

[ART]

DOWN TO A FINE ART

The Journal discovers more about art consultancy company and local gallery, The Art Movement

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Camilla Girardot is just one of those people who you connect with instantly. She admits that she's always been a 'people person'. Perhaps it's her demeanour, her aptitude to listen, or the fact that she has the ability to adapt to any circumstance. These attributes certainly came in handy when she launched The Art Movement in 1995. At the time, she was living in SoHo in New York City and working for a small research company when she had the idea of setting up her own business. Being interested in art and food, Camilla had the idea of an art consultancy business and art dining club.

Back in the UK, she launched The Art Movement and put on her first event at a restaurant in Parsons Green. "The concept worked for the restaurant and for the business – the clients were buying art, we had no overheads and everyone had so much fun," she tells me. As well as working as a PA for the editor of *The Economist* (she joined as maternity cover and ended up staying for 10 years), Camilla's business grew and after an article in *The Times*, she put on events at restaurants including The Pheasantry on the King's Road and 1 Lombard Street in the City. "At the time, artists stayed in their gallery – none of the studios were open to



the general public – so the whole concept was, and is, about bringing art to the people," she says. As well as her successful art dining club, Camilla has sold a lot of artists' work to The Wellcome Trust. "It liked emerging artists, so I worked quite a lot with the management there."

Camilla, who, in her words, came to realise she had become somewhat of "an underpaid courier", recently decided to set up a gallery

space on Queenstown Road, where she displays some of the work. Showcasing everything from abstract pieces to sculptures, she says: "I often have open nights and also work with companies in the local area. Not that long ago, I worked with the Battersea Power Station for its Art Station, while I've also helped the Battersea Arts Centre fundraise since the fire." Camilla also exhibits at both the spring and autumn



Affordable Art Fairs in Battersea. "At one point in my career, I was doing around 12 combined national and international art fairs, per year but I made the decision to concentrate on the Affordable Art Fairs and my gallery," she says. After being affected by David Bowie's death in January of this year, Camilla gave the artists she represents a brief to produce pieces inspired by Bowie for the fair. "We've got a six-foot black star that's going to be hung on the wall of the fair and we're going to be showcasing work around it," she describes. As well as this, she will also be exhibiting Bowie pieces at her gallery. But what satisfies her most about her work? "It has to be about finding the right art for the space – you can't get much better than that." ♦

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