

Art reinvents chapel



LONDON. Collector Anita Zabłudowicz is to open a public gallery at Chalk Farm on 20 September. It is set in a converted Methodist Chapel, dating from 1867. The imposing classical building was used by the Methodists until the 1960s, when it became the North London Drama Centre.

Refurbishment is now being completed, and curator Elizabeth Neilson says the work has been handled with a "light touch", preserving the interior's period features. The architect is Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, which is also working on the Saatchi Gallery in Chelsea (due to open in November). Known as "176", from its address at 176 Prince of Wales Road, the Zabłudowicz building will have three main galleries and six smaller rooms.

There are to be three exhibitions a year, and Ms Zabłudowicz says that the gallery is to be "a platform for more experimental shows", with special commissions and works from her collection. Twelve years ago she began to collect with her Finnish-born husband Poju. Owned by the Zabłudowicz Art Trust, the collection now comprises 1,200 works from over 30 countries, particularly Britain, Germany and America.

The opening exhibition, "An Archaeology" (until 16 December), will present a new commission by Indian-born New York artist Rina Banerjee, along with Zabłudowicz works (including Vanessa Beecroft and Sarah Lucas).

At the same time works from the Zabłudowicz collection are to go on show in an exhibition at the Baltic Centre in Gateshead (provisionally 21 September-20 January 2008). Curated by the Baltic's Jérôme Sans, the show, entitled "When we build let us think that we build forever", will include a commission by London artist Mustafa Hulusi, who is of Turkish Cypriot origin.

The Zabłudowiczs are already generous gallery patrons, supporting the Tate, Serpentine, Whitechapel and Hayward. They also back the Zoo art fair which runs alongside Frieze in October.

Poju Zabłudowicz's wealth comes from his Liechtenstein-registered company Tamares Groups which has investments in property and hotels. *The Sunday Times* rich list values Mr Zabłudowicz's assets at £2 billion.

Martin Bailey