

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## ArtLife advances online art movement with new mobile app

October 29, 2020



*ArtLife offers secondary works from Jean-Michel Basquiat. Image credit: Sotheby's*

By ELLEN KELLEHER

Online art gallery **ArtLife** is shaking up its digital business by unveiling a new mobile app which allows users to buy and sell art.

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The app's arrival comes at a time when aspects of art exchange are shifting online due to the lingering consequences of the pandemic. The technology is sought-after as it allows collectors to research and shop for contemporary, pop and urban works and also take part in online auctions.

"Launching ArtLife Mobile is just a natural extension of everything we are already doing," said Avery Andon, founder of ArtLife, Miami. "My goal is to enhance and perfect the online-only art collecting experience for both buyers and sellers."

A detailed look

The app sets itself apart as it permits both buyers and sellers to use it as a method of trading.

For instance, a user starts by browsing through ArtLife's gallery of works by Andy Warhol, Banksy, Keith Haring and Jean-Michael Basquiat as well as photographs by Helmut Newton and other prestigious names.



*The anonymous British street artist Banksy is featured in ArtLife's line-up of works. Image: ArtLife*

With the help of specialists, customers use the app to add favorite works to a wish list and ask to purchase them directly in real time.

Another feature enables users to take part in live auctions, where buyers can bid on collectibles from rising stars in the modern art market.

On the sellers' side, artists and smaller galleries are able to upload their artwork and have it appraised within 24 hours.

Under the app's augmented reality function, users also select pieces of art and place them digitally on a wall or room of their liking to get a sense of how it will appear in their homes.

Digital sales have taken off at ArtLife. This year, the online house has sold 400 percent more contemporary works than it did in 2019.

In a sign of well-placed cyber-enthusiasm, ArtLife recently sold a painting for over \$5 million in an entirely online exchange. The piece was consigned to ArtLife online, offered to a client through a private viewing room and purchased remotely.

Much art is considered a safe-haven asset and outperforms a number of financial indexes, particularly in challenging times.

"After the 2008 financial meltdown, blue chip art recovered to pre-recession levels within 9 months while the financial markets took 15 to 18 months," said Mr. Andon.

A powerful niche player in the market, ArtLife Gallery has curated museum exhibitions at MOCA Bangkok and hosted large-scale pop-ups in Los Angeles, Miami and New York.

#### Competition

ArtLife is one of a number of art galleries and auction houses at the forefront of the digital revolution in the contemporary art world.

Global art platform Artsy recently announced it had expanded its ecommerce channels "Buy Now" and "Make Offer" in Asia.

Launching first to Artsy's gallery partners in Hong Kong, the new functions are expected to pare back the time it takes Asian galleries to close a sale, from a three-week period to just a few hours. Artsy will introduce the channels to its gallery network in Japan and Singapore by the end of this year.

The launch in Asia follows the success driven by these channels for Artsy's gallery network in the United States, United Kingdom and continental Europe ([see story](#)).

There is no doubt that art collectors are devoting more of their budgets to buying pieces online, according to a report from global art platform Artsy.

Artsy's Online Art Collector Report from Oct. 2019 found that more than two in 10 online buyers spend 75 percent or more of their art budgets on online purchases. Sixty-four percent of art collectors have purchased art online as

ecommerce becomes a more viable platform for the art industry.

The report is based on responses from almost 4,000 Artsy users who reported purchasing art annually ([see story](#)).

"Anytime there is chaos in the economy or uncertainty in the stock market, collectors from all over the world shift money into blue chip art," said ArtLife's Mr. Andon.

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