

Speech Riga 18th October 2019

Firstly, I would just like to start by thanking Jumava for publishing the translation of my book 'The Essential Guide to Business for Artists and Designers'. Secondly, I would also like to thank the Latvian Designers Society and the Patent office for inviting me to this wonderful city and to talk at this fantastic design fair in Riga today.

I wrote the first edition of this book in 2009 as at the time I didn't think there was an accessible educational text book in the UK which would appeal to wide readership from the arts, design, and creative industry sectors. Equally at that time the subjects of business, entrepreneurship, law and other vital content was not being covered at Art Schools and Universities at the time.

Just over a decade ago, I decided that I would like to write some kind of business manual for a wide spectrum of visual artists, designers, makers and creatives. The type of book I really could have done with myself, 30 years ago, when I was beginning my life as an artist.

In the 1990s and generations before then, establishing an art practice was not an easy undertaking. There was no internet, or email, no websites or portfolio platforms...and of course no mobile phones.

We live today in a new world, of global connectivity, digitalisation and virtual reality. In the chaos of it all there is still a need I believe for such a book. But not only that, it is important that we build a community involving more mature creatives in some way, so that emerging artists, makers and designers have someone to turn to for support or advice.

What's important to remember is that many things are still the same now as they were, way back then, a sense of being alone, having to forge your own path, ...Yet despite social media, it's a sad reflection that many people are more lonely now than they ever were before. As an innovator it is important to be brave, have the confidence and courage to go forward.

In my lecture I'll be exploring my thoughts around entrepreneurship. That most creators are innovators, non-conformists, mavericks and renegades. They have an entrepreneurial spirit to bring fresh ideas, new bodies of artworks, fashion collections, cutting-edge products to the marketplace, into our lives, workspaces and homes.

I'll be also touching on Intellectual Property. I might be worth knowing that in the UK matters of law are still not covered sufficiently well enough in many art schools today. Just the other day, for instance, I had to explain to some illustration students why permission needs to be secured/sought if they plan to copy iconic movie posters and also draw images of celebrities and famous film stars, apply them onto products and sell them online.

And finally, as I am due to talk very shortly, I would just like to wish all the exhibitors the very best of luck during the fair and thank everyone who plans to purchase a copy of my book, either for themselves or for a friend.