

the hotels a greater level of affordability while receiving the same benefits of showcasing original artwork.

Vancouver-based Pekarsky Noble Corporate Art Consultants have also lent their expertise to several local hotel projects, including the Meridien (now the Sutton Place), the Pan Pacific, and both the Waterfront Centre and Vancouver Airport projects for CP Hotels. "Each project has used a different methodology to incorporate art into their concept," says the company's Beth Noble. "Most of the design firms are from the U.S. and really aren't familiar with local Canadian artists, so part of our mandate is always introducing them to their works." Noble finds that choosing art to enhance a design concept is much easier today, as design firms are now more sophisticated. "None of the art works were chosen to match the chintz. They were not decorating; rather, they were looking for pieces with independent existence that could stand on their own as art." Noble notes, however, that the major concern in selecting art for a hotel property is usually the bottom line. "Hotels try to get the most for the money, given that most design budgets are not extensive, and that's where a consultant can really contribute a great deal. We can find relatively low-cost works by artists that are up-and-coming, and yet still have the quality look of a senior or mid-career artist."

For CP Hotels' Waterfront Centre, Noble and her partner spent nearly a year locating artwork, while commissioning specific works for guest rooms and public areas. "The hotel

also wanted an Asian component, so we worked with several local specialty shops to find some unique pieces," says Noble. "As a result, the Waterfront now has a wonderful collection of paintings, craft objects, Asian artwork and almost museum-quality textile art pieces. Any hotel starting an art program must allow sufficient time to research and locate the artwork, because high-quality works are typically not all available simultaneously."

Mowatt also believes that time can be on the side of the hotel owner: "If you design well, and use quality art effectively, you will save yourself a lot of money in the long run in terms of redecorating by fashion." The gallery owner considers the Waterfront Centre project to be a classic example of the benefits of featuring high-quality art. "Because their collection has been so well-received by guests curious about the artists, the property has installed gallery-style labels and created in-house tour maps. And in the eight years or so since its purchase, much of their collection has more than tripled in monetary and critical value, so should they choose to replace certain pieces, they could easily resell them."

## Dealing in Art

There are several options open to operators in terms of how they bring quality art into their properties. Many public galleries and museums have art rental programs, and private-sector studios and dealers will sometimes provide a leasing arrangement to high-volume clients. Artist-run co-opera-