

# THE LINE

On Special Objects:  
Favorite Finds

Bettina Prentice

*Founder and Creative Director, Prentice Art Communications*



A career working with artists, dealers, and other colorful characters of the art world has given Bettina Prentice the deep knowledge and contagious enthusiasm of a curator. The latest object of her affection is also her most recent acquisition: a 1981 collage by the late Ray Johnson, whose work is the subject of an exhibition (on view through January 16, 2015 at New York's Richard L. Feigen & Co.) that her five-year-old boutique communications firm helped shepherd to success. "All of Johnson's subjects sat for portraits—he would make silhouettes and then collage them," says Prentice. "This one is the silhouette of the famous collector Christophe de Menil. If you look closer, you'll see a snake, in several pieces, on which he has etched letters that spell 'Picasso.'" Along with books that have become enduring favorites, Prentice brought with her to *The Apartment This Is a Soul* by Marilyn Berger. "I'm reading this right now—it's about Rick Hodes, a doctor in Ethiopia who treats children that are untreatable. It just kind of powers you through the day and puts things in perspective."



## Bettina's Favorites

### MEMENTOS OF HER GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDFATHER

Among the family photos that Prentice treasures is one of her grandfather, Frederick Shrady, a sculptor who during World War II helped to retrieve looted art as one of the Monuments Men. Another favorite heirloom is the prayer book created for her by her grandmother, Maria Shrady, a Catholic theologian. “She filled the book with prayers that she hoped would get me through my life,” says Prentice. “So it’s very meaningful to me.”

### MAN WITH A BLUE SCARF: ON SITTING FOR A PORTRAIT BY LUCIAN FREUD BY MARTIN GAYFORD

“This biography of the artist Lucian Freud is one of the best artist biographies I’ve ever read. The author had to sit for [Freud] every day, so it’s about Freud’s moods and methods on a daily basis.”

### SAND FROM THE SAHARA DESERT

“In 2005, I went out into the desert with a group of Berber nomads who were camel herders. We slept under the stars—it was really desert living. I love the color of the sand. It’s always been incredibly evocative for me.”

### EGYPTIAN-STYLE BOOKENDS

“These bookends are Egyptian revival, and they were given to me as a gift by the artist Michele Oka Doner when she found out that I was an ancient Egypt fanatic.”



Last Christmas, my husband gave me the book *Art & Place*, and it's become a kind of bucket list for me—pieces that I must go and see.

*Bettina Prentice*