



Art collecting, while intrinsically personal, is far from a solitary endeavor. (UBS)

How to build a meaningful art collection of lasting value

04 December 2023, 3:37 pm EST, written by US Editorial Team

Collecting art has been a passion for centuries. Learn principles to guide you in starting a new or expanding an existing collection.

The path to building an art collection of lasting value is seldom a clear one. Great collections are recognized as such because so few successfully navigate the pitfalls that can arise.

Collecting art has been a passion among successful individuals and families across the globe for centuries. Offering manifold benefits, an art collection can also acquire both financial and cultural value, empowering its owners to create a legacy and become influencers in the global art ecosystem.

However, it can be challenging to navigate the art market today to build a collection that:

- Will be personally meaningful
- Has the best chance of maintaining long-term value
- Remains relevant over time
- Allows a collector to create cultural impact

Guiding principles

Collections that meet these standards tend to be guided by a set of principles and hallmarks that set them apart from others. To start, great collections typically are personal and represent the individual collector's intimate relationship with the art—mirroring their passions, interests and experiences.

Outstanding collections also adhere to standards of quality that keep them from becoming diluted. In addition, these standards foster respect and credibility for the collection and collector within the art community.

Over time, successful collectors develop a nuanced understanding of their chosen artworks and artists, enabling them to separate significant from insignificant works. As collectors acquire greater expertise, their collections in turn become more valuable.

Great collectors tend to be decisive risk-takers. Artworks of quality and rarity can be difficult to find and at times, collectors must make swift decisions to secure coveted pieces. This combination of decisiveness and risk-taking, backed by passion and expertise, make a collection an exciting reflection of artistic discoveries and personal exploration.

Collections in context

Art collecting, while intrinsically personal, is far from a solitary endeavor. Great collections often result from collaborative efforts fostered across a broad ecosystem of relationships, including:

- Family members who, with their shared history and values, often influence a collection's direction and spirit
- Curators and historians who offer scholarly perspectives, helping to identify historically significant pieces.
- Dealers and auction house representatives who provide insights into market trends and opportunities
- Advisors who offer guidance on strategic acquisitions and collection management
- Museum professionals who can facilitate access to a broader artistic narrative
- Other collectors who provide camaraderie, competition and inspiration

And of course, the artists themselves, who are at the heart of it all, offer the most intimate connection to the artwork. Their thinking and ideas can significantly influence collection-building.

To learn more, see [Art and collecting: Building a meaningful legacy](#).

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Main contributor: Matthew Newton, UBS Art Advisory, part of the UBS Family Office Solutions Group

Expiration: 11/30/2024

Review Code: IS2307047

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