Dorchester *Collection*

ART AND CULTURE

Meet a Mayfair art curator

October 24, 2022

Named after its founder, Pilar Ordovas, Ordovas in Mayfair is renowned for showcasing contemporary works from major European institutions and rare private collections.

Welcome to Ordovas

With floor-to-ceiling windows and a contemporary exterior, the private, airy showroom of Ordovas stands out among Savile Row's early 18th-century townhouses. While its outside may lure you in, the gallery's three annual exhibitions will encourage you to stay, offering a rare chance to witness works that you can't see elsewhere. Household names attract curious art enthusiasts, collectors and investors, while the 20th and 21st-century works from private, international collections are even more intriguing – especially as some of the pieces have been locked away for generations.

25 Savile Row, London W1S 2ER

Courtesy of Jake Walters

Inside London's art world

Like an artist experimenting with a new medium, Pilar Ordovas' passions have moved in different directions over the years – from post-1945 European art while working at London auction house Christie's, to contemporary art while director of the capital's Gagosian gallery. "In 2011, my dream of founding my own gallery came true when I launched Ordovas with an exhibition exploring the relationship between Francis Bacon's self-portraits and paintings by Rembrandt such as 'Self-portrait with Beret," she explains. Since then, she has collaborated with Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum and London's Somerset House.

Linger and learn

If you've ever urged a friend to catch an exhibition that inspired you, then you'll understand Pilar's desire to spread the word about a particular artwork or artist. Unusually for an independent art space, Ordovas usually shows work on loan rather than for sale – making it feel more like a museum than a gallery. "Of course, it's necessary to sell paintings for the gallery to exist," says Pilar. "However, our exhibition schedule concentrates on showing great art – the commercial activity tends to be behind the scenes."

Courtesy of Roman Foord

Courtesy of Stuart Burford

Investing in art you love

Whether you want to purchase art because it makes you feel joy or you appreciate its ability to make you think something new, Pilar's philosophy is to always buy art that you love. "In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in investing in art," advises Pilar. It's wise to do your research and not be afraid to ask questions or seek a second opinion. "There's no such thing as a silly question."

Other galleries in Mayfair

If you're interested in Mayfair's historic auction houses and newer, independent spaces, Pilar recommends Gagosian's big name artists and the influential contemporary artists displayed at Marian Goodman. Luxembourg + Co is another favourite, hosting museum-quality exhibitions by modern artists such as Joan Miró. She also admires Sam Fogg's medieval art, Eskenazi's Chinese art, and The Mayor Gallery where American sculptor Alexander Calder held his first solo UK show before exhibiting at the Royal Academy of Arts.

Gagosian, 20 Grosvenor Hill, London W1K 3QD

Marian Goodman, 23 Golden Square, London W1F 9JP

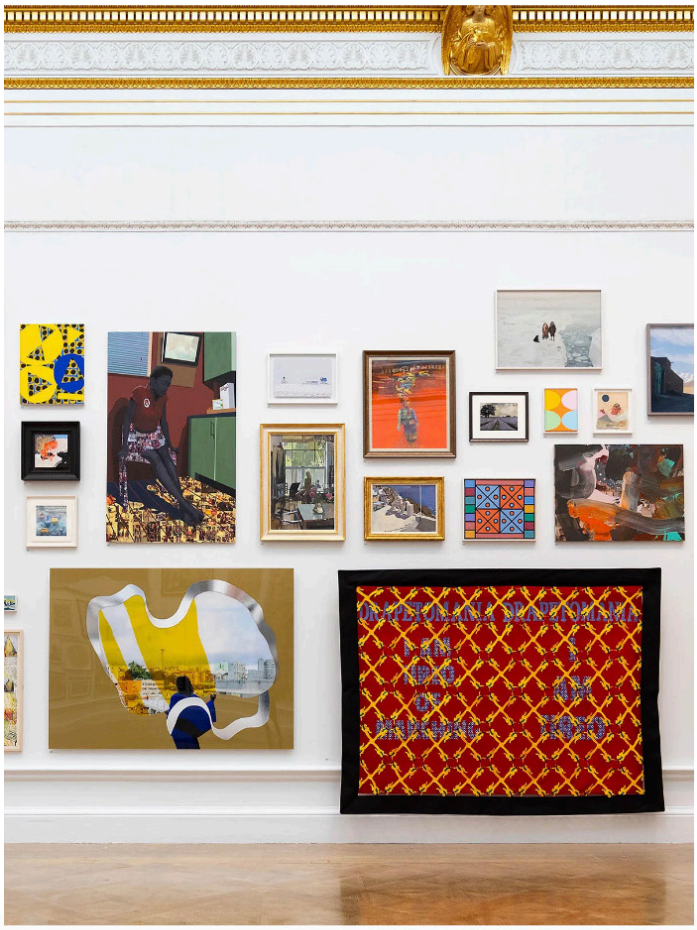
Luxembourg + Co, 2 Savile Row, London W1S 3PA

Sam Fogg, 15D Clifford Street, London W1S 4JZ

Eskenazi, 10 Clifford Street, London W1S 2LJ

The Mayor Gallery, First floor, 21 Cork Street, London W1S 3LZ

The Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BD



Courtesy of Royal Academy of Arts, London