



## The last WORD



## Blank Canvas? Anything But!

HBA's global art affiliate hope to transform hotels with art

By **Matthew Whitaker, Director, Canvas Atlanta**



**Matthew Whitaker** has been creating art collections for HBA's art group since 2004 and has worked on projects in locations as faraway as Kiawah Island and Abu Dhabi. His background in executive hospitality management together with a BFA in Interior Design and a life long passion for art make for a winning combination of skills that informs his intuitive approach to art consulting. He lives in Atlanta with his partner (an artist) and three dogs.

**Any artist will tell you that approaching a blank canvas is at once both thrilling and challenging, presenting the opportunity to take a pristine field of white space and create an utterly unique object of beauty. At Canvas, HBA's newly integrated global art affiliate, we approach each project with the same combination of excitement and intensity. We create collections of artwork that are not only relevant to hotel interiors, but also provide the continuity for compelling stories that can be woven throughout all areas of a project and serve as a backdrop for the guest experience.**

**T**hough Canvas as an entity is new, the individual HBA art groups that joined forces to create Canvas are decidedly not. We are a group of seasoned professionals with a global network of resources who have been creating superlative hotel art collections for decades. We believe that art should define its environment and the collections we create are developed with this aspiration in mind.

Canvas, as a stand-alone art consultancy, now has the capacity to move beyond the HBA stable of projects and into the wider luxury hospitality market, and brings with it a collective breadth of experience that literally spans the globe. Our finely honed knowledge of the luxury hospitality sector presents us with a unique opportunity and we look forward to aligning ourselves with other luxury design firms who share our belief

in the power of art to transform.

With the advent of an increasingly more sophisticated world traveller, hotel art collections have had to evolve into much more than groupings of mundane, purely decorative, and generically framed posters and prints. A keen understanding of the luxury hospitality market enables Canvas to remain abreast of the changing needs and expectations of the jet-setting elite, and to expertly advise clients to invest in collections that are visually stimulating, engaging, and socially relevant from a worldwide perspective.

As a group, Canvas fills a void in the hospitality design industry. We offer art consultancy services that are specifically tailored to the luxury market – hotels, of course, but also resorts, residences and corporate headquarters - and we have a certifiable track record of experience that is evidenced by the long list of successfully completed projects for clients like St. Regis, Ritz-Carlton, and Mandarin Oriental. Canvas is comprised of a group of pedigreed consultants, designers, and artists who bring a well-rounded, fresh perspective to art consultation. It is precisely this cultured point of view that fuels our capacity to produce an exceptional, high-quality product in the most efficient manner possible, and our advantage lies in having been an embedded entity with HBA's design teams from the start. With a laser-focused lens and an impressive command of global market offerings, Canvas Art Consultants works with clients to create inspired and fully realized art collections that are worthy of the beautiful properties for which they are developed. ■

HBA creates inspired, brand-defining design experiences that evoke a distinct sense of place, while delighting the world's most discriminating travelers. Their portfolio spans more than 80 countries and encompasses the planet's finest nameplates. HBA spaces are a fusion of tradition and innovation, craft and the cutting edge. From 13 studios worldwide, the designers blend incomparable industry experience with a passion for artistic exploration and a philosophical approach to each project as a discovery opportunity. By expanding the aesthetic envelope, HBA develop strong, inspired identities that set new standards for luxury and comfort.

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