

whitewall



Inside the Collection: Patrick Seguin on Living With Art and the Poetry of Design

A lifelong champion of modern design, Patrick Seguin reflects on collecting as both passion and philosophy—where living with art becomes an art in itself.

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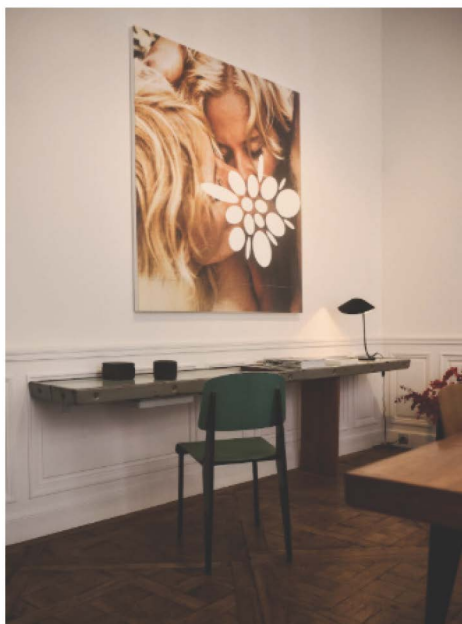
For more than three decades, ***Patrick Seguin*** has shaped the way the world understands 20th-century design and its dialogue with contemporary art. What began with a serendipitous discovery at Paris's Saint-Ouen flea market in the late 1980s—when he and his wife, Laurence, encountered ***Jean Prouvé's*** humble yet profoundly architectural furniture—evolved into a lifelong pursuit of collecting, preserving, and sharing modern masterpieces. In 1989, they founded ***Galerie Patrick Seguin***, now a cornerstone of the international design landscape, known for its meticulous scholarship and the reintroduction of **Prouvé, Perriand, and Royère** to new generations of collectors and institutions.

From those early finds grew a ***collection*** that reflects both personal conviction and curatorial rigor—a living conversation between design and contemporary art, where Prouvé sits alongside **Warhol, Basquiat, Calder, Prince, Grotjahn, and Stiegel**. For Seguin, being a gallerist and a collector are inseparable callings, each guided by curiosity, instinct, and an abiding belief that art and design are meant to be lived with, not merely displayed. As he reflects on decades of discovery, dialogue, and friendship, ***Seguin*** remains devoted to what first moved him: the simple, transformative poetry of form, function, and feeling.

Patrick Seguin on the Beginnings of a Life in Design



Courtesy of Patrick Seguin. Photography by Victor Jacques.



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WHITEWALL: Was art and design something you grew up around?

PATRICK SEGUIN: Not really. I grew up in a simple environment; art came into my life later, around the age of 20. But once it did, it completely took over. My passion for collecting began even before I opened the gallery in 1989 – that enthusiasm naturally guided my path toward becoming a gallerist.

WW: What was the first piece in the collection?

PS: Laurence and I discovered Jean Prouvé in the late 1980s, when we bought a Standard Chair and a Compass Table at the Saint-Ouen flea market. I remember being immediately struck by their simplicity and ascetism – functional yet poetic. Those pieces changed everything for us. They became the starting point of both the gallery’s identity and our personal collection.

“Art came into my life later, around the age of 20. But once it did, it completely took over,”

-Patrick Seguin

WW: How did your collection grow from there?

PS: At that time, Prouvé’s work was not yet considered collectible, but we were fascinated by his vision. In 1992, we bought hundreds of his chairs and tables from the Cité Internationale Universitaire in Paris – but at the time, there were almost no collectors, and we kept this stock for a long time. That was when I understood the importance of preserving these works and their history. Over the years, our collection naturally expanded to include not only Prouvé’s furniture and architecture, but also contemporary art by Warhol, Basquiat, Calder, Ed Ruscha, Richard Prince, Mark Grotjahn, Rudolf Stingel, and Jonas Wood. It has become a living dialogue between art, architecture, and design.

WW: Has it been important for you to connect with the artists and designers whose work you collect?

PS: Very much so. Many of the artists we collect are also friends – Richard Prince, Mark Grotjahn, Rudolf Stingel, Jonas Wood, and Damien Hirst. These relationships bring an additional dimension to the works. Prouvé himself was close to artists such as Calder and Léger, and that spirit of dialogue continues to inspire us.

Where Collecting and Curating Become One Practice at Galerie Patrick Seguin



'Saint Laurent-Charlotte Perriand,' 2025. Photography by Galerie Patrick Seguin. Courtesy of Galerie Patrick Seguin

WW: How has your role as a gallerist impacted your collection?

PS: Being a gallerist and a collector are, for me, inseparable. The gallery and our home form part of the same story; they reflect the same passion and discipline. My professional life informs how I collect, and collecting, in turn, deepens my curatorial eye. Both are guided by dialogue, discovery, and conviction.

WW: How has your collection impacted your approach as a gallerist?

PS: Living with pieces every day changes the way you see them – their scale, their energy, and the synergy that exists between them. That daily experience sharpens how I present and contextualize works in the gallery. It's an ongoing exchange.

WW: Are there artists whose work you collect in-depth?

PS: Jean Prouvé remains the cornerstone, of course, but also Charlotte Perriand and Jean Royère. We also collect in depth the work of contemporary artists such as Basquiat, Warhol, Mark Grotjahn, Richard Prince, Rudolf Stingel and Steven Shearer – artists we have followed for many years and with whom we share a genuine connection.

WW: Are there pieces you like to see every day – to wake up to? To work near?

PS: Warhol's portrait of Tina Freeman and Richard Prince's Nurse, both of which take pride of place in our living room, have been with us for over twenty-five years. And a magnificent Central table (table Trapeze) by Jean Prouvé, which is a highlight.

WW: Do you have a favorite room in your home?

PS: My office. It's my sanctuary – filled with books, photographs, drawings, and small objects that trace our story. It's a distillation of our life. Laurence prefers her office, where she works surrounded by a Bruce Nauman painting and a Jeanneret desk – her own quiet world.

WW: Do you work with an advisor?

PS: No. I rely on instinct, experience, and relationships built over the years.

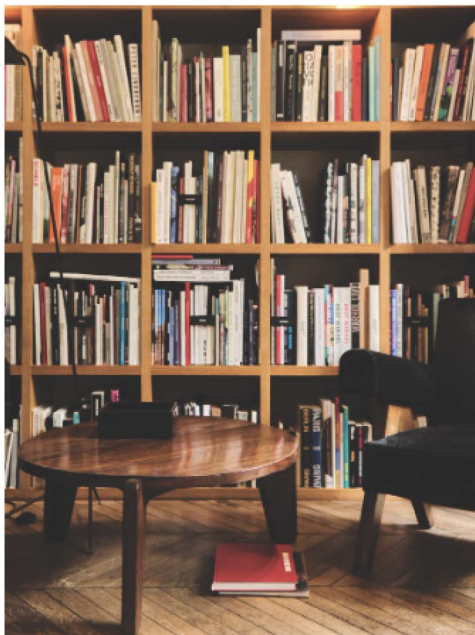
WW: How do you prefer to acquire works? From galleries, fairs, or at auction?

PS: All of them, depending on the piece. For design, I rely on my own trusted network; for art, often through galleries or directly from the artists I know. I travel frequently, and I enjoy the energy of fairs, which have become an essential meeting point. But in the end, I follow emotion rather than context.

WW: Is there a piece that feels like the one that got away?

PS: Yes, a painting by Christopher Wool. I've always wanted one, and I still do.

Living With Art as a Daily Philosophy



Courtesy of Patrick Seguin. Photography by Victor Jacques.



Courtesy of Patrick Seguin. Photography by Victor Jacques.

WW: Can you share a recent acquisition you're excited about?

PS: We recently rehung the dining room with a large painting by Richard Prince, and added a self-portrait by Rudolf Stingel and an X Painting by Wade Guyton. We also bought a work by Akeem Smith, a young artist represented by our daughter, Pauline, in her gallery (Heidi Gallery) in Berlin. That makes it even more meaningful.

WW: What is your advice for aspiring collectors, just getting started?

PS: Be curious. Read, visit exhibitions, learn, and trust your instincts. Start with books, see as many exhibitions as you can. Passion and knowledge are what will guide your eye.

“It’s not about display, it’s about living with what you love,”

-Patrick Seguin

WW: Who is the artist you’re most excited about right now?

PS: Jean Prouvé!

WW: How has living at home with art impacted your life?

PS: It has shaped our everyday rhythm completely. Art is part of our life; we move things, change arrangements, and live among them. It’s not about display, it’s about living with what you love. There is a quote by Robert Filliou that sums up why Laurence and I have dedicated our lives to collecting. He said: ‘Art is what makes life more interesting than art.’ That’s our philosophy.



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