

ORANGE RUIP

PEOPLE CULTURE TRENDS SHOPPING



BY AMANDA ANDERSON

INSTALLATION ARTIST

Eight years ago Alan Scott was just a man with a plan and a van. The plan came after he started helping an artist friend install his work, and Scott developed a vision for a more sophisticated breed of professional art installer. The pristine white van he still uses to transport works of art

from the artist to the framer to the gallery to buyer's homes came just before he chucked his job as a bank teller. Today, he is one of Southern California's premier art installers, managing some of the finest art collections in Orange County and Los Angeles. The service he provides – part delivery man, part handyman, part interior designer – is one many art buyers and galleries don't even know exists. But once they discover him, they're happy to pay Scott's fee: \$100 just to show up; then \$70 per hour.

Unlike the starving artists or contractors who usually do this job, Scott adds an artful touch to art installation. Consider, for example, how to choose the placement for a distinguished portrait of the family patriarch. Hanging it high on the wall gives it a dominating presence; a landscape hung low invites the serenity of the work into the space and creates intimacy with the work. Reverse these paintings' positions, Scott says, and the effect is quirky, rather than sophisticated. "Scott designs the exhibition in [the client's] space," says gallery owner Peter Blake, who was among the first in Laguna Beach to employ him. His natural eye has been honed by his exposure to every step of art making and exhibition, says Blake. "He has a perspective that's totally unique in this industry." Through contacts he made delivering for galleries like Sherwood, Diane DeBilzan, J. Kamin, and the Peter Blake Gallery, Scott has grown the "collection management" side of his business. Once the art buyer sees him deftly install their new work (and vacuum up any errant dust left as a result with his own vacuum), often they'll give him a tour of the rest of their collection. "Many collectors buy their art over time and hodgepodge it together," Scott says. By adjusting just a few pieces or by taking down everything in the home and starting fresh, "I help create harmony between the pieces," he says, "making the house feel less cluttered and more magical." He's been hired to design lighting systems throughout a home, and to pack, ship and store an entire collection, then plan each piece's placement in the client's new home. He's even been flown to Europe to do installations and designs. Sounds like Scott's career plan turned out to be a masterful one. ☼