# Damien Hirst likens property buying to Monopoly in revealing interview



Damien Hirst, a prominent figure in the British contemporary art scene, recently shared his unconventional approach to property investment during an interview, in which he compared it to a game of Monopoly. Hirst has a well-documented affinity for acquiring properties, reportedly purchasing the villas he stayed in during holidays. He currently owns a diverse portfolio that includes residences in Devon, Mayfair, Richmond, and the Cotswolds. This expansive real estate collection reflects his status as possibly the UK’s wealthiest living artist, with a net worth previously estimated at more than £315 million.

In the interview, Hirst revealed some personal dimensions of his life, including the complexities of defining a “home.” His eldest three sons reside in his farmhouse in Devon, complicating his sense of place. A notable fact that lightened the conversation was his girlfriend, former ballerina Sophie Cannell, and her aversion to the natural fauna in his Mexican properties, where he mentioned encountering tarantulas and even a crocodile in the pool. Hirst quipped, “I used to buy everything. It was a bit like Monopoly – when you land on it, you buy it.”

Financial considerations pervade Hirst’s worldview, as he expressed a clear appreciation for money. He stated, “I just think [it’s] an important thing in the world that we live in. You must keep up with the market and avoid making loads of work that never sells.” This pragmatic approach to art and investments is integral to his identity as an artist, particularly in light of his controversial decisions in recent years.

In 2022, Hirst caused an uproar by incinerating numerous works from his NFT collection, “The Currency.” The collection comprised 10,000 pieces, and buyers had a choice between keeping the physical artwork or opting for the NFT. Those who chose the digital token saw the corresponding physical piece destroyed, a move Hirst defended by asserting it was part of a necessary transformation. "A lot of people think I'm burning millions of dollars of art but I'm not," he stated, clarifying that he viewed this action as a transfer of value from physical forms to their digital counterparts.

The implications of Hirst's NFT project resonate deeply within the contemporary art world, challenging traditional notions of ownership and value. Many observers noted that while some might view the destruction of physical art as reckless, Hirst framed it as a forward-thinking strategy for the future of art. He maintained that the value would not dissipate but would instead fuse with the NFT, effectively repurposing his creations for a digital age.

Aside from his financial ventures, Hirst also revealed more personal decisions, such as his rejection of a knighthood offer from art collector Jacob Rothschild. He found the idea of such an honour uncomfortable and expressed that he never felt at ease with the prospect. This independence reflects not only his values but also his larger-than-life persona as an artist deeply embedded in the fabric of contemporary culture.

Currently, Hirst has two exhibitions showing at the Newport Street Gallery in London, titled “Raging Planet” and “The Power and the Glory.” Curated by his son Connor, these shows exemplify the diverse and often controversial allure of Hirst’s works, which continue to provoke thought and speculation within the art community and beyond. As Hirst navigates the complexities of art, wealth, and personal relationships, he remains an influential and candid figure, unafraid to share his experiences and insights with both admirers and critics alike.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html), [[6]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-63218704), [[4]](https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/10/11/non-fireproof-tokens-damien-hirst-burns-his-own-paintings), [[5]](https://news.sky.com/story/damien-hirst-the-currency-artist-starts-setting-fire-to-thousands-of-his-spot-paintings-12717861)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html), [[7]](https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/10/11/non-fireproof-tokens-damien-hirst-burns-his-own-paintings)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html), [[6]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html> - In a rare interview, Damien Hirst revealed his approach to property investment, likening it to Monopoly by purchasing villas he stayed in during holidays. He owns properties in Devon, Mayfair, Richmond, and the Cotswolds. Hirst also discussed his relationship with former ballerina Sophie Cannell, mentioning her aversion to spiders and the presence of tarantulas and scorpions in Mexico. He expressed his appreciation for money, stating its importance in the world and the necessity to keep up with the market. In 2022, Hirst controversially burned works from his NFT collection, The Currency, valued at nearly £10 million, to complete their transformation into NFTs. Additionally, he declined a knighthood offered by banker and art collector Jacob Rothschild, citing discomfort with the idea.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/entertainment-arts-63218704> - Damien Hirst began burning hundreds of his own artworks after selling a series of non-fungible tokens (NFTs). Buyers had the option to choose between the physical artwork or the NFT, with those opting for the NFT seeing the corresponding physical piece destroyed. Hirst stated that burning the artworks was part of completing their transformation into NFTs, emphasizing that the value would transfer to the digital version. The works being burned were collectively estimated to be worth almost £10 million.
4. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/10/11/non-fireproof-tokens-damien-hirst-burns-his-own-paintings> - Damien Hirst began incinerating 1,000 of his own works from his first NFT collection, The Currency, at his Newport Street Gallery in London. The project, launched in July 2021, consisted of 10,000 dot paintings, each linked to corresponding NFTs priced at $2,000. Buyers could choose to keep the physical artwork or the NFT, with the exchange period closing in July 2022. Hirst's decision to burn the physical artworks confirmed his support for the NFT over the traditional art form.
5. <https://news.sky.com/story/damien-hirst-the-currency-artist-starts-setting-fire-to-thousands-of-his-spot-paintings-12717861> - Damien Hirst began setting fire to thousands of his spot paintings as part of his NFT project, The Currency. The project allowed buyers to choose between keeping the physical artwork or the NFT, with those opting for the NFT seeing the corresponding physical piece destroyed. Hirst expressed that the project was about making art for future generations, emphasizing that the value of art, whether digital or physical, would be transferred to the NFT once the physical version was burned.
6. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/news/damien-hirst-net-worth-property-homes-girlfriend-b2757243.html> - Damien Hirst discussed his approach to property investment, likening it to Monopoly by purchasing villas he stayed in during holidays. He owns properties in Devon, Mayfair, Richmond, and the Cotswolds. Hirst also mentioned his relationship with former ballerina Sophie Cannell, noting her aversion to spiders and the presence of tarantulas and scorpions in Mexico. He expressed his appreciation for money, stating its importance in the world and the necessity to keep up with the market. In 2022, Hirst controversially burned works from his NFT collection, The Currency, valued at nearly £10 million, to complete their transformation into NFTs. Additionally, he declined a knighthood offered by banker and art collector Jacob Rothschild, citing discomfort with the idea.
7. <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/10/11/non-fireproof-tokens-damien-hirst-burns-his-own-paintings> - Damien Hirst began incinerating 1,000 of his own works from his first NFT collection, The Currency, at his Newport Street Gallery in London. The project, launched in July 2021, consisted of 10,000 dot paintings, each linked to corresponding NFTs priced at $2,000. Buyers could choose to keep the physical artwork or the NFT, with the exchange period closing in July 2022. Hirst's decision to burn the physical artworks confirmed his support for the NFT over the traditional art form.