

Ask the Artsperts
by Kristine Meek and Juliana Meek
Harmon-Meek Gallery, Naples, FL

First Fine Art Purchase

Dear Artsperts:

What should a new collector be looking for when they are considering making their first fine art purchase?

**Signed,
First Time Buyer**

Dear First Timer,

Welcome to the art world. It's an exciting and life-long journey of discovery. As you explore new art styles, new artists, and new works you may find out more about yourself as well.

Sometimes people come into our galleries and will apologize to us that they are "just now starting to look at art" implying that they should have started earlier in life and regret feeling ill-equipped of art knowledge. We are told at an early age to like flashy cars and jewelry but the marketing for art isn't as pervasive. Many of us have other pressing financial obligations like starting a business or education for ourselves and our children that take up both our free time and our finances. But it is never too late to learn about art and to grow in your confidence as an art connoisseur.

Like anything today, you can use the internet but we recommend seeing art in person. When we have groups of school children visit the gallery we always demonstrate the difference of seeing a particular painting in person versus on a laptop versus on a phone versus in a book, because in each case the work will appear different and nothing is as good as in person. Visit art museums and galleries in person. Many museums have docent-led tours and galleries are generally eager to answer any genuine questions (e.g. don't start by asking "why would anyone buy this?").

As you look at art in museums and in a variety of galleries you might come to find you like a particular style of art and then find a particular artist that intrigues you. It is good to do some research into the artist – education, solo and group exhibitions, public and museum collections, and representing galleries – are all things to research about an artist.

Finding the art you like is part of the equation; the other is finding the source for the art. Finding an art dealer you trust is very important. Like a hair dresser or interior designer, the relationship between art dealer and art collector is very personal. Look at how long the gallery has been in business, both nationally and locally as unfortunately many come and go each year in Naples.

We've put together a short check-list for you as you begin your journey into collecting art with greater meaning and value beyond decoration or trends.

**Sincerely,
The Artsperts**

Fine Art Checklist

Does the artist....

- ✓ *Have critical acclaim*
- ✓ *Have works in museum permanent collections*
- ✓ *Have gallery representation*
- ✓ *Create only original works of art, meaning no Giclée, no editions of more than 9 for sculpture, no prints with editions of 100s*



Not everyone is lucky enough to be born the child of an art dealer and to start collecting art before talking or walking. Here is the son of Kristine Meek with his very first Hunt Slonem