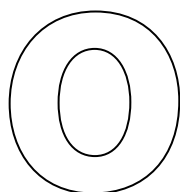




Different strokes

ART SHOW: The artwork you display has a major impact on the look and feel of your interior scheme. Interior designer **Jamie Hemsall** advises how to get it right.



ONE of the popular misconceptions is that original artwork is unaffordable and the preserve of those with plenty of cash. In truth, there is

normally something out there for everyone regardless of budget, and what could be better than owning a one-off rather than a print?

I would never advise people to “play it safe”. Paintings are pieces you are going to be looking at on a day-by-day basis, so concentrate on your likes and desires. Do not worry whether friends and family will like it; as long as you do, that is all that matters.

The art world can be a bit daunting, but avoid being put off by following the advice of artist Roy Pickering who says: “Start with what you like, but don’t write off the stuff

you are not too keen on at first. Paintings need to be given time. Be open-minded, keep looking and in the end trust your own judgment.”

Good art, like good design, will always cause controversy – if everyone likes it, then chances are it may be a little bland, whereas if it elicits passionate love or hate, you know you are on to a winner.

It is important not to rush into a decision, but to consider it carefully. Some galleries may even loan you a painting (for a deposit) to allow you to see how it fits into your environment. There are even loan schemes available to help people purchase modern works.

Colour can be an important issue with any painting, but here I would advise you to steer away from matching a painting with a pair of curtains. It is likely that you may change your curtains over time, but the piece of art will, hopefully, be with you for life.

However, if you are considering a new decorating scheme, it can be a great idea to pick up on a colour within

the picture to use it as an accent to tie the whole room together.

Placement is vitally important. Artist Sara Brighty thinks that the room in which you hang the painting should influence



PICTURE THIS: *Impossible Sky*, by Sara Brighty.



BACKS TO THE WALL: *No Naked Lights* by Roy Pickering, left; *Workshop Tree Tryptic* by Roy Pickering, above; Space around a painting is extremely effective, below left; *Beyond the Light of the Sun* by Sara Brighty, below right.



the home of
decoration
inspiration



MAKE YOUR
HOUSE A
home
BE INSPIRED

We stock a fantastic and varied range of wallpaper, paints and home accessories

- Over 800 different wallcoverings always in stock
- Over 1200 wallcoverings to choose from
- Probably the largest range in Yorkshire
- Over 300 wallpaper and fabric books in stock to browse at your leisure with a free pattern book loan service

Innovative room displays showcasing the best in wallcoverings, occasional furniture and home accessories

THE DECORATION DEPOT

TRIANGLE HOUSE,
257 KIRKGATE,
WAKEFIELD WF1 5PL
TEL: 01924 379992

WWW.DECORATIONDEPOT.CO.UK

your choice of content, and here I would definitely agree. Dining rooms with their night-time feel are often the best place for displaying striking pieces that require space and contemplation, while a bedroom is the ideal environment for something sensual.

Roy Pickering also considers that you should ensure the painting has to be right for the space whatever angle you approach it from. As artists, both Sara and Roy love their pieces to be considered to be the most important thing in the room or, at the very least, the cause of spirited conversation.

You should never underestimate the power of space around a painting as it makes it a centre piece and will draw the eye with minimal distraction. Depending on the scale, one painting on a wall can have far more impact than several. However, related groups work hung in close proximity.

Whatever, you do avoid falling into the trap of purchasing something that is too big for your room. I always carry a tape-measure – ever since a close friend got carried away at an auction and ended up buying a fantastic piece that they then found they could not get into their

apartment. Know the space you have available (and the access routes) and work within it.

Framing is a tricky subject and something people can often get wrong. Sara Brighty comments: “A frame does not make a good painting, but a poorly chosen frame can make a painting look terrible.”

The advice from all quarters is to go for bespoke framing (something which a gallery or frame-makers can help with).

Local framers have a variety of options and will be happy to give advice. It is important to match your frame to your picture (and its surroundings). In modern décor, plain frames in a single colour are often the best option, whereas in a period home, you may want to go for a more traditional heavier gilt frame.

“ One painting on a wall can have far more impact than several. ”

Roy Pickering often does not use frames at all, especially for works on canvas or metal, as he feels the messy edges reveal something of the history of the painting, but if this is the case, he advises clients to display them on a flat, one-colour wall.

Of vital importance is how you hang your painting. The first thing is to ensure that the picture will be flat against the wall. Keep wire tight or use specialist fixings for a perfectly flush effect.

I have often encountered people who agonise over exact measurements and pencil lines when positioning a painting. However, Roy, Sara and I all agree that levelling it by eye really is the best method because walls and corners are rarely straight. Consider this a two-person job with one holding the painting while the other looks, then swap over and discuss. At the end of the day, if it looks right, it is right!

■ Artist contact details: Roy Pickering – www.roypickering.co.uk 07984 229863. Sara Brighty – www.crazyartlady.com 07707 611977

■ Jamie Hemsall, BIID, is an award-winning interior designer. Visit him at www.jamiehemsall.com or call 0800 032 1180