



# A Day in the Life

*Catching up with jet-setting art connoisseur, Marla Wasser, president of art advisory firm Pursuits Inc.*

BY SIENNA VITTORIA LEE-COUGHLIN

**7:00 A.M.** “I wake up at around 7:00 a.m., sometimes earlier when travelling.” Breakfast consists of fresh fruit and yogurt—and “*definitely* coffee,” she adds. She scours the morning papers to catch up on world and art news and catches up on the many emails flooding her inbox before heading to work. Her go-to uniform: A classic black trouser paired with a bold shoe.

**10:00 A.M.** After arriving at the office—tucked away in a pocket of greenery in downtown Toronto—Wasser and her team begin their brainstorming and planning session. New art industry trends are researched and noted, as artists, events, and the market itself are constantly in flux. Next, travelling plans are tended to. This week, Wasser is finalizing her itinerary for her trip to art fair Frieze New York, a gathering of 200 global art dealers showcasing blue-chip contemporary art that attracts the world’s wealthiest collectors such as Jerry I. Speyer, real estate magnate and chairman of the Museum of Modern Art, Dasha Zhukova, magazine publisher and wife of Russian oligarch Roman Abramovich, and even actor Leonardo DiCaprio.

**10:30 A.M.** Updates on ongoing projects are then discussed. Between curating exhibitions, planning the Connecting Women Around Art luncheon, and helping clients acquire and build their art collections, the team is kept busy.



**11:00 A.M.** Time for meetings with artists and clients. Today, local artist Harrison Taylor brings in samples of his stunning light boxes, which have been commissioned by power couple Kirstine Stewart, head of media for Twitter North America, and actor Zaib Shaikh. Wasser and Taylor discuss logistics for installing the artworks in the couple’s home.

**12:00 P.M.** When not on the clock for a lunchtime meeting, Wasser’s favourite dining spots include Delica Kitchen, Signatures Restaurant, and Soho House Toronto. Wasser’s team also occasionally brown-bags it. “We always try to have a little bit of downtime for lunch to catch up on our personal lives and have a quick breather.”

**2:00 P.M.** Wasser heads out for on-site client meetings. Today, she follows up by visiting Stewart and Shaikh’s house.

**4:00 P.M.** Afternoons are spent engaging in the art world: visiting galleries, dealers, and meeting with artists. Today, Wasser stops by the Art Gallery of Ontario for the opening of *Thomas Ruff: Object Relations* (on view until July 31). “My husband Larry and I own several of his works. It was exciting to see four new works that have never before been seen.”

**7:00 P.M.** Once home, Wasser catches up with family and hosts her sons for dinner. “My family thinks that my steak dinner is better than any of the best steak houses in the city,” she says. When dining out, Quanto Basta and NAMI restaurants are favourites. Wasser unwinds by burning through piles of magazines—with a cup of tea in hand. Shortly thereafter, it’s to bed before it all starts up again the next day.

## THREE UP-AND-COMING ARTISTS ON WASSER’S RADAR



**Name:** Chloe Wise  
**Location:** Born in Montreal, lives and works in New York  
**Media:** Sculpture, painting, and video  
**Social Media:** @chloewise\_



**Name:** Mira Dancy  
**Location:** Born in Britain, lives and works in New York  
**Medium:** Painting



**Name:** Aida Muluneh  
**Location:** Ethiopia  
**Medium:** Photography  
**Social Media:** @aidamuluneh