

P R I V A T E C O L L E C T O R P R O F I L E

RENE J FUSCO

New York City · Collecting Since 2005 · Art & NFT Collector

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C O L L E C T O R A B S T R A C T

Rene J Fusco is a private collector of international standing, based in Manhattan's Upper East Side, whose acquisition practice spans twenty years and encompasses more than 140 works across painting, sculpture, photography, video art, generative digital art, and blockchain-native NFTs. With a collection independently appraised in excess of \$7.2 million and an annual acquisition budget of \$600,000–\$900,000, Mr. Fusco operates where institutional-grade discernment meets forward-thinking cultural patronage.

Educated at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia Business School, Mr. Fusco built his primary career in real estate development and private equity before founding Fusco Capital Group in 2005 ; a family office managing a diversified portfolio exceeding \$120 million. His entry into serious collecting commenced that same year, a deliberate act of cultural intention as much as financial strategy. Over the two decades that followed, he has assembled a collection distinguished not by adherence to market consensus, but by its consistent identification of artists whose contribution precedes their valuation.

His collecting philosophy is grounded in rigorous aesthetic and intellectual criteria, with a particular focus on Black American and African diaspora artists, women working in contemporary media, and digital-native creators whose careers have developed entirely outside the traditional gallery system. He collects across all media without hierarchy: the significance of a work is determined by its capacity to compel, provoke, and endure not by the substrate on which it resides. His engagement with blockchain-native NFTs since 2021 was not speculative but the culmination of a seven-year inquiry into permanent, verifiable digital ownership; a portfolio now valued at approximately \$1,850,000.

Since 2005, Mr. Fusco has deployed \$4,750,000 in acquisition capital across all media, generating a blended unrealised appreciation of 52% against an appraised portfolio value of \$7,210,000. These returns are a consequence of curatorial discipline, not its objective. This document has been prepared for the private review of galleries, auction houses, and institutional counterparties, and sets out in full his collecting history, philosophical framework, financial profile, and professional references. All data is current as of Q1 2025. The document is strictly confidential.

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01 | Biographical Profile

Biographical Profile

My name is Rene J Fusco. I was born in 1965 in New York City and raised in Queens; the son of a school administrator and a part-time seamstress. Art was not something my family collected, but it was always present: in the public galleries we visited on weekends, the street murals of the Bronx, the record covers stacked in my father's collection. From an early age I understood that beauty did not require wealth, but that ownership, real and permanent ownership, did.

I attended the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania on a partial scholarship, graduating in 1987 with a degree in Economics. An MBA from Columbia Business School followed in 1991. I spent the next two decades building a career in real estate development and private equity, rising to Managing Director at a major New York investment firm before founding my own family office in 2005. The firm today manages a diversified portfolio of real estate, private equity, and alternative assets exceeding \$120 million.

The decision to begin collecting art seriously came in that same founding year. After two decades of building financial wealth, I felt a deep need to build something that would outlast a balance sheet. Art gave me that. It has been one of the most consequential decisions of my adult life.

PERSONAL DETAILS

Full Name	Rene J Fusco
Date of Birth	1965 · Age 61
Nationality	American
Residence	Upper East Side, Manhattan, New York City
Education	B.S. Economics, Wharton, University of Pennsylvania (1987) M.B.A. Columbia Business School (1991)
Profession	Real Estate & Private Equity
Contact	renefuscoj@gmail.com

02 | Curatorial Philosophy & Collecting Vision

Curatorial Philosophy & Collecting Vision

"I do not collect what is already valued. I collect what deserves to be."

My collecting philosophy has never been driven by auction records, market trends, or institutional approval though I respect all of those things deeply. It has always been guided by a simpler and more personal question: does this work stop me in my tracks? Does it make me think, feel, or see something differently than before I encountered it?

When the answer is yes, I pursue it. When the answer is merely that it appears to be a sound financial investment, I walk away. The financial dimension is real and I take it seriously but it has never been, and will never be, my primary motivation.

My collecting centres on artists whose practice is serious, sustained, and undervalued relative to their actual contribution. I have a particular interest in Black American and

African diaspora artists, women working in contemporary practice, and digital-native creators building careers entirely outside the traditional gallery system.

I collect across every medium: painting, sculpture, photography, video installation, generative digital art, and blockchain-native NFTs because I believe the boundaries between these categories are artificial. A great work is a great work. Where it lives, and on what substrate, is secondary to what it does.

03 | Acquisition History & Collection Chronology

Acquisition History & Collection Chronology

I made my first art acquisition in 2005, a works-on-paper piece by an emerging New York painter, purchased at a Lower East Side gallery opening for \$3,800. I remember standing in front of it for nearly twenty minutes before deciding. I had no adviser, no market knowledge, and no strategy. I simply knew I wanted to live with it.

That is now twenty years ago. What began with a single work has grown into a collection of more than 140 pieces across painting, sculpture, photography, video art, digital works, and NFTs with an estimated value in excess of \$7.2 million.

First Acquisition	2005: works-on-paper, emerging New York painter, \$3,800
Years of Collecting	20 years (2005 to present)
Total Works Acquired	140+ across all media and categories
First Major Acquisition	2007; large-format abstract oil canvas, six-figure private sale
First Institutional Loan	2011; two works loaned to a New York non-profit gallery
First Digital Art	2014; video art acquisition; blockchain research commenced
First NFT Acquisition	2021; three inaugural blockchain-native purchases
Current Collection Value	\$7.2M+ (independent appraisal, Q1 2025)
Annual Budget	\$600,000 – \$900,000 across all categories

The collecting journey has not been linear. I paused during the 2008 financial crisis not out of necessity, but to study rather than buy. When I returned in 2009 I was a more knowledgeable, more disciplined, and more discerning collector.

I began acquiring digital art in 2014, long before NFTs made digital works commercially viable at scale. What I could not resolve was the provenance problem. The blockchain, when I encountered it seriously in 2019 and 2020, solved that problem in a way that nothing else had. My entry into NFTs in 2021 was a natural continuation of a journey that had been building for seven years.

04 | Digital Art & NFT Collecting: Rationale & Strategy

Digital Art & NFT Collecting: Rationale & Strategy

“The blockchain did not change what I collected. It changed what was possible to collect.”

The question I am most often asked is why a collector with fifteen years of experience in physical art would enter the NFT market seriously, not speculatively. The answer is rooted in a problem I had been wrestling with since 2014: how do you establish genuine, verifiable, transferable ownership of a digital file?

A digital image can be copied infinitely and identically. Traditional solutions: certificates of authenticity, edition registries, gallery records were fragile, centralised, and ultimately unverifiable at scale. The blockchain solved this definitively. It created, for the first time in the history of digital media, a genuinely unfakeable, permanent record of creation and ownership. That was not a gimmick that was a fundamental infrastructural shift. When I understood it clearly, I moved.

Provenance Integrity	Blockchain records are permanent, public, and unalterable, no physical certificate can replicate this.
Direct Artist Relationships	NFT platforms removed intermediaries between collector and creator, enabling real-time patronage.
Royalty Mechanics	Smart contract royalties ensure the original creator benefits automatically from every future resale; permanently.
Generative Art	Art Blocks introduced me to algorithm-driven works, a collaboration between human intention and computational process.
Access to New Voices	NFT platforms provided access to serious artists worldwide who had no pathway into the traditional gallery system.
Market Discipline	Entering in 2021 with full awareness of the speculative cycle, my strategy was always artistic merit at defensible prices.

05 | Portfolio Valuation & Investment Overview

Portfolio Valuation & Investment Overview

I approach art collecting as both a cultural practice and a financial discipline. The financial return has always been a consequence of good collecting, never the goal of it.

Total Capital Invested (2005–2025)	\$4,750,000 across all categories
Estimated Current Collection Value	\$7,210,000+ (independent appraisal, Q1 2025)
Total Unrealised Appreciation	\$2,460,000: blended return of +52%
NFT Portfolio: Capital Deployed	\$1,240,000 (2021–2025)
NFT Portfolio: Current Value	~\$1,850,000 (post-2023 strategic rebalancing)

Realised Gains from Sales	~\$580,000 from NFT rebalancing and selective physical sales
Annual Acquisition Budget	\$600,000 - \$900,000
Art as % of Net Worth	Approximately 14-18% of total personal portfolio

Asset Category	Capital Deployed	Est. Current Value	Appreciation
Physical Art: Painting, Sculpture, Photography	\$2,800,000	\$4,200,000	+50%
Video & Digital Art	\$420,000	\$680,000	+62%
NFT Portfolio: Ethereum & Solana	\$1,240,000	\$1,850,000	+49%
Generative & AI-Collaborative Art	\$290,000	\$480,000	+66%
TOTAL	\$4,750,000	\$7,210,000+	+52%

The NFT portion, \$1,240,000 deployed across Ethereum and Solana represents the most active area of growth since 2021. Following a strategic rebalancing in 2023 in which twelve tokens were exited through Sotheby's Metaverse, proceeds were reinvested into 1/1 works and commissioned drops. The current NFT portfolio is estimated at \$1,850,000.

Across the physical collection, the most significant appreciation has come from works acquired early in the careers of artists who subsequently achieved broad institutional recognition. The discipline of collecting before consensus, and holding through the period of uncertainty that precedes validation, has been the single most important driver of financial return.

06 | Professional References
Professional References

The following individuals have agreed to serve as professional references for Rene J Fusco. Both parties are fully familiar with his collecting practice, professional standing, and personal integrity, and may be contacted directly via the details below.

Name & Title	Organisation	Email
Lachlan Reid Thornton	Thornton Legal Group	Lachlanthornton@gmail.com
Miriam Calloway	Calloway Digital Art Advisory	miriamcalloway1@gmail.com

C O N F I D E N T I A L I T Y N O T I C E

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