

Fun investments for your future 極具升值潛力的有趣投資



Main picture: Swire Company, Hong Kong – Bernard Gitton, *Zen Fountain*.  
 Inset picture: Swire Company – Allen Jones, *Two to Tango*.  
 主圖：陳列在香港太古城中心的 Bernard Gitton 作品「禪宗清泉」。  
 小圖：陳列在香港太古城中心的 Allen Jones 作品「舞影翩翩」。

## Art of work 藝術商道

Visitors to one art collection in Singapore are taking themselves on a self-guided podcast tour, listening to commentary about David Hockney and Henry Moore. In Hong Kong, meanwhile, an art historian is leading a walking tour through a group of monumental contemporary sculptures. And outside Seattle, Washington, Japanese artist and local resident Akio Takamori is talking about his sensual, figurative ceramic pieces that make up part of this particular collection.

In each case, the art in question belongs to the corporate world. The podcast tour started in July this year at the Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore; Swire Properties Limited, a company involved in commercial, retail and residential developments, has been running its Island East Artwalk tour program in Hong Kong since 2002. In the United States, Microsoft employees and members of the local community have, for the past eight years, been flocking to

the company's headquarters once a month to hear visiting nationally and internationally recognised artists talk about their work.

It is estimated that there are several million works on display in corporations around the world – “almost as many as are displayed in city art museums”, according to Shirley Reiff Howarth, an art historian and former museum director who filled a void when she founded the *International Directory of Corporate Art Collections* in 1983.

Virtually every major company has some sort of

collection – billions of dollars, roubles, euros and yen are spent on it every year, doing much to invigorate the art market and, at the same time, creating a strong visual impression of the sponsor corporation's inner workings. And while it may not always be museum quality, Reiff Howarth says that “there are some excellent collections out there – I'm constantly striving to let people know that corporate art is not just wallpaper”. Among the 1,300-plus international



collections Reiff Howarth has investigated, she has found everything from Japanese antiquities and Impressionist paintings to portraits by such renowned contemporary artists as Lucian Freud and Chuck Close.

There's nothing new about businesses being involved in the art world – it's been a fact of life since banking houses became collectors and patrons during the Italian Renaissance. The collection of modern-day Deutsche Bank spreads from Sydney and Tokyo to London and New York. In parts of Asia in particular, though, rather than distributing artworks throughout offices, companies such as Daewoo and Samsung in Korea, and Mori, Bridgestone, Dai Nippon and Suntory in Japan, have founded often spectacular public museums to exhibit their collections. The Leeum Samsung Museum of Art in Seoul, for instance, has works ranging from national treasures of traditional Korean culture to contemporary paintings. The collection is housed in three interconnected buildings, designed by renowned architects Rem Koolhaas, Jean Nouvel and Mario Botta.

In addition to expanding into new areas, the art itself

is often of a far higher quality than it used to be.

Where art was once confined to the boardroom or executive floor, with posters for the walls of those further down the pecking order, a recent trend has been to make it far more of a democratic commodity, with original works throughout a company's offices and branches. "That indicates a certain generosity of spirit within the company," says Sydney-based art adviser Barbara Flynn, whose clients have included ABN Amro, Deloitte and UBS.

#### YOUTH CULTURE

Partly through budgetary constraints and partly through a philosophical desire to support young artists, she usually includes the works of a number of emerging locals in a company's collection. "It's hard to quantify, but you do get the sense that being surrounded by the work of artists the same sort of age as the employees could attract young people to a company."

Reiff Howarth has no doubt of the value of art to the wellbeing of employees. "It's been proven over and over again that people are

more productive if they're happy. Art can help create a pleasant work environment and there have been so many stories over the years of workers getting very attached to it. I heard of one employee who resigned when the artwork was removed from his office. He said he didn't want to work for a company that felt so insensitive to his needs."

The value of being surrounded by art for employees is one thing, but companies are finding that being associated with art can also be of benefit in other ways. In the case of hotels, it can be a selling point: Hong Kong's Langham Place Hotel, which has an artist-in-residence program and an extensive collection of Chinese works, put together by art consultant Angela Li, was last year named by *Time* Asia as "the best art gallery masquerading as a hotel".

For Swire Properties in Hong Kong, which has been incorporating public art into its developments since the 1970s, part of its rationale was, as



director and general manager Stephan Spurr puts it, "to offer enrichment, substance and challenge to those who had the patience to encounter it on a regular basis". But, he adds, altruism is only part of it.

"For a value-creating business like ours, it was important to ensure that our goods and services were clearly differentiated ... we were developing a discriminating audience which, through exposure to art, would recognise excellence and quality, and appreciate the values which we saw and used in our business."

Flynn, part of whose responsibilities for Deloitte has been to organise exhibitions and artists' talks in its Sydney offices



Deutsche Bank, Sydney – Caroline Rothwell, Milky Silkpod.  
陳列在德意志銀行悉尼辦公樓的 Caroline Rothwell  
作品 Milky Silkpod。



two or three times a year, says the company likes to include works that might provoke conversation: "They find it relaxes their guests and puts them on a less formal footing."

One criticism of corporate art is that works are taken out of the public arena – pieces that could be in museums are in a company's headquarters instead. "That is often true but seems to be changing," says Reiff Howarth. "The fact that art is moving out of the boardroom into general offices means an artist's work may be seen by hundreds of people who otherwise would never go into an art gallery." Besides, she adds, many corporations have a generous lending policy to museums, the marketing value of which would be impossible to buy.

#### ART AS INVESTMENT

Expressing a sentiment echoed by many, Hong Kong- and Italy-based art adviser Alison Pickett, who specialises in sculpture and whose clients include Swire Properties, Cathay Pacific and Merrill Lynch, says, "My clients are generally not buying for investment, but if you're a good art consultant and advise your clients well, then their collection will increase in value."

With the fickleness of the art market, it's not necessarily the best place for a company to put its money, says Reiff Howarth. "There are other, more secure ways they could invest if that is their goal. But it is wise for them to buy carefully because it can become an asset for the future."

And for the present? "I think that art in the workplace is a very strong force in creating a better quality of life in our society."

世界各地的大型企業紛紛加入投資藝術品的行列。這不僅是一種商業活動，更為重要的是它能夠為企業增值。

今年7月在新加坡麗嘉登美年酒店舉辦藝術品podcast遊：以零售業和住宅項目發展為主要業務的太古地產有限公司自2002年起開始在香港舉辦港東藝術遊活動；在美國，微軟員工和當地社區居民在過去的八年間每個月都會在公司總部聚集一次，傾聽國內和國際知名藝術家講解他們的作品。

藝術史學家和前博物館主管 Shirley Reiff Howarth 預計，每年有數百萬件作品在全球各大公司展出。她說：「這與在城市藝術博物館中展出的藝術品數量相若。」Howarth 調查了1300多件被企業收藏的藝術品，發現從日本古董到印派派繪畫作品應有盡有，現代藝術家 Lucian Freud 和 Chuck Close 等人的作品也在其中。Howarth 於1983年創辦了《國際企業藝術收藏目錄》，填補了這一領域的一大空白。

實際上，每家大型企業都收藏有一定數量的藝術品。它們每年都會投資數十億元購買藝術品，對推動藝術品市場起了極大作用。Howarth 說：「儘管它們未必全部達到博物館的水準，但它們總擁有一些非常好的收藏品。企業藝術並不僅僅是牆紙。」

商業機構涉足藝術界已經不是甚麼新聞了。自從銀行在意大利文藝復興時期成為藝術品收藏者和贊助者以來，這已經成為一種社會現實。現在，企業正以前所未有的規模涉足藝術領域。寫字樓、購物中心、商場、機場、醫院和酒店，藝術品隨處可見

像德意志銀行這樣的大公

#### NOTABLE COLLECTIONS

**DEUTSCHE BANK** Possibly the largest corporate collection, comprising more than 50,000 works, including works by Joseph Beuys and Anselm Kiefer.

**UBS** Around 1,000 top-class works created after 1950 by emerging artists of the day, such as Cindy Sherman, Yasumasa Morimura and Andy Warhol.

**JP MORGAN CHASE** Over 30,000 objects, including paintings, sculptures and photographs by such artists as Matthew Barney and Donald Judd, in 450 offices worldwide.

**SUNTORY MUSEUM OF ART** More than 3,000 articles closely connected to Japanese life, including lacquerware, kimonos and ceramics.

**MORI ART MUSEUM** Property developer Minoru Mori conceived and set up the contemporary art museum, which occupies two floors of his 54-storey Mori Tower in the 11-hectare urban development enterprise in Roppongi Hills, Tokyo.

**PROGRESSIVE CASUALTY INSURANCE COMPANY** Far more confronting than the average corporate collection, it aims to reflect the innovative nature of this insurance company.

#### 重要收藏

**德意志銀行**：也許是全世界最大的企業收藏，共五萬件作品，其中包括 Joseph Beuys 和 Anselm Kiefer 的名作。

**UBS 瑞士銀行**：約有一千件頂級藝術品，均出自1950年後正在崛起的藝術家之手，如 Cindy Sherman, Yasumasa Morimura 和 Andy Warhol。

**摩根大通**：共三萬餘件收藏品，包括繪畫、雕塑和攝影作品，出自 Matthew Barney 和 Donald Judd 等人之手，分別收藏在全球450個辦事處。

**三得利藝術館**：三千件藝術品，日本生活主題，包括漆器、和服和陶器。

**森美術館**：地產商森稔建造的當代藝術館，在54層的新城森大廈中占兩層。新城森大廈位於東京六本山，占地11公頃，是日本首都新興開發的地區。

**PROGRESSIVE CASUALTY 保險公司**：與一般企業的藝術收藏截然不同。前衛並充滿爭議，收藏品意在反映該公司在保險行業的創新和與眾不同的特性。

Deutsche Bank, Sydney – Nell, Let Me Put My Love Into You. 德意志銀行悉尼分行的收藏品 — 「納爾，接納我的愛吧」

