

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

Salon Style Hanging: hiding control panels

Dear Artsperts:

I have annoying control panels for the air conditioning and the security system on my walls in places that prohibit me from hanging anything. Is there anything I can do, short of calling an electrician and redoing these walls, to hang art on these walls?

Signed,
Controlled

Dear Controlled,

One solution for your problem of having an a/c or security system control panel in the middle of your wall is to hang art around the electronic panel in a “salon” or “gallery” style. Open any magazine today with images of home interiors and you are likely to see at least one photo with a wall hung with art in the “salon style”. The style of hanging an assortment of paintings, instead of one large painting, gets its name from the salons of Europe – particularly France – two centuries ago where the learned and leisurely could gather to discuss the advances and issues of their time amongst walls adorned with an astonishing assortment of paintings.

The advantages for you is that you don’t have to hire an electrician and handy man to repair the hole in the wall and the paintings will take the attention off the electronic control panel.

Hanging salon style may look hap-hazard but like ‘bed head’ hair styles and ‘acid-washed’ jeans there’s more to creating this look than just hammering a few nails. Although it’s also not as daunting a task as some may fear either.

First begin with a common thread. When hanging multiple paintings, you are free to pick works of various mediums, colors, subjects, sizes and frames, but to help prevent the hodge-podge look pick one of those five aspects (medium, color, subject, size or frame) to be common amongst all the works hung together on that wall. For instance, you could do a collection of black and white paintings, or are all watercolors, or paintings that are all depicting birds, or all 8” x 10”, or all framed with the same type of frame. This creates some uniformity and can be fun finding works to complete the collection over time.

Next space the works appropriately. Give each work at least 2 inches to breathe. Some people hang with the corners aligned, others will space out the paintings. Some people make templates of each work out of paper and then tape the paper to the wall to practice before putting tiny holes in their walls. Personally, I lay the works flat on the floor under the wall and fit the works together like a puzzle and practice spacing the works on the floor first.

Finally, like all art collecting and art displaying – make it personal and make it yours. Whether the works you pick remind you of a loved one or the setting of a special memory, or the work just makes you smile, your collection in your home, and every wall in your home should make you happy... even if you are looking at the wall because someone else adjusted the thermostat or you are rushing to turn off the security system!

Sincerely,
The Artsperts



Several walls in the home of Kristine Meek have control panels and salon style hanging of works. (From left to right: Norwegian plater unknown artist, pair of lovebirds by Hunt Slonem, above is landscape by Tobi Kahn, below is a watercolor of a rose by Gary Bukovnik, far right wall is a pair of prints by Robert Kipniss).

In the home of Juliana Meek a work by Sadie Roseblum perfectly covers the breaker box.

