

### HOME & GARDEN

## Art-Buying 101

BY JESSICA REMO

Fear not, young collector. Getting past that feeling of being overwhelmed by a gallery and possible break-the-wallet prices is step one. Step two is taking advice from local-art doyenne Shelley Spector: "Buy local and buy young. And be confident in your aesthetics — buying art that's more affordable means being comfortable saying you like something without it being sanctioned by the powers that be." So take a breath, check out these budget-friendly stops, and let the hunt begin.

The more art you see, the better your chances of finding work that fits your budget — and the better to learn your taste — so start by visiting a bunch of galleries or studios at once with our favorite (and free) gallery crawls: Old City's old standby, First Fridays are still in full swing with more than 30 galleries open from 5 to 9 p.m. ([oldcityarts.org](http://oldcityarts.org)). No wonder other locales have jumped on the bandwagon — see First Friday Main Line ([firstfridaymainline.com](http://firstfridaymainline.com)) and Second Thursdays North of Spring Garden ([inliquid.com](http://inliquid.com)).

Affordable art often pops up when you aren't even out looking for it — say, over a cup of joe at Chapterhouse — so keep your eyes peeled and don't be afraid to ask if what's on the walls is for sale. Other local retail stores/restaurants/coffee shops that hybridize as galleries: Art Star and Arcadia Boutique in Northern Liberties, Bella Vista's Mew Gallery and InFusion (also in Mt. Airy), Old City's Minima, Django and Bean Cafe in Society Hill, and Gryphon Cafe in Wayne.

**Mark your calendar for '08's major — and majorly affordable — annuals:** MANNA's A Show of Hands auction (May 30; [mannapa.org](http://mannapa.org)); PAFA's 107th Annual Student Exhibition (May 10-June 1; many pieces starting under \$100; [pafa.org](http://pafa.org)); InLiquid's Art for the Cash Poor 9 (June 14-15; all works under \$200) and Benefit v.8.0 auction (September 25; [inliquid.com](http://inliquid.com)); Philagrafika's Open Portfolio (October; prices starting at \$100; [philagrafika.org](http://philagrafika.org)).

Scope our other favorite spots that focus on emerging artists or always have something for those on a budget: community art centers, like Main Line Art Center (their "Living with Art" exhibit begins April 5; prices start at \$50; [mainlineart.org](http://mainlineart.org)); Old City printmaking shop and gallery Silicon Gallery Fine Art Prints (prices start at \$50; [silicongallery.org](http://silicongallery.org)); Rittenhouse area print gallery The Print Center (prints and photos from \$15; also check out their "Contemporaries" events aimed at young collectors; [printcenter.org](http://printcenter.org)); Shelley Spector's website, [spectorspector.com](http://spectorspector.com), which has a sale section (where prints start at \$20).

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