

# Fine Art & Antiques

## Art for beginners at the RDS

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Next weekend's Art Fair 2010 at the RDS is an ideal venue for first-timers considering purchasing a first painting

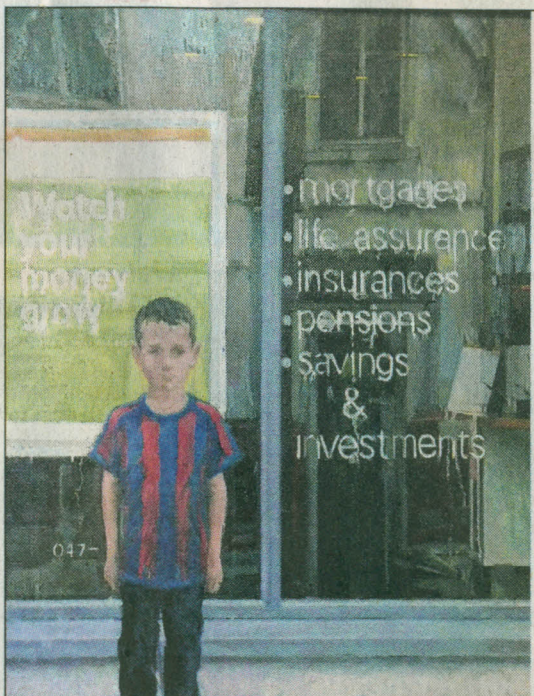
**B**UYING an original work of art for the first time is one of life's milestones. There comes a moment to leave behind that framed poster of Doisneau's soppy *Kiss* (*Le Baiser de l'Hôtel de Ville*) or Ebbets' skyscraping *New York Construction Workers Lunching on a Crossbeam* and acquire something more substantial.

While the outlay is clearly unlikely to be as financially significant as a first car or home, the occasion should be just as memorable while the purchase is likely to outlast both.

For first-timers, the experience can be nerve-racking. Where to start? What to buy? How much to spend? Is it a good "investment"? And, the great imponderable: "is it any good?"

The timeless and still best advice is: buy what you like. Don't choose a painting - or piece of sculpture - simply because the artist is fashionable or you've been told his "prices are set to rise" if you don't enjoy looking at it.

And there's no point in fretting over what it might be worth in 10, 20, or 30 years hence. Just as most books published never become best-sellers, so most works of art are never going to become Old Masters or cause a stiff upper lip



At the RDS Art Fair 2010 next weekend: above left, *Best Case Scenario* (€650) by Stephen Penders from the Sol Art Gallery; right, *Fruit Study 2* by Lucy Doyle, (€495) from the Bad Art Gallery; below, *Ketchup Bottle* by Orla Walsh (€495)

to quiver on the *Antiques Roadshow*. But that doesn't mean they won't provide a lifetime's worth of pleasure.

Collecting art is popularly perceived as a leisure activity of the rich. But it doesn't have to be. There is now a profusion of galleries, auction houses and temporary exhibitions all over Ireland with prices to suit almost every pocket. And monetary value isn't always a guide to quality. A picture bought for €100 at a village fair may provide its new owner with as much joy as a Vermeer bestows on a billionaire.

Nervous novices may find auctions baffling and commercial art



galleries intimidating. But both are well worth visiting to build up knowledge and confidence. However, next week's *Art Fair 2010* at the RDS in Dublin, which brings together artists and galleries from Ireland and overseas under one roof, provides a good opportunity to get an overview of what is for sale in a relaxed and informal environment.

Organisers of the fair, which opens on Friday and continues through the weekend, said it would offer a combination of established and emerging artists with paintings starting from €100.

Exhibitors include Denise Donnelly of Dublin's cheekily-named

Bad Art Gallery on Francis Street who claims: "Now is a good time to buy art as galleries and artists are more flexible with pricing and there are some great bargains to be had."

The fair will also feature lectures, a sculpture feature area and live music.

■ **ART Fair 2010 RDS runs on Friday, November 5th (noon-9pm); Saturday, November 6th (11am-7pm); Sunday, November 7th (11am-6pm). Tickets cost €10 for adults, €8 for concessions, and children under 12 are free with an adult. See [rds.ie/artfair](http://rds.ie/artfair)**