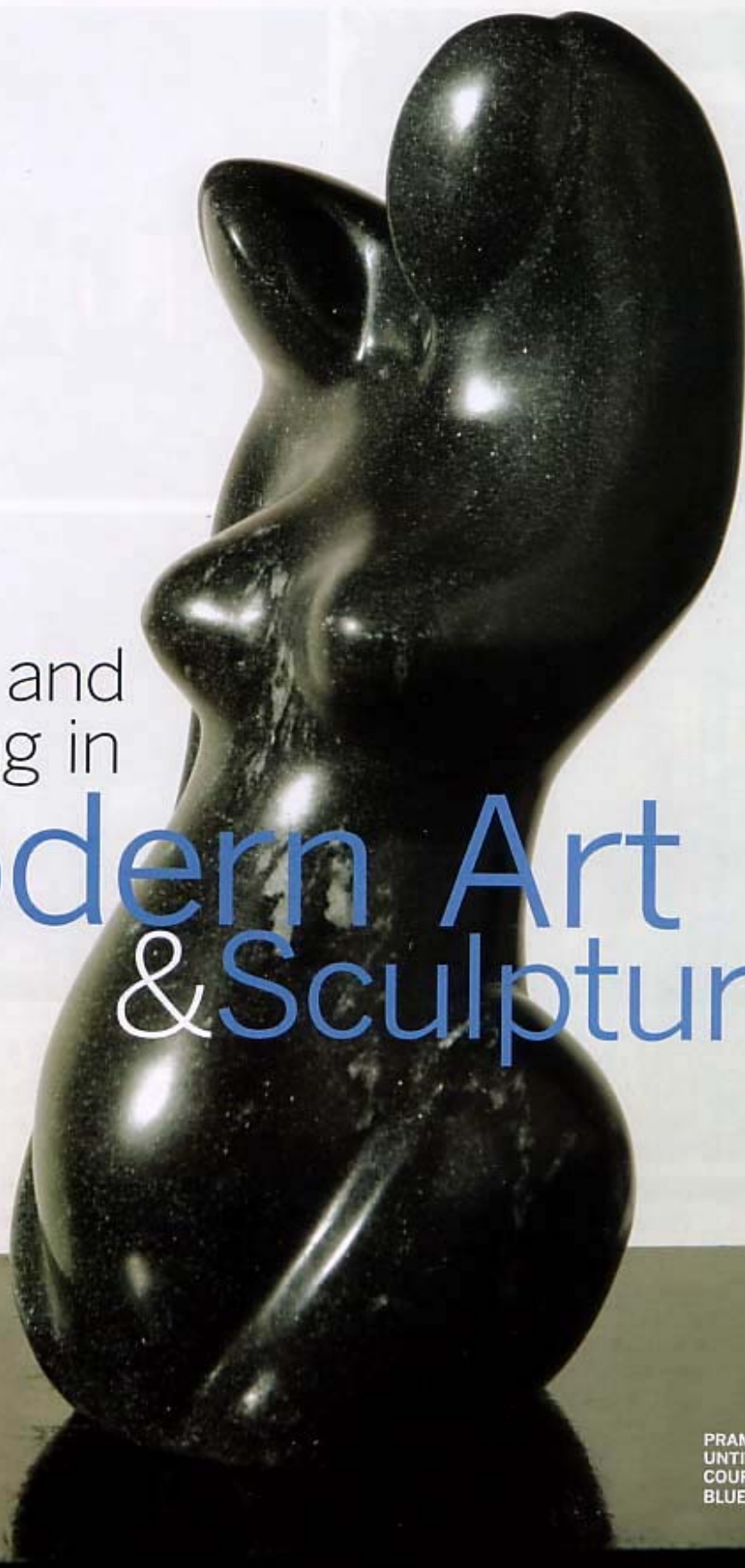


School Children Draw Titles

Buying and investing in

# Modern Art & Sculptures



PRAMOD MANN,  
UNTITLED, GRANITE,  
COURTESY INDIGO  
BLUE ART, SINGAPORE.

Modern art and sculptures are acquired not just for their aesthetic appeal. They can be investment treasures too. Conservation specialist, **Dr Robert Faltermeier**, shares his views on how buying modern art reflects the buyer's taste, style and power and yet can be very profitable too.

**F**or many years now private and corporate investors have realised that investing in art can be very profitable and enjoyable. Collecting contemporary art is a great way to add a new chapter to an existing investment portfolio. Buying modern art can also immediately enhance your living and working environment, having an artwork on display, at home or in the office can demonstrate taste, style and power. Depending on the understanding of the artwork and the artist the piece can express a company's ethics and mission.

A background check of the artist and his oeuvre is therefore of different importance for home and office.

Well known artists such as Rodin, Moore and Giacometti, are like blue chip stocks. This blue-chip-art is limited and appreciates better in a poorer market, than less known artists.

However the price tags are vastly higher. To collect masters, you do need specialised knowledge of the art market and the artist. These exceptional artists have already proven their investment quality and are an encouragement to go out and find the next great masters. It is important to diversify the collection and it is always a good idea to include emerging regional artists, these will add bulk to your collection and there is always the potential of an artist to be discovered and really to take off. Imagine for a moment you were one of the few who started buying an early Picasso.

Collecting contemporary art is a great way to start collecting or to add new life into an established collection. To make an informed choice of artist or material to buy, visit galleries, discuss the pieces with the artist whenever possible. Research the artist by reading articles in magazines, books and the Internet.

**DR FALTERMEIER  
STUDYING BOTERO,  
LOVERS, BRONZE,  
COURTESY VALENTINE  
WILLIE FINE ART,  
KUALA LUMPUR.**





When buying modern sculptures, it is important to see if the new artist has understood the material he is working with.

Look at the artist's longevity; an artist might have only one big show and then disappear from view forever. Therefore his exhibition record becomes very important. See if the shows are only local or regional, or if the artist has been exposed to an international clientele. This will quickly reveal if an artist has been hyped by museums or galleries and this might be an indicator for quality and acceptance of pieces.

When buying modern sculptures, it is important to see if the new artist has understood the material he is working with. Be it stone, bronze or modern materials. Stone is one of the most resilient materials; the reoccurring maintenance costs, such as cleaning and conservation are low. When buying a bronze for indoor or outdoor display, the patina has to be in pristine condition and the sculpture needs regular attention, since bronze corrodes easily in an urban environment.

Modern materials such as plastics are generally a difficult genre, since many modern resins can deteriorate rapidly when exposed to high light and temperature levels, as they are typical in tropical regions. It is always good when investing in contemporary art to have the assistance of an independent experienced conservator, familiar with the material and the subject.

Finally some legal aspects. A collector of modern and contemporary art, has to understand the copyright laws of the respective country. When buying a piece of art, the transfer of all copyrights should be contained within a sales contract. The buyer has to ensure that the transfer is legally binding. This might be necessary in case of publication, conservation or future sale of the artwork in question, and might determine the final value. The contract should also indicate the authenticity, history and provenance as detailed as possible. ■

Dr. Robert B. Faltermeier (info@faltermeier.biz, Tel: +65 6323 1360) Based in Singapore, he has worked for distinguished museums such as the J.P. Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, amongst others. In Singapore he performed conservation and consultancy projects for Singapore Art Museum, Asian Civilisation Museum, Buddha Tooth Relic Temple, and Police Heritage Centre. The Faltermeier family has executed conservation and consulting projects for major public and private collections all over the world.



RIGHT, ABOVE: CHUA BOON KEE - SHOU (LONGEVITY), REINFORCED EPOXY, COURTESY UTTERLY ART, SINGAPORE.

RIGHT: TANG YONG, POWER TRAIN, FIBRE GLASS, COURTESY ART SEASONS, SINGAPORE.

