

# Big Screen Benefits: Why You Need Art at Work

When you go see a movie, you're going to get an all-consuming, immersive experience. The screen is generally five to eight stories high. The colors are vibrant. The story takes you places. Your brain gets to take a break from the real world and science tells us that's a good thing.

By giving our brains a break, we improve focus, sharpness and motivation. After all, if art in the theater is important enough to deserve a televised awards gala, why not put more emphasis on it to support creativity in the workplace? Creativity isn't just for movie stars and screenwriters. We face global issues that require us all to unleash our creative potential to solve problems and generate ideas.

"Creativity is about thinking about things in a different way. You need it whether you're a programmer or a doctor or an accountant," says Karen Gelardi, creative services manager for Designtex Surface Imaging. "By having artwork around you, your mind can wander and make new connections. It can be soothing or inspiring. It can lead to a different type of focus."

## HOW ART BENEFITS PEOPLE AT WORK

Gelardi went on to list a number of other ways art supports people's ability to be creative at work.:

- Communicate that creativity is valued and part of the organization's culture  
Express a commitment to creating a work environment that supports employee wellbeing
- Show the company's point of view and willingness to take risks
- Attract and retain the next generation of talent looking for inspiring spaces to work
- Make a connection to the local community by working with local artists or images
- Create a community at work by building a sense of place and sharing imagery with colleagues
- Build relationships with colleagues by creating a natural conversation starter
- Create positive distractions – as you try to decipher a piece of art, your brain will make new connections
- Customize a workplace to represent a brand or place
- Promote sustainability by choosing purposeful materials

It's Gelardi's job to approach artists you might normally only see exhibit in galleries. She connects them to a new venue for sharing their ideas and images: The workplace. New technologies and materials, such as PolyVision's CeramicSteel, are allowing artists to produce at massive scale in the work environment. Forget the eight story movie screen, how about a massive building lobby? As the options for material applications grow, artists are eager to see how their works translate into the built environment.

As for the people choosing and viewing the art, it's like deciding what movie to see. Depending on what genre, actor or director you patronize, you'll end up being left with very different feelings when the credits roll. Similarly, artwork that takes us somewhere new and is thoughtfully cast can resonate and inspire. Gelardi says when the project's complete, success feels just as an actor does receiving a gold statuette.

"People are won over—it's experiential. And, for us, it is super rewarding when people fall in love with the imagery and the artists they are working with and they get to feel real ownership over the space. Then, the relationship of the work to people day to day takes on a life of its own."

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*"Bloom" by Anna Hepler is a large scale woodcut included in the Bespoke Image Portfolio for Designtex Bespoke projects. A high-resolution scan of the original 20'x20' woodcut allows for a colossal scale digital reproduction.*

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### **Rebecca Charbauski** **Senior Communications Specialist**

Rebecca, an Emmy-winning journalist, reports on global research impacting the places where people work, learn and heal. Over her career, Rebecca spent 17 years covering local and national news events on television and a variety of digital platforms. She directed a digital news group in Kansas City for three years before becoming news director in Grand Rapids, Michigan for more than five years. Prior to Steelcase, Rebecca worked with one of the four largest media groups in the United States to coordinate news coverage among 48 newsrooms from the east to west coast.

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