

# Art World News

DECEMBER 2023

## THE INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE

### THOMAS LOCKHART'S IMPORTANT STORY TO TELL PRESENTED IN NEW COLLECTION

Mixed media artist, Dr. Thomas Elias Lockhart III, from Denver, CO, takes the techniques and skill that he has learned through the years as a self-taught artist, and infused storytelling into his newest collection. Go to page 14.

### FRAMER TOUTS VIRTUAL FRAMER BENEFITS

New Creation Framing owner Nancy White recently started using Virtual Framer, a portable picture frame-shop in software form, and has found that it has made the sales process easier in unexpected ways. To read more, go to page 10.

### EXPLORING THE LATEST CONTEMPORARY FRAMING TRENDS

This month, ADC Fine Art's Litsa Spanos delves into the exciting world of contemporary picture framing, exploring the fusion of tradition and innovation that defines current trends and how to create appealing projects. Go to page 20.

### DIRECT MAIL: THE OLD MASTER OF MARKETING

Gallery Fuel's Katherine Hébert says that using good old-fashioned direct mail is a great way to shake things up if a gallery owner is concerned that their current marketing might be getting a little stale or diluted with other digital competition. Page 22.



*Hilton Contemporary is located in Chicago.*

## SUPPORTING CAUSES HAS MULTIPLE BENEFITS

When it comes to spending money today, many consumers are highly influenced by supporting retailers with a charitable focus and that are working towards providing help for the community. Consumers like to know that they are helping, rather than hindering, with their money. While a business' bottomline and bringing in sales is still at the forefront for a gallery and frameshop owner, it is no longer how it is entirely judged. And the impact that a retailer's charitable work can have on a community and its brand image can extend it's reach into a new demographic of possible customers. But in today's

divided world, political concerns have made the selection of a charity a minefield with the possibility of offending, rather than endearing, all too great. While it is always good to lead with your  
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### QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

*"The collectors love the fundraising events because they feel good that their art purchase is going towards helping the mission of the charity."*

*Arlica Hilton, page 12*

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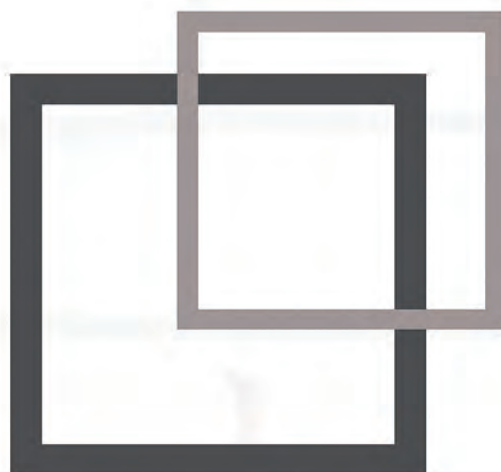
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Shown is "The Twelve," a  
mixed media on canvas by  
Thomas Elias Lockhart  
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## Supporting Causes Has Multiple Benefits

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## Presenting New Art Releases

We present the New Art section featuring current releases of work in an array of mediums, edition sizes, image sizes, and price points, as well as company contact information.

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## What's Hot in Open Editions

This month's What's Hot in Open Editions features a variety of the latest best selling open edition prints, some available as print-on-demand images, and it includes contact information as well.

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# IN OUR OPINION

## BEING AUTHENTIC

The world is a fast moving place that recently has been running at break-neck speed. Last week is a very distant memory while what's for dinner tonight seems set deep into the future. Once you have seemingly figured something out, it becomes irrelevant, flipped by someone, some thing or some idea you never remotely considered. As frustrating as it is exhausting.

So how is one expected to run a successful art and framing business against a stiff current and shifting sands? With strong conviction and an ability to communicate the virtues of their business in a manner that is real and motivating to their clientele. Now, more than EVER, the source and substance of what is offered to the public is dubiously being questioned. Is what you get and what you see really what you think it is? From appealing fast food to headline news stories might of dubious design or ori-

gin. The result is an assault on spontaneity and a slow down of fast-paced consumption.

The bedrock of success in the art and framing industry is grounded in creating and selling that which is real, transparent and of verifiable quality. Smart retailers incorporate the necessary educational process into their business practices to gain customers loyalty and improve employee skill. It might not be an incredibly high-tech approach but it's one that has stood the test of time. Good art and framing doesn't happen by itself. There are hours of training, studying, experience and practices that enables expert artists, gallerists and framers to create finished goods. So often, the back stories never get told to the clientele. The personal histories and motivations of those behind the finished product, are really important. In many ways, those stories are the keystone of what our industry is. Retelling them customers makes us distinctive and succesful.

**John Haffey**  
Publisher



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# The Must-Attend Industry Event



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# ARTISTS & PUBLISHERS

## Saper Galleries' Alvar Exhibition

Saper Galleries, East Lansing, MI, celebrates Spanish artist Sunol Alvar with an extensive exhibition of his sculptures, limited edition lithographs and drawings. It has been 20 years since the artist has visited the gallery, who has added dozens of original prints to their collection. Alvar, age 88, has stopped creating lithographs, but Saper Galleries has more than 60 of them in their east and west locations. Many of Alvar's lithographs are in suites, a set of 2 or 4 or 5 images of a common theme. For details, call (517) 351-0815 or visit: [www.sapergalleries.com](http://www.sapergalleries.com).



**"Concert of Evening" by Spanish artist Sunol Alvar.**

## Addison Art Gallery Helps Charity

Addison Art Gallery, Orleans, MA, is presenting a reception and show to benefit the Cape Cod Foster Closet organization, featuring work by award-winning artists, as well as painting instructors Maryalice Eizenberg and Jonathan Earle demonstrating oil painting. The Cape Cod Foster Closet provides clothing, shoes, toys, books, baby formula, duffel bags, backpacks and car seats to children in the foster care system. Eizenberg, whose "Cotillion" is shown, is a member of Oil Painters of America, as well as Twenty One in Truro, MA. Her work has been featured in museums on, and off, the Cape. For further information, phone Addison Art Gallery at (508) 255-6200 or go to the website at: [www.addisonart.com](http://www.addisonart.com).



**"Cotillion" by Maryalice Eizenberg is an oil on canvas measuring 20 by 16 inches and retails for \$1,400.**

## Corey Helford Gallery's Shanmei Show

Corey Helford Gallery (CHG), located in downtown Los Angeles, unveils their first solo exhibition from Chinese artist Li Shanmei, titled *Lucid Dreaming*. The artist is known for her oil



**"Mandala 24" by Li Shanmei is an oil on canvas measuring 16 by 12 inches.**

paintings depicting otherworldly children whose spirits and physical form are one with nature and life. Her use of bold colors, geometry and mandalas are nods to systems of mathematics yet also embody tools of spiritual guidance and ascension. Shanmei's painted children represent new age deities that adapt to the innovations of technology while also maintaining a homeostasis with their natural world. For more information, call (310) 287-2340 or go to the gallery's website located at: [www.coreyhelfordgallery.com](http://www.coreyhelfordgallery.com).

## Wendi Norris Gallery Debuts Devasher

Gallery Wendi Norris, San Francisco, CA, presents an opening reception for a show by Delhi-based artist Rohini Devasher titled *One Hundred Thousand Suns*. In collaboration with Minnesota Street Project Foundation (MSP Foundation), the event features Devasher's first U.S. solo exhibition of her research-driven body of work chronicling a decade as an eclipse chaser and astronomer. The focal point of the collection is the four-channel, 20-minute *One Hundred Thousand Suns* film which will debut simultaneously in three continents: Mumbai, India; Utrecht, Netherlands; and at Gallery Wendi Norris. For more details, call (415) 346-7812 or visit the website at: [www.gallerywendinorris.com](http://www.gallerywendinorris.com).



**Rohini Devasher's "Latent Fields" is an installation rendering.**





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PARIS—**New Creation Framing** owner Nancy White recently started using **Virtual Framer**, a portable picture frameshop in software form, at her San Marino, CA-based business and has found that it has made the sales process easier in unexpected ways. “I have run my brick-and-mortar since 1984,” she says. “Clients move out of town but still cling to our design aesthetic from a distance. With custom framing work, it’s a tricky dance of trust and delivering creative product that defies adjectives and verbal explanation. It is more laborious and time consuming to set up samples and mats, take multiple images and go back and forth in e-mails or texts to make a sale that with a client in the shop. Virtual Framer speeds up the decision-making process with the full image, and multiple views of mouldings ready on the app. With the app, I get to keep clients and also create new and innovative business relationships. I now am providing framing services as a secret supplier to a few needlework shops. And, it also lets those shopkeepers look professional. The speed with which I can make alterations to a design to respond to their needs is a real bonus.” Virtual Framer, developed by Khaled Feki, is only available to picture framing professionals and officially launches at the 2024 West Coast Art and Frame Expo held in Las Vegas in February. Another perk of the app is staying on top of inventory availability. “A side benefit is becoming aware of mouldings that aren’t in the print version of moulding catalogues or have otherwise escaped my attention,” Ms. White says. Visit Virtual Framer at: [www.virtualframer.com](http://www.virtualframer.com).

# SUPPORTING CAUSES BRINGS IN SALES

*continued from page 1*

heart personally, making the wrong decision for the business may hinder a company’s public relations efforts and tarnish its reputation.

Millenials—those born between 1981 and 1996—are the driving force behind this buying trend. These 27- to 42-year-olds are the largest working generation in the U.S. today and make up 35% of the workforce.

A recent study shows that 76% of those workers consider a business’ commitment to social and environmental issues when choosing where to spend their money.

And many Millennials walk the walk professionally. A study done by Cone Communications Company, a public relations, marketing and strategic communications firm, showed that 75% of Millennials would take a lower salary to work for a socially responsible company.

And along those lines, artists from this generation are often looking to galleries to help implement such practices when it comes to building their careers and promoting their artwork.

Custom framers are also seeing these trends as consumers ask more about

products that are sustainable and ecologically sound, and, more importantly, they are willing to pay more for them.

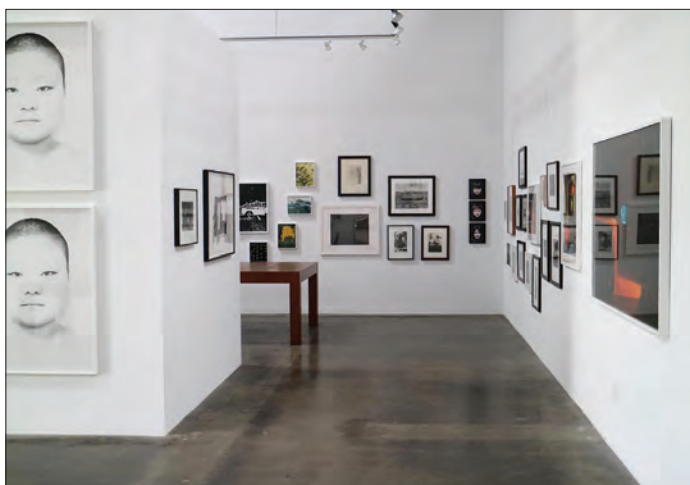
Rose Shoshana, owner of ROSEGALLERY located in the Bergamot Station Arts Center in Santa Monica, CA, says that actively supporting organizations that help the community are part of her business. “We are supporters of several organizations which I

gallery’s sales has been the best way to do it for her. “The most advantageous way for us to support these organizations is by giving them a percentage of sales from the acquisitions made by the gallery’s clients. Most times, the percentage comes from the gallery’s portion of the funds from sales, rather than the artists’ profits.”

Working closely with the artist, and their wishes on which charities to support, is a good way for Ms. Shoshana and her gallery to create a more symbiotic relationship with them. “At times we work with an artist who is connected to a charitable organization and wishes to col-

laborate with us on the funding. My mission is to stay focused on our the community’s needs yet also with an intention to support an organization, such as Human Rights Watch, which closely monitors abuses happening in all parts of the world, especially in times of war.”

The overall sense of goodwill a business can experience in doing charitable work also comes with marketing, employee engagement and branding opportunities, as well as tax benefits. Professionally-speaking, the program should benefit your brand and



**ROSEGALLERY is located in Santa Monica, CA.**

feel best serve our community,” she says. “One is Westside Food Bank, a local organization based in Santa Monica which uses funding to get fresh food items to those in need. Human Rights Watch is the second. We are dealing with so many important and dire issues at the moment. Hunger is first, always, which strongly ties in with human rights. We have also had events for the Tree People, an organization that plants trees in neighborhoods of Los Angeles that desperately need them.”

Ms. Shoshana says that making donations from the

*continued on page 12*





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Bittan Fine Art is proud to feature the work of  
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CARLSTADT, NJ—**Pantone**, recognized globally as a leading source of color expertise, announces PANTONE 13-1023 Peach Fuzz as its Color of the Year for 2024. Described as the company as “a velvety gentle peach tone whose all-embracing spirit enriches mind, body and soul,” it replaces 2023’s bold Viva Magenta. Pantone’s pale, warm orange color choice sets the tone for home decor, fashion, technology and various facets of trends for the coming year.

The Pantone Color Institute provides color insights and solutions; collaborating with its clients to strategically address color challenges and develop a color and design approach consistent with their brand vision. Shown above is Wild Apple’s “Sun Kissed I” by Moira Hershey and is available as POD.

To learn more about Pantone Color Institute, go to the website at: [www.pantone.com](http://www.pantone.com). For more information from Wild Apple, Woodstock, VT, phone (802) 457-3003 or visit: [www.wildapple.com](http://www.wildapple.com).

**CHARITABLE WORK**  
*continued from page 10*

help other people at the same time.

Arica Hilton, CEO of Hilton Contemporary, with two locations in Chicago’s River North and Bridgeport Art Districts, says that being community-minded is a good way to give back while getting the word out about the business. “Quite often the charity will approach us, or in most cases, it will be a charity that is close to our hearts,” she says. “We try to work with charities that will have the most impact on the causes that are most important to us, such as the environment, plastics in the oceans, pediatric cancer care, animal protection, wildlife charities, ALS (Lou Gehrig’s disease), etc.”

Collectors have responded positively, and Ms. Hilton says that people are more inclined to make a purchase when they know that their money will also have the added benefit of a donation to a good cause. “We have never received any negative feedback with any charities that we have worked with. People are always thrilled to know that we are working towards making our world a better place. And they want to join us in making that happen.”

Sometimes events can

garner much media attention. “Our artists are also quite hands-on with helping to raise funds through charity work. Take fine art photographer, conservationist and author David Yarrow for example, he has raised in excess of \$11 million for various charities over the last few years. He is always present and



*Hilton Contemporary is located in Chicago.*

works very hard to help raise the maximum amount of funds.”

Hilton Contemporary has



*Heather Gaudio Fine Art is in Greenwich, CT.*

held various events through the years that have attracted large crowds and even larger donations. “We recently worked with supermodel Cindy Crawford, raising millions of dollars for pediatric cancer care for American Family Hospital in Wisconsin. We also are working with

the Chicago Blackhawks Alumni for much needed medical care for former hockey players who do not have the means to pay for medical expenses. And recently, we raised over \$100,000 for ALS with the head coach of the Chicago Bears football team, Matt Eberflus. There is always something we can do to help.”

Ms. Hilton finds that her customers are enthusiastic to participate. “The collectors love the fundraising events because they feel good that their art purchase is going towards helping the mission of the charity,” she says. “They are active participants and supporters. With that, these events have helped with sales and with establishing a close and trusting relationship with our clients.”

Her advice though is to only take on what the business can handle and not to overextend oneself. “Don’t overdo or over commit. It is a lot of work with many surprises along the way. It is always best to partner with a reputable charity where they can help with many of the details. In our business, we have the means to be able to improve the circumstances of people, animals, our earth and anything else that is in need of support. And the arts are a perfect vehicle to bring attention to

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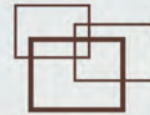
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**ORIGINAL DRAWING  
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AUCTION IN LONDON**



**LONDON—Forum Auctions** presents an auction for a newly re-discovered drawing by British sculptor and artist Henry Moore (1898-1986), found some 20 years ago in a charity shop in the U.K. The single drawing features four studies titled, "Mother and Child." This was a common theme in Moore's work.

The drawing's current owner thought it was just a print when they bought it for little money, but when it was brought into Forum Auctions and taken out of its frame Henry Moore's signature was found, as well as another drawing on the reverse side.

After two years of research by the Henry Moore Foundation, it has been authenticated. It is now included in the Foundation's upcoming catalogue raisonné and will be offered at auction with an estimate of £20,000 to £30,000 through Forum Auctions on December 14, 2023, in London. Established in 2016, Forum Auctions is London's specialist auction house for works on paper.

For further information, go to Forum Auctions' website located at: [www.forumauctions.co.uk](http://www.forumauctions.co.uk).

# LOCKHART'S IMPORTANT STORY TO TELL

Mixed media artist, Dr. Thomas Elias Lockhart III, from Denver, CO, takes the techniques and skill that he has learned through the years as a self-taught artist, and infused storytelling into his newest collection. Having mastered many different mediums, such as oil, acrylic, pencil and mixed media, he came to realize how impactful his artwork can be for the viewer, as well as himself.

"I have always been a very diverse artist throughout my career, but with my new work, there is research and a sense of purpose behind each piece," he says. "Part of my work's evolution is that the art can take the viewer deeper into what they see initially. I also start all of my work with a black background and build up the layers using white for shadows and highlights."

For Lockhart, the story that needs to be told is as important as the artwork itself. "The message is always based on inspiration. I want the viewer to leave my work better off as a person than when they came."

## The Early Years

He initially got his start as a graphic designer but began his career as a professional artist in 2000. Today his work is carried by various fine art galleries and there is even a

documentary about his life and work set to be released in 2024.

"Starting out, it was difficult to get into galleries," he says. "They really wanted established artists. They wanted to know where my work has been. Many times I was trying to just make it on my own. Over the years, and especially this year, I

tional award (Top 60 Masters Awards, often called

"The Oscars of the Visual Arts"), an Honorary Doctorate Degree in arts and culture, a Lifetime Educator of the Year award and I just won a Best New Artist Award at a recent national show. I have also had my work displayed in three museums this

year. And, in 2024, I have an international documentary coming out on several streaming platforms. I am very excited to see it when it premieres."

Having been in the industry for 23 years, Lockhart says that meeting with collectors has become more important now than ever.

"When I get a chance, I love to be hands-on with my existing collectors and new collectors, but I do also love when a gallery can represent my work and explain it from a third-party perspective, such as describing their personal experience with the work."

## Expanding His Customer Base

Getting his work out into the world is important to Lockhart, and often that means expanding beyond the art market. "I have been the featured artist for the



**Dr. Thomas Elias Lockhart III.**



**Lockhart's "A Sure Foundation" is a mixed media on canvas measuring 24 by 48 inches (\$8,000).**

have gained many accolades. I received a interna-

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# DR. THOMAS ELIAS LOCKHART III

## INTERNATIONAL MIXED MEDIA ARTIST



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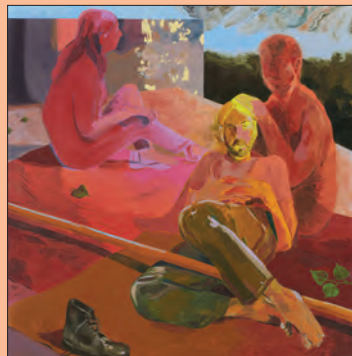
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**OGUNKUIT MUSEUM  
ANNOUNCES ANTHONY  
CUDAHY EXHIBITION**



OGUNKUIT, ME—As part of its opening exhibition in 2024, the **Ogunquit Museum of American Art (OMAA)** has announced the first solo show in the U.S. of Anthony Cudahy's work titled, "Anthony Cudahy: Spinneret." Spanning the last half-decade of his career, this survey of more than 30 significant paintings—including brand-new work—will explore Cudahy's richly layered practice. The exhibition will be on view April 12 through July 21, 2024. Wrapped around scenes of intimacy are meditations on death and its politics. From the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 1990s to the Covid-19 pandemic, the artist examines these periods of crises with homages to artist and filmmaker Derek Jarman, and more germane views of crowds congregating during lockdowns. Cudahy brings together different histories, featuring images from a range of sources, including photos from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center archives in New York and medieval tapestries. Shown is Cudahy's "Tempest (rooftop)," an oil on linen measuring 72 by 72 inches. For further information, telephone (207) 646-4909 or go to the Ogunquit Museum's website located at: [www.ogunquitmuseum.org](http://www.ogunquitmuseum.org).

**THOMAS LOCKHART**  
*continued from page 14*

last three years at the Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival," he says. "It is great to interact with people, explain the artwork and see their reaction of their perception of the work. Over the years, I have witnessed many emotions from them—some people laugh, some people have a lot of joy, some people cry—and they tell me that it is very powerful."

Technology plays a big role in his career growth as well. "Social media is a great place to grow your presence as an artist. It is ever-changing, but sometimes it is difficult to put a lot of time into social media and paint at the same time. My advice is to get help to keep your presence growing on social media from someone else."

Lockhart's work is available as originals of mixed media, (primarily in acrylic, but also in oil, watercolor, pen and ink and pencil on wood, paper and canvas), limited edition (giclées on paper and canvas) and open editions.

The evolution of his original work has been about finding the best techniques and elements to tell the story of each piece.

## The Evolution of His Work

"Over the years, I have been able to capture the essence of my work effectively in many different mediums. Being as a self-taught artist, I have had to learn a great deal on my own, but I am very lucky to have several friends and

## Wearing Many Hats

"In addition to actually creating the artwork, I manage my online gallery, write and send weekly emails, do social media marketing, dream up fun promotions, manage finances and constantly learn as much as I can about how to get my work in front of more people," he says.

"With all of the experience that I have acquired over the last number years, I can see how both the artistic and business sides work together. Also, traveling, going to events and meeting with people one-on-one really makes you have an appreciation for the art industry as a whole."

Creating meaningful conversation is a catalyst for much of Lockhart's work and with that comes

representation and understanding. "I want my work to make you think. We don't think anymore as people. We let the media and the world around us guide our thoughts. It's important to have your own mind."

For further information, telephone Lockhart Gallery in Denver, CO, at (720) 219-3460 or visit the artist's website located at: [www.lockhartgallery.com](http://www.lockhartgallery.com).



**"Roses Defined" by Lockhart is a mixed media on canvas measuring 36 by 48 inches and retailing for \$9,500.**

mentors that I can pull from in navigating my art career," he says. "I am blessed knowing that the successes that I have with my art, don't come without prayer and hard work. Never giving up and continuing to pursue your goals and dreams help to make them a reality in your life." The retail price range of his originals go from \$1,000 for a small piece and up to \$30,000. Limited editions range from \$750 to around \$2,800.



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**CHARITABLE WORK**  
*continued from page 12*

and help, make these changes. It is very satisfying when we can make a difference in peoples' lives."

To disregard this trend might be a mistake as the list of successful, and growing, companies who have incorporated charity into their business model is undeniable. For example, the globally-recognized shoe company TOMS has been philanthropic from day one and donates one-third of its profits to various of grassroots organizations.

Also, in collaboration with Save the Children, TOMS donates one pair of shoes for every pair that is purchased. Since 2011, nearly 1 million pairs of shoes has been donated to those in need. Eyewear brand Warby Parker offers free eyeglasses and exams to students in need, while also training adults to administer essential eye exams and sell glasses affordably.

Ice cream company Ben & Jerry's, founded in 1978, has always put social issues from climate change to LGBTQ+ rights to refugee rights, at the forefront of its business model. The Ben & Jerry's Foundation, specifically, supports communities in the company's home state of Vermont, while also offering a national grant program that aims to support grassroots organizations and movements around the country. The foundation itself has donated more than \$50 mil-

lion and the company has also pledged 7.5% of its annual profits as a donation to its foundation.

At Heather Gaudio Fine Art in Greenwich, CT, gallery director Rachael Palacios says that when it comes to choosing charities, they look to what is important to their community. "We try to be selec-



*Kiechel Fine Art is in Lincoln, NE.*

tive with organizations that are close to ours, and our clients,' values," she says. "It is hard to support everything so the challenge for us it to remain focused on a few causes. Because we are a small business, we tend to stick to charities and causes that are close to home and local to the community. That is where we feel our impact is most effective."

Such events may help to build stronger relationships with a gallery's

artists, while also helping to connect with collectors. "Sometimes artists will donate artworks to an auction or charity event we partner with, other times we have partnered with them to donate their time and talent for a specific community project," Ms. Palacios says. "It's always on a case-by-case basis. We also work closely with our collectors in supporting their causes and they have also supported our charitable ventures. It takes a village, these things don't happen in a vacuum. The primary driving factor is to effectuate a change in the community. If a sale happens in the course of the charitable event and project, that is great, but that is not the driving force."

Ms. Palacios agrees that keeping the list of charitable work to a manageable number is important. "We find we need to limit the number of events and must be selective with the causes to support. As a small business, we can only do so much, so when we do something we prefer to do it well. Less is more!"

For Buck Kiechel, owner and director of Kiechel Fine Art in Lincoln, NE, creating meaningful outreach and meeting charitable goals comes from

having a passion for the cause, as well as hard work. But since he opened the gallery in 1986, he has also learned what to avoid. "I tend to choose charities that align with my personal goals and mission. But it must also be mutually beneficial for all those involved," he says. "I feel a lot of charities take advantage of artists, wanting them to contribute their work to help fund charities. I'm more inclined to support charities which support artists, rather than taking from artists in order to reach their goals."

Working in collaboration with an artist on a charity event is the best way to go for both parties. "As a private dealer, it hurts my sales if the artist and the charity work exclusively and do not include the gallery. You will have a group of people who choose to buy their work from a non-profit rather than a retail gallery for tax benefit reasons."

Another part of the process is to learn as much information about the organization and how the money is spent. It is also important to make sure that all parties involved are able to benefit in some way. "As a business owner, I need to know the mission and where the generated funds will be going before we make a choice. In the end, as long as the event is beneficial for the charity, the artist and the gallery, it's a great thing. But it can become one-sided."

*Koleen Kaffan is Editor in Chief of Art World News.*





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# ART INDUSTRY TRENDS

## EXPLORING CONTEMPORARY FRAMING TRENDS

**By Litsa Spanos**

Picture framing has evolved beyond its traditional role of preserving and displaying artwork or photographs. In recent years, framing has become an art form in itself, with trends constantly evolving to reflect changing tastes and design philosophies. This article delves into the exciting world of contemporary picture framing, exploring the fusion of tradition and innovation that defines current trends.

### Minimalist Elegance

One of the prevailing trends in picture framing is the embrace of minimalist design. Clean lines, simple profiles, and neutral colors dominate, allowing the artwork to take center stage. This approach often involves the use of thin frames or even frameless options, creating a sleek and modern aesthetic that complements various art styles.

### Mixed Materials And Textures

Contemporary framing has moved beyond traditional wood and metal options. A growing trend involves experimenting with mixed materials and textures. Frames incorporating elements like reclaimed wood, acrylic, or even fabric add a tactile and dynamic dimension to the overall presen-

tation. This trend invites creativity, allowing framers to explore unique combinations that enhance the visual appeal of the artwork.

### Floating Frames

Floating frames, which create the illusion that the art-



work is suspended within the frame, continue to gain popularity. This technique involves placing the artwork between two panes of glass or acrylic, allowing for an unobstructed view of the edges. Floating frames add a sense of depth and sophistication, providing a contemporary twist to traditional framing methods.

### Bold Colors & Geometric Shapes

Traditional frames often feature muted tones, but contemporary trends embrace bold and vibrant colors. Frame

designers are experimenting with eye-catching hues and geometric shapes, injecting energy and personality into the framing itself. These frames serve as an extension of the art, contributing to the overall visual impact of the display.

### Customization & Personalization

As consumers seek unique and personalized design solutions, custom framing is on the rise. Framing shops and online services now



offer a wide range of options for customizing frames, including choosing materials, finishes, and even adding engraved details. This trend aligns with the desire for individual expression and ensures that the framing complements the specific character of each piece of art.

### Sustainability & Eco-Friendly

With a growing focus on sustainability, eco-friendly framing options have gained traction. Materials such as bamboo, recycled wood, and environmentally friendly finishes are becoming more prevalent. Consumers are increasingly conscious of the environmental impact of their choices, and framers are responding by offering greener alternatives.

Contemporary picture framing is a dynamic and ever-evolving field that reflects the diverse tastes and preferences of art enthusiasts. The fusion of traditional craftsmanship with modern design principles has given rise to a myriad of exciting trends, from minimalist elegance to bold experimentation with materials and colors. As framing continues to push the boundaries of creativity, it plays a crucial role in enhancing and contextualizing the visual experience of art in our lives.

*Litsa Spanos is the President of ADC Fine Art and works with private, corporate and commercial clients for 30 years. Her mission is to support contemporary, living artists and her company ranks as the top 2% of women-owned businesses in the nation based on revenue. For more details, visit: [www.adcfineart.com](http://www.adcfineart.com).*





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## DIRECT MAIL: THE OLD MASTER OF MARKETING

by **Katherine Hébert**

For a long time now, art gallery marketing has been all about digital channels, such as search engine optimization (SEO), social media, and email marketing. If you are concerned your marketing might get a little stale or diluted with other digital competition, you could shake things up with old-fashioned direct mail. In this article, we will discuss how direct mail marketing can do that for art galleries and wake up your audience to all your gallery has to offer.

Direct mail has been dropped from many galleries' marketing plans, opting instead for email to save printing and postage costs. And I get it, but direct mail is still very relevant in your business' marketing mix and may be worth resuscitating as part of your marketing plan. But do it strategically.

### Direct Mail in a Digital World

We all get junk mail, but people of all ages still get excited to receive mail that interests them (and is not a bill). Physical mail can often have a better response rate than digital marketing, because it can be seen as something new and different in our digital world. There are several advantages to adding some direct mail into your

marketing mix, including:

- **Enhanced Engagement:** Break through the digital noise and captivate your audience with physical mail that demands focused attention.

- **Mail brings a sense of daily discovery,** which art collectors crave.

- **Reduced Competition:**

desk or countertop.

Gen X now dominates the demographic of art collectors. If they make up a large percentage of your buyers, consider the findings of a recent study by the United States Postal Service (USPS): "71% of respon-

- Gen Xers are more likely to read direct mail items before throwing them away than similar emails.

- Gen X is more likely than both Gen Z and boomers to visit a company's website after receiving relevant mail."

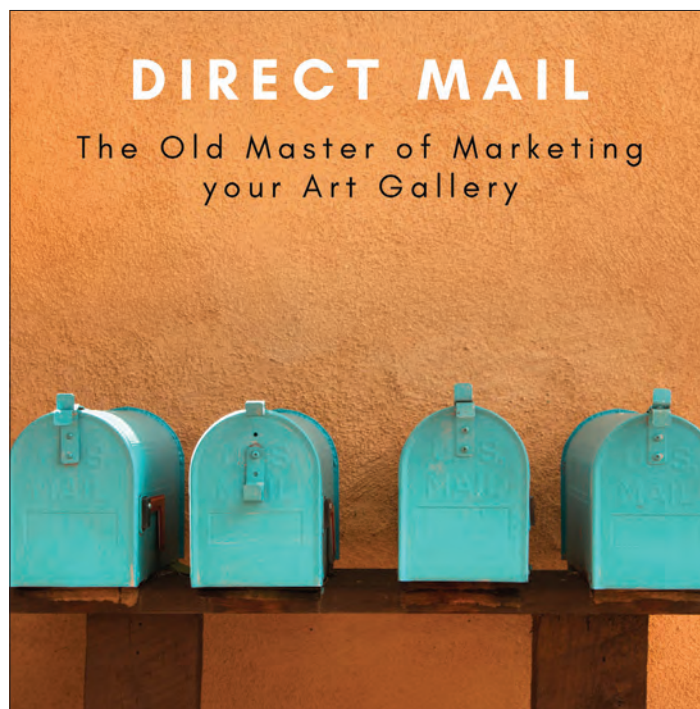
While most art galleries rely on email invitations to reach their entire mailing list, utilizing direct mail significantly increases the likelihood of attracting the attention of those genuinely interested in your offerings.

### Key Considerations

Today's direct mail campaigns are all about smart targeting, and some new rules exist to create a successful campaign. The physical nature of a direct mail piece enhances memory retention and can contribute to the emotional bond the receiver may have with a featured artwork or value message. That is what you want to optimize in your direct mail strategy.

Consider the power of mail in establishing a personal bond. What kind of things do you tend to keep? Probably those with a meaningful or inspiring message or visual, right? Therefore, a postcard featuring a provocative artist quote may hold

*continued on page 24*



Bypass the digital clutter of an inbox and appear in the less crowded mailbox.

- **Emotional Impact:** The tactile element of a mailing can help forge a deeper emotional connection with recipients.

- **Greater visibility potential:** A mailing may be viewed several times as it gets handled between the mailbox and trash can lingering on a

dents in Gen X feel mail is more personal than online digital communications."

- **Are more likely to read promotional mail than emails**

- **Have very limited interest in receiving deals via an app or text**

- **Feel emails from retailers come too frequently—they set many to spam or quickly delete, unless they're looking for a certain offer**



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more significance than one with just your gallery logo or image of the gallery. What might get your client to display it on their fridge or where they see it daily. Similarly, a simple letter with a handwritten note at the bottom is more personal and thoughtful than a printed one.

Another strategy to enhance the impact of your direct mail campaigns is to collaborate with your business partners and advocates. This is especially helpful if your gallery's client database has more email addresses than mailing addresses.

Spend your budget wisely by sending your mailings to a very targeted list, such as those who have bought in the past but you haven't heard from in a while. A well-crafted mailing could regain their attention.

Include a compelling and obvious offer or call to action. Your offer should answer the question of what is in it for them by responding to your mailing.

## Planning a Campaign

There are many types of mailing an art gallery could incorporate to meet various goals. One consideration, a mentioned above, is your access to mailing addresses. With so much done over email, are you capturing physical mailing addresses? You probably have them for clients from invoices and for those online buyers who had pieces shipped. That's your

starting point.

What would your goals be for this segment of your mailing list?

- Re-engagement
- Client Appreciation
- Gain referrals
- Offer unique VIP opportunities.
- Share a social cause they support through the gallery.
- Promote significant events and happenings (art fair calendar, annual group show, etc.)

Given the additional expense of printing and postage, your direct mail campaign should be a message that appeals to a broad range of client's interests. Announcing a new artist or solo exhibition may not appeal to all your buyers with different tastes, styles and needs. That kind of message may be better communicated in your email newsletter.

Selecting and crafting your message, the tone, and the accompanying visuals is crucial. You want your mailer to command attention and be instantly recognized as your gallery's brand.

Another essential component is a compelling call to action. What action do you want the receiver to take from the mail? This might be visiting the website, RSVPing to an event, or purchasing. Make sure the call to action is clear and easy to follow. Use graphic design to make it stand out. Don't allow the call to action to blend in with the text.

In digital marketing, you can use things like links and navigation buttons to help

people interact with your email, social post, or website. But when it comes to sending physical mail, the action you want them to take should have a unique benefit, be easy to do, and be clearly communicated. It's best to have just one thing you want people to do in each mail piece, so it's not confusing for them.

If you are concerned about your client's perception of your mail's environmental impact, that can be alleviated using recycled paper and vegetable-based inks.

## Old and New Working Together

A great way to marry direct mail to your digital presence is by incorporating a QR code on your mailing. You could also print a URL that is unique to that mailing. For example, if your mailing is to promote an annual group show, for example, you will likely create a page on your website specifically for that exhibition. Duplicate that page and give it a unique URL.

By doing this, you can track hits to that page, and you will know they all came as a result of your mailing. The QR code will give you the same tracking capabilities by seeing how many times the code was scanned.

Direct mail marketing for art galleries is not a silver bullet, but a campaign that's strategically and consistently applied will deliver results. Don't shy away from this effective marketing tool because of printing or postage costs. Spend wisely by being clear about your

audience and selecting a message that has broad appeal and is potentially evergreen.

Art galleries have focused on digital marketing channels like SEO, social media, and email marketing. While great for many reasons, efforts can sometimes get lost in the flood of digital messages. Direct mail can be a refreshing addition to your marketing mix.

Direct mail offers enhanced engagement, reduced competition, and emotional impact. Gen X art collectors find mail more personal and are more likely to read promotional mail than emails. Consider smart targeting, personalization, and collaboration with business partners when planning a direct mail campaign. Incorporating QR codes or unique URLs can help track the success of your mailings. After all, if Google, the king of the Internet, uses direct mail, they must understand the value of this marketing masterpiece.

*Columnist Katherine Hébert specializes in art gallery business sales and marketing strategies, as well as the founder of Gallery Fuel, a subscription-based service that helps fine art galleries be more competitive in today's art market. Gallery Fuel is dedicated to helping fine art dealers and galleries in small- to mid-sized markets grow and improve their businesses. To learn more information about Gallery Fuel, read more from Katherine Hébert and become a member, go to the website located at: [www.galleryfuel.com](http://www.galleryfuel.com).*



## The Twelve



Lockhart Gallery, Denver, CO, introduces Thomas Elias Lockhart III's "The Twelve," a mixed media on canvas measuring 60 by 40 inches. The retail price is \$12,000. For details, call (720) 219-3460 or visit: [www.lockhartgallery.com](http://www.lockhartgallery.com).

## All War Is A Failure



Daniel Mazzone Art, Toronto, Canada, presents "All War Is A Failure" by artist Daniel Mazzone. The artwork is collage on wood. Price available upon request. For further information on the work, send an email to: [info@danielmazzoneart.com](mailto:info@danielmazzoneart.com) or go to the artist's website located at: [www.danielmazzoneart.com](http://www.danielmazzoneart.com).



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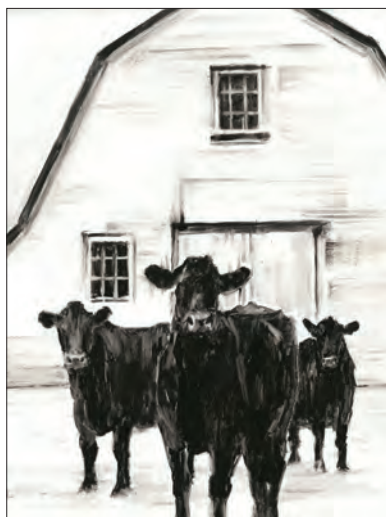


## Egret Family Outing

"Egret Family Outing" by Lanie Loreth measures 36 by 24 inches and retails for \$30. For more information, call Sundance Graphics, located in Orlando, FL, at (800) 617-5532, or go to: [www.sdgraphics.com](http://www.sdgraphics.com).

## Candy Cane Coffee

"Vintage Christmas Signs—Candy Cane Coffee" by Tara Reed measures 24 by 24 inches and retails for \$25. Call Roaring Brook Art, located in Elmsford, NY, at (888) 779-9055, or go to: [www.roaringbrookart.com](http://www.roaringbrookart.com).

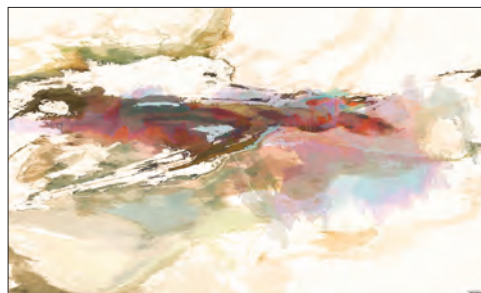


## Standing Around II

"Standing Around II" by Ethan Harper is available as POD in various sizes. Phone World Art Group in Richmond, VA, for further information at (804) 213-0600 or go to: [www.theworldartgroup.com](http://www.theworldartgroup.com).

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"First Kiss Light" by Jenette Verentes is available as a canvas print, giclée fine art paper or poster. The retail price ranges from \$12 to \$75. Call Wild Apple in Woodstock, VT, for details at (800) 756-8359 or go to: [www.wildapple.com](http://www.wildapple.com).





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## Roses Blue

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## The First Snow

"The First Snow" by Sara G. Designs measures 12 by 12 inches and retails for \$12. Also available as large format giclée prints. For further information, call Penny Lane Publishing, New Carlisle, Ohio, at (800) 273-5263, or visit the company's website located at: [www.pennylanefineart.com](http://www.pennylanefineart.com).

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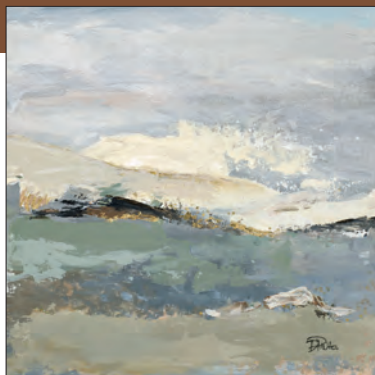


"Seeking the Sun" by Sandy Nelson measures 30 by 30 inches and retails for \$54 on standard paper. Available as POD on multiple substrates and multiple sizes. Call Image Conscious, San Francisco, at (800) 532-2333 for details, or visit the company's website at: [www.imageconscious.com](http://www.imageconscious.com).



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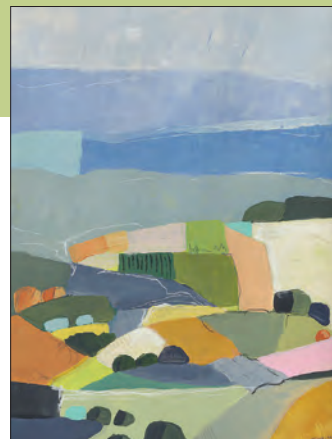


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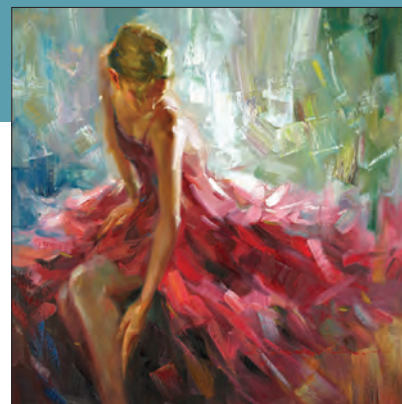
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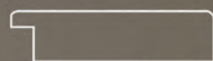




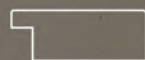
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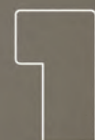
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