

Kelly YouTube Final

📅 Thu, Jul 20, 2023 9:58AM 🕒 47:37

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

zentangle, watercolor, people, teaching, learn, shows, classes, pattern, art, talk, botanical, pandemic, draw, great, retreats, kelly, studio, business, good, year

SPEAKERS

Alison Manning, Kelly Barone

A Alison Manning 00:00

Hi, everyone, I am extremely excited to welcome Kelly Barone to my YouTube channel. Kelly and I have known each other for about four years, we met on the good old social media back in 2019. And her and I've been following one another and talking and taking classes with each other ever since. So, I'm very excited to chat with her today about her creative journey. And her business. And I think this is gonna be, I think you're gonna learn a lot, this would be very juicy. So Kelly is a CZ T Certified Zentangle Teacher. She's an art educator. And she's an artist, she works in watercolor, pen and ink, illustration, and botanical alchemy, so that we have to find out what that is. And as you might imagine, from that nature has a heavy influence on her work. She has taught and exhibited both domestically and internationally in multiple mediums. And she is the owner of whimsy by Kelly, and you can find her in her studio in downtown Buffalo is in the historic district of Allentown. And I can't wait to hear about that, too. So let me bring on Kelly. Hello, how are you?

K Kelly Barone 01:16

I'm good. How are you?

K Kelly Barone 01:17

I'm good. Thank you. Well, we'll get back to botanical alchemy in a minute. Because just before we start out, Kelly, why don't you just let us know if sort of when you came to creativity? Did you grow up as a creative kid? Or is this something that's come to you later in life, like, paint the picture for us? So I always wanted to be an artist when I was little right? So in my head, I had this vision right? of me standing painting it an easel probably wearing a Blu Ray, right? Because that was my vision of what artists did. Show. And I remember people asking would always ask me, yes, but what kind of artist? What do you want it but I didn't know there were kinds or anything like that. I was just like, I just want to be an artist. And so I always used to draw and I used to, you know, paint and play with my colored pencils and chalk. And if I could make it I did. And then in high school, I used to just the only the only art career that I knew of was

fashion design. But I am not. I am not a fashionista. Like I want my T shirt and my jeans all the time. So that seemed a little odd for everybody. But I had great fun learning to draw ball gowns. But I decided pretty quickly that that wasn't going to be for me and I actually ended up going to school for business.

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Alison Manning 02:43

Okay. But luckily, that's probably come in quite handy, but okay.

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Kelly Barone 02:48

It has, you know that that you're gonna want to get a real job kind of thing. Oh,

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Alison Manning 02:53

yeah. Yeah. Well, we'll prove them wrong, won't we? So when did creativity come back into it? So were you then creative throughout your 20s 30s? However,

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Kelly Barone 03:04

not realistic? No, not really. I you know, and mixed up with the kids. We we used to do our annual chalk fest downtown, things like that. But I didn't do a ton, you know? Yeah, it was just it was it. I was. I had a an executive type career. I spent a lot of time making a lot of spreadsheets. It wasn't a lot of fun. But it's so around 2009 I started playing with stuff very casually. I opened an Etsy shop. I did a few illustrations. I created a piece that actually went viral. But I made the very, very tragic mistake of not having my name on it anywhere. So there was that. But it eventually came around and got attributed to me again, but and then in 2014. I left my job and dove into art full time. And that's when I got my CCT and I started teaching. And so

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Alison Manning 04:10

so let me just get this straight in 2009 You suddenly decided to open an Etsy shop, like what made you like, what was the motivation for that,

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Kelly Barone 04:18

like, all of all of my friends started scrapbooking and making cards and stamping and stuff and I yeah, probably, let's see. So the kids were little maybe in like 2006 or seven, right around somewhere around there. And so I started playing with stamps and paper again, and I remembered how much I loved it. And every time I would make something somebody would be like, can I buy that? I'd be like, Yeah, okay. We go to crops, like scrapbook crops everyone would come over and can be would be like, can you do this border for me? Or can you can you write the Can you write out the headline for me? And I'd be like, sure, you know, so and I never

really did much with it because I was really busy with work and the kids and stuff, but I liked it. And so I've never shut it down. I don't have much on there now because yeah, yeah. It's been a consistent piece in there.

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Alison Manning 05:16

Yeah. Yeah, I think 2010 was when I got my Etsy shop to and I swear I haven't even shut mine down yet, though. Not that it's been active for years. But

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Kelly Barone 05:24

it used to be so much different. Remember, they had like alchemy, where you could actually like, have people make stuff for you? Yeah,

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Alison Manning 05:31

yeah. Yeah. Yeah, it seems a very different place than it is right now. It was, but that's another conversation. So what what was it about being a CCT? So 2014 You became so what number CZ Tru, and 1717. So tell me what drew you to that.

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Kelly Barone 05:49

So, like I said, I had a really high powered kind of busy, stressful career. And my daughter had a substitute art teacher who had come in and she was about, I want to say 11, or 12. At the time, I can't remember exactly the daughter, not the teacher, my daughter, not the teacher. And she had shown them how she's like, I'm basing this idea on something called Zentangle. And she, she went on to say that she didn't really know a lot about the the method, but she thought it was cool. And they made Zen Dallas. Okay, like these very graphics and Dallas, and she said that a lot of people use it for stress, and for relaxation. And that was all my daughter had got really got from it was that little piece, and she brought it home and said, Mom, I think you'd really like this. And so we played with it a little bit. And remember going back to that chalk fest thing, it was actually chalk fest. So we did some Zen dollars for that. Yeah. And then we took a couple little classes, but the CCT locally, didn't really teach. She had some health issues and everything. But she, she made it an exception. And she gave us a couple little classes, but she didn't want to do it regularly. And then in a weird stroke of coincidence, my business did a reorg. And they wanted me to take on a lot more responsibility. And my kids were coming up on that I'm a teenager, I'm gonna need mom around. And yeah, um, my husband was a disabled vet. So it was like, there was a lot. And I was like, I don't really want more work. I'll just stay with what I'm doing. And they're like, that's not really an option. Oh, okay. Okay. So they gave me a couple other options. And then they offered me a severance package. And I said, I want to let's talk more about that. And but I just, I had signed up for CBT training. Yeah. Just before that, and then I, after, after I said that I was going to take the severance, I was like, it's not really fiscally responsible of me to go, you know, go take out a new certification and do this other stuff. It was originally just going to be for fun.

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Alison Manning 08:02

Right? And

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Kelly Barone 08:05

and then I got a check in the mail. That was for an outstanding expense report that was for the dollar amount exactly, that it was to go do my certification. So I did.

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Alison Manning 08:18

The universe is telling

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Kelly Barone 08:20

me, you should go do this. So I did. And as soon as I started playing with it, I knew that that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to teach people how to do this, I wanted to share with them how how important it could really be to actually take these moments for yourself. And as I as we say, a lot you know, Zentangle can be that gateway to all kinds of other art. And the more I the more I tangled the more I found myself painting more or, you know, drawing more, I had, you know, sketchbooks and and canvases and watercolor books, shoved in the closet with you know, things I had been doing for the last 20 years, but most of them were never finished. I never had gone anywhere with them then even if I did, they just got shoved back in the closet. So I came back from seminar and immediately knew I wanted to dive into teaching. So I did yeah, within two months, I realized that it was silly to not have a studio when I wanted to do this full time.

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Alison Manning 09:29

Wow. Wow, you went from zero to 60 your

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Kelly Barone 09:32

own Yeah, immediately that's I only really have two operating speeds.

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Alison Manning 09:39

Yeah, yeah, no, hey, yeah. Oh, you're out. It took

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Kelly Barone 09:43

me a little bit to get there. But that was my goal almost immediately. So I had a studio within a year and I was teaching mixed media and watercolor and tangling lettering. I do a lot of lettering. Yeah, and just anything that I could and I did I teach untangle the different types of

relettering. Tean, and just anything that I could and I, I and I teach untangle the different types of groups, right? So I teach it to the people who want to come for fun and make. And then I teach it to the people who want that relaxation and stress reduction, and hey, I need something in my life to to keep me together. So I have, it's almost like two completely different client bases sometimes.

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Alison Manning 10:27

Wow. So let me just get, let me just see if I'm answering this, right. So you know, 2014, you introduced the Zentangle. And then you kind of take a severance package kind of get laid off, they want to do this all in 2014. And you get your season T in 2014. And then by 2015, you are full time you've rented a studio outside the house, and this is your thing.

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Kelly Barone 10:52

Yes. Okay.

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Alison Manning 10:57

Excellent. Well, that's. So talk to me a little bit about having a studio outside of the house. Are you still in the same one? Or have you got a different one? Have you moved?

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Kelly Barone 11:06

I'm not in the same one that I was in first. My son had an injury in 2019. And my whole, my whole life kind of changed for a while and went on pause. And I, for almost a year, I was using it basically as storage, which was not not a good financial decision. So I closed it down. And I didn't quite know what direction I was going to go in. When the pandemic hit, because I had been planning on getting back to things and you know, but as soon as the pandemic hit, I knew there was no way my son's high risk. And my mom was my mom was sick and high risk. And she's since passed. But she had lung cancer. So people couldn't come near us. So it wasn't like I was going to be hosting stuff in the studio. So but almost a year later, exactly. The woman who owns the building that I live in now reached out to me she'd been out for a run and saw my my old signage, which they hadn't taken down and asked if I was looking for new studio space. Yeah, she has she's formed out collective of 16 women on businesses in an old old mansion in downtown Buffalo, right in the arts district. And I'm like, and, you know, in her whole thing was, you know, there's people out there who have businesses and she was going to set up a wellness center, but it and again, people in and out. So she shifted to this women's collective. And it's been lovely. I've made some wonderful friends here. Lots of network connections. We feed off each other's energy, it's great. Everybody does their own thing. Sometimes we come together and work on great projects. And women supporting women is really like what it's all about here. So I'm, I'm in I'm in this gorgeous space. Now. It's the building was built in 1896. So beautiful hardwood and yeah, it's fun. It's and it's nice that they can come make a mess. And not have to worry about cleaning it up to make dinner.

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Alison Manning 13:26

Yeah. Oh, yeah, I hear ya. That's amazing. It, it just it feels like for you. Like, like, just doors open when they needed to. They closed when they had to. And then they open again. When the time was right. That's how it

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Kelly Barone 13:42

really you know, and that's actually So Megan is the woman that owns the business or owns here eighth house, which is where my studio is. And that was pretty much what it was she had asked and she said, You know, I this is what I do. Would you be are you looking for Spaceman like well, not really not right now. I just figure when it's right. I'm going to know it and I'll do it then. And now it was very much very much what happened I walked in the door and I'm like, Guess I live here now.

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Alison Manning 14:13

Do funny. So your business took a bit of a pause, obviously, you know when Travis had his injury and then we had COVID What does it look like now versus what what does your your art practice look like now from like 2014 When you first became a see, let's start with the art practice. First how has that evolved and changed over the last? I use is

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Kelly Barone 14:37

I know I can't wait. So I used to do a lot of pure Zentangle work. That was that was a lot of my focus. It was a great way for me to bridge back to like this creative universe and I still do I still love it immensely. I'm very involved in the Zentangle world I actually I run one of the biggest Zentangle groups on Facebook out there, we have 30,000 members. So that's super fun. But watercolor was one of my huge loves. And I had 30 years of almost finished paintings in, under my, you know, stashed in the closet. So they spend a lot of time finishing them. And so I'd come back and I'd finished stuff. And then I did a lot of shows, I, a lot of vendor shows, you know, put up a tent, go stand there in the heat.

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Alison Manning 15:39

I don't want to come back to those vendor shows, talk to me a little bit more about your art journey, and then we're gonna get back to those vendor shows. Because

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Kelly Barone 15:46

it's about that. Yeah. So and then I just, I would branch off as somebody would, somebody would mention something, and I love to learn. It's fascinating to me, I think that as a creative person, if you're not learning constantly, you kind of start to stagnate, right? Things change, things grow things evolve. Sure, you can make the same types of things all the time, and you're gonna have that, that long feel. But even if you go take a class with someone in something you're skilled in, you're going to learn something because everyone does things differently. So

for me, that was that was huge. I, I was constantly trying to take little classes, I like to go to retreats, I like to do workshops with people. So I tried really hard to make sure that I was learning something new, I have a Skillshare membership. So like I would I especially back then I used to have built into my practice an hour every day where I would just try and learn something.

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Alison Manning 16:48

Oh, my gosh, you're kidding me.

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Kelly Barone 16:51

I mean, I wouldn't make it like four days a week, but it was there. It was on my schedule that every day I would get up and I'd watch a Skillshare class, or I'd review, you know, and that was there wasn't a lot of online learning at that point.

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Alison Manning 17:03

That's true. Yeah, that's very true. Yeah, I

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Kelly Barone 17:06

would try. So I do some Skillshare classes, most of them were about an hour. So I usually tried to do that. And I'd like go through one and or, you know, sometimes I would have gone to a retreat, and I have this this philosophy that if I make something new at a retreat, I'm never never happy with it, because it doesn't have my spin on it yet. Yeah. So I try and do it right away afterwards. Oh, right. So I would do some of those to kind of cement those those ideas in my head. So that was, that was what I did. And then I would try and do an hour an hour of actual work in the studio, you know, like, creative work.

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Alison Manning 17:44

Wow.

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Kelly Barone 17:48

But again, we're gonna be we're gonna be real honest here. That didn't really happen. Creativity. I think creativity happens in bursts. Yeah, right. And it probably was about an hour or an hour a day, a week. But often it would be, you know, seven hours in a seven hour block instead of that, you know, I'm supposed to, I'm supposed to be making art now. And I'd be down eight, you know, and instead I'd be rearranging my bookshelf.

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Alison Manning 18:16

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Alison Manning 18:16

Yeah, I just, I just had a day like that yesterday. It was like,

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Kelly Barone 18:20

deciding what CD to put on the seat. Yeah, you know, yeah,

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Alison Manning 18:24

I hear you.

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Kelly Barone 18:24

I hear you. But But in theory, I had this very committed, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do this. And I, but I did really the the the learning piece for me, always huge. Because taking, taking and creative knowledge then makes me It sparks other things in my brain, you know, you can take this and you can mix it with this and have you Why did you not ever try to do this before? And so that was that really fed everything.

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Alison Manning 18:56

That's all I really liked that I think sometimes we feel like, oh, we should stick to our own style and just do our own thing. But just getting ideas and knowledge from other people, I think then creates you know, your own. I think that feeds more getting your own kind of sense of style on what you like, or don't like. So I applaud you for that commitment. I really should do more of that actually kind of just just pure learning and maybe like for fun.

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Kelly Barone 19:22

Yes, that's important. And I know you and I have talked about that. Before that sometimes you have to keep pieces of what you do and make for yourself.

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Alison Manning 19:29

Yeah. Oh, absolutely. Yeah, I'm a big believer in that. Well, I'm a believer in that. Following through and doing that or another matter but I'm a big believer in just get you know, if you've got a creative business, keeping parts of it, just for you and just for fun is, you know, is the ideal. So

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Kelly Barone 19:46

in a perfect world.

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Alison Manning 19:48

Yes. Just talking before we get on to business things, just talking about your style and how it's evolved over the years through, you know, taking lots of class So I'm practicing and obviously I'm teaching to I'm sure helped you hone your style, botanical alchemy. But talk to me about that

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Kelly Barone 20:08

botanical alchemy is is actually the piece that I do largely keep for myself, I will make pieces and I will give them away and I will, you know, sometimes I'll make things out of it. It's my form of eco eco dyeing. And it's mixed with watercolor.

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Alison Manning 20:26

Ooh, interesting.

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Kelly Barone 20:29

I take because I also make paint I make I make a lot of my own paint. But I started making actual paint from the same materials that I was doing eco dyeing with. And you get this incredibly magical thing happening when you combine the two. So,

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Alison Manning 20:46

okay, we'll pop up about the backup you making.

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Kelly Barone 20:50

Yeah, that was my pandemic project, you know how everybody has something that they're like, now I have all this time, I'm going to do X, Y, and Z. So I learned how to make paint.

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Alison Manning 21:03

What kind of paint like

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Kelly Barone 21:05

watercolor? Oh,



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Alison Manning 21:07

was that difficult? It's,

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Kelly Barone 21:09

you know, it's not so much difficult. And really time intensive. It takes a lot of time it takes it can be it can feel really relaxing, because you do a lot of grinding and the pigments and an old mortar and pestle and things like that. But yeah, it's not something I do a lot of I do little small batches. And I usually do them to like, to commemorate like if I go on a trip or something like that, I call it I call it my line wandering whimsy, watercolors. And I just have a few palettes here and there. And it's a lot of fun. It's just not something I do all the time.

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Alison Manning 21:48

So so when you say you do them to commemorate a trip, so while you're on this trip, you gather materials,

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Kelly Barone 21:55

not necessarily the materials, but like the inspiration for the colors that I want to use or something like that. Yeah. Oh, so

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Alison Manning 22:03

that was so I remember when I saw your palettes you have like an an ocean palette. So that must have been inspired by was it? Where did you go to?

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Kelly Barone 22:12

I went on a Caribbean cruise. Oh,

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Alison Manning 22:15

so that was the palette? You put your palette and spike? Oh, that's really cool. I'm actually going to put your website on the screen. So are they on your website right now?

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Kelly Barone 22:25

They are they are I don't have a lot in stock. But I have another I have another batch that will be dropping shortly. Um, I just had, I just had my retreat, and I sold out of all my pizza. Oh,

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Alison Manning 22:38

really. So great problem to have. That's amazing. So let's talk let's let's we'll talk about retreats later. But let's talk about how I know there's just like so much to talk about. Let's talk a little bit about going back to what you were saying when you you know, you had your Etsy store, you've started, you've got your studio, you're doing a lot of watercolor, you started to do a whole bunch of shows. Yes. Can you just talk to us about what kind of shows you did, how you got into them? And sort of maybe how that experience has changed over the years? Absolutely.

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Kelly Barone 23:12

Absolutely. So when I first started because of course everybody says you need to sell your stuff. And all of a sudden, as I was completing 30 years of work, I had so many paintings like what do I do with all of this? Yeah, my mom could only hang so many on the fridge. But I saw I started to do vendor shows. And you can give your creative type, you know, they exist, right? You see them all the time. And they're like, some are tiny and in like a church basement and some are huge. And I started with some of the small ones, right? Because you want to get your feet wet, you want to find out what you're doing. Oh, great. Except what I discovered very quickly is it usually costs you money to do some of those those shows. By the time you get inventory, you might make your booth fee back if it's you know, 20 bucks, and maybe a little bit more. But by the time you put in all the effort and everything, you haven't necessarily made anything for the day. Okay, so I started to be really discerning, I mentioned that I was that I was on Etsy. So we had a buffalo Etsy group that actually was amazingly active, and we had meetings and we would get together and we would share. And we would talk. If you have a local art community near you, people should really like take advantage of that. Like whatever it is, get to know your other artists because that's where all your good information is going to come from. Oh, that's good

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Alison Manning 24:43

advice. Yeah. Right.

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Kelly Barone 24:45

So they, they were like, Oh, well, you know, I've seen your work and your work is really good. You should look at you know, you should you should maybe you should try this market. So I tried a few of those and those were good and they cost More to get involved 50 \$75 table fee, right? But I was walking out making, you know, my table fee, my materials fee, and then actually enough money to have paid myself for my work. And I was like, Oh, all right, that that works. And so of course I did what I do remember, I only have the two speeds. Yep. On or Off on the couch watching Criminal Minds for nine hours in a row. Or, you know, go go go. So. So I signed up for so many shows. But it basically became a full time job. I was, you know, making making stuff and selling stuff and doing shows, but it's hard. It's a hard life. Right? Like, there's those tents are heavy. Yeah. You can't tell from from me sitting here, but I'm five feet tall on a good day.

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Alison Manning 25:50

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Alison Manning 25:56

Oh, okay. I didn't know what Yeah, I'm pretty

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Kelly Barone 25:58

sure. You know, so everything's taller than me. So it's big and it's awkward. And eight, six foot tables are like, yeah. So, but I did it. And I did that for a couple years. And I did that. And I started teaching more at retreats and things like that, like people would be like, Hey, do you want to come teach at the Zentangle retreat? And I'd be like, Sure. And so I started doing, I started building that in. So basically, every weekend I was doing a show, or I was teaching at a retreat.

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Alison Manning 26:31

That's a lot of weekends. It's a

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Kelly Barone 26:33

lot of weekends. But my kids were older. My son was, you know, nearing graduation, my daughter was in college, it was it worked. It worked with my lifestyle right then. And then, you know, when Trump got hurt that that changed. But yeah, going back to shows, again, that local community has come into play, I still have good friends that from that used to be in the Buffalo Etsy group. But I've also made friends with other vendors. And we, we actually have a vendor group that talks on Instagram message. And they we share everything, hey, I did this show this, the applications for this one are out. And now while I still do shows, I do about maybe a half dozen a year. Okay. They're the higher higher price point. But they're well attended. They're very, they're very well marketed. They, and that, for me, that was the big thing. I'm more than willing to pay the booth fee. Even if it's \$300 for the weekend, if I know that they're going to you know that they're going to bring in the people who are going to want to buy what I'm selling, right?

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Alison Manning 27:48

Yeah, no, it does. So basically, it's just it's like a ladder, almost you start out at you know, your some local church fairs to see just to get your feet wet, then you kind of move up to sort of a mid tier markets. And then at this point, you're just doing you know, maybe for a year high ticket, but with

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Kelly Barone 28:09

where's my golf for is my hope for next year?

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Alison Manning 28:14

All right, what about this year? How many do you think

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Kelly Barone 28:16

this year, I have eight, only because I'm trying a couple of different markets that I wasn't sure about. And then I'm gonna pick my favorites and probably go with that. That's really small. That's you know, because then I can have originals there instead of just prints and I have actual inventory in stock for people to choose from, you know, I go and sell a ton of prints at a show. I actually just did our Botanical Gardens henna show, and that one is perfect for prints because people are there. They want to buy pretty things. I do a lot of nature stuff. And I've done paintings in the Botanical Gardens. But they're not looking for originals. Right? Yeah. However other shows people will come in, nobody wants to buy prints, they want to be able to buy the actual original art and leave with okay. And they're, they're willing to pay that price. So it's, it's a balance, and you just, you know, you find out which ones are good. And, you know, if you are interested, if people are interested in shows, I encourage them to actually talk to the vendors too, because most of us like to share you know, we're not keeping it a secret.

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Alison Manning 29:24

Yeah. How have shows changed since the pandemic in your opinion?

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Kelly Barone 29:31

I don't think they're as well attended. Yeah, and honest. Like the little craft markets and stuff. I don't see anybody buying anything because I still go I like to I like to go poke around and see what people are like to support local artists and stuff. Yeah, what I always pick try and pay attention to is how many people have bags in their hands.

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Alison Manning 29:54

Yeah, that's a good point. Yeah. Yeah.



29:58

And what I did discover is a little A lot of people found their creativity during the pandemic. Yes. So they are at that stage where maybe they think, Oh, I can make that. And they haven't quite come to the conclusion yet. Which it took me until just a couple of years ago. I could make that, but I'm not going to.

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Alison Manning 30:19

No, I never will. I could go buy \$500 worth of supplies to make that I'm not gonna.

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Kelly Barone 30:26

So I like whether I can make it or not. Nine times out of 10 Now I'm just gonna buy it. Yeah. a while to get there. We're be like, you know, I really like that. But I really wish it was in turquoise. Because Turquoise is my color. Right? So could you make it for me in turquoise, you know, and I'm much more likely to do that these days than to be like, Oh, I can make that change. And I think that's going to swing back in another year or two people are going to be like, yeah, I could, but I'm not going to.

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Alison Manning 30:59

Yeah, yeah. Nice. Just what kind of things do you selling? Have you been Have you been selling the same kind of things throughout your show mostly

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Kelly Barone 31:07

sell watercolors at my, at my shows? I do I have my artwork on tumblers. And I do these cool stainless steel mason jars that have that have my artwork on them. That's interesting. Yeah. And I do them all myself. So like, like my mug, right? I put my logos on all my mugs.

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Alison Manning 31:36

Yeah, I want to sit Yeah. Can you show us your mug? Sure. Oh, cute. Yeah, I

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Kelly Barone 31:43

do mugs. And I do glass tumblers and stuff. Because sometimes, again, you have to kind of play to your market. I have heard that people really like functional art. Yes. So I can take my paintings and I can put them on a mug or tumbler and somebody who's just starting out a lot of people, you know, like pretty things. But if you're, if you're a college student art for your wall isn't necessarily your priority. But if you're going to spend 20 \$25, and you can get a really cool glass tumbler that you're going to use every day that has the same artwork on it. You can buy that.

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Alison Manning 32:22

That's so that's that's a

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Kelly Barone 32:26

while to figure that out too. But

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Alison Manning 32:29

A Alison Manning 32:29
right wife takes us a while to figure out

K Kelly Barone 32:34
Yeah, for the most part it's I've stuck a lot with my watercolors just because that seems to be what sells and I keep all my like my Zentangle largely for myself, I make I make handmade journals from my, some of my botanical my favorite botanical papers, but I usually only make like three or four for a year. And you know, I put them in a basket and if they sell they sell if not, I keep them for myself. Good.

A Alison Manning 33:01
So how now you're moving away from shows? How are you keeping, you know, your full time business going? What are you shifting towards? Are you shifting more towards teaching or another revenue stream?

K Kelly Barone 33:16
I really so teaching I mean, teaching is my great love i I fully believe that art is for everybody. It says it right in my logo. People think they can't draw people think that they can't make stuff. And it's not true. They've just they've been told that or that's been their experience. And I love to watch people light up when they realize that they can do something they didn't think they could do. Yeah. So I do a lot of teaching. I I teach online, I teach in my studio. I teach retreats. I've been you know, I've done work with an amazing group for disabled veterans called Songwriting with Soldiers.

A Alison Manning 34:01
That's interesting. Tell us about that. Oh, it's a

K Kelly Barone 34:05
wonderful group in

A Alison Manning 34:07
salt was it songwriting for solo

K Kelly Barone 34:10
Songwriting with Soldiers with soldiers, they bring in award winning and Grammy Grammy winning songwriters. And they host these retreats. And they're in Virginia and Arizona in San

Antonio. And they pair a veteran with the with a songwriter and they tell their story. And this the the songwriter and the veteran, create a story that becomes theirs and it's all about healing and expressing yourself because so often there's no way for for these people to tell their stories. Yeah, yeah. And part of the the weekend is all About the other tools you can add to your toolbox, right? Your other resources. So you can so they bring in so I go and I take Zentangle. And they usually have someone that does like a journaling workshop, and yoga, and but they try and bring things from every medium, because people respond differently to different creative arts. You know, we had somebody that was one of them, she's super cool. Her name is Stella. And she is actually a makeup artist now and not like, not like, everyday put on your blush kind of makeup artist, but like graphic effects and special effects and things like that. And it's the first night everyone is just kind of like, very standoffish, and you can tell they're all very closed in and at the end. They play their songs. The the songwriters play their songs, and we they do a concert, and and they share their songs. And at the end, everybody's talking and laughing and hugging. And these people are leaving. I imagine lots of crying. Lots of crying at these. But everybody leaves with these amazing connections, and they have a song that for them tells her story.

A

Alison Manning 36:23

Wow, oh,

K

Kelly Barone 36:24

it's so powerful. It is such a powerful thing. And it's one of the coolest things I've ever been involved with. I've done work with them at the Cary Institute for Global good. And at Boulder crest retreat in Virginia. And it's just,

A

Alison Manning 36:43

yeah, it's amazing. And so you teach them Zentangle I'm sure you've heard so many stories, so many stories.

K

Kelly Barone 36:50

Yes. So many stories. How,

A

Alison Manning 36:55

how big is how many veterans that have each one?

K

Kelly Barone 36:58

Usually there's only four or five? Oh, yeah. And sometimes sometimes they their families come sometimes they sometimes it's just them. They usually have a handful of past past attendees as like peer support. It can be scary for for someone who's you know, dealing with PTSD and so

as like peer support. It can be scary for for someone who's, you know, dealing with PTSD and so much trauma and to come in and and be in this this situation. So they have people there who are like, Hey, I did this. This was life changing for me. You should call you should you know you should sit even if you don't actually do anything you should come. And

A Alison Manning 37:42

so it's that is amazing. Wow, good. Good for you for doing that and you teach them then that's great. They get to do Zentangle. Which,

K Kelly Barone 37:51

right? Yeah. So many of them are like, Oh, I can't draw and I'm like, that's okay, you don't really need to and I tell people you know if you can write your name, or draw a stick figure, however badly you can do this, I promise.

A Alison Manning 38:02

Yeah. Yeah. Wow. That's amazing. Thank you for sharing that I'm sure. We'll leave a link below to the organization. So people can check it out. Because that is really That's really amazing. So all right. So um, your plans then are to, if I'm answering this straight, for really good shows a year, you're going to ramp up your teacher, you're ramping up your teaching in person, or you could be doing more online, like what are your sort of what are your plans 2023 24 moving forward.

K Kelly Barone 38:34

So, for the last year, I've been teaching a free botanicals workshop. During the during the pandemic, I also did a weekly Facebook Live teaching Zentangle. I love both of those things. I plan on doing some more retreats I like to host and I like to attend retreats. So that's always fun. But I have a project that I'm working on, I'm calling it medley. And it is kind of a mash up of my Zentangle and my botanicals. And it's all about learning to draw things in different ways and how we can take one kind of like one idea and morph it into other things. And so I'm going to be launching that in August that's going to be a subscription like ongoing course thing. They can sign up for a month or they can sign up for recurring, whatever works for them. So that's kind of my big project that I have coming. And then I also have just a bunch of classes kind of slotted into my plan. I love to teach online I'm taking a lot of my my classes and putting them up as on demand classes as well.

A Alison Manning 39:53

Nice.

K Kelly Barone 39:54

You know, when I get bored teaching the same thing over and over and over. I always want to choose something new So

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Alison Manning 40:02

scription then will be really good because you'll have to summon you every month.

K

Kelly Barone 40:05

Exactly. I'll have to do new stuff every month.

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Alison Manning 40:08

Yeah. What? What platform are you using? Think if ik Thinkific. Right, excellent. I'm just back to medley. We're calling it can you give me an example of taking one concept? And then doing lots of things that I'm not quite sure?

K

Kelly Barone 40:23

Yeah. So Zentangle is based on repetitive patterns, which I know, you know. But often people come to us untangle. And they think it's very cool. But they think that they need to learn all the millions and millions and millions of patterns that are out there. Right. And you can become a pattern collector, and be aware, which is its own hobby, right. And it's great, and, but then there are people that think that they need to learn it all. And they need to master it all. Or they have to get really good at all of them. And the truth is, you don't you can learn one, Pat? Well, I mean, I've learned more than one. But oh, yeah. But you know, when you learn like a handful of patterns, and you can make art, always great, you don't need to learn the newest and the most popular and everything all the time. So what I did with my, my weekly Facebook Lives, which are on YouTube. Yeah, well, what I, what I did was, I would take a pattern, and I would focus just on that pattern. And I'd be like, so you can draw it this way. Or you can draw it this way. Or you could draw it this way. Or you could draw it this way. So just because you've been taught to draw one way, doesn't mean that you can't bring in all these other ideas. So what I will do with mentally is I'll do that with a pattern every month. Yeah. And I will also do it with a botanical. So botanicals. So you know if I draw a daffodil, yeah. It's great when you learn to draw a daffodil, but then every time you go to draw one, you're going to draw it the same way, because that's how you learn to draw. Yeah. Okay, so I can drop a daffodil. And we can look at that and it'll be forward facing. Well, now I'm going to teach you how you actually look at it, to turn it so that your Daffodil can be facing a different way. Or it can be drooping down or whatever. And then it'll have like a little one hour class in there as well where I kind of merge the two. So you can kind of take a tangle pattern, and what you learned with your botanicals, or whatever we ended up drawing it largely be botanicals, because that's that's really my my strong point there. And we will put that together and make a little project. Oh,

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Alison Manning 42:48

I love it. Yeah, I find

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Kelly Barone 42:50

that to be a lot of fun. I'm really excited about it. I'm,

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Alison Manning 42:53

I'm excited. I agree with you, though, about the patterns, there's nothing wrong being a patent collector, but it's almost like a shiny object, there's always the latest and greatest, there's always something new to learn. And then I find that in bookbinding to you people always want to learn like a new binder, a new big new binder, but sometimes, maybe just doing the fundamentals. And learning to do those really well. And then doing variations on those. And like building on those skills is also really kind of valuable. And I mean, we all we all have shiny object syndrome. I mean,

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Kelly Barone 43:23

sure. The problem is, you know, I've been a CZT for a long time. And people draw patterns, and I'm like, I've never seen that one, right? And then then you can you start to feel like left out. Or, you know, when I'm like this just like you don't need them. All right. I spent all my time trying to draw all the patterns that were out there, I'd never get any work done.

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Alison Manning 43:50

Exactly, you'll have pattern FOMO that's

K

Kelly Barone 43:55

the other thing that I've I've noticed is that when you collect the patterns, when when, when that's the focus, you just you just draw the pattern in, it's great, you find a pattern that you that you think is really cool, by all means learn it, right, yeah, but don't feel like you have to go get this pattern and this pattern and this pattern and this pattern. There are plenty of like monthly challenges and things like that, where you can expose yourself to a bunch of new patterns in a short period of time without feeling like that has to be your you know, part of it and I'm not knocking anybody's practice who that's that's their thing.

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Alison Manning 44:32

No, no, no, everyone's got the right. But I

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Kelly Barone 44:35

think that for me trying to keep up to keep up with all those patterns overwhelmed me to the point where I didn't feel like I could make art right. So, you know, you get kind of fluxes my is may go to my mac and cheese, right. You can make flux pointy, you can make flux round you can make flux, you know and all different kinds. The sheep's and it's still flocks.

A

Alison Manning 45:02

Yeah, yeah, that's true. Oh, I love that. And what I also love about your plans for the upcoming, you know, year or whatever is instill includes your learning. So I think for me, that's been a key takeaway, and perhaps something I didn't know about you is that you're constantly learning. It's not like, Oh, I'm done. I know everything I need to know. You're still learning new techniques. And I think that's

K

Kelly Barone 45:24

absolutely you never know, you never know what you're gonna learn. Never know what you're gonna learn. And it's usually something you know, I take watercolor classes all the time. Oh, do you beat No, no, because everyone teaches differently. And even though I watercolor, like I said, is, is one of my primary mediums. Why? I still come out learning something different. Every single time. You know, oh, I never knew I could do that. I never thought to do that. And, you know, maybe I didn't learn a ton, but if I learned one little tiny thing, it's usually worth it to me.

A

Alison Manning 46:00

Yeah. And also you meet great people. So yeah, there's always the plus two.

K

Kelly Barone 46:03

Yeah, you can't go wrong meeting new people. Exactly.

A

Alison Manning 46:07

Alright, so I think we're gonna wrap this up. Where can folks find you on so what social media platforms are you on? I know you're at whimsy by Kelly, where can they find you? So

K

Kelly Barone 46:19

I am pretty active on Instagram. I like Instagram a lot. I do use Facebook. Again, I'm whimsy by Kelly there. I have a Tiktok that is I have a Tiktok it I think it has one thing on it. I always mean to get to it, and then there's other something then there's something else to do. So eventually, I may put some stuff up there but I don't know. I would I would primarily look for me on with an

Instagram, Instagram, and Facebook and Facebook. You can I put most of the same content on them. So but there's going to be more on Instagram. It's just easy for me. And because what I do is visual, right?

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Alison Manning 47:04

Yeah. And then when was when was the by kelli.com Is your website and that's where they can find your watercolors your online classes and also get on your newsletter right for the upcoming

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Kelly Barone 47:18

and I actually do have a newsletter coming out next month, that talk or next month next week that I'm that's going to talk about medley, the nice you know, that's that's starting next month it's going to have some local classes as well as a couple online classes.