

PRIVATE AIR

LUXURY HOMES

Volume 2 | Issue 3

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DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE

DESIGN LINES-

BUYING Art

By: Pamela Hughes

As designers working in virtually every style and on projects large and small, we find that just about every project is better with art. So we have become skilled at buying art, and we love to assist our clients with their art research and purchases.

The phrase, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder," is never as true as it is with art. Even educated and totally knowledgeable art critics can have different views on a particular piece of art.

Sometimes art is selected because the viewer sees it as pleasant, calming, beautiful, technically well-produced, shocking, avant-garde, valuable, or as a good investment for resale. All of this art can be "good", if it is simply selected due to personal preference or intent.

Generally, the person who is new to art will select a piece that is pleasant or beautiful. They may not know the techniques used or even care; they just like the art for its decorative value. This is wonderful – art should be a part of everyone's life whether one is an art expert or not.

Some collectors like avant-garde art which can often be outrageous, sometimes arousing, or simply something new. Some of this avant-garde art is not understood by either the novice or the professional. But it is a new expression and often offers us a new way of looking at something mundane or "everyday". New expression is good. Often it leads to greater and more accomplished expression.

This point is easy to illustrate especially with the contemporary art of the sixties and seventies. Lots of canvases were painted, some just all white or of another color, and lots of stripes (The Washington Color School) or splatters of paint (à la Jackson Pollock and Clyfford Still). It is easy to say, "I could have done that," and lots of us

could have. But, the artists did it first, and by doing it first, got credit for starting the trend, helping us see things in a new way.

Then there is intellectual art, which can easily fall into the avant-garde category. Intellectual art is a thoughtful and deep manifestation by the artist which some people can comprehend and others cannot. Often, it is understood by studying or knowing the artist, so one can appreciate the elements of the art and what the artist is trying to convey.

In the upper echelons of art, technique becomes more important. Old Masters are celebrated because of breakthroughs in technique or style for their era. For instance, Vermeer used light in a new way, Renoir was a leading painter in the development of the Impressionist style, and Picasso is known for his founding role in the Cubist movement.

There is endless advice on why and how to buy art. Some people believe that art gains value when it changes hands, so there is the investment angle. Others say to buy art that challenges you, buy what makes you feel good or buy from artists you admire or know.

My advice is: buy the best art you can afford for whatever your strategy or for whatever your reasoning happens to be.

Buying art, and having art, enhances your daily life, supports the community of artists and art dealers, and opens up your world. And artists are fun and interesting people!

The next time there is an art opening in your neighborhood or city, take advantage of this wonderful social, intellectual, and eye-opening experience. Go and enjoy!

DESIGN

Painting by Wolf Kahn, hanging in a Washington, DC Residence



VISIT STUDIOS, OPEN THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION WITH ARTISTS AND DEALERS, AND GET INVOLVED. IT IS GREAT FUN, STIMULATING AND WHO KNOWS! MAYBE YOU'LL COME HOME WITH THE NEXT PICASSO OR RENOIR!



Clockwise from Top: Painting by West Frazer, Charleston, SC, artist hanging in a home in Kiawah Island, SC, Painting by David Steiner of Sarasota, FL, hanging in The Concession Golf Club, Bradenton, FL, Painting by David Steiner of Sarasota, FL, hanging in The Concession Golf Club, Bradenton, FL

About Pamela Hughes:

Pamela Hughes is an international interior designer whose firm, Hughes Design Associates, designs distinctive interiors for private residences and estates throughout North America, the Caribbean and the Bahamas. The firm's portfolio includes styling vocabulary from cutting edge contemporary, to classic modern, to historical and traditional design. Pamela and her firm have been featured in Architectural Digest, Veranda, Washington Life and other fine publications. In addition, HGTV produced a one hour special on Pamela and her work showcasing a grand home in Chicago and the Four Seasons Hotel in Philadelphia.