

EPISODE 29: HOW TO SUBMIT PHOTOS TO MAGAZINES THE SECRETS OF DARK BEAUTY MAGAZINE with Topher Adam

Marketing for Creatives Show
at IntNetworkPlus.com

Announcer:

Turn your hobby and freelance work into a profitable business! Make your marketing easier by applying the strategies of experienced entrepreneurs and have more time to do the work you love. You are listening to the Marketing for Creatives show with your host Marina Barayeva.

Marina Barayeva:

Hi everyone. This is Marina Barayeva. Welcome to another episode of Marketing for Creatives show. In this episode, we gonna talk about how to submit photos to magazines.

Whether you are a fashion designer, photographer, makeup artist or another creative entrepreneur who create a visual work and you want to get your work published in the big magazines such as Dark Beauty Magazine or others, we will get to the details of how to submit photos to magazines, what to pay attention to when you submit photos, what mistakes to avoid and many more.

I'm super excited to introduce you to our guest today Topher Adam.

Topher is founder and editor of Dark Beauty Magazine, photographer, fashion designer, and artist.

He started the magazine after being rejected with his work by other media and now he helps other creatives to get their work published.

Marina Barayeva:

Hi, Topher. Welcome to the show. How are you doing today?

Topher Adam:

I'm awesome. How are you?

Marina Barayeva:

I'm doing amazing too. Please share with us your story. Tell us about yourself.

Topher Adam:

Most people ask what are you and who are you, and I usually say, "I'm just an artist." An artist is a big spectrum of possibility, so I'm a creative entrepreneur, an artist, photographer, and fashion designer. I'm just a funny person. I like to live fully for passion and do what I love and try to help people see the same values. That's really what I do.

Marina Barayeva:

That's amazing. As a creative entrepreneur, you're also a founder of the amazing Dark Beauty Magazine. How did you start with this?

Topher Adam:

It's funny because Dark Beauty actually started because as I auditioned for Project Runway back in 2010 and I made semi-finals. I was like, "Woah! This is great."

I was on the show and the whole experience was kind of weird, in the big picture. You start watching how the dynamics of people react and then you start realizing how a show isn't necessarily reality, it's scripted reality.

I started watching all these people get crushed and I started watching people's emotions break and I started watching how much someone really believed in themselves and then in the end, when they told they were rejected or not good enough, you see that person fall apart thinking just like I did.

They thought to themselves, "Am I supposed to do this? Do they know something I don't know? Is there something I missed? I mean, this is something I love."

For two months, I was at home feeling depressed after the show because they said things to me like, "Your stuff looks like it comes from space." Or they would say, "You don't know how to sew." Or they would say, "Who would even wear your stuff?" And they would chuckle and go, "Ha ha ha, maybe Helen Bonham Carter." I'm like, "Exactly. I have a different audience."

For two months when I was at home back in the Bay Area, I sat there going, "Wow, what am I supposed to do?" I thought, "I need to do something and put my foot down and go, there's got to be another way."

A friend came over and she says, "Hey, have you heard of this thing? You can make your magazine and do all this stuff." I'm like, "What?" And she showed it to me and I was like, "Wow, that's really cool."

And bam! Immediately I got this idea, "Oh my God. I'm going to start this magazine. I'm going to help artists. I've got to figure out how to do this, and I'm going to call it, and seriously in seconds I said I'm going to call it Dark Beauty." I'm like, "Woah, this is really freaking me out," because it all just came into play.

I believe sometimes we listen to opportunities but we don't really listen to them. We don't really act on them. I felt like this thing has to happen because... I'm an empath, so I feel emotions and I'm very emotional and I'm a touchy-feely kind of person, not touchy but emotionally feely touchy. I thought to myself, "I've got to make this thing happen."

I actually did. I made it all happen within three weeks. I released my first issue August 2010 and it was amazing, we sold 200 copies and I'm like, "What the hell just happened? Woah, this is crazy." This was my screw you Project Runway. I'll show you!

I never thought it was going to be something where my point of view would get out there because people are like, "What's Dark Beauty?" I'm like, "I'm Dark Beauty." They're like, "What does it mean?" I'm like, "I'm just a dark storyteller. I love things that are amazing and dark and interesting."

I have a saying and it's basically this, there's more light in the dark because that's when your imagination sparks. It's when you close your eyes and you get to see all these colors and that's your imagination flaring up and giving you all these ideas.

It's kind of like the story of Dark Beauty. It's my little success story. But now we're eight years old. That one idea blossomed into this. What? How did that happen? But like I said, sometimes we listen to opportunities, sometimes we don't. It's always happening, it's all around us, it's just that one time you go, "I'm going to listen to that one." And that's what I did.

Marina Barayeva:

That's fantastic. Eight years is a long time.

Topher Adam:

It is a long time. It's a lot of work, it is.

Marina Barayeva:

That's a lot of work and I assume now that you get more and more submissions to your magazine.

Topher Adam:

All the time.

Marina Barayeva:

What about those people who are also photographers, fashion designers, makeup artists, all of these creative people who want to get their work out there, who want their work to be seen in online magazines or offline magazines, how can they create a great series of photos to submit to magazines?

Topher Adam:

How do they submit to us?

Marina Barayeva:

How can they create it? What are the foundations of---

Topher Adam:

For me as an editor, I tend to... Look, everybody has their own point of view. We all do. Art is very subjective. It's totally understandable why it's subjective.

But what is Dark Beauty? When I started Dark Beauty, it had to come from somewhere. I had to spark an idea based off my own rejections and feelings about something. So, of course I had my own expectations of what Dark Beauty is and when you start a publication that then becomes kind of owned by the public because they really are the controllers now of content.

When I started Dark Beauty, I had this idea that I'm going to show the freaks, the weirdos, the fun, the dark, the twisted, the amazing, and kind of creepy uncomfortable stuff. I really felt like that stuff needed to become somewhat mainstream but also accepted.

When I first started, it's totally changed obviously, the content that I accepted then was different. But as we grew, we understood more and more about what content really becomes more accepted. You can still share dark content but you have to find a certain kind of balance, the yin and the yang.

I started to listen more to my audience:

- What are they looking for?
- What are they seeing?

But for me, as an editor, I'm really picky. I have to be picky because I'm representing my audience. I think a lot of people don't realize what that means. Someone who starts a magazine might go, "I'm just going to pick stuff because it looks good." No, no, no. I don't do that. For me, it's really important to look at content that has so many elements of quality behind it.

- Does it have a great composition?
- Is the lighting good?
- Is there a story behind it?
- Is it consistent?
- Does it have flow?
- Is it fluid?

All of these different things come to my mind, so what I'm looking for and I see content that reaches me and I get goose bumps, I think, "This could be something," because I'm starting to look at all those things.

I know that's kind of a fast forward to what I accept, and I can look at a spread in five minutes or less and go, "Yes, no, yes, no," because of course I'm trained, this is what I

accept, this is what I don't accept, and so I'll look for all those elements to see if it really does trigger that essential dark beauty.

That's really what it is first. Is it Dark Beauty? If it's not Dark Beauty, I'm sorry, bye-bye. See you later. If it is Dark Beauty, then I'm going to dive into it. I want to look at all the pictures in the spread.

- Does it flow?
- Does it tell me something?
- Did the creator actually think about the process behind it?
- Did they consider how a viewer is going to react?
- Did they tell me the story?

If it doesn't have all that, then I have to reject it. I'm not the kind of guy who goes, "Sorry, bye-bye, you're out." No, I'm going to say, "Hey, I didn't accept your content because." I want people to know why because I'm not going to be that---

Look, I'm not that big. I'm who I am and I have to accept the fact that we've accomplished what we have but I'm not going to be that guy who goes, "I hide behind a computer and I'm not going to talk to you." That's not who I am.

I'm going to say, "Hey, look, this is why I didn't accept you. Try this, and if you can do it, send me something back. Maybe I'll like it but if not, I'm sorry, maybe next time." That's the way I see it. Maybe it's just my upbringing, I don't know. I'm Southern, I can't help it (laughter).

Marina Barayeva:

No, but that means a lot. I remember many years ago when I sent you my pictures and got rejected and you sent me a long message to my why, and I was like, "Wow, he actually replied to me." You just made me look at my work in a different way.

Topher Adam:

Good. I hope so. Like I said, I'm an artist. It's the subjective part.

What makes me any more special? The only thing that makes me a little bit more knowledgeable is that I own and started this magazine. That's the only thing. I have to maintain my ethics behind the magazine, my essentials behind the magazine, and my purpose for Dark Beauty. That's really what I maintain.

It's not about me going, "Oh my God, that's amazing, I really would love you but I can't because it doesn't... It's almost there." No. I have to go, "Ergh, you're just not there yet," And that's because I am Dark Beauty. I get to decide that.

I get a lot of people who write me back who are so angry, and I'm like, "Why?" I'm in awe when they write me back and they're so upset. "Can you tell me why? I need to know why. It doesn't make sense. My work is good." Granted, you're right. It's subjective. Your work is good. But it just doesn't fit my mission.

That's really the ultimate thing for the submission, maybe next time. Don't stop trying. That's who we are, Dark Beauty, we inspire people, so come on! Try again. I hope you did.

Marina Barayeva:

Well, I'll try another time (laughter).

Topher Adam:

Okay, good.

Marina Barayeva:

And for those who do that, who submit their photos, can you help us to understand what is the editorial photo. Are there any specific points? People often get confused what is the editorial and what is only a simple nice photo.

Topher Adam:

It's funny because editorial really just means that somebody paid for a whole pictorial. That's really what it means. What's an editorial? It's one of those things that has to match.

For example, you hire me to shoot something but you're hiring me because you're paying me to shoot something for a purpose. That purpose represents you and what you're trying to sell. That's an editorial.

- Does it support an article?
- Does it support a topic?
- Does it support something?

That's the editorial. For us, we accept submissions and spreads. We're not here to say, "Your photos have to sell something. You're here submitting to us a submission of a spread to say, "I get to look at your story."" There's a big difference.

Editorial is an editorial matching something that someone's promoting or writing about or trying to sell. That's funny. People don't get it. I'm not an editorial magazine. I'm a storytelling publication. There's a big difference. If I was an editorial, I'm going to get hired. I'm going to be hired by the company.

For example, Vogue, Marie Claire, whoever, they don't pay very much. If they're hiring, they're hiring you to shoot an editorial for their purposes. Did you know they only pay \$500, \$600? It's not very much.

Marina Barayeva:

So cheap.

Topher Adam:

Yes, scary, for all those amazing pictures.

But I can understand why most photographers out there who are commercial photographers want to get that because of the name. "I get my name out there." The spread and the awareness is huge.

But for us, it's totally different. I'm not trying to get your name out there. I'm trying to show amazing content to people to help you get back out into the world and show your work. That's what I'm doing.

Did I answer your question? I hope I did.

Marina Barayeva:

Yes. When people do a photo shoot, how can they choose photos for submission? Because they cannot send you the whole photo shoot, what should they pay attention to?

Topher Adam:

We do reviews. Somebody can come to us with some money. I know, it's all about money and I'll talk about that sometime.

We look for consistency. Are you submitting something to me that is a consistent body of work? It can be different clothing, it can be different models, it can be different hair, but is there something within it that is so consistent that I know that's one storyline.

If I don't see that and it's very discombobulated and it's all over the place and I have 12 or 25 images, then I'm like, "What the hell am I looking at? I don't understand this."

That's when I'm going to sit back and go, "I just can't take this because I don't get it and if I don't get it, I think that's kind of important." (Laughter) Because it is. You're submitting to Dark Beauty.

For people who are submitting content, consider your storyline. If you're picking pictures and selecting content that has the same face, when I say face that means a model who looks the same and emoting the same face, I'm not going to select that because I'm not getting an emotional sense out of it. I'm not feeling something.

If the model can work and really work the photo series, she's going to help pull you through this whole series of images and I'm going to look for that.

Are the clothes consistent? Is there a feeling to them that has the same kind of understanding like, "I understand this designer." Or if it's a makeup story and it's a beauty editorial, is this beauty artist, beauty makeup artist, telling me a story of her or his quality of work? What do they do? How do they do it? What are their qualifications? I want consistency.

I think for everything, every single person submitting needs to understand what they're submitting. That's the first thing. What are you submitting, editorial, a spread, fashion, or beauty? What are you submitting?

The second thing you have to consider is, is it consistent? Do I understand what they're looking for? Is the color story the same? Is the quality of editing the same? Is the filter series that you're doing on top of your photos the same? I'm not going to take a black and white

mixed with this other grainy colorful thing that's blasted out with saturated tones because if going black and white is your intention and it's throughout the whole thing, it's got to make sense.

Did I answer? Hopefully it did. Usually when I talk, I'm all over the place.

Marina Barayeva:

That's okay.

Topher Adam:

I live out of passion, I can't help it.

Marina Barayeva:

That's amazing.

What do you think? Who can submit photos to magazines? We have a big audience but the common thing is usually that the photographers submit pictures and the photographer creates the series. But what about those like fashion designers, hairstylists, makeup artists or other members of the creative team if they want to get exposure of their work?

Topher Adam:

Obviously, it really depends on who's reaching us. If it is a makeup artist or if it is a fashion designer, whoever it is that's paying for the shoot to be done by the photographer, or maybe it's the photographers setting this, I always say make sure you always include everybody who's involved, the team, because it doesn't happen with one person.

You can't make a movie with one person and make it look epic like they do. It takes thousands of people. Sometimes on a photo shoot it might take a group of 20, sometimes it's 10, sometimes it's two. Whatever it is, make sure that you realize it takes a team and make sure you include that team because we don't separate.

If you're going to send me photos, and you go, "I'm the only one that worked on this." And then I get an email later saying, "I'm sorry. I didn't get credit for this." That's rude, isn't it? That would break my heart if I knew that photographer sent it in and went, "I want all the credit." What? No, everybody's involved.

Anybody can submit to us. We take anything from music, art, photography, fashion, and makeup tutorials. Whatever it is, if it's still in the range of Dark Beauty, send it to us. We even take written content. We take videos. It's really about the expression. Who wants to get their work out to an audience like ours? Anybody can submit, just know what your audience is first. I think we're going to talk about that sometime, about audience.

Anybody can submit as long as they feel like it is Dark Beauty. Because I'll slap somebody and say, "No, sorry."

Marina Barayeva:

Your magazine is very big already and popular. There are also a lot of other online and offline fashion magazines. How can people choose the magazine that would give exposure or will be a good credit to their portfolios?

Topher Adam:

I think what's important is when... I always have to use an analogy somehow.

If you're going on a date with somebody, you've got to see if they're a fit. You're kind of in this dating phase where it's a newbie phase where you just get to know each other. With any job or anything you're going to submit your work to, be prepared to make sure that it's a fit because if it's not, you're obviously wasting your time.

If you want to know who we are, date us for a little bit. Scout the magazine online, find out what it is we share. Find out if there's a similarity. If you're just going to throw out content, throw out content to different magazines, you're wasting your time because you're really not going to go anywhere.

I think it's important for you as an artist to invest your time appropriately. I'm not going to go and say, "Oh, I just shot this image of a computer. I'm going to send it to Google." But Google doesn't really celebrate computers, they celebrate the shared network, what you can share online and how you can find information.

You have to understand what your audience is. If you think that you shoot for Dark Beauty and your content is so Dark Beauty, then of course you want to come to Dark Beauty.

But you have to make sure that the content you're sending to me is going to be represented right. If I can't represent you, then why are you sending it to me? If it's not simpatico, it's not simpatico. If we're not the same, we're not thinking the same, your work is going to be rejected by the people following us.

I always say, try to date us for a little bit. Try to figure out what we're like online. And if you want to submit to me, understand that when you submit to me, it has to be the ultimate Dark Beauty because I'll look at it and go, "What were they thinking? It's not Dark Beauty."

But most of the time I won't do that. I'll just say, "Hey, you might want to shoot this a little darker or you can add more filters to it or you can make it look a little darker and then I don't understand your story so maybe you can put some new images in there to make it consistent, blah blah blah."

I'll hold your hand as much as I can. But as we keep growing, I can't do that with everybody anymore. I try to do that with people who come to us with the one-on-one in depth reviews. We have an in-depth reviewer, someone who submits content to us, and I'll look at it and I'll give every explanation like I did with you, but now this is one-one-one.

I'm going to say, "Hey, this is what I looked at. This is why this photo didn't work. This is why this series didn't work. I didn't really think that your technical skills are right. I don't think it's commercial. I don't do this." I'll go through a whole list of things to make sure you understand if it was accepted or if it was rejected. I think there's a value in that because people will finally see what it is that it takes for us to accept your content.

“Why don’t I get into Dark Beauty?” people ask. Well, because of this, and I’ll spit it out. “By the way, I really like this image and although I won’t take all these images, I like that image. Can you do this to it and send it back to us and we’ll promote you.” See, not everybody gets rejected. Just because all the content doesn’t fit doesn’t mean you’re going to get rejected. Anybody can submit to us.

Marina Barayeva:

Topher, what are the common mistakes people make when they submit photos? What should we avoid?

Topher Adam:

First thing, the biggest, biggest, biggest, biggest, I’m going to say it again, the biggest thing is people don’t read. Seriously they don’t read. I’m like, “Did you read the content? Did you read the application? Did you read the acceptance letter that you just signed?”

And when people are like, “Um, no.” I’m like, “What if I just said you’re going to sign your house to me and I’m going to take all your cars, and thank you so much I get to live in a different country because you just signed your passport away to me, you’re not going to read that? That’s silly.”

The biggest number one problem with people submitting content is people don’t read everything thoroughly. They don’t read it. So if I can b**** slap anybody, I’m going to say, “Please, please, please read everything.”

I’m that weirdo who sits at the dentist’s office and I read everything because I want to make sure that what I’m doing and what they’re going to do is exactly what they say they’re going to do because it’s my mouth and my body, so do it right. That’s what I think. That’s the number one.

What else is the other thing I was thinking about? There are a couple of things. The second one is not really considering if they fit a magazine, like we talked about earlier. They’re not really considering if we’re the right fit.

First of all, read and the second part, consider if we’re the right publication for you, because that’s important.

Marina Barayeva:

Number three, anything?

Topher Adam:

Was there a number three?

Marina Barayeva:

I don’t know. Let’s make a trio.

Topher Adam:

What would be number three? I guess make sure that they understand that they have to make sure that their content is flawless. As much as I want to support amateurs, I do want to support amateurs, but I think there's a learning curve.

When we started, we were taking all kinds of content because we were just starting. But as we grew and developed and understood our audience, we started cultivating Dark Beauty and we started to nurture it to become what it has become, so the content that we share needs to be flawless.

I don't want to get comments on it on Facebook or any other network going, "Wow, this is really crap. Why did Dark Beauty accept it?" I don't want that. I want you to be celebrated. So when your content's out there, I want everything to be positive.

Not everything's going to be positive, we just don't live in that world anymore but when people are on Facebook or Instagram and they see comments, I don't want people to be broken down by it because someone else's point of view. I want to make sure that the content we're posting is flawless. That way, you're celebrated, not ridiculed, because nobody likes that.

A lot of times we just usually slap somebody and delete their comment because I don't accept that. I get it, the truth hurts and it will hurt but at the same time I think there's a right place for it and from Dark Beauty's point of view, I don't think it's the right place for it.

I allow criticism, but when they start to rip people apart, I have to delete it because that's not the way that I live. I'm a kind guy and I want to treat everybody with the same respect and I want you to be online and tell people what you think about something critically not in a rude way, in a very positive way.

You can say something in a very directive way of saying, "Wow, this is an amazing shoot but did you know that if you use this filter at this light, it might even become better," instead of going, "Wow, that's really crappy. Why do you even bother?" I don't do that. I don't want that. All unedited with Topher Adam.

Marina Barayeva:

Thanks for supporting the creative industry.

Those who got the publication, whether in your magazine or another online or offline magazine, how can they later market with this? How can they get more work out of this?

Often when you get published only once, it doesn't really bring too much value.

Topher Adam:

No, it doesn't. I think the biggest thing is most people, out of my experiences, I'm only talking out of my experience, when we started charging for submissions through Dark Beauty, we got so much flack for it. But people didn't realize that we were working our asses off, doing everything we could possibly do for free to make this magazine happen.

It was costing me so much money to make this thing happen I started realizing I'm going to go under or I have to go above, so I needed to figure out a way to do this. So I thought, somebody's going to spend a dollar on a song on iTunes or \$5 on a cup of coffee. What about them doing that for themselves?

I always use the term, money makes money. What that means for me is that if you're afraid to promote yourself and spend \$5, maybe you should question yourself if you're really wanting success. If you're afraid to spend money to promote yourself, and really think about that.

If I'm going to sit here and be afraid to spend a dollar or \$3, or \$5, \$25 on promoting my artwork, there's a problem because you cannot, in this world and in this day and age, be seen or heard unless you spend money to get in front of other people.

I always say that there's so much noise in the world, that you're one tiny speck, that you're never going to be heard, never, so don't be afraid to spend a little money to promote yourself. It's the only way you're going to get above other people.

Money makes money. If you're investing into yourself, even if it's \$25 and go to another magazine and spend \$300, whatever it is, if you feel it suits you and it's your right audience, don't be afraid to promote yourself.

You have to. It's the only way. I always use a raven, not a bird, the quiet raven doesn't get the worm. Nobody gets fed, so you have to be loud and \$5 is taking a step to being a little bit louder.

Now, I'll talk about Facebook a little bit. I have to put it down a bit because I'm really upset about it. We grew Facebook. We have 1.2 or 1.3 million fans. This is organic. Never paid for one person. And Facebook has dumped us down so bad and I think it's unethical.

I think it's completely unethical because these people who chose to like my page and follow me, chose on their own accord, their freedom, their choice. Now Facebook is limiting those people from seeing what they chose to follow. I think that's wrong.

It's like I don't even want people to pay money to promote themselves on that page because we've done studies and we've looked at how much attention I can get if I pay \$5 and if I don't pay \$5. Believe it or not, the people who don't pay \$5 get more attention. That's scary, isn't it?

You might get this little status that says, "With your \$5 you had 2,300 eyes on this picture and you had four clicks." No. I had more attention on the organic stuff than I did with paying money. You have to start asking yourself, paid money to the right audience that's going to get you what you need to have seen.

Invest in yourself. Don't be afraid of spending money. Money makes money. But only spend money where you know that audience is going to be. That's when you start doing your homework. That's when you start dating us for a little bit. That's when you start seeing if it's a right fit because that's really the only way you're going to get your content to the right eyes. And that's how we do it.

One day maybe Facebook will slap themselves silly and wake up again and open it up for the world because it's only fair that we have that audience so I can get the 20, 30, 40,000 likes

on images that I used to get. But we're still reaching a great audience. We still have the visibility and we're on seven or eight different networks around the globe. It's not just Facebook. It's Instagram and Twitter and Pinterest and VK and Ello. We have a big audience. We put it all out there.

Make sure when you spend money, it's going to the right thing. And if you spend money with us, we're publishing it on eight or nine different networks. You're getting your content out there. It's not like we're being greedy b***** and going, "Thanks for the \$2. We're only going to put it on one network." No. We accept the content and we're promising you that we're putting it out there.

Spend money to get noticed. It has to happen. It's the way the world is.

Marina Barayeva:

How often would you recommend submitting photos to magazines?

Topher Adam:

I guess that's a personal choice. If you find that your content isn't being picked up, stop. Reevaluate what you're doing wrong or take a risk and write to somebody and say, "I'm really curious, what does it take?"

I have a handful of artists that are submitting to us all the time and it's beautiful because we've built this great relationship because they know my network is going to get them the audience that they need.

We love seeing her work because it's beautiful. She's awesome because she thinks of new things all the time. I'm not going to say names because that's pin pointing one person but as a generalization, make sure that it happens. You're submitting the work that matters where it matters.

If you feel like we're doing some good and justice for you, then continue because if you're only submitting once and somebody sees it once, that's not really going to help you. If you submit every week or once a month or twice a year, submit it because people start recognizing who you are.

It's just like us and my team. We look at a photo and go, "There they are again. Oh, there they are again. Oh my God, there they are again." Because we recognize the style of work. Submit to the places that are actually going to feed you and feed your audience and do it more than you can. That's the only way to make sure that you're growing your awareness and your audience base.

Marina Barayeva:

That's fantastic. Now, Topher, please help us to summarize a little bit everything. What are the three steps our listeners could do to submit photos to magazines and have a big chance to be accepted and get published?

Topher Adam:

The number one thing for me is master your craft so well that your audience, you have them in mind. You need to know your stuff. Obviously you have to understand what you're doing, because if you don't, you're not going to get that awareness.

Have conviction and passion that supports you all the way. Understand that that stuff is going to feed your work and your body of work and style and growth. Without, your work won't ever lend itself to the quality that most publications require. They just won't. You've got to have all of that behind you. It's like feeding yourself. You have to have food to survive.

If you're an artist, make sure you're living through passion and conviction and cling everything you can to your art to make it master class. Because then you'll obviously grow more and more.

Number two. I always say with likeminded teams your chances are bigger and more successful. If you work alone, great. If you're good at it by yourself, fantastic.

But when you work with bigger teams, you get this amazing thing that happens. It kind of morphs itself into (sings) this magical epicenes that you go, "Wow! What just happened?"

Take a risk and join a team. Try to let other people do their part. Have one task, one thing in mind and make a team work together, and you'll be surprised at what you can accomplish then.

Number three is don't be afraid of spending a little bit of money, because like I said, money makes money. Don't be afraid of money. I learned this from my mom a long time ago. She says feel the fear and do it anyway.

Sometimes what happens with us as human beings is we're operated by emotions and our emotions are love and fear, those two things. Fear causes us to stop so much that we don't take the risk to try. I think what happens is most people think, if I spend a little bit of money and go to the magazine, I don't know if I'm going to get anything out of it.

Well, here is the problem. You've already given yourself an obstacle. You said that I don't know if I'll get anything out of it. Of course! You never know what you're going to get out of it.

You never know what kind of results you're going to have with a cup of coffee. You know what it does and there's an action in it, it's caffeine, I'm awake! But you don't know if you're going to have to run to go to the bathroom. You don't know what the results are.

What I'm saying is, don't be afraid of what you're going to spend because you're investing into yourself. That's the most powerful fact. You have to invest in yourself. If you don't invest in yourself, why are you doing what you're doing?

We don't live in a society anymore where John Smith was discovered because of his art talents. We don't live there anymore. We live in a world where John, Jenny, Jacobs, whoever it is, everybody on the whole block is talking about, "Look at me! I'm an artist. No, no, come here. Come back. Oh, okay, go."

But you live in this world where everybody's talking about their being an artist, so how do you manage that? How do you get out there? You can either go, "Okay, I'll just let them win." Or you can go, "Screw that b*****. I'm out here first. I'm going to win. I'm going to promote myself. I'm going to get out there. I'm going to make sure everybody knows who I am and I'm going to be on the top."

That's how I live my life. I could have sat there and let Project Runway go, "You're not good enough Topher." I could have listened and I could have said, "Okay." And then tried something else. But I didn't. I said, "You know what? Screw them. There's got to be a way. I've got to support artists."

Because it was that door that slammed in my face that pushed me on the other side that says, "No, Topher is out. He's going to do something bigger, he's going to do something better, and he's going to support people just like himself."

And that's what I did. I wasn't afraid of that. I didn't look at it and go, "There's another chance that went away." I looked at it and went, "There's another opportunity that didn't happen and I have another door and I'm going to go through it." That's the way you have to see life. Those are my three top things.

Marina Barayeva:

Fantastic. Please share with us how we can learn more about you. How can we find more about you, connect with you, and reach you?

Topher Adam:

I always laugh at this one because I always think to myself, all you got to do is Google me because I'm like a whore in the corner. I'm everywhere. You just Google Topher Adam and ta dah! Here he is. You can just Google me, I'm all over the place.

I'm an illustrator, photographer, musician, artist, fashion designer, loony bin comedian. I'm all over the place.

But if you're looking for Dark Beauty, it's easy. Darkbeauty.com We're going to rule the world. It's funny, I have to say this, and no, I've only had one cup of coffee today, this is what passion does people. If you live from passion, you have energy. I always said, one day Dark Beauty is going to be on the shelves next to Marie Claire. And guess what? It happened.

Marina Barayeva:

Woohoo!

Topher Adam:

One day, it was on the shelves, on iTunes, next to Marie Claire. It wasn't on the real shelf, it was just on iTunes. But at least I did it.

Marina Barayeva:

Still, yes.

Topher Adam:

Yes, it doesn't matter if it's digital or if it's a physical copy, I did it. I was right next to Marie Claire and I'm like, "Woah. Things do come true if you believe in it." Things really happen. But like I said before, Dark Beauty was my screw you to Project Runway and look what happened. This magical thing where I get to support artists who just want to be seen and recognized and accepted and valued.

It happens, people, it really happens. Just live out of passion. Love what you do. Never say no, well you can say no to some things, but never say no to the things that don't matter. Always say yes when you believe that it matters because that's what will take you further, it really will.

Marina Barayeva:

Amazing Topher, thank you so much for your inspiration and a lot of great tips.

Topher Adam:

Of course, I'm happy to anytime. You can ask me anything you want. I'm always here.

Marina Barayeva:

Thank you.

Topher Adam:

Welcome.

Marina Barayeva:

All right. I hope you got new insights that you're ready to try in your business. If you missed something or would like to go back to some parts of this interview just go to intnetworkplus.com where you will find the show notes and the full transcript of the episode.

And if you have the questions or topics that you would like to hear about on the show just email me to marina@intnetworkplus.com.

Announcer:

Thank you so much for joining us today. If you are new to the show be sure to subscribe. And for more marketing tips go to the IntNetworkPlus.com where you'll find the answers on the hottest topics about how to grow your business. You were listening to Marketing for Creatives show. See you next time.

Resources from this interview:

- Learn more about Topher Adam's Dark Beauty Magazine on darkbeautymag.com
- Follow Dark Beauty Magazine on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#)