

Adding artwork to your home? Think small

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Good things come in small packages, and this notion rings true even when it comes to art. Pinterest boards and decor magazines full of oversized pieces anchoring feature walls and rooms arranged around sizable sculptures suggest that bigger is always better, but the opposite can often be work too – especially if you’re an emerging collector or interested in investing in an array of Canadian works.

Kristofer Sakamoto-Marshall, gallery director at Lumas in Toronto and founder of the pop-up gallery the New Other, often encourages his clients to consider scaling down their tastes to purchase a piece that pleases the eye and invites viewers to take a more considered look up close.

“One thing I like about smaller pieces, especially if they are originals, is that the artist is often almost forced to think more about the details and the technique than if it’s a large-scale piece,” Sakamoto-Marshall says. Another appealing factor, depending on the artist, is that smaller works come at a more accessible price point – a boon if you’re considering going small and doing a gallery wall with an assortment of diminutive canvases, photographs, textile works and sculpture.

Sakamoto-Marshall’s advice for how to tackle showcasing a small work includes opting for bolder framing if you plan to hang a piece on its own on a wall or

propped up on a table or plinth. He also says that mixing in photographs or other personal imagery adds an interesting dimension to a gallery wall of smaller works, particularly when people will be taking an intimate look at a petite piece.

The most important thing, he says, is that a collector “goes with their instinct” when buying art in the first place. Then, authentication – which is more easily accomplished when buying from a gallery or artist directly – is paramount.

With Art Toronto – the four-day event that attracts an international roster of galleries to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from Oct. 24 to 27 – just around the corner, Sakamoto-Marshall’s tips will be easier than usual to apply given the breadth of media, themes and artists on-site. “Go with what your eye is drawn to, first and foremost,” he says. “And then you can get the backstory or the context of the artwork – and understand what the artist is intending, or what they’re trying to say – after speaking with either them or their gallerist. Contemplate what your own thoughts and feelings are of that subject matter – or of the artwork – and then take it from there.”

GRAPHIC LANGUAGE



From left: Meaghan Hyckie, *Peak-14*, 2024. Pencil crayon on paper. 6 inches by 8 inches (paper), 7 inches by 9 inches (framed). \$2,400 at Olga Korper Gallery (olgakorpergallery.com). Suzanne Nacha, *Study (rock face)*, 2017 to 2023. Framed archival pigment print. 10 by 7 inches. Edition of 3. \$1,400 at United Contemporary (unitedcontemporary.com). Hana Elmasry, *Heavens Fall into Place, Fruition*, 2022. Gold leaf, metallic acrylic paint, pencil, ink, beads, brass and copper dust. 8 by 8 inches. \$1,200 at Jane Corkin Gallery (corkingallery.com).

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Abstract, boldly coloured and graphic works can be especially appealing in a minor scale, whether the work recalls natural forms or pulls from the pep of op art.

GO FIGURATIVE



From left: Alana Kinsey practical shoes, 2023. Water based marker on watercolour paper. 3 inches by 2 inches. \$100 at Abbozzo Gallery (abbozzogallery.com). Hayley Axelrad, Lautrec, 2024. Oil on canvas. 8 inches by 10 inches. From \$316 through tacitcollective.com. Shevon Lewis, Drifting Thoughts, 2023. Oil on panel. 3 inches by 4 inches by 0.75 inches. \$250 through shevonlewis.com. Darlene Cole, Prelude (Teen Cats), 2023. Oil on panel, framed in white. 8 inches by 10 inches. \$2,650 at Bau-Xi Gallery (bau-xi.com).

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As Kristofer Sakamoto-Marshall points out, petite art can elicit delicious levels of detail. This is perhaps no more true than in the case of works that take inspiration from people, places and things.

FULL OF INTRIGUE

From left: Dexter Barker-Glenn, *Sleep Debt*, 2023. (Shown laying flat but meant to be hung). Hydrographic Print, Humidifier Wick Filter. 7 inches by 7 inches by 1.5 inches. \$1,000 at Hunt Gallery (huntgallery.info). Fin Simonetti, *Pacifier 8*, 2022. Bianco Neve marble, Portuguese pink marble, lock shackle. 2.25 inches by 3 inches by 3.75 inches. US\$3,500 at Cooper Cole (coopercolegallery.com). Winnie Truong, *Wait to Tell*, 2024. Coloured pencil, cut paper, mixed media. 9 by 5 by 3.5 inches. \$2,200 at Patel Brown (patelbrown.com).

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Novel materiality and three-dimensional presence is another delicious way in which a small-scale art piece can captivate an audience. From the use of humidifier filters to a melange of marble, the creativity exhibited by Canadian artists knows no bounds.

Styling by Odessa Paloma Parker. Sets and prop styling by Dani Reynolds at Cadre Artists. Photo assistant: Ness DeVos. Styling assistant: Leah Gust.

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