

WEB PRESENCES FOR ARTISTS

I. IS IT REALLY NECESSARY FOR ARTISTS TO HAVE A WEB PRESENCE?

A. If you are serious, YES. No excuses – you need a web presence.

II. WHAT IS A WEB PRESENCE?

A. Gallery Web Site with your images sequestered to a page.

B. Personal Web Site

1. Pay attention to **Searchability**, **Updability**, **Scalability**

Searchability: Can Google find you in the top 5-7 listings? If not, you're invisible. If you build it in Flash, you're probably not very searchable. Pay attention to key words, classification, and your actual web address.

Updatability: Can you update your site yourself with your new contact info, your new images, your upcoming shows? If not, you're wasting time and money.

Scalability: Can your website grow with your career for the next five years? Does your navigation scheme have room for more "galleries?"

a. Other People's Pixels (www.otherpeoplespixels.com)

This is a content-management system with a clean design, good updatability, good scalability and potentially good searchability.

b. (Web) Blog at your Name.com

I use Wordpress blog software myself. Quick set up, thousands of styles that are plug and play + news feed subscription + plug ins + great updatability, scalability and searchability

c. Fine Art Studio Online (www.fineartstudioonline.com)

A group member added this and I checked it out. It seems to feature a decent content-management system and potentially good searchability. Also, it is oriented towards art marketing, which is nice.

C. Social Networking Site

1. Art Social Networking vs. General Social Networking
 - a. Facebook (www.facebook.com) - general social networking
 - b. Myspace (www.myspace.com) - general social networking
 - c. Neo Images (<http://www.neoimages.net/>) - art social networking
 - d. Saatchi Online (<http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/yourgallery/>) - art social networking
 - e. Artslant.com (<http://www.artslant.com/>) - art social networking
 - e. Wordpress.Org (<http://wordpress.org/showcase/>) - general blogging / social networking
 - f. Blogger.com (<https://www.blogger.com/start>) - general blogging / social networking
 - g. Tumblr.com (<http://www.tumblr.com>) - general bloggin / social networking / image oriented

III. WHICH KIND OF WEB PRESENCE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

A. The Gallery Page is best if:

- You have a gallery that has a web site that you like, that googles well and that is updated semi-regularly.
- You don't want to do anything to manage the career part of your art career anymore.

B. The Personal Web Site is best if:

- You want to retain more control of the presentation of your work.
- You anticipate moving between galleries more often.
- You think that your website will be more important as a reference for curators/patrons than as a meeting place to maintain audience. (The exception here may be the Wordpress Blog at your domain name (<http://www.gregorybotts.com>))

C. The Social Networking Site is best if:

- You don't have much time to work on setting up a site, but quite a bit to maintain it.
- You think that your website will serve primarily to keep you in touch with your audience and to keep them informed about an active exhibition schedule.

IV. WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD YOUR WEB SITE CONTAIN?

- A. Your professional name (Ideally in the address bar or domain name)
- B. Images of your work
- C. Contact information (if you're with a gallery, this is *their* information)
- D. News (esp. of Upcoming Exhibitions)
- E. Exhibition History
- F. Collections
- G. Awards
- H. Artist Statement – every curator has an opinion about this. Here's mine: if you have something to say, say it in your work. In 1 out of 200 cases, I find it elucidating and useful. The other 199, I find them as painful to read as most artists do to write. DEFINITELY, don't put this on your "home" page.