

Tips for Collecting Local Art

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ASHLAND, OHIO: If you are a local history fan, collecting local art is a must. However, finding original artwork by local artists that you like might take some research and legwork on your part.



Most locales do not have a central gathering place for all the nearby artists. Therefore, if you want to search for local art to collect, you need to find the places where the artists work. There are some likely spots to look such as summer art shows. However, it is often true that you will see the same local artists at all the shows that you attend. This is not your imagination. Many artists do not like to set up booths on the weekend to sell their work. So where should you look?

The first place to look is a local gallery. In most cities, there is at least one gallery that is devoted to displaying and selling the work of artists from the local geographical area. It may be tricky to find this gallery, because it will probably be in an older section of town that has lower rents for commercial space. If you ask artists that you meet, they will be able to tell you where to look for a local gallery.

When you have exhausted the local gallery scene, the next step is to look for artist studios. Many artists prefer to sell their own artwork instead of selling through galleries or at shows. This is especially true of artists who create large works of art or heavy pieces that do not travel well. Artists keep most of their original art in their studios, where they can be protected from the elements. Artist studios may be in their homes, in offices, warehouses, or apartments scattered throughout the city. Sometimes groups of artists band together to share a studio space.

A good rule of thumb is to ask any artist you visit if they know other artists in their field. Artists

tend to know of each other because they network just like other business people do. This networking can be formal or informal, but this is one way to find artists who only take customers through referrals.

With the ability to show work on the Internet and save overhead costs, many artists have their work for sale online. You can search the Internet to find artists in your area. By looking online, you can see ahead of time if you like their work, but once you do it is better to meet them in person. Meeting them in person will allow you to see all of the art that they don't have online yet. A lot of preparatory work goes into posting artwork online, therefore it often takes time before an artist posts new work.

If you have a local art school nearby, that can be another place to find artists. Art schools usually display their students' work, and also keep up with their alumni. If you visit the local art school, they will be able to refer you to some of their graduates in specific fields. You can also learn about new and upcoming artists that are still in school.

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