

I know what I like, so why do I need an art advisor?

Ideally, an art advisor is an independent and knowledgeable expert on art and the art market who can help to shortcut the learning curve, get the most out of collecting, prevent errors, buy the right work at the right price and make a safe investment.

Since "art", "innovation" and "creativity" have become the new buzzwords in the private and corporate sector, building a collection or creating company art programs is no longer reserved only for an elite few or luxury brands. Because opportunities to buy and engage in art have exploded in the digital age, qualified art advisors are invaluable.

There is generally no job description of an art advisor, and anyone can start an art advisory. Art consulting is multifaceted and art advisors are personalities with various areas of expertise. The basic service is offering support in the acquisition of works of art, but the clientele is varied: seasoned and neophyte art collectors; companies and corporations; developers and architects. Thus, the services of an art advisor must be customised to realise individual goals and the particular vision of the client.

It's all about the Client

An art consultant's job is primarily to be the advocate of the client, to save time and take the client on a meaningful journey through the art world. It is not surprising that people who are interested in art ask themselves, why work with an art advisor if I can buy art in a gallery, at auction or online and have my own opinion? Even



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the seasoned art collector Peggy Guggenheim relied on advisors, including the Dadaist Marcel Duchamp and the anarchist poet and critic Herbert Read to build her collection. So, the big question is, how can an art advisor realise my personal collecting concept or company brand vision?

Transparency, Knowledge and Passion

The art world is complex and very opaque and can be intimidating. Working with an art consultant is a relationship with many facets and benefits. There is no rulebook for art advising but creating transparency in the dynamic and fast evolving art world is one of the most important tasks of a consultant. Advisors stay informed not only through reading but go to gallery openings, exhibitions, art fairs, auctions and biennales. Working with many different artists and being familiar with various categories of art allows the advisor to connect the dots and create innovative concepts for collections and art programs. Ideally, the art advisor perceives the passions and needs of the client and helps to realise those intentions. It is not about the taste of the art advisor; rather the advisor helps the client to discover his own tastes and create bespoke projects and personal collections. It is like having four eyes, and training your eyes to see is the most important lesson you take away from looking at art. On that note; anyone can buy art with their ears, but serious art lovers experience art personally. The art advisor can help on all these levels and it is a long mutual journey with service elements which are easily underestimated.

Experience, Credibility and Trust

An art consultant's reputation is paramount, in order to navigate the art business, credibility and building trust in the network and keeping the codex of fairness and professionalism high should be the priority of any qualified art consultant. All benefits mentioned above can be worthless, without any personal rapport. Working with an advisor, you enter into a rather intimate relationship. You become part of each other's' lives. Therefore, you not only want to pick an experienced advisor, with references and so forth, but you should choose someone you trust and feel comfortable with. Catherine the Great relied on the great mind of Diderot in building her art collection, but she didn't enjoy being with him; thus the relationship did not last.

To me, as an advisor, a great client is one who doesn't expect to purchase an "instant collection" or a business leader who doesn't need an immediate return on investment. Understanding art and collecting is a journey. The idea of accompanying a client on the building of a collection or a CEO on making art and culture part of his brand, is the most rewarding aspect of my profession as an art consultant. Because this is my passion, the clients benefit.

IAM – International Arts Management was founded in 2007 to provide a new and customized approach to art consulting.

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