor himself also saw his life in Tony Stark. But, because for over 10 years, Downey portrayed a memorable, semi-hateable, semi-likeable character throughout one franchise, when people see his name in the credits they're astounded. They immediately think, "this is something I need to watch." To many fans of the Marvel Cinematic Universe, without Robert Downey Junior, the films wouldn't have been as successful as they are. Robert Downey Junior didn't only have a reputation on screen but he did off screen as well. Robert Downey Junior was addicted to Cocaine, Heroine, and other forms of drugs for many years. Robert Downey Sr., Jr's father, introduced the addictive lifestyle at the age of eight years old. To Downey Jr. it became "a form of bonding." That false ideation followed him into adulthood causing him to be arrested on numerous occasions. The Dream Life Recovery website deems the recovery of RDJ as a "heroic road." Not too many people say they were originally at rock bottom and rose up to become Iron Man. Downey Jr. is literally the only person to be able to say that.

(DreamLifeRecovery.com). Downey had a film career before the MCU years so when his career began to go downhill and his personal life was full of jail cells and anxiety, his reputation went down with it. One could only imagine the uproar his decisions and repercussions had caused in the media. As he attempted to get himself together, his career lifted off as he landed the Iron Man role. In his specific case, his personal life was a part of the reason he had become as famous as he did. In his career overall, he had films ranging from 1983 and onward on his resume but him trying to become a better man made people more interested. Substance abuse is a very prominent thing in the world. The reputation he had of being a playboy, junkie, a really downhill type of guy ended up helping him fulfill the role of playboy Tony Stark / Iron Man. When film lovers see the growth on screen, they can quickly become infatuated with who the actor is in their everyday life-- outside of the character they have portrayed. We as consumers of film, and fans of Robert Downey Jr., can rush to YouTube in order to watch old interviews versus new ones. His personality has changed over the years after accounting for his life experiences and personal development that grew from them. Robert Downey Jr. has an incredible acting resume. He is currently one of the highest paid actors in Hollywood. Naturally, no one thinks having RDJ's paycheck is obtainable. Although, the change from the person he used to be into the person the world sees now, is admirable. He picked himself up and became not only a high paid actor but a household name. The money he is able to have is only a side dish in comparison to the type of person he is in interviews, especially after all he's been through. His reputation stems from both how many films he's been in and how much he's grown as a person.

An aspiring photographer, Salome Martinez has a desire to be heard and recognized by name. She uses the examples of composer Tchaikovsky and Dr. Martin Luther King. When a person hears their names, not a soul asks "who is that" or "what did they do." Martinez doesn't

necessarily wish for her photos to be on the covers of magazines but her excitement rests in the idea that one day they may be. That a young photographer will see it and think, “wow, I’m going to remember this artist.” In the future, Martinez wants to be a part of history without the desire for fame, As a photographer, Salome Inez Martinez wants to be recognized for her work and to be envisioned by name. As far as her career goes, she doesn’t discuss money or fame. Her heart is in a place of wanting to make a difference and to be thought of even after she’s gone (Salome Martinez). While Martinez’s desire to be recognised as a piece of history is a personal goal, it falls under the idea that reputation can be someone’s idea of success.

The way two films differ is not always in the genre or the plot. Instead, it can reside in the emotion viewers feel afterwards. Consumers can imagine themselves in a world that doesn’t exist and seek the thrill of doing so. Movies and television have such an easy way of transporting people. As a matter of fact, transporting people through art is what makes films successful. Maybe, there is no point in comparing two films’ financial statements. It is important to look at the ways those invested in art find themselves within the screen. It is okay if a viewer doesn’t find themselves in the story on screen but it is possible for them to sympathise with fiction. The *Book Thief*, a novel published in 2005 was about the people present in the Holocaust that “didn’t want to hang Nazi flags.” Markus Zusak wanted to tell the stories of those who didn’t want to be a part of the terror during that time. *The Book Thief* film adaptation and original published work gave young people emotional connections to a story that they had originally learned about in their history lessons (Interview with Markus Zusak). The story in both formats are beautiful pieces of art. However, the story itself is unfortunately far too close to home. It is technically fiction but the truth of war, pain, and suffering was put into a context almost too penetrating to the soul. Having these emotions evoked, creates connections with fictional characters, a message,

or storyline a reader found intriguing. When the film version was being released in November of 2013, school districts across counties and states read *The Book Thief* as a part of their curriculum. *The Book Thief* became integrated into plenty of students' lives and once the film was being released the young adult population wanted to see it. They had been taught about the story and writing techniques used in it and felt the urge to watch it on a screen. In young readers, it is a common desire to see how their imagination matches up to the real thing. The ability to evoke an emotional response is at the core of any artistic expression. As Matthew Kopsachilis, the young filmmaker attending Purchase College's Film Conservatory notes, as humans "we express emotions [in] everything, we like to feel something." This is part of the reason why people are drawn to film and other art forms. Wanting to feel and utilise emotion in order to create art is something that all art forms participate in (Matthew Kopsachilis). There is a reason that reputation within emotion is so prominent. *The Book Thief* allows people to feel the desire to be the one that helps someone get through something difficult. The story revolves around Liesel, *The Book Thief* herself, both viewers and readers of all ages can feel a connection to their inner child. Especially, when there are so many terrible things going on around us. Depending on the type of story, there are differences in the type of feeling people feel. This varies across the various artistic forms. As Allen Dennis notes, being invested in emotion through music is deeply connected to a wide range of emotions. Older generations do not hesitate to say art is useless, but Dennis has had songs make him get up and dance when at his lowest. Feeling emotion for any reason definitely isn't useless. "Art is something anyone can connect to and find comfort in." The comfort in art is present when there is no physical being to provide those feelings. (Allen Dennis). Being able to find comfort in that way is what makes art truly beautiful and important to have in the world.

Harry Potter is both popular in cinema & published novels. As a series, it has brought millions of readers together through the magic of writing. Clearly, that is not the only way magic was used. The author used magic in a way that can transport readers from one world into another. Many, like myself, used the story to escape the reality they were living in. Even though *Harry Potter* is classified as a children's story, it gives so many opportunities to even the oldest of fanatics to feel a sense of belonging. The story feels like home. The author of a series will put pieces of their personality into their characters, their styles, and yes, this includes their choices. Authors tend to do this without realising. In doing so, the authors capture the truth. Writing a novel, even if not published just yet, is still a success. An artist took pieces of their own story, struggles and trauma to complete a 200+ page novel. On a strictly informational basis, J.K. Rowling, the creator of the popular series had spoken out about her experiences that led her to writing. A lot of her experiences have included those of her mental health. Without sulking, she used writing as a way to heal; as a form of therapy. As she continued to map out *Harry Potter's* story, the series became the most sold book-series in history. The writing process became less about her and more about how the readers would be able to relate to her work. Problems with the story aside, J.K. Rowling provided a home for 500 million readers. That amount of readers equalled how many copies were sold in general. Publishing companies and readers alike, could easily say that *Harry Potter* was successful in printing because of that fact (MediaRoomScholastic). In every book of the *Harry Potter* series, it was easy for readers to find pieces of themselves within the pages. Yes, it is a story about magic and the struggles between good and evil and what that means. However, within the lines of the novels, every single reader has a character, a moment, or a favorite book that they see the most of themselves in. It is unclear to pinpoint the exact thing that can make books be considered a success. From a reader of *Harry*

Potter, success is being able to find oneself in the pages of a children's book even if ten years have passed. *Harry Potter* has that reputation of being relatable and fun while also providing comfort, kindness, and home. Because of this, *Harry Potter's* success differs from that of *The Book Thief* because it is more relevant in pop culture. Ten-plus-years have passed since the final installment of the novels and readers in their twenties still continue to revisit the universe that J.K. Rowling created.

Personal Achievement

In every industry, there are ways in which a person can be considered successful. Each reason does vary depending on the person. In business, it might be how large a company is. In film, it could be determined on how many credits are attached to a name. But, in the name of visual art, it is a lot more difficult to be able to determine when success has been achieved. Art related industries have a tendency to favor those with connections. Desiring connections does not automatically mean that artists without a strong and powerful network matter any less. As an artist, success means being able to impact one soul with stories, paintings, choreography, photography, and many more mediums. With 2304 works of art, Hirst is well deserving of being known amongst the art world. However, that does not necessarily mean everyone will view him as successful. There is nothing wrong with not having the title of success under one's belt. Although, in the visual art industry, success may be defined under many umbrellas. In an article written on the Massachusetts Cultural Council website, the creators often pose questions for their regular readers. A question that was asked back in 2014, when less people were more open about their art, was "How do you define success as an artist?" There were five artists, of different mediums that were highlighted in this article giving their thoughts on the subject. Ronan Noon, a

playwright and screenwriter says, “[he] wants to create something that gives you [the audience] a feeling, that helps you to make sense of the world.” That, being a beautiful notion as an artist, is a personal notion for success. Noon believes that the personal gratification of someone having feelings brought out from his work is what makes him *feel successful*. Out of this one instance, Noon had multiple plays performed throughout the 2014-2015 theatre season. His name was on a small billboard somewhere and his shows were being viewed in the matter they were written: on a stage. That in of itself, could be a factor of success--having a physical audience. Like many artists, Noon continues to feel successful based on what his plays do for others (Massachusetts Cultural Council). It is easy to feel discouraged in regards to being a playwright. However, in his case, it seems as though if one person feels great and has been impacted by his work, Noon will stand proud and be excited to be an artist

In a more historical sense, Vincent Van Gogh, a visual artist of the impressionist era, now is considered a successful artist. But, it wasn't until after he tragically died in the year 1890 where his art was treasured and seen as beautiful. In Van Gogh's everyday life, he practically was the epitome of a “starving artist.” He had very little money and survived off of the support of his brother. He only sold one painting. Artists like Vincent Van Gogh have given people reason to undermine the abilities and even sanity in artists. Now, over twenty plus museums around the world, including the appropriately named “Van Gogh Museum” in Amsterdam, contain all the discovered paintings. Van Gogh died believing he wasn't an artist at all. If he was able to see how much of an impact his art has and how many art lovers adore him, Van Gogh would feel like the greatest painter in the world. Even to the most famous painters in the world, success is different depending on the day. One strike of an emotion has the ability to completely change what determines success. For Van Gogh, it might have been to sell two paintings instead

of one. The artist never wanted praise or fame. He painted because of the way it made him feel (Van Gogh: The Complete Paintings). For filmmakers, it may be to finish a script. For writers...to finish a novel. Success, while having a proper definition in a dictionary and a plethora of synonyms, can become something entirely different given different circumstances. Of course, when talking to artists about what makes them successful, it is more beneficial to the art world to talk the painter, filmmaker, writer, in person. The details are also most ideal when found in a recent article, interview, or a recent, physical piece of art.

Each artist uses a different, personal scale for success. Personally, writing is my medium of choice. I am able to describe the way I imagine things without explicitly saying I'm imagining them. Writing is therapeutic because I am able to put pieces of myself into a character without forcing detailing of my life onto the story. But, what exactly makes me believe I'm an artist, the first and most important thing is that I am sitting down and writing a novel. The publishing industry has the capability of being discriminatory to age and life experience. But, I believe that having an idea and going out into the world to bring it to life is what makes one an artist. Art being objective makes it impossible to say someone's art isn't art all. In the end, it's about the artist and the soul they're trying to show the world. It isn't about whether or not they are able to show the world at all. Like Matthew Kopsachilis, I, along with many other art-based students have different visions for ourselves when it comes to their passion. Michelle Dieguez, a senior Literature major and Theatre and Performance minor has a dream of becoming an actress. In an interview with the student, she stated that "[it isn't to become famous], it's because I love pretending to be other people." If a person, like Michelle, truly has a passion for what she's doing, there is always the option to bring a passion into life on a daily basis. Something as simple

as going to a restaurant and putting on a different accent for the night counts too (Michelle Dieguez).

Being a writer though comes with more struggles than getting published. For me, being a young, aspiring author comes with self-accountability. Being in college where things are often chaotic and busy, being able to sit and write a sentence a day is better than not writing at all. The task still remains difficult. For most, the amount in which they do something, determines their title both personally and publicly. I agree with Nicole Ludwig, a senior psychology major at LIU Post who finds, “if you create art...you’re an artist!” In her spare time she creates visual comic style pieces in order to eventually achieve the goal of completing a visual novel or a webcomic. “I’ve been developing this for six years,” Nicole says. While she is definitely an artist, she sometimes feels as though she might not deserve that title. As artists we are often taught that we are only deserving of a title if we are either wealthy, well known, or published. But, Nicole Ludwig sometimes thinks, “I don’t draw *that* often.” However, Nicole’s criteria for considering herself an artist doesn’t mean every sector of art has to meet those same criterias. Nicole’s responses are the exact reason it is important to recognise personal achievement as achievement. Ludwig feels as though she’s taking part in “imposter syndrome. Ludwig feels this way because she doesn’t draw as much as she’d *personally* like to. When the day comes that Nicole is able to say “Wow I can draw full body portraits in my own style,” that may be the time when she can say she’s an artist without feeling like she’s deceiving herself (Nicole Ludwig). Similarly, I have been writing stories, poems, scripts on and off since I was about eight years old. I fell in love with fantasy and the idea of realities that could exist outside of the one we are living in. There have been periods of time where my pen hasn’t touched paper for months at a time. But, when those around me asked me what I was doing in my spare time or what type of hobbies I have,

saying “oh I’m a writer,” was often at the top of my list. Because I’ve written anything at all, I allow myself to call myself an artist. The amount of time one does or doesn’t create something isn’t what makes someone an artist. It’s the actuality of doing it.

I’ve read hundreds of stories and novels that have inspired me to create something as personal as my soul on paper. As a child, I would write two page, terribly written stories, but I believe part of me knew that’s what I wanted to do. I didn’t write too often between the age of 8 and 14 years old. Despite that, I still considered myself an artist. As I grew older and delved into college life, the urge of creating something personal yet fun and relatable crept in. Although, as much as I enjoy the concept of having my books on shelves, being able to say I have written 300+ pages for a concept that started out on receipt paper is more than enough to consider myself an artist. After revisiting my love for *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak, I discovered interviews and videos of him speaking about his experience in writing his own stories. According to an interview that was published on the Guardian, Markus Zusak has been asked the question of “Why do you write?” His response really resonated with me. Zusak stated, “to me the question is: if a ray of light came out of the sky and said, ‘Your next book will never be published - would you still write it?’ If the answer is yes, the book is worth writing.” Zusak, a successful, emotionally invested writer has been published six separate times, continuing to make money and a name for himself but still answers *I will still write this even if it never makes it to a shelf* (The Guardian). In discovery of Mr. Zusak’s prompt as far as writing goes, I’ve come to the conclusion that I feel the same. If I have the ability to write and I’m passionate about it, then I will write. It doesn’t matter if bookshops close and readers can only purchase e-books. There is always a story to tell. If a writer wishes to write and physically does so, it doesn’t matter too much if the rest of the world sees it. What matters is that writers and other artists do what they’re

passionate about. It is more important that an artist achieves the goals they set for themselves rather than ones that society sets for them.

Being able to get thoughts of characters and entire universes onto an unedited page gives me hope for myself in art. Writing is what makes someone a writer. As writers, we are allowed to write and want the whole world to see it. We are allowed to write and not want anyone to see it. It follows through for visual art, music, theatre, and every art form there is. Not everything is meant to see the light of a library but every story deserves to be told. The art industry in any matter is competitive and most of the time, based on a lucky moment in time. Having a personal goal is what matters the most. Once an artist creates their goal, they can give themselves any title they choose. One doesn't even need to wait until their goal is met. Confidence and passion is more than enough to be considered successful through personal achievement.

Writing novels is something I do for myself. But, in my own experiences, I've always dreamed of getting as far as a rough draft of a story. Currently, in 2020, I've used the pandemic to take time to freely write. I came up with a storyline that is constantly changing, characters that have little to no personality, yet, because I am so close to my personal goal of having a 300 page draft, I feel as though I'm successful in my art. This is true because I'm still confident, motivated, and interested in the story. I've taken breaks but like it says in *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, "The things you love always have a way of coming back to you in the end." When it comes to art, the opposite can also be deemed as true (*Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*). If something is a part of an artist's soul and they are turning it into an expression, it's easy to step away from it and return later on. Most personal achievement when it comes to art forms of any kind is just doing it. Even if months pass, it's common in artists' process to return to their passions without too much thought on it. If an artist writes, paints,

dances, etc., and they feel a connection through what they're creating, they never truly stop. For Markus Zusak and myself, our goals have always been to just write--to get a story out. For Nicole Ludwig, it's expanding her knowledge in drawing. Michelle wishes to pretend to be anyone and everyone for the sake of doing so. Once everything falls into place, their achievements on a personal, more soul fulfilling level, are deemed a part of success if the artist wants it to be.

Recommendations

Being an artist is difficult enough without whole generations telling us we don't have a chance. The experience of struggle has the power to shape an entire person's outlook on life. The struggle that artists experience seems to matter a lot less when the art they're creating feels real and is even tangible in their hands. An artist doesn't have to be on screen, on a shelf, rich, a household name to feel like their art is not only a reality but helping them move forward toward their goals. Artists of every skill set have rituals or motivation tactics that push them toward a reality of art that belongs entirely to them. Someone like Michelle Dieguez, the Purchase College Social Media Intern as well as aspiring actor puts accents on whenever she walks into an ice cream shop. Each time she enters, Michelle allows for a whole new persona to show itself (Michelle Dieguez). Becoming someone else for a night allows for actors to become comfortable with testing the realistic elements of their craft. Some creators even go the more tedious route. Yu Uemura, a Purchase College Senior who maintains interest in acting and music often researches and broadens his knowledge on different industries while figuring out "who or what [he] wants to be." For Uemura he has his heart set on living a comfortable, yet realistic lifestyle that can support him enough to the point where he is able to hone his craft in both acting and music.

Uemura is one of a probable thousand or so actors that wouldn't mind having their passions as their career. However, the aspiring creator doesn't want his passions to become a chore for money. No one, especially college students in 2020, wants to have to struggle to survive. Yu Uemura plans on ensuring that he doesn't have to do so (Yu Uemura). In a similar manner, Greg Abiuso one of Purchase College's many alumnus does research in a more casual way. He says to keep him going he "watches and studies films, listens to music, and talks to other artists about their work." I, as a writer, find that talking about my ideas and the pieces I am working on motivates me to keep going. As conversations about art continue, every word inspires me and allows me to think of something I could add (Greg Abiuso). To add on, not only talking about the world I've created but visualising it through Pinterest boards and collage as well as talking about my creation helps to keep motivation strong even when the future is so uncertain. I have been doing this for every story, every character, and every plot I create. If one is able to visualise the aesthetic of what they're trying to make a reality, it becomes easier to fully adapt to the art itself.

Being an artist is simply creating art. There are other aspects to being an artist that not too many artists think about. Jack Zuckerberg, a student who is the drummer of a band brought up an interesting and valid point. In the world of art, many people believe just being an artist is enough to be recognised and to have a platform. "They neglect marketing and advertising," Zuckerberg states. From Zuckerberg's perspective, he has seen so many talented people that deserve to be recognised. But having music to write and messages to share through art doesn't mean anything if no one knows the work being done. Even though Zuckerberg is a musician, his thoughts don't just apply to music. If a goal is to be recognised and noticed by the industry, having even a small platform is beneficial. Unknown musicians start their careers on Youtube and Jack Zuckerberg

takes note of it. To keep himself motivated, Jack watches artists and musicians' videos that aren't known worldwide. His motivation stems from those he views online that are simply doing what they love. Sometimes, watching and listening to others when it comes to doing what they love is enough to inspire someone to finish the film they're trying to create. It may even be enough to inspire one to write an entire book series (Jack Zuckerberg). All artists have different methods of keeping themselves motivated to create things and follow their passions. Usually, it's students who fear the future the most but whether it's researching or practicing, they are able to confide in their art without worrying too much about their success rate.

Financial success can be determined based on the amount of income a project brings in. Reputation is about the conversation an artist brings up through their art and how their work impacts society. Personal achievement is about the individual goals each writer, painter, musician wants to set for themselves. The constant comparing of our level as artists to those seemingly far ahead of us is why a conversation about the different types of success is relevant to the artists of today. If a writer is only saying, "I'll be famous when I have as much money as J.K. Rowling," or if a painter believes true fame is having as many paintings done as Van Gogh, causes them to forget that success exists outside what we're told it does. Art is more than stability in a creation. It is ideal to make a strong living off of a passion but if it doesn't happen, artists may draw the conclusion that they are failures. Artists have been taught to follow their dreams but only if it means they can guarantee a perfect life for themselves. These same artists have so much pressure put on them that on occasion, they may decide to pursue a career or a dream that isn't really in their heart. With every generation comes a path that is seen as the most ideal and realistic way to go about living. As the paths are strayed from, new ideas are formed, new stories are being told. Going out of the norm creates brand-new opportunities. Not every

single person is able to live the life they imagine. But each day, new ways to succeed emerge, and it is crucial that an artist takes a chance on those ways. An increased amount of artists want to create but their fear still controls them. Teaching others that there is more than one path to success is significant in keeping art alive as well as keeping artists excited to create art.

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