

Learn the business side of the art business, artist to advise others

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Battenfield

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Artists don't have to be poor and starving.

That's the message author and artist Jackie Battenfield brings to town next week in a series of speeches and workshops for area artists.

Battenfield's visit, which is being underwritten by a group of Kansas City artist organizations, complements a growing movement in the area to help artists make a living.

"The message our society sends to artists is they're going to be poor, they're going to have a difficult time. And that, unfortunately, keeps a lot of people down," said Battenfield, who lives and works in New York. "My message is that it's quite possible to have a wonderful life with art at the center of it."

Battenfield said many artists need to learn the less glamorous side of the art business — promotion, networking, time management, bookkeeping and basic organization skills, to name a few.

"I teach artists what their job is besides just making art," said Battenfield, who has been delivering her message to artists around the country for 18 years. She teaches career development programs for visual artists at the Creative Capital Foundation and Columbia University.

The Artists Coalition, the Arts Incubator, the Kansas City Art Institute and KCArtistLink, a soon-to-be launched Web resource for artists, are sponsoring Battenfield's visit to Kansas City on Sept. 16-19.

Most of her visit will be spent with groups of artists, but on Sept. 17 Battenfield will give a speech at Unity Temple on the Plaza and sign copies of her book, "The Artist's Guide: How to Make a Living Doing What You Love." The \$20 admission includes a copy of her book. (Info: Rainydaybooks.com)

Kansas City, with its strong artist community, is on the leading edge of a national trend to equip artists with business skills, said Dianne Scott, who oversees artist training programs for the Missouri Small Business & Technology Development Center.

The Metropolitan Arts Council and the Charlotte Street Foundation, for example, are working with UMKC's Innovation Center to put on Artist INC, an eight-week course designed to teach the same business skills. The next session begins Sept. 21.

And the KCArtistLink Web site will be launched on Sept. 19, Scott said.