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## Collectors should be careful

# Screen prints before buying

By KAREN KOPEKIN

How about trying something different for this year's Christmas gift giving? Why not buy someone a work of art?

No longer can people give the excuse that art is too expensive to buy, especially as gifts, because prints are reasonably priced and are worthwhile investments.

Often, a new collector expects to spend a fortune for an art piece and doesn't realize that a very good print can often be purchased for less than \$50.

For those who plan on buying prints as Christmas gifts or as personal investments, there are a few things the new collector should know in order to insure that the prints purchased will retain their value.

PRINTS ARE called multi-original art works because a print or a copy is made from a block on which the artist has designed a reverse image.

The artist also takes part in, or supervises the actual printing, and he inspects and signs the finished print.

A limited edition means that a series of prints is assigned an upward number, such as 250, and that number is not exceeded. After the edition's printing is completed, the artist destroys the original block.

A reproduction is a copy of the original. Reproductions, generally, are not limited in number and are not high quality. They are also relatively inexpensive.

An offset reproduction has more value than a simple reproduction because it's of higher quality and looks more like the original. It is usually more expensive than a reproduction, but costs less than a limited edition print.

Restrike prints are ones the collector has to be careful of. While limited edition prints are done only by contemporary artists, a restrike is an unauthorized, large-scale printing long after the artist's death.

They are worth only the cost of the paper, but are sometimes sold as originals, at inflated prices. Restrikes come no one as long as they are sold only as restrikes.

ALLEN GREENSTEIN, owner of Picture Talk Galleries in the Marketplace, Wonderland Center, Livonia, has some suggestions for the collector who is new to prints.



Signed and numbered by Rabintra, the artist, this limited edition print is also certified (lower left). The certification assures the buyer the print is an original. It also gives the date the original block was destroyed. (Staff photo by Bob Woodring)

He strongly advises a collector, especially a beginner, to purchase prints from an art sale or a gallery, rather than from an art auction. Art auctions are popular during the Christmas gift-buying season.

"Unless a person really knows what he's buying, he can get hooked at an auction," Greenstein said.

Greenstein also said that the potential investor should make sure a print is signed and numbered by the artist. The number the artist signs is a fraction. The numerator represents the place of the print in the edition, whether

it's first, second or third copy. The denominator represents the total number of prints in the edition.

"It's also a good idea to look up the artist in 'Who's Who,'" Greenstein said. "If possible, try to talk to the artist."

Because the artists who design prints are contemporary, they should be in "Who's Who" if well-known.

Greenstein stresses that a collector should only buy from a reputable gallery.

"As a gallery owner, I only buy from reputable dealers, and a collector

should do the same," Greenstein added. "A reputable gallery will always stand behind the prints it sells."

He then said that his gallery always gives certification when it sells limited edition prints.

"THE CERTIFICATION tells when the block was destroyed, the number printed in the edition, and usually tells something of the artist's history," he explained.

The prints Greenstein sells at the Marketplace and his shop in the Harvard Row shopping center in Southfield, run from \$8 to \$300. The most bought prints are in the \$8 to \$50 price range.

Greenstein also sells prints by such local artists as Janet Anderson of Livonia.

"An investor should always remember to ask whether a piece is a limited edition, a reproduction or an offset reproduction," he said. "Then he will know for sure what he is buying."

ROBERT DUFORT, a printmaker at Schoolcraft College, has had showings in California and other states, including most recently, Burlington, Vt.

DuFort instructs two classes in printing techniques at Schoolcraft, and tries to teach his students what he learned while an art major at the University of Michigan.

"I try to make my students mindful of the old rules of printmaking," he said. "But, I don't make them stick to those rules all the time."

DuFort believes that a collector who is a purist, is going to have a hard time these days. He sees a purist as a person who buys only work done by traditional printing techniques—etchings, aqua tint, dry point, engraving, wood cut and lithography.

"A purist will have a hard time accepting the fact that Xerox may be the way to print today," he said.

Excited with all the new techniques printmakers are experimenting with today, including photography, DuFort himself does not stray far from traditional printing ethics.

"I have to be obedient to the rules," he said. "And a slave to the people who want to buy my work. That is, if I don't want to go hungry."

HE BELIEVES that printmaking has traditionally been the art form with the most rigid rules because it is the only form that deals with multi-originals.

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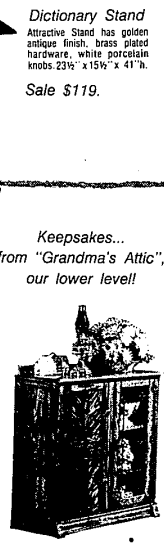
### "Isiah Jefferson" Table...

Oak finish bamboo-style legs with brass trim. The finishing schooner, "Isiah Jefferson" is permanently etched into the stain & scratch-resistant, simulated slate top (see inset). 25 1/2" x 16 1/2" x 16" h. Sale \$99.



### Dictionary Stand

Attractive Stand has golden antique finish, brass plated hardware, white porcelain knobs. 23 1/2" x 15 1/2" x 41" h. Sale \$119.



### Showcase Curio Table

Perfect for your precious small collectibles. Has lift-up glass top, 4 side glass panels. Antique finish. 22" x 21" x 45" h. Sale \$119.

### Keepsakes... from "Grandma's Attic", our lower level!



### Right: Moustache Stand

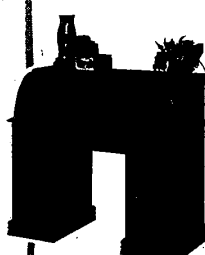
Charming Moustache Shaving Stand from our Keepsakes Collection. Solid golden oak. 9" h. Sale \$99.

### Left: "Icebox"

"Keepsakes" Icebox for display of collectibles and storage. 44" x 19" x 48" h. Sale \$299.

### Desks! Desks! Desks!

Just 2 from our extensive Desk Collection! Perfect for gifts. Below: Oak Knee-hole Desk in golden oak finish. Antiqued hardware, finished back. 7 drawers. 48" x 22" x 20". Sale \$259.



Above: Handsome Oak Roll-top Desk in turn-of-the-century style. Has golden oak finish, 7 drawers and slots for storage, finished back. 48" x 22" x 42" h. Sale \$399.

### Bamboo Wash Stand ...

A unique & charming item. Creamy yellow & gold decorated bamboo with ceramic bowl & pitcher. 59" h. Sale \$129.



### Bamboo Mobile Server

Has two shelves and casters for extra mobility. 30" x 20". Sale \$49.



## Kids can go to winter camp

The YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit has openings for resident camping during Christmas vacation Dec. 27-30, at Camp Ohivya's—a year-round outdoor center located in northwest Oakland County.

The Christmas camp is led by Michael Dresch, Camp Ohivya's director, and Ted Marthe, assistant director of Camp Nissokone. Counselors are staff members.

The four days of activities include ice skating, winter olympics, arts and crafts, tobogganing, archery, BB guns shooting, nature, slides from summer camp, hay rides and games. Part of the vacation camp program will be a camp reunion.

The cost of the vacation is \$25, which includes all projects meals, lodging and insurance. No spending money is needed.

Roundtrip bus transportation is available for \$4. Specific pick-up and drop-off details will be mailed two weeks before camp. A map will be mailed to parents bringing their children.

To find out more about the camp or to get a registration form, call the YMCA Metro office at 961-1726. Registration deadline is Dec. 13 to allow for mailing of confirming and transportation details.

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