



TEXTILE ARTREPRENEUR

LYRIC
KINARD

TEXTILE ART BUSINESS INTERVIEWS

WITH CLARA NARTEY

CLARANARTEY.COM

HOW TO TEACH TEXTILE ART ONLINE - AN INTERVIEW WITH LYRIC KINARD

[Published on ClaraNartey.com/blog](https://claranartey.com/blog)

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Clara Nartey Interviews Lyric Kinard

CN: Hi Lyric, welcome to the blog and this edition of Textile Art Business Interview.

LK: It's my pleasure. Thank you for inviting me.

CN: Tell us about your journey into textile arts. Who and what were your early influences?

Lyric Kinard's Journey into Textile Arts

LK: I come from a family of creative people. My father taught high school art, my mother was a talented potter and weaver. My siblings are all musical and most of them know how to draw.

I was so busy and driven with my music (I play French Horn) and my many other interests that I didn't even think about the visual arts. I have always had a very broad range of interests, studying creative writing, architecture, history, languages, sciences, and always - music.

Then I made a choice. Instead of pursuing a career I chose to stay home with my children. I don't regret that choice for a single moment - it has led me down a path I never could have imagined. But it wasn't an easy path. I gave up the music and pretty much everything else that was part of my identity to stay home with these lovely, needy,



"Progress", Lyric Kinard, 98"w x 54"h

all-consuming little beings. For the first few years, I was lost. It felt like there was no "me" left. My well had run dry.

Art filled it back up. A dear friend took me to a quilt bee with her and those fabulous ladies taught me to make beautiful quilts. It was a much-needed creative outlet. I could take a stitch or two then run off to care for the little ones. No paint drying in the brush. It was amazing how much I could accomplish two minutes at a time.

Early Influences and Struggles



"Remains of the Day", 23"w x 32"h, Lyric Kinard

But I was still struggling with a lack of identity, (and a bit of post-partum depression.) A little while later I attended my first large quilt show, stood in front of an art quilt, and had an epiphany. Quilts could be ART! I immediately took out every class I could to teach me the techniques I needed to know.

My first art quilt was a group challenge - create an art quilt in the shape of an apron. My first reaction? UG! But I chose to take on the issues I was dealing with and ended up working through my ambivalent feelings toward motherhood.

Art took me through an exploration of my choices, of society's view of motherhood, of my value in the role of homemaker. Art brought to a greater appreciation of the sacrifice that mothers have always made. Art helped me find out who I was, and helped create who I am now.

And because, no matter how hard I fought it, teaching is in my blood - sharing my love of what I do naturally evolved into a career as an itinerant traveling textile teacher.

A Universal Love for Fabric

CN: Why do you love to work with fabrics?

LK: It's a tactile thing.

People all have an immediate relationship with fabric from the time they are wrapped up in their first baby blanket.

Just watch - anyone who looks at a quilt on the wall reflexively reaches out to touch it. You don't get that connection with an oil painting.

Lyric's Path to Online Teaching



Lyric Kinard in her studio

CN: Lyric, let's talk about teaching online. You were teaching live workshops before you started teaching online, right? When did you start teaching textile art and when did you branch into online teaching?

LK: I've taught live workshops both locally and around the world. Because my first priority has always been my five children I've kept a limited travel schedule. I had an opportunity to teach online long before Craftsy came onto the market with the first online platform for quilt education - Quilt University.org.

It was an amazing opportunity to reach a much broader audience and for me to continue teaching while being home with my kids. Craftsy approached me when they first opened but I still felt loyalty to Carol, the owner of Quilt University and was also a bit wary of Craftsy's payment structure for their instructors. After the owner of Quilt University died and the platform ended I took time off.

CN: Was there a particular reason you decided to add online teaching to your menu of services?

LK: Recently I've come back into the online teaching world as there are new platforms that allow an independent instructor like me to control their offerings from start to finish without having to deal with the background technical details like student registration, computer programming, etc. It was time for me to once again offer what I love to a broader audience but on my own terms.

Why Teaching Online is A Suitable Method for Textile Art Education



"Mill Wheels V: Rise", 27"w x 39"h, Lyric Kinard

CN: What do you say to someone who says you can't effectively teach textile art online?

LK: With current technology, online courses can offer much of what a live class brings. I offer video presentations with tight close-ups of detailed handwork in process - something that is difficult to do in a live class. The written content can be light or as in-depth as any published book.

The platform also allows for conversation between the students and the instructor, places for students to post photos of their work and receive feedback. One advantage that is of interest to fiber artists is that you work from home with your full range of equipment and materials at hand, and at your own pace.

Of course, it does not provide the immediacy of live group interaction. Well - actually the platform I use does offer group webinar options but I have only used

them sparingly.

Can Fiber Art Teachers Hold Their Own in a Fast-Growing Online Education Market?



Lyric Kinard's Art Studio

CN: The online course industry is growing by leaps and bounds, partly because traditional educational systems are not meeting the DIY needs of today's students (who come in all ages). Do you think this growth in the online course industry will spill over to fiber art in a big way? Craftsy has done so well. But do you think individual fiber art teachers can hold their own in this market? What are your thoughts?

LK: I think that the online component of textile education has already revolutionized the industry. There really are a small percentage of fiber enthusiasts who can travel to or afford live classes.

Internet technology, which is especially intuitive to the younger crowd, allows a broad and democratic access to education. So many larger companies and publishers are following Craftsy's lead but I'm pleased to see independent instructors and designers holding their own.

If you are able to find your niche market you can make your offers directly to the customers who really love what you have to offer. With the rise of easily accessible platforms like Ruzuku, even technologically challenged teachers can get up and running. Once they are able to get their name out into the world and find their tribe (that's the first challenge!) then they most certainly are competitive.

CN: Lyric, there are two segments I include in every interview because readers really enjoy these segments.

Lyric's Five Faves



The first is this: "What are your five favorite tools, supplies and resources"? They can be tools you use in your studio, books, anything you really love that has helped you/ helps you a lot. Readers love to use the same things their favorite artists use. If you can provide links to them, that'll be even better.

LK: I love, love, love my tech! From my camera that captures the imagery that inspires my artwork, the computer that lets me digitally manipulate those images, create patterns for consumers, all the myriad products that allow me to create digital content and connect with my peeps! But I also love my old school, all mechanical sewing machines, simple needles, thread, fabric, beads and floss that afford countless blissful hours of MAKING things with my hands.

CN: What are 6 tips you can give to someone who is just starting out and hoping to follow the online teaching path?

Lyric Kinard's Business Tips for Online Teaching



1-Practice. Find a diverse group of neighbors and friends and teach them first. Ask for feedback both on your content and on your teaching style. Find an art center or local shop to teach at. Be organized. Give everything you've got. Learn to communicate clearly.

2-Practice. Learn to be professional. Use contracts. Ask for fees that reflect your expertise. Do be generous but never sell yourself short. Pay close attention to returns vs. investment. If you agree to work for an outside publisher are you being paid a percentage of what they bring in - and do they discount those prices so often that you get pennies even though you might be asked to be available in perpetuity to answer student questions? Really think hard about what your time, skills, experience, and expertise are worth. You should pay yourself more than a cleaning service. Seriously.

3- Practice. Write. Online teaching, even if you go entirely with video requires written material at a minimum for marketing. At best, your clear and precise instructions will enrich your visual content. There are all kinds of learners and you want to reach them in as many ways as possible.

4- Practice. Get familiar with tech. Unless you are working with a pro (which I highly recommend) you will really need to know how to work lighting, sound, and video equipment. Editing software too. You need to present your work as professionally as you possibly can.

5- Practice. If you are working on camera, say your spiel over and over and over until it becomes natural. Practice being organized with how you move from one step to the next. Practice including everything you want to show within a reasonable amount of time. (Online students have short attention spans - break videos up into bite-sized chunks.) You don't need to be perfect - real is good. But a wooden and nervous presentation will get in the way of what your viewers want to learn.

6- Practice. Remember that you are doing this because you LOVE to pass on what you

know to your students. You LOVE teaching. You LOVE being able to reach people far and near. It's awesome to be able to make a living at what you love.

Before we go, here's the special Confidence Boost video Lyric recorded for you. Enjoy and Share!!!



Finally, a SPECIAL BONUS

LK: I'd love to offer your readers a discount to my current online offerings.

Use the code "Artpreneur" for a 15% discount and take a first-hand look at how I teach and use the Ruzuku platform.



Lyric Kinard's Discount for Clara Nartey's Blog Readers

CN: Thanks Lyric. I'm sure this interview will be enjoyed by all who read it. You've packed it with so much goodness. :-)

LK: You are very welcome! I invite your readers to come explore my artwork and course offerings at www.LyricKinard.com

Interview Quotes and Takeaways

- △ Internet technology allows a broad and democratic access to textile education
- △ Do be generous but never sell yourself short. You should pay yourself more than a cleaning service. Seriously.
- △ There are all kinds of learners and you want to reach them in as many ways as possible.
- △ On-line courses can offer tight close-ups of detailed handwork in process - something that is difficult to do in a live class. And the written content can be light or as in-depth as any published book.



Clara Nartey is an artist and a writer. She finds and interviews thriving entrepreneurs from all over the world about their mindsets and the systems they use to grow their businesses, in order to help artists learn how to start or grow their own creative businesses. To get more of her writings and access to her free resources for textile & quilt artists, makers, and creators, [sign up here](#).



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