

ALICE AMATI

Cultured Magazine

'MEET THE NEXT GENERATION OF BRITISH GALLERISTS YOU NEED TO KNOW'

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In a post-pandemic world, follow a generation of young upstarts who turned unprecedented times into scarcely preceded progress.



Exterior of Alice Amati. Image courtesy of the gallery.

“More than 90 percent of Oof’s visitors have never been to a contemporary art gallery,” Frankel explains. “This is their first exposure to what can be an exclusionary, difficult and alienating world.” Oof is at the forefront of a new generation of galleries—what some are calling the Young British Gallerists—that have reinvigorated London’s commercial art scene after the pandemic. “There is

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definitely a new wave,” says [Alice Amati](#), a former sales executive at [David Zwirner](#) who, in June 2023, opened her eponymous space in a former art supplies shop in Fitzrovia. “It is a phenomenon, and it is specific to London,” Amati says of the scene. “In [New York](#), all the galleries seem to be closing. Here, a whole new gallery scene has emerged in just a few years.”

“It’s flourishing,” agrees Hannah Barry, founder of [Bold Tendencies](#), a not-for-profit arts organisation in Peckham set to reopen this year. “Covid created unique conditions that allowed this fiercely independent sector to thrive.”

By taking advantage of business rate relief schemes, occupying newly vacant high street real estate and harnessing council support for cultural initiatives, galleries like Amati, Oof, [Harlesden High Street](#), Vardaxoglou Gallery, [Ginny on Frederick](#), [Rose Easton](#), [Emalin](#), [Sherbet Green](#), [Neven](#), and [Guts Gallery](#) are showing a new type of artist, selling to a new type of collector and perhaps even reaching a new type of audience.

These spaces have thrown their chips in with early-career practitioners who arrive without reputation or fanfare. A world apart from Mayfair, the historic art district in the city’s monied centre, they are rooted in Hackney, Southwark, Lewisham, Haringey, and Brent—parts of London that the old guard has traditionally feared to tread—or in unlikely central [London](#) spaces within Soho, Bloomsbury, and Fitzrovia, where they occupy what were once cubby hole shops, factory floors, workshops, pubs, greasy spoons, desecrated churches, and abandoned offices.

“It’s an astonishing shift,” says Jeremy Epstein, co-owner of the well-established Edel Assanti gallery in Fitzrovia. “The London economy was hit hard by Brexit, Covid, and inflation. Yet new galleries continue to open every year.”

Epstein founded [London Gallery Weekend](#) to draw visitors back to the art scene post-pandemic. Its 2025 edition, opening 6 June, will feature 123 galleries, 13 of which are first-time participants. The 2024 iteration welcomed 15 new additions. “This phenomenon is driven by a young generation who feel they have something to say,” Epstein adds. “They want to do things differently, they have a unique perspective, and they want to showcase their artists in their own way.”

Amati agrees. “We all saw how the old gallery system operated,” she says. “It’s something we wanted to change. We are shifting the focus back to the artists.”