# 25 MOST COLLECTIBLE CONCEPTUAL ARTISTS

EDITED BY SARA ROFFINO

Determining which artists to include on our Most Collectible list provides a chance each year for the editors at *Art+Auction* to step back from the onslaught of sales results and consider questions about how art markets operate over the long term. We looked for artists whose historical and critical importance has been firmly established, but whose markets have lagged and are poised for growth. It required us to weigh the opinions of numerous specialists and curators and to balance judgments rooted in art history against those of the economic sphere. This year we complicated matters further by choosing to focus on Conceptual artists, a diverse group whose work is seldom an easy sell to collectors.

A defining aspect of 20th-century art history, Conceptual art can be best understood as art in which the ideas behind its creation take precedence over its formal qualities. Rather than subscribe to a particular technique or medium, Conceptual artists often work across media in experimental ways that have greatly expanded contemporary understandings of what constitutes art.

Unsurprisingly, a primary challenge for Conceptual artists in the market is that their work is not necessarily object-based. As a result, many Conceptual artists have found stronger support within institutions than among private collectors. Yet, for collectors willing to expand their own thinking about art, these artists offer a rich array of ephemera and documentation in addition to video, paintings, sculptures, and installations. Collectors of Conceptual art must be willing to ask questions that may not have answers, and should remain open to work they may not immediately understand. The reward for such patience is the opportunity for a long-term engagement with a work.

Further complicating matters, several artists included this year place challenging the structures and influence of the market at the core of their practices. They did not make art to sell, but to question the systems according to which art is considered, exhibited, and valued. Hans Haacke, for example, refuses to allow his work to be included in art fairs; he also requires all collectors to abide by a contract dictating the terms of exhibition and reserving a 15 percent royalty for him when work is resold. At the extreme of disengagement from markets is Lee Lozano, who began as a painter but then rejected the art world, choosing to create performances out of her disillusionment, resulting in one of the first life-as-art works to take place.

Our selection of most collectible artists goes beyond the specific 20th-century school of Conceptualists who lived and created in urban art centers. We present 25 artists from across the world in hopes of illustrating the ways in which Conceptual art has often integrated with traditional or local contexts. The convergence of Conceptualism and feminist art, for example, resulted in many women Conceptualists addressing gender theory through their work. Our hope is that this list acknowledges the complexity of Conceptual art while encouraging art lovers to look beyond traditional forms for some of the most collectible art of the moment.

*Written by Taylor Dafoe, Liza M.E. Muhlfeld, Meghana Reddy, Sara Roffino, Angela M.H. Schuster, Danielle Whalen, and Deborah Wilk*

**ELEANOR ANTIN | B. 1935 | UNITED STATES**

"I've always felt that narrative is as much a human need as breathing," says Antin in an interview for the PBS series *Art in the 21st Century*. Whether these narratives are true to life matters little to the performance luminary, however. "I would define what I do, essentially, as inventing history," she explains. Through performance, video, photography, and installation, the artist creates alter egos, of which the most famous is Eleanora Antinova—a black ballerina in the early 20th-century Ballets Russes. Antin first gained recognition in 1971 with *100 Boots*, for which she mailed 51 photographs of 100 black rubber boots positioned in various locales to 1,000 art world figures. Complete sets of the original mailed postcards now sell for $90,000, but unmailed sets can be acquired for $70,000. "You could always get her videos from Electronic Arts Intermix," explains Marco Nocella, sales director at New York's Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, which has represented Antin since 1977. "Video was a less expensive way to get her in museum collections, and a lot of museums have done that. Now, many of them are looking to match the videos with the photographs." Her series of photographs re-creating scenes of ancient Greek and Roman life, compiled in the book *Historical Takes*, range from $35,000 to $60,000. Antin's film *Caught in the Act*, 1973, is included in "Watch This! New Directions in the Art of the Moving Image" at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington D.C., and the film *Portrait of Antinova*, 1986, is included in "The Body Electric" at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, both open this month. • ***THE CONVERSATION FROM THE LAST DAYS OF POMPEII*, 2001**

**JOSEPH BEUYS | 1921–1986 | GERMANY**

After abandoning his youthful plans for a career in medicine following a legendarily harrowing experience as a German soldier in World War II, Beuys attacked art world conventions with protean force. The resulting objects represent a philosophy that continues to reverberate through contemporary art practice. Although the confounding innovations of Beuys's oeuvre often draw comparison with Conceptual grand-père Marcel Duchamp, Beuys was openly critical of what he perceived as the anti-art posture of Duchamp's readymades, the concept that an artist could deem any found object art. Whereas "Duchamp brought up the question of what art is, Beuys considered the idea that everybody can be an artist, that humankind itself is a work of art," says Grégoire Billault, head of contemporary art at Sotheby's New York. "Beuys put human beings in the center of everything—everyone you meet will affect how art is perceived and consumed on some level. That is the main Beuys message." But as with all Conceptualism, "to define Beuys's work in one way would be a mistake," says Billault. "All the works are open to interpretation." Beuys's widespread influence and appeal are uncontested, however, acquiring a work for one's own collection can be tricky, despite Hans Mayer, Mary Boone, and Thaddaeus Ropac being among the gallerists representing the artist's estate. "Important installations rarely appear at auction," says Billault. Yet sculptural multiples are central to his oeuvre. One of the artist's iconic felt suits, *Filzanzug*, 1970 (20/100), crossed the block at a Sotheby's London day sale in fall 2015, fetching £68,750 ($106,000) on a £50,000 ($77,000) high estimate. And Billault notes that drawings appear on a regular basis and seem to be gaining value: *Zeitpunkt: das Massaker von Muenchen (Point of Time: The Massacre of Munich)*, 1972, more than doubled its high estimate to achieve £854,500 ($1.2 million) at Christie's London last February. "What can I say?" Billault asks. "He's somewhat matchless." • ***FILZANZUG (FELT SUIT)*, 1970**

**IRMA BLANK | B. 1934 | GERMANY**

Under-recognized for most of her career, Blank has been based in Milan since the 1960s. Her labor-intensive practice is rooted in an exploration of the relationship between written and visual languages and a determination to reduce both to their primordial essence. Darren Warner of London-based Alison Jacques Gallery—which has represented Blank since 2011, when she began to gain a following outside of Italy and Germany—observes that "her work can come across as quiet, it's very contemplative and it doesn't necessarily scream out at you." Pieces in Blank's "Radical Writings" series from the 1980s and '90s, wherein each line corresponds to a breath taken by the artist, range in price from €10,000 ($11,000) for a small work on paper to €140,000 ($154,000) for a large diptych. Her "Avant-testo" works, described by Warner as "the culmination of Blank's evolution toward abstraction and the progressive erasure of the self," run from €23,000 ($25,000) for a very small piece to a larger diptych priced at €250,000 ($274,000)—the top end of the artist's market. Important exhibitions include Documenta 6 in 1977 and the 2001 Venice Biennale. In addition to Alison Jacques, Blank is represented by P420 in Bologna, Gregor Podnar in Berlin, and Galleria d'Arte De Chirico in Turin. • ***UR-SCHRIFT OVVERO AVANT-TESTO, 14-11-02*, 2002**

FROM TOP: RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS, NEW YORK; SOTHEBY'S; IRMA BLANK AND ALISON JACQUES GALLERY, LONDON





**PAULO BRUSCKY | B. 1949 | BRAZIL**

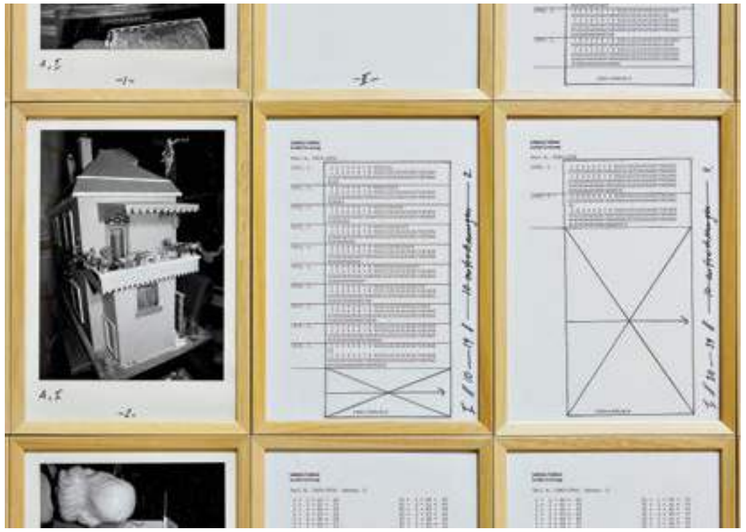
Arrested three times, imprisoned, and tortured under the military dictatorship that ruled Brazil from 1964 through 1985, Bruscky worked almost entirely outside the establishment until 2008, when he joined Galeria Nara Roesler (he is also represented by Amparo 60 in his hometown, Recife). As part of Fluxus, he was at the vanguard of mail art, Xerox art, books, performance, and subversive practices such as placing ads in newspapers and on billboards. All the while, Bruscky maintained a day job in human resources at a hospital in Recife, where he still lives, while his collector base consisted of a local priest and artists and institutions to whom he mailed his work. The recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1982, Bruscky has been included in four São Paulo Biennials, among other institutional group exhibitions, and a retrospective of his work, "Art Is Our Last Hope," was organized by the Bronx Museum in 2013. Despite inclusion in major museums such as New York's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), Tate, Georges Pompidou Centre, and Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Bruscky's works can still be acquired for as little as $5,000. Artist books range from $15,000 to $25,000, while an entire performance can reach $300,000. • ***WHAT IS ART? WHAT IS IT FOR?*, 1978**

> "GENERALLY SPEAKING, THE WORK OF CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHERS TENDS TO BE MORE COMPLEX, BUT THE APPRECIATION OF IT OFTEN MORE LASTING."
>
> —COLOGNE GALLERIST THOMAS ZANDER

**VICTOR BURGIN | B. 1941 | ENGLAND**

"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 Varenne 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**

FROM TOP: ANGELO JOSE AND GALERIA NARA ROESLER; VICTOR BURGIN AND GALERIE THOMAS ZANDER, COLOGNE



**HANNE DARBOVEN | 1941–2009 | GERMANY**

Darboven spent a lifetime in pursuit of order, creating elaborate systems—in the form of large-scale installations—describing supposedly universal objective constructs, relating to mathematics, music, and time. After she studied painting in the early to mid 1960s at Hamburg's State Academy of Fine Arts, the artist moved to New York. There, she fell in with Minimalist and Conceptual practitioners Carl Andre, Mel Bochner, Joseph Kosuth, and Sol LeWitt, whose approaches likely encouraged her distinctively strict aesthetic path. Her objective absolutism relented somewhat when she began to incorporate found objects that allowed the sentimental into her compositions. "The early work is very personal, but it's not private on the surface," says Philomene Magers of Darboven's Berlin-based gallery Sprüth Magers, referencing evidence from the artist's Hamburg home of organized hoarding. "But more private stuff comes out in the later works, and these later installations are contextualized in an extremely interesting way in today's art discourse," the dealer continues. "The Minimal work is maybe not as contemporary as the later work, which is engaging the interest of a lot of younger artists." An exhibition of a 1980s installation opens at the gallery's Los Angeles venue on September 9. She is also represented by Düsseldorf-based Konrad Fischer Galerie and P420 of Bologna. Works, which range between €25,000 and €4 million ($27,000–4.4 million), have been collected steadily by institutions and more recently by private museums. "Obviously she's a completely undervalued artist to the extent that she's a real artist's artist, and every curator and knowledgeable patron knows the work," says Magers. • **DETAIL FROM THE 2015 EXHIBITION "HANNE DARBOVEN: ACCEPTING ANYTHING AMONG EVERYTHING," TALBOT RICE GALLERY, THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH**

> "OBVIOUSLY SHE'S A COMPLETELY UNDERVALUED ARTIST TO THE EXTENT THAT SHE'S A REAL ARTIST'S ARTIST, AND EVERY CURATOR AND KNOWLEDGEABLE PATRON KNOWS THE WORK."
>
> —PHILOMENE MAGERS OF GALLERY SPRUETH MAGERS ON HANNE DARBOVEN

**ROBERT FILLIOU | 1926–1987 | FRANCE**

"He goes beyond art; he's more of a philosopher and a thinker," says Anne-Laure Riboulet, director of Paris-based Peter Freeman gallery, which has represented Filliou's estate since his death. "The artworks, for him, are mediums to express ideas and concepts." The artist was involved with the French Resistance during World War II, then moved to California, where he studied economics and worked for Coca-Cola before signing on with the U.N. to work in South Korea. He eventually landed back in Europe. It was in the late 1960s that Filliou, then close friends with George Brecht and a part of Fluxus, realized the market potential for his works, which range from found-object assemblages and multiples to action poems and large-scale installations. Filliou's pieces were less expensive than those of his peers, like Daniel Spoerri and Dieter Roth, so they found eager collectors. Following his death, however, his prices increased—they now range from €20,000 ($22,000) for smaller assemblages to €350,000 ($384,000) for a big installation, though multiples are available for as little as €1,500 ($1,600)—and his galleries have been developing a new collector base. "A younger generation of French collectors is now interested in Filliou," says Riboulet. "Many of them also collect contemporary work. For them, Filliou is the root of French Conceptual art." In addition to Freeman, Filliou is represented by Barbara Wien in Berlin and Richard Saltoun in London. A retrospective, "The Secret of Permanent Creation," opens at Antwerp's Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst on October 14. • ***THE SUN BOOK INSIDE THE MUSIC BOX AND THE GLORY AND THE LOSS*, 1973**

FROM TOP: TIMO OHLER, HANNE DARBOVEN FOUNDATION, HAMBURG, ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, AND SPRUETH MAGERS, LOS ANGELES; FLORIAN KLEINEFENN, ESTATE OF ROBERT FILLIOU, AND PETER FREEMAN, INC.

NILS KHINGER, DOCUMENTA AND MUSEUM FRIDERICIANUM; TATE MODERN; AND IN SITU FABIENNE LECLERC, PARIS

**MESCHAC GABA | B. 1961 | BENIN**

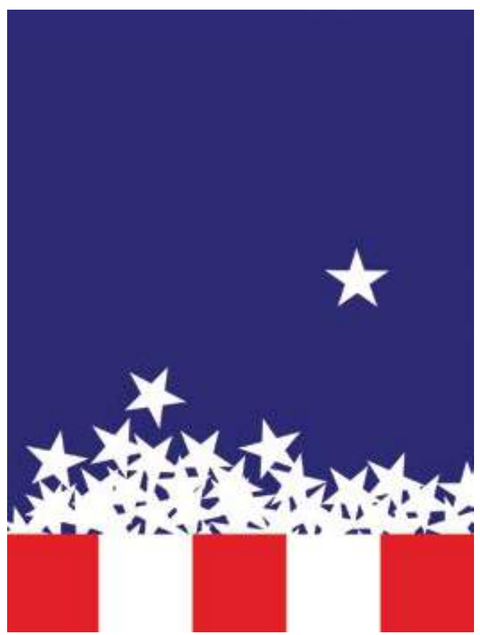
Gaba, who now lives between Benin and Rotterdam, "has a strong market that includes both collectors focused specifically on African art and an important international collector base," says New York gallerist Tanya Bonakdar, who represents the artist, along with In Situ Fabienne LeClerc in Paris and Stevenson in Cape Town. Via the construction of large-scale, immersive installations, Gaba challenges cultural, social, and political hierarchies—specifically those that subjugate Africa to the West. His 12-room *Museum of Contemporary African Art*, 1997–2002—perhaps a nod to Marcel Broodthaers, whose own fictional museum had seven iterations—grew from his realization that European museums did not have space for African artists. In 2013 Tate acquired the work, making it the "largest acquisition ever of any one artist at any one time," notes Bonakdar. Smaller works by Gaba can be had for as little as €1,000 ($1,100), while his market tops out at €200,000 ($221,000). • **DETAIL OF *MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN ART* (ARCHITECTURE ROOM), 1997–2002**

**KENDELL GEERS | B. 1968 | SOUTH AFRICA**

Channeling his experiences growing up in apartheid-era South Africa, Geers has actively renounced his Afrikaans upbringing, using his art to disrupt commonly accepted moral codes that have led to the sanctioned marginalization of segments of society deemed inferior. Often minimalist in form, his works incorporate neon and a range of materials such as truck tires, chevron tape, and shards of glass from broken beer bottles. "Although Geers's output is diverse in appearance, his use of wide-ranging references gives his work a mass appeal," says London gallerist Stephen Friedman, who has witnessed a growing collector base for the Brussels-based artist since they began to work together in 1999. "Geers has a strong following in Europe and South Africa. However, we have also placed work in important American, Asian, and Latin American collections, including the Art Institute of Chicago." Besides Stephen Friedman, Geers is represented by Yvon Lambert in Paris, Goodman Gallery in Cape Town, and others. His many solo exhibitions include "Kendell Geers 1988–2012" at the Haus der Kunst in Munich in 2013. According to Friedman, works on paper from the artist's "Age of Iron" series sell for €6,000 ($6,700), and large installations can reach €250,000 ($280,000). At auction, smaller sculptures have mostly sold in the $10,000-to-$15,000 range. • ***FOUR LETTER BRAND (FEAR)*, 2009/2014**

**HANS HAACKE | B. 1936 | GERMANY**

Synonymous with institutional critique—an offshoot of Conceptual art—Haacke's practice focuses on examining sites of exhibition. His landmark 1971 work, *Shapolsky et al. Manhattan Real Estate Holdings, a Real-Time Social System, as of May 1, 1971*, which detailed fraudulent activities of New York real estate barons, was famously censored by the Guggenheim that year. He continues to critique relationships between corporations and museums: His 2014 exhibition at Paula Cooper Gallery, where he is represented, illuminated David Koch's donation to the Metropolitan Museum. Haacke's resistance to institutional norms has led him to retain tight control over his work even after it is sold, requiring collectors to adhere to a strict contract that governs exhibition conditions and forbids its inclusion in art fairs. Despite these limitations, a growing contingent of collectors interested in Conceptual art have come to see the contract as an integral part of Haacke's work. "We've found people to be really intrigued and engaged by it," says Paula Cooper director Steve Henry. Editioned works are available starting at $50,000, while historic works, including early environmental pieces, can reach up to $500,000. Approximately 30 works have been sold at auction, most of them in the range of $8,000 to $20,000, though *Condensation Cube*, 1963–65, an acrylic cube containing a small amount of water that changes form depending on the environment, sold at Christie's London in 2013 for £46,850 ($73,000). In 1993 Haacke represented his home country of Germany at the Venice Biennale, where he won the Golden Lion for *Germania*, 1993, a piece for which he shattered the marble floors of the pavilion and hung a photograph of Hitler visiting the site in 1934. • ***STUFF HAPPENS*, 2003**



**SUSAN HILLER | B. 1940 | UNITED STATES**

"Susan doesn't like to tie anything down. When it comes to explanations of her work, she likes to leave it up to the viewer and keep it open," says Andreas Leventis of London-based Lisson Gallery. A multiplicity of interpretations characterizes the approach of many Conceptual artists, but Hiller's wariness of finite definition is rooted in her early rejection of formal anthropology and its adherence to the objectivity of academic research. What her early training in anthropology did give her was an understanding of and fascination with the extemporaneous ideas to which different groups of people cling to give their lives meaning. "For me," continues Leventis, "if there's one word that embraces all aspects of her practice, it's the word faith. And I mean faith in terms of what we believe, whether it's political, religious, scientific, spiritual, or otherworldly." That, in turn, leads to investigations about how meaning is fixed and created and how it blurs the boundary between fact and fiction. Objects constructed of pretty much anything, and installations that often experiment with technology, are inspired by cultural research or interest in specific materials—or both. "It almost drives itself, and I think she likes the idea that it's sort of out of her control, that the work takes its own form starting with the source material, whatever that might be," says Leventis. "I think she's trying not to intercede too much. It's more like curating pre-existing ideas or objects." Hiller's wall-mounted photographic pieces range between £40,000 and £50,000 ($52,000–65,000); a large, single-channel film installation would be £75,000 ($97,000); and room installations fall between £250,000 and £400,000 ($328,000–518,000). Strong institutional interest is bolstered by a small but devoted band of followers. "It's a very personal thing for the collectors," says Leventis. "Most hold on to their works and aren't really speculating." Perhaps that's because they have faith. • ***WILD TALENTS*, 1997**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KENDELL GEERS AND STEPHEN FRIEDMAN GALLERY, LONDON; SUSAN HILLER AND LISSON GALLERY, NEW YORK; HANS HAACKE, ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, AND PAULA COOPER GALLERY, NEW YORK

RIGHT: MICHAEL SHEN, TEHCHING HSIEH, AND SEAN KELLY, NEW YORK

**TEHCHING HSIEH | B. 1950 | TAIWAN**

For an artist who stopped making work in 2000—and whose output was always performative and ephemeral—Hsieh's career is still going strong. Most widely recognized for a series of five yearlong pieces, including *One Year Performance 1980–1981 (Time Clock Piece)*, for which the artist punched a time clock every hour on the hour for an entire year, Hsieh officially joined the stable at Sean Kelly Gallery in 2009. "What exists in the world are installations which are the physical representations of his five one-year performances and a limited number of posters and works on paper that reference them," explains gallerist Kelly, describing the works that are available. Most have gone to museums and important collections rather than to private individuals. Tate recently acquired an installation, and in 2013 the M+ museum in Hong Kong acquired the entire set of six installations (one for each yearlong performance and another for *Thirteen Year Plan*, a piece that ran from 1986 until 1999 when the artist did not create any work), making their holdings of Hsieh's work the largest and most significant in the world. Posters, printed in an edition of 365 for *One Year Performance 1978–1979* can be had for $7,500, while installations are priced at $350,000, and the entire set goes for "well over a million," according to Kelly. Hsieh will represent Taiwan in the 2017 Venice Biennale with an exhibition including previously unseen works. • **DOCUMENTATION OF *ONE YEAR PERFORMANCE 1980–1981, PUNCHING THE TIME CLOCK***

**HUANG YONG PING | B. 1954 | CHINA**

The Xiamen-born artist, who took up residence in Paris following his inclusion in the 1989 exhibition "Magiciens de la terre" there, has built a reputation for provocative yet playful and paradoxical works. Among these is *The History of Chinese Painting and the History of Modern Western Art Washed in the Washing Machine for Two Minutes*, 1987, essentially a box of paper pulp—the processed remains of two art history tomes. Another is *Theatre of the World*, 2008, an installation consisting of a terrarium of sorts in which insects devour one another, their combat emblematic of the seemingly unending cultural conflicts around the globe. This past summer he presented *Empires*, a 2016 Monumenta commission at Paris's Grand Palais, which featured a giant aluminum snake skeleton slithering through a "city" built of shipping containers from around the world, the installation a metaphor for nations vying for market dominance and the local economic disasters that can ensue. At auction, Huang's large sculptures and installations tend to sell for $100,000 to $500,000, while works on paper trade in the $10,000-to-$30,000 range; photographs are considerably less. This year's winner of the Wolfgang Hahn Prize, awarded by Cologne's Ludwig Museum, Huang is represented by Gladstone Gallery in New York and Kamel Mennour in Paris. • ***BEST BEFORE 1 JULY 1997 (WAITROSE WHOLE ORANGE DRINK)*, 1997**

**DOUGLAS HUEBLER | 1924–1997 | UNITED STATES**

One of the original artists to show, in 1968, with Seth Siegelaub—the curator and gallerist who defined and championed Conceptual art in New York—Huebler is closely associated with the emergence of photoconceptualism. Following his 1969 renouncing of a formal and object-based approach to artmaking, he remarked, "The world is full of objects, more or less interesting; I do not wish to add any more. I prefer, simply, to state the existence of things in terms of time and/or place." Two years later he embarked on *Variable Piece #70 (In Process)*, in which his stated aim was to "photographically document the existence of everyone alive." While much Conceptual art takes a serious and analytical stance, Huebler's work is often playful and open-ended. "There's a real sense of humor to the work; it's wry and it's absurd," says Steve Henry, director at Paula Cooper Gallery. In the secondary market, where Huebler's work is not often seen, a record was set in 2014 when *Variable Piece #70 (In Process)* sold for approximately £34,000 ($57,000) at Sotheby's London. On the primary market, works by the artist are available starting at around $40,000, while historically significant pieces can reach $200,000. Recently, Henry says, "there's been a lot of interest among younger collectors who have been drawn to Conceptual art, or who may have found their way to him through other artists, such as Mike Kelley, who were so reverential of him." • ***VARIABLE PIECE #70: 1971 (IN PROCESS) GLOBAL, CROCODILE TEARS: THE GREAT CORRECTOR (MONDRIAN)*, 1987**

> THE WORLD IS FULL OF OBJECTS, MORE OR LESS INTERESTING; I DO NOT WISH TO ADD ANY MORE. I PREFER, SIMPLY, TO STATE THE EXISTENCE OF THINGS IN TERMS OF TIME AND/OR PLACE.
>
> —DOUGLAS HUEBLER ON HIS REJECTION OF AN OBJECT-BASED APPROACH TO ART

FROM TOP: EPW STUDIO, ESTATE OF DOUGLAS HUEBLER, ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK, AND PAULA COOPER GALLERY; CHRISTIE'S





**MARY KELLY | B. 1941 | UNITED STATES**

The godmother of feminist art, Kelly is known for her provocative films and large-scale narrative installations that explore notions of sexuality, work, power, and politics by tapping into the more visceral aspects of daily life. In 1976, she outraged gallerygoers in London with a presentation of *Post-Partum Document*, 1973–79, then a work in progress that included some of her son's soiled diapers, which she found suitable for framing. This past spring, a 1975 version of that piece, which included her son's scribblings atop her notes, went on view at Tate Britain in "Conceptual Art in Britain: 1964–1979." "Kelly is one of the most important female Conceptual artists of our time," says L.A. gallerist Susanne Vielmetter, who represents the artist along with New York–based Mitchell-Innes & Nash, and Pippy Houldsworth Gallery of London. "Despite the fact that her work has been placed in major institutions such as the Kunsthaus Zurich, the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, and Tate Britain and Tate Modern in London, private collectors have only recently begun to discover her." For now, Vielmetter adds, "considering Kelly's art historical importance, her work remains reasonably priced, although there is not a lot of available inventory." While works rarely come up for auction, Vielmetter has several freestanding pieces and installations on offer in the $150,000-to-$300,000 range; framed images printed on compressed washing machine lint sell for $25,000 to $250,000. According to Pippy Houldsworth, the Centre Pompidou Foundation acquired a major installation, *Corpus, Preliminary Artwork*, 1984, for $250,000 at Frieze New York in May; a few other works, she says, are available in the $100,000-to-$500,000 range. • **INSTALLATION VIEW OF *GLORIA PATRI*, 2016**

**JOHN AUBREY CLARENDON LATHAM | 1921–2006 | ZAMBIA**

It is not often that one extols the virtues of book burning, but the act of literary desecration—in performance leading to the creation of event-based mixed-media works—has been an important part of Latham's practice. The British artist has spray-painted, sawed, and even chewed up tomes—most famously Clement Greenberg's seminal volume *Art and Culture*, while he was teaching at St. Martin's School of Art—putting the results to use as fodder for collage and building materials. His "Skoob" works (books spelled backward) have been collected by Tate Britain and Modern Art Oxford. And it is this "high-profile institutional recognition that has spurred a steady interest in Latham's work among private collectors—particularly in Asia and the U.S.," says Andreas Leventis, associate director of London-based Lisson Gallery, which represents the artist's estate. When his works do come on the block—only 30 have appeared to date—they tend to trade in the $2,000-to-$30,000 range, depending on size; a suite of sales at Christie's and Sotheby's topped out at $70,000 in London and New York in 2007, the year after his death. According to Leventis, early, important, and large-scale Latham works range in price from £100,000 to £400,000 ($131,000–525,000). Among these are *Four Phases of the Sun*, 1963, *Untitled (Roller Painting)*, 1964, and *They're All There*, 1988, all available from the gallery. • ***FOUR PHASES OF THE SUN*, 1963**

FROM TOP: MARY KELLY AND SUSANNE VIELMETTER LOS ANGELES PROJECTS; THE JOHN LATHAM FOUNDATION AND LISSON GALLERY, LONDON

**LEE LOZANO | 1930–1999 | UNITED STATES**

"The attention recently lavished on her work exemplifies the irony that there is nothing that sells better than the principled rejection of money, status, and career," wrote historian and critic Katy Siegel in 2008 of the near-immediate market success of Lozano's work after her estate was picked up by Hauser & Wirth in 2005. The artist's mythic status has much to do with her rejection of painting followed by a withdrawal from the world, through a series of life-as-art pieces including the 1971 *Decide to Boycott Women* and the 1999 *Dropout Piece*, leading ultimately to her burial in an unmarked Texas grave. Unsurprisingly, she left "a relatively small body of work," says Hauser & Wirth partner Marc Payot. Yet, he adds, "the estate still has some examples from all periods, and there are things we are able to get from private collectors when they are willing to part with them." Gallery exhibitions, therefore, generally consist of loaned works with just a few available for purchase, with prices ranging from $50,000 to $1.5 million. • ***NO TITLE (I GOT MY BLOW JOB THRU THE N.Y. TIMES)*, 1962**

**LEA LUBLIN | 1929–1999 | BELARUS**

Lublin came into her own as a performing artist in the mid to late 1960s, on the edge of a major resurgence in feminist thought and activism in the West. Her work was unapologetically informed by her gender and societal expectations and prejudices relating to it, particularly in regard to ideas of domesticity, language, and art history. "Lublin characterized her work as an attempt to challenge the cultural conditioning of vision and perception, exposing the power implicit in systems of representation," says Sandra Moros of Valencia's Espaivisor gallery, which has represented the artist's estate since 2012. Although Lublin was an early pioneer of feminist performance art, along with contemporaries such as Lygia Clark, Yoko Ono, and Hannah Wilke, her body of work remained relatively unexplored outside of France, where she spent most of her adult life. Lublin emigrated with her family to Buenos Aires in the early 1930s, where she grew up and attended art school before moving to Paris to pursue a more experimental, performance-based career. In 1968, she made waves when she ensconced herself daily at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris to care for her infant son in a piece titled *Mon fils*. The performance shocked viewers with its public display of motherhood and private, domestic acts, such as changing a diaper or feeding a child. Photographs of the performance were exhibited as part of the artist's first retrospective, at Munich's Lenbachhaus in the summer of 2015. Priced from $13,000 to $221,000, a diverse array of work is available, from a silver gelatin print to a video of one of Lublin's performances. • ***INTERROGATIONS SUR L'ART*, 1977**

**MARISA MERZ | B. 1926 | ITALY**

After almost 50 years in the shadows, quietly producing her work while fellow Arte Povera artists enjoyed the spotlight, Merz is finally beginning to receive her due. The only female artist associated with the Italian group, and the widow of Arte Povera member Mario Merz, she has created works on paper, installations, and the large-scale sculptural pieces for which the group is most widely recognized—though her sculptures are in materials such as thin sheets of aluminum, wax paper, clay, and copper wire, creating an ephemeral and delicate quality that distinguishes her work from that of her male contemporaries. "She adds a light touch to everything she does," says Simone Battisti, director at Gladstone Gallery of New York, which represents the artist along with Galleria Monica de Cardenas in Milan, among others. "She's always been a part of the conversation, since she started exhibiting in the 1960s in Turin, but she was reluctant to release interviews or be recorded. She's very much an unreachable person, in a way." Her relative anonymity has begun to change, however, particularly after the artist, who turned 90 this year, was awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the 2013 Venice Biennale. Several exhibitions focused on Merz are in the planning stage, including the first major U.S. retrospective of her work, opening at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in January 2017. Battisti anticipates that this will spur more international interest in her work, which has had a predominantly European collector base in the past. With the artist's auction record established in 2014 at Christie's London, where a small-scale sculpture in lead and wax sold for £207,000 ($340,000), and historical works by the artist still readily available, collectors will be competing with major institutions keen to obtain a piece by this fundamental Arte Povera artist. • ***UNTITLED*, UNDATED**

FROM TOP: THE ESTATE OF LEE LOZANO AND HAUSER & WIRTH, NEW YORK; LEA LUBIN; DAVID REGEN, MARISA MERZ AND GLADSTONE GALLERY, NEW YORK AND BRUSSELS.
OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: ETIENNE FROSSARD, ELIZABETH DEE GALLERY, NEW YORK, AND THE ADRIAN PIPER RESEARCH ARCHIVE FOUNDATION BERLIN; IRINA NAKHOVA AND LISSON GALLERY, LONDON

**IRINA NAKHOVA | B. 1955 | RUSSIA**

An early member of the Moscow Conceptual School, Nakhova—who works in painting, sculpture, and installation—was awarded the prestigious Kandinsky Prize in 2013 and was the first woman to represent Russia at the Venice Biennale, in 2015. Pavilion curator Margarita Tupitsyn wrote in the catalogue for the exhibition that Nakhova's room was "a postmodern (Jamesonian) hybrid of color-form and color-text in which one can locate the traces and distortions of society as a whole." The artist won early recognition for her *Rooms* project, 1983–87, the first immersive installation in Russia, which was shown in her apartment. Her work was then in the Sotheby's groundbreaking 1988 sale of Russian avant-garde and contemporary art in Moscow, where a 1978 painting of Nakhova's sold for just over $8,000. Since then her market has grown considerably, with an auction record of (£39,000) $79,000 set in 2008 at Sotheby's London for *Triptych*, a painting from 1983, and primary-market sales reaching $100,000. Nakhova is currently included in "Thinking Pictures: Moscow Conceptual Art in the Dodge Collection," on view through December at the Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She also has a solo exhibition at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow opening in November, and a historical survey of her work is on view at Nailya Alexander Gallery in New York from September 6 through 30. • **VENICE BIENNALE, *THE GREEN PAVILION*, 2015**

**ADRIAN PIPER | B. 1948 | UNITED STATES**

Although renowned for her identity politics artwork—much of it performance and video pieces of the 1970s and '80s—Piper has never lost sight of her academic roots in philosophy, in which she earned a doctorate from Harvard University in 1981. She was tenured as the first female African-American professor of philosophy by Wellesley College in 1990 but lost her position in 2008 when she was listed by the American TSA as a "suspicious traveler" while on sabbatical in Berlin and refused to return to the United States so labeled. She subsequently established the Adrian Piper Research Archive as a Berlin resident. The irony in this turn of events is profound, considering the multiple levels on which Piper's art investigates racism, delving into the meaning of otherness. For this philosopher, all roads appear to point toward truth, as exemplified by the *Probable Trust Registry: The Rules of the Game #1–3*, 2013. She won the Golden Lion at the 2015 Venice Biennale for the piece, which asks viewers to sign contracts committing themselves to total honesty in all personal interactions. Piper's take on the market is similarly rarefied: Her 1975 essay "A Proposal for Pricing Works of Art" posits fixing art prices as a Conceptual practice in and of itself, and she suggests that the financial value of an artwork should be equal to the cost of its production. "She had her academic career in philosophy to be independent of the art market; this is why she's enjoyed an art career free from market considerations," says Elizabeth Dee, whose New York gallery works with Piper's foundation to make placements. "Most of the key periods of Piper's work have been collected, since the 1980s, by institutions," she says. "Museum sales are still a focus and the bulk of the market buyers." The gallery, however, is also focused on Piper's secondary market, "acquiring and reselling works, buying for our stock as we can," says Dee. The artist's range, from framed two-dimensional works to installations, is currently $40,000 to $750,000, with most pieces falling between $100,000 and $300,000. "Owning Piper is like owning a piece of art history," says Dee. Collectors are sure to feel that weight when a career survey opens at MOMA in 2018. • ***THE PROBABLE TRUST REGISTRY: THE RULES OF THE GAME #1-3*, 2013**

"SHE HAD HER ACADEMIC CAREER IN PHILOSOPHY TO BE INDEPENDENT OF THE ART MARKET; THIS IS WHY SHE'S ENJOYED AN ART CAREER FREE FROM MARKET CONSIDERATIONS."

—GALLERIST ELIZABETH DEE ON ADRIAN PIPER

**WALID RAAD | B. 1967 | LEBANON**

Raad's early life was shaped in large part by the civil war that broke out in Lebanon in 1975 and lasted through 1990. Now based in New York City, the artist uses photography, video, sculpture, and performance to channel his ideas of history, violence, and memory, with particular attention to their functions in the Middle East. "Appropriating and subverting these forms from within," says Anthony Allen, associate director of Paula Cooper Gallery, "Raad has developed a body of work that destabilizes the boundary between fact and fiction and questions how historical—or any ostensibly truth-telling—discourse is produced." From 1989 to 2004, Raad produced work through the Atlas Group, a collective of which he was the sole member. Its mission was "to research and document the contemporary history of Lebanon," which it did by creating fictitious diaries and films made by mixing found and invented footage. In recent years, Raad has continued his political activism via the Gulf Labor Artist Coalition, a group he founded to help expose labor abuses taking place on Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island, where several art museums are under construction. "Collector interest for Raad's work has been enthusiastic," says Allen, "especially as a result of recent exhibitions at the Louvre and Documenta (13), as well as the fall 2015 MOMA retrospective, all of which introduced his work to a larger audience." Single photographs by Raad sell in the range of $30,000 to $60,000, while wall reliefs are priced between $50,000 and $100,000, and the largest sculptural installations go for $200,000 or more. In addition to Paula Cooper Gallery, Raad is represented by Sfeir-Semler Gallery in Beirut. • **INSTALLATION VIEW OF "WALID RAAD" AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, OCTOBER 12, 2015–JANUARY 31, 2016**

**MARTHA ROSLER | B. 1943 | UNITED STATES**

In a career spanning more than 40 years, Rosler has worked in video, photography, performance, text, and collage to explore issues ranging from female identity in the domestic sphere to mass surveillance and war. Her art has earned accolades within both Conceptual and feminist art circles, and her collector base is an "incredibly diverse and interesting group of individuals," according to Lucy Mitchell-Innes, cofounder of New York's Mitchell-Innes & Nash, which represents the artist, as do Galleria Raffaella Cortese in Milan and Galerie Nagel Draxler in Berlin. "She has extremely devoted collectors around the globe who tend to be politically minded." Though Rosler works across media, most pieces that have found their way to the secondary market are photographs, the most popular being the photo collages from her two acclaimed series, "House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home" and "Body Beautiful, or Beauty Knows No Pain," in which she juxtaposes pictures of pinups, female-focused ads, wartime images, and domestic scenes culled from magazines. Prices for individual works range from roughly $7,000 to $14,000, and a 1967 edition of all 10 images in "House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home" hit $156,000 at Christie's New York in 2006. Rosler's works are in the collections of MOMA, the Metropolitan Museum, and the Whitney, and she has had solo exhibitions in nearly a dozen countries in the past decade at institutions including MOMA, the Stedelijk, and the Dia Art Foundation. And her activity doesn't seem to be slowing. This past June, Rosler restaged one section of "If You Lived Here…," her landmark three-exhibition cycle that was first seen at the Dia Art Foundation in 1989. That section, "If You Can't Afford to Live Here, Mo-o-ove!!," opened at Mitchell-Innes & Nash to critical acclaim. In 2010 she received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Guggenheim, and earlier this year she won the New Foundation Seattle's inaugural 100K Prize, a biennial award recognizing the achievements of a female artist based in the United States. "Given that this is an election year, people are thinking more politically than they might in other years, and Martha's work has always provided a platform of exchange for political discussions," notes Mitchell-Innes. • ***PLAYBOY (ON VIEW)*, FROM THE "HOUSE BEAUTIFUL: BRINGING THE WAR HOME, NEW SERIES," 1962–72**

FROM TOP: THOMAS GRIESEL AND THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, NEW YORK; MARTHA ROSLER AND MITCHELL-INNES & NASH, NEW YORK



**JIRO TAKAMATSU | 1936–1998 | JAPAN**

"It's striking how little has been written or is known in the West about these huge figures in Japan, artists who made work at the same time or even before parallel movements elsewhere in the world," says Fergus McCaffrey, whose New York venue will mount a Takamatsu show in November. In addition to working in plastic and transparent media in the 1960s and '70s, this little-known great staged public interventions focused on the urban condition with the collective Hi Red Center, attempting to blur the boundary between art and life in a manner that brings to mind Joseph Beuys. Takamatsu's best-known solo works include those from the "Shadow Paintings" series, made between 1964 and 1998, which investigate truth in painting through lack of perspective and optical illusion; *Slack of Net*, 1968–69, a grid in which the structural string is not pulled taut; and 1971's *Oneness of Concrete*, a pulverized Minimalist cube. "Takamatsu is almost anti the Western Minimalist ideal of truth to materials," says McCaffrey. "He's saying, 'Look at the games I can play with this or look at the way I can attack the pillars of Minimalism and Postminimalism and create something new.' " The artist's photographic work predates Pictures Generation investigations into observation, perception, and the authenticity of reproduction. McCaffrey, along with Yumiko Chiba in Tokyo and Stephen Friedman in London, has been developing Takamatsu's market over the past decade and says it's ripe for reappraisal. Prices currently range between $40,000 and $750,000. "Compare an incredibly important Takamatsu shadow painting from the 1960s to a Yayoi Kusama or Robert Ryman from the same period," says the dealer. "The artists have parity with regard to their importance in art history, so you gauge the value." Takamatsu eschewed industrial process, so only a limited number of hand-wrought, unique pieces exist. According to McCaffrey, Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles director Philippe Vergne "once described Takamatsu as being like a virus that enters your collection that you just watch to see how it kind of corrupts and changes things." • ***THE POLE OF WAVE*, 1969**

FROM LEFT: JIRO TAKAMATSU AND FERGUS MCCAFFREY, NEW YORK; MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES AND RONALD FELDMAN FINE ARTS

> "HE'S SAYING 'LOOK AT THE GAMES I CAN PLAY WITH THIS OR LOOK AT THE WAY I CAN ATTACK THE PILLARS OF MINIMALISM AND POST-MINIMALISM AND CREATE SOMETHING NEW.'"
>
> —GALLERIST FERGUS MCCAFFREY ON JIRO TAKAMATSU

**MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES | B. 1939 | UNITED STATES**

Simultaneously addressing institutional critique and feminist perspectives in art, Ukeles is best known for her landmark performances dealing with what she has termed "Maintenance Art." Throughout the 1970s she performed a series of actions at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, where she undertook maintenance work for the museum, such as washing the entryways and cleaning glass vitrines. Recontextualizing the museum in terms of labor relations and exposing the institution's reliance on a largely invisible workforce, Ukeles also drew parallels between these tasks and the domestic duties often relegated to women. Her work can be seen through several lenses, but her approach is ultimately "rooted in a deep humanism," says Marco Nocella of New York's Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, who places her work in the vein of Joseph Beuys. Because she was a pioneer in the realm of social practice, institutional interest in Ukeles's work is significant. She has exhibited widely, including at the Whitney Museum, Queens Museum, MOCA Los Angeles, Brooklyn Museum, and Haus der Kunst in Munich. Discerning collectors and curators tend to acquire her work directly from the gallery rather than in the secondary market. Editioned works, largely in the form of photographic documentation, start at $20,000, while her manifesto—the foundation for her early performances—is priced at $175,000, and her sculptures reach beyond that. Ukeles is the official artist in residence at the New York City Department of Sanitation, an unsalaried position she has held since the 1970s. • ***TOUCH SANITATION PERFORMANCE: SWEEP 7, STATEN ISLAND, 6:00 A.M. ROLL CALL*, 1979–80 CITYWIDE PERFORMANCE WITH 8,500 NYC SANITATION WORKERS** ⊞