

THE SPEAR'S 500

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RICHARD CLARK SLAUGHTER AND MAY

Richard Clark is quite simply an art law guru. Formerly the head of dispute resolution at Slaughter and May, he developed the specialism twenty years ago and has been in practice ever since, continuing with art litigation and sitting as a mediator, despite his move to the role of managing partner of the firm in 2013. 'It's an area of practice I really enjoy; it developed out of my own interest in art,' says Clark, who comes from a family of artists and collects modern British paintings.

He has seen the evolution of art law over the past two decades, which is linked to the growth of the art market. As values have increased, 'the stakes are so high it's not surprising there's a greater need for legal advice. If you're paying £15m for something, you need to be sure that all the legal and regulatory requirements are in order,' he says. The number of art law disputes has increased for the same reason; Clark believes many of these can and should be settled by mediation rather than through the courts.

Requirements for practicing are simple: 'Art law is a branch of the law like any other, and the key is to understand the client's objective and needs and apply the law with that in mind. The second requirement is to have an interest and knowledge in the subject area,' says Clark, who decidedly ticks both boxes.



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