

ART SPEAK

Experts point out the essentials to keep in mind when acquiring young talent

SALONI DOSHI

Collector/Promoter
"Always love what you buy, and only buy from noted galleries. Ensure that you buy more works of the artists you like, and support them as they grow."

ANURAG KHANNA

Collector
"My choices depend on the quality and content of the work, how my intuition responds to it, and the gallery representing the artist. I also seek an intersection with the artist, if possible, to gauge if there is a fire in the belly."

SHEFALI SOMANI

Gallerist
"A vital part of your homework should include sweeping research on the artist."

PRATEEK RAJA

Gallerist
"The connect of what you see and what you feel is crucial, and to discover this with a young artist is unparalleled. It's important to take your time. What one loves momentarily may not evoke the same feeling in a week's time."

2. For young collectors, this is the logical starting point. The artists emerging on the horizon are of your age, speak a language that you can likely relate to and connect with, and the price barriers that surround them aren't yet daunting. It can also serve as the richest training arena—one wherein you learn the ground rules of collecting, sharpen and hone these skills, and witness first-hand the fruit of your labour. This is your personal opus taking shape as you proceed, one artwork at a time.

3. Identifying your preferred group of young artists and standing in as a patron for them while you support their early showcases will result in two certain outcomes: The first would be the benefit of owning the strongest works from crucial junctures within the artist's career—should the artist become a leading Contemporary, these works will be considered sought-after. The second outcome would be the privilege of being counted among the early patrons of an explosive talent. And when the fledgling young 'uns become celebrated maestros, it will doubtless result in the collector likewise being championed as an absolute maverick—one who marched forth on her own terms, assembling a deeply personal collection.

4. The financial upside! Works selling for high crores today were acquired for low thousands three to four decades back, when these superstar artists had only recently emerged on the scene. On the global front, a wider range of price escalation has been recorded (think canvases by Picasso climbing from under \$10,000 to \$100 million+ in just over six decades), in large part on account of being an older, comparatively more mature market with a larger volume of trade docketed.

HOW TO SCORE WHEN YOU SCOUR?

Is this section of emerging artworks reserved solely for budding collectors? I would think not. Nothing quite compares to a collection that displays an intelligent intermingling of the

Masters with the Contemporaries and the emerging. It certainly isn't a cakewalk, but master collectors do manage this with aplomb and flair. The biggest challenge of making one's way within this section is actually precisely that—there's a lot to trove through. There are seemingly countless new artists arriving on the scene on an ongoing basis.

So how does one chart their path within this section? The starting point should be to consider the artist's strengths and capabilities. The level of her skill would be evident instantly, following a viewing of a body of her work. Further deliberation would reveal the inherent intellect. These could be some of the opening questions to consider: What are the residing concerns of this artist? How does she translate these into personal, powerful statements? How interesting is her usage of media? Does the work pack intelligence, skill and visual appeal, all while retaining a high degree of individuality in its presentation?

The next consideration, and this is a crucial one, is to check if there is a seasoned gallerist's support involved. This serves two immediate functions: firstly, that of validating the strength and early promise of the artist; and secondly, the backing provided offers the artist much-needed stability to be able to focus on her craft.

The benefit of being introduced to an important selection of patrons, who will doubtless play a crucial role in the artist's future, is also an untold and immense benefit.

Other facets to consider include the artist's academic background and achievements; the perspective of imminent curators and writers in regard with the artist's practice; and the reception of this body of work by other noted collectors—though I would not give undue weight to the words of others beyond a point. Ultimately, it's your collection and must be in your own voice, so go with your eye and your gut! ■

Arvind Vijaymohan is the CEO of Artery India, a financial datacentre focused on Indian art sales globally



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—ARVIND VIJAYMOHAN