

Do I Have Space?

Art is universal, and covers all demographics. Many people think you have to be rich and have a gallery to collect art, which is not true at all. Art is about passion, not wealth. In fact, some of the top art collectors in the world such as Victor and Sally Ganz, Herb and Dorothy Vogel did not come from wealthy families. So, how did they do it?



Victor and Sally Ganz amassed one of the greatest collections of modern art in the world. Victor developed as he described it a “love affair with Picasso” and their first Picasso acquisition was “Le Reve” the painting Steve Wynn damaged with his ring just prior to it is (aborted sale) to Steve Cohen for \$140,000,000. The Ganz collection, when it was sold at Christies’s in 1997 realized over USD200,000,000. It was the highest grossing sale ever for a private art collection

at that time. Victor Ganz, was not particularly wealthy, he owned a small costume jewelry manufacturer. But, he had passion, and spent every weekend visiting art galleries, museums and artists. Their Picasso’s hung in their dining room.

In that vein, the case of Herb and Dorothy Vogel is even more unusual. They were not wealthy at all. Herb was a postal worker and Dorothy was a librarian. They lived in a small, one bedroom apartment in New York City.

Herb never finished high school, and as the son of a Russian immigrant, he worked nights at the post office. Dorothy, his wife of 50 years was a librarian. What they shared was a love of each other and a passion for art. But, how did they do it on such a modest salary and a limited space?

Basically, they were very practical. They used Dorothy’s income for living expenses, and Herb’s salary for art. They were disciplined collectors, attending over



Deborah Iskandar

Art Consultant

In this **Art in Design** section of **Indonesia Design** Deborah Iskandar shares her knowledge and love for art. As a former managing director of both **Sotheby’s** and **Christie’s** in Indonesia, she knows how to navigate the current evolving market trends of the Art World. Regarded as a pioneer in the auction world in South East Asia, she established the first international auction house representative office in Indonesia in 1996.

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.

ISA Art Advisory®
 Jl. Wijaya Timur Raya No. 12,
 Jakarta 12170
 t. +62 816 841 029
 e. isaartadvisory@gmail.com.



PHOTOS: HATNAT NETWORK



DO I HAVE SPACE?
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

— The Vogel's who managed to accumulate an impressive art collection despite having a shoestring budget and matchbox size apartment.

— Ganz apartment's living room: "Sailor"- Picasso (1943), "Battle of the Centaurs"- Picasso (1946), "Winter Landscape"- Picasso (1950), "Study for Les Demoiselles d'Avignon"- Picasso (1907), "Woman in an Armchair"- Picasso (1913)

— A small Bachelor Apartment in Jakarta filled with artworks such as "Family Tree" by Widayat behind the bed and "Fragmented Memory: Church" by Antonio S. Sinaga above the couch in the corner.

25 exhibitions a week. In the 1960s, pop art and abstract expressionism was all the rage, which they couldn't afford. So, they moved to conceptual and minimalist art and developed friendships with the artists. They bought the works of John Chamberlain (his first crush sculpture and works by Saul Dewitt. Like Ganz, their first acquisition was a Picasso ceramic for their engagement in 1962. That sparked a lifelong collecting habit. So, we know how they collected. The next question, how did they store it?

They lived in a small, one bedroom flat their whole life. They collected over 4000 pieces of art in 45 years! Even though they could have afforded to sell a work and buy a larger space, they never did. So, what was the compromise? The art they collected was conceptual and minimalist, which is sufficient for a small space. Works on paper are a good selection, because when

you upgrade to a better work, or want to change your style, it can be unframed and stored quite easily, as it is a flat paper. The Vogel's also collected minimalist sculpture, one piece of wire. Minimalist or conceptual art represents many styles and expressions of art, from photography, collage, video, drawings, and some paintings. Not only did they collect the art, they had the research, (news clippings, catalogues, etc.) to accompany it.

So, for a small space, the type of art is very important. I like the idea of video art. Video art is easy to store, can be played quietly at a dinner party with your selection of music to accompany it. This could create a very edgy feel. I love the work of Tromarama, who is considered the top video artist in Indonesia. As part of the young generation, they explore issues of contemporary urban society with their art. Tromarama's choice of medium and narration, reflect their total involvement in the global youth movement, marked with the do-it-yourself spirit or the fantastic cross between the rebellious and the mainstream, the high art and popular forms. You can imagine a very cool dinner party with Tromarama playing in the background.

Photography is also a good choice, as it

can come in special edition sizes. Another option is prints. Prints or lithographs can change the look of a room, if you go from a Nara to a Warhol with ease. This type of work is also very affordable, so a good starting point for a new collector. You could also collect small sculpture, which can line the shelves with ease.

Finally, the question is, where to store it? In a small space, this can be difficult. Under the bed, on top of the cabinet are always good spots, as out of the way. But, you would have to be careful of dust and mold, which can easily damage works on paper. The oven is NOT a good place, as it could be switched on by accident. There is always a space if you have the will and a way. I love the story of the Vogel's. When it came time to disperse their art rather than sell it, they choose to donate the collection to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. The funny thing was the National Gallery didn't have room for it all, when ironically their tiny apartment did. (The solution was called 50x50, then catalogued the collection into parcels of 50 pieces each, and gave it to a museum in each of the 50 states).

My personal advice for art in a small space? Hang it wall to wall. Art is meant to be enjoyed, not stored. 📍