

What's new, Simon de Pury ? Interview by Nadine Dinter

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Nadine Dinter October 10, 2025



I met **Simon de Pury** in the course of my work for the Helmut Newton Foundation. Simon is one of the most brilliant minds in the international art scene, with a remarkable career as an auctioneer, curator and gallerist. Yet his own creative work – his photography – warrants attention in its own right. I was thrilled to delve into this side of his practice and talk about his inspiration, what drives him, and more. Enjoy the read!

Nadine Dinter: For the first time, you are showing your own photographic work in London – how exciting! How did your journey as a photographer begin? Was there a moment that made you take up the camera more seriously?

Simon de Pury: My father gave me my first camera. I was initially doing mostly black and white photographs of rock formations that I would see on family hikes in the Swiss mountains. As a grown up, I always used photography as a means to record something that visually intrigued me. We are all confronted with the inexorable passing of time and photography offers us the illusion of suspended time.

Your current show *Blow Up* takes viewers to locations such as Miami, Aspen, and Los Angeles. Of all the places you've photographed, which city or landscape has inspired you the most?

SdP: The second I see something that catches my attention on my travels around the world, I take a photograph. This drives whoever is with me totally crazy as I stop every two to three minutes. Tokyo is possibly the city I find most inspiring, but even in Monaco, where I live, I constantly discover new fascinating angles.

Although your camera has traveled widely, your images feel strikingly focused – from the intricate detail of *Barbara's Carpet* to the pared-back mood of *Battement d'Ailes au Clair de la Lune*. What draws your eye to these moments?

SdP: When I first visited Barbara Becker's house in Miami Beach I was completely mesmerized by the funky interior that Lenny Kravitz had created for her. Before she was able to finish a sentence in her dining room, I was crawling on the floor to take a close up picture of her amazing pink carpet.

The title *Blow Up* immediately recalls Antonioni's classic film. Was that reference deliberate, or does the phrase carry another meaning for you?

SdP: The title is deliberately taken from one of my all-time favorite movies, Antonioni's masterpiece *Blow Up*. In it, David Hemmings plays a photographer that is loosely based on David Bailey. Looking at a photograph I took at night in a London park reminded me of the gorgeous park scenes in the film. Since some of my images are details that are blown up, the title felt appropriate.

Born in Basel, you have lived a cosmopolitan life and now call London home. Did presenting your own photographs here feel different compared to your earlier shows in Berlin, Geneva, Paris, or Moscow?

SdP: After having lived for many years in London, I moved to Monaco seven years ago. It means a lot to me that Leica, whose name cannot be disassociated from the finest in the history of photography, offered me the chance to show my work in their London gallery. I am an urban guy and love London as well as Berlin, Paris, Moscow, and Geneva, where I exhibited before, and Monaco, which for me is like a mini Hong Kong.

How do your many years as a curator and art advisor shape the way you select and present your own work?

SdP: My professional life forces me to be very rigorous in my aesthetic choices and to be a strict editor. It can be more difficult to have that necessary distance to your own work. In this case I had the privilege to be helped by Lou Proud, the wonderful Director of the Leica Gallery.

What is currently inspiring you – in art, photography, or life more broadly?

SdP: Curiosity is the engine that propels me, and nothing excites me more than discovering what is happening daily in the worlds of art, design, photography, architecture, cinema, music, fashion, gastronomy, and sport. Same thing in life. While we all know how our terrestrial journey ends, I am always convinced that the best is yet to come. The minute you stop dreaming it's game over!

What's next for you – are there new themes, places, or projects on the horizon?

SdP: Instagram is a wonderful tool that allows you to share what excites you. I love doing portraits of artists in front of their works. Equally I like to share impressions of the many wonderful places my travels take me to.

What advice would you give to younger photographers just starting out?

SdP: Follow your creative urges. You automatically will develop your personal artistic handwriting!

For more information, check out the artist's IG account @simondepury

Current exhibition:

Simon de Pury – Blow Up

Through 30 October 2025, Leica Gallery, London