

# Slow motion and “less is more”



## Q&A with Danish art collector Peter Ibsen

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Photos: Courtesy of Peter Ibsen - Copenhagen Contemporary

A new face will be joining this summer’s crowd of Europe’s art fairs – [CODE](#), which is slated to take place in Copenhagen from 26 to 28 August. Among the list of participating European and American galleries, a noticeably large number are from Denmark: Last Resort, LES GENS HEUREUX, KANT, Gether Contemporary, Hans Alf Gallery, Galleri Jacob Bjørn, Charlotte Fogh Gallery, and Bianca D’Alessandro. One of the fair’s highlights promises to be the project “Flat Fix”, by Brooklyn artists Ryan E. Steadman and Ryan Wallace, who explore the current state of painting and challenge the notion that it is a dated art form. As everyone knows, this is a leading topic in the art world right now, and Arterritory.com plans on covering it in depth.

To read some opinions on the future of painting as a medium, see the following interviews in our conversation archive:

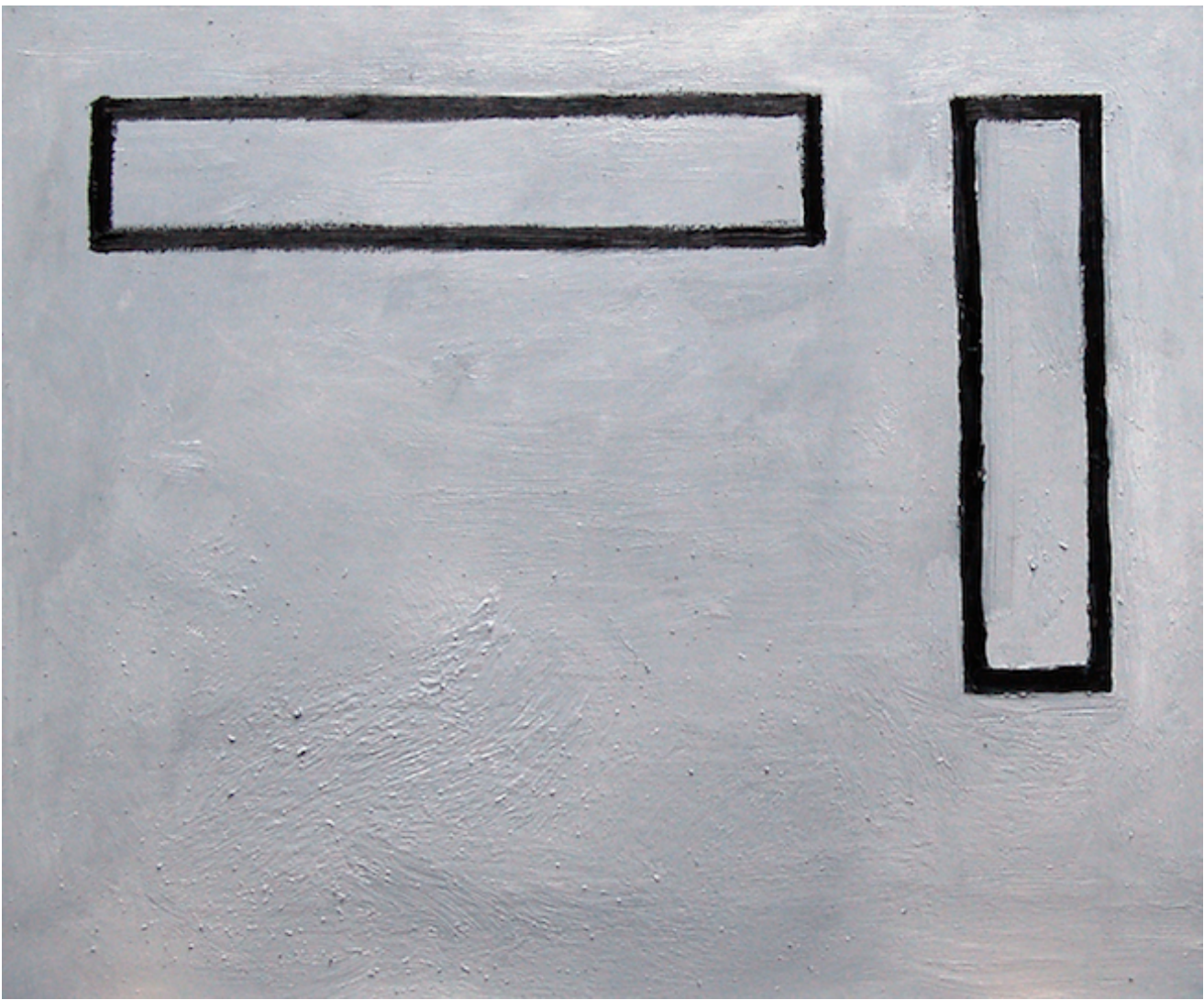
- [An interview with French collector Pierre Pradié](#)
- [An interview with psychotherapist and art collector Diethard Leopold, son of the collector Rudolf Leopold](#)
- [An interview with Belgian painter Luc Tuymans](#)

One of the co-curators of CODE is Peter Ibsen, an collector of contemporary Danish art, and an ardent believer in the immortality of painting. When asked what he would say to someone who asserts that painting is dead, Ibsen retorts: “Maybe they should look at little bit closer, visit some more galleries in real life, and accept that painting might never be dead. As long as there are painters and artists, painting will never be dead.”



Stefan Müller

Peter Ibsen began to collect art in 1995, when a painting in the window of an art gallery caught his attention. Although the painting in question was already sold, Ibsen found out who the artist was, and as simply as that, he has been intimately linked with art ever since. In his first decade of collecting, Ibsen focused on colorful figurative painting. This lasted until he came upon the masterful black and white works of the German minimalist painter, Gregor Hildebrandt. Ibsen's conversion was so strong that he sold almost all of his color paintings, and now his collection is mainly based on abstract, minimalist works, with most everything done in shades of black, white and gray. The main collection contains works by Danish artist Sergej Jensen, and the German artists Gregor Hildebrandt, André Butzer and Stefan Müller. Along with art collecting, Ibsen also spends a lot of time getting to know the artists whose work he admires – through interviews; he then shares these Q&As on his blog, [Copenhagen Contemporary](#), and on his [Instagram account](#), the latter having been rated by *Larry's List*, the leading database of art collectors, as one of the top 20 collector Instagrams to follow.



André Butzer

**In your opinion, what is it that makes people become passionate collectors?**

An unstoppable, curious and dedicated focus, and the urge to try to understand artists, art, and this fantastic parallel universe that is the art world.

And also, truly wanting to support artists in their work is a common trait among passionate collectors. Not just buying the artworks, but buying the vision and the future of the artist.

Another trait might be accepting that one would rather have a smaller house and a smaller car, but really great art on the walls.



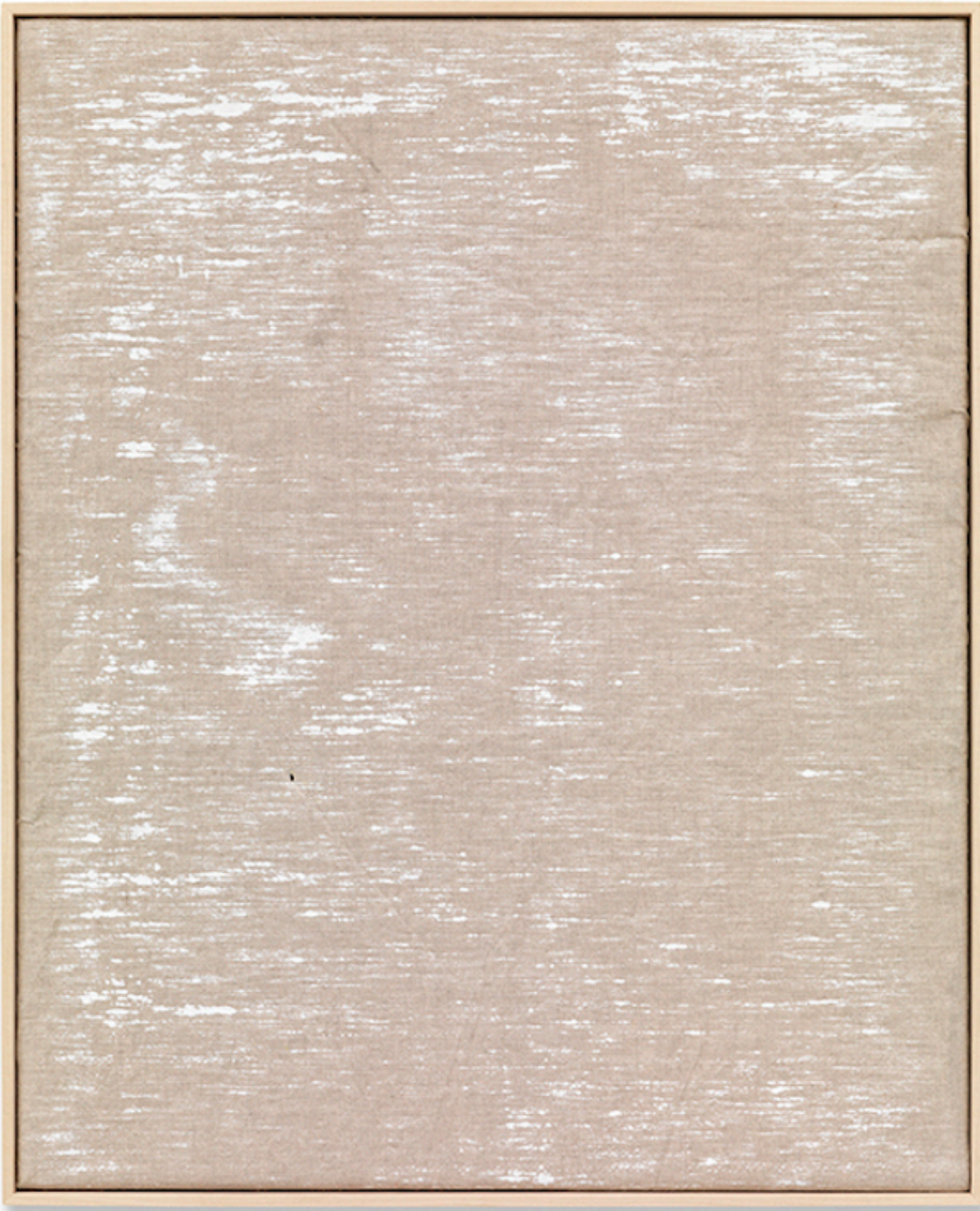
Gregor Hildebrandt

**When you started your collection, you focused on figurative works, but then you began to collect much more abstract, minimalist and monochrome works. What was the turning point that made you change your collecting approach?**

During a group show, I was provoked by a very black and minimal work by Gregor Hildebrandt. It irritated me, and I really did not like it or understand what it was. I kept on coming back to that work; it pulled me in, and I ended up buying it. From then on, my collection and my way of collecting changed. Maybe I was ready for a change without knowing it. I more or less sold off all of the colorful works and started a new path, a new approach. It was not on purpose, but just something that happened; and it has been a fantastic change with great impact.

**In your opinion, what makes something a masterpiece?**

For me, personally, it would be a work that you never fully understand, and never get tired of looking at. A work that keeps on poking you in the eye, and demands your full attention. A work that keeps asking of you, and makes you question it.



Sergej Jensen

**What is your latest discovery?**

My latest discovery might actually be a re-discovery: the artist Stefan Müller. He was born in 1971, in Frankfurt, and studied at Städelschule under the great professor Thomas Bayrle, together with Sergej Jensen (Müller grew up with Jensen, and together they created art and music from the age of 14). Stefan's works are amazing, and you can still manage to buy great pieces that he created between 2006 and 2012. He is, to me, one of the more interesting artists that I will continue to focus on. He also fits perfectly into my collection, which already has works by Sergej Jensen, Andre Butzer, and Gregor Hildebrandt.



Max Frintrop

**If your collection were a journey, how would you describe it?**

Wooww... That's a tough one...

The first ten years might be a fast road trip across the USA, with fireworks, candyfloss and cold beers. Lots of colors, stopping by Disneyland, and soaking in everything; shooting left and right with no real purpose.

The next 10 years: finally ending up at a silent yoga retreat in Bali, with slow motion and "less is more".