

Beyond the story

MASTERCLASS FOR COACHES | SAS PETHERICK

Meet Maya

Tell me a little about yourself and your background

I'm 48, married, and have two children who are 17 and 20. I went to art college in my early 20s but left when I became pregnant with my eldest. I always thought I'd go back, but I never did.

I don't regret it. I loved being home with my kids and I've always kept making art. I'm mostly self-taught now and I've developed my own style over the years. I've done occasional commissions and sold bits and pieces, but I've never really treated it as a career.

Now the kids need me less, I've suddenly got more space to think about what I want. I've started selling a few pieces and getting really lovely feedback, and I'd love to take it more seriously. But I feel slightly ridiculous calling myself an artist because I didn't finish my training.

What would you like to work on in coaching?

I want to work out whether I can actually make a go of this. I know I need to start putting my work out there properly, approaching galleries, sharing more online and generally being more visible, but I find all of that incredibly uncomfortable.

I have massive imposter syndrome. I look at people who went to art school, have proper qualifications and have been doing this professionally for 20 years and think, Who am I kidding?

I'm also honestly a bit heartbroken by everything happening with AI. It feels like the whole creative landscape is changing just as I've finally got the space to do this, and sometimes I wonder whether I've just missed my chance. I know some of this might just be excuses because I'm scared, but I genuinely don't know.

What would you like to be different as a result of coaching?

I'd like to make a decision about whether I'm really going to do this and, if I am, give it everything I've got. I don't want to look back in five years and think, you had your chance and you bottled it. There's definitely a bit of last-chance-saloon energy about

it. My kids are older, I'm nearly 50, the industry is changing so quickly, and I feel like if I'm ever going to find out whether I can make this work, it has to be now.