

Somebody asked me recently how I manage to find things to blog about. It immediately struck me as a good subject to blog about - and therein lies the nub!

So - here are my suggestions for.....

## 6 GREAT WAYS TO FIND SUBJECTS TO BLOG ABOUT

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### #1. BLOG ON A REGULAR BASIS

If you blog on a regular basis, you'll find that it gets much, much easier to identify subjects for blog posts. The more you do it, the more you think about potential options - and the more often they just seem to turn up with no effort on your part. Like the subject of this post!

I find that having a routine and regular time of the day when you write your blog posts also helps. I try to get mine done before breakfast if at all possible.

You certainly don't need to blog every day, but blogging frequently makes it much easier to write the next blog post. Leaving long gaps between blog posts only seems to make it more difficult to post. And don't worry if you don't like blogging - not everybody does. The vast majority 'die' within the first 3 months. Reading blogs and commenting is good too!

### #2. DON'T BLOG ALL YOU KNOW IN ONE GO

People new to blogging often want to start downloading all their knowledge or thoughts in a few blog posts and then feel like they've got nothing left to say.

So - #2 tip is to slow down!

Think about what you know (or want to know more about) and what you're interested in and then how you might talk about your subjects. In particular, think about ways in which you can separate out your potential content into digestible chunks.

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Here are some ways you can 'chunk up' your content:

- Do a work in progress - show people how you arrived at the end image from your initial thoughts and finding reference material, through selecting materials and the different stages of development all the way to the end product.
- Think about things you do on a routine basis which you can maybe teach to other people
- Think about things you use on a routine basis which maybe others don't know about
- Write a review of a book you have which have read or studied which helped you with your work. Then look at the rest of the books on your bookshelves and remember it's as helpful to know the ones which didn't help a lot as well as the ones which really helped your work rise to another level.
- Blog about all the different aspects of a project you are undertaking. For example, if entering work for an exhibition you might have the following as potential blog posts - spread out over time:
  - research - deciding whether to submit and what sort of work might be suitable
  - producing work - and maybe showing it as a work in progress
  - getting work framed and well presented
  - if a competitive entry getting the results
  - going to the Private View/Exhibition
- Consider doing a series or a project (see below 4 and 5 below).

### #3. BE INTERESTED

Do you like taking the fastest route between two points or do you like the scenic route? Do you surf the internet or do you go straight to what you want to know about and then switch off? Being curious, having an interest in various topics and wanting to learn more are all attributes which are enormously helpful to blogging.

I'm very curious and always very much enjoy learning more about the things which interest me - so I'm usually prepared to do the virtual equivalent of "look round the corner". I click that extra link - just to see what's there. In this way I've found some great material for blogging purposes.

If you find things interesting, you'll also find that this communicates itself easily to readers. If readers are also interested you'll find that this then tends to get them looking and they'll come back and offer you some great links for you to visit!

### #4. HAVE A FOCUS - TRY DOING A PROJECT

Being interested in lots of things could make things very messy. So it can help if you can also introduce a bit of structure and have some way of organising your thoughts.

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Two ways of doing this are a project and a series. Both also mean that you have a way of sharing what you know or what you are learning about with others in a more accessible way.

A project is a great way of blogging for people who want to develop their skills or learn more about a topic. In 2007 I did a project each month and it had a big impact on the way I blog. These were mostly art history related in one way or another but they don't have to be.

I first got the idea from Laura Frankstone ([Laurelines](#)) who had a different topic for each month of the year last year (look down the left hand column to see the different subjects she tackled) - and it was fascinating to see how her work changed and developed as the projects progressed.

In 2007, about a third and a half of the blog posts each month were related in some way to the project. It helped to make me very focused about:

- identifying resources for the project
- thinking about one or more artists I want to focus on
- finding information about the artists or subject matter - how people have painted in the past
- working out what sort of art I want to produce as a result
- saying what I've noticed as I've studied the art and the artist(s).

All my projects have also been open to other people to join in. It's nice to do things with other people - and it doesn't need to be the same people all the time as we all naturally have different interests and subjects we like working on.

In 2008, I'm focusing on over-arching themes such as composition and design and colour. I also decided that a project each month was too much. So I'm having a smaller number of projects with bigger themes - and I'm not doing a project every month. Most last two months.

I know that most of the projects I've been involved in have helped me enormously with my perspective on the art I produce and how that might develop in the future.

## #5. HAVE A FOCUS - DEVELOP A SERIES

You can do a series about absolutely anything which has the potential for a series - whether it's a weekly round-up post or maybe developing a batch of posts about all the art supplies you use.

Whatever interests you and has sequential possibilities - consider a series. Once you've got a series, you'll be amazed about how you suddenly find you do have something to say about an item or subject which you previously might not have thought worth blogging about. If you do want to develop a series then do also develop a label for that series - which then helps people to easily find earlier posts in that series.

These are also posts which you can develop in advance and have ready for days when you want to goof off or are far too busy with other things. Although I do sit down almost every morning to write a blog post, I also have mornings when I need to be doing something else - and the series post is a great way of keeping up my frequency of posting.

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**#6. DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A LIST OF DRAFT BLOG POSTS.**

Everytime you see something, and you think it might have some potential as a blog post create a draft. I've got a long, long list of draft blog posts - some are related to things I know I will blog about later in the year, some are just ideas - and not all will see the light of day on my blog.

Here's an example. If I know I want to visit a particular exhibition, I create a blog post with title and time it for when I expect to visit. Thus when I get to that time of the year it reminds me to go and already contains some of the basic details.

My "who's made a mark this week?" partly grew out of the fact that my list of draft posts was getting longer and longer and it looked like some of my ideas/information would never ever get posted - so I now use them in the weekly thread.

Don't forget to change the date of the draft thread to make it the date you are posting on rather than the date you started it!

**.....AND FINALLY**

A final comment - everybody's blog is different and what works for me might not suit you.

The main thing is to work out some strategies and routines which make blogging enjoyable for you rather than hard work. If you get busy, you get organised. Being a bit more structured and organised - while also being very flexible – can often take the pain out of thinking up a subject for your next blog post!

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You can find more 'Making A Mark Guides' with advice on sketching, blogging and the art business on the portfolio or publications websites listed on the right.

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