



Rent a Masterpiece

Original paintings, sculptures and photographs can turn a home from a blank canvas into a masterpiece.

By Kirsten Rodenhizer

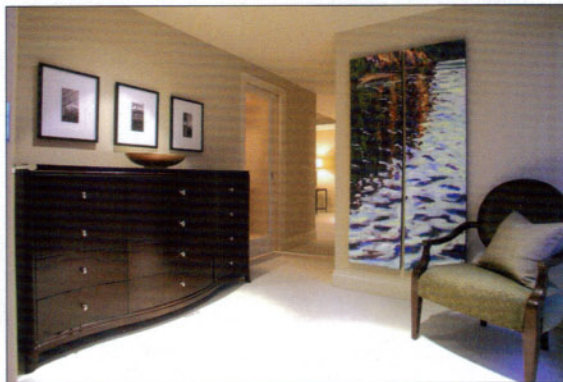
Thanks to the Vancouver Art Gallery's Art Rental and Sales program, it's easier than ever to bring art into your home, your office and your life. The gallery offers more than 12,000 pieces of original art from over 200 artists for rental and sale. The collection includes contemporary landscapes, abstracts, sculptures and photography from well known artists like Tony Onley, Martha Sturdy and Jack Shadbolt, as well as many emerging artists. Rental prices run from \$8 a month to \$150 month, depending on the value of the piece.

"It's hard to believe you can rent such gorgeous art," says division manager Miriam Aroeste. "You may not be ready to buy, but you can still have a beautiful piece in your home."

Aroeste works with Vancouver galleries and artists to source artwork. The proceeds from rentals and sales benefit the artists directly, with a small portion donated to the gallery for programming, exhibitions and other functions.

"The great thing about it is that the artists really benefit from this program," she says.

Clients of the program include "anyone and everyone," from corporations and businesses looking to spruce up their office spaces to architects, interior designers, film industry reps, real estate agents and private homeowners who just want to surround themselves with beautiful things. Many homeowners use the program because they aren't sure what they like, and they want



to try out a few pieces before buying. Many rentals turn into sales.

"Our residential market is growing and growing," she says. "People are keen on renting until they find the perfect picture. They get familiar with different artists and different styles until they end up buying one painting."

Home sellers and staging companies – firms hired to give homes a makeover prior to selling – often

rent art to create a wow-factor for open houses and list photos. Tracy Mills of Dekora Staging recently used over 30 original art pieces to decorate a two-storey, \$4-million West Vancouver penthouse condo. The condo sold almost immediately

"Original art just gives the home that high-end appeal," says Mills. "It does so much in terms of the colour it offers, and it also just personalizes the space that much more."

Aroeste provides a consulting service for her clients to help to help them decide which pieces work best for their space.

"I consider their goals and their own personality, but in general they know much more than they imagine," she says. "At the end of the day, they know what they like and make choices very naturally."

Rental periods range from a minimum of one month to a maximum of 12 months, and up to three months' rental can be deducted from the price of purchase. For more information, visit www.artrentalandsalesvancouver.com.

