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Inspiration, Information, Reflection and Vision

(An electronic version of our Corporate Ethical Will)



Memoirs
PRODUCTIONS

*An Ethical Will &
Video Biography Company*

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LETTER FROM THE PRODUCER

Greetings all and happy spring. Not only does the re-emergence of the sun inspire nature to blossom literally, it's a great opportunity for us to do so figuratively as well. The idea that art and storytelling are connected is a theme that keeps resurfacing for me lately. Storytelling itself can be an art, and art and collectibles can be a central component of the stories we tell.

So in honour of the natural art that surrounds us as spring shows her colors, this newsletter will be dedicated to exploring how art collecting and legacy-leaving are connected, both in the stories that our choices in art tell about us, and how we can use art as a powerful medium for conveying our beliefs and values to future generations.

Be well, go safely,
Iris



*Iris E. Wagner
Executive Producer*

WE'RE INSPIRED BY...



THE ART OF STORYTELLING IN BRIEF

Although there is nothing more entertaining than a long and detail-filled tale, it's fun to consider once in a while the beauty in brevity. It is possible for a short story, after all, to have tremendous impact, and a story doesn't have to be long to be powerful? If you haven't heard of him yet, you should get the scoop on artist and computer scientist Jonathan Harris, who makes online art that tells stories, sometimes very succinctly. He has challenged the idea that provocative emotions and strong values can be imparted in both long and elegant ways, such as videos, but also sometimes be by a single sentence.

You'll no doubt recognize that this same theme of saying a lot by saying very little has been recently popularized by the Six Word Story concept, started when Ernest Hemingway was asked to write a story of no more than six words. He wrote "For Sale: Baby Shoes. Never Worn." In 2006, SMITH Magazine challenged people to send in their memoirs of six words each. They subsequently published a bestseller called "Not Quite What I Was Planning". You already know how hard it can be to summarize your life's work in an hour or even a day. Now imagine if you had to summarize your entire memoirs in a six-word sentence, what would it be?



To see more about Jonathan Harris, visit:

www.ted.com/index.php/talks/jonathan_harris_collects_stories.html

To read more six-word memoirs, visit: www.smithmag.net/sixwords/

VISIONARY: THE ART IN OUR STORIES



Whether or not you keep scrapbooks or albums to help you tell a story, it is undeniable that mementoes, photographs and other tangible objects help to better recreate a mood, a feeling or an atmosphere. Studies show that we are both more engaged by and retain information better when we see images that accompany words. Some of us are natural story tellers and don't need "props" but how much more meaningful is a story of grandmother's wedding day when you can see the lace shawl she wore that day, or the medal awarded to great-uncle for valour in service. We sometimes frame these treasures and the memories do indeed become art. But they serve as more than just decoration, because each time we see them, a story is recalled. Why not consider which mementoes that are meaningful to your family could actually be worth displaying?

INFORMATIVE

TELLING OUR OWN STORIES THROUGH ART



No. 5, 1948
Jackson Pollock, 1948
Abstract Expressionism

As more and more collectors are beginning to record their legacies through the art they choose and to tell the stories behind the various pieces in their collections, some of us wonder how to collect art that we love and that represents us. In other words, art as more than simply décor.

According to the source of Wikipedia, the most expensive artwork ever sold was No. 5 1948 by Jackson Pollock which, according to its inflation-adjusted value, went for a price of almost \$150 million. While you might not choose to invest millions in a work of art, there are still certain rules of thumb to follow when collecting artwork.

One is to consider the tenet that the more expensive the art, the better the artist must be. This is not necessarily false, of course, since generally speaking, the more advanced the artist and his or her career, the more valuable the work. But you are not obliged to buy (or to only like) well-known artists. Consider buying art from self-represented artists, since galleries may not have discovered the artist yet. You may potentially discover an emerging artist whose art both pleases you and is less expensive. And ultimately, it can even be a worthwhile investment if your taste is shared by others.

A myth that should be put to rest is the idea that if a critic likes it, it must be good. Taste in art is entirely subjective. For example, how many people have looked at many a contemporary work by an important artist and said, “My grandchild could do that”? That doesn’t reduce the appeal of abstract art or any other kind, it just means that when you purchase art, it should tell your story or fit into your lifestyle. It doesn’t need to be externally validated by the art world to be a powerful addition to your life and legacy.

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Memoirs Productions has been asked to consult on a Legacy documentary video interviewing the leaders of Attorneys for Family-Held Enterprises (AFHE) at their April 2009 conference in Charleston, South Carolina. They will record their mission, vision, values and goals for their organization with Iris Wagner. It’s impressive that these attorneys really know how to preserve legacy!



FINAL THOUGHTS

Memoirs Productions has begun to document the legacies of families and individuals as expressed through their art collections. Art aficionados are realizing the vital importance of preserving the story behind their collections. If you would be interested in a self-narrated video "catalogue" of your artwork, please contact us for more information on the Art and Collectibles Legacy™ Edition.

RECENT/UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 12-15, 2009
43rd Annual Heckerling Institute on Estate Planning, Orlando World Center Marriott Resort and Convention Center, Orlando, Florida.
- February 12, 2009
Winter Workshop - Navigating Rough Waters, hosted by GenSpring Family Offices, Family Wealth Alliance, Miami, Florida.
- March 31, 2009
Sharing the Wisdom, The Commonwealth Institute, Downtown Harvard Club, Boston, Massachusetts.
- April 23-25, 2009
The International Association of Attorneys for Family-Held Enterprises, AFHE Annual Conference 2009, Planter's Inn, Charleston, South Carolina.
- May 20-21, 2009
Spring Forum for Private Investors, Institute for Private Investors, New York City, New York.
- June 18, 2009
The Legacy Companies, Boston, Massachusetts, World Wide Webinar.

'MEMOIRABLE' QUOTE

“ Practise what you know, and it will help to make clear what now you do not know.

REMBRANDT

”



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Video Biography Company*

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***If a picture (of a loved one)
is worth a thousand words,
then what's a movie worth?***