



ANY GIVEN MASTERPIECE

HER ART COLLECTION RUNS THE GAMUT, FROM RAUSCHENBERG TO YARD SALE CASTAWAYS. HER NEWLY RENOVATED HOME IS A DE FACTO GALLERY WITH ITS OWN CREATIVE FLOURISHES. FOR LYNN HEITLER, THE WORLD IS ALL HIDDEN BEAUTY AND OPEN CANVAS.

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VIEWED FROM A DISTANCE, LYNN HEITLER'S ENTIRE LIFE IS ABOUT ART. HER EYE FOR THE BEAUTY OF EVERYDAY THINGS, HER KNACK FOR PAIRING DISPARATE ITEMS IN INTERESTING WAYS, HER NEED TO CREATE AND CAPTURE AND RECONFIGURE ... THESE ARE THE TRAITS THAT SUFFUSE HER WORLD IN WAYS SHE DID NOT EXPECT. THEY ARE THE VERY SAME TRAITS THAT MADE HER A SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEUR AND THE PROUD OWNER OF AN IMPRESSIVE AND ECLECTIC ART COLLECTION—A COLLECTION SHE TOOK CARE TO CONSIDER AND ENHANCE WHEN RENOVATING HER 1942 HILLTOP HOME. LIFE IMITATES ART? OR THE OTHER WAY AROUND?

Heitler operates and co-owns Lynnel Art to Form, a Denver-based company providing original, customized digital art for commercial and residential clients. However, she's done more than make a business from her passion. Heitler embodies the belief that incorporating art into one's daily surroundings has an enormous impact on overall quality of life. She spent a lifetime curating her personal collection, and she takes pride in the fact that not every painting comes from a high-priced gallery exhibition; not every sculpture was shaped by a titan of the art world. In fact, she places greater emphasis on surrounding herself with pieces of distinct personal significance. "Some of these I've gotten by trading with other artists. I go to yard sales; I buy street art. I go to printers and see what their inventory looks like, sometimes galleries," she said.

For Heitler, the art adorning her walls does not exist as a symbol of status or sensibility. It exists as a living testament to her travels and experiences, her memories and aspirations. She sees no value in limiting her options. Tibetan jewelry that recalls a specific moment in time. Glass cubes to capture and refract the morning sun. African art gifted from traveling family. They all have a place; they all have a story. "I went to an estate sale about a month ago, and I bought a photograph for five dollars," she said. "And I love it. I value it as much as some of the things that cost me a lot of money."

Some of these pieces did, indeed, cost a good deal of money—her collection is hardly a hodgepodge of thrift-shop tchotchkes. Scattered here and there you'll find a Chagall, a Dali, a Bertoia, a Rauschenberg. A sitting room corner boasts a Siamese standing gilt bronze Buddha dating back to the 17th century. An upstairs office is home to a lovingly maintained Eames chair. Some of these she purchased, and some she inherited from her parents. Her mother, Dorothy, was a lifelong collector and a woman whom Heitler describes as having "the eye of a genius, but also the capacity to collect and get rid of."

For Heitler, whose collection also features several Colorado artists and more than a few of her own pieces, there is great value in looking beyond aesthetic trends. She doesn't over analyze the importance of matching specific styles or placing high-profile works front and center. The fit, she insists, is the thing. Pairing the Chagall with a Vance Kirkland? Positioning a favorite piece high on a bathroom wall so that it can be seen while relaxing in the bath? Flipping a vertical painting horizontal, and in the process creating a whole new perspective? There are few constraints when you feel no pressure to conform to the standards of others.

Nevertheless, the cohesion of Heitler's diverse collection is hardly an accident. When she set out to transform her once-Colonial home into something with more mid-century modern flavor, she did so with clear intent: to create space for the art to flourish. Heitler tends to view everything as an art form, and she's especially sensitive to the opportunity that architectural design provides. With a vision in mind and a checklist in hand, she hired local firm Design Platform to devise and execute the perfect renovation.

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When Heitler asked Design Platform Founder and Creative Director Jonas DiCaprio to open and pull an abundance of natural light into the home, he made it happen—but not without a little problem-solving. "That house was built with a lot of intermediate structure, and it's a shallow-depth house. So the challenge was to open up the main floor, which was nearly impossible because almost every wall on that main level was load-bearing. We had to add a gigantic steel beam so we could open up the kitchen and dining area."

In addition, Heitler wanted clear, open views with minimal obstruction. "There are two or three sightlines through the house—from the front door out to the back yard, and from the kitchen into the sitting room, that also reflect a very thoughtful design that created an open space—but not so open that it wasn't meaningful," she said.

Heitler also made an unconventional choice when it came to color scheme, opting for white walls throughout. This allows for balance and versatility, leaving virtually any wall, in any room, in play. "Her house is such a gallery," said DiCaprio. "It just made sense to let everything else fall away and allow the art to stand out." To complement that smooth interior, Heitler and DiCaprio devised a bold, textured cedar exterior in the back yard. Seen from the clean expanse of the living room, it adds a dash of rugged Colorado to a house that would fit comfortably in any major metropolitan city.

In the end, Heitler's home is a perfect reflection of her life: a creative extension of seemingly unrelated art forms. Some pieces come with prestigious pedigrees, but the greater value is the meaning she derives from their individual stories and from the story they tell collectively. Surrounding yourself with art, it seems, is a recipe for riches beyond monetary means. Building a collection is only the beginning.



Robert Rauschenberg has a special place in Lynn Heitler's heart—and a special place in her home, too. "Rauschenberg was a guide for me in my own career as an inspiration for how to combine photography and disparate kinds of images into a collage as a mono print," she said of the piece acquired at a deaccession auction for the Denver Art Museum. The painting is complemented by glass fruit in a metal basket, along with a wooden mask gifted from her brother, Bruce, following a visit to Africa.





An original Lynn Heitler piece, once on exhibition at the William Havu Gallery, now resides in the artist's own kitchen. Of the untitled oil on canvas, she said, "We really needed something that was active and colorful, because the rest of the house was designed to be calm and comforting and quiet. The reds and blacks in particular work with the grays and the exposed beam in a way that it all becomes one art form. So it's not just the painting, it's the painting in relation to where it is."



TOP LEFT: "Corral del Conde" by Lucio Munos hung horizontally in Heitler's parents' home for years. She flipped it vertically to better fit the space. "I don't think it was intended by the artist, but I liked how it felt that way." **TOP CENTER:** A collection of hand warmers from China resides next to wooden candlesticks and glass carafes, sitting atop glass artwork from Lynnel Art to Form. **TOP RIGHT:** A three-dimensional piece by Heitler, which includes sea shells, Nepalese jewelry, dice, dried fruit, and more. **BOTTOM LEFT:** An array of gifted art, including a modern chair replica and a chess-set queen, are centered by authentic African fertility art. **BOTTOM CENTER:** Original art by Lynn Heitler. "What's most interesting about these is where we hung them," she said. "They're above the visual line that you normally look at artwork. It gives a nice vantage point, particularly from the bathtub when you're looking up. It makes for a different kind of an entry." **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A Siamese standing gilt-bronze Buddha dating to 1670 A.D. is positioned beside "Women with Angelic Beings" by Salvador Dali. "Somehow they relate to each other spiritually."





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An all-new main floor master suite was added during Heitler's home renovation, thanks to Design Platform. The expansion allowed for metal library shelving that brings a modern feel to what was once a more traditional colonial home, while openly displaying Lynn Heitler's extensive collection of art books. On the far wall is a painting by the abstract expressionist William Brice, bought at a print studio in San Francisco. "It's not too strong or bold. It's very soft, but I love it," she said. On the left wall are a series of European mid-century lithographs acquired by the Hungarian mother of Heitler's partner, Steve Krauss.



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Once a mundane brick fireplace, Heitler saw an opportunity to create a dramatic centerpiece for the main floor sitting room during her renovation. In the process, she also acquired the perfect platform for this piece by Harry Bertoia, purchased long ago by her mother from the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center Museum. "One of the more interesting things about this piece is that it does have a sound component," said Heitler. Every touch registers a slightly different tone.



The second floor office is anchored by an Eames chair that once belonged to Heitler's father. "It used to be in his office, so I feel like I have his presence here now," she said. On the far wall is an original piece by Japanese artist Homare Ikeda, now based in Denver. And on the near wall appears "Willow," an Edward S. Curtis print dating to 1905. Said Heitler, "The juxtaposition of Homare's piece, which is so contemporary, with the Curtis print, which is so traditional in many ways ... they're both figurative, which is so traditional in many ways ... they're both figurative, they have a color relationship. They're kind of the same thing, done differently."

