

rated

ART

Winter 2024

A McQueen Agency Publication

10 Things
We're Looking
Forward to
This Winter!

Get to Know
The Prints &
the Paper

Fa La La
in Love with
Great Gift
Ideas!

9 Tips for
Framing Art

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Meet Alice Rich

AN ARTIST Q&A



AGENCY DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Changing Gears & Holiday Cheers

As I write this letter, it's nearing the end of November, and there's currently no snow in Edmonton.

But those of us who live in this part of the world know that this likely won't be the case for much longer.

It's been a relatively mild November so far, but with winter on the horizon, I'm having a hard time changing gears. It's not quite fall anymore, but it's also not officially winter. That unnamed shoulder season when even small things, like not knowing how warmly to dress, feels somewhat disorienting. From my conversations over the last several weeks, I'm not the only one feeling like we're in a strange in-between zone.

Decided change has been happening other places though. The political climate is as charged as ever, and many are contemplating what life will look like for the



Jared Tabler, photo by Ryan Parker.

year ahead. Thankfully, our editor, Carmen, and I have been working away in our publishing happy place and are thrilled to be able to share our final issue of 2024, which includes many things to look forward to, including an eclectic variety of exhibitions, our holiday gift guide, and a chat with our inspiring cover artist, Alice Rich.

So in the spirit of our winter issue and the promise of holiday cheer, I recommend getting yourself a hot drink, grabbing a comforting snack (our favourite right now is the **Chicago popcorn mix**) cozying up with *ratedART*, and ushering in a happy, hopeful, holiday season!

Take care, everyone!

– Jared

ARTIST Q&A

Meet Alice Rich

The landscape belongs to the person who looks at it. And Ralph Waldo Emerson isn't the only one who thinks so. To Alice Rich, the act of painting is a means of transcribing our emotional and cultural connection to the landscape through the language of form and colour.

As you'll soon discover, the suggestion of earth, sea, and sky in her paintings are neither literal nor specific. Instead, each work is born of an internal place of memory and imagination. The result? Artwork that hovers between abstraction and representation and landscapes that belong to the people who look at them. Meet Alice Rich.

When you were first starting out, what was it about the arts that made you feel like it could be your community?

I grew up in a cultural community with many influences and always felt a lot of comfort being around artists and museums/galleries, just observing artwork, being curious, and exploring ideas. But I never saw the arts as my calling until later in my life.



Alice Rich. Photo by Stephanie Artuso.

“
Artists take others to places they cannot go on their own. We do that through colour, composition, forms, imagery, and media.
”

You've described the act of painting as a means of transcribing the intangible elements of place through the language of form and colour. Can you unpack that a little?

Artists take others to places they cannot go on their own. We do that through colour, composition, forms, imagery, and media. When I look at an environment—a place, a location with wind, noises, smells—all my senses are aroused. Then there are impressions of a place, not generated from a photograph but from feelings and experiences. By omitting detail and definition, I invite the viewer to relate the image to their own experiences. It could be spiritual, emotional, a feeling of community, or environmental connections. My goal is always to create a visual idea, hoping to evoke thoughts, connections, questions, and imagination.

Tell us about someone whose support and advice have guided your career.

I am fortunate to feel support from many wonderful people who view my work and comment. And I have shared my own advice when I developed and delivered a seminar/workshop called "The Artrepreneur." After doing that, I decided it was my turn to walk my talk, so I focused and made a commitment to myself to paint. I hired an artist-teacher to give me private studio lessons, and he was incredibly supportive, instructional, and gave me the confidence to jump in with both feet. I continue to learn.

How has studying art history and history of architecture informed your work and/or process?

I love history of art and architecture. It provides the background of values that I hopefully exhibit in my work. There are values that can't be defined, but when I produce a painting, I'm guided through knowing the work of other artists. I'm painting life's impressions and, in a vital way, am informed by past artists who used repoussoir to visually obtain movement through the canvas, sfumato, stubbling, light and dark, and hard edge to create tension, all of which are so relevant and important.



Appeared—At a Glance, acrylic on canvas, 54 x 36, by Alice Rich.



Alice Rich. Photo by Stephanie Artuso.

“

I begin with chaos and create order out of that.

”

What is the creative process like for you? Where do you usually begin, and how do you develop an idea?

I begin with chaos and create order out of that. I allow myself to muck around with the paint and process while building up layers. Sometimes I start with a right-brain-left-brain exercise to free myself with automatic drawing using large aqua sticks. It frees my approach.

When you were a kid, what's something that adults used to say that turned out to be true? And what's something that didn't hold up?

I'd hear people say, “cut your losses and run,” and that is actually true. Well, it's certainly true of investments: use money wisely and don't hold onto the losers; keep your money working for you and accept the losses, but then move on. In other aspects of life, it's true in relationships that can become negative and become your loss. By letting go, you open up to other opportunities, people, and experiences. I also clean my space by decluttering: letting go of items is freeing and allows engagement with other opportunities and options. Getting rid of stuff that doesn't serve you allows for a clearer mind, more creativity, and room for ideas to flow.

Advice that didn't hold up? That “you will never make a living in the art world.” I've been very fortunate to make a living through painting, and earlier through photography, as an art educator, and working in galleries.

I always knew that I wanted to work in the cultural sector. Studying fine art clearly made me comfortable in galleries and museums anywhere, and my attitude was that art and culture create a healthy and vibrant community. I was persistent in my intention to stay in the art field, and I have learned so many things from that challenge: putting exhibitions together, writing curatorial essays, public speaking (although I'm still terrified of it, it's all part of the job).



Communication III, acrylic on canvas, 36 x 36, by Alice Rich. Photo by Ted Clark.



With all my endeavors, I found that I really needed to focus. And in one case, that focus became a mantra. It's a long story, but the outcome fell into place like magic, completely providing everything I needed at the time—money for my art business and a place to stay in New York City for a trade show. Persistence is needed, but so too is figuring out the next step and visualizing yourself there. I know it's “woo-woo,”

but just practice it and someone will email you and buy or commission a painting. I did quit my day job when I started to paint, but that's because I visualized a studio on Granville Island, Vancouver, and when that happened, everything else fell into place, and people honoured me by collecting my work and sharing positive comments.

Tell us about a lesson you've had to learn more than once.

To remind myself where the light is coming from. Light comes to us from a source, and if the painting reflects that, it shapes into a better work. I allow the process to guide me. Some might call me an intuitive painter, but in that process I can run amuck in the experience of painting and not remember to embrace the basics, light being one of them.

As an art lover, what's one image that will stop you every time?

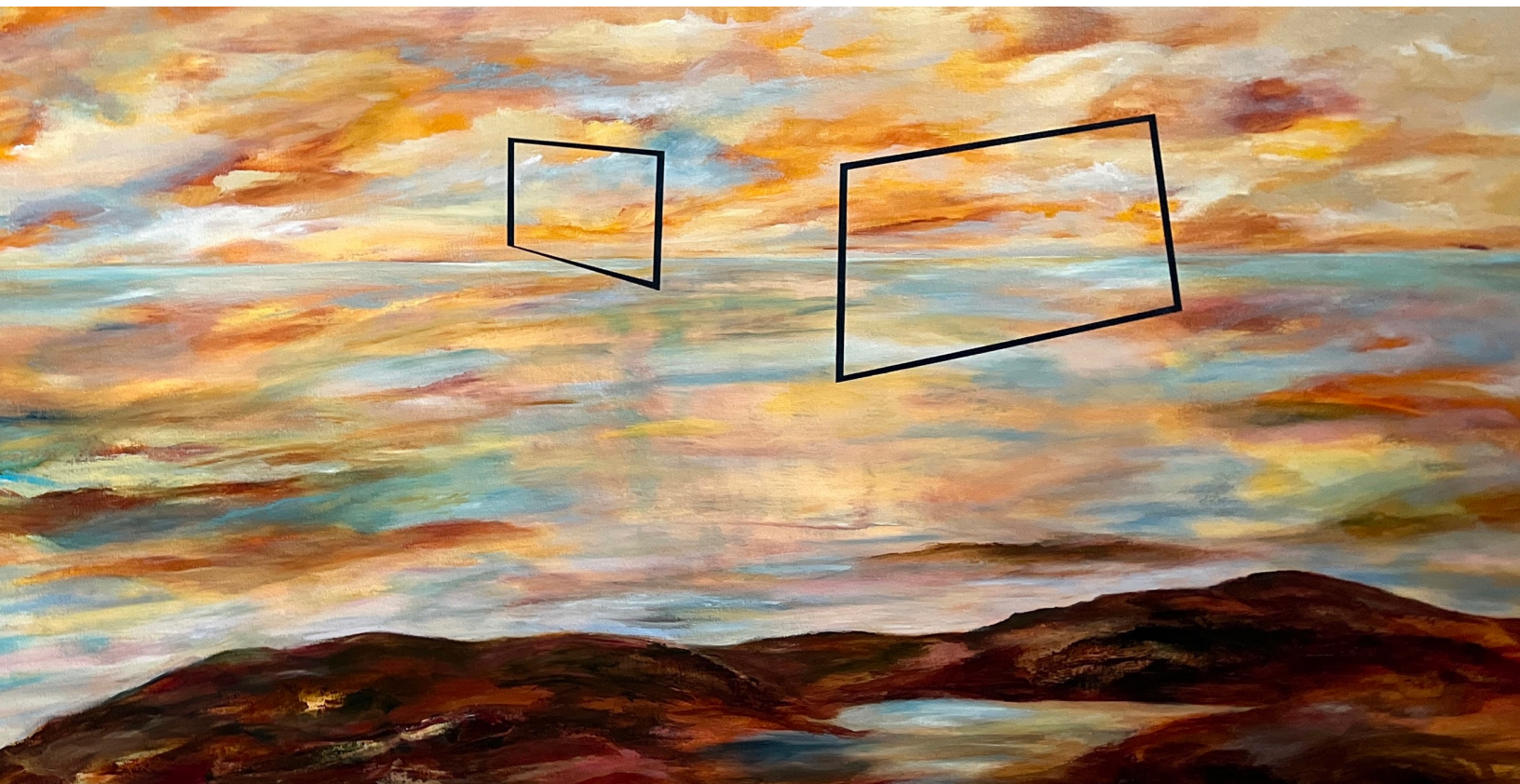
I've had two experiences where I've stood in the museum and was choked with tears. Most recently, Vermeer's "Girl with a Pearl Earring" at The Mauritshuis, in the Hague, Netherlands. I didn't expect it, and there it was around the next corner on a wall, all alone, with just me. The light and colour—two strokes of white paint created that earring! I was moved.

The other was my first trip to the Louvre at 19 years old when I saw "The Valpinçon Bather," by Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres. Suddenly the pages in Janson's *History of Art* became real. That was my textbook in high school.



Shifting, mixed media on canvas, 18 x 24, by Alice Rich.

“
***My goal is always
to create a visual
idea, hoping to evoke
thoughts, connections,
questions, and
imagination.***
”



So Much, acrylic on canvas, 24.5 x 67, by Alice Rich.

In what ways have you grown as an artist? And what's something that's stayed the same?

My interest in landscape has stayed the same because it allows me to experiment with colour and feels freeing. Adding to my interest in art, I've more recently been writing poetry.

Poetry just came to me through the silence of the pandemic. As everything was shut down (no planes flying, few cars going by), I got quiet too, listening. I'd go to the studio to paint, and then I'd just read over the poem I had started the day before. From there, I'd edit that poem and start another, and the day would fly by—much like working in the dark room until two in the morning. I matched each poem to one of my paintings and was amazed to see how they fit and related to one another. Though I ended up putting the brakes on, I did so knowing I'd return and put my little collection together

one day. Just thinking about this now makes me want to go back to them. I realize that writing is very much like creating a painting, as it does feel very intuitive, listening for the right word or groups of words to come.

It's a perfect day. How do you spend it?

I wake up, make a cup of tea, meditate, and take my Swiss Mountain dog for a walk. Next, I exercise while listening to an audio book, clear my emails... and don't get side-tracked. Then it's off to the studio to assemble my thoughts, spur my creativity, and get to work on an exciting painting project that generates a feeling of accomplishment and contentment. From there, a check-in with friends and family.

Discover more of Alice's work [here](#), and give her a follow on [Instagram!](#)

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Get to Know The Prints & the Paper



Sandy Muldrew, owner of
The Prints & the Paper.

We've all heard the expression, "seeing is believing." But to walk through the doors of The Prints & the Paper is to delight in it. Before the shop door closes behind you, you'll be transported to a time when neighbourhoods were defined by the shops on their streets, and people forged lasting relationships with the shopkeepers who curated them. That brick-and-mortar experience is exactly what Sandy Muldrew created when he opened The Prints & the Paper, a treasure trove of graphic art and print-culture offerings, in Edmonton's 124th Street business district.



Though Muldrew's dream for the store was to share his love of graphic art, illustrated children's books, and pop culture, he also wanted to be part of a community that supports artists, small businesses, and a culture that values what is lost online.

"My store is more than a place to shop," explains Muldrew. "It's a communal experience that gives both me and my customers a sense of identity and belonging. And that's something you don't get online."

That sense of having arrived at a destination is something Muldrew still feels eight-and-a-half years in. And he's not the only one: "I always love hearing customers say how much they enjoy the experience and atmosphere. But maybe the best compliment is when I hear the door ring and little kids come in and say, 'This is my favourite store in the whole wide world!' That people of all ages share my passion for art and design is still a surprise to me. So it's very gratifying to see that a store like mine can work in Edmonton."

“

My store is more than a place to shop... It's a communal experience that gives both me and my customers a sense of identity and belonging. And that's something you don't get online.

”

If you've never been, there's no better time than the holiday season. Among all the prints, graphic novels, and pop-culture offerings, you'll discover an inspired collection of holiday cards, advent calendars, German ornaments, and so much more. In fact, the only criterion for what makes it into The Prints & the Paper is that Muldrew likes it.

"There really isn't anything in the store that I wouldn't like for myself, which is great because when you believe in something that much, it's easy to talk passionately about it. Thankfully, people seem to like my tastes. The only downside, of course, is that I'm store poor, not house poor, because I'm obsessed with reinvesting in the store with the many products I hope to bring in to make it better and better!"

Despite that occupational hazard, Muldrew is forever delighted by the idea that something you've purchased from his shop will find a place in your home and bring you joy every time you see it. A good reminder that logic might get you from A to B, but imagination will take you everywhere.

Learn more about The Prints & the Paper [here](#), and be sure to give them a follow on [Instagram!](#)

Wooden holiday ornaments, holiday greeting cards and print ephemera at The Prints & the Paper.



10 THINGS WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO

This Winter



Strangled by Growth, oil on canvas, by Emily Carr, 1931. Collection of the Vancouver Art Gallery, Emily Carr Trust, VAG 42.3.42.

1

BEERS London presents:
Myrna Quiñonez: The Horizon Pulled Me Close, through January 25, 2025.
Learn more [here](#).

2

The Esker Foundation presents:
Erika DeFreitas, January 25 – April 27, 2025. Calgary, AB. Learn more [here](#).

3

The Mackenzie Gallery presents:
Beads in the Blood / MĪGISAK MĪGOHK: A Ruth Cuthand Retrospective, through March 28, 2025. Regina, SK.
Learn more [here](#).



Kaija Sanelma: Warp & Weft, 2024. Installation view at Remai Modern. Photo by Carey Shaw.

4

Arts on the Ave presents: *Deep Freeze: A Byzantine Winter Festival*,
January 18 – 19, 2025, in Edmonton's
Alberta Avenue district. Learn more [here](#).

8

Montreal Museum of Fine Arts presents: *Two by Two, Together*,
through October 5, 2025.
Learn more [here](#).

5

Museum of Contemporary Art presents:
***Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas: Diaries After a Flood*,** through January 26, 2025.
Toronto, ON. Learn more [here](#).

9

The Morgan Library & Museum presents: *Bella da Costa Greene: A Librarian's Legacy*, through May 4, 2025. New York. Learn more [here](#).

6

The Flying Canoë Volant, January 29 –
February 1, 2025, in Edmonton's **French Quarter**. Learn more [here](#).

10

Vancouver Art Gallery presents:
***Emily Carr: Navigating an Impenetrable Landscape*,**
January 25, 2025 – January 4, 2026.
Learn more [here](#).

7

Remai Modern and the Saskatchewan Craft Council (SCC) present: *Kaija Sanelma: Warp & Weft*, through
March 9, 2025, at Remai Modern's
Marquee Gallery. Saskatoon, SK.
Learn more [here](#).



MCQUEEN RECOMMENDS

Fa La La in Love with Great Gift Ideas!

Makin' a list and checkin' it twice? Have we got some tips for you! And we do mean "we." To help you out with your holiday shopping ideas, we asked a few of our artists (and some of our team) to share their favourite places to buy gifts for loved ones—themselves included! Here's what they had to say...



Tiffany Blaise
Vancouver, BC

My favourite place to buy a gift for myself is **Old Faithful** in Vancouver because they have wonderful items for the home and a great book section in the store. It's a beautiful shop in Vancouver's **Gastown**.

My favourite place to buy a gift for someone else is the **Vancouver Art Gallery store**. There are lots of interesting treasures there for the art-and-design lover.



Amelia Hlushak (Associate Art Director, *ratedART*) **Edmonton, AB**

When I want to treat myself, I never miss the **OddBird Art & Craft Fair**. Supporting local is my favourite, and with everything from pottery to jewellery and art prints, it's impossible to leave empty-handed.

For gifts, one of my favourite spots is **Violets** in Little Italy. They always have the trendiest, most playful finds, and the owners are absolute gems!



Carmen Hrynychuk (Editor, ratedART)
Edmonton, AB

My favourite gift for myself—anytime of year—is a book and some takeout. So if I'm staying in my neighbourhood, the book will likely come from **Indigo-Chapters** and the takeout from **PitaBake**, a small, Lebanese restaurant with authentic Mediterranean food (the Tandoori Chicken stone-baked pita "pizza" is so good!). But if I'm heading downtown, I'm definitely hitting **Audreys Books** (Edmonton's oldest independent bookstore), then swinging by **Noi Thai** for some Drunken Noodles and vegetable spring rolls.

My favourite gift to give during the holidays is a "wish" from the **London Drugs "Shopping Stuffers for Seniors" tree**. Walk into any London Drugs across Canada, pick a wish list from the store's Christmas tree, then shop for a senior in a care centre who might be feeling forgotten by Santa. Once you've shopped for all the items on the list (which can be purchased anywhere you like), simply put everything in a gift bag, and drop it back off at the London Drugs you chose the wish list from—along with the OG wish list so that they know who the goodies are for!



Pat Marino
New York

I like to shop at flea markets and thrift shops, and at the moment, my thrift of choice is **Penny Lane** in Geneva, New York, which is a year-round indoor flea market with loads and loads of lovely and not-so-lovely (but fun!) antiques, clothes, housewares, and everything under the sun.

As a wine lover, I also like to shop for certain folks virtually from **Astor Wine & Spirits** on Lafayette Street in Manhattan, NYC, because, frankly, they might be the best wine shop on the East Coast—and they ship very, very well!



Alice Rich
Vancouver, BC

People have so many things, and many feel that if they receive a gift, it should be kept, which often just adds to the clutter in their lives. That's why I like the idea of consumables—enjoy, use, and recycle the canister. Gifts like local jams, handmade face creams, knitted socks, pies, applesauce, and chutneys are always helpful to friends who have a house full of guests. To me, the joy of giving is to see happiness in another, so I shop in local shops and small galleries that offer unique selections.

The Little Stand (1283, Queensbury Ave., Saanich) in Victoria is my go-to for their beautiful little jams. And on Gabriola, the **Free Spirit Gallery Studio & Shop** has wonderful handmade lotions and things.



Jared Tabler (Creative Director, ratedART)
Edmonton, AB

When I think about buying a gift for myself, it's usually a bit of an indulgence. A treat I wouldn't casually pick up, but something intentional, and **Tiffany & Co** always has the best pretty things. From jewellery, to homeware, I can always find something that catches my eye.

I chose the **MoMA Design** store as my favourite place to shop for someone else, because they have such a fantastic mix of art and design gifts and collectibles. From prints, to furniture, there are so many fun things, it's a great spot to shop! Also, I am overdue for a trip to New York, so my choices may have been influenced by this!



Johnny Taylor
New York

Honestly, with all the options in NY, we usually wing it and see what we stumble upon. That said, there is a great craft market that runs for a few weeks in December at **Union Square** that we usually stop at even just for a browse, but these kinds of gifts are usually a modest stocking stuffer.

As for a gift for myself, Amy and I have made it a tradition for the past few years to go halvesies on a piece of art from an artist we covet and want to support as our real Christmas gift to each other. It could be a local we've discovered or someone we've followed online for a minute.



Curtis Trent
Edmonton, AB

I love shopping at the **Italian Centre** for someone else and for me! I remember watching a show about *Colatura*, a fish sauce made by fermenting salted anchovies inside *terzigni*, small chestnut barrels. I went straight to the Italian Centre and halfway down the oil aisle, there it was, a cute little bottle. I think I bought all of them and gave many as holiday gifts. So many unique products under one roof! Cheers!

WHAT'S ON

McQueen Artists Take Centre Stage



Charlene Johnson.

All of our amazing McQueen artists are busy creating new work this winter, but one has a fabulous show we're excited to tell you about. Here's where you'll find **Charlene Johnson**.

Charlene Johnson will be taking part in a group exhibition titled, **5 Artists 1 Love**, at the **Art Gallery of Alberta**, February 21 – March 4, 2025.

About Charlene Johnson

Charlene Johnson is an abstract expressionist painter from Treaty 6 Territory (Edmonton, Canada), who describes her paintings as "love letters to the moments of joy that remind us to live freely." Having recently discovered her passion for abstract art, Charlene credits the journey of breaking through an artistic block as the catalyst that allowed her to challenge the "strong black woman" stereotype—a notion that assumes black women are innately strong, fierce, and resilient. In other words, undeserving of protection and tenderness.

Today, free of this negative narrative, Charlene creates work filled with calming pastel colours and playful textures that unapologetically express her femininity, joy, and delicate nature.

A SPARK OF INSPIRATION

The Winter 6



1. *Pleasantville*, acrylic on canvas, 30 x 40, by David Tycho, 2024. | 2. *Looming Glacier*, acrylic on canvas, 40 x 16, by Michael McLean, 2022. |
3. *For The Love Of Après*, retro and vintage-inspired mixed-media collage with acrylic graphic stripe on wood panel canvas, 20 x 30, by Josie Michaud. |
4. *The Visiting Team*, oil on canvas, 30 x 30, by Lisa Graziotto, 2023. | 5. *A Secret Garden*, satin, acrylic, and plaster on primed cotton, 60 x 66, by Pat Marino, 2024. | 6. *Drin—Sunshine in Winter*, oil on linen, 36 x 30, by Michael Abraham, 2023.

QUICK TIPS

9 Tips for Framing Art

With Johnny Taylor

If you're like us, chances are there's a stash of much-loved art sitting patiently in your home, waiting...and waiting... to be framed. The reason it's taking so long? For starters, it's expensive! But the likely bigger reason? You're afraid to get it wrong. Well, thanks to **Johnny Taylor**, one of our amazing McQueen artists, we're hoping to alleviate some of those fears. Starting with a tip that requires no work—or money—at all...



Artwork and framing by Johnny Taylor.

1 Not all art needs a frame.

Whereas prints (photos and works on paper or similar delicate surfaces) almost always require a frame, most works on canvas, wood panelling, or durable surfaces (like enamel) usually won't. In fact, whenever possible, I usually opt for a "canvas frame" because I quite prefer that level of finish and presentation. You will, however, always want to consider if not framing those pieces will leave your artwork vulnerable to fading or general wear and tear. Sometimes that's solved as easily as making sure not to hang those canvases on walls that get bright, direct sunlight from a close window.

2 Invest in archival (acid-free) framing materials.

Depending on your art and the environment it's going to live in, you'll likely want to protect it from things like discoloration and yellowing, caused by acidic framing materials. Most framers will always use legit archival materials for backing boards, adhesives, and tapes, but if you're going the DIY route, make sure this is what you're using as well. Those products, however, are not all created equal, so do your homework and read the labels.

3 Don't skimp on glass quality.

Starting from the bottom, "standard" glass is an economical option that might get the job done. If you're framing is something like an inexpensive digital print or a decorative, short-term piece (a.k.a., cheap, cheerful, and easily replaced). For everything else, you'll want to consider museum/conservation-grade glass or anti-glare when appropriate. These are a step up in price, but provide anti-glare and UV protection that will combat discolouration. Remember: the larger the piece and the darker/richer the colours, the more surface area for reflection that might require a certain degree of anti-glare. Just be warned, once you "see" the difference anti-glare makes, you won't be able to unsee it.

4 Suit the frame to your art first, and to the aesthetic of your space second.

In other words, think of how the frame serves the work as the first step, then how this new finished object would serve the space as the second, and make your choices accordingly. For example, a busy, textural piece often benefits from a simple, monochrome frame. Conversely, 'slick' works on vellum or mylar often look best with frames that have a touch of natural grain.

5 Be sure that the framing doesn't become decorative.

Aside from rare exceptions where a dramatic statement is being made as part of the work, a frame should serve to focus attention on the work—and stay out of the way. Common mistakes are thinking of choosing a frame that matches a certain tone in the work itself. In my opinion, this usually dulls the work down rather than bringing it out. The idea is to go for a harmonious tone, maybe a few degrees from—but not exactly matching—a colour contained within the work.



Oil on mylar painting with shadow-boxed float mount and subtle grain hardwood frame.
Artwork and framing by Johnny Taylor.

6 Consider shadow boxes instead of frames with mats.

Nothing against mats, but I'm a big fan of the shadow box. In fact, rarely do I find this not the best option. I love the natural breathing room and dimension that's created when the work doesn't have glass pressing right against it. Rather than simply being a piece inside a frame, in my eyes it becomes a whole unified object.

7 Look for second-hand frames at markets and thrift stores.

My Dad, a semi-pro photographer, would often stockpile frames found at thrift stores (beveled, vintage-style ones that perfectly suited his photos of the American Southwest), and then make prints to fit.

So if, like him, you have access to works that can be ordered to custom size—or that requires a mat to fit it within, this may be a good option.

8 Ask an expert for their help or advice.

Most framers will have their own sensibilities and specialties, but the best will cover all the bases well. Here are some of McQueen's and my favourites.

- [Millcreek Picture Framing](#) (Edmonton)
- [Riverbend Art N Frame](#) (Edmonton)
- [17th Avenue Framing](#) (Calgary)
- [Chernoff Fine Art](#) (Vancouver)
- [KENT Picture Framing](#) (Vancouver)
- [Dandelion Art Framing & Gallery](#) (Saskatoon)
- [SoHo Art & Custom Framing](#) (Toronto)
- [ConservArt](#) (Montreal)

9 Though there are general rules (like all the ones above), do what you like.

Your opinion is the only one that really matters, so trust your gut and fill your spaces with what you love.



About Johnny Taylor

Johnny Taylor currently creates from his studio in Queens, New York, tapping into the action and intensity of this cultural hub to propel his current work. Embracing change as the only constant, Johnny has carved out a nomadic, creative career path, responding to the unpredictable and distinct energies of his different working environments—from the grit of Vancouver's downtown east side to the neon glow of the streets of Tokyo.

Johnny has been included in numerous solo and group shows, and has been featured in *Ion Magazine*, *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Vancouver Observer*, *Scout Magazine*, and *Artweek.LA*. When Johnny's not painting, you'll find him on the hunt for a great cup of coffee or a slice of NY pizza.



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