

Collecting Art

The Caldwell Gallery

History of Collecting Art

Historically, there has been a great deal of mystery surrounding the collecting and ownership of fine art and antiques. During the Renaissance, there was a guild system in place which was driven by sponsorship from wealthy families, royalty, and the church. The creation of beauty in all its forms was therefore dependent on the direction dictated by the wealthy and powerful. By the mid-nineteenth century this system was changing. The emergence of artist coalitions along with a broad based middle class had a dramatic affect on the creation of art. It freed the artist to pursue art, at least theoretically, for solely personal and aesthetic reasons. While this worked towards artistic freedom there were still limitations. The twentieth century saw the continuation of this process of change along with increased artistic freedom in art through the introduction of radical modern concepts such as non-objective art. Artist led rebellions against the art "establishment" began to place artistic freedom outside the bounds of the traditional dealer-artist-museum triumvirate. Evolving technologies of the twenty-first century now allow everyone equal access to global markets. This may be the art world's final transition to truly democratic way of collecting art.

How to Start Collecting Art

For most people art collections start one piece at a time. Start by looking everywhere! Look in museums, galleries, private dealers, auctions, and at art and antique shows. Buy art books and magazines, and begin the process of educating your eye and defining your tastes. Zero in on the things that give you that extra little "tingle" when you see them. You will get to a point in your education where you'll know if a work is right for you almost instantly. Are you eclectic, casting your net over a wide range of periods and styles? Or are you tightly focused, delving deeply into one of the multitude of "micro" markets, which in turn make up the art market as a whole? There is no right or wrong, and expect your tastes and eye to evolve over time. It is this process of evolution which attracts and hooks all of us who share an interest in this exciting field.

Ask yourself why you are interested in buying art? This is a highly personal question, which is answered differently by each collector. It is our hope that the collectors we work with are seeking a life enriching experience through the purchase of art. How strongly does an artwork *speak to us*? In a way, collecting art is similar to falling in love. There's the initial stage of infatuation, which is driven by the senses. Then there is the getting-to-know you or research stage, which holds this potential relationship up to the realities of bright daylight. At this point there may be valid reasons to eliminate a particular work from purchase consideration. And finally, there's the point after all this where it just makes perfect sense to "tie the knot" by buying the work of art. At The Caldwell Gallery, this process is one that we strive to tailor to each client's individual needs. Whenever possible we will deliver a work without obligation to a client's home so they can experience the visual impact and staying power of the piece at leisure in their own environment.