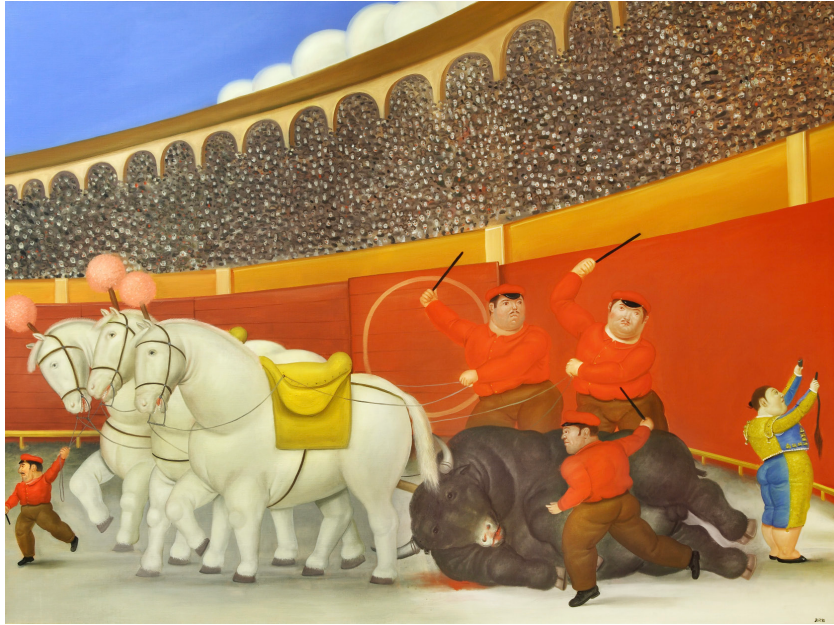


OPERA GALLERY



Fernando Botero, *El Arrastre*, 1984, oil on canvas, 185 x 141 cm | 72.8 x 55.5 in

FERNANDO BOTERO

In Praise of an Amplified World

12 October - 22 November, 2026

LONDON

Opera Gallery London is pleased to present Fernando Botero, the first solo exhibition in London of the celebrated Colombian artist's work since 2015. With scenography conceived by Cécile Degos, the exhibition brings together a major selection of paintings, drawings and sculptures produced over the course of almost six decades, from the mid-1960s to the final year of the artist's life, inviting visitors to rediscover one of the foremost figurative painters of our time. It reveals that Botero's universe is founded neither on humour, nor caricature, but on a remarkably coherent formal investigation.

Volume is the true subject of Botero's work—not as a stylistic device, but as a fundamental principle of representation. Botero does not simply enlarge figures and objects: he amplifies them. By altering proportion, he transforms our perception of reality. Fruit, animals, landscapes, musical instruments, human figures and everyday objects acquire an unprecedented physical presence. Their weight, density and monumentality never verge on excess; rather, they endow the world with a new intensity.

This singular vision originated in a now celebrated discovery made in 1957, when, by reducing the size of the rosette on a mandolin, Botero realised that a simple shift in proportion could radically transform the presence of an object. His entire œuvre stems from this foundational intuition: painting does not reproduce reality—it reveals its hidden intensity.

The exhibition at Opera Gallery demonstrates the extent to which this enquiry belongs within the long history of painting. Having worked as a copyist at the Prado in his youth, Botero maintained a constant dialogue with Piero della Francesca, Velázquez, Goya and Picasso. Far from mere quotation or homage, these references nourish a profoundly personal visual language in which tradition becomes the point of departure for continual invention.

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At a time when images succeed one another at an ever-accelerating pace, the paintings and sculptures of Fernando Botero offer the opposite experience. They invite us to slow our gaze. They restore to people, objects and landscapes the silent density that familiarity so often erases. More than an imagined universe, Botero's work, as presented in this exhibition at Opera Gallery, offers a renewed way of inhabiting the world today.

"Fernando Botero created a visual language that is instantly recognisable yet endlessly nuanced," said Gilles Dyan, Founder of Opera Gallery. "Bringing together works across more than six decades, this exhibition highlights the remarkable consistency of his artistic vision and the diversity of his achievements. Beneath their celebrated forms lies a profound understanding of human nature, one that continues to resonate with audiences across cultures and generations."

About Opera Gallery

Founded in Singapore in 1994, Opera Gallery has forged a network of galleries worldwide with locations in London, Paris, New York, Geneva, Madrid and Dubai, establishing itself as one of the leading forces within the international art market.

Headed by Gilles Dyan, Chairman and Founder, Opera Gallery specialises in modern, post-war, and contemporary art. In addition, the gallery represents international emerging artists such as Andy Denzler and Gustavo Nazareno, alongside internationally recognised names such as Ron Arad, Manolo Valdés and Anselm Reyle.

For more than 30 years, Opera Gallery's mission has been to showcase the dynamic, innovative, and diverse expressions of modern and contemporary art through its ambitious yearly exhibition programming and collaborations with private collections and leading public institutions. Opera Gallery in London is led by Deputy Director Giulia Lecchini.

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