

ARTnews

INSIDER'S GUIDE

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Top Art World Professionals

A directory of leaders across 12 niche fields based in the United States, from advisers to lawyers, framers to shippers, and everything in between.

BY BRIAN BOUCHER

The art industry comprises an incredibly diverse tapestry of experts in all sorts of professions. There are artists who conceive the work, fabricators who help them execute it, dealers who sell it, advisers who guide collectors, lawyers who draw up contracts, shippers who cart artworks around the world, insurers who secure the work, conservators who repair the works when damaged, and many others.

Once a collector amasses holdings of a certain volume, say, more than they can display in their big-city town house or mansion and their second, idyllically located pied-à-terre—and often before they even reach that point—they require an expansive array of services. If they lend their precious pieces to museums, lawyers come into play to execute loan agreements. If they want to bid on a costly piece coming up at auction and find themselves in a cash crunch, they may rely on banks to front them money based on their art assets alone.

The *ARTnews* Top Art World Professionals list (alphabetical and not ranked) focuses on the United States, since it remains the

largest single national market. The country accounted for about 45 percent of the global art market by value last year, according to *The Art Market 2023: A report by Art Basel & UBS*, authored by art economist Clare McAndrew, founder of Arts Economics.

To compile this list, *ARTnews* consulted an array of specialists in the field, including more than a dozen art advisers—many of them members of the Association of Professional Art Advisors—as they often deal with a distinctive assortment of professionals in building and managing clients' collections. We also spoke with representatives of nearly as many of the country's top art galleries, focusing on those that participate in Art Basel, which has one of the world's most competitive selection processes, as well as a handful of other well-placed art world veterans.

"Working with the right professionals allows for consistent quality service, which makes owning art fun rather than a hassle," New York adviser Wendy Cromwell said. "This means that my clients can focus on the excitement of art collecting and the joy it brings into their lives, not logistics."



Advisers and Advisory Firms

Advisers offer clients—be they individual collectors (veterans or new and in need of education), corporations, estates, or nonprofits—a plethora of services in building and managing art collections, including estate planning, appraisal, and ongoing oversight. Advisers often come from backgrounds in auction houses and galleries, so they know the inner workings of the market and have extensive Rolodexes that may allow for access to highly desirable works. If collectors want to remain anonymous at public sales, advisers can bid at auction on their behalf. When clients want a change of display in their surroundings, advisers facilitate the rotation of the collection. If a museum requests a work for loan, an adviser typically oversees the process. And when it comes time to sell, from a single work to an entire collection, they can facilitate the sale. Advisers may be individuals employed by a larger firm or who operate solo; some even work in art galleries. Increasingly, they offer their services to artists as well.

▶ Art Intelligence Global

AIG was created in 2021 by three powerhouse Sotheby's veterans: Amy Cappellazzo (formerly chair of the house's fine art division and, before that, Christie's chair of postwar and contemporary), Yuki Terase (prior head of contemporary art, Asia), and Mike Goss (ex-CFO). Based in New York and Hong Kong, the firm focuses chiefly on the fast-growing Asian market.

▶ Erica Barrish, New York

New York adviser Erica Barrish brings experience as a former director of sales at Marianne Boesky Gallery, and head of sales and contemporary art specialist at Sotheby's before that. Barrish guides both new and experienced clients on collections ranging from 19th-century to contemporary, helping them purchase works by major figures such as Alexander Calder, Helen Frankenthaler, Yayoi Kusama, and Andy Warhol. She prides herself on spotting talent in younger artists, as she did several years ago with Titus Kaphar, whose New Haven, Connecticut, nonprofit, NXTHVN, she advises. She has also worked with both the Ford and Mellon Foundations on collections management projects.

▶ Wendy Cromwell

New York adviser Wendy Cromwell founded her bespoke advisory firm some 20 years ago to help individual clients build their collections, after serving as vice president of contemporary art at Sotheby's for nearly a decade. Many of her clients have been with her from the beginning, and the *New York Times*, Bloomberg, the *Wall Street Journal*, and Art Basel's public programs turn to her for expert commentary on the art market, fairs, the ethics of art advising, and what artists to watch.

▶ Guggenheim, Asher Associates

Fixtures in advisory since the early 1980s, Abigail Asher and Barbara Guggenheim have built collections for bold-face names like Stephen Spielberg and Jeffrey Katzenberg, and corporate clients like Coca-Cola. With offices in New York and Los Angeles, they are known for a personal touch with clients of more modest means or who are newer to collecting.

▶ Megan Fox Kelly

Having advised since 1989, New York's Megan Fox Kelly began her career as a curator, and describes her work as curating collections ranging from vintage photography to postwar and contemporary art. She has served numerous institutions and estates, including the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Robert Rauschenberg Foundation. She's a frequent go-to expert on the art market for papers like the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

▶ Levin Art Group

With 35 years of experience, Todd Levin of New York is responsible for the purchase of more than 1,500 artworks with a cumulative value exceeding \$1 billion. He has expanded his service from private collectors to public institutions and museums over the last decade, helping place works by major artists from Ansel Adams to Frank Lloyd Wright. He lectures widely and has curated exhibitions internationally. Publications from the *Art Newspaper* to the *New York Times* quote him regularly.

▶ Esthella Provas & Associates

Esthella Provas, headquartered in Beverly Hills, earns major props for helping fruit juice heir Eugenio López Alonso (an *ARTnews* Top 200 Collector) develop the collection of Mexico City's Museo Jumex, one of Latin America's top private museums.

▶ Schwartzman&

Allan Schwartzman has three decades in the business in New York, and is known for major projects like developing Brazil's Instituto Inhotim.



Schwartzman& specializes in building and maintaining collections, estate planning, philanthropic giving, creating new museum models, and developing community projects that center art, with the help of no fewer than 19 curators and advisers.

▶ Zlot Buell

San Francisco's Mary Zlot has been advising since 1983; Sabrina Buell joined her in 2012, after a 10-year stint at Matthew Marks Gallery. Buell, a Stanford alumna, brought an awareness of art to the Silicon Valley tech community. Focusing on postwar and contemporary art, Zlot has managed the collections of investment gurus like Charles Schwab, while Buell has worked with Google founder Larry Page and Instagram cofounder Mike Krieger.

More top advisers:

- ▶ Aileen Agopian, New York
- ▶ Artsource Consulting, New York
- ▶ Victoria Burns, New York and Los Angeles
- ▶ Andrea Feldman Falcione, Los Angeles
- ▶ Elizabeth Fiore, New York
- ▶ Gagosian Art Advisory, New York
- ▶ Patti Gilford, Chicago
- ▶ Benjamin Godsill, New York
- ▶ Gould Art Advisory, Florida
- ▶ Adam Green, Dallas
- ▶ Laura Lester, Chicago
- ▶ LK Art Consultants (Lydia Kutko and Alex Stoller), New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago
- ▶ Mireille Mosler, New York
- ▶ Melanie Ouyang Lum, Los Angeles and Shanghai
- ▶ Ruth | Catone | Goulding, New York
- ▶ Chrissie Shearman, New York
- ▶ Irina Stark, Los Angeles
- ▶ Courtney Strimple Colman, New York
- ▶ Laura Smith Sweeney, San Francisco
- ▶ Elizabeth Szancer, New York
- ▶ Cristin Tierney, New York
- ▶ Tanja Weingärtner, New York
- ▶ Sharón Zoldan, Los Angeles and Luxembourg