



CURATOR CONVERSATIONS Inside Hong Kong's Opera Gallery

In celebration of Art Month, we talked to Sharlane Foo, Director of Opera Gallery Hong Kong to learn more about life as a curator.

Originally founded by Gilles Dyan in 1994, Opera Gallery has established 12 locations around the world including London, Geneva and New York. With museums as well as private clients worldwide, Opera Gallery is one of the leading dealers in modern and contemporary art.

Having started your career at the Museum of Contemporary Art Loewen in Singapore and then relocating to the UK for further studies at Sotheby's Institute of Art, it is clear that you have always had a passion for art. What are your earliest memories and experiences with art and what were your main inspirations behind these pieces?

My father travelled a lot for work and he always brought a book home. For me, I treasured the art books the most and I would read them until I wore them out.

During one of our family trips to London for the summer, while in my early teens, a poignant moment for me occurred on a visit to the Tate Modern. Entering the Mark Rothko room was such an incredible experience and that was when I decided that I wanted to be in an industry that allowed me access to such beauty.

What inspires you to drive awareness for collectors and emerging artists?

My role in the gallery is to bridge the gap between artists and collectors. I find that collectors gain the most satisfaction when they have the utmost understanding and a true connection to the artist. I feel extreme happiness when I can bring both sides together.

You have a wealth of experience in contemporary and modern art. How do you use this to strengthen collaborations with artists?

I am blessed to have had great experiences with artists, and feel doubly fortunate to be part of the Opera Gallery group led by Founder and Chairman Gilles Dyan. As a global organisation with 12 galleries worldwide, we (collectively) have a wealth of experience and knowledge of the industry that we all call upon. I also work very closely with the group's Art Director David Rosenberg to bring on new artists to our Hong Kong gallery roster.

Have you observed any recent trends among Hong Kong art collectors and more specifically, at Opera Gallery?

Opera Gallery Hong Kong has gone through a number of changes over the past year. We are progressing and moving with the times and our collectors. One trend that

has become apparent is a slight shift in the demographic of the clientele. We are now seeing more of a younger crowd walking through our doors, which is exciting. We are always keen to meet new collectors and to learn more about their interest in the works on our walls.

Will Opera Gallery feature any art exhibitions at Art Central in March?

We are thrilled to be a part of Art Central 2018 and will showcase a number of magnificent artists, one of which includes Manolo Valdes. Following the great success of Valdes's monumental sculptures shown in Singapore and Paris, we are bringing the same energy to Hong Kong.

During Art Month in March we will also have a group exhibition at Opera Gallery for three amazing Korean Artists: Yoo Bong Sang, Lee Gil Rae and Seo Young Deok. We consistently strive to bring unique talent to Hong Kong to engage local art enthusiasts.

Following the success of Mike Dargas' exhibition, what's in store for Opera Gallery this year?

The successful opening of Mike Dargas' exhibition empowered us to take on more avant-garde works by young global emerging artists. We have a great 2018 ahead of us with a superb line-up for the coming year. With four floors of gallery space, we can bring Hong Kong a diversity of artists that work closely with us and we are always thrilled to see new faces through our door!

