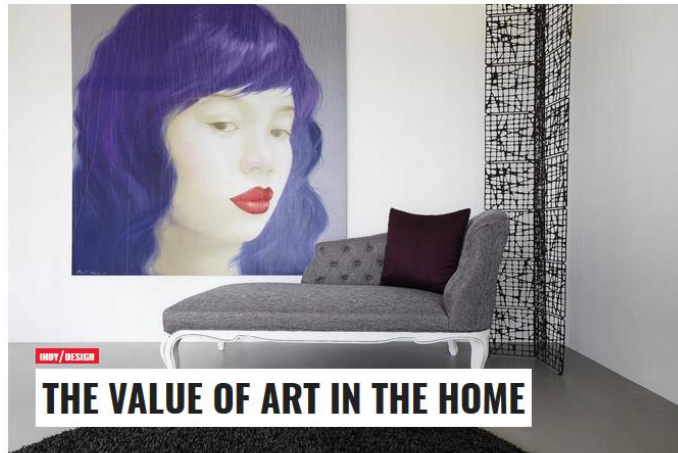


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INDY / DESIGN

## THE VALUE OF ART IN THE HOME

*"Let it puzzle and urge interpretation, encourage deeper thinking and debate"*

Artwork, whether paintings, sculpture or drawings, adds serious qualitative value to the home

**BRIAN WOUFLE**  
Friday 22 December 2017 00:00 GMT

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# The Value of Art In The Home – Villa Sammasan

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**By Brian Woulfe**

Artwork, whether paintings, sculpture or drawings, adds serious qualitative value to the home. For me, a home is incomplete without the presence of art, be it an original Hirst or a haul from a degree show. From showcasing your identity to enlivening the spirits of your guests, art provides value in myriad unexpected ways.



Art is by far the most visceral form of self-expression. The best collection of artwork for the home is one that stirs you and reflects your personality, regardless of style, era or medium. Before specifying artwork for any of my clients, I get to know them on both personal and professional levels. Choosing art is such a personal endeavour, so curating for others is a delicate challenge, but the bottom line for any personal art collection is to buy only what you love.

Choosing art for a social space is an unrivalled pleasure for me. Select art for your home that acts as a catalyst for conversation. Let it puzzle and urge interpretation; encourage deeper thinking and debate. Art

is a tremendous talking point, which can lead a dinner party smoothly into the early hours. Art that catches the eye of your guests will undoubtedly open the door to questions about where you purchased it, whether it was a commission, who the artist is or what attracted to you to it.



On the other hand, art, as with many visual triggers, transcends language. People from an array of cultural backgrounds will understand the message that a particular artwork is trying to conjure, or forge an interpretation that can be brought into conversation with others. In this way, art is a truly primitive pleasure that can be enjoyed by all at an incredibly basal level. Aside from the sentimentality we have surrounding our art collections, art is a necessary element of crafting interiors to fit a brief from a design perspective. Of course, colour choice is an essential factor when deciding on pieces for a specific room. My most memorable art specification was for a largely navy living space. The design team and I decided on a bright red, abstract portrait by an emerging Thai artist that gave the room the kick it needed. The large-scale canvas provides a potent red focal point that serves to reinforce the muted blue of the space. This is a great example of specifying a statement piece of art, but there are other options. Art can blend seamlessly with a pre-established scheme by commissioning colour-matched paintings, or purchasing art that falls within the same colour spectrum. Alternatively, if you're considering a full redecoration, why not start with a work of art as the basis for your overall colour scheme?





Subject matter, in conjunction with colour and style, can be equally as important to fulfilling a design brief. Art brings a mood or atmosphere to a space in a way that colour and furniture simply can't. It can provide humour, whimsy or a sense of reflection. In my projects and in my own home, I use art to add a certain quirk or humorous element. Interiors shouldn't take themselves too seriously. As much as a bright yellow armchair in an otherwise demure living room might induce a grin in a visitor to the space, a peculiar portrait or sculpture can immeasurably brighten the mood of a space.

### **Top tips**

- Buy only what you love!
- It doesn't matter if you can't afford artwork by classical masters... Contemporary art by emerging artists is just as worthy of your wall space
- Decide whether you want your art to extend the overall aesthetic of the interiors, or contrast with it to create a more dynamic scheme
- Use art to give your space impactful personality. Use colour and subject matter to define the atmosphere of your room

*Brian Woulfe is the founder of London-based interior design studio Designed by Woulfe Ltd*

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