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experience and one key message. Some ideas for what to discuss or do during your talk include:

- Your process, step by step, including a live demonstration
- The historical context of your work
- What other artists are doing in your field
- Your unique materials
- What you're seeking to understand with your work
- The story of how one work or series came to be from the first spark of an idea to finished work.

For this issue, I interviewed five experienced artists who all enjoy giving artist talks. They didn't always enjoy the process, but now they do. Read on to learn from artists who are out in the world giving talks about what made all the difference.

DON'T BE NERVOUS ABOUT NERVES

Judith Modrak

I went from a reluctant, nervous speaker (at best) to fully embracing, not only the opportunity, but the entire experience and the audience as well. Hour-long artist talks swim by in seemingly minutes followed by dynamic question and answer sessions. It really is a case of reprogramming one's response to what can be a cause for stress into an occasion to reveal one's body of work and sources of inspiration in more depth. My tips include:

- *It's fine to be nervous, most people will be a little nervous. Work with the nerves, not against them. Focus on your work and what you love about it and want to say about it.*
- *Exercise the day of a big talk or take a walk to collect your thoughts.*
- *Be prepared: preparation reduces anxiety.*

- *It's OK to pause and ask for something, for example a glass of water or that the lights be turned down a notch or that the projector's color be tweaked. All these things make you feel calmer and put you in control of the situation.*

TELL YOUR STORY TO COLLECTORS

Jaqueline Doyle Allison

There's nothing more affirming, gratifying or terrifying than speaking to a group of potential collectors about my art. Connecting them through words to the visual aspects of my abstract paintings opens a line of communication and understanding that would not be there through the image alone.

Collectors resonate with, and respond to, an artist's work not only because of the visual impact, but also because of the backstory and influences behind the work. An artist talk gives viewers a glimpse of the artist as a human being

3 *Our Memories at Naumburg Bandshell, Central Park, 2018, by Judith Modrak. Fiberglass resin cast and acrylic stones, 54" x 22" x 24". Copyright © Judith Modrak, photo by Sylvie Rosokoff. Used by permission of the artist.* 4 *Our Memories at Thomas Paine Park, 2018, by Judith Modrak. Fiberglass resin cast and acrylic stones, 46" x 54" x 26". Copyright © Judith Modrak, photo by Sylvie Rosokoff. Used by permission of the artist.*