

## Felix Baumgartner

FOUNDING PARTNER, URWERK

"As a manual guy I have to understand what happens, and a record player is nothing more than an electro-mechanical tool. This is more fascinating to me than a CD player, where I cannot see what happens. And with music on the computer, it is totally abstract." Felix Baumgartner is explaining the tactile pleasure of collecting vinyl records. But for Baumgartner it is about more than tactile pleasure or the satisfaction of understanding the mechanics by which sound is created—it is an inherited trait. His father is a collector with, Baumgartner estimates, somewhere north of 6,000 jazz records, alongside Frank Zappa and the Grateful Dead. By contrast, Baumgartner does not consider himself a serious collector; he counts his records by the hundred. For him, it is as much about the artist and the cultural context as it is about the object on which the music is stored. So his records encompass jazz, particularly Charlie Parker, and rare techno, the sort of thing that Baumgartner, born in 1975, used to play as a DJ on the Swiss rave scene, when he was living in a squat during the 1990s. Knowing of this background, perhaps it is possible to discern a new significance in the iconoclastic aesthetic of his Urwerk timepieces.

*Photographed by Frederic Aranda at Music Lover, Geneva, on November 27, 2009, wearing an Urwerk UR-103T.*

