

**Fernando Botero**

**A Love Letter to Latin America**

December 5 - December 27, 2023

**Opening Reception:** December 4, 2023, 6-8pm



(L-R) Fernando Botero, *En La Plaza*, 1987; *Circus Band*, 2008; *Circus People*, 2008

**November 2023, Miami, FL** - Opera Gallery Miami is pleased to present 'A Love Letter to Latin America,' a solo exhibition honoring the ubiquity of Latin America's intrinsic role in shaping the oeuvre of Fernando Botero (1932-2023.) Featuring 18 paintings and 9 sculptures, this exhibition commemorates Botero's singular artistic vision and innumerable contributions to both art history and Latin American culture at large.

Through his instantly recognizable 'Boterismo' aesthetic characterized by whimsical, voluminous figures, Botero demonstrated his mastery of form and astute social critique that seamlessly ranged in tone from humorous to sensual to starkly political. In this exhibition, Botero's evocative paintings and sculptures tell a nuanced story about the artist's life and incisive observations on society and culture, which were undeniably shaped by his early life and subsequent time spent in Latin America.

The underpinnings of Botero's aesthetic development and worldview began in Medellín, Colombia, where the artist was born in 1932. In this Postwar Colombian environment characterized by staunch Catholicism, social rigidity, and political instability, Botero began his artistic exploration—effectively combining motifs and inspiration drawn from his lived experience within Colombian culture and his appreciation for Renaissance and Baroque artists to establish his own distinctive artistic vocabulary.

As a visual poet of daily life, Botero's pioneering figurative artworks, still life paintings and sculptures serve as vivid portrayals of the characters and scenes Botero encountered throughout his life. "A Love Letter to Latin America" presents a selection of works that demonstrate—in both subtle and deliberate ways—the tremendous influence of Latin American culture on Botero and conversely, Botero's advocacy for Latin America's representation within the canon of art history.

The presentation of this exhibition in Miami additionally serves as an homage to the vibrant influence of Latin America in South Florida. "The sincerity in Botero's work speaks directly to the deeply rooted Latin American culture and traditions embedded in the identity of Miami itself." said Opera Gallery Miami Director Dan Benchetrit, "Through this cross-cultural exchange, we explore timeless themes while creating a new dialogue about the human condition, societal dynamics, the identity of the individual and the future. This interplay between tradition and modernity directly correlates to the spirit of present day Miami and America at large."



Fernando Botero. © Enrique Palacio

## About Fernando Botero

Perhaps the most widely recognized and celebrated Latin American contemporary artist of the twentieth century, Fernando Botero (1932-2023) was born in Medellín, Colombia and transformed the Latin American art landscape. He gained worldwide acclaim for his distinctive 'Boterismo' style characterized by smooth, inflated shapes with discernible shifts in volume and scale. His works often commented on—and sometimes criticized—subject matter including but not limited to economic disparity, sensuality and pleasure, religion, political instability, and the monotony of daily life.

Botero's early aesthetic influences included cubism and Mexican murals. After a stint at a matador school, Botero decided art was his true calling and in 1948 at age 16, he had his first exhibition. In the early 1950s Botero traveled through Europe, studying art at Madrid's Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, followed

by a spell in Paris spent absorbing the works of the Old Masters at the Louvre. He continued to Florence where he studied the frescoes of the Italian Renaissance, discovering techniques from a bygone era. Many of the artist's important works are housed in the Botero Museum in Bogotá in his native Colombia, which opened to the public in 2000. He died in September 2023 in Monaco.

He has created monumental sculptures for public spaces in many major cities, including New York (Park Avenue), Paris (Champs-Élysées), Rome and Monte Carlo. His works are found in many important private and public collections, such as the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.); Ho-am Museum (Seoul); Israel Museum (Jerusalem); Kunsthalle Nuremberg (Nuremberg); Museo d'Arte Moderna del Vaticano (Rome); Museum Moderne Kunst (Vienna); Neue Pinakothek (Munich); Staatgalerie Moderne Kunst (Munich); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Tel Aviv); The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York); The Museum of Modern Art (New York); and The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum (New York).

## About Opera Gallery

Founded in 1994 with exhibition spaces in Singapore and Paris by French art dealer Gilles Dyan, Opera Gallery Group is comprised of sixteen galleries worldwide with locations in Paris, New York, London, Geneva, Monaco, Hong Kong, Seoul, Singapore, Dubai, Beirut, Miami, Miami Bal Harbour Aspen, and Madrid. Since its inception, the gallery has presented a program of major modern and contemporary works by predominantly established artists, showcasing its expansive collection of works in dialogue with a contemporary visual language. With an annual program of thought provoking exhibitions and art fair presentations, each gallery promotes a cross-cultural exchange of modern and contemporary creative visionaries.

## Press Contact

Katherine McMahon  
katherine@operagallery.com

## Opera Gallery Miami

151 NE 41st Street, Suite 131  
Miami, FL 33137  
miami@operagallery.com  
T +1 305 868 3337  
Mon - Sat : 11 am - 8 pm  
Sun: 12 am - 6 pm