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Galerie's Comprehensive Resource Guide for Art Collectors

When art at home is worthy of museum-caliber treatment, experts call on these professionals for all their framing, lighting, and conservation needs

by TED LOOS

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The more you know about how a room is put together, the more you realize expertise matters. Collectors regularly rely on interior designers and art advisers. But who do those experts in charge of masterfully displaying a collector's valuable pieces rely on? It turns out, decorators and architects employ a whole field of specialists who help them get an artwork restored, moved, installed, and, finally, lit.

"One Richter painting is not like another Richter painting," says art adviser Liz Klein, of the firm [Reiss Klein Partners](#), who has worked

with a number of mega-collectors. “I’m a big believer in sticking with those core people with whom I’ve built a trusted network. They complement what I do and make me look good.”

We asked Klein and nine other discerning experts to recommend the best of the best across several key areas when it comes to enhancing any collection.



Architect William T. Georgis called on DMA Lighting to illuminate this Kips Bay Decorator Show House room.

Photo: Björn Wallander

LIGHTING

“Good lighting is all based on the human eye,” says specialist Nathan Orsman, who has established a whole business on the principle. “Any glare contracts your pupils, so you see less. The subtlety comes from the management of the darker areas in a room—what we call ‘the negative.’” More bright ideas—but not too bright—are below.

Architect William T. Georgis called on DMA Lighting to illuminate this Kips Bay Decorator Show House room. “[DMA Lighting](#) is extremely sensitive to museum-quality lighting in a residential setting, and Davis Mackiernan is a team player. He’s an asset to anyone who collects art. He’s also sensitive to how people look in these spaces too, not just objects. That’s key.” —architect [William T. Georgis](#), **Georgis & Mirgorodsky**

“Founder Joe Saint of [IMCD Lighting](#) does a lot of lighting for the fashion industry. It’s a hard field because it’s changing so fast—every two months there’s a new wrinkle. He stays on top of new technology.” —[Thomas Jayne](#), **Jayne Design Studio**

“[Isometrix Lighting + Design](#)’s founder, Arnold Chan, has worked with André Balazs and a lot of collectors. He’s just so good at lighting art. He works all the time, all over the world.” —designer **Robert Stilin**

“At [Orsman Design](#), our primary clients are private residential collectors. The work is all about the subtle nuances that make residential lighting different from commercial lighting, working with anything from an Ellsworth Kelly canvas to a Rodin sculpture.” —lighting designer [Nathan Orsman](#)

“[Sean O’Connor Lighting](#) takes a holistic, natural approach. Unlike some, the finished projects don’t make you feel like you’re in a lighting showroom.” —**Robert Stilin**



An interior by Robert Stilin featuring works by Danh Vo and Julian Schnabel showcases how framing, lighting, and installation come together.

Photo: Stephen Kent Johnson, Courtesy of Vendome Press

MOVING & INSTALLATION

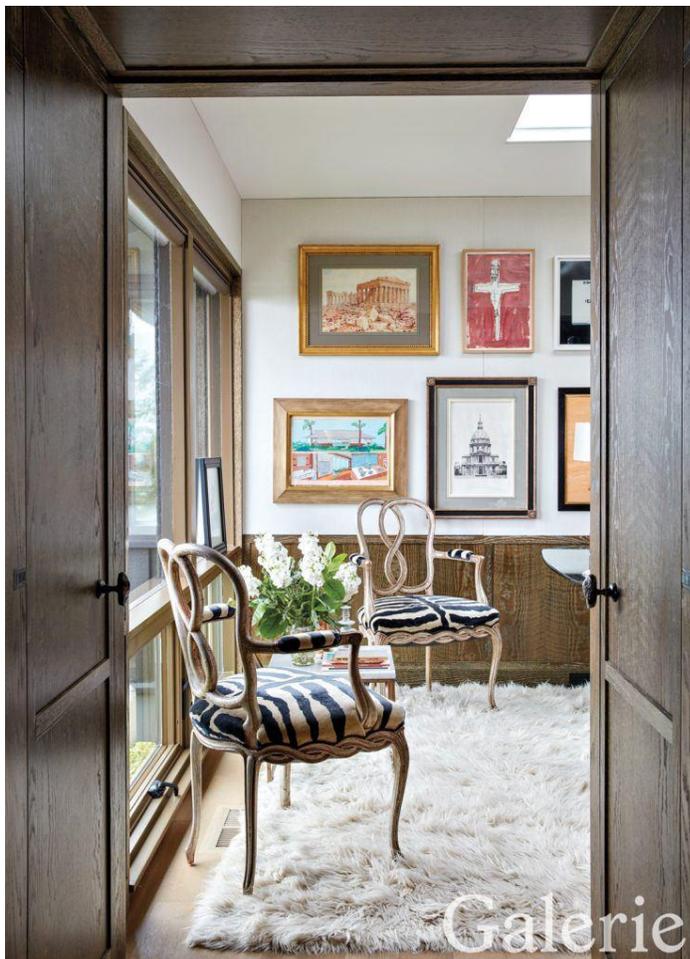
Moving might seem like a bread-and-butter issue, but do you really want that Roman bust or that complicated installation by Sarah Sze mishandled? “Transportation is the easiest way to mess something up,” says Klein. “There’s no going back.” So go with the pros below.

“We work with Theo Padavano at [10-31](#) on mounts for sculptures and vitrines. If you’re buying antiquities, they need to be displayed properly. He works with auction houses a lot because he has an extraordinary eye, enhancing the object and making it better. It’s a white-glove service, too.” —**William T. Georgis**

“I’ve known John Jacobs of **Artex Fine Arts Services** for maybe 20 years; the company merged recently with **Crozier Fine Arts**. A huge amount of Crozier’s clients are museums, so they are used to issues like climate control—even for overnight trips. They never leave the truck alone.” —**Liz Klein**

“**ILevel** tends to hire artists. They are technically proficient but with an artistic sensibility. For a Beekman Place apartment with 35 works of art from all eras—postwar to Egyptian antiquities—they handled it all with aplomb.” —**Thomas Jayne**

“Art placement is probably my favorite part of the installation process. I love working with Gordon Curtis of **Fred Worden Trucking**. His impressive knowledge of art and artists’ works takes placement to the next level. He has a consistent, intuitive understanding of scale and proportion.” —**designer Sara Story**



A well-framed array in William T. Georgis’s La Jolla, California, home.

Photo: Roger Davies.

FRAMING

If you notice the frame before the picture, something's wrong, says Jayne, a longtime master decorator. "The frame should be the handmaiden to the art," he adds. The places below fulfill that rule, while also bringing an understated level of craft to the form.

"Mark Karnett of [APF Munn Master Frame Makers](#) makes an object look its finest, and he's low-key about it. He's a great resource. You know he's good because he worked on the reframing for the new MoMA." —**William T. Georgis**

"[Art & Frame of New York](#) is a very small operation, but don't let the size fool you—they get the job done, from smaller projects to very expensive artworks. It's the kind of mom-and-pop operation that is local, accessible, friendly, and reliable." —**art adviser [Natasha Schlesinger](#), ArtMuse**

"[Bark Frameworks](#) makes all of their frames to order in-house. The craftsmanship is incredible. I completely trust them." —**Robert Stilin**

"I frame a lot of things with [City Frame](#). They'll put a \$200 frame on a photo or make a gold-leaf one with no attitude. They can handle anything." —**Thomas Jayne**

"I've worked with [Drummond Framing](#) happily for 20 years. David Hales there is wonderful, and they are the go-to for many artists, including Hiroshi Sugimoto." —**Liz Klein**



A work by Jusepe de Ribera hangs in Colnaghi's New York gallery space.

Photo: Courtesy of Colnaghi

CONSERVATORS

There is a fine line between restoration and conservation—a hot-button issue in the field. How do you get as close to the artist's original intentions as possible, but also make a work look good? You need a knowledgeable hand, like those below.

“I have every artwork of a certain vintage examined by Sandra Amann and Elizabeth Estabrook of [Amann + Estabrook Conservation Associates](#). They are exacting and rigorous and have sometimes resulted in my putting the brakes on a potential sale. A clean bill of health from them helps me sleep better at night.” —**art adviser Kim Heirston**

“Mary Gridley at [Cranmer Art Group](#) restored a Robert Slutzky painting that I own. She's incredibly thoughtful in the way she approaches her work, and the results show. The painting's canvas had become warped, and she was able to restore the integrity of the surface without impacting the subtlety of the colors.” —**architect Deborah Berke, Deborah Berke Partners**

“[Darius Shemaria](#) is a generalist, but Darius has especially helped me with Greek and Roman bronzes. He worked on one that was very

frail, and when we got it back, you couldn't even see where the breaks were—that's what I am looking for.” —**Carlos Picón, director of Colnaghi gallery in New York**

“**EverGreene Architectural Arts** specializes in architectural heritage, and we worked alongside them when we were doing the lighting for the refurbishment of the Art Deco ceiling mural of the Sherry-Netherland's lobby. It was completely painted over, and they were unsung heroes for the way they fixed it up.” —**Nathan Orsman**

A version of this story appeared in our Winter 2019 Issue with the headline “Design Panel.” [Subscribe to the magazine.](#)