



DEVELOPMENT
NEW JERSEY

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METROVEST EQUITIES

...Building a 'City Within a City'

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"...ALL AROUND THE TOWN"
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The Beacon

Art Plus

...Coloring the Canvases of Commercial Real Estate

Corporate
Art Consultants



(Back row, from L to R): Lynn Marcantonio, Lauren Montour, Alissa Montour, Jeanne Shottland, Linda Slove (Front row, L to R): Kate Tevis, Carol Rush, Anita Fickensberger. Missing from Photo: Muriel Esdale and Linda Blinder

Congratulations, you are moving or renovating your offices! With new furniture and a new location, you want your space to convey success, competence, organization and credibility. Research reveals that aesthetic objects such as wall hangings and art décor have extremely positive effects on visitors and the workforce. Art instantly warms up a space, expands it both emotionally and visually, and adds color. Art also creates an image which infuses personality to make the work environment more productive and satisfying. Art has become as essential as office furniture.

Carol Rush, owner and president of Art Plus, exudes a dynamic energetic style and vitality which is the trademark of her company. For over two decades, Carol built her business through embracing new ideas, reaching out to expanding markets, and training people with varied backgrounds to share her enthusiasm in imagining the endless possibilities of designing space. Along with a staff of ten, Rush both manages the business and services a large and diverse group of clients.

By Marc Connor

TWO DECADES OF SERVICE

Art Plus, a full-service art consulting firm, located in Springfield, New Jersey, has been assisting corporations for 23 years in designing office space with artwork in all mediums: including fine art, giclees, posters, photography, tapestries and commissioned pieces. Perseverance could be considered the trademark of Art Plus. Undaunted by impossible deadlines and customers who say art isn't in the budget, Rush has turned obstacles into challenges and have made winning new prospects her company's goal.

Tenacity, guts and an ability to spot opportunity are just some of the skills that have enabled her to build Art Plus into one of the largest corporate art consulting firms in the area. The consultants all work in a pleasant 2,500 square foot, closed door historical showroom/office space. But what the consultants are most proud of is their client list, which includes many of the top companies throughout the United States. Rush and her staff continue to build upon their success with their existing corporate clients including Ortho Pharm, ADP, AFL-CIO, Acordia, Aegis Insurance, San-kyo Pharmaceuticals, CBRE, Mack-Cali, Murray Construction, Eastman Management and the N.J. Turnpike Authority, and just recently, the Newark Center renovation.

Art Plus has four full-time consultants in the New Jersey office. Kate Tevis, an art consultant for fourteen years, as well as a graphic designer, holds the title of "Creative Director". Kate designs and provides companies with specific marketing walls and "purposeful" art. Linda Slove, an art distributor for over 25 many years, has joined the staff, bringing in new artists and cultivating their ability to fit corporate needs. Jeanne Shottland is a professional oil painter and mixed media artist with a background in art show installations and sales. Anita Fickensberger is a crafts artist with a gallery sales background. Linda, Jeanne and Anita bring an added dimension to our Art Plus staff, providing a new level of professionalism to the Art Plus sales experience.

Ortho Bio-Tech, Bridgewater, NJ



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Art Plus employs an efficient internal administrative staff of three, including Lauren, office manager, Lynn, executive secretary and Alissa, administrative assistant who work hard behind the scenes to ensure that all transactions are perfectly executed.

Art Plus works in many types of facilities, including healthcare, Fortune 500 companies and major bank chains. "We assist in budget development for the corporations," says Rush, "by working with the architect, furniture dealer, CEO or facility manager. Artwork can cost between .50 - \$1.50 per square foot depending on the selection of posters or original artwork, and we help our clients maximize the dollars they have available in order to properly finish off their new or renovated space."

Five years ago, Art Plus expanded the business to Boston, Massachusetts with art consultants Muriel Esdale and Linda Blinder. Last year, they opened their Boca Raton, Florida office to service the booming Florida market.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Fifteen years ago, Rush believed in "branding" before it became a popular marketing tool, and she believes that the first step toward making a corporate sale is establishing a strong, professional image. This begins with the company's logo, which is highly visible, and is used on everything from sweatshirts to thank-you notes. Rush states: "Our name and logo are very important. People remember them." All of our art consultants are encouraged to wear tailored suits and their Art Plus name badges whenever they visit prospects or clients, and our installation staff wears uniforms bearing the Art Plus logo. You only have once chance at a first impression," says Rush.

THE VALUE OF NETWORKING

The real estate industry has been a great asset for networking opportunities. Art Plus firmly believes in participating in groups such as NAIOP, Corenet, IOREBA, BOMA, ICREW and ASID. Networking keeps their information of business movement up-to-date. It has led to building alliances with realtors and property managers directly, and understanding tenant needs. "We are able to ascertain client ideas on image, and how to convey the vision of their company through art," says Rush. "With nationwide capabilities, Art Plus is able to capture and service a client base which the average firm cannot.

"Our goal is to get referrals," says Rush, who estimates that 60 percent of the firm's sales comes from architects or designers. "Networking is extremely important in this

regard." Each art consultant actively participates in one or more of the industry-related associations in addition to a networking group. "The key is to get involved...the more you put into it, the more you get out of it." In addition, Rush caters to architects and designers by having a spacious, well-lit showroom that is an accommodating place to do business. At hand are bins of art, moulding corner samples and seating for coffee and/or formal discussions. Wide metal cabinets double as layout counters, giving designers room to spread out large pieces of artwork. Periodically, Rush hosts luncheons in the showroom to make presentations to key design firms. She uses these "Lunch & Learn" events to update designers on new art trends and services available through Art Plus.

LOOKING AHEAD

Art Plus now represents more than 2,000 artists and has an in-house poster stock of approximately 2,500 pieces to be ready at anytime for an appointment. Their turnkey operations include a cost-free, no obligation consultation, art selection, custom framing, delivery and supervised, professional installation.

Through Carol's leadership, Art Plus has since grown into one of the largest art consulting firms in the region. One measure of her success is that this Spring, Rush was nominated as New Jersey Entrepreneur of the Year, an event sponsored by Ernst & Young, with final selection taking place in June, 2006. "After twenty years," Rush says humbly, "it shows that I must be doing something right!"

Art Plus has also recognized the untapped luxury residential market and is expanding their business to include their newly formed Art Plus-Home Division, working with interior designers in upscale homes surrounding the metropolitan area. ■

You may contact Carol Rush and her team at (973) 376-2400 or by email at carol@art-plus.com



Garbani/CAP, Jersey City, NJ



Stryker Mobile, design by Art Plus, Mahwah, NJ



Bergman Realty Lobby, Fairfield, NJ

