

Title:

Collecting Art - Do you have the bottle?

Word Count:

779

Summary:

The beauty of the art collecting lottery is you can hang the ticket on your wall. A win, win situation, your wall decorations are working for you and all your friends can admire your taste.

Keywords:

art,investing,investment,collecting,collectables

Article Body:

The headline reads "Undiscovered master piece sells for millions at Auction". The family was overjoyed to discover that a picture that had hung on their grandfather's wall for years attracted a six figure price at auction. Grandson and heir said "The whole family knew he collected odds and ends but we never envisaged it would amount to anything."

Ok the above is fiction, but it's what's at the back of the majority of collector's minds, especially those who collect art. Buy it cheap and sell it for squillions. Just don't rely on it as your retirement fund. In many respects it is a lottery, your betting your collection decision against that fickle beast, public opinion. The beauty of the art collecting lottery is you can hang the ticket on your wall. A win, win situation, your wall decorations are working for you and all your friends can admire your taste.

Now that can be scary, because 90 out of 100 people know damn all about art. If it isn't chocolate box pretty it isn't art, right. Wrong, have a look at the masters of art in your local museum or better still here on the internet and see how many pretty pictures you can find. Look at Picasso, Gauguin, Pollock, Matisse, Cezanne or Van Gogh to mention a few.

It's Ok, I'll wait.

Not much prettiness there. What is there is life, both the depiction of it and in the picture itself. There is an energy that radiates from art and if you allow it that energy will take you places you have never been before. But be prepared, it will confront you, it will challenge you, it is opinionated and

isn't afraid to speak its mind, it is prepared to stand up and be counted, it is art.

As such it is in the vanguard of human experience, it is raw, it is fresh and new. It isn't the tried and true of recipes of yesterday rehashed, it is pushing the boundaries. In the 21st Century it is computer generated art in all of its many and varied forms. Be it fractal art, manipulated photography or cartoon cells, the collectable artists of today are using a keyboard and a mouse. If Michelangelo were to paint the Sistine Chapel today you can bet London to a brick he wouldn't be using intonaco. Now as then he would be using that latest technology available to him.

For the collector this just adds another level of complexity. Because computer art is so easily reproduced, what does one actually collect? As in the past, collect signatures, preferably from a limited edition. Obviously, the shorter the edition the better. If an open edition with a signature is all you can afford, go for it, it is better than a poster with or without a digital signature. If your print isn't signed by the fair hand of the artist, as a collectable, it is worthless and that includes digital signatures. It is a \$29.99 commodity and barely worth the paper it's printed on. Although the frame may attract a bid or two.

If you consequently come across your print on the cover of Vogue or in a TV commercial for whatever, chances are you're on a winner. That is the paperback of your signed first edition. Assuming of course your print has staying power, for so much of the mass media is based on ephemera. It is the quick hit that attracts attention and while this can be true of art there is a deeper relationship just waiting for your attention in works that can stand the test of time.

For anyone seriously considering collecting art, the pieces to acquire are those you can live with. If you like it from the start that is a bonus though not essential because if you have chosen wisely you will, over time and many conversations, come to love your new found friend. Works of art do become trusted friends and when it comes time to dispose of them it is a gut wrenching experience. This I know for I have been there and done that. When I had to dispose of my collection a few months ago my main concern was that they were going to good home rather than the financial return they could afford me. Consequently the ROI was less than if I had been less sentimental.

Though if ROI is your motivation and you can be hard nosed at the end of the day you will have many hours of enjoyment from your friends upon your walls along the way.

