



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF
ELEGANCE AND EXCELLENCE

THE GROSVENOR HOUSE ART & ANTIQUES FAIR CELEBRATES 75th ANNIVERSARY IN STYLE

The 75th anniversary of The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair closed on 17 June 2009 following a week's busy trading. The Fair, which had been started as a means of boosting trade during the Great Depression, was an instant success with both collectors and the smart set and ran for three weeks in September 1934. Echoing the past, the 2009 event took place in the worst recession known in recent times but sales throughout the Fair underlined the resilience of the art trade in this particular economic downturn.

The Fair started well with record visitor figures on Preview Day, Wednesday 10 June, which were up by 5.1%. Despite the tube strike, which undoubtedly affected visitor figures at the beginning of the Fair, the overall visitor figure showed an increase of 2% at 19,537 visitors.

Traditional areas like English furniture and silver were very much in demand. **Ronald Phillips** reported the sale of a number of good English pieces including a George II carved mahogany settee, c. 1750; an Adam period mahogany side table with six fluted and reeded legs, c. 1785 and a pair of Queen Anne walnut needlework armchairs, c. 1710. Simon Phillips, who is currently Chairman of the Fair said, "We have had an exceptional Fair and I am delighted to note that we are not alone in that. Despite the economic gloom, this has been an extremely successful Fair and a very fitting way to celebrate our 75th anniversary".

First-time exhibitor **Thomas Coulborn & Son**, whose Swedish porphyry tazza received the Gold Award for **Artefact of the Year**, sold a George III harewood, satinwood and crossbanded

secretaire chest attributed to Ince & Mayhew, English c. 1785 for over £30,000 while **Godson & Coles** sold a number of items including a pair of Regency armchairs by Morel & Hughes for a sum in the region of £68,000. In addition to selling a carved limewood opium bed designed and signed by Gabriel Viardot, c. 1885 with an asking price of £145,000 to a new collector, **Peter Petrou** was also spotted selling a pair of iconic Gerald Summers chairs, each made from a single sheet of cut and bent birch plywood to former Chairman of Sotheby's Alfred Taubman for a six figure sum.

Lewis Smith of **Koopman Rare Art** said that the Private Preview had been the best opening day 'at any Fair for the last ten years'. Early sales included a silver gilt tray c. 1805 by Benjamin Smith with an asking price of £350,000 to a private client, a pair of George III Royal tazzas by Nicholas Clausen and a gold, enamel and mother of pearl clock 1830, which had previously belonged in Buckingham Palace.

Jewellery dealer **Symbolic & Chase** enjoyed a successful debut with many sales including a yellow gold and diamond 'flame' cuff by Sterlé, Paris, c. 1940 and two clocks by Cartier; a black lacquer and mirror desk clock with mother of pearl dial, c. 1950 and a purple and white enamel timepiece with a stepped agate base and a white enamel dial and diamond hand in the original fitted travel case, 6cm high, c. 1920. **Sandra Cronan** sold very well throughout the Fair. Sales included a pair of heart-shaped Tiffany bangles, 1889 and a pearl and diamond collar, 1895, which sold to an English private collector.

Modern British painting and sculpture has been the big success story of The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair in recent years and 2009 was no different. **Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert** sold his two most important pieces *Stringed Figure (Curlew) Version 1*, 1956, by Barbara Hepworth and *1934 (White Relief)*, oil on canvas board by Ben Nicholson. **The Fine Art Society**, exhibiting at the Fair for the second year running and winner of the Gold Award for the **Stand Design of the Year**, reported a good Fair selling *Pink and Gray Still Life*, oil on board, 1962 by Anne Redpath ARA, RSA for £230,00 while **Agnew's**, who are returning to the Fair after a number of years sold *Pulteney Bridge, Bath*, oil on canvas, 1918 by Walter Richard Sickert. **Offer Waterman** reported a very strong Fair with sales including an oil on board painting by Frank Auerbach, entitled *E.O.W.*, 1972 and an important sculpture by Naum Gabo, *Stringed Figure in Space No 1*, 1942.

The inclusion of new porcelain dealers has strengthened the offering of European and English ceramics at The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair, making this an important specialism within the Fair. **Stockspring Antiques** reported an excellent Fair with sales including a large Meissen figure of a swan, c. 1798 modelled by J. Kändler with the assistance of Peter Reinicke. 18th-

century Meissen Pieces were also sold by **Albert Amor** including a figure of a horse, c. 1745 and a teapot in the form of a cockerel from the same year. New exhibitors to the Fair, **W. W. Warner** were delighted to sell pieces from the Sèvres and Meissen manufactories as well as some important English pieces including a Chelsea figure of Mars, c. 1765. Oriental ceramics also found buyers with **S. Marchant & Sons** selling a number of items including a pair of Imperial yellow wine cups Yongzheng mark and period, 1723-1735.

Gregg Baker Asian Art reported his best Grosvenor ever. His sales included a two-fold paper screen painted with a boat amongst reeds and chidori in flight, in ink and colour on gold ground from the end of the 16th or beginning of the 17th century to international royalty and **Richard Philp** sold an important sandstone sculpture showing the torso of a Buddha from Northern India, Mathura School, Kushan Period, 2nd century A.D.

The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair is known for the quality of the clocks exhibited. **Anthony Woodburn** sold a number of small bracket clocks, most notably a fine Charles II Dutch clock in a brass-bound ebonised fruitwood case by Vulliamy, London 1815 and **John Carlton-Smith** was pleased to sell a very rare Queen Anne miniature walnut longcase clock by Thomas Wightman, London c. 1715 and a longcase clock by Joseph Windmills, London c. 1715 originally commissioned by the Wrightsman family.

Witney Antiques were delighted to sell a number of good pieces of needlework including an outstanding 17th-century raised work embroidery depicting a noble couple in a landscape with turreted palaces, trees, birds and insects – the base with an elaborately-worked pool with mermaids and fish, the bank heavily encrusted with coral rock, crystal, pearls and coloured stones, c. 1660.

Glass dealer **Mark J. West** sold his one of his star exhibits of a wonderful set of 24 half litre size decanters engraved with fruiting vines, ex Royal House of Witteksbach, Bohemia, c. 1780-1800 for around £7000.

The Royal Charity Gala Evening was held on Thursday 11 June. A glittering and glamorous affair with a dinner in the Ballroom themed on The Grand Tour was attended by HRH The Duchess of Cornwall who is President of the National Osteoporosis Society, the benefiting charity. The event raised £535,000.

Exhibitors throughout the Fair commented on the quality of visitors noting the presence of some very serious collectors and museum buyers. Many also felt that the buzzy atmosphere, buoyant

mood and commercial success of the Fair was affirmation of the The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair's place as Britain's leading international Fair in its 75th anniversary year.

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Notes to Editors:

The Private Preview was held on Wednesday 10 June 2009.

The Fair was open to the public from 11 – 17 June 2009.

The Royal Charity Gala Evening in aid of the National Osteoporosis Society took place on Thursday 11 June 2009 in the presence of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall.

The Grosvenor House Art & Antiques Fair

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