

Dealers and auctioneers united

January extravaganza in New York brings together a wide range of fairs, exhibitions and sales

Report by Anne Crane

NEW Yorkers are a resilient lot. January may be the time for snow and bitter winter weather but that will not deter the city from staging events.

So while the art market in Europe slumbers its way through a traditional New Year lull, the Big Apple this month is a time of hectic activity regardless of plummeting temperatures.

Consequently this is where you will find a large slice of the national and international art trade and collectors.

If Manhattan is the locus, the *Winter Antiques Show* has long provided the focus. This veteran event has been staged every January for 63 years. At the same time, the major New York auction rooms build a series of Americana auctions into their January schedules.

Other events such as a dedicated ceramics fair have followed. This is also traditionally the month when the New York rooms put Old Masters under the spotlight while, for the past dozen years, a gallery trail devoted to Master Drawings is an extra draw.

It all provides plenty of excuses to cross the pond, as our preview on the next four pages shows. ■

Bowled over

Glass Past New York, dealer by appointment run by Sara Blumberg and Jim Oliveira, specialises in Italian glass spanning the period 1870-1970 by well-known designers.

They are taking this Barovier and Toso swirl-decorated *spina* bowl priced in the region of \$12,000 to the *Winter Antiques Show*.



Winter Antiques Show

AT 63 years old (or young), the *Winter Antiques Show* fully lives up to its popular prefix as 'venerable'. The fair, whose long-term beneficiary has been the East Side House Settlement in the Bronx, has been pulling the visitors into Manhattan in the first frosty weeks of the New Year for decades.

Staged at the Park Lane Armory in the heart of Manhattan, it starts with a glitzy ticket-only opening night party, this year on January 19, and continues until January 29.

Mixing Americana, folk art and classic antiques, the high return rate of its exhibitors also testifies to the popularity of this formula. Of the 70 exhibitors who are standing this month, 61 were present last year.

American dealers may still dominate the roster but these days the WAS is also an event where you will find British dealers making the most of the fallow period in the UK and Europe to capitalise on all the activity stateside.

And while Americana is still a major plank of this event (reinforced this year by a loan exhibition from Colonial Williamsburg's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum), a gradual shift of emphasis to a broader mix of disciplines has taken place.

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Commenting on these



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shifts, show director Catherine Sweeny Singer points out: "The show has grown in a very organic way.

"In recent years, we had been 'courting' certain top dealers from the UK in traditional English furniture and other areas. In 2015 we were thrilled to add Apter-Fredericks, H Blairman & Sons, Bowman Sculpture; Thomas Coulborn & Sons, Daniel Crouch Rare Books and Ronald Phillips."

A lecture programme and Young Collectors night (pre-requisites for any fair of standing these days) are other elements to be found as part of the 10-day run at the Armory.

Pictured here are some of the elements that make up the show's eclectic mix, plus interviews with two longstanding exhibitors on what makes them keep coming back.

winterantiquesshow.com



Tomasso Brothers

THESE 13in (34cm) terracotta roundels of satyrs and bacchantes were produced c.1770 by the British sculptor John Bacon the Elder (1740-99) as models from which Josiah Wedgwood produced examples in black basalt and white stoneware at his eponymous Staffordshire factory.

The roundels are based on frescoes discovered at Pompeii in the so-called Villa of Cicero. Wedgwood had direct access to the originals through the Marquess of Lansdowne. The highly finished works were formerly in the collection of Dr Terry Freidman, keeper of Decorative Arts at Temple Newsam and at Leeds City Art Gallery.

They are among the works of art spanning the Renaissance to Neoclassical eras which Tomasso Brothers Fine Art is taking to New York for its January exhibition, *Important European Sculpture*, to be staged at Carlton Hobbs Gallery on East 93rd Street from January 19-28. Prices range from \$50,000 up to \$1.5m.

tomassobrothers.co.uk

Third time

H Blairman & Sons is making its third appearance at the *Winter Antiques Show* in 2017. For this year's show the firm has planned its stand around a group of furniture by the Scottish-born architect-designer Bruce J Talbert (1838-81). It will include this ebonised sideboard which has an asking price of £28,000.



Choice items

Mayfair dealership Ronald Phillips will be taking choice examples of its speciality – antique English furniture – to the *Winter Antiques Show*.

The display will include this rare 1660s English cocus wood cabinet on stand, **below**, inset with panels of Florentine pietra dura from the same period.

It has a paper label to the reverse inscribed in German *in the possession of the Dalton family* and is priced in excess of **£250,000**.



Rocking on

This rock crystal, gem-set and enamel pendant in Egyptian style created by Gustave Baugrand c.1867, is one of the pieces that London dealer Wartski will be showing on its stand at the *Winter Antiques Show*, where it is priced at **£100,000-150,000**.

Winter Antiques Show dealer focus: Robert Young

Robert Young is one of the leading UK dealers in folk art but each year, rather like taking coals to Newcastle, he exports this speciality across the Atlantic to the *Winter Antiques Show* where he has been an exhibitor since 2001. ATG asked why he has made a beeline for this fair over the last 17 years.

"The show has always been our most successful fair," says Young. "It is America's longest-established and probably still highest-profile antiques fair, always amazingly well attended with some very loyal clients."

Young notes that "when 'antiques' were more 'fashionable' it was a particularly prestigious show at which to exhibit and an honour to be invited. There is still a healthy waiting list of dealers who would like to participate and a very low attrition rate, which to some extent reflects its commercial success".

He adds: "The fair is perfectly positioned in the New York calendar and is a genuine antiques and decorative arts show, with very few dealers with items displayed in glass cabinets."

Although a strong group of high-end dealers still exists for American pieces, Young says there is now a more even spread, with international dealers and a wider variety of disciplines. "It is a comparatively small show with perhaps 70-75 dealers and has always had a completely different



Left: among the pieces that will be taken by Robert Young to *The Winter Antiques Show* will be this 20in x 2ft (53 x 63cm) framed British naïve school still-life of c.1880. *A Quiet Supper* features a ploughman's meal. The oil on canvas is priced at **\$8500**.

Below left: folk art dealer Robert Young.



look and feel from the Haughtons' international show in the same building and now *TEFAF New York*."

He likes the dealers' stylish presentation which, he feels, helps to attract a broader, younger audience.

When it comes to collecting tastes for folk and vernacular art on either side of the Atlantic, Young says that the Americans have long been excited by their cultural heritage and celebrated inspired naïve and primitive works created by their pioneering population.

"We have always discerned an innate sensitivity for the forms and

aesthetically compelling qualities of folk art, both American and European," says Young, although he adds that "some hard-core Americana collectors would never buy European examples".

Does Young make a particular selection from his stock to take to New York?

"Honestly, no," he says. "We do not select works any differently for exhibition in New York or for *Masterpiece* in London, nor indeed for our gallery.

"Mainly we try to take the most exciting and significant works we can source, as it is an educated and highly selective market."

Winter Antiques Show dealer focus: Tim Martin

New York dealer SJ Shrubsole, which deals in early English and American silver and jewellery, has exhibited at the *Winter Antiques Show* every year since it was founded. The firm's Tim Martin explains why this is an unmissable event.

"We keep coming back because it is one of America's best antique shows, in a great location, with top dealers bringing new items to the market," says Martin.

"It is the cornerstone of what has come to be known as Americana Week, with the auction houses, smaller shows and private galleries all over the city focusing on American art and antiques."

In merchandise terms, what makes the fair distinctive, says Martin, is the focus on Americana which he reckons to be the most exciting aspect of the fair. "It feels like a – these days, much-needed – celebration of America."

The other thing that really sets the show apart, he says, "is that it is one of the few major shows in the world entirely devoted to charity". He adds: "In fact, most of the old dealers still call the show 'East Side' because the beneficiary of the show is the East Side House Settlement in the Bronx – an organisation that helps people from disadvantaged backgrounds with everything from getting an education to getting a job."



Above: Tim Martin of Shrubsole.

"A recent *New York Times* article covered the closing of the Barnes and Noble bookstore there, noting that it leaves an entire borough of the city, home to 1.5m people, without a single general-interest bookstore. The charity is



Shrubsole will be taking its usual mix of silver and jewellery, trying for a focus on American pieces in the former. In the latter, one of the stand-out pieces will be this pair of Mauboussin bracelets in the Brutalist style, **above**, priced at **\$60,000**.

appropriately foregrounded during the show, so most of the visitors can get a sense of what their ticket money and purchases are supporting. It creates a nice atmosphere."

Asked how this 63-year-old veteran event has altered in terms of content and exhibitor profile, Martin reckons "the most recent change was that, with the waning of the *International Show*, there were more English dealers".

However, he adds: "I'm not sure whether that will change back again, now that TEFAF is producing the show in October."

Are there any innovations he would like to see at WAS?

"Nope, I like old-fashioned antique shows," he adds succinctly.

Good bit of exercise with stops for art

Report by Katherine Boyle

ORIGINATING in 2005 as something of a casual gallery stroll while the Old Master drawings auctions were taking place in the city, *Master Drawings New York (MDNY)* has evolved into a significant event in its own right.

It has expanded to include Modern and Contemporary drawings as well as Old Masters.

From January 21-28, a total of 24 galleries will put on special displays of drawings in a relatively small geographical area of Manhattan in either their own or borrowed galleries. Participants come from as far afield as London, Florence, Vienna, Paris and, of course, the US.

The idea is effectively that of an art fair, dedicated to drawings, but with a short walk – often battling terrible winter weather, however – between the stands. Rather than the more generic environment of a fair location, the visitors can admire the

range of exhibitions and share the knowledge and enthusiasm of the dealers in cosy and purpose-designed galleries.

MDNY provides the opportunity to see discoveries, debate recent attributions and appreciate the immediacy, vision and perception of a huge number of artists from various periods, often before the drawings vanish into private collections again.

The event unites major collectors, curators and drawings enthusiasts and the sketches and studies on show offer the chance to see how the thought processes of the artists developed, providing an intimate insight into their creative process in unfinished sketches.

It is a key occasion in the calendar to see many wonderful and varied works on paper, to gain insight into drawings as an art form and to feel the bonhomie and shared enthusiasm for drawings of the scholars, dealers and collectors which buzzes through the streets.

masterdrawingsinnewyork.com



Above: among the works on paper that Stephen Ongpin will show at MDNY is this Picasso drawing of a picador (*Le cheval de picador cabré*) dated 7.12.53. The drawing entered a private collection the following year and had not been seen in public until recently. It is estimated in the region of £230,000.

Master Drawings New York dealer focus: Stephen Ongpin

Stephen Ongpin has been taking part in MDNY since 2007 and will be travelling from St James's, London, to exhibit at Dickinson Roundell.

"It's the one time of year when the circus comes to town and we have a perfect storm of American collectors, curators, scholars and dealers together in one place," he says.

"A lot of the American collectors and curators don't have the time or the funds to come to the European fairs, but here they can see a range of excellent exhibitions in a relatively small geographical area."

"Certainly I've noticed a lot more museum curators and scholars visit us at MDNY than in Europe and it is a unique event. Paintings and sculpture predominate at *London Art Week* now



Above: London dealer Stephen Ongpin.

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When someone comes to your gallery in New York they're a captive audience

and the *Salon du Dessin* is primarily geared towards Old Masters, whereas the great thing at MDNY is that it's purely drawings and you can see works from 14th century to 20th century."

Whereas at art fairs exhibitors have limited space and are cheek by jowl with other participants, Ongpin believes works can be hung and presented to their best advantage in galleries, making them as visually appealing as possible. "When someone comes to your gallery in New York they're a captive audience," he says.

Right: David Tunick will be showing this 17th century Flemish school drawing, *A Wooded Landscape with Houses*, at MDNY.

The work has previously been attributed to the Master of the Winter Landscapes, who has been tentatively identified as Geybrechts Leytens. This attribution remains uncertain, and it has also been suggested as the work of Sebastian Vrancs and Frans Francken II, who at times collaborated with Leytens. It is priced at a low six-figure sum.



Master Drawings New York dealer focus: David Tunick

David Tunick has been dealing in works on paper since 1966 and was one of the founding participants of MDNY. He enjoys the immediacy of drawings and how they can take you into the heart and mind of an artist. He will be exhibiting works from Old Master to classic modern.



Above: works on paper dealer David Tunick.

The event brings together a tremendous concentration of fine drawings within a broad range of nationalities, periods and prices, and it comes at a time in New York when there is intense activity in Old Master museum exhibitions, gallery shows and auctions. It has been a great success from the beginning in attracting curators and collectors from all over the US and the rest of the world.

Tunick has exhibited at TEFAF for almost 20 years but believes the specific focus of MDNY is its key appeal to dealers and visitors alike.

"The visitors are very concentrated on works on paper, and we welcome a dedicated group with real knowledge, interest and buying power," he says.

"Everyone who comes through the door is a potential client. Even the almost inevitable winter storms don't stop them."

The *Salon du Dessin*, where Tunick has also participated in the past, has a similarly focused group of collectors, but despite hugely enjoying the event, he believes the economy to be livelier in the US than France.

Auctioneers take a bite of the Big Apple

JANUARY is a month in the Big Apple for auctions as well as fairs.

Traditionally the period when the major London rooms hold one of their periodic Americana series (mirroring one aspect of the *Winter Antiques Show*), it is also the point in the year when New York focuses on Old Masters.

Christie's concentrates its efforts around works on paper, tying in to the Manhattan dealers' shows and holding over its main painting sales to the spring. Sotheby's, by contrast, goes the whole gamut with four sales in its series covering drawings, paintings and sculpture.

christies.com
sothebys.com

Sotheby's

Right: this highly finished watercolour by Edward Burne-Jones depicts a subject from the story of Sir Tristram de Lyones, one of the books in Sir Thomas Malory's epic about King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

It is painted over a 'cartoon' for a stained-glass window which was part of an 1862 commission from Morris Marshall Faulkner & Co by the industrialist Walter Dunlop to provide 13 stained-glass panels to decorate his Yorkshire home.

The adventures of Sir Tristram were chosen and six artists were employed to create designs with Burne-Jones contributing four of them. Three, including this one, *The*



Madness of Sir Tristram, were then worked up into independent watercolours. The resultant glass panels are now in Bradford City Art Gallery. The 23 x 22in (58 x 56cm) work, in watercolour and bodycolour heightened with gum arabic and gold and signed with initials lower left, has been extensively exhibited and will appear in Sotheby's January 25 auction of Old Master drawings with an estimate of **\$350,000-450,000**.

Left: one of the highlights of Sotheby's January 25 evening sale of Old Master paintings and sculpture will be this finely finished 16½ x 14½in (42 x 37cm) bust portrait of a young woman by Orazio Gentileschi (1563-1639). It is guided at **\$2m-3m**.

A rare example of an oil on panel by the Italian artist, it was painted in the 1630s when the artist was at the court of Charles I, and is recorded in the king's 1636-37 inventory.

It is consigned from a private collection and part of the proceeds will go to benefit the Department of European painting and sculpture at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Christie's

Below: this view of summer from a set of four engravings of the seasons by Peter Bruegel the Elder and Hans Bol from c.1570 is one of more than 220 prints spanning five centuries that are included in Christie's dedicated sale on January 25.

They range from 15th century works through to a mid-19th century print of San Francisco by Charles Meryon and offer opportunities to purchase works ranging in estimate from six to four-figure sums. The Four Seasons set is estimated at **\$30,000-50,000**.



Right: this 17½in x 12in (45 x 30cm) sheet of studies including two angels by the Parisian artist Charles de la Fosse (1636-1716), in red and black chalk on brown paper, is included in Christie's Old Master drawings sale on January 24.

It is estimated at **\$30,000-40,000**.



Inside track on outside artworks scene

WHILE in NYC you might also want to visit the *Outsider Art Fair*, the show dedicated to Art Brut, Folk and Outsider Art which marks its 25th anniversary this year.

Sixty galleries from nine countries are standing at The Metropolitan Pavilion, West 18th Street, from January 19-22.

outsiderartfair.com

More glass and contemporary is smashing mix

WHILE visitors to the Park Lane Armory for the *Winter Antiques Show* will be regaled with a wide mix of art and antiques, ceramics buffs will be beating a path to the Bohemian National Hall on East 73rd Street for the latest staging of the *New York Ceramics and Glass Fair*.

Although the event started out with a very strong leaning to antique pottery and porcelain, increasingly over the years the emphasis has shifted to include more contemporary work and more glass.

For its 18th showing this year, from January 19-22, a total of 28 exhibitors from Europe and round the US will be standing. They bring a mix spanning the 16th century

to pieces made just last year. The fair will also feature its usual lecture programme which covers subjects such as *What a long strange trip it's been: American Ceramics from Fictional to Funk*, an exploration by Jeaninne Falino, to *A discovery of 18th century true porcelain in Philadelphia and other tales of ceramic intrigue* by author and archaeologist Robert Hunter.

Among the early English ceramics on sale will be this pair of 15½in (40cm) high First Period Worcester porcelain frill vases, c.1768-70, one of which is signed *To for John Toulouse*. They are priced at **\$29,500** on Leo Kaplan's stand.

nyceramicsandglass.com

