

A GUIDE TO BUYING CONTEMPORARY ART FOR YOUR BUSINESS

THE BENEFITS OF ADDING AN ART COLLECTION
TO YOUR COMPANY PORTFOLIO



*'And Pigs Might Fly',
by sculptor Krys Pomeroy*

Featured Piece Available through KilbahaGallery.com

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What is contemporary art?

Contemporary art is 'art, created by a living, present day, artist' – (as opposed to historical art). The term 'contemporary' in this instance, does not pertain to the style of work. Contemporary art can be of any style, from classical to abstract, but the work is 'of the moment' by virtue of being created by a contemporary artist.

At Kilbaha Gallery we are always on the look-out for exciting, up-and-coming artists, as well as consistently showcasing and selling work by many of Ireland's established, professional, contemporary artists.

Starting an Art Collection

First, let's take a closer look at WHY having a company art collection can be a brilliant addition to your business and workspace.

To Enhance Public Spaces

Having pieces of original art, either paintings, sculptures, or abstract installations, adorning your public thoroughfares and/or your offices, is a beautifully positive way of enhancing your spaces; not just for the benefit of those patrons who visit and use your services, but for those who work there too.

Original art can add intrigue, fun, and a touch of class, to your foyer, or entrance hall, waiting room, or dining areas. It can be especially effective in outdoor spaces too.

This can really serve to provide an atmosphere, inspire dialog, and create a meaningful connection between the company, the team, and the patrons.

To Boost Morale

It boosts morale to have a fun, bright, company art collection. It stimulates chat, perhaps some critique and maybe even might help inspire further creativity within the company environment itself.

It instills a certain confidence within your team to know that their employers are considering their space and putting thought into how it flows and feels. It also speaks to the company's culture of supporting the arts.

Art can do the 'talking' for you

Having a great art collection can say so much about your company, your style, your business, your cultural influences and so on.

The 'type' of art you choose can complement your décor, and interior design and can add to your building or business's overall style (i.e., modern, traditional, classic etc.).

Whether your industry is food, accommodation, advertising, law, or dentistry – a 'nod' to what it is you do, can rather cleverly be achieved through your art choices. Is it large modern food paintings in your restaurant's dining room? Or an artist's interpretation of what you do, in your waiting room? Or interesting graphic design posters along your corridors?

Location:

You can also speak to your 'location' through your art choices. Are you in a distinctly rural or urban location? Can you pay homage to that somehow? Will you have a huge city skyline in oils in your boardroom? Or a dramatic seascape painting with crashing waves in your foyer?

Or perhaps, for a less 'literal' nod to your location, you just might choose a local artist, regardless of what the subject matter is.

And finally, in a rather more classical way, you can always commission pieces such as oil portraits of board members or indeed a bronze bust of a founding father etc.

As a Financial Investment

Art is an asset that will generally hold its value. In fact, it will potentially appreciate, in value, over time – and furthermore, in some cases, can rise in value quite considerably.

Therefore, a thoughtfully considered art purchase may indeed be a very good investment for your company.

Contemporary art (art by a living artist) is perhaps a long game purchase when it comes to getting a return on investment, but in some cases, it can happen quite quickly.

Many contemporary artists can have a very exciting career where their trajectory is strong, their profile is rising at a fast pace, and their work shows signs of rising considerably in value over time.

Although, in investment terms, these might indeed be speculative purchases, it is still most definitely a great way to support the arts and enhance your space considerably, while also building on the value of the collection.

NOTE: Also, in Ireland, original art purchased by a company for public display, can avail of certain tax benefits – enquire with your financial advisor as to how this works and for the most up to date information. Generally, this pertains to art that you have on display in your public spaces.

Why choosing 'Contemporary Art' is truly, 'Supporting the Arts'

Company art collections often consist of historical art (important old art) especially if being purchased from an investment point of view.

However, including 'contemporary art' as part of your art collection, is seen as truly 'supporting the arts' (i.e., supporting a living artist and his or her family). This makes it a far more fulfilling direction for your company to go in and can – and should – be seen as an act of corporate social responsibility.

Indeed, the added benefits of 'Supporting the Arts' is worth exploring further.

Because not only do you get to reap the visual benefits of having beautiful pieces hanging in your workspace, but you also benefit from knowing that you are doing something directly positive for the industry as well as in how your company is perceived by those who visit and work there.

In this case, buying art from contemporary artists or through contemporary art galleries, is to know that your purchase is benefitting both the artist and the industry.

And although somewhat speculative, is nonetheless potentially valuable down the line.

Patrons of the Arts

Companies, big and small, are often regarded as patrons of the arts through the purchasing and showcasing of contemporary art in their lobbies and main thoroughfares for staff and visiting dignitaries to enjoy.

Culture

It is telling of a company's culture when they are seen to be supportive of contemporary artists and interested in how they make both their staff, and their clients feel about the environment they are in.

Events

Supporting the arts opens-up opportunities for holding company events – based around that such as exhibiting the collection, celebrating new additions to the collection, celebrating an artist perhaps – or indeed just having the collection can help in creating the right ambiance in a space for any important, company soirees or visiting dignitaries.

Corporate Gifting

It is also wonderful for companies to be able to gift pieces of original art to retiring board members, long standing team members, visiting dignitaries or other such important people or to mark significant moments. By doing so they continue to show their support for the arts and are sharing the love for a particular artist and raising their profile in the process.

Guide to Buying Contemporary Art

Whatever your reasons, it's a win, win type of investment – with a multi-faceted return. Here are some pieces of advice we would give to businesses / companies looking to start or grow their art collection.

Advice

Speak to a gallery like ours who have a solid track record within the industry and are used to dealing with businesses big and small. Developing a relationship with a trustworthy and reliable gallery, or indeed several of them, is a great place to start. Not only do they have their finger on the pulse, but they also know their own artists really well, they are watching what artists are up and coming and most importantly, would have a good idea of what artists might suit your brief.

The Brief

Speaking of the brief, it is important to consider two things before going to your gallery for a chat. Space and Style

Space:

Your space or spaces (the size, shape, and general surroundings of the spaces that you might like to see new art placements) is the most important consideration.

Is it a large open space that can take something in the middle?

I.e., a three-dimensional piece of sculpture for example?

Or is it the space behind a reception desk where a large painting might work? Or is it a corridor that you would like to see a collection by the same artist on?

Style: Once you have determined the space – have a brief think about style. You don't need to be certain on this, and can get guidance from your gallery. However, it is good to give your surroundings some thought – for instance, is there a certain style that would particularly suit your building's aesthetic? i.e., is it an old building that would warrant something sympathetic to that? Or sometimes, perhaps, the older the building, the more it can take a contrasting modern, abstract piece which could look superb!

Once you have at least considered the space and the style – don't worry, a good gallery will help you tease out the rest.

Other Considerations

Here are some of the things your gallery will be considering. They will help you look at things such as:

The Medium: Do you know what medium you would like to see used? If it is a painting, is it in oils? Is it acrylics? Or a Watercolour? Perhaps it is a mixed media piece?

If you are looking at outdoor sculpture for example, then your medium becomes very important indeed. Steel or iron would rust (something that can also look good over time but would have a limited lifespan) but stone or bronze would be forever.

Decor: Is there a theme you would like to see complemented by your choice of art?

Do you tend to lean towards a traditional aesthetic or a more modern one?

Your sense of Place:

Do you want the piece to complement your actual business type or its location? It might not need to, but sometimes it can be a lovely addition from that point of view.

For instance, The Armada Hotel, here in Co. Clare, have celebrated their ocean views with a mix of original paintings that complement their seaside location and a large bronze sculpture of a breaching whale, by a local artist (Adil Vezir) – a piece cast in our own bronze foundry here in Kilbaha.

Other local hotels like, for example, the Cliffs of Moher Hotel in Liscannor, have included a mix of historical and contemporary art, from some very well known artists. These superb original pieces, dotted around the building, from their foyer to their bar, form a big part of their intrigue and appeal.

Other businesses include original art in their public thoroughfares such as public offices, waiting rooms, restaurant spaces, board rooms and so on.

It can also come down to the kind of ambiance that you want a staff member and / or a customer to feel a part of. Jovial and fun? Perhaps more relaxed and calming? Or indeed sophisticated and glamorous?

Your art decisions (perhaps working alongside your interior designer) will help achieve this.

The Artist: When you discuss the art, with your gallery, they will also talk about the individual artist.

Their reason for producing what they do, may resonate with the culture of the company. Their background story may be of interest and may highlight even further synergies.

Their trajectory may also be worth discussing in terms of the value of the work into the future.

The Budget: Finally, of course, knowing your budget is important when you go to your gallery. They can work within that brief to source you the piece or pieces that will best suit your needs and your business and for the price you can afford.

Kilbaha Gallery

Ailish Connolly and Liz Greehy are the owners and curators at Kilbaha Gallery. With many years of experience in the art industry, and indeed two generations of the family, steeped in the art business, the ladies and their team are knowledgeable and helpful – will gladly assist you in determining what piece or pieces you might like to add to your company collection.

Contact us on www.kilbahagallery.com

Featured Cover Piece:

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