

CULTURE

Christine Mack's extraordinary art collection goes on view in Southampton: Inside the elegant opening

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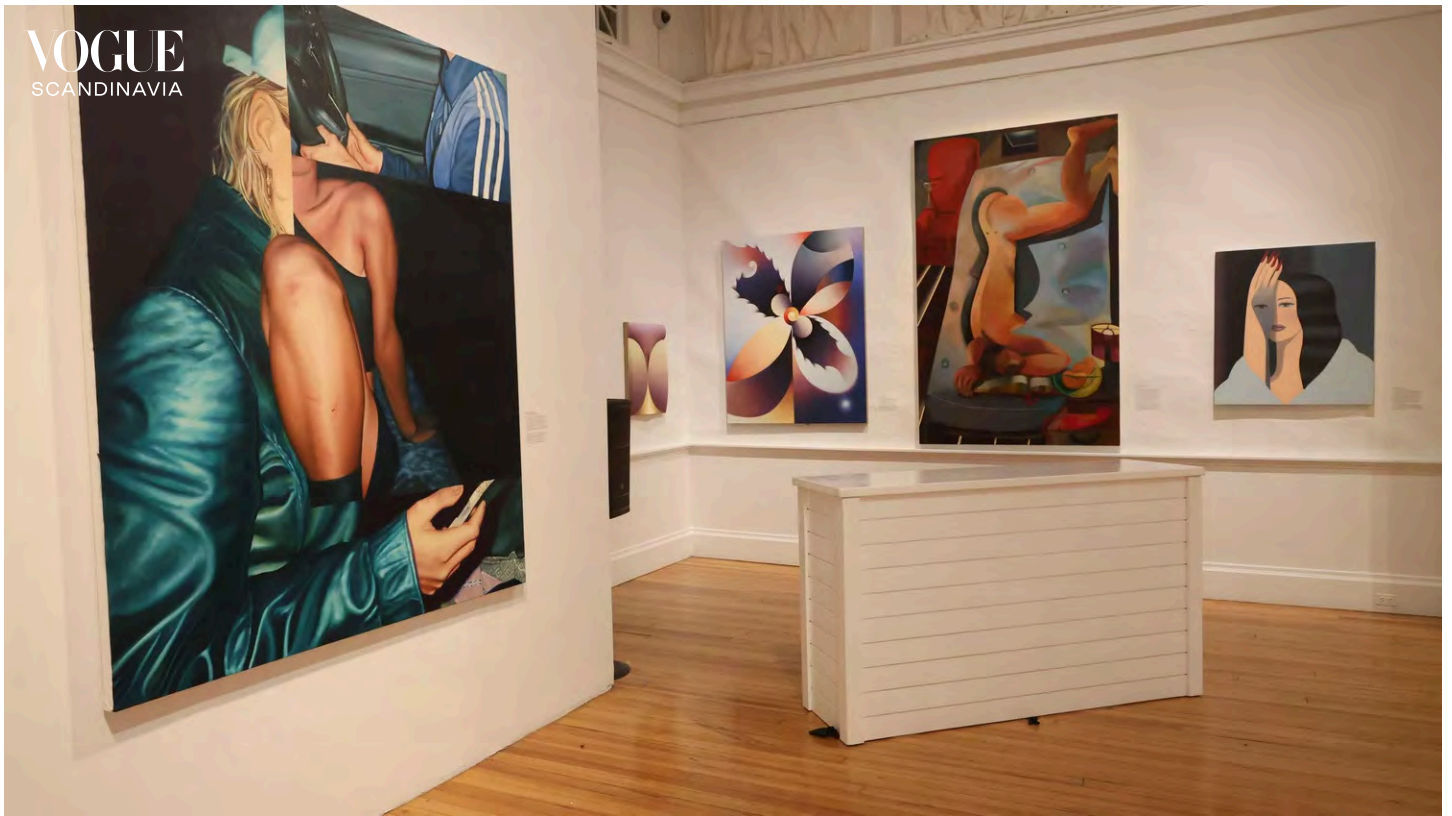


Swedish patron of the arts Christine Mack has been collecting the works of emerging and established artists for over two decades. Now, a curated mix of her collection is on view at the Southampton Art Centre. We step inside the opening of *Beyond the Present: Collecting for the Future*

For over two decades, Christine “Chris” Mack has been steadily building an extraordinary art collection, focusing on emerging artists (many of whom, like her, are Swedish). Now, a curated selection of these works, which span Rashid Johnson to Austin Lee to Rugiyatou Jallow (with a handful of iconic works by the likes of Keith Haring, Cindy Sherman and Robert Rauschenberg thrown in for good measure) are on view in an unmissable exhibition at the Southampton Art Centre. Dubbed *Beyond the Present: Collecting for the Future*, the exhibition reflects a woman who has dedicated her life to supporting the arts. To fete the opening, friends of Mack’s – artists and editors, museum directors and gallerists – came from far and wide to show their support and enjoy an intimate dinner, which culminated in guests decorating their own blank-canvas desserts with chocolate and caramel.



Installation view of 'Beyond the Present: Collecting for the Future'. Photo: Rob Rich/SocietyAllure.com ©2025



Installation view of 'Beyond the Present: Collecting for the Future'. Photo: Beyond the Present: Collecting for the Future

“After collecting for over 20 years, it was a great opportunity to look back on that journey and share it with a wider audience,” says Mack of the exhibition. Co-curating with SAC’s director Christina Strassfield and art advisor Natasha Schlesinger, Mack distilled her collection into a show that reflects her unwavering approach as a collector. “ I’ve always followed my instincts- drawn to works that move me emotionally or challenge me intellectually,” she says. “This exhibition isn’t just a snapshot of what’s in my collection today; it’s about supporting the voices that are shaping the future of art. It’s also about legacy, and how the choices we make as collectors today help shape the cultural conversations of tomorrow and inspire future generations.” Mack follows in the footsteps of her mother-in-law, Phyllis Mack, who began collecting in the 1980s. In fact, both women have works by the likes of Keith Haring and Cindy Sherman in their collections. Phyllis, of course, came to the opening to support her daughter-in-law.

To double down on her support for future of art, in 2023 Mack opened the Mack Art Foundation, a residency programme that offers emerging artists access to a covetable studio space in Brooklyn whilst helping residents make the right connections to get their practice off the ground. Later this summer, the Southampton Art Centre will award Mack with Champion of the Arts award for her extraordinary efforts.







Chris Mack and her mother-in-law Phyllis Mack. Photo: Rob Rich/SocietyAllure.com ©2025

In putting together the exhibition, a natural theme emerged: the human body. “It wasn’t a conscious focus when collecting, but seeing the works together made it clear how often I’m drawn to artists who explore identity, vulnerability, and power through the body,” says Mack, noting that her co-curators were instrumental in exploring this theme throughout the exhibition. “Working with curators Christina Strassfield and Natasha Schlesinger was truly a gift. They each brought such a thoughtful and focused perspective, and together they shaped the exhibition into something cohesive, layered, and deeply resonant.”

The exhibition opening brought out the who’s-who of the New York art world and beyond. “Carl Kostyál flew in from Stockholm too, since we did a collaboration with one of his artists, Austin Lee,” notes Mack. “ I was surrounded by family, friends and my favourite people in the art world. I was really grateful for the chance to spotlight so many emerging artists and share why supporting them matters.” Dinner guests left with gift bags stuffed with goodies from BonBon, LALO, Odd Bird and AMAN resorts, not to mention the latest copy of Vogue Scandinavia.



The ART dinner to fete the exhibition opening. Photo: Rob Rich/SocietyAllure.com ©2025



Photo: Rob Rich/SocietyAllure.com ©2025

For Mack, taking in the fully installed exhibition for the first time was “emotional, honestly”. “I’ve lived with many of these works for years, often in intimate settings like my home, so seeing them installed in a formal exhibition space gave them a new kind of life. Certain pieces I thought I knew felt different when placed in dialogue with others-especially when juxtaposing established artists with emerging voices. It reminded me how dynamic art can be, and also made me incredibly proud of the artists I’ve supported and the stories they’re telling.