



Worth Avenue Galleries in Bloom in Palm Beach

December 1, 2014

by Sandra Hale Schulman

As the Hamptons can be to New York, Palm Beach is to Miami—a tonier art scene that’s more established, with less bling. The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm, Florida invites comparisons to the Parrish Art Museum in Water Mill or Guild Hall Museum in East Hampton, N.Y., but the driving distance from Miami to Palm Beach, at 90 minutes, might even be a little more manageable.

Crossing the Highway 704 Bridge onto Royal Palm Beach Way brings the visitor to an upper crust state of the arts. The main street is Worth Avenue, a limestone walled, flower and courtyard festooned thoroughfare that beckons with the best the worlds of art, fashion and jewelry have to offer. Four of the galleries that help set the tone for the local scene are Mark Borghi Fine Art, Gavlak Gallery, Wally Findlay and Holden Luntz Gallery.

Mark Borghi Fine Art

A longtime fixture in the gallery scene in the Hamptons and New York City, where he grew up in his father’s Manhattan galleries and sold his first artwork at age 9, Mark Borghi opened his Worth Avenue location in 2011.

Borghi decided to open an art gallery in Palm Beach because he had been doing fairs in South Florida “for quite a while, and we always had great space,” he said recently. “The availability of the space on Worth Avenue was too tempting for us. It’s a great location.”

Located next door to the iconic Tiffany’s at the corner of Hibiscus Avenue, the gallery participates in the Worth Avenue Art Walk during Art Palm Beach in January and stays open during the summer “off season” with a curated selection of post-war abstract and contemporary art dating from 1945 to the present.

Borghi aims to present work in an intimate, comfortable environment. The gallery is painted a dark slate blue and has a living room set at the rear, a similar set up to those familiar with the Bridgehampton, N.Y. gallery. In Palm Beach, the current multi-artist exhibit includes work by Salvador Dali, John Chamberlain, Elaine de Kooning and others.



“Penthouse” by John Chamberlain, 1969.

Courtesy Mark Borghi Fine Art.

Borghi brings the work of many artists with ties to the Hamptons—including Eric Fischl, Tom Dash, April Gornik, Lee Krasner and Robert Motherwell—to his Palm Beach gallery and also to the Art Miami art fair, Art Wynwood, and Art Palm Beach. In addition, Borghi said he is working on plans for a new space in Florida to be announced soon.

Mark Borghi Fine Art, 255 Worth Avenue, Palm Beach, FL 33480, www.borghi.org



“Fever To Tell II” by Tom Dash. Courtesy Mark Borghi Fine Art.

Gavlak Gallery

Gallerist Sarah Gavlak opened her first space in West Palm Beach in 2005, before bringing contemporary art with an edge to Worth Avenue in 2008. A pink painted staircase leads to her second floor space, owned by Warhol factory superstar “Baby Jane” Holzer, who herself was the subject of a blockbuster show at the Norton Museum in West Palm Beach last season.

Gavlak Gallery represents artists including Scott Reeder, Orly Genger, and Whitney Biennial artists Lisa Anne Auerbach and Keith Mayerson. She was the first to give Wade Guyton, who later had a Whitney retrospective, a solo show in the U.S. The gallery also gave early shows of such artists as Marilyn Minter and Aleksandra Mir.



Installation by Lisa Anne Auerbach. Courtesy Gavlak Gallery.

“The reason I opened my first gallery in Palm Beach is because there is a great community of collectors, but there aren’t any galleries representing many of the artists they collect,” Gavlak told ArtInfo. “So I saw a need and a unique opportunity opening in Palm Beach.”

Gavlak—who has a connection to Los Angeles, as she lived and went to school there in the early '90s—opened a second gallery in LA in September. With the new space, 5,000 square feet at 1034 North Highland Avenue in Hollywood, Gavlak plans to stage bigger and more ambitious shows by

her stable of artists.

This fall, Gavlak is bringing works by LA-based artists to her flagship gallery in Palm Beach for an exhibition titled “Blessed Oblivion,” opening on November 25, 2014 and remaining on view through January 5, 2015. She will also be exhibiting gallery artists at booth A13 at Art Basel Miami Beach in December.

Gavlak Gallery, 249B Worth Avenue, Palm Beach, FL www.gavlakgallery.com



Artwork by Wade Guyton. Courtesy Gavlak Gallery.

Wally Findlay

For a taste of historic Palm Beach, the Wally Findlay gallery is a must-see. This sprawling, expansive space with the striped awning against limestone walls dates back to 1961 but founder William Wadsworth Findlay first opened his doors in 1870 in Kansas City, Missouri. He exhibited European art, including 19th-century English landscapes and portraits, German genre works, and French Impressionist and Barbizon paintings.

Spaces followed in Chicago in 1931, New York City in 1964, Paris in 1971, and briefly in East Hampton; currently operating galleries are in Palm Beach, New York and Barcelona, Spain.

With 9,000 square feet of exhibition space and two floors that each have their own intimate themed exhibition rooms replete with rugs, couches, lamps and marble tables, the Palm Beach gallery feels more like a grand home, or several grand homes rolled into one. The gallery carries period, modern and contemporary art and has museum quality work by such masters as Winslow Homer, Andrew Wyeth, Matisse and Picasso.



Artwork by Alexander Calder. Courtesy Wally Findlay.

In-house art consultant Fecia Mulry gives informative tours of the salon and knows the storied history well.

“This is the oldest gallery here and has the most diverse selection of work outside of a museum,” Mulry said recently. “Interest and business has picked up the past few years on Worth Avenue as the street’s history and beauty is unmatched.”

The current spotlight show is “Images of Autumn,” with Impressionist paintings by Tadashi Asoma, a Japanese artist who emigrated from Japan to New York and studied at the Art Students League.

Wally Findlay, 165 Worth Avenue, Palm Beach, FL www.wallyfindlay.com



Artwork by Tadashi Asoma. Courtesy Wally Findlay.

Holden Luntz Gallery

Engaging exhibitions and lectures on photography are the main focus at Holden Luntz Gallery, a sleek two-story Worth Avenue space that seeks to educate, entertain and engage. The gallery exhibits groupings with the aim of showing the possibilities that photography opens within environments. Often genre directed, the groupings encompass a large variety of artists, printing techniques, and sizes.

The shows at the gallery also create dialogues with other local institutions such as the Norton Museum. For example, in November the Norton opened “A Century of Fashion Photography from Conde Nast” while Holden Luntz presents, through December 13, “Fashion and the Female Form,” with works from such artists as Horst P. Horst and Frank Horvat. The gallery annually exhibits at the New York Art, Antique & Jewelry Show each September.

The Holden Luntz artist roster includes a number of international artists; one of the most impressive is Massimo Listri, whose portrayals capture the majesty of grand European structures as well as the fine details that reveal the secrets and stories contained within. His architectural portraits reflect the mastery of marble and stone cutting along with the scale and the theatricality that shape the way human drama plays out in these spaces.

Holden Luntz Gallery, Inc., 332 Worth Avenue, Palm Beach, Florida 33480 www.holdenluntz.com



Artwork by Massimo Listri. Courtesy Holden Luntz Gallery.

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