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Collector's eye: Karsten Schubert

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COLLECTOR'S EYE

Karsten Schubert

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Imagine I'm about to destroy your whole collection in my Art Bin at South London Gallery but you could keep one piece. What would it be? It would be the early Mondrian drawing of the tree along the river; it's in my bedroom.

If money was no object, what would be your dream purchase? A really great, abstract painting by Mondrian.

How do you like to buy art?
From a dealer who knows what you're after, and offers you very specific things. In the past, dealers would have asked questions about the buyer's collection. Now, on the whole, they don't.

Do you think that knowing the artist alters the way you see their work?
Yes, because you get a studio perspective. You become part of the process, have the privilege of seeing things as they happen. It makes you nervous, because suddenly you have an emotional investment. I know collectors who don't want to meet the artist for that reason – it allows you to move on without any pain.

Can you have that same connection with younger artists, as you do with your own generation?
I think in your 20s and 30s, you are very open. Then there comes a point when you're full up. I'm now 57, and occasionally I see a show of someone in their late 20s and I just don't feel particularly engaged. It's what happens – you can't carry on being engaged with everything. There are certain collectors in their 70s who still go to everything and you just think: “Guys, just relax a little”. You grow up with your own people and you should just stick with them. There was a point, a few years ago, when everyone wanted the next hot young thing. Now everyone wants historic works.

• Michael Landy's solo show, *Scaled-Down*, is at Thomas Dane Gallery, until 17 November

The London-based dealer and collector Karsten Schubert met the UK artist Michael Landy 30 years ago, when Schubert visited his degree show at Goldsmiths. He signed Landy up immediately, along with Gary Hume. Schubert now holds the largest collection of Landy's work at around 50 pieces. Here, the artist speaks to him about his motivations.

MICHAEL LANDY: How did you first get into collecting?
KARSTEN SCHUBERT: I was about 12 years old when I began collecting coins, then Roman antiquities. I eventually realised that if you want to get fantastic things, you have to collect contemporary art. It came through my grandmother – she lived in a part of Berlin surrounded by museums. It's one thing looking at works in a museum but a totally different proposition to live with them.

When did you first start collecting my stuff?
I bought one of your tarpaulin works from your first show with us.

They have stopped making that type of tarpaulin. Do you remember which of my works you bought most recently?
I got one of your Breaking News drawings. It says: “Keep Your Laws Out Of My Vagina.”

Michael Landy (left) was signed by Karsten Schubert 30 years ago

NEWS

Artist takeover

The Artist Newspaper team

The famous faces behind our first daily edition at this year's Frieze



Rana Begum
"Instagrammer"



Tania Bruguera
"Art critic"



Shezad Dawood
"Columnist"



Elmgreen & Dragset
"Agony uncles"



Zeng Fanzhi
"Man about town"



Pierre Huyghe
"Contemporary art correspondent"



Paul Kindersley
"Stylist"



Yayoi Kusama
"Art director-at-large"



Michael Landy
"Market writer"



Rachel Maclean
"Art director-at-large"



Grayson Perry
"Chief contributor"



Laure Prouvost
"Art director-at-large"



Chiharu Shiota
"Art director-at-large"



David Shrigley
"Centrefold guy"