

The Life of an Expat Collector

The life of an expatriate or diplomat has always seemed very exotic. Travelling the world experiencing new work and home environments every few years and, of course, adapting to local cultures provides many opportunities to build a diverse art collection. I've observed that the homes of expats also have a very distinct characteristic in the art they collect; it's like a life journal of the countries they have experienced and what has inspired them.

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THIS PAGE
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Bamboo elevator' from Angki Purbandono, digital print on light box 2013 (Indonesia)
OPPOSITE PAGE
—
Living room: untitled British portrait and Ebb and flow' from Gareth Edwards (England); French furniture from 18th and 19th centuries mixed with more contemporary and 'art nouveau' pieces



It's even more special when one of the owners is in the art world, such as the apartment of my dear friends Benedict Pownall and Laurent Bourson. Benedict was the head of corporate sponsorship at Sotheby's for many years. Working in an auction house motivates you to collect art, as you have the privilege to be surrounded by "objects of desire" daily. When Benedict and Laurent moved to Jakarta, rather than rent a house they chose a very urban lifestyle among the penthouses of the Peak Residences. From the 40th floor, there is an exquisite view of the Jakarta skyline, but



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In this Art in Design section of Indonesia Design, Deborah Iskandar shares her knowledge and love for art. Regarded as a pioneer in the auction world in South East Asia, she knows how to navigate the current evolving market trends of the Art World.

After more than 20 years' experience collectively, within the art world, she founded her own advisory firm, ISA Art Advisory® in 2013. Being widely respected in Indonesia and Singapore ISA Art Advisory®, aims to aid buyers, sellers and collectors to approach the art world with ease and to build collections that will retain value over time.

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CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT
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The two birds - 2 digital print on aluminium dBond from Agan Harahap 2012 (Indonesia)
—
‘Great Waves’ from Arky Yilmansa (Indonesia)
—
Few controversial stamps framed from the first half (ware periode) of the 20th century
—
Outdoor paintings are from a contemporary Australian artist, member of Ben's family
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In the hallway: Structuralism Red paintings with two faces: artist is Dr Shetha Faraj Abbo Al Numan (Doha)
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In the entrance: Few Australian aboriginal wooden art and paintings



even more eye-catching is the abundance of art they brought with them - acquired from around the world.

The apartment is very eclectic, with 19th century tables combined with 21st century design to give is a very “chic” look. The neutral grey palette highlights the 19th century portrait of a gentleman, looking stately across the room. A serene photograph juxtaposed with an old master painting of a young maiden illustrates a

longing for the infinity of the sea from time immortal.

The newest addition to the collection during their time spent in Indonesia is the Lightbox by Angki Purbondono. Angki is one of Indonesia’s most prominent artists specializing in scanography.

Scanography is the process of creating an image using a flatbed scanner. Art in the 21st century is about new media, and in Indonesia, Angki is at the forefront. Benedict selected this particular image as it mimicked the stance of the stately cupboard, but the toy “couple” standing on the branch conveys a sense of playfulness as well as intrigue as to why Angki placed them in that position.

On the opposite side of the room is an abstract work by Arkiv Yilmansa. Usually known

for his bright palate, this work imbues a sense of calm, and compliments the calm sea in the photograph. Arkiv created waves of paint across the surface of the canvas with a splash of red which provides that burst of energy.

Throughout the apartment you can find some rather “quirky” images, which reflects the fun-loving personality of its occupants. Artwork from around the world is hung on almost every wall in the apartment such as the collage of works on paper at the entrance, the intimate works in a corner of the room, and the stately portraits which each capture the diverse interests of the owners and their love of collecting. The art has been acquired alongside extensive travel all around the world and the mixture of styles reflects a ‘complementary diversity’ of cultures, styles and times. 10