

ART BIZ success
with Alyson Stanfield

The Artist's
ANNUAL REVIEW 2025



Dear Artist,

The end of the year signals a closing out of sorts and anticipates a new beginning. In our Art Biz Success community, it's a phase of **REFLECTION**.

This is your moment to shine a light on your creative journey and truly see the distance you've traveled.

Reflection is like holding a mirror to your year—revealing the effort, growth, and triumphs that might otherwise go unnoticed. It's a chance to pause, take honest stock of what has transpired, and honor how far you've come.

This step is essential.

Before you can successfully enter the next phase—PLANNING for a new year of growth and opportunities, which we do in the Artist Planning Workshop in January—you need to understand what has been working, what hasn't, and how you arrived at this point.

When you're clear on these truths, you're better equipped to commit to the right opportunities and confidently say no to those that no longer serve you.

As you engage in this meaningful process, know that you're joined by artists around the globe who are reflecting on their own creative paths. Together, you're part of a powerful collective energy of recognition, gratitude, and renewal.

Ready to get started?

There are a few suggestions on the next page for turning this process into your personal ritual.

I'm honored to share this time and space with you.

Love,



OWN YOUR YEAR

Planning Workshop :: January 13-15, 2026

Please join me for this New Year reboot.

<https://artbizsuccess.com/makeaplan>



Your Annual Review Ritual

To prepare for your annual review, block time on your calendar and make this a priority.

This process will take at least 2–4 hours, but it's worth every minute. You can break it into smaller sessions over a few days or dive in and complete it in one sitting. Personally, I find it takes me a few sittings to fully recall everything. Our Accelerator members often kick it off during a 2-hour coworking session.

If possible, I strongly encourage you to write by hand. Handwriting makes the process feel more personal and helps you resist the urge to make everything perfect.

Whether you prefer paragraphs or bullet points, add as much or as little detail as you like. There's no right or wrong way to do this—this reflection is for you and you alone.

I use my daily notebook (journal) for this ritual, but you should choose the format that suits you best. Gather your favorite writing tools and have them ready to go.

When the time comes, make it a meaningful ritual. Here are some suggestions to help you set the mood:

- Gather your materials, including your calendar, planner, or journal, to help jog your memory.
- Choose your favorite room or cozy spot.
- Close the door.
- Turn off all notifications and leave your phone in another room.
- Light a candle.
- Play music that inspires or soothes you.
- Begin writing.

I've provided prompts to guide you, but feel free to make this process your own. Let your creativity shine—add insights, doodles, or even embellishments like Washi tape or crayons (but maybe save the glitter for another occasion).

One final note: **reflecting on your year can be an emotional journey.** You might feel pride and joy in your successes, and you might also feel sadness or disappointment over unmet goals or dreams.

💛 Be kind to yourself throughout this process. Pause to celebrate your progress and honor the lessons learned.

PERSONAL

This annual review is heavily weighted to your art and business, so let's start with the personal stuff to make sure it's acknowledged..

In 2025...

How would you rate your general level of happiness and satisfaction for the past year?

If you had a word for 2024, how did it help guide you (or not)?

What one word would you use to summarize the entire year?

Where did you travel and what did you see and learn on those journeys?

What was a favorite recipe you made?

What lessons did you learn in the garden or from other hobbies and pastimes?

What were some of your favorite TV shows and movies? How did they enrich your life?

What art shows did you see? What was your favorite and why?

Who or what stories inspired you this year and why?

What or whom did you lose and how are you feeling about that loss now?

How did you help others, either by giving your time or donations?

How did you practice (or neglect) self-care?

YOUR ART

Without the art, you are not an artist. And when you don't take time to think about the work you're making, you don't grow as an artist.

How was the year in the studio for you?

In 2025...

What new work did you make?

How many major pieces did you complete and add to your inventory?

How do you feel about the work you made in 2024?

How did your work change or evolve?

What medium or skill did you attempt or master?

What was your most productive period and why do you think so?

What, if anything, got in the way of your studio production?

What do you notice about your studio routines and habits?

Where did you find the best support for your growth as an artist?

What grants, honors, or awards did you receive?

What did you really enjoy about sharing your art this past year?

💡 Document any recognition you received throughout the year by adding it to your website and résumé.

LEARNING & TEACHING

Think of all the ways you stuffed your brain with beautiful knowledge this year.

In 2025 ...

In what ways did you open yourself up to learning this year?

What classes, seminars, or workshops did you take?

What books did you read? What was your favorite and why?

What art documentaries or art-related films did you watch? What was your favorite and why?

What other videos, films, or documentaries did you watch and learn from?

What were your favorite podcasts and specific episodes and what did you like about them?

What new apps or technology did you begin using and how have they helped?

What did you learn about yourself or your art?

What did you learn in 2024 that will affect what you do differently in 2025?

If you teach ...

What courses did you teach?

What did you enjoy most about teaching?

How did you adjust your approach to teaching?

How many students did you have? Who were your favorites and why?

What did you learn from your students?

BUSINESS & MARKETING

With the answers to these questions, you'll **confront some numbers and results** so you can better plan for the future. You'll also find some questions here that you might not have considered, but add to a more balanced view of your year.

In 2025 ...

What were your gross sales?

What's the breakdown of your income from each income stream? (Income stream examples can be found in [this article](#).)

Looking at the above numbers, what story do they tell?

Where did you exhibit, sell your art, or teach? Every place or platform counts!

What was the most valuable venue for you and why?

How do the above figures compare to 2022 and 2023? How do you account for the differences?

In what ways did you invest in your future success?

With whom did you collaborate?

What significant connections did you make?

How many blog posts did you write? What do you think was your best one?

What articles did you write for publication?

Where was your art published or discussed? What podcasts did you appear on?

How did your role as a business owner—as the person fully responsible for your own success—evolve?

What made you happiest about running a business?

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2026 ...

How do you want to *be* in 2026?

If you already have a word selected for the New Year, what is it and why?

What do you envision for your art in 2025?

What would you like to learn in 2025?

If you teach ... How will you approach teaching differently in 2025?

How will you adjust your approach to business in 2025?

If you're overwhelmed by what's ahead, don't know where to go from here, or need to start hustling, join me for **Own Your Year** 2026, a planning workshop just for artists on January 13-15, 2026.



Please Email Me

What was your biggest insight from this process? I'd love to know! *Seriously.*

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About Alyson

Alyson B. Stanfield is the host of The Art Biz podcast. She is an artist advocate, workshop leader, and art-marketing consultant.

Since 2002 she has helped thousands of artists improve their professional presentation through her online classes, publications, membership programs, live events, and podcast, and blog.

Alyson wrote *I'd Rather Be in the Studio! The Artist's No-Excuse Guide to Self-Promotion* for the many talented artists who remain professionally unfulfilled because their work is not seen and not purchased.

Her mission is to empower artists by helping them gain skills and build sustainable systems for a successful art career.

She asks her artist-students and -clients to reflect on their past achievements and challenges to better assess their next steps in the planning phase.

Read about our upcoming season of Steady Confidence in Essentials for Artist Success: ArtBizSuccess.com/essentials

See if the Art Biz Accelerator coaching group is a good fit: ArtBizSuccess.com/accelerator

Connect on Facebook: [@ArtBizSuccess](https://www.facebook.com/ArtBizSuccess)

Peek on Instagram: [@AlysonStanfield](https://www.instagram.com/AlysonStanfield)

Watch on YouTube: [@AlysonStanfield](https://www.youtube.com/AlysonStanfield)



Find clarity for the New Year

OWN YOUR YEAR 2026

Artist Planning Workshop

January 13-15, 2026

Take advantage of the fast action discount through December 30!

Sign up now so you can schedule it and come prepared.

ArtBizSuccess.com/makeaplan