

ART & Business

AN IMMERSIVE EVENT FOCUSED ON TURNING
YOUR CREATIVE INTERESTS INTO A CAREER!

SEA 2025 | Nov. 15 & 16

North Central College | Naperville, IL

www.selfemploymentinthearts.com

Look Who's Coming - Visual Arts



George Berlin believes creativity shines when it deepens connections between people and the places they love. His studio creates unforgettable multi-sensory experiences using music, projection mapping, light art, and live performance. An award-winning director, George's work celebrates home and togetherness—from epic love stories projected in Sydney to igniting Art on the Mart in Chicago, lighting a permanent mural in Colorado Springs, performing with live orchestras, and debuting a global series about loving the Earth.



Denise Laurin is a visual artist exploring transformation, light, and spirituality through the human form using traditional media and metal leaf. She studied at the New York Academy of Art and with David Kassan and Brad Kunkle, holding a B.A. and M.A. from Northern Illinois University. A former graphic design firm owner and Women in Design/Chicago Woman of the Year, Denise taught college art and led a MoMA-sponsored group show in New York. She also gives art talks and is an advanced Toastmasters speaker.



Elaine Luther is a studio artist using textile fragments and light-reactive dye to explore themes of women's labor and rights. Her work has been exhibited nationally and in the UK, and she teaches textile arts to intergenerational students. Elaine has presented at SECAC and SEA, with essays published in *Sixty Inches from the Center* and *Give and Take*.



Andrea Skyberg Andrea Skyberg is an artist-educator, author, illustrator, and musician whose work blends visual art, storytelling, and community engagement. A Fulbright Fellow and MFA graduate, she is Associate Professor of Art Education at Alverno College. Andrea has led collaborative art projects for over 15 years and is the award-winning author of five children's books. She also performs with her band in Milwaukee. Her latest project is the comic book *SOS*.



Jeanette Smith is the Director of Zoonicorn, a global 3D animated preschool series, where she leads business operations, branding, and licensing. She's also launching *The Spark Experiment*, a science-based graphic novel and product line with High Touch High Tech. With deep experience in children's entertainment and brand strategy, Jeanette also works as a consultant and coach, helping creators turn ideas into successful, market-ready brands.



Lynda Sommers-Herzog is an MFA-trained sculptor and professor at Alverno College, teaching sculpture, metals, enameling, glass fusion, and ceramics. She directs the Arts and Cultures Gallery and leads related courses. Lynda creates commissioned public and private sculptures, including a large work at Aurora Sinai Medical Center, often involving students in the process for hands-on experience.



Daniel Sroka is a fine artist creating abstract photographs that highlight our connection to nature. With over 20 years as a professional artist, his work is held by private collectors and businesses worldwide. Formerly a graphic designer and the original creative director for Yahoo!, Daniel left corporate life to focus on his art. He lives in northern New Jersey with his family.



Jessica Zambo is a multidisciplinary artist and freelance designer pursuing a B.A. in Design with Honors at North Central College. Her work spans branding, web and graphic design, packaging, and marketing. She has collaborated with clients like Delta Railroads, CDW, and Only In Theatres, and her photography has earned national recognition from the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Jessica also maintains a mixed media practice and is developing a thesis on self-portraiture as a College Scholar.

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Session Snapshots

Tabletalk - Licensing Know-How: Turning Creativity into Revenue

Curious about how art and design can earn beyond the studio? This small group discussion explores how licensing can open new doors for creators—beyond work-for-hire or product sales. We'll share real-world examples, talk strategy, and explore how to recognize your value in the marketplace. Whether you're just starting or looking to grow your creative business, come ready to ask questions, exchange ideas, and rethink what's possible for your work.

My Life in the Visual Arts | Behind the Canvas: Real Stories from Working Visual Artists

What does it really take to make it in the visual arts today? Join a diverse panel of painters, illustrators, digital artists, and multidisciplinary creatives as they share their personal journeys—successes, setbacks, and everything in between. From navigating galleries and commissions to staying inspired and sustainable, this conversation will reveal the many ways to thrive as a visual artist in a shifting landscape.

Show Your Work: Crafting a Portfolio That Opens Doors

Your portfolio is often your first impression—and your biggest opportunity. Whether you're applying to residencies, pitching to galleries, or launching a freelance career, a strong portfolio can open new doors. This session guides visual artists through the essentials of creating a compelling, cohesive portfolio that reflects your unique voice and vision.

Gain insights on how to:

- Curate your work to tell a clear, engaging story
- Tailor your portfolio for different opportunities and audiences
- Avoid common mistakes that hold portfolios back
- Use digital tools and websites to showcase your art effectively
- Stand out in a competitive creative landscape

Making Art, Making Money: A Conversation on Pricing

How do you put a price on your creativity? Whether you're a visual artist, designer, musician, writer, or multidisciplinary creator, pricing your work can be one of the most confusing—and intimidating—parts of building a career. In this practical panel, artists and creative pros share real-world advice on how to approach pricing with more confidence.

You'll learn how to:

- Figure out what your work is really worth
- Choose a pricing model that fits your goals
- Talk about your rates clearly and professionally
- Avoid common money mistakes
- Connect pricing to long-term sustainability

Bring your questions, your curiosity, and maybe a calculator—we're getting into the real talk on making art and making money

And many more panels and small group discussions like: AI & the Arts, working with clients, developing your network, building your brand, selling at art and craft fairs, overcoming creative blocks, managing cashflow, mental health and wellness, and so much more!

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