



# Muddy Stiletto

THE URBAN GUIDE TO THE COUNTRYSIDE - SURREY ▾

## Art attack

A London art gallery has upped sticks and moved to Surrey - offering private viewings in a stunning space near Cranleigh. Here's everything you need to know about Belgravia Gallery.

I greatly enjoy modern art without claiming to understand too much of it. It's a world that baffles and slightly intimidates me - which probably explains why my walls are relatively bare save for the odd school photo of the kids and a watercolour or two painted by late nan.

So for people like me, the discovery of a gallery where art is viewed in a relaxed environment one-on-one with the curator, in a home setting - as it might look in my own home - and without the hassle of trekking up to London is brilliant. And even better, there's art here to suit all budgets. So here's the lowdown on Belgravia Gallery.



Monroe Hodder, *Another Place, Another Time I and II*

### **Belgravia Gallery is not in Belgravia ...**

But it used to be. The gallery was started by Anna Hunter in 1986, first from her London home then later in galleries in Belgravia and then Mayfair. Over the years, the gallery has hosted exhibitions all over the world including pop-ups at Anna's former home at Chinthurst Hill. Now showings are held in the home of Anna's daughter, Laura Walford, near Cranleigh.



Sir Peter Blake, Some of the Source of Pop Art

### Like mother, like daughter

Anna's daughter Laura joined the business in 2001. It was never part of the long term plan, but the sudden death of Laura's brother Sebastian in 2001 led Laura to spend time working at the gallery with Anna. Laura, a recent graduate, already had a job lined up in film production but the pair discovered a great working partnership – and they've been working together ever since. The gallery is now closely tied to the Sebastian Hunter Memorial Trust, which raises money to build schools and help disadvantaged people in Tamil Nadu in south-east India.



Monroe Hodder, *Roses and Roses*

### **A Prince, his art and a charitable foundation**

Do you know that Prince Charles is an artist? And a flipping successful artist at that! HRH has raised more than £4 million through his art – and that's in no small part thanks to Anna and Belgravia Gallery. Back in 1989, Anna saw a story about the Prince of Wales and his watercolour paintings in a Sunday newspaper. She decided to write him a letter suggesting that his work be made into signed lithographs and sold to raise money for his charitable foundation. Her chutzpah paid off and some months and several meetings later, a decade-long partnership was born.



Nelson Mandela, Hand of Africa



Nelson Mandela, Love



Nelson Mandela, The Window

## Nelson Mandela gets in on the act

Several years later, when Anna was attending an exhibition in New York she was approached by the publishers of Nelson Mandela's artwork who were familiar with her association with Prince Charles. Belgravia Gallery started launching Mandela's work selling limited edition signed lithographs and some originals. Two new lithographs 'Love' and 'Earth' have been released this year to celebrate 100 years since Mandela's birth.



Jan Coutts, *Sprinting Cheetahs*

## Down to earth

There's no doubt Anna and Laura have moved in distinguished circles – but their approach to art is down to earth and approachable. Their aim is to demystify art and take away the fear of buying art. As well as works by Prince Charles, Nelson Mandela and other well-known artists such as Andy Warhol, Lord Snowden and Sir Peter Blake, they also show art by lesser known artists. And there's a range of prices – starting at £1000 and lower.



Gered Mankowitz – Jimi Hendrix, Blue

## Art at home

Laura and Anna have clients all over the world – and they’ve found that showing art in a home has been very well received. Laura says most clients prefer to see art in a home setting – in a dining room, bedroom, living room, or above a sofa. It allows for so much more insight into how pieces of art and sculpture may look in your own home and will, they hope, inspire you to start or build upon your own collection.

Laura has a beautiful home and you won’t fail to be inspired by the paintings and sculptures she has on display. Every room is adorned with original art – including her children’s bedrooms which each include a commissioned portrait. The collection has been beautifully curated, and yet it feels not at all like a gallery. There’s nothing stuffy or pretentious about it.



John Illsley, Two Young Lovers

## Art for investment

Laura's first piece of advice for anyone who wants to buy art as an investment is buy what you love. If the piece goes up in value – that's a bonus. She likes to think of art on a cost per day of enjoyment – and when you put it like that it becomes a no-brainer.

[belgraviagallery.com](http://belgraviagallery.com)