

LIVING SPACES

By Nancy Peevy | Photos by Chadwick Turner

An Art Salon

Creating a home around fine art and relationships

Pablo Picasso famously said, “Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

Likewise, Greg Thompson believes in enriching people’s lives through fine art. It’s the mission of his company, Greg Thompson Fine Art.

A seasoned art dealer, with more than 30 years of experience in the high-end art world, he’s sold art to public collections, including Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art; Stephens Inc.; Tyson Foods; the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth.

“But we also have private collectors all over the United States and Europe that we do business with — many of whom are on the Fortune 500 list and ARTnews Top 200 Collectors list,” he said. “We get to know collectors, what they’re passionate

about, what they’re looking to acquire, and we use our vast network of established relationships with private collectors, art dealers, consultants, advisors, galleries, appraisers, conservators and museums to help them acquire what they’re looking for. The Walton family, the Stephens family and the Tyson family helped build Arkansas, and we’re very proud and honored to be associated with all three of those families.”

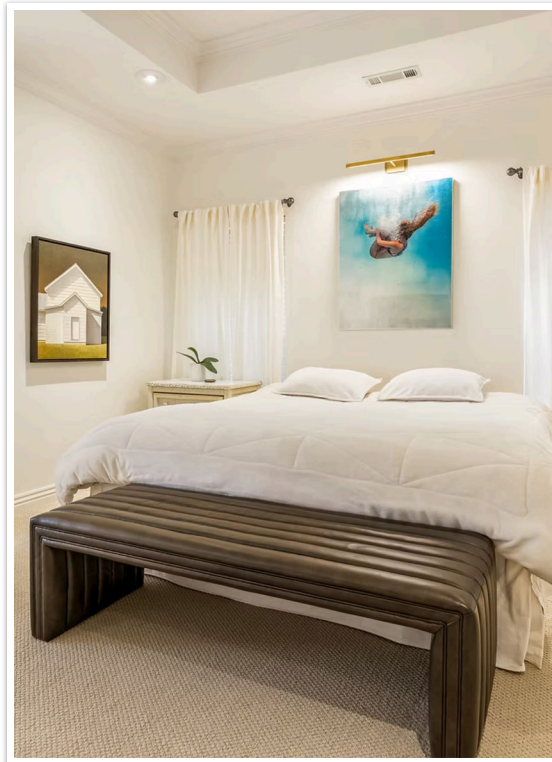
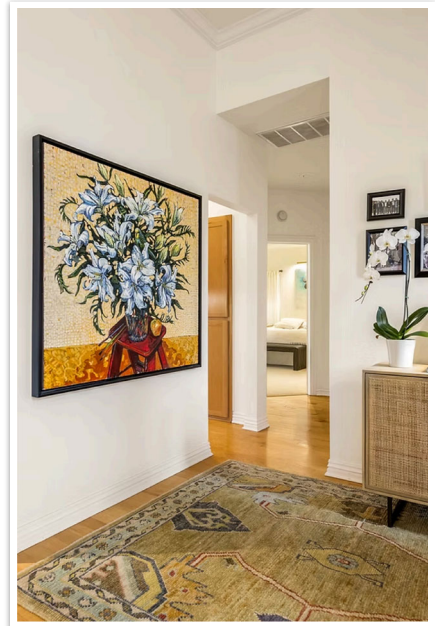
Thompson represents 30 living artists and also works in the secondary art market. He’s found online at Greg Thompson Fine Art, Artnet and AskART. His secondary market work comes from private collections that are for sale, some of which included works by Picasso, Henri Matisse and Georgia O’Keeffe.

Thompson moved to Fayetteville from Little Rock in 2023 and wanted to create his new home around art, hoping it would build relationships. Early in his career, his mentor and good friend, the late Townsend Wolfe, who was director of the Arkansas Arts Center for 40 years, told Thompson, “Greg, relationships are everything.” And Thompson said he places that at the forefront of everything he does.

While envisioning his Fayetteville home, Thompson had the idea to develop an art salon in the manner of Peggy Guggenheim and Gertrude Stein. “Guggenheim’s home in New York was a centerpiece for the art world,” Thompson said. “Jackson Pollock was one of the first artists she championed, and she commissioned him to do a very large painting in her foyer. She would have people over for cocktail parties and introduce them to Jackson, and she launched his career that way.”



Stein lived in Paris at the turn of the century and had an art salon where she held private events and invited artists such as Matisse, Picasso and Alberto Giacometti to introduce them to art collectors. Both Guggenheim and Stein “helped usher in modern art for the home in Europe and America,” Thompson said.



So, Thompson calls his home an art salon, which he defines as “an intimate space for collectors, artists and people in the art world to get together, socialize, develop relationships and view art in a personalized setting rather than a more formal gallery, which can be intimidating.”

Thompson enlisted Chris Goddard of Goddard Design Group to select “furnishings and lighting to create spaces with the purpose of showcasing art in a personal environment, where our clientele can see how the art could work in their own homes,” Thompson said. “I got to know Chris through Crystal Bridges. I love his sense of design style. He’s got this undefinable sense of class, style and elegance that has a kind of worldly but down-to-home sensibility.”

Goddard helped him create “pockets of intimacy,” reminiscent of Thompson’s design hero, Frank Lloyd Wright. Throughout the house, there are areas to sit with friends or family, visit over a glass of wine, and look at art by important regional and national artists. One such space in the primary suite features a painting of the Buffalo River by artist Charles Harrington from Bella Vista.

Art currently featured in Thompson’s home includes important regional artist Thomas Hart Benton from Missouri, Arkansas artist Carroll Cloar; Tennessee artist Richard Jolley; Arkansas abstract artist Sammy Peters; Hot Springs artist Dolores Justus; Russellville artist Mark Blaney; Ohio artist Leslie Shiels; New York artist Reginald Marsh; New York artist Jared French; and Arkansas artist Al Allen. Most of these artists have pieces in Crystal Bridges; New York City’s Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum of American Art; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Smithsonian; and the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts. As pieces sell, Thompson rotates new ones in.

“We cut our teeth on Southern regionalism,” Thompson said. “I realized early in my career that Southerners like to buy Southern art, so we really focused on that. But I also have a deep passion for American and European modernism that runs from about 1900 to about 1954 — so, Georgia O’Keeffe, Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove, Picasso and Matisse. And we sold a Renoir last year, a David Hockney, several Thomas Hart Bentons and a Warhol. Those are all artists that we keep our finger on the pulse.”

Thompson’s home, on a half-acre surrounded by woods, is open by appointment. He hosts private, by-invitation-only soirées, which are intimate gatherings of 20 to 30 people. Clients also have access to his extensive art library.

Thompson's love of art began at an early age, and art still touches him deeply, as it does his clients. "My mom dragged me to the Arkansas Arts Center when I was probably 5 years old for museum classes; I loved to paint and draw," he said. "I fell in love with art. It became a spiritual experience for me. Great museums are like churches for me. It's one of the places I connect with the divine. For me, one of the places God resides is in the human soul. And when I see a great work of art that I connect with, it's like connecting with the divine in a way that only fine art can do."



Home Pros Used:

Alarm System: ADT

Art: Greg Thompson Fine Art

Designer/Décor: Goddard Design Group

Drapes/Fabrics: RH

Electrician/Wiring: Word's Electric Inc.

Landscaping/Lawn Care: D & J Martinez Landscaping LLC; Precision Lawns & Landscaping

Painting: Colors & Details; Sherwin-Williams

Rugs: Hadidi Rug Gallery



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