

# THE MAYFAIR

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### Society sculpture

Mayfair's Sladmore Contemporary gallery is understandably proud to be hosting the annual exhibition of work by the esteemed Society of Portrait Sculptors. A showcase for fine quality figurative sculpture by the Society's members from around the globe, alongside that of some non-members whose artistic skills have earned the respect of the Society and with it, an invitation to exhibit. Sladmore's Director, Gerry Farrell, will be awarding a prize of £3,000 to the artist who produces the best human portrait.

*'Society of Portrait Sculptors' is at the Sladmore Contemporary gallery from 12 – 17 May (sladmorecontemporary.com)*



## Art news

Mayfair plays host to some iconic sculptures with both Sladmore's Society of Portrait Sculptors and a landmark Rodin exhibition

WORDS: CAROL CORDREY

### Awesome architecture

Ben Johnson's work on cityscapes, notably a panoramic interpretation of Liverpool in which he combined his fascination for computer technology with a passion for architecture and

precision drawing, has long since intrigued me. Liverpool was a *tour de force* and commissions for other panoramic views of cities around the world quickly descended upon his studio. Architecture is the theme at this *Museum Rooms* exhibition but, this time Johnson applies his forensic eye to create large-scale paintings that take us up close with museum interiors, making us feel as though we are actually walking into their imposing spaces, restored forms and subtle scars from the ravages of time. Together, this gives us the fullest, most awesome experience of these historic buildings.

*'Ben Johnson' is at the Alan Cristea Gallery from 9 May – 7 June (alancristea.com)*

## Q&A with...

*Robert Bowman on his landmark Auguste Rodin exhibition*

**Q: Why is the exhibition on at this particular time?**

**A:** This is the 100th anniversary of Rodin's gift of 18 sculptures to the V&A Museum. Originally planned as an exhibition, Rodin came to London and supervised the display of his works. Within six months he had decided to gift the works in honour of the soldiers who had died in the war.

**Q: Will we see any iconic works in the exhibition?**

**A:** There will be several, including bronzes of *The Thinker*, *The Kiss* and *Eternal Spring* in both the original and later format. Also, one of the last large bronze casts of his famous figure of the *Prodigal Son* not in a museum, and sculptures that were personal to Rodin – including his portraits of Rose Beuret, his wife and Camille Claudel, his lover. Works like *Iris Messengers* demonstrate how Rodin's sculpture was at the forefront of modern art; it would have been very shocking in 1900, but equally at home in any collection of contemporary art today. The majority of works will be for sale.

**Q: As the world's leading Rodin specialist, has this helped you to source so many sculptures?**

**A:** Consistently exhibiting works by Rodin around the world at international art fairs has placed us in many people's minds when they think of buying or selling a work by Rodin. Much of the work we currently hold are pieces we have bought back from clients.

**Q: What would your advice be to investors?**

**A:** Each year the number of available pieces decreases as works go into collections that will never release them to the market. There is an established market for work by Rodin so collectors can be confident that purchasing a sculpture will prove a solid investment that also pays a wonderful visual dividend. Values for his key images have increased in value by over 400% in the last eight years.

*'Rodin – In Private Hands' is at Bowman Sculpture, 1 May – 31 July (bowmansculpture.com)*

