

# MAKING ART WORK IN THE WORKPLACE

Research commissioned and undertaken by  
International Art Consultants in partnership  
with the British Council for Offices



# FOREWORD

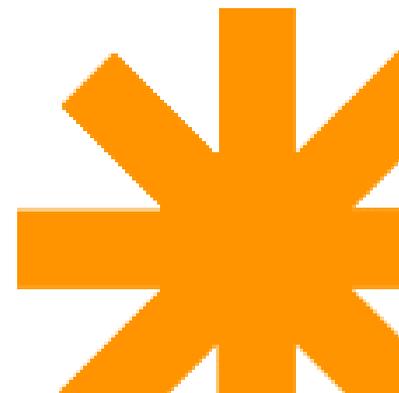
IT IS NOW TEN YEARS SINCE International Art Consultants partnered with Arts & Business to research and publish the booklet 'Art Collecting: the benefits for your business'.

Although this remains a valuable resource, so much has changed since then in our understanding of both workplace design and our consumption of contemporary art that the whole topic demands fresh research.

The British Council for Offices is also keen to keep its membership abreast of evolving Best Practice in this area so we commenced this study of the role of art in the contemporary workplace with a detailed questionnaire of their membership. Over 10% of BCO members responded thoughtfully and comprehensively for which we are most grateful. The full results of the survey are published alongside this report and are gratifying to those who provide art-based interventions in the workplace. Not only do around 90% of survey respondents display art on their premises but over 86% of them think that art is more relevant than ever in today's office environment.

At International Art Consultants we believe strongly in the ability of art to transform the workplace into a more aesthetic, creative and productive environment. We hope that, once you have read this report, you will have gained some practical pointers as to how and where this transformation can be brought about.

ALEX HEATH, Chairman International Art Consultants



# INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

IN AUTUMN 2011, INTERNATIONAL ART Consultants and the BCO compiled a survey comprising a list of 16 questions under the title 'Does Art Work in Your Workplace?' A link was sent out to 1500 BCO members via newsletter, e-flash and tweet. The response was excellent (around 10%) and a summary of the survey results is published alongside this report. This survey data was then complemented by extensive, qualitative research led by independent researcher and editor, Rebecca Tanqueray. She interviewed leading practitioners of interior design and office fit-out, behavioural psychologists and, of course, corporate occupiers themselves. These interviews provided a rich supplement to the survey data in terms of practical examples, case studies and expert opinion. The information garnered was distilled and organised around the following key questions:

- Is art still relevant and valued in the 21st century workplace? (Art Works, p4)
- How is usage of art changing in response to radical change in workplace design? (All Change at the Office, p8 and New Kinds of Art, p14)
- How can art benefit both employers and employees in the contemporary workplace

(Bonuses & Benefits, p16 and Art & Branding, p20). These in-depth analyses were then supplemented with an individual case study (p22) and a summary of Best Practice (p24) in the deployment of artwork in the workplace.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Rebecca Tanqueray is an independent design writer, editor and researcher, formerly Deputy Editor of Elle Decoration and a Sunday Times columnist. Alex Heath and Joanna Digby are both Directors of International Art Consultants, with over 20 years experience of working with Architects, Developers and Corporate Occupiers to deliver art-based interventions and solutions in the workplace. International Art Consultants is a well-established art consultancy servicing a broad range of clients around the world.

## ABOUT THE BCO

The British Council for Offices' (BCO) mission is to research, develop and communicate best practice in all aspects of the office sector. It delivers this by providing a forum for the discussion and debate of relevant issues.

SUSPENDED KILN-FORMED GLASS INSTALLATION BY AMY CUSHING, 2008



# ART WORKS

## WHY ART IS ALWAYS IMPORTANT IN BUSINESS...

'ART BUILDS. ART QUESTIONS. ART TRANSCENDS borders. Art works...' declares the Deutsche Bank website – and it's a company that should know. With more than 60,000 works of art at 911 locations in 48 countries, it has the largest corporate contemporary art collection in the world and has seen at first hand the positive benefits that art can have in the workplace. While few corporations can – or would want to – emulate the scale or scope of the Deutsche Bank collection, many share an impetus to incorporate art into working spaces and most do.<sup>1</sup> But, in austere times when budgets are shrinking, should art still be on the corporate agenda? According to our survey, despite the downturn in the economy, art is more relevant in the workplace now than it has ever been<sup>2</sup>, but the motivation for its acquisition and use has shifted. Where once corporate art collecting was all about status and investment, today its value is far broader.

### THE FINANCIAL VALUE OF ART

Trophy art collections are not what companies are after these days. Accountable to stakeholders – be it shareholders, clients, suppliers or staff – any company wants to project a prudent image in an unpredictable economic climate, and acquiring art for art's sake or as a vanity project no longer feels appropriate. This shouldn't mean dismissing art out of hand, however (and the fact that less than half the companies we surveyed had a specific art budget suggests this might be becoming an issue at the moment<sup>3</sup>); the key is to see the value of art beyond its direct financial worth; to spend limited budgets wisely and to approach the incorporation of art in the workplace in a different and more meaningful way. One solution is to invest in art by

new, up-and-coming artists. While this means less money up front, well-selected artworks can prove a good long-term investment and offer a company the chance to work more collaboratively with an artist (and get some positive PR into the bargain). Law firm, Pinsent Masons, for example, brought in young London-based print maker Paul Catherall as an artist in residence and together they are planning a series of landscape and abstract lino cuts for the London office. They are also in discussion with Charles Ogilvie – a sculpture graduate from the RCA, recently shortlisted for the Saatchi Gallery and Channel 4's New Sensations prize. 'We have a fairly modest budget and we're trying to use it as sensibly as possible,' explains partner David Isaac (head of their art committee and also Chairman of the trustees at Modern Art Oxford), who relishes the chance to work with new, young artists. Accounting firm, KPMG, too, is keen to foster new talent with one proviso. 'It has to be about quality. Quality of ideas, quality of materials, quality of intelligence.' This is a company that believes absolutely in the value of art in the workplace. Even though its budgets, as everyone else's, have been squeezed recently, the allocation for art has remained the same or even increased.

### ART FOR IDENTITY & BRANDING

The contemporary office often starts out as an anonymous and uniform space (a particular challenge in speculative buildings); using art can be the perfect way of stamping a bit of personality onto it. Whether it's discussed pre or post fit-out (though retro fitting is never ideal, see page 9), art can individualise and contextualise a workspace and can also be effectively used as a branding tool.

BATTERSEA BRICK, LINOCUT BY PAUL CATHERALL, 2008



87.4% of respondents to our survey said that art is more relevant in the workplace today than it has ever been

Some companies select artworks that embody their corporate values; others use art to represent the history of their company, either by commissioning new works that reflect this or by redeploying pieces from the company archive in a new way. In his book, 'The Value of Arts for Business', Giovanni Schiuma quotes the example of international fashion company Diesel who, since its foundation, 'has attributed a fundamental importance to the arts in workplaces as a way to prompt and represent the innovative, organizational spirit'.<sup>4</sup>

#### ART FOR WAYFINDING

In any formulaic building, art can be useful for way-finding, whether it prompts occupants to remember the manifestations in a particular corridor or a wow-factor piece on a certain floor. In Deutsche Bank's London office, individual spaces have become identified by the artworks inside them. 'Each of the nearly 60 conference rooms displays a prominent British or German artist and is named after the artist itself. The hallways... often echo with staff expressions such as: "Is Freud free at present?" or "Are we meeting in Richter?" This might seem a bit strange to any visitor at first, but it has become commonplace amongst staff and business partners of the British head office'.<sup>5</sup>

#### ART FOR CSR

Arts-based initiatives (or ABIs as Schiuma<sup>4</sup> terms them) are ideal instruments in an effective corporate social responsibility or outreach programme, whether a company becomes a patron or sponsor of the arts (law firm, Taylor Wessing, for example, has recently been sponsoring the Photographic Portrait prize at the National Portrait

Gallery); whether it creates art for the community or whether it works collaboratively with local community groups to produce or encourage active participation in the arts. Any such schemes can only foster better community relations and enhance a company's PR profile.

#### THE POSITIVE EFFECTS OF ART

Given that 80% of business cost is people, says Mark Catchlove (a director at Herman Miller and an expert in the working environment), it makes sound financial sense to make employees feel as good as possible in the office; and well-chosen art can make all the difference. Participants in our survey agreed. 93.8% of them said that art makes the workplace feel more welcoming, and one explained further: 'Because we live in a time when macro economics dictate that all spending has to be accounted for, most companies have implemented austerity measures. At times like this, it is easy to forget that art, culture and design can increase value, increase productivity and improve individual and collective wellbeing.' And this is a key consideration given that we are living in a time of shifting work styles when many can opt to work from home. Additionally, it can have only a positive impact on the issue of staff retention. Anecdotally, it's also clear that art inspires creativity and can lead to an increase in productivity (see page 16). 'Companies should place more focus on maximising the output of its key asset – staff,' adds Catchlove. 'If you can increase productivity by even 2% or 3%, it becomes worth it.'

#### MAKE ART RELEVANT

An overwhelming majority of respondents to our survey said that art is more relevant in the

HANDWOVEN TEXTILE INSTALLATION FOR THE OU BY PTOLEMY MANN, 2004



workplace today than it has ever been; the crucial thing from a commercial perspective, however, is to **make** it relevant. 'Art has to be part of a business strategy rather than a one-off tactic,' says Catchlove. 'It has to add value.' (Although the majority of survey respondents said that art was displayed in their offices, 65.9% of them said that their companies did not have an art strategy at the moment, suggesting that this is clearly something that needs to be addressed.) Jack Pringle of architects Pringle Brandon agrees. 'The benefit of art in the workplace is to be able to communicate the values of a firm,' he says. 'If it's just lipstick on a gorilla, it's a sham.'

#### THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- The population is becoming more interested in art. Since Tate Modern opened just over decade ago, the number of visitors to galleries has risen notably.<sup>6</sup> 'Retail therapy is being replaced with gallery therapy,' comments Jack Pringle.
- Though an ageing workforce is a primary national concern, in London the workforce is young, due to a migration of talent from elsewhere. The consensus is that younger people engage with contemporary art more easily than older generations, and like to see it incorporated into their immediate environment. Using art in the workplace is an easy way of tempting them in.

<sup>1</sup> 89.9% of participants in our survey responded positively when asked 'Does your company display artwork on its premises?'. <sup>2</sup> 87.4% of respondents said that art is more relevant in the workplace today than it has ever been. <sup>3</sup> 63.6% of those surveyed said their companies did not have a specific art budget. <sup>4</sup> The Value of Arts for Business, Giovanni Schiuma, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p113-114. <sup>5</sup> See the Deutsche Bank website: [http://www.db.com/csr/en/art\\_and\\_music/art\\_at\\_the\\_bank.html](http://www.db.com/csr/en/art_and_music/art_at_the_bank.html) <sup>6</sup> See recent UK statistics at [http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/resources/press\\_releases/record-visitor-numbers-uk-national-museums/](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/resources/press_releases/record-visitor-numbers-uk-national-museums/).

# ALL CHANGE AT THE OFFICE

AND HOW ART CAN MEET THE CHALLENGE...



PEDESTRIANA - ENAMEL ON BOARD, COMMISSION BY STEVEN MARSHALL, 2008

## A NEW KIND OF WORKSPACE

It's rare these days for anyone, except for very senior management, to have his or her own office. With business space at a premium, the impetus for companies worldwide is to pack as many employees as possible into one multi-purpose space; somewhere that can easily adapt to fluctuating staff levels and varying work assignments; somewhere that gives businesses – in theory – maximum bang for their buck. An 'efficient' style of office design has been adopted globally, so whether you're in Tokyo or New York, you're likely to find similar working environments: large open-plan spaces broken up by standard work-stations, the odd partition and an occasional meeting room or kitchen.

This new formula for office layout has had a mixed effect on staff<sup>1</sup> (see page 16) and a dramatic impact on workplace art. 'There are no bloody walls left; and those that are left are glass,' remonstrates Jack Pringle of architects Pringle Brandon, highlighting the fact that traditional hanging space is now limited. This can be a challenge for companies moving into a speculative office space, particularly if they want to incorporate an existing art collection into the new premises. (Where pieces can't be redeployed, the solution can be to sell. Deloitte's, for example, sold off its entire UK art collection when it moved to new offices in 2010.) It's less of an issue for those moving to a custom-built office, as long as (and this is crucial) the art strategy has been on the agenda from the word go. 'Where art is important or will be important, it has to be talked about right up front and then it's not an accident whether it's incorporated in the right way,' says Pringle. 'It is harder to accommodate art in a modern

building because there are fewer offices and white walls,' says Freidhelm Hütte, Head of Art at Deutsche Bank. Their solution has been to opt for commissioned pieces or to ensure that the architect is aware from the outset that any new fit-out must allow for the art programme.

## THIRD SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

One development in office design that should have a more positive impact on workplace art is the rise in the inclusion of 'third space' – a catch-all term for bits of the office that aren't work-station or meeting room; those semi-private, semi-public lounging areas, for example, or 'break-out' spaces for ad hoc collaborations and flexible working. Initiated by traditionally creative industries, such as advertising and design agencies, it seems that third space is now becoming more mainstream. A survey by the Workplace Intelligence Unit<sup>2</sup> found that, although it is not often considered a key part of workplace strategy, the amount of floor plate dedicated to third space is set to double by 2020. If companies are prepared to ring-fence a proportion of their budget for third space fit-out, workplace art can only benefit, as this is the ideal location for it, especially artworks chosen by the employees themselves (see page 18). It should also help to entice people into the office – an increasingly pertinent concern, see below.

## A NEW KIND OF WORK PRACTICE

With advances in technology and the arrival of Web 2.0, work is becoming something that can be done anywhere. Though comprehensive home-working is still not widespread<sup>3</sup>, an increasing number of people are opting for a more flexible,

93.8% of survey respondents said that art makes the workplace feel more welcoming

self-determined working model or 'agile working'<sup>4</sup>; and some companies, eager to accommodate this development while still minimising overheads wherever possible, are beginning to see the benefits of engaging a more fluid workforce. But there are drawbacks, too. The modern office is now competing with an array of less rigid, more relaxed working spaces (home; Starbucks; the local park, for example) and in order to retain staff, it is crucial for corporations to make the office a destination of choice; to create an environment that people want to be in. Investing in amenities that will draw employees in is thus a sensible and necessary business strategy and is one that workplace art can do much to support. 'Art is about employee retention,' says Andy Moseley of KPMG. 'We want to encourage people to be here and art is one of the subtle strategies we use for doing that.'

#### A NEW APPROACH TO ART

As the workspace becomes a less static and predictable entity and the workforce, more mutable, so any company art strategy must adapt accordingly. The contemporary office poses a major challenge to workplace art, but it also opens up a host of new possibilities if a company is prepared to integrate art at the earliest opportunity; to adopt a modular, flexible art strategy; or to explore new kinds of art for this new kind of office (see page 14).

#### THINGS TO CONSIDER

- **The changing shape of the workspace**  
The dynamics of the contemporary office and its workforce can change frequently, particularly in corporations that favour hot-desking or those that have created areas of multi-functional 'third space' (see above). Given that it's tough to specify traditional art for a moving target, one solution is to consider investing in pieces that can easily be moved (freestanding or modular artworks, for example) as this will maximise flexibility.
- **The changing nature of business**  
In a climate of mergers and acquisitions and at a time when occupier preference is for short leases<sup>5</sup>, a company may not be in one space for long. If long-term prospects are unclear or unstable, it makes sense to rent workspace art rather than invest up-front in a bespoke corporate collection. For more on renting artworks, see Best Practice on page 24.
- **The 'agile' workforce**  
It's not enough for office art to be purely decorative these days; it needs to engage and motivate a peripatetic and fluctuating personnel. One effective approach is to put staff at the centre of the company art strategy, involving them in choosing, displaying or even creating workplace art. This kind of empowerment has been shown to have a very positive effect on staff morale and productivity (see page 16).

<sup>1</sup> To understand the impact of open-plan working on staff, see the BCO report: Making the Workplace Work, June 2010 at [www.bco.org.uk](http://www.bco.org.uk).  
<sup>2</sup> [www.workplaceintelligence.co.uk](http://www.workplaceintelligence.co.uk) <sup>3</sup> See Coworking, Swarming and the Agile Workplace at <http://www.hermanmiller.com/content/hermanmiller/english/research/research-summaries/coworking-swarming-and-the-agile-workplace.html>. <sup>4</sup> For an in-depth survey of flexible working, see the BCO report: Making Flexible Working Work, May 2010 at [www.bco.org.uk](http://www.bco.org.uk). <sup>5</sup> See the IPD/BPF Annual Lease Review at [www.ipd.com](http://www.ipd.com).



SCREEN-PRINTED GLASS PANELS BY KATE MAESTRI, 2011



60% of respondents to our survey  
said kinetic art has a high impact  
in the workplace

# NEW KINDS OF ART

FOR A NEW KIND OF WORKPLACE



FROM THE RESULTS OF OUR SURVEY, IT SEEMS the emphasis with regard to workplace art is still on the traditional (painting: 73.9%; photography: 71.6%; prints: 55.7%; sculpture: 40.9%) but the contemporary office opens up possibilities for new approaches to art. Here are just a few.

## INTEGRATED ART

Manifestations; screens; murals – integrating art into the fabric of a building solves the problem of where to hang artworks in a largely open-plan office. What's more, it can transform mundane interior elements into creative tours de force. 'These days it's important to turn everything that is necessary into something that's a little bit special,' says Paul Scrivener, director of design at MCM Architecture;

a key consideration when money is tight. Forming part of the structure of the interior, any integrated artwork has to be considered at the planning stages of a fit-out, also helping to ensure that the art strategy is established right at the start of a project.

## FUNCTIONAL ART

Investing in art that combines aesthetic impact with functional purpose makes sound commercial sense and it's something that seems to be on the increase. Private equity firm, Permira, for example, commissioned a 3D, wall-mounted textile artwork by Anne Kyrro Quinn for their new reception area in London. A sculptural felt art-piece, this softens the corporate feel of the space and also acts as a sound-buffer. There is scope, too, for commissioning

FLUTTER, INTERACTIVE DIGITAL ARTWORK BY CINIMOD STUDIO, 2011

art-furniture. Nick Pell, principal of interior design at Swanke Hayden Connell Architects, recently collaborated with sculptor Danny Lane to produce a boardroom table integrating light and technology for a leading fibre optic network provider. An impactful artwork in itself, the table also becomes a talking point during client meetings and brilliantly communicates the company brand.

## KINETIC AND DIGITAL ART

With the exponential growth of new technologies over the past few years, this is an area of art that is developing fast but it's only now being embraced by the corporate world. Only 11.4% of those we

surveyed said they had some sort of dynamic artwork in their office, and yet 60% of them said it had a high impact. So what's the appeal? 'It's living art,' explains Tony Langford – co-founder of Kinetica museum and art fair.<sup>1</sup> 'It connects with people as it's very engaging and participatory.' Indeed, the most successful kinetic art pieces are those that interact with the viewer, whether it's a simple mobile responding to touch or a hi-tech installation reacting to movement or voice. Jason Bruges<sup>2</sup> is a leading exponent in the field and believes the essence of his work is 'breathing life into spaces' – something many a soulless corporate environment could do with. Another advantage of mutable kinetic art is that it doesn't need curating. 'It has more lasting freshness,' says Jack Pringle. 'People are always surprised and intrigued.'

Concern about obsolescence is misplaced says Dominic Harris, founder and director of Cinimod Studio<sup>3</sup>. 'For me, the concept of artwork remains the most important part of what we do; technology comes second, so our pieces have as much longevity as any art. We also put everything we can into future-proofing and use solid-state technology wherever possible to minimise moving parts.' Even better, it seems there can also be a sound business incentive for incorporating kinetic art in the workplace. Having commissioned a light installation by Harris for his 12th branch of Itsu, Julian Metcalfe found this restaurant enjoyed much stronger sales figures in the opening months than the others, so he took a commercial decision to commission more. 'There is a real financial value to these artworks,' continues Harris, whose pieces are now being commissioned and shown worldwide.

<sup>1</sup> www.kinetica-museum.org <sup>2</sup> www.jasonbruges.com <sup>3</sup> Cinimod Studio is a cross-discipline practice based in London specialising in the fusion of architecture and lighting design: www.cinimodstudio.com.

# BONUSES & BENEFITS

## HOW STAFF AND EMPLOYERS CAN PROFIT FROM WORKPLACE ART

IT SEEMS SELF-EVIDENT THAT A WORKPLACE should inspire and motivate the people who work within it but many contemporary offices, designed to maximise efficiency within a set budget, are in danger of losing sight of this. Exteriors, of course, may be iconic (think of the Gherkin or the Shard) but interiors can be less engaging spaces that do little to meet the physical or emotional needs of the workforce. And this doesn't just adversely affect employees; it can also have an impact on the bottom line.<sup>1</sup> There is growing evidence to suggest that, as well as boosting staff morale, a conducive and appealing working environment can significantly up productivity.

'We are uncovering genuine links between the psychological use of space... and levels of well-being, satisfaction and crucially, productivity at work,' says Dr Craig Knight, head of Identity Realization (IDR)<sup>2</sup>, a research group based at the University of Exeter whose aim is to improve lives and to increase businesses' effectiveness and profit. In an article for *Scientific American Mind*, Knight explains further: 'Not only does office design determine whether or not people's backs ache, it influences how much they accomplish, how much initiative they take and their overall professional satisfaction. Employers rarely consider these psychological ramifications – but they should, because paying more attention to workspace design can boost employees' well-being and productivity at minimal cost.'<sup>3</sup> And, according to Brian Thompson and Drivers Jonas, authors of a survey on the subject for the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors<sup>4</sup>, it's an investment well worth making: 'A modest improvement in productivity

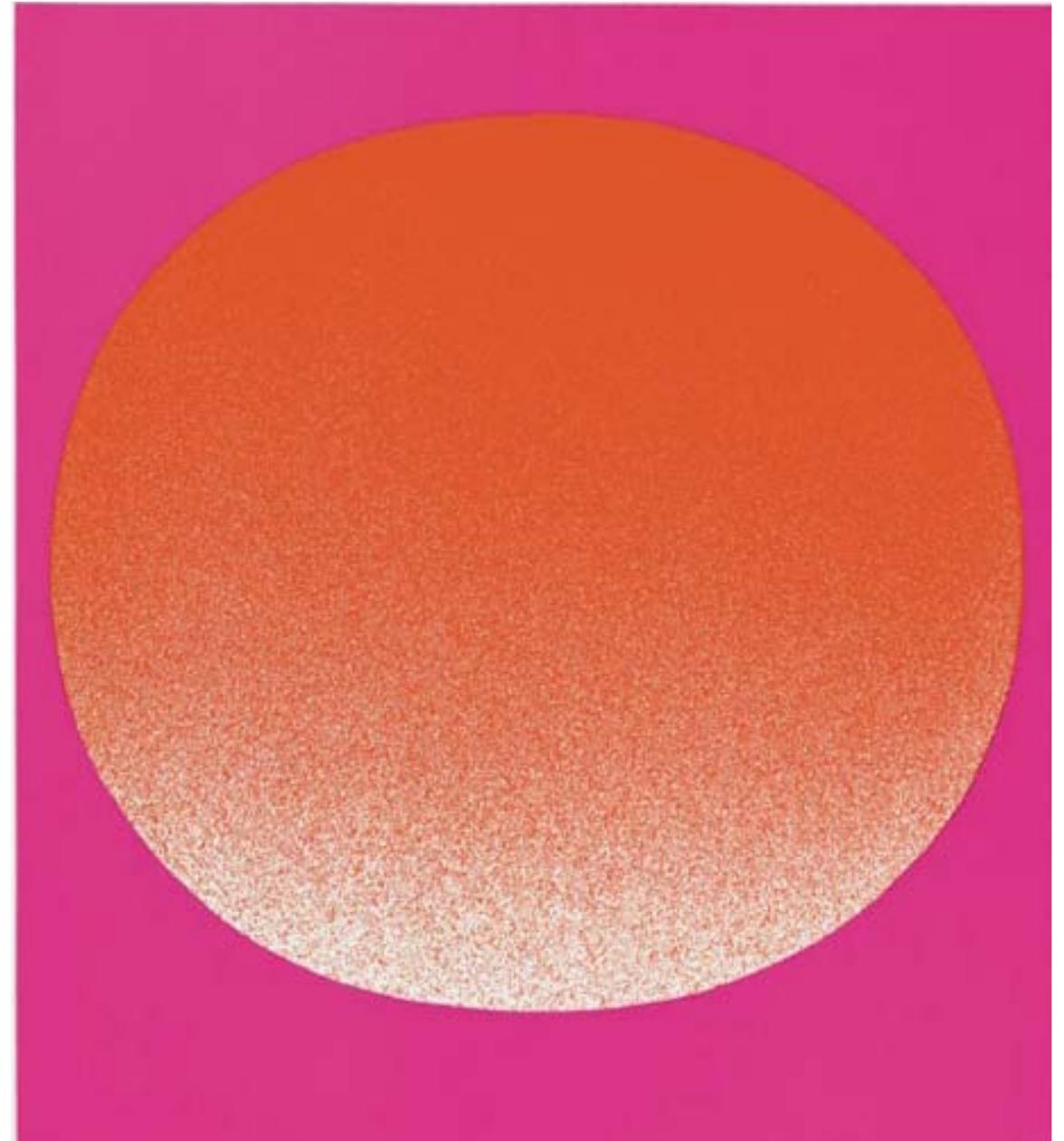
can deliver economic benefits that overshadow the savings that can be achieved through economies in areas such as rent, FM costs and utilities.'

So what should an 'ideal' office offer its inhabitants? The Thompson/Jonas survey suggests that a 'stimulating visual environment' is a crucial factor – and it's one, of course, that workplace art can do much to address. It's been known for some time that art can have a very beneficial and therapeutic effect on an environment<sup>5</sup> and now evidence of its positive influence is growing. A staggering 93.8% of respondents to our survey believes that art makes the workplace feel more welcoming and 60.8% of them feels that it also stimulates creativity in staff. Yuko Ujita – formerly responsible for Marketing and Communication for Deutsche Bank, Tokyo – has personal experience of this, recounting how the brilliant orange circles of a piece by German artist Rupprecht Geiger (see right) gave her new creative ideas time and again.

Workplace art has a clear potential to act as a stimulus for engaged brain thinking in the office but the key to success – according to a study by IDR – is that staff should have some element of control or engagement over the art displayed. To test their hypothesis, the team created a variety of different office environments, including a 'lean' office (a sanitised space with minimal decoration); an 'enriched' office (one decorated with plants and art) and an 'empowered' office (one in which the occupiers could choose what they displayed and how). The results were telling. 'People in the enriched office worked about 15% faster than those in the lean office, with no more errors, and

60.8% of respondents to our survey felt that art stimulates creativity in the office

LEUCHTROT WARM AUF LEUCHTROT KALT (WVG 103-4), SCREENPRINT ON PAPER BOARD, BY RUPPRECHT GEIGER, 1967



they reported fewer health-related environmental complaints. Productivity and well-being increased even further – by around 30% – in the office that participants customised themselves.<sup>2</sup>

### ART FOR ALL

Managers are often the decision-makers when it comes to workplace art (81.6% of respondents in our survey said that art was chosen by senior staff), but the benefits can be far greater if the art selection and strategy is a more democratic and collaborative process. Giving employees a sense of ownership of the art in their workplace can only increase their sense of connection to the company and foster a feeling of company pride. It is also key to display art across the building, not to focus on public and client spaces – something that often happens according to the results of our survey.<sup>6</sup> As we have seen, art can have a very positive effect on staff moral and creativity. What's more, it should up productivity levels, too.

### IDEAS FOR EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

- **Art Committees**  
Creating a selection panel made up of staff from all levels is a good way of stimulating interest and making art choices more democratic.
- **Artists' Talks**  
These can stimulate interest and debate; and often prove very popular.
- **Collaborations**  
Involving staff in the creative process itself can foster a sense of ownership in the ultimate artwork. Credit reference agency, Experian, for example, commissioned a photographer to create two digital montages made up of hundreds of photographs by members of staff so that everyone could claim a small piece of it.
- **Interactive Art**  
Kinetic pieces can do much to involve staff in workplace art – literally. Photo Field by Jason Bruges Studio for UBS London, for example, allowed employees to curate their own personal art collection on a series of screens in the atrium.<sup>7</sup>
- **Employee Art**  
Fostering artistic talent within a company is very beneficial as any arts-based initiative can 'marshal positive feelings...and the ability to motivate oneself'.<sup>5</sup> Displaying selected employee art in the office can also engage the workforce at low cost.
- **Photographic Competitions**  
A brilliant way to engage employees and increase art awareness.

<sup>1</sup> See the BCO/CABE report: The impact of office design on business performance, May 2005. <sup>2</sup> For information, see [www.identityrealization.com](http://www.identityrealization.com)  
<sup>3</sup> This article Cubicle, Sweet Cubicle by S.Alexander Haslam and Craig Knight appeared in the September/October 2010 issue of Scientific American Mind. <sup>4</sup> Their July 2008 survey: Property in the Economy. Workplace design and productivity: are they inextricably linked? can be accessed at [www.rics.org](http://www.rics.org). <sup>5</sup> See The Value of Arts for Business, Giovanni Schiuma, Cambridge University Press, 2011, p111-112 (Heber, 1993; Marwick, 2000; Staricoff, 2004; Verghese et al, 2003) and page 78. <sup>6</sup> Of respondents to our survey, 83% said art was displayed in public areas of their company versus 58% in staff areas. <sup>7</sup> <http://www.jasonbruges.com/projects/uk-projects/photo-field>.

'Art can function as a catalyst and bring people together. Art can connect them in new ways.'

RALPH RUGOFF, DIRECTOR OF THE HAYWARD GALLERY



PHOTO FIELD; DIGITAL PHOTO INSTALLATION BY JASON BRUGES STUDIO, 2007

# ART & BRANDING

## CHAIRMAN OF INTERNATIONAL ART CONSULTANTS, ALEX HEATH, DISCUSSES

### CLEAR COMMUNICATION

The modern workplace is full of communications devices aimed at staff and customers alike. Serried ranks of plasma screens compete with super graphics and marketing literature to trumpet company mission statements and customer pledges at every opportunity. Overuse blunts these communication tools however and artwork can provide a complementary and sophisticated way to cut through the communication overload and get key messages across.

### ART AND MISSION

A company brand is more than a sum of its marketing messages. It is the cumulative value of the customer experience and should be closely aligned with the company's purpose. Artwork can be deployed to reflect and celebrate what a company does in a way that creates a different level of engagement and stimulation – truly aesthetic rather than anaesthetic in effect. 54.1% of survey respondents said that art programmes helped to promote their company's values. The key, however, is to do it in an authentic manner so that the images and messages contained in any artwork really do help communicate the company's purpose. Moodys, for instance, determines company credit ratings and its staff spends much time analysing financial data for signs of strength or weakness. This need and ability to decode data and recognise important financial patterns was put at the centre of the art programme for their new European HQ with a core theme of 'making sense of what you see'. Artwork was selected that required close examination (or at least a second look) to reveal its

true subject, be it photography of moonlit water-scenes or an arboretum. The artwork rewarded the viewers' curiosity and concentration and celebrated their decoding skills. The art programme has now become a firm part of the company's aesthetic and is being rolled out on a global basis.

### ART AND VALUES

'Art is a necessity,' says Friedhelm Hütte, Deutsche Bank's Global Head of Art. 'It opens an extra window on the world and reminds staff they are part of this reality.' Deutsche Bank has been committed to art in the workplace for a generation (in 2011 alone, it invested over 25 million Euros in art and music programmes.) The world sees this commitment through their strong support of contemporary art institutions and events, such as the Frieze Art Fair which they sponsor. This visible presence is rooted in the bank's deep commitment to purchase work by contemporary artists that challenges staff perceptions and makes them register the multiplicity of global problems they have a role in solving as stewards and facilitators of the global economy. In order to bring this 'core value' to life, the art is often challenging – work by Kenyan Wangechi Mutu, for example, highlighting the subjugation and stereotyping of women or South African Zwelethu Mthethwa's portraits of exploited agricultural labourers. Such examples demonstrate that, when genuinely aligned with a company's corporate mission and values, art can be far more powerful a communication tool than any advertising strapline. As Andy Moseley at KPMG says: 'Art is a line to a thought process; something that can reflect the skills of the business and echo its values.'

WESTONBIRT ARBORETUM 1 (DETAIL), CIBACHROME PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB CARTER, 2006



# CASE STUDY

# ALLEN & OVERY

PROJECT CONSULTANT JOANNA DIGBY



NHA TRANG LILY POND, FABRIC APPLIQUE BY ROWENA DRING, 2007



SPITALFIELDS, HAND-STITCHED CANVAS PRINT BY CLARE LANE, 2007

IN 2006, ALLEN & OVERY, ONE OF THE WORLD'S leading law firms, moved its London headquarters to One Bishop's Square, a landmark building in Spitalfields designed by Norman Foster. With this steel and glass backdrop in mind, the firm's art committee commissioned what ultimately became a wide-ranging and innovative art programme.

Planning the art programme for the new building began early. We made our first visit to the site in April 2005, over 17 months before the building was occupied. Our first priority was to work with the art committee to develop the overall vision and strategy for the art. The geographical zoning of the building, which reflected the international scope of Allen & Overy's business, became an

important element of the art brief. We researched and presented a number of artists for each location, and those shortlisted artists were briefed in detail and invited to present their designs. As we oversaw the various commissions, in addition to regular progress meetings, there were opportunities for the art committee to visit artists' studios. There were also meetings between artists and the construction team who worked on technical issues relating to the more complex works.

The resulting collection features sculpture, textiles and photography inspired by the building itself, Spitalfields and its historic association with the silk industry, as well as Allen & Overy's values and global presence. The artists came from many different

countries and included up-and-coming graduates and world-renowned stars. The collection of textiles commissioned for the Level 10 Dining Rooms typifies this approach. Twelve artists of various nationalities designed a series of textiles using a wide range of traditional and modern techniques including appliqué, screenprinting, embroidery, Jacquard weaving and fibre optics (see above).

Six years and one workplace environment award later, art committee member and law firm partner, Eileen Kelliher, remains committed to the notion that the collection's vibrancy stems from a willingness to be bold. 'There's nothing I walk past and think "if only"; she says. 'We would have been very disappointed if we hadn't taken any

risks. I think we did take risks, and I was happy with that.' Importantly, the firm did not set out with the intention of trying to please everybody with its artwork. 'Art is not about getting a positive reaction, it's about getting a reaction and engaging people,' says Kelliher. 'As long as we get that, we are happy. And we've certainly had a reaction from clients.'

Some of the most popular and attention-grabbing artworks are the interactive installations. Of these, Pixel Cloud by Jason Bruges Studio, an eight-storey tall 3D matrix of individually programmable light globes, won a Design Week Award in 2009. 'I think the quality and calibre of the art we have represents the quality and calibre of the legal work we provide,' concludes Kelliher. 'It's an expression of excellence.'

# BEST PRACTICE

If you are embarking on an art programme or arts-based initiative for your workplace you may want to consider the checklist below. This advice is drawn from both the recent research and over thirty years of art advisory experience. We hope you find it useful:

## 1 START PLANNING EARLY

The earlier you start the process the wider the scope for intervention. Artwork can be integrated fully into the design and construction of your workspace allowing works to be suspended, embedded, lit and maintained in an optimal manner. Costs can also be reduced by utilising related budgets such as glazing, cladding etc rather than retrofitting and duplicating cost.

## 2 BUILD A BROAD BASE OF SUPPORT

This brochure shows how wide the benefits of art in the workplace can be. Make sure you gain the support of as many stakeholders as possible from the outset. Get buy-in from senior management and ask them what they want the art programme to communicate as this will form the keystone of any programme. Consider forming an art committee to allow other key stakeholders to be harnessed effectively. Then build support for the programme widely using newsletters, staff tours, artist tours and preferably an explanatory booklet or catalogue.

## 3 ALLOW STAFF TO CHOOSE

Recent research has demonstrated staff are more productive if they can tailor their surroundings to their needs and preferences. Artwork is one way to allow staff to customise their spaces. This can be through active consultation on commissioned or permanent works or providing a mechanism to personally select temporary works.

## 4 BORROW OR RENT SOME OF YOUR ART

Contemporary offices are designed to be reconfigured as and when required to increase the 'agility' of the workforce. Artwork in these modular spaces should be agile, too, and can

be best provided by a curatorial approach, with artwork rotated internally as required or borrowed or rented from artists and galleries on flexible terms. Changing the artwork regularly also increases the opportunity for staff engagement and ownership of their surroundings. If a piece is well liked by all then it can always be purchased after this trial period.

## 5 FIGHT FOR AN ART BUDGET

Don't just hope that the artwork can be funded out of the FF&E contingency. Art budgets vary widely depending on the nature and extent of the artwork required but most meaningful programmes allow at least 5% of their interiors budget for the task. If that is a stretch then ask your key stakeholders to make a contribution from their budgets. Artwork has such clear branding and motivational benefits that marketing and human resources should support a properly funded initiative.

## 6 LOOK AFTER YOUR ART

Nothing looks worse than a damaged, dirty or badly hung artwork. Artwork needs looking after with regular condition checks and maintenance. Make sure someone is responsible for this.

## 7 DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP

Art is very subjective and even at the highest level decision makers worry about their taste in art not being shared by others. An art committee can help solve this problem but without a confident internal chairperson, a third-party is often needed to avoid selection tending towards the least controversial and blandest artwork. An art consultant can also navigate the notoriously opaque art market and help you get best value in your procurement, offsetting their fees in the process.

## PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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This brochure uses images and information from a broad range of corporate art projects, not simply those undertaken by International Arts Consultants. We would like to thank everyone who agreed to have work included and also those who agreed to be interviewed for the project; their help was invaluable.

