Art World News

FEBRUARY 2023

THE INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE

CREATIVE CUSTOM FRAMING: LEVITATED MAGAZINE COVERS

Using Tru Vue's Museum Glass to create a three-dimensional "levitated" mount is a reliable way to achieve the effect while also protecting the object. We can use a similar method to create the same sort of magical look for other types of artwork with Optium Museum Acrylic. Go to page 16 to learn more.

2023 PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Gallery Fuel's Katherine Hébert discusses trends worth implementing into this year's list of priorities for a gallery business' development plan. Go to page 20.

SEEING CLEARLY: CHOOSING BETWEEN GLASS OR ACRYLIC

Making the wrong call when choosing between glass or acrylic in creating a display piece can have significant long-term implications for the safety and condition of your objects, as well as the logistics for how your installation will work out. Visit page 18 for the story.

FRAMERICA DEBUTS RIFTED OAK CARAMEL

Yaphank, NY-based Framerica introduces Rifted Oak, a new collection of moulding highlighting the inherent beauty of rift sawn lumber provides a narrow, very straight grain pattern on its face. Go to page 14.



Meyer Gallery is located in Park City, UT.

GROWING ARTIST ROSTER BRINGS CHALLENGES

Navigating the world of artist selection is not easy for today's fine art gallery owner. Add to their already growing list of tasks to keep the business profitable is the tricky process of bringing in new artists whose work has the potential to attract new collectors, while also exciting existing ones. For each gallery this can be a unique process and depends on many factors, the main one being saleability.

Successful gallery/artist alignment means being on the same page with the artist's body of work, meeting the needs and wants of collectors, having similar work ethics and being adaptive to the ever-changing

marketplace. Finding this balance may not be easy. Choosing an artist goes beyond liking their work and it may also be the gallery owner's job to educate them on what it takes to keep your continued on page 10



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QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"We have established trust with our large number of collectors over the years, so it is important that we bring to our collectors well-vetted artists."

Nancy Ouimet, page 12

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Shown is "Just Smile" by Victoria Montesinos, a mixed media on canvas measuring 50 by 50 inches. Go to page 10.

Growing Artist Roster Brings Challenges

For each gallery owner searching for new artists to grow their family of artists, the process can be very unique and depends on many factors, the main one being saleability.

Montesinos Expands Gallery Network

Noted Clearwater, FL-based artist Victoria Montesinos is now represented in Connecticut by the Westport River Gallery, located along the historic Saugatuck River in Westport, CT.

Creative Framing: Levitated Items

Using Tru Vue's Museum Glass to create a three-dimensional "levitated" mount is a reliable way to achieve the effect while also protecting the object, such as a magazine cover.

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Choosing Between Glass and Acrylic

Making the wrong call when choosing between glass or acrylic in creating a display piece can have significant long-term implications for the safety and condition of your objects.

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Priorities for Business Development

Industry insider and Gallery Fuel's president, Katherine Hébert, discusses trends worth implementing into this year's list of priorities for a gallery business' development plan.

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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

IT'S PROSECCO TIME!

hampagne psyche is often the source of a current that flows to make really good sales years in the art and custom framing business. When clients perceive the glass to be half full, they are more likely to self-indulge and spend a little extra money.

Now, sadly, it seems the specter of recession has shifted minds and hearts away from the French bubbly to its lesser priced Italian cousin. Prosecco typically sells at a fraction of the cost yet still offers a degree of indisputable elegance to begin or end a day. It's a high-value choice whose sales have been dramatically out stripping the higher price option over the last six months. The moral of the story; the psyche of discretionary luxury purchasers is becoming more value driven.

Art Galleries, artists and cus-

tom picture framers need to recognize the trend and to pivot their sales pitches and offerings accordingly. The easiest part is to adopt the "good, better, best approach" by offering alternatives at different pricepoints. Displaying them in an effective manner to highlight each piece or a product's virtues and characteristics, yet it facilitates easy comparisons when needed. That's the simple part of the process.

The most challenging operational aspect of the sales process is to listen effectively to hear the cues that will evolve into permission to close a sale. Great art and framing sales professionals listen intently while controlling the selling process. They know what they are selling and how to link it—the right way—to buyers again and again. The goal is to illuminate the value of what the customer wants. And when the approach works, a glass of champagne is most certainly in order.

> John Haffey Publisher

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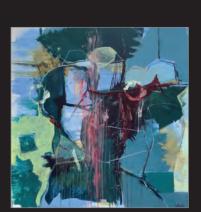
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"08-05" 48 x 36"



"Matisse's Blue Room" 30 x 40"



"Music and Wine for Two" 20 x 16"



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ARTISTS & PUBLISHERS

Beverly McIver's 'Dear God' Debuts

Turner Carroll Gallery's CONTAINER location in Santa Fe, NM, was the setting of an exhibition titled, Beverly McIver: An Introspective Retrospective. tured during the artist's event were five new works in her "Dear God" series, as well as her "Loving in Black and White" Each piece in "Dear God" features a prayer that reads as a journal entry of events in the artist created a painting



artist's life. Also during "Dear God 4" by Beverly McIver is the opening event, the an oil on canvas, 30 by 40 inches.

live for the purchasing collector from the Cancer Foundation for New Mexico's annual Sweetheart Auction. McIver personalized the prayer in the painting for the collector. For details, call (505) 986-9800 or: www.turnercarrollgallery.com.

Victoria Montesinos' New Artwork

Artist Victoria Montesinos presents her newest collection of mixed media, acrylic, oil and inks on canvas, as well as smaller sizes available on wood. After having much success with her paintings of portraits and a series of women. Montesinos' work then evolved into flowers. But, the pandemic brought new in- Victoria Montesinos' "Sky is the got stuck in Florida and



spirations. "In 2020, I Limit 6" is a mixed media on canvas.

with the lockdowns, solitude, etc., and I noticed the fantastic shapes and colors of the Clearwater skies and started to paint them," she says. Retail prices range from \$5,000 to \$16,000. Call Victoria Montesinos Art, Clearwater, FL, at (818) 659-5597 or visit: www.victoriamontesinosart.com.

Wild Apple Signs Leslie Trimbach



"Cape Cod Path" by Leslie Trimbach.

Wild Apple, Woodstock, VT, has signed watercolorist Leslie Trimbach. She is creating and producing top-selling wall art, available as print-on-demand, as well as home decor products, gift and tabletop. Today, working from her home studio, she loves to experiment and see how she can push the limits to see what combination of tools and images she can use together to get a different outcome. "I rely on my fine art foundation and drawing skills as a base, then make it contemporary and current using techniques and technology," she says. Phone (800) 756-8359 or go to: www.wildapple.com.

Davis Gallery Presents Bouff!

Davis Gallery & Framing, Austin, TX, presents "Bouff! The Big Tease," an exhibition of new work by artist B Shawn Cox. Over champagne, macarons and petit fours, the artist discussed his collection of new colorful and diverse oil and acrylic on canvas and printed fabric, as well as paper sculptures and other media, that celebrates iconic Texas big hair and the women who wear it. The show also includes new explorations including oil on fabric, paper cuts, folded paper and digitally created lenticular collages. Phone (512) 477-4929, www.davisgalleryaustin.com.



"A Gentle Breeze" by B Shawn Cox measures 40 by 60 inches and retails for \$6,700.

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VICTORIA MONTESINOS BRINGS HER WORK TO WESTPORT RIVER GALLERY IN CONNECTICUT



WESTPORT. CT-Noted artist Victoria Montesinos is now represented in Connecticut by the Westport River Gallery, located along the historic Saugatuck River. The gallery opened in 2004, a stone's throw from yesteryear's Norman Rockwell's Artist School. "We are pleased to bring the floral beauty of Victoria's art to southern Connecticut," says Pat Warren, gallery co-owner with her husband Ken. "There is a lovely vibrancy and depth that many artists today forget is important to create a connection with buyers." Mr. Warren noted that the artist once said that "flowers are this incredible way for nature to show the infinity of existing colors." She has also been quoted as saying, "I really wanted to explore and go inside their world, find all the textures, layers and passages of just one flower. They are small universes and I feel captured by their beauty. Flowers are an incredible way for nature to show the infinity of existing colors."

"Florals never go out of style," Mr. Warren says, "and, in fact, primitive flowers are said to have evolved about 140 million years ago." For details, call (203) 226-6934 or: www. westportrivergallery.com.

CHOOSING NEW GALLERY ARTISTS

continued from page 1

lights on. This helps to create an understanding of all of the moving pieces that are running the business.

In the process of choosing a new artist, remember that they are also choosing you. Be sure to educate them on the business' history, growth and collector base demographics. Being represented by a gallery has perks that can go beyond just having salespeople working on one's behalf.

Remind the artist of the importance of actively exposing their work to new people, helping to build a collector base. promoting their careers, bringing in sales, marketing, hosting receptions and providing an inviting location to experience work.

Nancy Ouimet, Santa Fe, NM. owner of Canyon
Road Contemporary Art, located in Santa Fe, NM, hav says that her gallery receives many solicitations from artists seeking representation. This month, she welcomes two young and visionary artists, Jessica Bowles and Sienna Van Slooten to her roster.

"When choosing a new artist, we look for one with a unique voice, an ease of partnership between gallery and artist with trust, clear roles and responsiveness to needs; a curatorial mix of work, heartfelt motivations that translate into the artwork and sales potential," she says.

Ms. Ouimet's gallery features an inviting 3,000 square feet of exhibition space and a garden for sculptural works. Finding new artists can be a lot of work and she says that she has a specific time each year dedicated to the process. "Because of the reputation of Canyon Road and Santa Fe's art scene, we receive more requests for representation by artists than we can handle. Responding has a significant impact on our stretched



Canyon Road Contemporary Art is located in Santa Fe, NM.

resources. Therefore, we have a streamlined submission process that we carefully explain to artists. We try to respond to every request, as we are grateful to all artists for our existence," she says.

"We prefer to find the artist by doing our own research overall, than being approached by artists, as we have specific sales and curatorial needs. And, we dedicate our slow season months to doing such research. Bringing new artists into the gallery during high season can be chaotic."

She says that style of art-

work that the gallery represents can be varied but has continuity. "The common thread would be how the work curates toward the overall vision of the gallery in its current manifestation, and the heartfelt, unique style of work. Sincerity, drive and passion factor highly into our choices."

Setting guidelines for artists, up front, is vital. "We prefer the artist to price their work, but are often in the role of suggest-

ing or adjusting pricing," Ms. Ouimet says. "We discourage artists from putting us in that role, because if the artist is not satisfied at some point with sales, they will often cite us as responsible for the results. Only the artist ultimately knows what they need at the end of the day. We do inform the artists about our competitive envi-

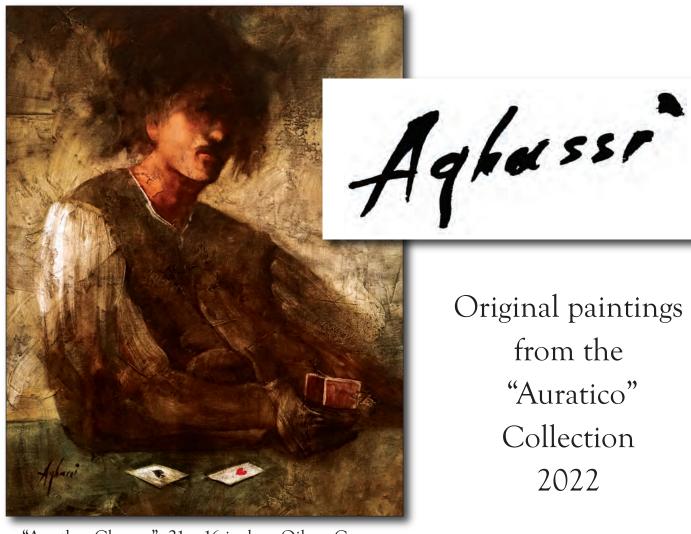
ronment and help them with the research."

The ability to work together should be considered because taking on a new artist is an investment that should bring longevity to both parties. Researching the artist's established track record of sales (or lack thereof) must be considered.

"Ease of partnership is paramount, as we have over 30 artists, and maintaining those relationships needs to flow well," she says. An artist with an est-

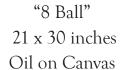
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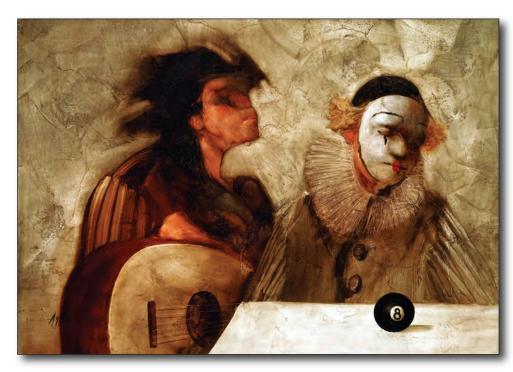
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"Another Chance" 21 x 16 inches Oil on Canvas

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ARTIST EBONY G. PATTERSON AWARDED THE 2023 DRISKELL PRIZE



CHICAGO—Artist **Ebony G.** Patterson has received the 2023 David C. Driskell Prize in African American Art and Art History. Patterson is known for her multi-layered works in a variety of media that "contrast beautiful, lush imagery, color and texture with darker underlying themes addressing societal and political injustices." Awarded annually by the High Museum of Art since 2005, the Driskell Prize demonstrates the High's ongoing dedication to furthering artistic innovation and promoting research of African American artists and scholars. The recipient of the prize receives \$50,000 in unrestricted funds to use toward the furthering of their research or artistic practice. Patterson's work has been featured in more than 50 solo and group exhibitions over the past 10 years and is included in the collections of institutions such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), the National Gallery of Jamaica, Kingston, The Studio Museum; Harlem, New York, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Shown is "To Be Beneath the Leaves Between the Cuts Below the Soil." Visit the artist's website at: www.ebonygpatterson.com.

NEW GALLERY ARTISTS continued from page 10

ablished track record of sales can be helpful in determining if they will be a productive member of the partnership.

On the Canyon Road Contemporary Art YouTube channel, a series of videos are available featuring gallery artists talking about their work, careers, collections and studios to help give collectors more insight into the artwork that the gallery has to offer. Marketing programs, such as the

YouTube series. are part of their offerings and help to expand their own brand, along with that of the artist. "It is not important to us that the artist self-represents or markets," she says. "It seems to have little bearing on the results. If the artand we are doing a good job, sales follow."

Educating the artist is also part of the process. "We have seen every kind of behavior in regard to how their work should be sold and the guidelines of selling without the gallery," Ms. Ouimet says.

"It comes down to ethics. Like any important partnership in an individual's life, commitment to the partnership ensures success. Eventually, cheating from either side will become apparent. We have established trust with our large number of collectors over the years, so it is important that we bring to our collec-

tors well-vetted artists. It matters less whether the artist is established or emerging. What matters most is the integrity of their artwork."

At Fragment, a contemporary art gallery guided by a mission of promoting LGBTQI+, women and BIPOC artists, located in New York, NY; owner Sergey Guschin says the relationship between artist and gallery is the most important aspect. "We understand the gallery business as a close collaboration between everyone who is in-



work is good, Addison Art Gallery is located in Orleans, MA.

volved in it with artists, collectors, curators, art critics and institutions all playing a role," he says. "As an artist-driven gallery, we put the artist's will, intent and interest at the top of our priorities. So, we always discuss what's better for the artist's career. But. it's important to mention that the price is defined not by size or materials used, but mostly by artist's portfolio, their visibility and the amount of institutional shows and collections that they participate in."

The artist search, and work involved, is never-ending for Mr. Guschin. "It's going on all the time. I'm al-

ways speaking with other artists and curators, travelling, spending time on the phone and going through social media. Generally, my team and I look at the artist's curriculum vitae (CV), including previous shows, residences, etc. But, most important is the work itself. The next step is initiating a Zoom call or, preferably, a studio visit. If it works at both sides, we proceed with further discussion of possible collaboration."

Finding a good fit for his gallery and collectors is

also part of the process. "I don't think it's style or size that matters. We never choose artists by style of work they make. There should be something more important behind it. Personal story, research, ability to think in-depth, consistency of the artistic practice as a whole—I think all of these have a

much bigger priority. There are no easy people in the world. And I don't believe in 'the easier the better' principle of getting to know someone. As in any relationship, it takes time to understand each other. And sometimes it doesn't work. And it's ok. We look for artists who share with us the same principles, goals and missions. So when it all matches, it can lead to fruitful collaboration."

Marketing-savvy artists bring with them an added bonus of exposure for the artwork and gallery alike.

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"Sky is the Limit"
Mixed Media on Canvas, 50" x 40"



"Just Smile"
Mixed Media on Canvas, 50" x 50"

Sensual Colorist



"Last Night"
Mixed Media on Canvas, 48" x 36'

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FRAMERICA DEBUTS RIFTED OAK CARAMEL, COMPANY NEWS



YAPHANK, NY—Framerica introduces Rifted Oak, a new collection of moulding highlighting the inherent beauty of rift sawn lumber, provides a narrow, very straight grain pattern on its face. "We have seen specifiers migrating toward rift sawn patterns," says Josh Eichner, executive vice president. "This treatment lends itself to striking picture frame finishes." The first color in the collection is Caramel Rifted and is available in profiles ranging to three inches.



In company news, **Jose Rivera** has joined Framerica as its director of procurement. He brings a decades-long background in sourcing and relationship building, as well as external logistics. "We understand how important the integrity of our supply chain is and we believe Jose will be a critical piece in managing it," says Dave Rosner, senior vice president. For more information, call (800) 372-6422 or go to: www.framerica.com.

NEW GALLERY ARTISTS continued from page 12

"We live in the digital world," Mr. Guschin says. "It's better to have at least a regularly updated Instagram account. But if the artist is referred to us by another artist, curator, writer or friend, the only thing that matters is a conversation, studio visit and/or portfolio. We kindly ask artists not to sell from their studios though (or, if it's crucially needed, hold the same prices as in the gallery). As we're working off the atmosphere of mu-

tual trust, I believe, everyone understands that it's better for their career not to sell from the studio."

At Addison Art Gallery in Orleans, MA, owner Helen Addison says that for her, choosing the right artist requires that the

work must appeal to her collectors, it must impress and intrigue them and the artists themselves have to be friendly and professional. Also, their work should be unique and not just duplicates of other artwork found in the gallery.

When it comes to introducing new artists to collectors, she says that emails, social media and opening receptions are most effective. "The one-on-one relationships usually start at the receptions. We do a great deal of work connecting our artists with all of our collectors, which includes hosting more than 20 receptions and events a year at the gallery. We

also feature off-site events in the region," she says.

Interacting with the public is part of closing a sale at the gallery, therefore, working with artists that are open to this relationship building is a big part of Ms. Addison's decisionmaking process. It is also a plus if they have a market that they are actively cultivating through their website, social media, events, artist appearances, etc. "It definitely helps, though we are also adept at successfully bringing unknown artists to the market. But, if

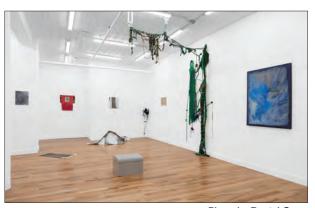


Photo by Daniel Greer

Fragment is a contemporary art gallery in New York, NY.

an artist is selling directly to the public, they are competing with the gallery. We do not represent any artists selling directly."

Meyer Gallery, located in the Historic District of Park City, UT, first opened its doors in 1965. Over the past 58 years, the gallery has seen the market change, as well as collector's tastes.

Owner Susan Meyer says that when it comes to choosing the right artists today; quality, price, uniqueness, artist location and presentation all work together in making the decision. The gallery's website features a section for

prospective artists instructing them on the best ways to present their work for consideration electronically (preferred): five to 10 samples sent as image files and a recent biography and/or CV. And for physical submissions: portfolios, slides and other materials sent via US mail (returned to the artist if return packaging and postage are included). "My gallery is located in a mountain resort where customers visit from all over the world," Ms. Meyer says. "I like to represent work by artists who live in our region. The style varies.

> Sometimes regional work thought of as smalltime but I think it's a smart way to curate a gallery. Why would I primarily represent artists who can already be found all over the country in multiple markets? What's interesting about that?"

She says that when it comes to pricepoints, choosing work that meets various criteria is what she seeks out. "The price itself isn't highly important. The critical part is if I believe the price of the artwork is fair. The quality of the work, the reputation of the artist, the presentation of the art and the artist's record are all factors that impact the price. Lesser galleries will sometimes price unrecognized and low quality work at high pricepoints because the work has a popular, ontrend look right now. This serves the gallery nicely but it doesn't serve the customer," she says. "Better galleries

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CREATIVE CUSTOM FRAMING

FRAMING A LEVITATED MAGAZINE COVER

By David Lantrip

Using Tru Vue's Museum Glass to create a three-dimensional "levitated" mount is a reliable way to achieve

the effect while also protecting the object. We can use a similar method to create the same sort of magical look for other types of artwork with Optium Museum Acrylic. In this example the artwork is a magazine, but it also works well with items such as:

- Comic books
- Documents
- Crocheted doilies
- Flags
- Papercuts

The mounting method works by applying even, gentle pressure to the artwork to hold it in place against the glazing. Depending on the design and the artwork, it may be simple mechanical pressure from the positioning of the artwork, or pressure can come from batting placed behind the artwork. This pressure works to hold the artwork in place, with no adhesives or stress, between the backing and the acrylic.

Of course we all know that artwork should never touch the glass, and that is still true. However, in this type of design we use acrylic, not glass. Acrylic has very different thermal properties as compared to glass, so there is very little chance that condensation will form on it. With a presentation like this, acrylic is mandatory. The magazine is held to a slightly



with

undersized backing Mylar. Given the magazine's weight and the slick paper it is printed on, it needs more support than can be given by the pressure mount alone. To start with, I cut a piece of Mylar slightly narrower than the width of the magazines and about one

and a half times its height. I placed it under the front cover and folded the flaps at the top and bottom around to the back of the magazine. I then removed the Mylar and used a burnishing bone to crease the folds so that the

Mylar would wrap tightly around to the back of the magazine and placed it back inside the front cover.

Next, I cut a piece of black foam board about one eighth of an inch (3mm) smaller than the magazine and placed it on the back of the magazine, face down, and wrapped the Mylar flaps to the back of the board. The flaps are secured with a strong double-sided tape, burnished well. Then the mounted magazine is mounted to the background mat with dots of glue and tape to hold it in place while

the glue dries. Keep in mind



that the adhesives are not in contact with the magazine, just the foam board.

Every part of the magazine is now mounted, with only the front cover free. This is where magic happens, and

it's ridiculously easy. Instead of cutting the mat and foam board strips to line the sides of the frame to give one eighth of an inch (3mm) or more clearance from the glazing, I cut them to be about one sixteenth of an inch (1.5mm) smaller than the height of the mounted magazine. Once the frame is fit, the slight pressure holds the cover down and the magazine in place.

Optium Museum Acrylic is essential to the success of this design. Its thermal properties allow placing the artwork directly against it, and its antireflective coatings mean that there are virtually no reflections, especially important with an all-black design like this. Give it a try with some samples for your store and you'll be able to sell design that will really impress your customers with your framing magic. Your sales of Optium Museum Acrylic (and your profits) will increase.

David Lantrip, MCPF, GCF, is director of education for The Great Frame Up, Deck the Walls and Framing & Art Centre, and a member of both the PPFA International Board of Directors and the PPFA Certification Board. For further information about Museum glass, telephone Tru Vue, located in McCook, IL, at (800) 621-8339 or go to the company's website located at: www.tru-vue.com.

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INSTALLATION TIPS

SEEING CLEARLY: GLASS OR ACRYLIC?

by Kelly Bennett, founder of Art Pro Net

There are so many decision points to prepping objects for display. From picking the frame stock to the color of the walls, it can often be overwhelming to come up with the right combination of materials. One aspect that can be surprisingly complicated to negotiate is the decision between using glass or acrylic.

Making the wrong call can have significant long-term implications for the safety and condition of your objects, as well as the logistics for how your installation will work out. There are good reasons to choose each one, and knowing your medium, location, and future plans are key to figuring out which way to go.

Where To Start

When working it all out, I like to start with the medium and material of the object. Whether you are planning a case or a frame, think about what your object is made out of. Is the medium super fragile and crumbly? Maybe a pastel, charcoal, or unfired ceramic work? Understanding this is key for many reasons. For instance, acrylic is a terrible source of static electricity.

A simple wipe-down of a vitrine can cause enough

static to lift materials from the surface of your object and in some cases will raise a whole sheet of paper.

Choosing Acrylic

In general, acrylic is a better bet for making bonnets for cases, but if you have terracotta or cultural herinstalling the object or case. If this is something that you want to hang on a wall, consider acrylic for anything 30 by 30 inches or bigger. The weight of a single piece of glass can significantly change the weight of the work by as much as 20, 30, or even hundreds of pounds.



itage objects that are crumbling, I would suggest considering a design with a glass window instead. It will help keep the work safe and stable. In frames, glass can also allow for minimal hinging and a shallower rabbit or mat so that the work has fewer shadows cased by a deep inset.

The next aspect to consider is where you plan on

If you are framing something that will be installed in a residential home or office, you should consider acrylic to keep the work lighter. Most sheetrock walls are not backed with plywood or rated for much weight, and you might find that you need to add structural support behind the work to install it if there is glass. It is also very heavy when you start making bonnets and vit-

rines, and can be dangerous to have installers lift into place.

One tip:

If you ever get in a situation where you need bulletproof glass for an installation, you can substitute with half-inch acrylic. It will absorb the impact too and protect the object at the same level of strength.

Location is also important when you consider the lighting of the work. Gallery and track lighting can be challenging with acrylic because there is a lot of reflection that can interfere with viewing a work. Depending on the scale and budget of your project you can consider glass to help minimize this glare. There are also non-glare plex options, but they are not more cost-effective, so it really depends on the size vou need. Also, consider future movements of the object. Acrylic would be better if the objects need to be shipped, or changed out regularly since it will be much more durable for moving around and storing.

Choosing Glass

The future plans for the object or casework is the next point that I like to con-

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NEW GALLERY ARTISTS continued from page 14

know that if you look out for your clients, they will return to you for years to come."

The artist's likeability goes beyond just having a good repertoire with collectors. They must also be adaptive to the needs of the gallery. "The reputation or experience of their personality is one factor but I would say a track record of performing well under pressure and in competitive environments is more important," she says.

"As a gallery owner, I have to artfully accommodate the personalities and temperaments of dozens of artists, multiple staff members, several suppliers and

service providers. That doesn't even include the collectors and gallery visitors who may be challenging. If I only worked with easygoing people, I would be limiting my business opportunities greatly. That said, I have worked with a couple of artists who were highly anxious and they expressed that (loudly) to myself and my staff. I'm too old to bother with that anymore."

While having an online presence does work in the artist's favor, when it comes to choosing new talent in the gallery, it's not the make or break for Ms. Meyer. "It can sometimes be a bonus, but I just need great work that's valued by my collectors. Our collectors don't care if the artist is popular online or

at events. My top five selling artists are not highly active online so that speaks for itself."

Setting sales guidelines immediately with artists can help to cut down on confusion later. "Artists have every right to sell direct to clients, but they will lose my representation if they sell directly to clients whose patronage was initiated through my gallery, staff or marketing. I support artists making money in a variety of ways but if they don't consider my profits earned marketing their work to be an honest and valuable part of our teamwork, then we won't work together.

"Artists who enjoy the benefit of me exhibiting their work year-round,

posting their images on my website and social media, paying my staff to sell their work, etc; then an artist must actively support my profits from that effort. Most artists understand that gallery relationships are an investment in their future," Ms. Meyer says.

"As gallerists, we get excited about new work by existing and new artists. We're stimulated by the refreshed environment of a room of new paintings. All artists should rotate their work and provide fresh pieces regularly to a gallery. We benefit from that boost of energy to stay engaged and enthusiastic."

Koleen Kaffan is Editor in Chief of Art World News.

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BUSINESS STRATEGIES

2023 PRIORITIES FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

by Katherine Hébert

It is essential to regularly reflect on the state of your art gallery business and look forward to what you want it to look like in three to five years. Here I want to talk about some recent trends you, as a small gallery, may wish to consider as you plan the priorities for your art gallery business development. Running a gallery with a small staff often means your management is reactionary to the moment. You are always greasing that squeakiest wheel. I encourage you to set time aside at the end of each vear to think about the big picture and your gallery business development.

The gallery sector will continue rapidly evolving to keep up with changing buying habits, technology that makes managing a gallery more efficient, and narrowing focus on core elements of a gallery's program. Galleries need to ensure they prioritize existing buyers and continually provide value to them between sales. Try to create tools that enable you to proactively reach out to those who purchased in the past and start a new dialogue. These tools should blend upselling or cross-selling with non-sales communications that are generously helpful, thoughtful, or amusing.

Utilize technology that gives you greater insight into your

prospective collector's buying habits, preferences, and interests. This means regularly tracking analytics from your CRM, email marketing, search engine optimization (SEO) and social media. You could also send an annual survey or feedback form after a sale.

Galleries will need to be more proactive in developing

and promoting their gallery program, mission, values, and services as a crucial part of their sales and marketing messaging separate themselves from their competition. Put a greater emphasis on staff training and outsourcing specific tasks to increase efficiency and better enable

you to focus on business development and leadership. Most small art galleries aren't financially able to hire permanent staff, to focus on specific aspects of the business, such as content marketing. Take advantage of the growing gig economy to hire someone who can work remotely temporarily and fill a skills gap within your gallery's staff.

Look for ways to be more environmentally sustainable in your business. If you adopt green practices in your gallery or if your artists do, you must help your clients understand exactly what eco-friendly choices have been made and demonstrate the authenticity of those choices in how you do business. Today, going green is a client acquisition strategy. It can help attract new art buyers who actively shop from green companies, and you can potentially reduce your gallery spending on



some resources.

Look for ways to extend the sales cycle and enhance the viewing experience with additional programming or supporting events around an exhibition. This increases the opportunity to create awareness and contextual understanding of the artwork you exhibit, thus making that emotional connection for buvers that often leads to a sale. By offering diverse supporting events around a show, you also meet your collectors' different preferences for

experiencing art.

Whenever possible, customize your sales messaging to specific clients or groups of prospects. Customized messages tend to ignite a conversation; when that happens, you can build trust and show you understand their needs and values. Continue to be transparent with pricing both in the gallery and online. Collectors have indicated in numerous surveys that they will more likely support art galleries with price transparency. This goes a long way in building trust, especially with the next generation of art buyers.

As online sales become a more significant revenue channel for your gallery, reviews also grow in importance. Selling art online isn't just about whether someone falls in love with a piece and their ability to buy; it's also about what other collectors have to say about working with your gallery and the artist. Find ways to consistently incorporate client reviews into your sales process so you can use them as a sales tool online.

Unique experiences still entice buyers. Look for ways to provide inimitable and creative ways to present your artists and allow art lovers to get to know them. Blending in-person and online experi-

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PAGE 20 ART WORLD NEWS

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INSTALLATION TIPS continued from page 18

sider when deciding on glazing. Focus on more than just the single installation of the work. If you are framing something that needs to travel on loan or collections storage, look for acrylic options. Taping glass is a possible process for transport, but not a foolproof one, and I have seen it fail more than once. If you are ever trying to figure out if you need to tape something that is already framed, touch the glazing. Glass tends to be cold to the touch. You can also get a coin or something metal and gently tap on the surface. If it makes a high pitched noise it is glass and not acrylic.

If you are working on

sealing or encasing a work, glass can be a better option. It allows for less passive changes between the inside and outside environment.

that is eight feet tall, acrylic is going to have way more benefits in weight and durability. It is a blending of these decision points

Making the wrong call between acrylic and glass can have significant long-term implications for the safety and condition of your objects, as well as the logistics for how your installation will work out.

would caution though that this benefit gets less and less the larger the climate case. If you are looking to seal something in a case that will help you make the right call.

Spending some time learning about your materi-

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als before making the decision will really help. There are pluses and minuses to both sides. If you think through the whole plan and work out where this decision with leave you, then you will maximize the material and not be beholden to its challenges. Just a little future conceptualizing can you find the clear and best choice.

Kelly Bennett founded Art Pro Net to help strengthen art professionals' community by broadening awareness and creating a way for clients and contractors to connect. Art Pro Net offers a wide range and scale of services to support all levels of a project. Call (713) 291-4878 for details, or go to: www.artpronet.com.



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BUSINESS STRATEGIES continued from page 20

ences around an exhibition is still an excellent strategy to reach larger audiences. Video will still be the dominant form of content created. Short-form video is taking over as the content type of choice for viewers, and marketers are listening. Your followers will likely respond positively to your shorter video content that gets to the point quickly and therefore stick around longer on your social pages exploring.

While video is the hot new(ish) kid on the block. blogging is still very effective and should be continued and nurtured. Be mindful of the format you use to make this long-form content easier to scan and read on smartphones. Break up long text sections into shorter paragraphs, and use bullets and headers within a post. If improving your SEO is a priority for your gallery's website, you should post regularly.

Community connection is vital. Continue to partner with other art galleries, artists. and businesses outside of the art world to create fresh art experiences. Collaborations will expand awareness and focus on nurturing art lovers' desire to start collecting and take pride in supporting your gallery's artists. Many partnerships will also continue to be useful for cost-sharing, such as shared booths at art fairs and expanding into new markets.

Galleries must carefully monitor the mobile experience they provide to clients and prospects across their marketing channels. Online viewing experiences on your

website, email marketing personalization, SEO and mobile optimization continue to be critical to both the art discovery and buying processes. To see how the art gallery sector, as a whole, continues to evolve in the next decade. promises to be exciting. For me, it is even more exciting to watch how both emerging and mid-level art galleries find creative ways to be more competitive in this crazy, crazy art world you call home.

It is challenging to prepare for what the future holds, and while these trends are not allinclusive, consider those I have included here as you plan for your new year. Pushing an artist's career forward, putting context to the artwork, and continuously reaching more art buyers through a thoughtful gallery program is an enormous job. Narrowing your focus, trying to think outside the traditional gallery model box, and investing in training and technology will make your actions more impactful to the bottom line on which your gallery staff and artists depend. Including some of these ideas and strategies in your gallery business development priorities can help your future success gain momentum and increase sales.

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 smallto mid-sized markets grow and improve their businesses. To learn more about Gallery Fuel: www.galleryfuel.com.

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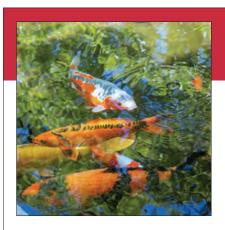
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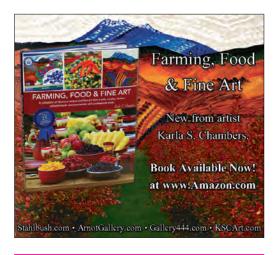
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