

Art World News

SEPTEMBER 2025

THE INDEPENDENT NEWS SOURCE

HOW TO BUILD AN ARTIST/ GALLERY RELATIONSHIP THAT THRIVES

Bringing an artist into your gallery isn't the finish line—it's the starting point. The real work—and the real opportunity—lies in how you keep them engaged, inspired and motivated. Go to page 22 to learn more.

SURVIVING THE STORM: HOW TO RECESSION- PROOF A GALLERY

Gallery Fuel's Katherine Hébert discusses how even economic uncertainty can bring opportunities with the right marketing strategy that helps maintain income and set the gallery up for a strong comeback when conditions improve. Visit page 28 for more.

CUSTOMER RETENTION IS HIDDEN GOLD

While acquiring new customers is a necessary part of growth for any gallery or frameshop owner, industry expert Sheila McCumby talks about how a business' long-term success is fundamentally tied to its ability to retain its existing customer base. Page 16.

ART AND FRAMING HOLDS STRONG DESPITE ECONOMY FEARS

Anita Petersen says that even when household budgets shrink, people still buy art because that emotional connection is a powerful advantage, and one that continues to drive consumer spending. Go to page 26 for more.

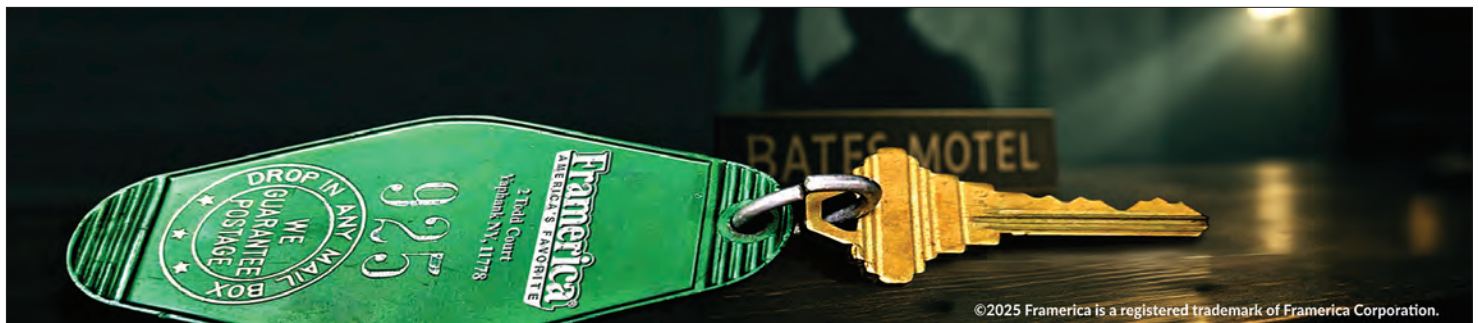


Maybaum Gallery is located in San Francisco, CA.

HOW TO BRING NEW ARTISTS AND ART INTO A GALLERY

Presenting new artwork in a gallery takes a lot of planning and marketing, so choosing the right pieces that resonate with new, and existing, clients can be the difference between the work flying off the shelves or collecting dust. Retailers know that attracting new customers is important but in the art industry, repeat sales can hold more weight as many that return have loyalty and confidence in the business which often leads to sales that increase in price with each purchase. Understanding what collectors today are looking for may mean the gallery will have to take a risk and expand the type of work that they offer to keep sales healthy. For artists looking for gallery representation, building a relationship with a prospective gallery is key and will take some time. Exposing the gallery owner to the artist's

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH:
"I typically spend a lot of time researching and looking at various artists before selecting one. Sometimes I find something I love that I'm not even looking for."
Christina Maybaum, page 10

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Shown is "Headcount"
by Oscar Ukonu from
Corey Helford Gallery,
located in Los Angeles.
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Bringing New Artists And Art Into A Gallery

Presenting new art and artists takes a lot of planning so choosing the work that resonates with new, and existing, clients can be the difference between the work flying off the shelves or collecting dust.

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Customer Retention Is Hidden Gold

While acquiring new customers is a necessary part of a business' growth, Sheila McCumby talks about how long-term success is fundamentally tied to the ability to retain its existing customer base.

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How To Build A Thriving Relationship

Bringing an artist into a gallery isn't the finish line—it's the starting point. The real work—and the real opportunity—lies in how you keep them engaged, inspired and motivated.

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Despite Economy Fears, Industry Holds

Anita Petersen says that even when household budgets shrink, people still buy art because that emotional connection is a powerful advantage, and one that continues to drive consumer spending.

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Recession-Proofing An Art Gallery

Katherine Hébert discusses how economic uncertainty can bring opportunities with the right strategies that help maintain income and set a gallery or frameshop up for a strong comeback.

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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, most available as print-on-demand images, and it includes contact information as well.

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IN OUR OPINION

How to Promote Against Headwinds

Sometimes the path ahead is as clear as a crisp autumn day, sometimes, like today, the path is neither crisp nor clear. The current blend of economic, political, financial, and psychological information is indigestible if taken in large bites. There are too many factors that can be reconciled with one another to create a concise view to what the immediate future holds for art dealers, frameshop owners and artists.

Consumers seek and need comfort and they are having a difficult time finding it these days. Their assumptions and patterns have been challenged, or upended, and they are now having extreme difficulty crafting an understanding of the economy, society and the near future. Puzzling. So, what's a marketer to do...give people what they want. The answer is in the brand. The intrinsic value of a strong brand is its ability

connect and motivate consumers under even the most constraining scenarios. Brands communicate assurances to customers' beliefs and feelings. So, when life becomes unsolvably complex, brands massage the buying public into a better frame-of-mind.

The challenge for galleries, custom framers and artists is to objectively evaluate the strengths and weakness of their brands and to manipulate their marketing mix to emphasize the strength and emotional value of what they offer. In this environment, tenure in the marketplace matters a great deal. Folks are less focused on what's new than what works for them. Therefore, communicating strengths is more likely to match best with consumers needs.

Hopefully, the world settles down to a more comprehensible scale soon. In the meantime, as always, building your success relies most heavily on you.

John Haffey
Publisher



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ARTISTS & PUBLISHERS

Gallery 71 Celebrates Anniversary



"Transitions" by artist Jon deMartin.

Gallery 71, New York, NY, is celebrating 31 years of presenting original fine art and custom framing on New York City's Upper East Side, with a group exhibition featuring the gallery's stable of artists. In business since 1994, Gallery 71 has been home to curated solo and group exhibitions around a particular theme. The anniversary group show features work from artists such as James Stewart, Kathryn Keller, Thomas Schaller, Stever Dreyer and Lana Privitera. For further information, telephone (212) 744-7779 or visit: www.gallery71.com.

Studio EL Signs Artist Tim Kellgren



"Field Map 1" by artist Tim Kellgren.

Studio EL, Emeryville, CA, has signed artist Tim Kellgren and represents his colorful works that feature a refreshing new take on landscapes. An array of richly collaged, dimensional textures on the surfaces of his works depict dramatic clouds and distant horizons. Vibrant color combinations dance to create uniquely angled perspectives on sweeping fields at sunset. For further information, call (800) 228-0928 or visit the company's website located at: www.studioel.com.

Greenwich Workshop's New Bye Work

Greenwich Workshop in Seymour, CT, has released new work by artist John Bye featuring vibrant photo-realistic images of the American West available as limited and open editions in various sizes. Bye's paintings are in the collections of the Booth Western Art Museum and the James Museum of Western and Wildlife Art. For further information, telephone (800) 243-4246 or go to the company's website located at: www.greenwichworkshop.com.



"Mountain Pass" by John Bye is available as an open edition on canvas.

Corey Helford Gallery's Duo Exhibit

Corey Helford Gallery, Los Angeles, is presenting a duo exhibition featuring solo work by artists Arinze Stanley and Oscar Ukonu called The Weight of Us. The exhibit brings together the compelling visions of Nigerian contemporary artists Stanley and Ukonu in an intricate dialogue exploring the depths of shared humanity, emotional interconnectedness and the complex interplay of individual and collective narratives. For more details, call (310) 287-2340 or visit: www.coreyhelfordgallery.com.



Stanley's "Numb" is a charcoal, graphite, pastel, color pencils and acrylic on paper.

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MIAMI—Spectrum Miami and **Red Dot Miami** will return to Mana Wynwood Convention Center, offering “Two Fairs Under One Roof” for both exhibitors and art enthusiasts during this year’s Miami Art Week, taking place December 3rd to December 7th, 2025, at Mana Wynwood, 2217 NW 5th Ave., and NW 22nd St. in Miami. The five-day fairs will cover more than 150,000 square feet of indoor exhibition space, all within walking distance of Wynwood’s coveted restaurants, bars and retail boutiques. Spectrum Miami and Red Dot



Miami, both produced by Redwood Art Group, have grown to become the destination for the fine art industry professional and contemporary art enthusiast, with exhibits showcasing today’s elite artists, galleries, dealers and emerging talents. Spectrum Miami’s sister fair [SOLO], highlighting established and independent emerging artists, will also return. For more details, visit the websites: www.redwoodartgroup.com/spectrum-miami and www.redwoodartgroup.com/red-dot-miami.

HOW TO BRING THE NEW INTO A GALLERY

continued from page 1

full body of work, current portfolio, technique and process helps show them that the artist is worth investing wallspace and marketing in. And, this is no small investment as it needs to not only show collector appeal and quality, but also provide reassurance that representing the artist’s work will be a relationship that will grow for years to come.

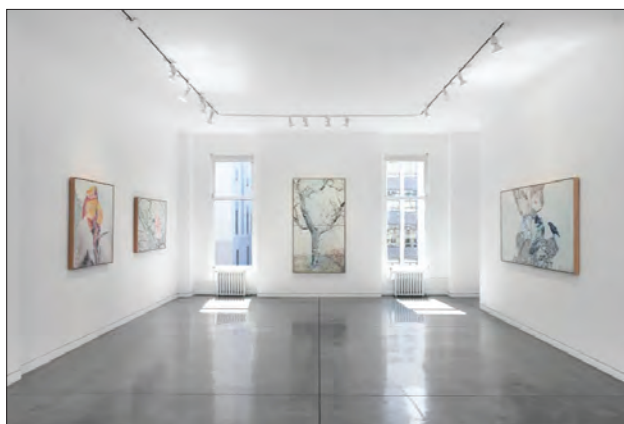
For gallery owners themselves, business longevity is vital and oftentimes they must seek out new artists and artwork to attract new, younger and/or trend-forward buyers. At the forefront today is abstract and contemporary, especially among younger collectors. Emerging artists are also sought-after by younger buyers as original work by them may be more affordable to acquire, as well as offering a one-of-a-kind piece for them to own. Textured art, minimalist art, Pop art, street art and graffiti art are trending as well.

Exclusivity also plays a role in offering work not widely known, so smaller to medium sized editions, as well as large pieces for residential spaces, are sought-after today.

A good way to scout new artists is to attend art fairs and exhibitions as they often feature emerging artists and an opportunity

to meet several of them face-to-face. There is less pressure on the gallery owners as well since they are the ones approaching the artists that they are interested in, not vice versa.

For Christina Maybaum, owner of Maybaum Gallery in San Francisco, CA, finding new work that will appeal to her clientele takes a lot of time and preparation, but starts with catching her eye first. “I am typically looking for a specific type



Maybaum Gallery is located in San Francisco, CA.

of work, like a metal wall artist or a tapestry artist,” she says. “I typically spend a lot of time researching and looking at various artists before selecting one. Sometimes I find something I love that I’m not looking for. That is typically with our painters because I’m always drawn to great painting.”

Ms. Maybaum says that she will not work with an artist that makes cheap replicas or uses machines to make their work as she prefers to present work that is unique and offers something different. “I think there are so many types of art collectors out there, and here in San Fran-

cisco, we speak with a lot of them. The art market itself has become very global so you can attract buyers from anywhere in the world depending on what you show. I’m always open to presenting something unique and prefer not to show one specific style.”

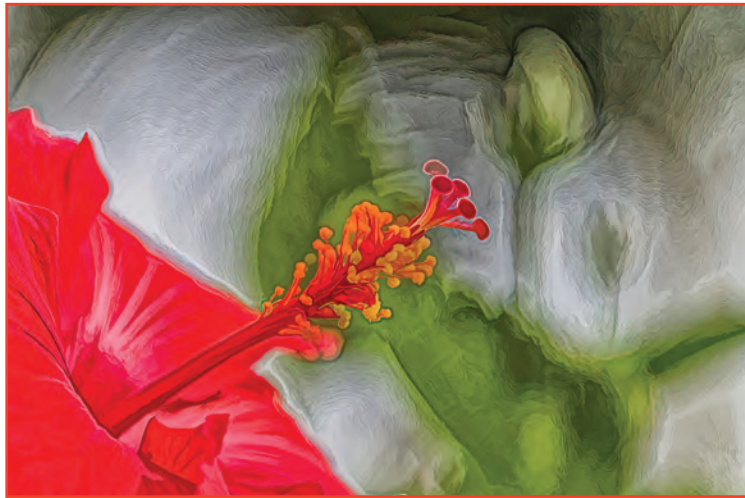
The minimal commitment Ms. Maybaum would be willing to show in her gallery of a new artist’s work is four pieces, but they must be capable of providing work for years to come. “I only want to work with artists that are interested in a long-term commitment, so I expect to start with at least four works and always anticipate getting more. For Maybaum Gallery, we are very invested in sharing a range of voices,” she says. “I am interested in minority artists and those of different sexual orientations. I have a mixed race family and that often informs my interest in really being inclusive as a gallerist.”

Shanan Campbell, owner of Sorrel Sky Gallery with locations in Durango, CO; Santa Fe, NM; Easthampton, NY, and New York, NY, says that the story behind the artist and their art is part of why people seek out work that speaks to them personally as a collector. “At Sorrel Sky, we look for artists who share our gallery vision,” she says.

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Minds Eye Photos

Photography by Alan Goldberg

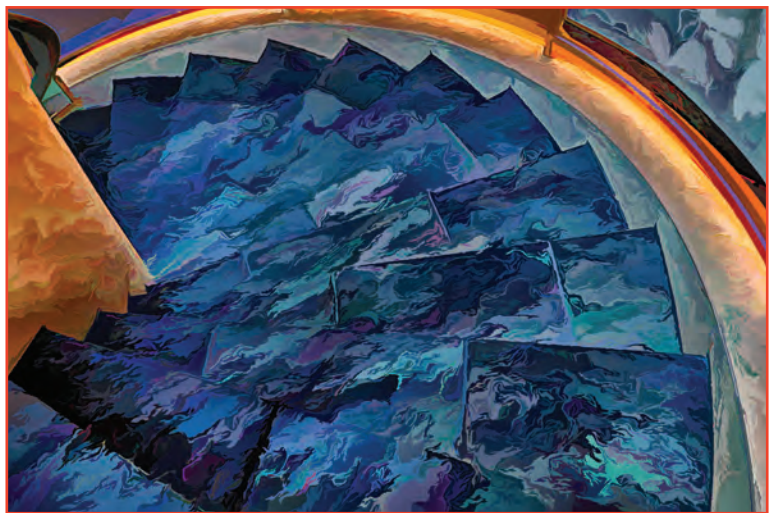


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Alan Goldberg has exhibited at Miami Art Week, Artexpo New York, Art San Diego, Paris Art Expo, Palma, Berlin, Zug, Basel, Athens, Venice, Granada and Dubai and has been published in *Vogue*, *Millennium* (15th Edition), *Contemporary Art Magazine* and *Artist Closeup* #25 magazines.



Minds Eye Photos • Photography by Alan Goldberg • Boca Raton, FL

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YAPHANK, NY—**Framerica's** Apple Burl is the newest addition to its popular Woods Collection. Its light coloring is a nod to the most on-trend accessory pieces in the U.S. interior design market. "Burl has been in Framerica's line forever," says Josh Eichner, vice president. "We've updated it based on numerous requests, and it took off immediately." Apple Burl is available in profiles ranging to 3 inches. For more information, call (800) 372-6422 or visit: www.framerica.com.

ZENITH GALLERY PRESENTS WOMEN ARTISTS IN THE DMV

WASHINGTON, DC—**Zenith Gallery**—along with many major art spaces in the DC area—is participating in "Women Artists of the DMV," curated by F. Lennox Campello and gallery owner Margery Goldberg. The DMV refers to the Washington metropolitan area, which includes the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. DC area curator, artist, and arts activist, Florencio Lennox (Lenny) Campello, is curating the main exhibition of works by 400+ women artists from the DMV and Greater Washington DC region. This exhibition will be the first ever survey of female visual artists from the DMV region. Call (202) 783-2963 for more information or go to: www.zenithgallery.com.

FINDING NEW ARTISTS *continued from page 10*

"We love working with artists who understand that art is about more than aesthetics; it's about storytelling, craftsmanship and creating emotional connections.

"My father is artist Ben Nighthorse Campbell and growing up, I spent a lot of time in his studio. It was there that I learned early that true artistry combines technical excellence with cultural authenticity and personal narrative. Our submission process involves a comprehensive assessment by me and our management team. We meet three to four times per year to review portfolios, and we evaluate past, current and future trends in the fine art world."

In business since 2002, Ms. Campbell has accrued an educated staff with a creative eye and a developed ability to seek out work and artists that best fit their gallery locations. "Our curatorial team looks for artists who have honed their craft, but aren't afraid to push boundaries. We also want artists whose narratives speak to something deeper, broader and more profound than bronze, paint or photography. We look for work that resonates with our 'fresh western' approach, blending contemporary and traditional elements. Most importantly, we want artists who understand the business side and are ready for

a true partnership. Relationship building is paramount. We maintain positive, long-term relationships with our artists through robust marketing efforts and personalized support."

For Ms. Campbell, integrity and mutual respect are key. "Poor communication or unprofessional business practices are hard for us to manage, as are inconsistent quality and craftsmanship. Our artists must be committed to their



The Santa Fe, NM, location of Sorrel Sky Gallery.

practice and professional growth."

Balancing existing and new customers is also a tricky job. "This is one of the most strategic decisions we make," she says. "We don't select art exclusively for existing clients or solely to attract new ones; we look for pieces that create a bridge between both worlds. Our approach is what I call 'progressive curation.' When I'm evaluating new work, I'm thinking about our collectors who've been with us since 2002, but I'm also considering the sophisticated art enthusiasts we're meeting in our

Santa Fe, SoHo and East Hampton locations. The key is finding artists whose work has enough depth and range to speak to different audiences while maintaining its authentic voice.

"The secret is in the storytelling. Take David Yarrow's photography—his work appeals to our long-time Western art collectors because of the subject matter and emotional impact, but it also attracts contemporary art collectors in New York because of his innovative approach and celebrity collaborations," Ms. Campbell says.

In selecting new artists, she has a strategic criteria. "We look for artists who express universal themes through specific cultural lenses, demonstrate both traditional mastery and contemporary relevance, create work that can hold its own in a ranch house in Colorado

or a penthouse in Manhattan and those who understand that great art transcends demographic boundaries."

The risk is always great and that is why, she says, research and putting in the work is essential. "I've built my career on calculated risks, from opening our first gallery in Durango in 2002, expanding to our Santa Fe location in 2014, launching in New York City in 2024, and East Hampton in 2025. We'll absolutely feature something quite different from our usual offerings if it

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S. Guccione

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FINDING NEW ARTISTS
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aligns with our vision and the artist demonstrates genuine potential. We've found that our most successful 'risks' have been artists who brought new perspectives to familiar themes rather than completely departing from our wheelhouse."

Presenting art that offers a new perspective story and or technique appeals to a wider audience and opens the door for much opportunity. "Our 'Let's make that happen' attitude means we're not just hanging art on walls. We're creating exhibitions, facilitating collector relationships and building careers. We're active partners in our artists' success."

While Ms. Campbell says that they don't have a cut-and-dry criteria on what an artist's body of work should contain, they do look for evolution in the work, as well as the ability to meet the needs of the collectors. "We don't have a rigid number of pieces of art need from an artist, but we typically want to see at least eight to 12 pieces for an initial showing. This gives us enough variety to properly introduce the artist to our collectors and allows for different price points and subject matter," she says.

"More important than quantity, we look for a cohesive body of work that demonstrates the artist's vision, pieces that represent different aspects of their practice, a range that allows us to introduce

them to various collector preferences and enough inventory to sustain momentum if the initial reception is positive.

"The art world has taught me that meaningful, lasting connections between artists and collectors don't happen by accident; they require vision, commitment and sometimes the courage to take that calculated risk on something extraordinary."

At Prairie Hills Gallery,



Prairie Hills Gallery is located in Lawrence, KS.

located in downtown Lawrence, KS, owner Mehrzad Alison says that finding new artists and work is easy, as there are so many looking for representation. "Galleries today have a very hard time surviving based solely on commissions. Because of that lax they tend to cater to already well-known artists to reduce the risk factor. Because of that, so many great new artists have less and less opportunity to enter showrooms and prestigious galleries in order to start with a high standard of representation."

To minimize his risk as a gallery owner, Mr. Alison uses a membership program. "I ask all artists to pay a membership fee to be represented," he says.

"The fee varies for different artists and offers them different benefits with all of them receiving 82% of the sales and no exclusivity. For the monthly risk they take to be included, all the traditional limitations are lifted for them to grow as best and

Owner of the gallery since 1996, Mr. Alison is also an artist himself, as well as an art instructor of painting classes for all ages and all styles. The gallery also features secondary market work, art appraisals, art restoration and custom framing.

"When it comes to selecting artists, first and for most, is the attitude. Second is quality and consistency in work. And third is being able to afford their customized monthly membership fees. That allowed me to select many styles and subjects without fear of not being able to pay the basic gallery expenses to survive through any hardship. The minimal commitment that we require from an artist is one year and, depending on the size and the monthly amount, the number of pieces can vary from five and up.

"My main criteria in picking the artwork for the gallery is quality, consistency and dedication. What I look for when choosing the actual pieces is the emotion-provoking concept behind it; whether it is done through colors, subject matter, brushstrokes, composition or all of the above. I look for what I call the WOW factor, and not just cliché subjects. I look for dynamic attributes, interactiveness, energy, stories and emotion-invoking power," he concludes. "Though the gallery is open to all artists, we tend to end up mostly with local and regional ones."

fast as they can. I do own the gallery and I select the artist and the work being displayed for sale, to keep a high standard of quality and image. It is not a cooperative gallery, but, I require for all artists to believe in their own work and invest a minimal amount in their own journey to success."

Mr. Alison says that using this strategy with all of the artists being financially invested, allows the gallery to offer many benefits free-of-charge and is able to survive in a high-traffic location.

Koleen Kaffan is Editor in Chief of Art World News.

INVENTORY FOR SALE



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WHY CUSTOMER RETENTION IS HIDDEN GOLD

By Sheila McCumby

We spend a lot of time, money and energy chasing brand new customers, which is akin to a business dating app where we are endlessly swiping right on strangers. Meanwhile, we're ignoring the people who already know us and love us (or at least, they like us enough to have bought something once). The real secret to growing your business isn't just about finding new fish; it's about keeping the ones who are already in the boat. Focusing on customer retention is less like a frantic fishing trip and more like a "happy hour" with all your best friends. They're already here, and they're ready to spend.

The Facts Don't Lie: A Profitable Choice

As a guest panelist during a marketing webinar, I was explaining how crucial customer retention is when an audience member, looking utterly over-caffeinated and defeated, insisted she was too busy to even think about it. I saw her thousand-yard stare and knew exactly what she meant. As a busy single parent and small business owner myself, I've been there. My heart went out to her.

Instead of just offering advice publicly, I privately

scheduled a one-on-one meeting. We pulled up a spreadsheet, and I asked her a simple question: "If you spent just 15 minutes a day on automated customer outreach; a few texts or emails each day, do you think you could bring in a couple of repeat customers a week?"



She agreed that 8 to 10 regular customers a month was a reasonable number. I explained that statistically, repeat customers spend more than new customers...a lot more. Her average sale was \$300. According to the numbers, her repeat customers' average sale would be closer to \$500. When we calculated how much a handful of repeat

customers could add to her bottom line; an extra \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year on a \$50,000 net income, I saw a glimmer of hope in her tired, overworked eyes. She looked like she'd just found the Holy Grail of spreadsheets and finally understood that making time for cus-

tomers could add to her bottom line; an extra \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year on a \$50,000 net income, I saw a glimmer of hope in her tired, overworked eyes. She looked like she'd just found the Holy Grail of spreadsheets and finally understood that making time for cus-

glove. Here are some facts regarding the profitability of marketing consistently to your existing customers.

- **It's Cheaper:** Acquiring a new customer can cost anywhere from five to seven times more than retaining an existing one. This is because you've already invested in the marketing, sales and onboarding processes for your current customer base.

- **They Spend More:** Loyal, repeat customers are not only more likely to make future purchases, but they also tend to spend more. Some studies show that existing customers spend an average of 67% more than new customers. Over time, this consistent spending contributes significantly to a customer's lifetime value (CLV), a key metric for long-term profitability.

- **Increased Profitability:** An article by business author Amy Gallo in the Harvard Business Review reported that a mere 5% increase in customer retention can lead to a staggering 25% to 95% increase in profits. This is a testament to the power of a loyal customer base and the efficiency of a retention-focused model.

- **They Become Your Best Marketers:** Happy customers

tomers retention wasn't a choice; it was a necessity, a very profitable necessity.

Customer Retention is Vital

The data on customer retention isn't just compelling; it's a cold, hard, slap in the face with a money-filled

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"Contemporary Vision" 36"x48"
layers of pigmented epoxy on panel



"Butterfly Garden" 40"x70" oil on Belgian linen

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"Extasea" 39"x39"
mica and pigmented epoxy on panel



"Woke up in a Dream" 36"x36"
mica and pigmented epoxy on panel

become brand advocates. They are more likely to refer your business to friends, family, and colleagues and their word-of-mouth marketing is highly valuable and often more trusted than traditional advertising. They are also five times more likely to overlook a delay or mistake, highlighting the strength of the emotional connection they have with your brand.

- **The 80/20 Rule in Action:** The Pareto Principle often applies to customer bases, with statistics suggesting that 80% of a company's future revenue will come from just 20% of its existing customers. This underscores the critical need to identify and nurture your most loyal patrons.

Ongoing Marketing and Engagement

So, how do you make customer retention a core part of your business strategy? It's all about proactive and consistent engagement that goes beyond the initial transaction.

1. Personalize, Personalize, Personalize

Customers today expect a tailored experience. Use data from past orders to understand their preferences, purchase history, and behavior. Then, use that information to create personalized communications and offers.

- **Targeted Emails:** Instead of a generic blast, send emails with product and art recommendations based on their past purchases and

preferences.

- **Personalized Onboarding:** Tailor the initial experience for new customers to ensure they are successful with your products and services from day one. Put a gold star on the workorder of a new customer, so you can ensure that everything goes perfectly, and they have a positive experience with your shop.

- **Address Them by Name:** Simple gestures, like using



their first name in emails or other communication can go a long way in making them feel valued. Most POS systems have a place for customer notes in their databases.

Write down key words about their interests, pets, children, etc., to give a more personalized experience when they come back into your shop. They will see you not only as a framer but

as a friend.

2. Master Customer Service and Support

Exceptional customer service is the backbone of retention. It's not just about resolving issues; it's about building trust and demonstrating that you care.

- **Be Proactive:** Anticipate customer needs and potential problems. For example, if you have a customer who is concerned about timely delivery, you can

polls. Show customers that you are listening by making tangible changes based on their suggestions.

3. Create a Sense of Community

Engage customers by fostering a community around your shop. This creates an emotional connection that extends beyond the product itself.

- **Online Forums or Groups:** Create a space where customers can connect with each other, share tips and get support. This could be something like, "Art Happenings in Our Town," or "Supporting Local Art" as a Facebook or Instagram page.

- **Host Events:** As an independent framer or gallery, it's important to establish yourself as the authority in your area. Virtual or in-person, events like webinars, workshops or classes can bring your customers together and deepen their relationship with your brand.

- **Showcase Customer Stories:** Nearly every piece of art brought into your shop has a story. Feature your customers in your marketing. Write heartwarming social media posts or customer spotlights that make them the heroes.

4. Build a Loyalty Program That Rewards

Loyalty programs are a classic, effective way to incentivize repeat business and show appreciation.

- **Tiered Rewards:** Create a tiered system where customers unlock greater perks

continued on page 20

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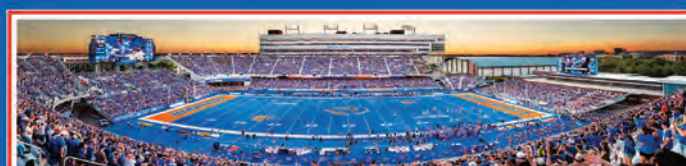
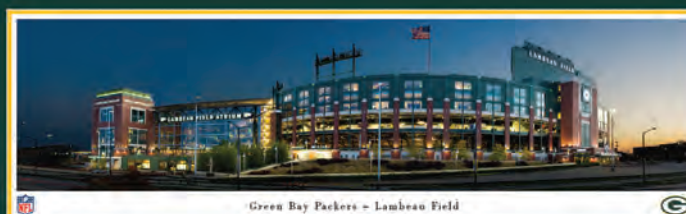
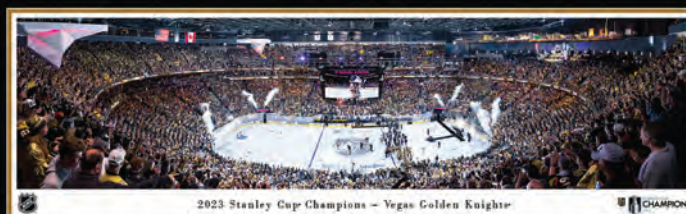
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BUSINESS STRATEGIES
continued from page 18

and benefits as they spend more. This can include exclusive discounts, early access to new products or free shipping.

- **Gamification:** Use a point system, badges or punch cards to make engaging with your brand a fun and rewarding experience.

- **Referral Programs:** Encourage existing customers to spread the word by rewarding both them and the new customer they bring in. I sent any customer who referred a friend a \$20 coupon to apply on their next purchase. My referrals went up and my existing customers were pleased with their bonus.

Obviously, acquiring new customers is a necessary is fundamentally tied to its ability to retain its existing



part of growth, however a business' long-term success customer base. By prioritizing engagement, delivering

value, and building genuine relationships, you transform your customers from mere transactions into your most profitable and powerful brand advocates. And sometimes, they end up being friends.

Sheila McCumby, owner of Strategies for Success, a small business consulting firm, connects with audiences worldwide as a popular speaker, writer, mentor and teacher. Her podcast, 'The Framing Chronicles' focuses on challenges faced by independent companies in the art and framing industry. With decades of experience as a picture framer and shop owner (since the early 90s), she's dedicated to helping small businesses boost profits and streamline operations. For more details, visit: www.mystrategies4success.com.



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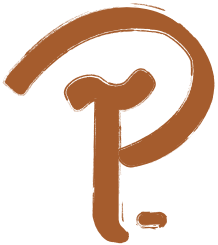
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KEEPING ARTISTS HAPPY

HOW TO BUILD A RELATIONSHIP THAT THRIVES

By Litsa Spanos

Bringing an artist into your gallery isn't the finish line—it's the starting point. The real work—and the real opportunity—lies in how you keep them engaged, inspired and motivated. Over the years at ADC Fine Art, I've learned that an artist's happiness depends on consistent communication, fair treatment, meaningful opportunities and genuine care.



That belief inspired the creation of SmartSell, our exclusive artist accelerator membership program. SmartSell provides artists with coaching, educational courses, marketing support and gallery opportunities designed to help them grow and succeed. With tiered memberships ranging from Starter to Ultimate Plus, artists can select the level of support that best matches their goals. What follows are the core practices I've found most effective for keeping artists happy—and how SmartSell helps bring them to life.

Communicate Often and Clearly

Artists want to know how their work is doing. Regular updates on sales, market

trends and client feedback help them stay in tune with what's resonating. Share what's working and what isn't, and encourage honest dialogue. At ADC, we pass

along observations about client preferences and trends so artists feel informed, supported, and ready to adapt when needed.

Making an Investment in Professional Growth

Artists thrive when they're learning. Beyond technical skill, they need tools to navigate the business of art. Workshops, coaching and resources make a difference. SmartSell provides access to expert-led courses covering everything from art licensing to corporate sales—practical guidance that helps artists expand their reach and refine their strategies.

Prioritize Visibility

Exposure keeps artists energized. Regular marketing—press, social media, newsletters and corporate connections—reminds the world of their work. SmartSell members are featured in our magazine, gallery shows and client presentations, giving them visibility well beyond our walls. The more artists are seen, the more motivated they are to keep creating.

Be Fair and Transparent

Trust hinges on clarity. Commission structures, payment schedules and pricing policies should be consistent and clearly explained.



At ADC, we keep it simple: artists pay no hidden fees, only standard commissions. SmartSell adds another layer of transparency by ensuring artists know exactly what opportunities and resources come with each

tier of membership. Make sure you never reach out to their customers without their consent or price your work lower in your studio/website.

Celebrate the Artist

Recognition matters. Celebrate milestones—first solo shows, major sales, anniversaries. Invite artists to share input in exhibition planning or themes when possible. With SmartSell, recognition is woven into the experience: members are highlighted in marketing campaigns, honored in exhibitions and included in conversations that help shape future opportunities.

Support Creative Experimentation

Encourage artists to take risks. Experimenting with new media, larger formats, or innovative styles keeps their practice fresh. While not every piece will be instantly commercial, the encouragement to explore fosters long-term creativity.

Right now, trends like mixed media, digital integrations, and socially engaged art are energizing the market. Galleries that embrace these shifts not only stay relevant but also keep their artists inspired.

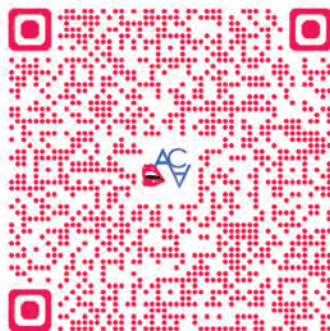
continued on page 24

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SCAN TO APPLY!

KEEPING ARTISTS HAPPY
continued from page 22

Expand The Artist's Markets

Art isn't only sold on gallery walls anymore. Corporate commissions, design partnerships, hospitality projects and licensing deals are growing avenues for artists. Helping them tap into these opportunities expands their income streams and audience. SmartSell equips artists with knowledge to connect with interior designers, corporations, and licensing professionals, giving their work new platforms and broader reach.

Build Real and Lasting Relationships

Nothing replaces authentic connection. Know your artists' goals, listen to their frustrations, and cheer them on. Show up for their openings, share encouragement,

and provide honest feedback. At ADC, we view artists not just as contributors to a gallery but as true partners. SmartSell formal-

grand gesture. It's built on small, consistent actions: clear communication, fair practices, visibility, growth opportunities, recognition



dation. SmartSell builds on it, offering tools, education, exposure, and encouragement that accelerate careers and keep artists excited about the future. When artists are thriving, so is the art—and so is the gallery.

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. ADC Fine Art has two locations: a 13,000 square foot gallery and custom frameshop in Cincinnati, OH's west end and a gallery and custom frameshop in the heart of Ft. Thomas, KY. For further information, visit the ADC Fine Art website located at: www.adcfineart.com.

izes mentorship, but at its heart, it's about care—making sure every artist feels valued both professionally and personally.

Keeping artists happy doesn't happen through one

and authentic relationships. When artists feel supported, their creativity flourishes—and that benefits everyone: the gallery, the collectors and the broader community. At ADC Fine Art, gallery representation is only the foun-

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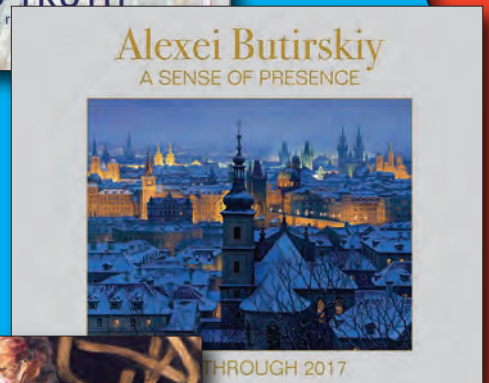
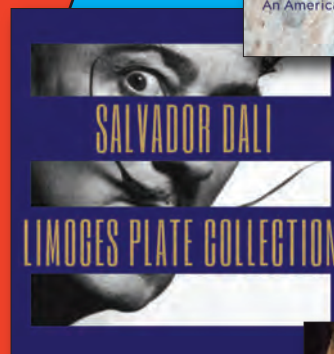
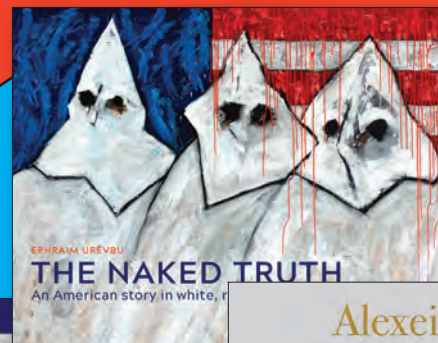
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ART HOLDS STRONG DESPITE ECONOMY FEARS

By Anita Petersen

Even when budgets shrink, people still buy art. They still hang framed pieces in entryways, gift notebooks with beautiful covers and choose the tea towel with strawberries instead of the plain one. In fact, during uncertain economic times, the emotional value of art often becomes more important than ever. That emotional connection is a powerful advantage, and one that continues to drive consumer spending even when other categories see pullbacks. The art in your shop may be beautiful, but the reason it sells is anything but fluffy. Here's why art continues to perform even when the economy wobbles:

1. Emotional Connection Leads to Action

Art isn't just decoration. It's storytelling. Consumers don't fall in love with a product because of a SKU, they fall in love with a feeling. A cozy still-life, a floral that reminds them of home, a color that lifts their mood. All of this drives purchasing behavior in categories from wall decor to stationery, mugs and beyond.

2. Art Equals Affordable Luxury

When larger purchases feel out of reach, small-scale indulgence wins. A print, a framed canvas, a pillow or a notecard with stunning art delivers joy without the guilt.

It's beauty that fits the budget, and that's something people continue to crave.

3. Art Helps Products Stand Out

In a competitive retail landscape, shelf appeal matters. Artwork instantly elevates a product's perceived value and gives it a unique story. When brands want to differentiate, adding art gives them the visual language to do it.

Resilience Starts with Good Retail Design

According to trend forecasting from platforms like WGSN and Pinterest Predicts, consumers are prioritizing homes that feel meaningful, joyful and personal. That emotional connection has a measurable business impact, and it's exactly where art-centered pieces deliver.

Design-focused products help retailers weather market slowdowns because they're not just functional, they're expressive. They reflect identity, mood and aspiration, and that kind of emotional spending doesn't go away when the economy shifts, up or down. It simply gets more intentional. Not all art is created equal. When you or the suppliers you buy

from work with an art licensing partner, like Wild Apple, they get more than just an image bank; they get a trend-savvy creative partner.

Here's what working with an art licensing agent looks like:

- Access to proven sellers: A company like Wild Apple works with top artists



and art directors whose work is already moving at retail. It's available to license and is available to order as prints, canvas, giclée or print-on-demand with POD Exchange.

- Production-ready digital files: Wild Apple's files are high resolution and formatted for real-world product application, from canvas to wall murals and beyond.

- Trend-forward curation: Our collections are constantly evolving, based on

what's trending in fashion, interiors, color forecasts and global markets.

- Speed to market: With over 50,000 images available, designers can move quickly from concept to product, an essential advantage in a fast-moving economy.

In times of uncertainty, consumers want meaning. They want comfort. They want color. And they want products that bring a little more humanity into their homes. Art licensing supports those needs by delivering beauty that works across categories, adapts to shifting trends and continues to inspire. Whether you're developing a new collection of wall art or adding new home decor products to your gallery or frameshop, great art helps products connect, and connection drives sales.

Anita Petersen is Wild Apple's Director of Marketing. She shapes the brand story, leads campaigns across channels, and keeps our social feeds vibrant with trend intel from the art and decor world. From strategy to stunning presentations, Anita makes sure Wild Apple stands out. Follow Wild Apple on social for the latest trends and sign up for our newsletter at www.wildapple.com. Learn more about Anita at www.thinkscarlet.com.



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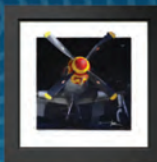
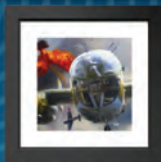
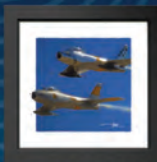
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SURVIVING THE STORM

HOW TO RECESSION-PROOF AN ART GALLERY

By Katherine Hébert

Running an art gallery during tough economic times can be daunting. Discretionary spending is often the first to be cut, which can hurt an art gallery business. So, what does an action plan look like to ensure your gallery survives?

Churchill once said, "Never let a good crisis go to waste." Even economic uncertainty can bring opportunities with the right marketing strategy. A successful gallery that weathers the storm will act proactively. It's time to adjust spending and strategy to achieve optimal business results. In this article, we'll discuss creating a gallery marketing action plan to tackle economic challenges.

Evaluate Your Gallery's Best Assets

The best strategy is to stick with the marketing resources you already have. Focus on "always-on" marketing efforts like your gallery's website SEO, social media, art sales platforms, or your existing mailing list. These typically have a more significant impact than developing something new and untested. Enhance these resources instead of creating new ones.

Consider where your best art sales leads are coming from. Identify your top-performing opportunities and resources that work well and don't carry too much financial risk. Narrow your focus and pivot your energy towards accelerating these opportunities.

Depending on the eco-

efforts move prospective art buyers from awareness to collectors and advocates of your gallery. Lifecycle marketing is about brand building with a strong value proposition. This could mean further developing your gallery's brand through communications or your gallery program.

Lifecycle marketing activ-

- Third-party sales platforms

Evaluate each of these activities to determine where to focus your time and energy during tight times. Emphasize brand building and your value proposition. Promotion of your artists will continue but may take on a softer selling tone.

Create a Recession Action Plan

To help your gallery survive a difficult, and unpredictable, economic climate, consider these six key steps. Some may need to be implemented before a crisis hits. These strategies can help maintain income and set the gallery up for a strong comeback when conditions improve.

1. Shift Your Gallery's Marketing Message

Shift your marketing message from focusing on selling artists to showcasing your gallery program and services. Connect with your buyer's values and needs. This shift will help you:

- Build gallery brand equity
- Show empathy for clients and artists

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nomic downturn, some lead-generating sources may not be viable. For example, expensive art fairs or sales platforms may need to pause if sales don't exceed expenditures. Decide what to keep and what to pause.

Lifecycle Gallery Marketing

"Always-on" marketing

ities might include:

- SEO
- Social media
- Brand awareness activities
- Paid advertising
- Marketing automation
- Email marketing
- Blogging
- Re-engagement campaigns
- Affiliate marketing or partnerships
- Referral or loyalty programs

SURVIVING THE STORM ***continued from page 28***

- Cast a wider net for awareness

Your buyers may also be struggling financially. Choose messaging that shows empathy and demonstrates how the gallery supports the community, clients, and artists.

2. Create Educational and Entertaining Content

Share untold or rarely told stories through gallery content. Communicate stories that build brand awareness and reflect value for prospective buyers. Content creation becomes more impactful during a recession. Increase content from your gallery as a soft-selling technique that resonates with collectors.

Create long-form blog posts, short videos, Instagram stories, etc. Increase gallery brand-forward content by at least 20%. Promote new content in your regular newsletters without overloading your email list.

3. Diversify Your Art Gallery's Revenue Streams

Surviving a recession may require creating new revenue streams, even temporarily. Consider these ideas:

- Sell secondary works from collectors
- Promote the gallery as a rental space
- Offer collection management packages
- Develop an art rental service for commercial clients
- Charge artists an up-front exhibition fee with a

lower sales commission

- Create paid lecture series or workshops
- Add a shop with unique items like affordable jewelry or home goods

Diversifying income sources beyond art sales commissions can ease financial pressure. Some ideas may require advance planning and a slight business model pivot.



4. Adjust Your Art Offering

After an economic downturn, your target market may prioritize paying off debts before buying art. Offer less expensive artworks by current artists or introduce new emerging artists with lower price points. Unique items from a gallery shop with high profit margins could be easier for buyers to justify.

Promote new artists as available for a limited time or as a special offering. Ensure selected artists fit all aspects of your gallery's program. Get feedback and

recommendations from artists you represent.

5. Set a Budget for Gallery Advertising Post-Recession

As a recession ends, collectors will be more comfortable buying art again. Increase marketing spending to catch up. Plan campaigns for when conditions return to normal. This is the

marketing an art gallery during these times requires planning. You won't have time to figure out what to do once sales dry up.

Preparedness Pays

Preparedness for all possibilities can help bring success in this economy. And, regardless of the recession's cause, you need a plan that can be quickly implemented. This plan should include changes to your business model that strengthen your ability to survive a crisis. Having a "go-to" plan helps you invest time and money wisely during a recession.

Focus on your gallery's best marketing channels for generating sales leads. Shift your marketing message to have an empathetic tone and showcase your gallery's program and values.

Consider adding new revenue streams to your business. Crisis or not, it's a good idea for the future. I want to see your gallery thrive in good times and bad.

time to reintroduce a sales tone and leverage the brand equity you've built.

6. Gallery Emergency Fund

Create an emergency savings account separate from your regular business account. Contribute a little each month to help you through tough times or bounce back when they end. Creating an emergency fund makes good fiscal sense.

History shows we can't predict when a recession will hit or its impact on your gallery business. Mar-

Columnist and industry expert 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. Visit the website at: www.galleryfuel.com.

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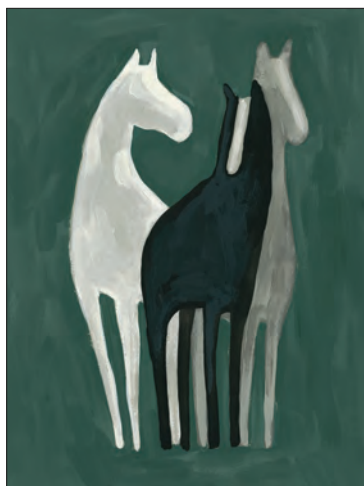


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"Regatta" by Beth A. Forst measures 40 by 30 inches and retails for \$72 on standard paper. Available on multiple substrates and multiple sizes. Call Image Conscious, San Francisco, for more information at (800) 532-2333 for details, or visit the website located at: www.imageconscious.com.

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"Horse Shapes I" by June Erica Vess is available as POD. Phone World Art Group, located in Richmond, VA, for further information at (804) 213-0600 or go to the company's website located at: www.theworldartgroup.com.

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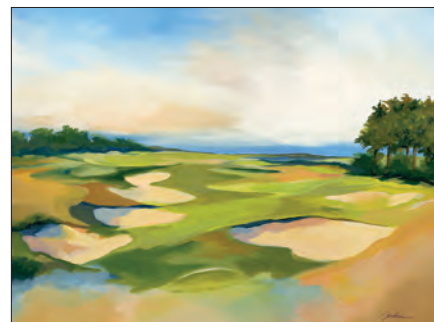
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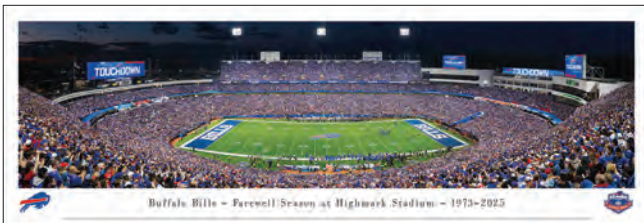
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Buffalo Bills—Farewell Season at Highmark Stadium

"Buffalo Bills—Farewell Season at Highmark Stadium—1973-2025" by Christopher Gjevre measures 40 by 13 1/2 inches and retails for \$34.95. For details, call Blakeway Worldwide Panoramas Inc. in Minneapolis, MN, at (800) 334-7266, or go to: www.panoramas.com.



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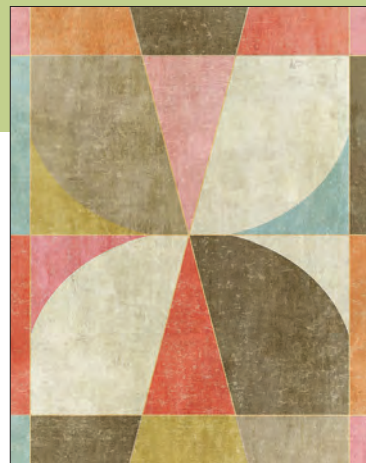
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"Pinwheel"
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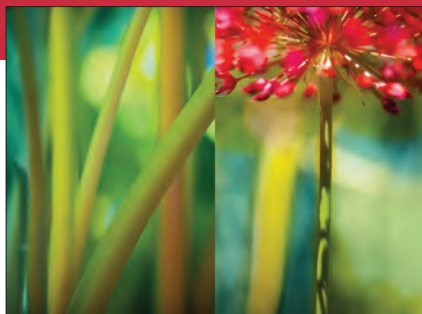
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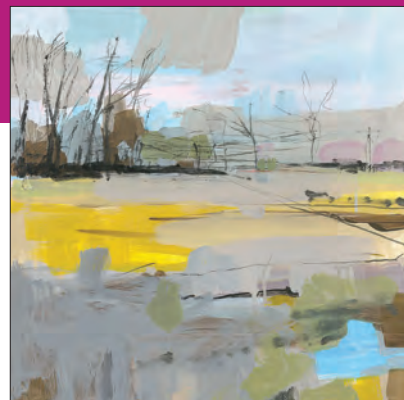
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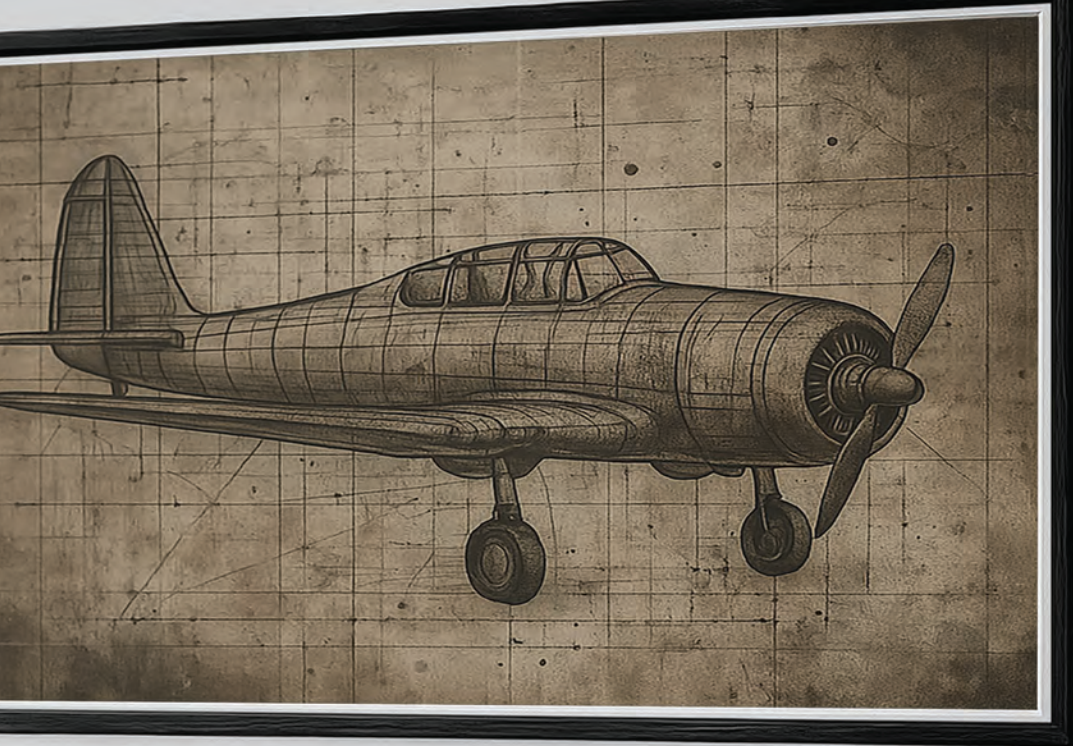
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