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find the history of Belgravia fascinating. First there's the fact the name actually harks back to a village in Cheshire, and second its look and feel is pretty much down to one man: Thomas Cubitt. Back in the early 19th century, he was commissioned by the Marquess of Westminster to create housing on an expanse of fields, which today we see in the wonderful white stucco houses that proudly form part of Belgravia.

It's no surprise, then, that when details emerged of his former home going up for sale, I became rather excited. In my time as an editor and journalist, I have been privy to many astonishing homes, but Cubitt Lodge has to be right up there. What's all the more remarkable is the property's current owners have done something incredible: maintained an essence of what the master builder was all about, but brought the home bang up to date. Turn to page 54 to see why I was so blown away.

It's all rather apt when you take a look through your new issue of The Resident as we have also made a few changes. Your regulars are still present and correct - from our in-depth homes section including a special look at the latest in kitchens, to our food and drink round-up that has a look back at a man who really made Soho what it is today - but you'll notice the introduction of more features to get your teeth stuck into at the front of the magazine. Mayfair is undoubtedly a world leader in the art world, but as

such how do you stand out from the crowd when opening a new gallery? Have our cover star Reza Derakshani as the man behind your first exhibition, that's how. We take a look inside the Sophia Contemporary Gallery on page 18. There's also some unique insight into the running of the BADA Fair, and an exclusive chat with Emma Hill, former Creative Director of Mulberry, about her own brand.

It would be interesting to know what Thomas Cubitt would make of design in the area today. Chelsea, in particular, has become a magnet for the very best in the industry - from Nina Campbell to Sally Storey - as we highlight from page 28. I have an inkling he'd be quite impressed. Enjoy the issue.



Mark Kelalaie, Editor





CULTURAL ATTRACTION

There's a new gallery in Mayfair and it's set to shed light on the stunning work emerging from the Middle East and Iran, starting with Reza Derakshani

Words MARK KEBBLE

ophia Contemporary Gallery is the result of a two-year project. Their aim is to showcase, through carefully curated shows, the best emerging and established artists from the Middle East and Iran alongside some of the finest artists from the West.

It all starts with Reza Derakshani's The Breeze at Dawn and here the gallery's director, Vassili Tsarenkov, tells us why he was perfect for their first exhibition.

Why did you want to open a gallery in Mayfair?

We decided to open in Mayfair as it has become the main hub for international art galleries in recent years. We believe that it is the ideal location to reach the largest number of international collectors and artistic institutions.

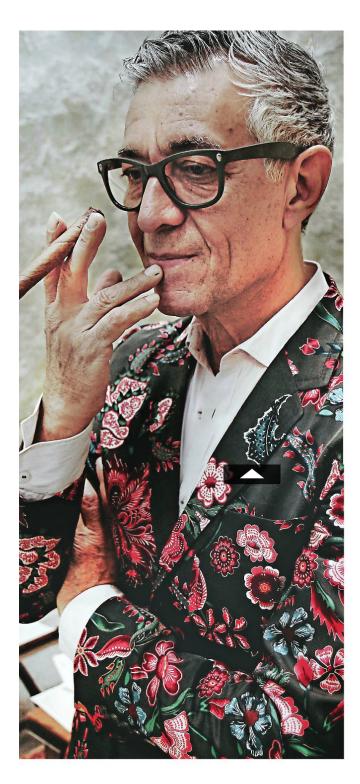
Why was Reza Derakshani perfect for the debut show?

He is perfect for our inaugural exhibition for several reasons. He is considered as one of the most significant living artists from the Middle East and has a strong collector base in both the Middle East and the West, notably in London. His artworks are in the permanent collections of the The British Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art among others. We are very proud and humbled to open our gallery with such a significant and creative artist.

Is he typical of what you want to bring to London audiences?

We chose to open our gallery with Reza Derakshani as we believe that he sets a good example of what we want to bring







to London audiences. Our artists are all rooted in local narratives and work either in continuity or in disruption with the history of art. It is important to us not to look at the work of a particular artist through narrow lenses, but to view it in a larger historical narrative, whether it is local or global. We therefore look for artists that we believe will leave a mark in the history of art in virtue of their originality and skills. Furthermore, we represent artists that are not only rooted in their respective cultures, but also actively engage with the contemporary artistic debates in the West and reflect the globalised world that we live in. Finally, it is important to us that our artists' work is both conceptual and intellectually challenging, yet aesthetically and visually appealing. In that sense, Reza Derakshani is very representative of our gallery's vision.

Reza Derakshani: The Breeze at Dawn runs from 9 March-23 April. Sophia Contemporary Gallery, 11 Grosvenor Street W1K 4QB; sophiacontemporary.com



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