



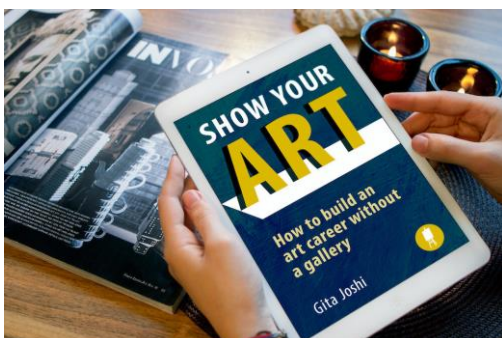
International Case Study

Entrepreneurship Strategy

Gita Joshi – The Curator’s Salon

London, UK & Global

The Curator’s Salon was founded to empower artists, inspire art world conversations, and support artists to become the best advocates for their own work outside of the mainstream gallery ‘market’. Prior to setting up The Curator’s Salon Gita ran artist’s open studio programmes, worked with arts charities, curated exhibitions in her own gallery space and business spaces. She has been a juror for art competitions and is a member of the Association of Women Art Dealers.



Gita Joshi is a UK based curator, coach, bestselling author, and podcaster supporting artists to showcase their brilliance and recognise they are the best advocates for their own work. She is the author of *Show Your Art: How to build an art career without a gallery*, hosts her own podcast *The Curator's Salon* and offers 1-2-1 coaching. She is an Indian woman living and working in London, UK with a global audience and clientele.

What sort of creative entrepreneur are you?

I am a curator, podcaster, author, and content creator. I started out with physical shows, art fairs, my own gallery and co-running the Open Studios Programme in Camberwell, South London, UK. In 2017-2018 I moved my work online via my Instagram account showing the art I was seeing out and about. This grew to give me a global reach for my work. Then through my podcast inspiring artists to talk their art I was inspired to write my book. In 2021 I have a magazine coming out, which is enabling me to evolve an arts publisher.

What motivated you to start up?

I always knew I had a calling in art. But I was aware of the societally conditioned views of the polar opposite ends of either the broke artist or being the super headline making artist at auction. I did not see where I fitted in. I could see the more taught, traditional routes to getting into art i.e., museums were quite closed in this sector, and with the need for qualifications and getting the foot in the door. As an Indian woman I could see my face did not fit the bias toward a certain look, race, class of person and the industry was, and still is non inclusive. Plus knew it was not well paid and would that I need private income to get my foot in the door. So, my career into the arts evolved through working my way in via a series of jobs via the Royal Fine Art Commission, working in the team for an architectural consultant, The Civic Trust and moving into the financial sector.

I self-funded myself to take a curation course at Central Saint Martins and here I could see I could make something happen within the arts, independently. This inspired me into doing things my way and have my own voice. I know I do not fit into the mainstream and I get to do it my way, I call the shots and I get to work with the artists I want and have creative control.

How have you developed and refined your idea over time?

It is not one thing, it is fluid. Looking back over the last 10 years I have done different things including art fairs, running a gallery space, art dealing, sitting on the board of Camberwell Arts to learn about how different community and charity organisations work.

I have done volunteering to help others to make money which has enabled me to develop both commercial versus more charitable approaches. I have learnt to know when to move forward and how to support more indie artists putting on exhibitions, especially those having their own show for the first time.

The book evolved as I learnt more and the book brings together the most common questions I was repeatedly getting asked and allows me to work with more artists to deliver on my aims.

I keep seeing ways to build out more products and services hence embracing artist coaching, which enables me to heal the artist struggle. I have discovered I have a genuine ability to listen, learn and empathise with my clients and apply what I know in ways that address what they need. This is Design Thinking.

I have learnt to be responsive, linked to my purpose, do what makes my heart sing and link this to the need in the sectors I serve.

The main aim is to heal the artist' struggle, so artists can stand on their own two feet and become self-sufficient beyond 'needing a gallery'. This is a contemporary response to the ways art making and sharing have needed to change due to digital and global changes and empowers artists to take ownership of what success is to them.

My strategy is to support artists to see they are selling luxury, non-essential, nice to have items and help them recognise this and embrace this.

What are your strategies for growing yourself?

Constant investment in learning not only about the overall strategy, but also the tech side and leaning into own purpose and spiritual self. I know I have a calling to bring value into the world whilst I get to be me, do to what I love, and I get to do this with ease and grace.

How do you seek to add value in business or through your business?

I am meet my clients where they are at, empower them, and I am consciously being a role a model humbly.

I am proud of being an Indian woman in the arts.

I open doors, demystify supposedly complex ways of doing things into simple, practical and achievable ways for artists.

What is a strategy entrepreneurs looking to expand might consider?

Be willing to go beyond the hyper local out into your wider region and to a global audience. Embrace that, be bold and go beyond your frame of reference.

What advice you would give to a growing creative entrepreneur in the first few years of setting up and growing their business?

- ✚ Keep going, keep going back to your purpose and the value you bring to the world.
- ✚ Protect your energy you do not need to be for everybody.
- ✚ It is not about global domination - you will not be for everybody. I still get to show up as me and get paid for this.
- ✚ Seek ways to be resilience if you are 1-3 years in it is ok to hire in people.

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- ✚ Its fine to get support to scale. Free up yourself to be supported, this helps to avoid burnout to keep being sustainable.
 - ✚ Find 'your' people.
 - ✚ Be willing to open to different avenues.

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Company Instagram [@thegitajoshi](https://www.instagram.com/thegitajoshi)

Further listening thecuratorssalon.com/podcast

Further reading [Show Your Art: How to Build an Art Career Without a Gallery: Gita Joshi, OMG Publishing 2020](#)

Researched, interview initiated and transcribed by [Anna B. Sexton](#), [Open To Create...](#) 2021
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