

Press Information

20 January 2009

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CLARION ARTS

Business Exceeds All Expectations at NEC National Fair

The 6th National Fine Art & Antiques Fair

In Association with LAPADA The Association of Art & Antiques Dealers

14 – 18 January 2009

The Arena, NEC, Birmingham B40 1NT

Visitor Information: Tel: 0121-767 2947

Business proved much better than expected for many exhibitors at The 6th National Fine Art & Antiques Fair, presented with the support of LAPADA The Association of Art & Antiques Dealers, at the NEC, Birmingham, 14 – 18 January 2009.

“Visitors are seriously spending their money on art and antiques in preference to the usual investments” were the words on exhibitors’ lips after a busy first day when sales were being recorded across the fair.

Buyers showed a marked preference for exhibits of special interest, with provenance, history and timeless appeal over the decorative and ephemeral. As a result, at a fair where the emphasis is always on the traditional, the vast majority of the 74 exhibitors enjoyed a successful five days.

‘It’s been our most successful fair ever,’ said a delighted Mike Emeny of Books Illustrated, the Salisbury art dealers. Books Illustrated sold a majority of their most highly priced exhibits, including a fine original watercolour by Edmund Dulac for £25,000, four large sculptures by Vivien Mallock (two at £15,000 each) and a number of other early and contemporary illustrations by well known artists. ‘Both new and regular clients came and bought,’ explained Mike, ‘and they were keen to spend their money on works of art with a good track record that suggests money well invested.’

Works of art sold well across the fair. Rowles Fine Art from Welshpool sold several oils and watercolours to new and regular clients, so too Haynes Fine Art from Broadway (who won the Best Presented Stand Award), Baron Fine Art from Chester and Ashleigh House Antiques from Saffron Walden. Newcomers Burlington Paintings from London, with an impressive stand of traditional and modern paintings, were delighted to sell six major works. Also selling well were Saunders Fine Art from Solihull, Rob Whittle Fine Art from Birmingham, The Hunt Gallery from Sandwich and John Noott Galleries from

Broadway, who sold a number of Modern British and contemporary works highlighted by two paintings by Mary Fedden.

Nineteenth and twentieth century bronze sculpture proved to be as popular as ever, with specialist dealers selling keenly, so too dealers with the occasional bronze exhibit on their stand. Garret and Hurst from West Sussex sold six of their finest examples, while Art Deco specialist David Hickmet from London was very pleased, and newcomer Solo Antiques from Lancashire, also with Art Deco pieces, was equally delighted.

Period furniture attracted more interest than expected with most exhibitors recording sales. Mark Seabrook Antiques from Cambridgeshire, specialising in oak and country furniture and metalwork, was pleased with business, reporting sales of occasional items, gate-leg tables and metalwork to new and regular customers. Mark was also anticipating a good deal of follow-up business in the days to come.

Georgian and early 19th century furniture specialists W.R.Harvey & Co. from Witney sold a number of higher priced pieces including a rare Regency mahogany drop-leaf architects table at £8,500, and an impressive Regency period mahogany crib.

Most successful of all were Melody's Antiques from Chester, who cleared half of their large stand of furniture, selling an oak dresser, a set of chairs, a coffer and other pieces. Mike Melody was very upbeat about prospects for 2009: 'I think the trade is turning a corner,' he explains. 'At last, more people are realising that antiques have a genuine value.'

In other areas, sales of jewellery proved to be very strong. Anthea AG Antiques from London was pleased with business, so too Russell Lane from Warwick, S. Greenstein from London, Terry Robert from Suffolk, Shapiro & Co from London, Trivette from Hampshire and Anderson Jones from London. Although sales of silver were not so strong, several dealers were pleased or content with business, notably S.& A.Marsh from Surrey.

Newcomer Garth Vincent, specialising in arms and armour, was pleased to sell to new clients, while regular exhibitors Mark and Sandra Diamond from London, specialising in porcelain, reported business to be much better than expected.

Commenting at the close, organiser Tiffany Pritchard said: 'I feel we've made a good start to the new year, in fact much better than anyone predicted. I'm delighted the fair has worked well for so many exhibitors and I'm particularly pleased that our new marketing initiatives have attracted many new buyers to the fair.'

The 7th National Fine Art & Antiques Fair will take place from 13 -17 January 2010.

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