


ANTIQUES TRADE gazette

THE ART MARKET WEEKLY

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Roadshow reins in ivory coverage

■ Fewer items to be shown on screen in future following lengthy debate with specialists

Roland Arkell
reports

THE BBC's Antiques Roadshow will show fewer ivory objects in future programmes, but has stopped short of banning the valuation of antique ivory on screen.

There has been speculation that the show was under pressure to follow its 'sister' programme in the USA and drop most ivory appraisals from the show.

Executive producer Simon Shaw told ATG that the show had become increasingly cautious about bringing pieces of ivory to camera, which has resulted in a decline in such appearances

on *Antiques Roadshow*. The approach has been taken in association with the team of specialists who have debated the issue at length.

However, Mr Shaw believes the *Roadshow* has an important role to play as viewers look for more information on the subject. "In our role as a trusted source of advice about antiques and fine art, we do not feel it appropriate to impose a ban on all coverage of ivory objects.

"On the few occasions where we will show antique ivory in future programmes we will choose them because of their importance in representing such cultural or creative significance and only when such pieces are legal under the CITES convention. Within these features we will also seek to reflect the wider context of the debate about ivory and the horrors of modern day poaching."

Mr Shaw said they had already filmed a discussion of the issues around the

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Inspector of scribes writes his name in record books

THIS 4500-year-old Egyptian painted limestone statue topped last week's summer series of Old Masters and works of art sales in London.

Billed as one of the most important Egyptian sculptures to come to market, and remarkable for its quality, near perfect condition and impeccable provenance, the 2ft 5in (75cm) sculpture from the Old Kingdom (c.2400-2300BC) sold at Christie's evening Exceptional sale on July 10 for £14m.

From the inscription to the base the main figure was a man called Sekhemka, the Inspector of the scribes of the royal court, accompanied by his wife, Sitmerit, at his feet and their son carved in shallow relief by his other leg. It was consigned by Northampton Borough Council to help fund a £14m extension to Northampton Museum

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Right: The Northampton Sekhemka – £14m at Christie's on July 11.



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The five-year-old has

■ Masterpiece seems to have finally cracked it as a major fair

THIS year, *Masterpiece London* had the feel of a fair that has come of age. Now a precocious five year old, gone is the much-criticised vague and often misdirected marketing, as well as the overemphasis on luxury goods that plagued the event in its first two years.

Yes it is expensive, both for exhibitors and visitors (even a coffee will set you back the best part of a fiver), and for some its glitziness and unabashed extravagance can grate. But, headed since last year by CEO **Nazy Vassehgh**, it is emerging as a sleek fair that has become a real 'event' on the London summer season calendar and most exhibitors seem to actually enjoy participating. It seems *Masterpiece London* is here to stay.

This year's run, in its usual purpose-built pavilion (a feat of engineering in itself) on the South Grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea from June 26 to July 2, attracted the highest visitor numbers to date at 35,000 and the packed preview day on June 25 brought in 7000 of those, 17% up on last year.

Several exhibitors said they had seen more international visitors this year and some of their overseas clients had flown in especially for it, now considering it an event to be at. An important client of London jewellers **S.J. Phillips** had flown in by private jet for the fair and concluded a substantial deal with them.

Floris Vandervan, the well-known Dutch dealer in Asian art and *TEFAF* stalwart, returned to the event this year and seemed happy with his decision: "*Masterpiece* has its own identity and flavour. It is an international fair with a



British flavour.

"It is now on the map and in people's diaries as a must visit. In only five years this is a real achievement and it is here to stay! There is an excellent mix of dealers specialising in high-quality objects from the quirky to exotic."

Museum curators were certainly doing the rounds, including representatives from, among others, The Wallace Collection, Rijksmuseum, MOMA, British Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Getty, Sir John Soane's Museum and TATE. And clearly it has taken its place on the social calendar with the likes of **Eddie Redmayne, Sir Paul Smith, Zandra Rhodes, Tom Ford, Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie, Marc Quinn, Sir**

"It is now on the map and in people's diaries as a must visit. In only five years this is a real achievement and it is here to stay"

Anish Kapoor, Richard E. Grant, Sir Bob Geldof, Rod Stewart and Penny Lancaster, Nick Candy and Holly Valance, Joan Collins and Dame Diana Rigg all seen on opening day – the latter bought a portrait miniature of the Countess of Craven from **Elle Shushan**.

There are gaps in the fair's profile; Old Master and pre-20th century paintings, for instance, remain thin on the ground



Above: Mayfair bar Mr Fogg's will be recreated in a pop-up venue at this year's *LAPADA Art & Antiques Fair* from September 24-28.

Mr Fogg's plans to pop up at LAPADA fair in September

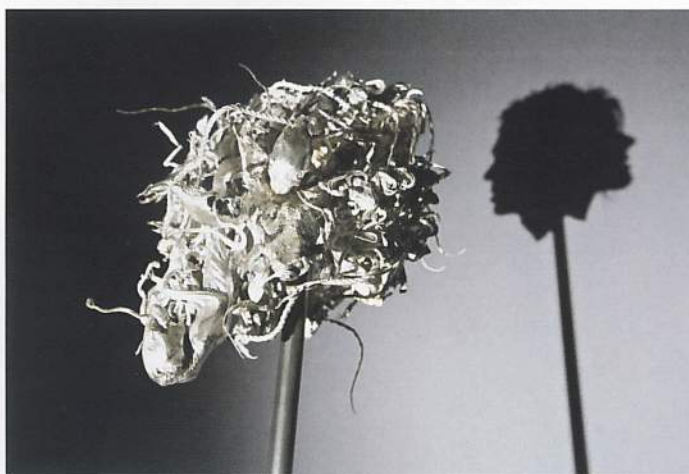
LAPADA will jazz up the interior of their Berkeley Square fair this September 24-28 with a quirky pop-up venue from Mayfair bar Mr Fogg's.

It is modelled on the period drawing room of the fictional explorer Phileas Fogg and will be adorned with maps, globes, exotic taxidermy, pictures and ornaments – **Charlie Gilkes** and **Duncan Stirling**, founders of **The Inception Group** who own Mr Fogg's, say they enjoy shopping at antiques fairs for their bars.

"We removed the entire door frame of the building to allow the entry of an antique balloon basket we bought through a dealer," says Charlie. "Then we wanted to suspend it from the ceiling, which had to be reinforced in order to support its considerable weight. It took eight of us to raise it. It is one of the most extraordinary pieces in the bar and a great talking point, so it was worth it."

The 2014 fair will see the return of 78 of last year's dealers (taking up 87% of the space), joined by new dealers including: **Gould Antiques, JGM Art, Craig Carrington, Crispian Riley-Smith Fine Arts, Timothy Langston, Antikbar, Walker Galleries, Northcote Gallery, Albemarle Gallery and M. Charpentier Antiques.**

Hansord, Geoffrey Stead, Holly Johnson, and Moira of Bond Street will return to the fair this year after a break.



Left: hidden behind a partition at the front, it was easy to miss **Blain|Southern's** stand at *Masterpiece London*, despite its location next to the enormous central champagne bar. However, the partition was there for a reason, to create the right conditions to light **Tim Noble and Sue Webster's** shadow sculpture, *The Masterpiece*, winner of this year's Object of the Year award and the sole work on the gallery's stand. The piece is in solid sterling silver, a squirming mass of vermin cast from their mummified remains which, when lit, ingeniously casts the shadow of the artist's profiles. The work was priced in the region of £200,000 and, at the close of the fair, was under consideration by a major US institution.

"This is our second year at *Masterpiece London* which has become a must on the international arts calendar," said **Adrian Sutton**, **Blain|Southern** director. "Every year we meet new collectors and reconnect with our existing clients."