



# How to buy art

*When it comes to purchasing art, most of us feel intimidated. As we've been taught since grade school, there's always a "right" and a "wrong" and this intellectual value system makes the thought of purchasing art unnecessarily stressful. Many of us imagine the embarrassment of showcasing a piece, where our tastes will be dissected and judged by those visiting our homes. But relax! Here are some helpful tips!*

The number one cardinal rule in buying art is simply to buy what you like. This is the mantra of the art world and anytime you ask for advice on what to buy, it is the first thing any reputable dealer will tell you. However, before sinking your hard-earned cash into any significant purchase, become an art lover.

"Knowledge is everything," says Rocco Pannese, proprietor of the Kipling Art Gallery located at Kipling and Highway 7. "I don't 'sell' art here - it's not something that can be pushed. Art has to come to the buyer: There has to be a bond. I simply provide information and if somebody wants to buy, they buy!" Mr. Pannese suggests that one of the best places to start is Nathan Phillips Square, when they hold art sales. He suggests that you check out the artists in the cheap outer booths and up on the grass: "There's a lot of good buys there. Most are students, so the pieces are very reasonably priced and, if you really like the piece, it doesn't matter that the artist is unknown."

He also suggests that art galleries are excellent places to start defining your preferred style. "Take your time in identifying your tastes by asking yourself why you like certain pieces. You'll meet other enthusiasts, make contacts and start discovering your comfort zone. Don't be afraid to ask questions because most people love to talk about their preferences and collections."

Some people collect art as an investment; however, Mr. Pannese doesn't necessarily agree

that this is the best way to start. At any entry level, one can expect to pay several hundred dollars for an artwork and, as acumen and passion develop, one can expect to start spending more. Although most art appreciates, he suggests that the best way to collect is through passion, first and foremost.

"I think everyone should have art in their homes. It is the greatest enhancement to any space - not just because it's beautiful in itself, but because it shows you care about the space. To me art is very much about originality. Even if it's not an original work, say it's a poster, then what you select, how you display it, where you display it adds originality and conveys your personal tastes."

When selecting art, pick what you like but also make sure the piece will work in your home. Most galleries dealing in originals will allow you to take the piece home to view it in the designated light and space. Many dealers, after learning your tastes and budget, will guide you towards interesting shows or artists. You'll be informed of trends, critical reviews and awards.

Art is playing a new role in our lives. One condo builder is even offering art as an upgrade, as opposed to appliances! Art is now perceived as more of an essential as opposed to a bonus luxury. In fact, because of the huge market demand, decorative art is enjoying its biggest boom ever. Take some time and browse. You too will become an art lover.