

[design matters]

HANGING ART

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WANT ART?

If you've got questions about restoring, choosing and displaying art, the Dynamic Dealer Duo of Steve Maker and Harvey Freer (*top, right*) have the answers. They are the owners of Harvey and Steve's Gallery in Portland, which is an Aladdin's Cave of centuries of landscapes and portraits in beautiful frames. *Oregon Home* talked with Maker and Freer about adding art to your life.

How long have you two been partners in art?

"We started with point restaration," says Freer. "We've been doing restoration since 1984, and we were one of the first businesses in the Pearl. Initially, we sold iust to dealers. When we eventually got ground floar space, we started the galleries."

Where do you find the pieces you have in your gallery?

"When we started the gallery, we already hod a lot of stuff we could put out," says Maker. "We're voracious collectors, and we hod storage sheds full of stuff, mostly paintings. We're *always* looking for paintings. We go to different European cauntnes every year and see what's there. We've found great art in Hungary. A lot of those ortists were schooled in France."

Does a person need a degree in art history or investing to buy that first painting?

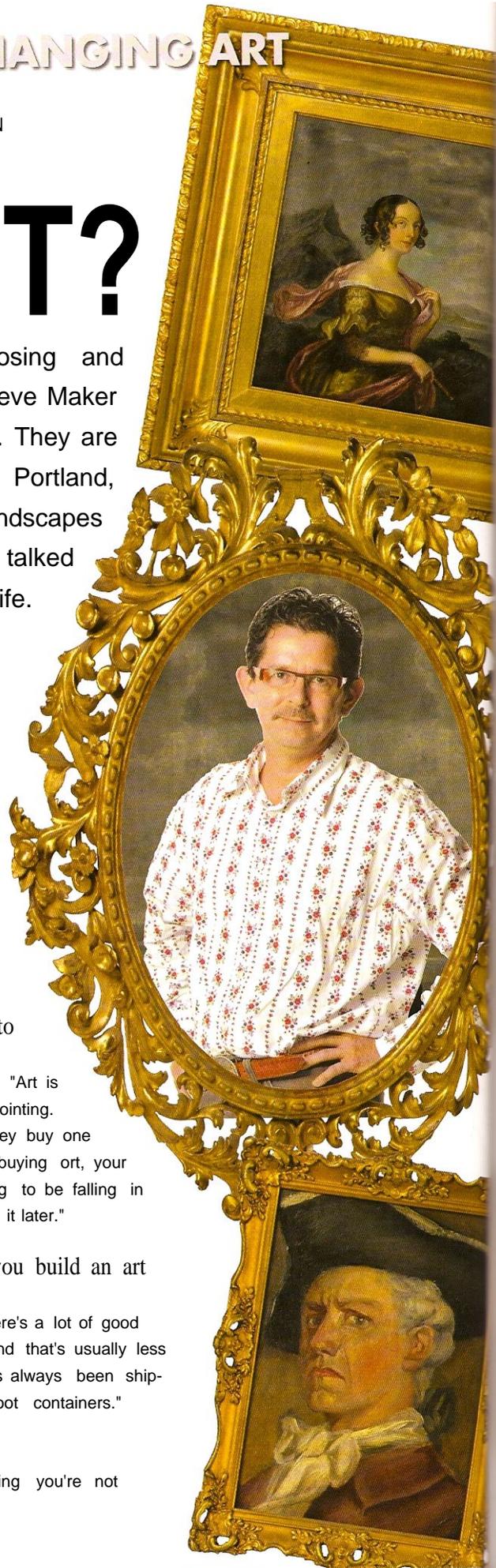
"What you need to do is build a collection you like," says Maker. "Art is fugitive, and the value may not go anywhere even if it's a great pointing. What often happens is that once people get serious about art, they buy one pointing and then buy another and then another. Once you start buying ort, your eye and taste are going to change, so you're not necessarily going to be falling in love with every piece you buy. You might very well trade it or sell it later."

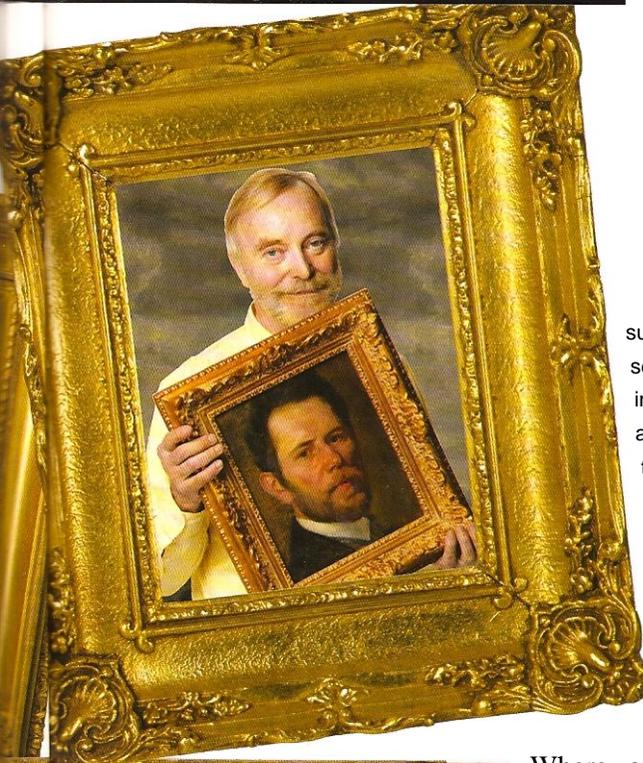
Since it takes so long to get a passport these days, can you build an art collection without traveling?

"Portland is one of the most inexpensive places to buy art, and there's a lot of good art in town," says Freer. "There's quite a bit of contemporary art, and that's usually less expensive because the artists are not yet known. And, since there's always been shipping here, a lot of art come to Portland after World War II in 40-foot containers."

What if you like a pointing, but hate the frame?

"A frame can *make* a pointing," says Maker. "It removes everything you're not





supposed to see, and a good frame can, for example, make a small pointing seem much larger. A good framer should be able to match the frame to the pointing. If the pointing comes with a frame that's contemporary to the pointing, think about keeping it. But, if you don't like it, change it. People often have a certain type of decor, and it's all right to change the frame, but keep the old one. If you sell the pointing, you'll still have the original frame."

Does the layout of a room affect where you can hang a pointing?

"Paintings are like furniture," says Maker. "You have to look out for doors that open. If you're hanging several along a wall, you need to leave room for the vacuum cleaner. If you're hanging in a narrow area, make sure the frame isn't so deep it gets knocked off."

Where are some out-of-the-ordinary places you can display art?

"We like hallways, but hang small paintings in them, paintings that you have to go up to," says Freer. "They can't be too big because in a hallway, you can't really stand back to get a good look at them. In a hallway, you can place a lot of small paintings and build a collection that way. Another place is a corner. Now, you can't hang a pointing in a corner, but you *can* put it on an easel you place in the corner. The nice thing about using an easel is that it's easy to change the pointing."

With groupings, how do you make sure the paintings click?

"Well, there's usually a lot of trial and error," says Maker. "Start with the pointing you think would look best in that spot and then work from there. I really think what pleases your eye is the best way to know if a grouping works."

Your gallery specializes in portraits. Why should a person consider hanging a painting of someone who's not a relative?

"It's true that we do have a large collection of portraits," says Freer. "If someone can point a portrait and have it really look like a person and make you wonder about that person, that's skillful pointing."

What does it mean if the portrait's eyes "follow" you around the room?

"If the eyes seem reolike that," says Freer, "that's another sign of skill."

How do you go about researching the history of a painting?

"If it's signed, that can make it easier, but it doesn't mean you'll find any information," says Maker. "The artist might just be coming to the market." The pointing itself can give information. If it's a portrait and the person is wearing a uniform, what kind is it? The canvas and the point can also provide clues, but to analyze it at that level, you need help from someone who knows about pointings."

Why did you put Harvey's name first when you opened the gallery?

"Harvey," says Maker, "is more unusual and more memorable than Steve."

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Choose a pointing or three! at Harvey and Steve's Gallery and visit its companion store, The Cultured Pearl 1532 N.W. 12th Ave.; 503-226-42621 in Portland. Check out some of their paintings online at harveyandstevesgallery.com. The portraits and frames shown here date from the early-18th to the early-20th centuries and come from Italy, Hungary, France, the Czech Republic and colonial America. Maker and Freer can provide you with their details.

