

**Thomas:** [00:00:05] This is a podcast with Thomas Petty. I have an interview with Gil Bruvel, that's G I L Bruvel. He's a French artist in Wimberley, Texas, with over 40 years of experience selling art worldwide and running his professional studio. Thanks for being here today, Gill. I really appreciate you taking the time.

**Gil:** You're welcome. [00:00:19]

**Thomas:** Thank you. Today, we're going to do a discussion on running an art-based studio as a business and what that's been like for you and some tips that you might have for someone else trying to start their own business.

**Gil:** OK. [00:00:29]

**Thomas:** So, we're going to start off here and I'm going to go through the questions. How crucial is a studio location and how has that played a role in how you run your business and how you might approach running your business in different setting? [00:00:49][44.8]

**Gil:** [00:00:51] I had a studio at one time in Maui. It was a bit harder to run a studio with assistance because just, you know, if you have a good wave day, you can't really count on anybody to show up. Versus so I've here been for a while now. being closer to Austin and San Marcos, definitely advantage in terms of finding assistant and the more consistent stream of help that is this location in this regard definitely helps if you want to see most of multiple assistance in terms of running the business. I mean, compared to running it on an island, it's much easier of course to be in central Texas in a sense that everything from, you know, access to, you know, shippers and materials and such, you know, much easier, no doubt. [00:01:50][59.8]

**Thomas:** [00:01:52] Okay. Well, that kind of leads into my second question here, which is what adjustments to your business model have you made to deal with art field once you've kind of been in it, especially like over the long period of time you've been practice? [00:02:04][12.3]

**Gil:** [00:02:05] Well, you want to make sure before an X amount of assistant to keep a consistent flow of production. So you I think you need to really kind of establish already, you know, I think it's a slow build of being able to start to build a body of work that's already successful on the art, in the art world, on the marketplace, and then progressively build a number of

assistant that will help you augment your production, I guess, you know, I see of an assistant as an extension to my hands, to my finger, and to my ability to create the artwork, you know? And in the meantime, see, who is showing talent and trying to help the future artists slash assistant to develop a clientele with my clients or connection to galleries or art fairs and such. [00:03:09][63.5]

Thomas: [00:03:10] So do you find that getting artists involved with your studio is a big part of the studio? Like you have things like artist residencies, like you have that one writer come over that you know, how do you connect with artists that you work with? [00:03:24][13.6]

Gil: [00:03:25] It was a it, was a artist, and it was basically an intern from a university in Paris, in France. They wanted her to come to a foreign country and work in an artist's studio to complete a program, you know. So that was a full internship. The difference, I think, there is between the internship and what I'm doing here is that I think the younger budding artists that came out of an art program should be paid versus those, you know, foundries I work with have interns and they don't get paid because it's part of programs I think this is unfair. And it's a critical time they are in. You have debt from your art program that you still have to pay off and on top of it your being exploited by the foundry that doesn't care. So, I think I'm against that. Not I think, I am. But go ahead, put me back on track. [00:04:39][74.7]

Thomas: [00:04:40] No, that's good. I love it. Awesome. So that kind of leads into one of my questions that has to do with networking. I know you're always talking about networking, how important that is, really get yourself out there. So, in terms of your artist's studio, what kind of connections do you feel best help your business in the long run. [00:04:58][17.8]

Gil: [00:04:59] Well, I mean, it's really important to keep A presence in the art world. I do that personally by showing in multiple galleries and also being present at multiple art fairs. like in the last, for instance, like Sense Art, Miami, Art Basel, and Context. I recently I think art, Palm Beach and then Art Wynwood. I also did a fair. There was an art fair in Las Angelis there were an art fair in San Francisco. So, in a space of only a few months, there were like six or seven art fairs where the public is able to see my work. But in order to try to achieve that, to do, the three effectively having a gallery interested you need to develop constant interest with new works, new series, new programs that the galleries and to get the dealers and art

consults interested in. you know so it's, there ... space on a. I knew a clothes designer back in France that was talking about the percentage of talent it takes to succeed in the fashion industry. And he strongly believed also that applied to the art world. He said, look, talent is 1%. You must have it. it is the classical notion. Then the rest. So, the 99%, my question was always what is it? He's said well you know it's the networking, it is being social, being present, you know, talking to people, developing relationships. I can give you an example, actually, after of develop a relationship; and really talk to the collectors, which is you really have to be out there, and you need help. So, I think the artists in the 21st century needs to have a really strong ability to play with multiple people in these periphery, developing and having a team spirit. Being an isolated artist would be, how do you say that.. deadly I guess. It's a strong word, like I would .... interconnected, and the idea of the assistant is essentially teamwork. And it goes both ways, not only on the side of the assistant. It's also on my side, you know, as I understand that something same can be done in a certain ways and it doesn't necessarily have to be my way as long as a result is, the result works, you know, So there's an advantage to my side is to keep a openness. to new ways to seeing new ways and new ways to do things, you know. So, the example I wanted to show you about the working relationship is that I started to do some work with a foundry abroad and in this in working with this foundry abroad to cast essentially stainless steel sculptures. There was this guy there that owned an agency that was representing essentially the artists in order to do public work, you know, and so now I'm doing with this agency, a huge project. But it took it took a number of years to cultivate this relationship. And really also develop a friendship that came naturally in this case, you know, so it's important to be social, I mean, not excessively you don't want to lose yourself, you know, in social activities, but enough to make sure that you got, you know, a spectrum of possibilities in front of you. Several balls. I guess. [00:09:29][270.0]

Thomas: [00:09:30] It's getting a good support network for your business and keeping open to where that can lead. [00:09:35][4.6]

Gil: [00:09:35] Yea, keeping open your possibilities and new ideas and such. [00:09:39][3.6]

Thomas: [00:09:41] Awesome. So, let get a few more questions in here. I don't want to keep you too long. Kind of going off of what you were just talking about. It sounds like you're all over the place. You know, I know you're in the studio almost every day, but I know, especially in the 21st century, there's a lot of

Internet stuff going on I've seen you do NFTs and everything. So how do you balance out, you know, doing all this online presence, making videos and all kinds of stuff, and making sure that you can do all the studio work? [00:10:07][26.7]

**Gil:** [00:10:08] Well, there's this part of the help. I have (name) as you know, in the office. That's, you know, taking care of the administrative and the paperwork aspect of, like any other business. You know, you got to take care of these type of things. I have help for that. As you know at one time I had JD who himself went to school for filmmaking and made some of the video for me. Daryl will help me with Instagram, you know, all kinds of stuff in some times. I have a couple of writers, right? That's outside of my crew that I higher regularly trying to write about my work or make sure that, you know, when an article is being written or an explanation about my work to make sure it's correctly explained, you know, I'm not a writer and, you know, these type of things in terms of NFT, you know, it's worth or worth exploring new ideas, You know, why not? You know, I mean, recently NFT kind of tanked But I mean, love, you know, I was talking to an old client today from a long time ago, and then we became friends. And he was asking me, what do you think about AI you know, and you have all these new programs and all that. I said look, you know, I think it's really like any other tool. But I think if you look at art History, you know, every time there's a new way to express the oneself with a new tool. The 19th century was photography, you know, oh well portrait is going to be dead. Well, the moment we took We were in a cave and were able to chew some roots and spit on our hands against a rock to make a stencil with our hands. Well right there, there was a tool We took a rock to carve something that was a tool. So I think whatever happens, the difference is that now actually tools like AI changes the, the computer graphics, you know, computer model and such it just changes the paradigm of creativity and I think Sometimes this makes people really uncomfortable. And that's the great thing about the field, that the arts field the art world is like is in constant motion and its constant changes. And on an evolutionary level, you know, as we all know, the species that the survived is that have been able to adapt the easiest and the fastest. So, an artist needs to consider this like being an explorer to continue to explore and try not to get into dead ends and be so set up in a way that there is no possible evolution. [00:13:14][185.6]

**Thomas:** [00:13:15] Awesome, That's excellent. All right, let's finish one more question. So, when you decide to do projects or work with other people or go to galleries and stuff, what is.. like I know you like to do smaller events because that's where

you like the network, but you might do a bigger event because you know, there important big events, but how do you decide what things you're going to go do and what projects are worth, you know, taking a chance on? [00:13:43][28.1]

**Gil:** [00:13:44] Yeah, well, I mean, there's some projects you definitely have to turn down, you know, like this. This sometimes it's a difficult evaluation, but I think the overall idea is that, you know, I became an artist because this is what I like the most. You know, the idea of following a dream blah, blah, blah you know? And in a way its true I mean, the reason I keep doing it for the last what 44, 45 years is because I absolutely love it and I love many aspects of it. And my favorite is, of course, is the creative aspect of being an artist. O, you got to do it because you love it. because, as you know, it's an enormous amount of work and if you don't have this energy and this motivation that pushes you from inside. You're not going to do it. and you got to feel it But, you know, sometimes you have people they throw at you some projects. You're like, oh my God, are you kidding me. I'm never going to do that. And some projects are just great. And there not the most.. you know, sometimes projects are commission work, introduce you to a new range of collectors and then possibilities and people in the art world that otherwise you wouldn't be able to connect with. So, you've got to be absolutely fearless, not only of what's in front of you, but also be not afraid of failure, because that's a really important aspect. But I feel obliged to talk about it because failure is basically a measure of for me, of success, is that it's it means that we fail because we were not in the comfort zone that we used to. And we afford to learn something new. And, you know, the first time you learn something, you're probably going to fail. It's like we don't learn to read or write spontaneously. It takes a while, you know? So, it's kind of the same thing. So, we need to. Debunk the myth of failure of being as being negative. I think for an artist it's just a sign that you have to do, you know, another, give it another try and another to try until you succeed. [00:16:11][146.8]

**Thomas:** [00:16:11] Awesome Gil. I really appreciate you being here. I had some great insight from you. That's why I picked you. I knew you'd have some good words. I really appreciate It and I'll see you again. [00:16:17][5.5]

**Gil:** I'll see you soon [00:16:19] [00:16:24][4.6]

**Thomas:** [00:16:25] All right. [00:16:25][0.0]