

Camilla Webster

Love from Palm Beach, the Artist, the Famed Resort and the 101 on How to Become a Next Gen Art Collector.

By Ava Roosevelt

Born in New York, to British and American parents, Camilla traveled the world as both an artist and an award-winning journalist. Camilla covered hot zones in the Middle East and important global events from The World Economic Forum to Wall Street. Her international experience gives her work, as an artist, an additional depth. She has also studied at The Slade School of Fine Art in London, the Art Students League in New York and has her Master's degree in Modern History and History of Art from the University of St Andrews, Scotland.

Camilla, a now globally recognized artist, resides in Palm Beach. Her often-epic museum collected paintings have focused on the essence of the human spirit, connection, healing, and the societal issues in our midst through abstracted landscapes and seascapes.

In recent years, Webster's work has been selected for Hudson Yards by Norges, as well as The Coral Springs Museum of Art, and is currently on exhibit at The Southampton Arts Center in New York, The Sagamore Hotel and The Ritz Carlton South Beach, where she was recently recognized in October by the Mayor of Miami and the Miami Art Commission. Over 50 paintings are in important institutional and private collections around the world.

Camilla and I met at a private soirée' in Palm Beach. We clicked.

Ava

You said it is the light and color of South Florida, that drew you back to Palm Beach. Your studio sits just one block down from The Norton Museum of Art. Tell us about the creation of the Love from Palm Beach brand and series?

Camilla

It's the pandemic which motivated me to create a collection of fine art inspired by Palm Beach and placing it on a series of products. The first pieces were encouraged by a painting called Love from Palm Beach which was auctioned to support Place of Hope. The painting became my trademark, my post card to the world, capturing the joy of throwing open the windows on the magic of Palm Beach.

Palms blowing, sea spray and an air overflowing with enchantment filled the darkness of the pandemic with my message of love. The brand is fresh and looking to the future, while walking hand in hand with Palm Beach's glamorous and elegant history. In just two years, Love from Palm Beach pieces have reached thousands of customers and raised over \$20,000 for local charities.

Ava

As you are a Next Gen artist and an avid art collector yourself, let's talk about Next Gen art collecting. Who should one be looking at?

Camilla

I am fascinated by any rich life experiences that drive or inspire an artist's work. While my paintings are inspired by radical beauty, spirituality, love and heaven, you can see the power of pain and addiction in the work of Van Gogh and Jean Michel Basquiat. Look for depth and what speaks to you.



Ava

Would you say it's important that they studied with a master or in a master class?

Camilla

Yes. I also study who are their mentors, where have they shown, and most importantly "who collects them." When an artist says, "This is my life's work, my only passion," and if they have any talent, you'll have a keeper!

Ava

How about the financial aspect of collecting?

Camilla

I very carefully review their art sales/pricing. Commissioning a painting or work from an artist you are following has multiple advantages. It gets you into their studio, which will allow you to bypass the gallery system that controls the financial share of their work. The shared experience of the artist's creative process is priceless.

Ava

I understand from my own experience, a sound pace is to collect slowly, but be ready to dip into your art fund if a real opportunity comes your way.

Camilla

Indeed. As a new collector, don't immediately box yourself into a genre or "period" until you shop around and remain flexible regarding the overall scope of your collection. As you acquire knowledge and sophistication in your artistic judgment, your collection will evolve naturally.

Ava

You are, on canvas, a traditional painter. Have you tried to self-define what KIND of artist you aspire to be and what art you generate gives you the most pleasure and fun in creating? Decorative, Socially Conscious, On-the-edge or Traditional blue chip? Are you in it for the long game or short-term gains?

Camilla

I love to create colossal works. These are museum size 6 x 9 foot works on canvas that test my own cerebral and creative limits. It gives me the opportunity to invite the viewer into a whole new world or universe. To watch someone in awe or excitement experience standing in one of my forests or a world of love is one of the greatest gifts I can receive. My work is in some of the most important art collections in the world alongside artists from Da Vinci to Peter Max. I keep creating art and experiences that generate the art orgasm, the spiritual enlightenment, the peace we so desperately seek in our lives. Like the artists of the Italian Renaissance, I do not get stuck on size, medium or place. I work with my environment - from champagne bottles, to a one inch canvas, to hallways - all to fill me with joy and change your life.

Ava

You have also created what you call ready-to-wear-art, earrings which range from \$300-\$600. They are beautiful and collectible. So, if you cannot afford a \$10,000 Webster canvas, you can afford signed Webster semi-precious stone earrings.

Camilla

I enjoy learning and inventing wearable art. These pieces are perfect to wear in our hot climate because of their design, light weight and textures. I just recreated the Dancing Palms painting in stones on straw envelopes, \$275 -\$450 clutches that epitomize island glamor.

I am passionate about well-being; we have a line of yoga mats, candles and towels that are carried at www.lovefrompalmbeach.com and at Florida's private clubs, retail centers and resorts, including Ocean Reef Club, Lost Tree, The Boca Raton and The Royal Poinciana Plaza.

Ava

It is worth remarking that you have a great eye for other artists and have become a collector of an important New York artist, Hunt Slonem. I understand Hunt has been generous to you, both in motivation and artistic "stretch." Has sharing a root spiritualism as primal motivation for your work lead to a close friendship?

Camilla

There is nothing more special than visiting Hunt's studio and spending time with him. Hunt is unabashedly true to himself, his artistic vision, prolific and as successful as artists with entire guilds behind them in earlier centuries in Holland and Italy. Before we ever met, I was described as the Queen of Color and known for the spiritual journey I took in my work. Knowing Hunt now as I do is like meeting a dear friend in the dark, who is holding the lantern for me on the right path.

Ava

You, yourself, fit so many of the categories we have explored above; you are young, but a life-experienced painter who has dedicated the rest of your career to being an artist. Collecting your art artwork, apart from pure joy, led to our friendship. You were happy to give me a certificate of authenticity to go with your seminal work from a series I acquired called, "American Summer." Because of my late husband William Roosevelt's family lineage, your work speaks to me and goes well in my home on the Connecticut Sound. I held a lunch there for about twenty-five friends, including a newspaper writer, to exhibit your work. Your art was well-received and multiple paintings were purchased.

Camilla

I am very grateful indeed. All young collectors should be cheerleaders for the artist(s) that they are buying and collecting.

Ava

Above all, what is your best advice for any newcomer?

Camilla

Self-education and willingness to LISTEN. Getting into art collection means you will get to know and even become close to the most inventive, creative, sometimes quirky, often brilliant personalities on the face of the earth. Don't be put off by big-price artists. You might find a lithograph or an out-of-series, unique piece, which has been created by the same artist, for much less. Trust your instincts and purchase what moves you, both visually and emotionally. Meanwhile, have fun, discover what moves you, and should Lady Luck shine upon you, make a fortune in the process!

Ava

Let me close with an inspirational, true story for all young collectors: One of my close friends, the contemporary American collector, Matt Rich, saw a teenager doing graffiti art on the streets of New York. Matt, who was moved by the inventive composition of the work, promptly commissioned the young artist, whose name was Brian Donnelly, to create a large piece. The cost was nominal and it was young Brian's first commission. It is well known that Brian's "tag" is KAWS. Two decades later that early piece is making the museum rounds valued in the high six figures. This is like buying a "penny stock" which soars into a gold mine!

