25 MOST COLLECTIBLE ARTISTS

Conceptualists whose markets have yet to catch up with critical acclaim make up this year’s list of notable undervalued artists.

By SARA ROFFINO

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"Generally speaking, the work of Conceptual photographers tends to be more complex, but the appreciation of it is often more lasting and sustained," says Cologne-based gallerist Thomas Zander, Burgin’s representative, along with Richard Saltoun in London, Lia Rumma in Milan, and Daniel Vocen in Geneva. "It isn’t decoration. The artists appropriate the medium of photography for their Conceptual endeavors and investigations into art itself." A pioneering figure in Conceptual photography, Burgin is known most widely for works in which text is overlaid on top of photos, invoking the sleek look and feel of advertising, cinema, fashion, and magazines while introducing more pointed questions about the nature of visual culture, as well as issues of semiotics, class struggle, and psychoanalytic theory. Burgin’s photographic works are frequently made and sold in series. At auction, they often sell for $10,000 to $20,000, with larger works going for more; his eight-photo-diptych series, "Zoo 78," sold for £61,000 ($96,000) at Christie’s London in 2012. "Burgin’s collector base is comparatively small, informed, and specialized, including many museums and foundations," says Zander. "These collections are often dedicated to Conceptual art and historically connected movements like land art or Minimalism," he adds. "However, while Burgin can be called an old master of Conceptual photography, he also continues to attract a young audience since he has always used new media, besides photography, in his art." An exhibition of Burgin’s recent work opens at Cristin Tierney Gallery in New York on September 8. • PORTIA, 1984