Art market
News

Latin American commercial art space to launch in London this October

Founded by the Brazilian collector Flavia Nespatti, Antesala in Fitzrovia will combine selling shows of Latin American artists with an advisory and public programme

Kabir Jhala

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Laura González (left) and Flavia Nespatti (right), Antesala's senior director and founder
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This October, London gains another dedicated venue for non-Western art with the arrival of Antesala, a commercial space for artists from Latin America.

Founded by the Brazilian-born collector and patron Flavia Nespatti, the Fitzrovia space will work directly with galleries, artists and foundations to stage selling exhibitions of both primary and secondary market works, alongside a public programme of talks, gatherings and film screenings.

"Latin Americans are one of the fastest-growing diaspora groups in the UK," Nespatti says. "There is an increasing interest in the region, but so often it is treated as one big homogenous land."

Nespatti's aim is to provide greater visibility and "more complex narratives" for Latin American artists, and the galleries that exhibit them, particularly those without a base in London. She positions Antesala as a "hybrid" model that is neither a gallery (it will not represent artists) nor simply a venue for hire (her team will be "highly involved" in the decisions behind each show).

Nor is it a private foundation, for which Nespatti says she does not have the funds to run. "This is a commercial project. I must abide to a certain budget; this project needs to pay for itself," she says. But a venture of this nature can be highly beneficial to the ecosystem, she adds: "We must all play our part to help galleries and their artists succeed."

So how will it work? Sales of consigned works through Antesala will be charged a "combination of a flat fee and a commission, although each calculation will be dependent on the client," Nespatti says. In addition, Antesala will include an advisory arm for not just private collectors but also institutions, she adds, with Latin American art remaining a "blind spot" for many European museums.

While gallery clients will primarily be based either in Latin America or those in Europe with Latin American artists on their roster, Nespatti plans to also work with London dealerships with reputations for dealing in art from the region, including The Mayor Gallery.

Presently, Antesala occupies the first-floor of a three-storey, mid-century industrial building in Tottenham Mews. Nespatti has bought the entire building, (the ground floor is presently being rented to two galleries) and says her intention is to "expand Antesala throughout the space" as it grows in scale.

In opening in Fitrozvia, Antesala joins a budding group of nearby art spaces dedicated to minority groups: YDP, launched by the Chinese philanthropist Yan Du for Sinophone art, and Ibraaz, the "Global Majority" art space from the Lazaar art publishing and collecting family.

"London allows for diversity it has an inherent appetite for the unknown," Nespatti says. "I have never been to any other city that is so interested in underrepresented voices". Though she acknowledges the negative impact of Brexit to London's international reputation—"lots of my friends left", she says—she remains committed to the city. "Buying the whole building is me reifying my commitment to this city. I am here to stay."

Against the white cube

The project evolved out of Anteroom, an itinerant salon space for artists without representation. Nespatti was spurred to stage these informal gatherings because many of her friends "were terrified" about entering a white cube art space. "It sounds cliché, but it's true," she says.

A little over a decade ago, Nespatti too was a fledgling collector who "didn't speak gallery", she says. She had moved back to the city following a stint in Madrid and a 15-year career in equities sales. As she joined patron's circles at London institutions like Gasworks and the Delfina Foundation she felt compelled to return to education—"a common trait for women of my generation, to feel they must have a formal background in order to achieve something", the Gen-X patron notes. Duly, Nespatti took up two consecutive degrees at the Courtauld Institute for Art, the latter of which was an MA focused on revolutionary art from Latin America and Eastern Europe in the latter half of the 20th century.

It was upon studying Latin America's 20th-century art history, she says, that the politically fraught landscape of her childhood, spent moving across South America—including Brazil and Venezuela—became clearer. "I grew up in a middle-class family that never spoke about the dictatorships we lived under," she says.

Nespatti has since become a key supporter and funder of Latin American art in the UK, including the Barbican's survey of Beatriz González, and various shows at Nottingham Contemporary. One such exhibition was for the Brazilian artist Alan Weber in 2025, for which he studied Nottingham's community of food delivery app drivers from Brazil. "Nottingham has the second-biggest Brazilian community in the UK, it was amazing to see these delivery drivers show up and for the museum to genuinely engage with this community," Nespatti says.

Antesala will open with a multi-generational exhibition that "complicates understandings of drawing from Latin America", and will include a sculpture by the German-Venezuelan artist Gego and drawings by the Brazilian artist Mira Schendel. Future projects will include an exhibition devoted to archives in collaboration with the Il Posto foundation in Chile.

The space will be co-run by the senior director Laura González, an art adviser originally from Puerto Rico, who in 2011 founded the Latin American department at Phillips auction house in New York.