



ART & MUSEUM

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Collector's Sculpture

How To Spot Rising Art Investment Talent

With the ease of online accessibility to art, we find ourselves in a world constantly exposed to new creatives. Within this plethora of art it is becoming harder to discover and distinguish the artists who have the makings of becoming a master and receiving critical acclaim.

On online art sales websites, such as Saatchi Art, contemporary artists set the price of their work themselves – outside the economic forces of the traditional art market, price certainly does not equal value. This presents potential pitfalls for collectors who are not familiar with the criteria against which to assess an artist who is new to them.

Whether a client is looking to commission art or build their collection, there are certain considerations which help to determine if an artwork is worth the investment. With decades' of experience in identifying promising and talented artists, Artelier has devised a unique set of criteria that we use internally when sourcing artists for clients.

1. Emerging Career

An emerging career artist – be they a young graduate, or an artist who developed their practice later in life – can offer an excellent investment. Their work is often sold for entry-level prices, yet can have the potential for a significant increase in value. They are also more inclined to charge fairly for their work, rather than adding a premium purely based on their name and reputation.

The client therefore receives art that presents new and inspiring ideas for an excellent price. When looking for an emerging artist, consider their projected career path based on past growth and potential. Is the portfolio on their website of consistently high-quality? Have they already received critical acclaim? Have they undertaken a prestigious commission? Are they well-established in their native country, but are as yet undiscovered elsewhere? A combination of these often points to an emerging artist whose career will grow exponentially.

2. Originality & Quality of Ideas

An originality of ideas is the hallmark of a great artist's mind. Artists who demonstrate original thought use their materials in interesting ways, and explore novel concepts and subtle themes. In addition, an artist's ideas should also be high quality – a compelling idea has nuances that can be explored across multiple artworks, developing into a lasting focus that continues to be exciting.

A broad understanding of the art market helps in spotting originality and quality; for art consultants, who filter through the work of hundreds of artists each week, exceptional artists stand out. When an artist is eloquent in demonstrating a richness to their ideas, the artworks are distinctly more sophisticated and thought-provoking. Being able to spot this is fundamental in predicting the future trajectory of an artist's career, and therefore their investment potential.

3. Skill & Use of Materials

A high level of skill is the product of extensive practice and natural talent – these are essential qualities that will encourage the artist's future growth. When an artist is a master of an unusual technique, they develop a visual language that isn't commonly found elsewhere, and sets them apart from their contemporaries.

To assess whether an artist's skill is remarkable, it's important to consider whether the same effect can easily be replicated. Often, ordinary materials can be transformed into the extraordinary through the artist's vision and technical skill. Consider whether their use of materials is innovative – do they sensitively enhance the properties of their raw materials to create unique effects? Having an experimental approach, combined with a deep focus on materiality, often leads to powerfully engaging artworks.

4. Focus

A consistent focus, be that in ideas or material, is often a sign of a sophisticated artistic practice. This could present as a continuous line of enquiry – the pursuit of particular concepts or subjects across the artist's oeuvre. Alternatively, if the artist follows a more process-led practice and is inspired by exploring their materials, then they must demonstrate a mastery of their medium.

This level of focus leads to consistent development in their work, which cannot be achieved if the artist is prone to deviating their ideas or materials from project to project. Long-term, this suggests that their artistic practice, and thereby reputation, will continue to develop.

5. Training & Experience

Examining the training and experience of an artist can often indicate the quality of their ideas. Being taught by prestigious academics or experienced practitioners leads artists to have a greater ability for analysis and developing ideas.

An artist can gain these skills from sources other than formal training, providing they are sincerely committed to learning from masters. Being self-taught is not enough; if an artist has not gained formal training, they should have endeavoured to work under leading artists as an apprentice or as part of a creative collaboration.

6. Longevity & Evolution

If an artist is following a current fad, then their work will inevitably lack longevity once art trends move on. Although creating art that taps into a popular aesthetic may be profitable for them in the short-term, if an artist is

known only for this type of work then their career doesn't show great promise for the future.

Instead, look for artists whose work shows an evolution and deeper interests – a sustained exploration of ideas, techniques, or styles, which show gradual development. This will indicate whether their practice will continue to evolve, and goes beyond current trends. Artists who are led by these explorations, rather than a trend, will be a more worthwhile investment.

Naturally, no artist will meet every criteria in its full capacity – each artist has their own strengths, and unique approach. Ultimately, the decision should be made through balancing the attributes of an artist, and being clear on what is important for the project.

Artelier are international art consultants, who specialise in curating art for luxury hospitality, residential, yacht and aviation projects. Find talented artists who are also a worthwhile investment for clients is an integral part of Artelier's role. In this article, we offer an insight into what to look for in up-and-coming talent, creating a guide for spotting investment opportunities.

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