

The Fine Art Registry™ Tag

Not Just a Pretty Label

by David Charles

What is so special about the Fine Art Registry tag?

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn would have killed for it. Pablo Picasso would rest more peacefully in his grave if he had used it. Renoir, Degas, Leonardo, Henry Moore, Norman Rockwell, Michaelangelo Buonarrotti, Andy Warhol... if only they'd had it. Art detectives and insurance agents applaud it. On the other side of the coin, crooks, thieves, shady art dealers and con men (and women – I guess it should be “con persons” to avoid the sexist label and anyone getting the idea that only men can con) in the world of art break into a cold sweat when they find out about it.

What is “IT”?

What is referred to casually by Fine Art Registry members as a “tag” is not just a pretty, holographic sticker. This is not your mother’s jam jar label. This is not something that any one can throw together in their garage or that you can buy at Staples and tweak. It is not something that you just print out of a plastic dispenser thingumabob and modify a little bit, or cook up on your pc and print out on an inkjet with a special template. This one is quite beyond even the consummate forging skill of a Mary Butterworth,



Samuel C. Upham or even Rick Masters of *To Live and Die in LA* fame.

No, some SERIOUS technology and engineering have gone into the Fine Art Registry TAG (capitals added for emphasis). So much so that a renowned and very successful engineer of some 35 years experience said to Theresa Franks, Founder and CEO of Fine Art Registry and the person who conceived, developed and patented the Fine Art Registry Tag and database system: “Speaking as an engineer, I think this is one of the most brilliant inventions ever. I’m amazed that you are not an engineer,” he continued. He also offered to invest a substantial sum of hard cash in her company to put money where his mouth was. But Teri didn’t want to be pushed down a different route than the one she had masterminded so she accepted the compliment and turned down the offer (a move she has never regretted).

But this tag is quite something and artists and collectors need to know exactly what it is that they are attaching to their art work and valuable collectibles.

What is the Fine Art Registry™ Tag?

This innocent little piece of acid free, polypropylene

with the nice holograms in it contains at least 6 levels of security that make each one unique to itself, unique to the artist, unique to Fine Art Registry, one of a kind, uncounterfeitable, nonduplicatable. Some of the same technology engineered into the tag is also used by the FBI. The tag is comprised of acid-free materials, including the adhesive. In addition, there is the fact that the piece is registered in a database with full description and photos.

This is patented, proprietary technology which, all combined including the online database registration system, makes the tagging system virtually impossible to counterfeit or to remove without trace.

The tag has an indefinite life (longer than yours or mine). It does not require a battery which can run down. It does not have to be replaced.

If any attempt is made to remove the tag, it self-destructs so it can't be used again. It also leaves behind an acid free residue which the Fine Art Registry can identify but others would not be able to. The residue cannot be removed without damaging the piece.

But the tag also serves as an incontrovertible identifier by its absence. A work of art presented as an original which was in fact a forgery would be identified as such by the lack of a tag on work of art that would be recorded in the FAR registry by an artist who was known to have all his or her work registered. Similarly if a stolen piece had the tag removed completely by destroying the canvas or the mat or wherever the tag is applied.

All that for \$2.25 including registration and electronic transfer of ownership!

What a clever idea!

It all began when Theresa Franks, a long-time, avid art collector, had to send a couple of really valuable pieces off to France for authentication and a friend brought up the question: "What if they go missing? How will anyone know they were yours?" This got Theresa thinking. The

insurance company would cover the pieces while in transit but after that they were on their own.

Lengthy research on the internet revealed no cost-effective way of tagging and registering art pieces. The very little technology available was flawed and prohibitively priced, especially if one wanted to tag a collection.

This happened at a time when an incident had arisen over Theresa's Jack Russell terrier which had an RF (Radio Frequency) ID chip implanted in its neck, unbeknownst to her. "If you could tag a dog, why not a piece of art?" was her question. It was that question that led to the Fine Art Registry.

This is actually one of the great things about America which has marked its progress in many ways: someone runs into a problem, works out a great solution and takes it to the marketplace. It's a story that repeats over and over and somehow this country seems to foster this spirit of invention by any of its citizens more than any other country in the world. Teri went into research mode.

A chance encounter with a Glaswegian (that's Scottish meaning "from Glasgow") art conservationist gave Theresa additional guidelines. You can't put something on a work of art which can't be removed without damaging the piece and be taken seriously in the art world. An additional challenge.

Theresa's years of research culminated in the patented technology in use in the Fine Art Registry™ tag and it is still improving, with a whole new level of security added in the latest batch of tags now under manufacture. Since then thousands of these tags have been applied to valuable art and other collectibles by many artists and collectors. It's a tidal wave that's only beginning.

If you think sliced bread was good... This tag, combined with the Fine Art Registry web site is even better.

