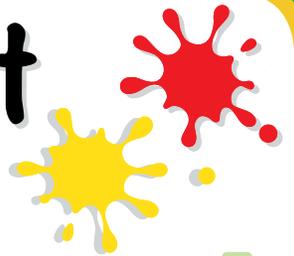




Paintertainment

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Finding A Good Agent

by Gretchen Fleener

Have you been struggling to find enough gigs to keep yourself as busy painting as you want to be? Do you dread the business side of face painting, wish you could skip all the paperwork and chasing down payments from clients, and just PAINT? Perhaps then you might consider working for an agent. Finding a great agent to work with can be very good for filling your calendar. Sadly, there are a lot of bad agents out there, and artists need to remember that as independent contractors we have the freedom to work for whomever we want, and should be interviewing potential agents just as they interview us. Here are a few tips to help you find the right agent for you.

Do Your Homework

Where To Find Agents

Before you can start working for agents, you of course need to find them. You can start with a simple Google Search or find out who's offering face painting services on Thumbtack, Gigmasters, Gigsalad, and similar sites. Some areas have Facebook pages for local artists to connect with agents and share gigs. The best way is to simply connect with other local painters who are willing to share who they work for and what it's like.

Define your Wholesale Rate

When you work for an agent, you need to be willing to work for a lower hourly rate than you would on your own. (and you certainly should be charging more for yourself than you get from an agent!!) A good agent invests a TON of time and money into their business to land their gigs, as well as doing all of the "grunt work" most artists hate...booking contracts, dealing with client complaints, coordinating multiple artists, cutting paychecks, advertising...the list goes on and on. I don't know about you, but for me, NOT having to do all of this and just show up & paint is totally worth a reduced rate. Find out the going rate in your area that agents pay, and decide what you are willing to work for. Or,

how much NOT having to do all that grunt work is worth to you. The rate you're paid will vary among agents and among gigs, based on many factors, so having a general range or minimum in mind is best. You may be willing to work for less if it's in your own town, for example, or if it's an all day event.

What to Look For

Before you start setting aside precious weekend time slots for agents, make sure they are reputable. Here are a few things to look for...

Prompt Payment

A good agent will make sure you're paid in a reasonable amount of time, not make you wait until the client pays THEM before paying you. It's the agent's job to control their own business cash flow issues, not project them onto you. If you're having to spend time chasing down payment from an agent, there is really no advantage to working for them in the first place... you can do that yourself with your own clients and make more for doing that extra work! On the flip side, a good agent who pays quickly and takes care of all the billing is SO worth working for a reduced hourly rate!

Written Contracts

A good agent will back things up in writing. Contracts are incredibly important, not only for protecting the clients and the agent, but for yourself. Your contract should not only include all event details, but the amount you will be paid, how you will be paid, and the date you can expect to be paid by.

Solid Business Practices

If your agent is a legitimate business, and they have paid you \$600 or more for any given calendar year, they are required to send you a 1099-MISC form by the end of January for the previous year's wages for your taxes. As an independent contractor you are required to pay your own taxes, and this is all part of running

a good business. Likewise, you are required to provide them with your address and social security number in order to fill out these forms.

Expectations

Make sure to have a discussion about an agent's expectations of you. Are you only allowed to hand out the agent's business cards? What is acceptable attire to wear to gigs? How should you handle questions about their rates or your availability? How early are you expected to arrive to a gig? What should you do if you are running late? How should you handle client complaints? What if the client wants you to stay later? Are there limitations as to what products you can use or what age you can paint? Are you expected to provide your own design menu or adhere to theirs? All agents should have something to say about these topics, and making sure you are both on the same page is critical to your business relationship.

Word on the Street

An employer calls up references to get the opinions of those you've worked for, so why not do the same with them? Talk to other artists who have worked for an agent. This is a great way to learn whether you will fit into an agent's business practices and expectations. Make sure to get multiple opinions to be fair. As we all know, not everybody may give glowing reviews, but don't judge an agent based on one bad review. We've all had relationships gone bad, so take opinions with a grain of salt, remember there are two sides to every story, and give them the benefit of the doubt...just as you hope they do with you.

More to Come

My hopes is that this article will help you to get started in your search for an agent, and hopefully lead to an awesome relationship with them! This is the first of a series of articles I plan to write on agents. Stay tuned to the Paintertainment blog for more on what you can do to KEEP your good agent relationship, and what to think about if you are considering becoming an agent yourself! 🌟

What's News?

Step-by-Step
FREE HOW-TO!



ONE STROKE KALLA LILY



March Paint Jam

Paintertainment is hosting another paint jam for local artists, this time in the evening! Find it on our event page or on Facebook!



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On the Blog:

- See the recap of my 2nd month of daily challenges, including this painted Oreo!



NEW Products!

Check out our shop to find Global's new, larger FunStroke palettes, new Pixie Paint colors, and more!

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Shopping cart must total \$25 or more before shipping and taxes. Offer expires 3/31/17.