

THE REAL DEAL

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The deal of the art Seeking sophistication, firms are increasingly “curating” what’s on their walls

It's not just the Saatchi & Saatchis and Goldman Sachs' of the world that hang five- and six-figure art on their walls these days. New York's residential firms are starting to do the same in the hopes of luring high-end clients.

“It helps people realize that a brokerage might possess the level of sophistication and/or taste that matches their own,”

noted interior designer Buzz Kelly of the trend, which *TRD* wrote about earlier this year and is gaining steam.

Wendy Maitland, managing director at Town Residential, agreed, noting that the firm formed a partnership with her longtime friend, the art dealer Edward Tyler Nahem to showcase pieces from his 57th Street gallery in four of its of-

fices. “To have a curated art collection in our offices is just one of many indications that we are part of the vibrancy of the culture of New York,” she said.

Naomi Muramatsu, the director of sales at Bond New York, said a firm's relationship with a client is consciously impacted by the art on the walls.

She said that Bond changes its wall art monthly, too, so its offices are constantly “infused with new energy.”

Bond's walls have been lined with work by artists such as Stella Michaels, Mimi Saltzman, Pat Christiano, Clara Aich, Brian Josselyn, Anthony Collins, Lowell Nesbitt, Loretta Shapiro, Arcilesi & Homberg Fine Art and James Mignogna.

Khashy Eyn, founder and CEO at Platinum Properties, also thinks art is worth the investment. He recently purchased five pieces by famed Japanese artist Takashi Murakami that will be mounted in each office. “[Clients] might walk into our office and feel as if they can instantly relate because they may be involved in art themselves, or at least have friends who are,” said Eyn. While Eyn declined to say how much he spent, he noted that art was “worth the investment.”

Some brokerages choose a more neighborhood-centric approach. For example, Modern Spaces' new Williamsburg office features a mural by local street artist Skewville. Firm founder Eric Benaim paid around \$10,000 for the mural. “Artists have been coming into grungy neighborhoods before there's anything, taking a chance, and because of them, the restaurants follow, and then come the developers,” he said. **By Cody Lyon**



Artist Mimi Saltzman (fourth from right) standing in front of one of her paintings at Bond New York's office with a group of Bond agents.



Platinum Properties' Wall Street office, with art by famed Japanese artist Takashi Murakami hanging on the wall.