

# Stephen Friedman Gallery

ARTnews

Top Collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Reflects on Her Foundation's 25<sup>th</sup> Year

Maximiliano Duron

9 October 2020

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Image: Luiz Zerbini, Happiness Beyond Paradise, 2020, Courtesy of the artist, Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, and Sikkema Jenkins & Co, New York

This year marks the 25th anniversary of collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo's namesake Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo. Housed in two buildings—an 18th-century manor in the Roero Hills, in Guarane, Italy, and a custom-built museum space in Turin—the Fondazione has staged solo exhibitions of some of the most celebrated contemporary artists, from Carol Rama and Ragnar Kjartansson, in its early years, to Ian Cheng, Avery Singer, and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye more recently. Re Rebaudengo also has a prodigious personal collection; she first appeared among the ARTNews Top 200 Collectors between 2003 and 2010 and has done so each year since 2016. In July, ARTNews spoke with Re Rebaudengo about her growing collection

#### **You started collecting art in 1992. What was your motivation?**

That year I went to London on a trip that changed my life. I visited museums, galleries, and the studios of artists like Anish Kapoor, Sarah Lucas, Damien Hirst, and many others. It was at that time that I bought some of my first artworks. The ability to establish relationships with artists was the reason I started collecting contemporary art and remains the main motivation behind my collecting. Contemporary art talks about our times, about the society in which we are living through their works, the artists help us better understand the present and anticipate the future.

#### **What keeps you going as a collector?**

A collection is like a living organism that evolves and changes through time. What keeps me going is the enthusiasm for what I don't know yet and the excitement that comes with meeting new artists who keep challenging my views on what art can be. I also see art as a tool to better understand our reality, helping to face the complexity of our times.

#### **Has your collecting changed during the coronavirus lockdown?**

My strategies or attitudes toward collecting have not changed. I still think that it is important to support emerging talents and invest in the younger generation, which is all the more important in these times of uncertainty and difficulty for so many artists. Acquisitions through commissioning or supporting the production of works are also a very important aspect of my activity: for example, a forthcoming exhibition at

the Fondazione will be from Martine Syms. Her project is a co-commission and co-acquisition in collaboration with the Philadelphia Museum of Art that specifically focuses on the most interesting new voices in time-based media.

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Image: Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo. Photo: Andrea Basile/Courtesy Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo

Also, during the lockdown, I decided to support the production of two works which will be part of important forthcoming exhibitions: a major new installation and performative work by young Italian artist and choreographer Michele Rizzo, which will be presented at the Quadriennale in Rome (scheduled to open in October); and a new video production by Marwa Arsanios, who is taking part in this year's Berlin Biennale (postponed from June to September). I am glad that both works will enter the collection.

The acquisitions are also connected to the Fondazione's exhibition program, and recently we commissioned and acquired a monumental installation by

Berlinde De Bruyckere.

Galleries are always involved, and the ongoing dialogue with them remains vital in my collecting process. All of my acquisitions still happen through the galleries. I also buy work that I haven't helped produce. My last acquisition of this kind is the work of Luiz Zerbini, during Art Basel Online Viewing Rooms in June.



Image: Ludovica Carbotta, Monowe (The Terminal Outpost), 2019  
Courtesy Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo

**What do you think of the shift to online viewing rooms? How has your experience been in using them?**

Buying virtually is something I was already used to. It's true that, especially for works of high cost and made with certain media, collectors usually feel more comfortable in making the acquisition

after seeing the work in person. For other kinds of works, like video and digital works, it is easier to decide whether to buy a work or not only after viewing it online.

**What have you liked about this new online environment?**

What I have enjoyed the most was doing virtual studio visits organized by gallerists, like the ones I did with Elmgreen & Dragset and Ana Elisa Egreja. The different and most valuable aspect was the possibility of interacting, foremost, with the artists, but also interacting with the other participants on the call—I really enjoyed that.

**What is one thing you miss about the in-person art world?**

Being together, in the real presence of others, to share our experience of art. Museums, galleries, and fairs are first and foremost public spaces. It's not only about an individual's relationship with an object, but encounters with other people who share our love of art.