

FROM MATISSE ETCHINGS TO SURREAL BEAR CHAIRS, MASTERPIECE LONDON OFFERS A MASTER CLASS IN ECLECTIC COLLECTING

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Henri Matisse, *Jeune femme le visage enfoui dans les bras*, etching, 1929

The stars of this year's edition include Marina Abramović in alabaster, Matisse's etchings, and bears from deep in the heart of the Black Forest.

Why not show your Larry Bell alongside a Renaissance Italian bronze? That's the mantra of Masterpiece London, the stately summer fair that mixes up booths of contemporary and Modern art with Old Masters and antiques. This year's event is something of an object lesson in "cross collecting," and this same sense of eclectic connoisseurship is reflected throughout the stand-out booths at the fair.

VIPs arrived on Wednesday to preview the fair's ninth edition. Visitors who head to the grounds of the Royal Chelsea Hospital will get a genteel crash course in high-end bricolage. We pulled out the highlights of the fair, which runs through July 4.

If you go down to Hauser & Wirth's Wunderkammer-themed booth, beware.

The alpha gallery, making its Masterpiece debut, has gotten into the spirit of mixing and matching by swapping works with Butchoff Antiques of London. Alongside Modern and contemporary art, visitors will find antique carved Black Forest chairs made in the late 19th century in the Brienz area of Switzerland. The naturalistic bears holding up the seat come with glass eyes and look strangely at home here, as long as you don't have a fear of the furry animals.

Meanwhile, Butchoff is showing drawings by David Smith and Rodney Graham lent by Hauser & Wirth, as well as a huge Brienz

Great Dane (also glass-eyed). The disconcerting sculpture of the big dog is priced around £100,000, or \$131,000.

Many of Masterpiece's showstopping works are figurative in the broadest sense of the word. Hauser & Wirth is showing a haunting piece in translucent polyester by the Polish artist Alina Szapocznikow, *Head of Piotr* (1972), from her estate. She made the bust of her son when she knew she was dying of cancer. It is priced at €1.2 million (\$1.39 million) and looks almost like a fragment from a pietà.

The gallery's sales during the VIP preview included Hans Arp's relief, *Spoon and Navels* (1928), which was priced at €1.5 million (\$1.73 million).

The high priestess of performance art, Marina Abramović, feels very present at Masterpiece.

Visitors are greeted by her new immersive installation, *Five Stations of Maya Dance* (2018), a series of translucent alabaster portraits in deep relief with LED lighting that evokes something of her charismatic presence. A collaboration between Lisson Gallery and high-tech art production company Factum Arte, the work is part of an edition of three, plus three artist's proofs.

Salomé Prada of Factum Arte tells artnet News that the edition presented at the fair is on hold for a museum. (Five panels are priced around £400,000, or \$524,000, in total, not including the installation designed by the architect Charlotte Skene Catling.) Prada says that the studio is also working on life-sized portraits of Abramović, this time carved into a form of plastic. All will be revealed at the artist's major solo show at the Royal Academy of Arts in London in 2020.

Meanwhile, a sculpture created by the Italian artist Gilberto Arrivabene Valenti and Factum Arte's founder, Adam Lowe, is tailor-made for a cross-collector seeking something classical with a contemporary twist. Realized using both digital technology and traditional Venetian glass-making techniques, the pair's interpretation of Canova's reclining nude Paolina Borghese has just been acquired by London's Victoria & Albert Museum for an undisclosed sum. The work, *Paolina after Antonio Canova* (2018), is part of an edition of 12.

The booth of London-based gallery Lyndsey Ingram evokes a room where Matisse might have drawn an odalisque, complete with antique wooden chairs, side tables, and a bowl of dahlias. On the dark walls hang 22 etchings made by Matisse himself, largely from

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a remarkable burst of virtuoso draughtsmanship in 1929.

The etchings were originally collected by the art dealer John Kasmin, who once displayed them in his stairwell. Over past five decades, Kasmin—who is best known for championing the work of his friend David Hockney—has embraced contemporary art, artifacts from Ancient Egypt, Oceania, and Greece, as well as Indian sculpture and etchings by Goya and Rembrandt. He will be giving a master class in cross-collecting at the fair on July 3 in conversation with the art critic Martin Gayford.

Matisse was also an eclectic collector, famously snapping up domestic vessels, African sculpture, Asian calligraphy, as well as textiles and ornate furniture, many of which appeared in his paintings, drawings, and etchings. At Masterpiece, Kasmin's Matisse etchings are priced between £14,000 and £28,000 (\$18,000 and \$36,000). One had sold at a patron's event ahead of preview day.

Patrick & Ondine Mestdagh of Brussels is presenting ethnographic objects alongside contemporary works and design objects at the fair. Highlights include an Inuit coat made of seal intestine that could easily be mistaken for a ghostly work of contemporary sculpture. Priced at £10,000 (\$13,000), Patrick Mestdagh says that it was probably made in Alaska and could date from the early 20th century. It is shown alongside an abstract sculpture by the Belgian artist Robert De Winne priced at £18,000 (\$23,000).

The dealer notes that fairs like Masterpiece allow him to lure new clients who might never have considered purchasing ethnographic art. He says one of his now regular collectors first bought a piece on the gallery's fourth year at the fair in 2016. "He said, 'I've seen you for the past two years and from now on we will work together.' He came this year and purchased a piece."

It isn't only visitors who get interested in new areas of collecting at a fair like Masterpiece. Rhonda Long-Sharp, the owner of the eponymous Indianapolis gallery, says that she started cross collecting at the fair after meeting expert dealers in medieval art. A Masterpiece stalwart, she likes knowing that her regular clients, some of whom have flown in from the Midwest, are in safe hands if they dip their toe into new categories at a fair in which she is participating. "I want to know that the work has withstood serious vetting," she says.

At the fair, Long-Sharp is presenting a never-before-shown early line drawing in ballpoint pen by Andy Warhol, *Woman in Decorative Dress* (around 1955). According to new research, the work is possibly based on a portrait in London's Wallace Collection of Eleonora di Toledo, the wife of one of the Medicis, attributed to the studio of Agnolo Bronzino. It is priced at around \$30,000. By the afternoon of the first preview day, Long-Sharp said that she had "placed a number of works" on the stand, which includes more drawings by Warhol and works from Roy Lichtenstein's estate.

Masterpiece newcomer Galerie Henze & Ketterer of Bern and Basel is showing remarkable paintings and drawings by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, including his last large painting, completed a few

months before he died by suicide, fearing a Nazi invasion of Switzerland. *Scene from a Midsummer Night's Dream* (1937) is priced at £6.4 million (\$8.3 million).

Another painting dates from 1915 and includes a ghostly self-portrait of the artist in uniform, painted shortly before he was discharged after a physical and mental breakdown brought on by military training during World War I. The canvas is priced at £5.2 million (\$6.8 million).

The artist's prolific and diverse output constitutes its own form of cross-collecting opportunity. In addition to paintings, prints and drawings he created carved wooden furniture, and even designed rugs. His wooden cabin in the Alps in Davos was his "Gesamtkunstwerk," says the gallery's co-director Alexandra Henze Triebold. The artist destroyed many sculptures before he died, making survivors all the more valuable. The dealer has an eclectic collection of her own: she is a proud owner of one of the wooden Brienz bear chairs similar to the ones from Butchoff on view at Hauser & Wirth's booth. On closer inspection, Kirchner's Modernist carved chairs, horses and cows could be country cousins.