

Press Release: 31 January 2006

## Post Show Report

Sales on the opening day of the Winter Decorative Fair (24-29 January, The Marquee, Battersea Park) were so rapid and prodigious that within 30 minutes of opening, it was already difficult to keep up with the number of pass out slips leaving by the front door, and the Harvey Boys were kept busy all day taking sold items to the stores and shippers area. One dealer commented that the visitors "eager intent and desire to purchase" was quite palpable.

In light of this exciting start, it was perhaps not surprising that an average mid-week visitor flow was felt to be slow by many in the marquee. Having said that, for a greater number of exhibitors it was a very good Fair, and many benefited from the "incredible" first day. The sold store was full by Tuesday evening, and on-site shippers BBF reported one of their busiest opening Fair days ever.

Robert Barley's exotic Egyptian tent and selling exhibition of Grand Tour collectors' items provoked many compliments from visitors. Air time on national radio mentioning the display elicited an enormous response from the public, drawing visitors from across Britain to the show.

The opinions of more than 35% of exhibitors were sought in order to compile the post show report, and barring one, all stated they had had exceedingly good opening day trading, primarily with decorators and trade buyers.

A long queue waited patiently outside the Marquee in bright but freezing cold conditions, and throughout the first day there was no let up – visitor numbers for that day were up considerably on October 05, by some 15%.

About 50% of sales of large items took place on the Tuesday, and the sold store logged some 40-50 items per day thereafter.

Sales continued through the week, with dealers selling steadily. The weekend was also good for many exhibitors, particularly on Sunday, when, for example, traditional furniture dealers appeared to do well.

Trends were difficult to discern: brown fared pretty well for many traditional dealers. C20th dealers also had excellent sales. Natural wood furniture of any period, particularly in a simple style sold well. The current 'fashion' for black and very dark wood furniture was reflected in the number of ebonised and macassar-veneered pieces that sold.

Painted furniture also did well, and items of exceptional quality and rarity, or those which were unusual, were appreciated by both trade and private buyers. There were a number of 'star' items in the Fair that could probably have sold many times over.

Garden statuary and larger items such as arches and gazebos also sold well, and lacquered items (furniture and accessories) proved popular.

Once again, value for money was a significant influence on buyers: many dealers with reasonable, well-priced useful stock sold consistently. Later in the week, a number of dealers were buying within the Fair to replenish their stands.

Notable visitors included Bob Geldof, Madonna, Anna Ford, Chris Smith (former MP), Amanda Burton. Trade visitors included Nicole Fahri, Nicky Haslam, buyers from Paul Smith, decorator Rupert Lord and Tobi Landi of US dealer/decorator Sentimenti. The number of Americans, both trade and private buyers, was commented on by dealers.

The next Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair is the Spring event, to be held from 25-30 April 2006 at The Marquee, Battersea Park. The Autumn Fair runs from 3-8 October 2006.

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## Examples of Items Sold, & Reports from Dealers

### Furniture - Decorative

Brownrigg were very pleased with the level of business they did – selling well on nearly every day. They sold a large c1800 painted bookcase for iro £5000, a good pair of C19th console tables iro £6000. Upholstered pieces also sold particularly well chairs and sofas selling for between £1500 and £3500, including in the closing minutes of the Fair a C19th French duchesse velvet-upholstered chair and footstool, ticket £1700.

Annette Puttnam enjoyed her “best ever” Fair, selling primarily within the trade. Amongst furniture sales were two unusually large, 12ft-long dresser bases. Private customers were buying lanterns and garden antiques.

Artefact had a very good Fair, on a par with October 05 (one of their best ever). Items sold included a C19th French glass chandelier for around £8000, a large refectory table, an unusual C19th doll's house iro £2000, a giant enamel clock face, a pair of 1920's larger than life-sized re-constituted stone & plaster swan planters for around £2000. Overall very pleased.

Maggie Charpentier had a good Fair, with sales including a pair of rare and large French berg-eres ticket price £9000, a pair of painted consoles at around £5000, an C18th painting at £5500 to an American buyer, and a large painted Alsace commode at £6500.

As at the previous Fair, Lee Wright had to send for more stock from Leicestershire despite bringing two large vans of stock to the . By Sunday afternoon 95% of his stock had sold. Sales included a C19th French oak Armoire for £2600, 2 commodes for £1800 each and a pair of upholstered chairs for £2000. Lee said ‘I had a brilliant Fair last time round and this was even better’.

Josephine Ryan did steady business throughout the week with decorators and members of the public. Sales included a large C19th Swedish painted buffet for £5500 and a large set of C19th French decorative iron railings for £1500.

Simon Sieff had a good Fair with plenty of buyers. Sales included a pair of French designer mirrors sold to Karen Millen, two C18th French commodes were sold to two Swiss clients for £8500 and £6000. Their collection of Gerard Mankowitz pieces sold very well commanding prices of between £4500 and £6500.

Ashton Gower sold consistently, enjoyed a “very good Fair”, primarily decorated and small furniture and lamps, but including a large Irish linen cupboard c1820, and Lucite pieces. Prices up to

£3000.

John Bird enjoyed good sales, mostly stock of plain wood in both dark and light shades, including a French chestnut and fruitwood 'enfillade' (buffet) c1780 for around £5500 and a pair of Pugin-design pale oak refectory tables from a convent, ticket price £3200.

Bloch, new exhibitors, were very happy with an excellent opening day selling good original and early painted Swedish furniture of the C18th and C19th, including a very large Swedish Gothenburg window seat c1820 for iro £2100.

Laraine Plummer had her "best ever" opening day, and overall a very good Fair, with sales including a wonderful pair of lead dolphins originally from a fountain, priced at £1000, and a massive marble-topped wrought iron garden table.

Callie Hollenden, with a mix of garden antiques and painted furniture, commented that buyers were seeking good looking, high priced quality items. Sales included a C13th limestone dragon gargoyle from Winchester Cathedral, discovered in the garden of a nearby house where it had lain unrecognised for many years, priced at £2500 (to a garden designer).

Katharine Pole enjoyed steady sales throughout the week, with a major item sold being an unusual octagonal wood and glass shop display case c1900, for around £1200.

Gary Wallis had a good Fair and sold well across the board. Painted furniture continued to sell well and Gary was pleased to sell a very pretty painted Louis XVI period buffet à deux corps for £3000 amongst other items.

Lorfords, exhibitors in painted and decorative furniture, had a great opening day selling well to the trade.

Brad and Jackie Newman had a good Fair and 'made money'. Their favourite sale was of a very good unusual cherry wood veneered C19th campaign washstand which sold to a private buyer for £1500.

#### Furniture – Traditional

Nadin & Macintosh brought a wide range of both traditional country house furniture and select decorative C20th design pieces and leather furniture, priced them reasonably, and sold consistently every day. By Sunday afternoon they had sold some 38 items of furniture ranging from £100 to £3000. One of their major sales was a large gentleman's mahogany table, 8ft x 4ft, from the Bristol Merchant's Club for £3000.

Victoria Harvey was happy, with many good sales, and an excellent opening day mainly to trade customers. One cabinet which sold on the opening day was much admired, and could easily have been sold many times over! Sales also included a very unusual carved C19th wood merman, probably South Italian from the front of a building.

Millers Antiques sold the centrepiece of their stand – a very large oak double sided counter and drawers c1880 from a French drapers – to a couple of private buyers who were going to rebuild their entire kitchen around it. The opening two days alone saw sales of nine coffers priced up to £1500, plus a kindling box and a good deal of majolica. They commented that country-style pieces were selling very well.

S&S Timms were “pleasantly pleased”. They had taken two stands, and stocked one with ‘country’ pieces, the other with smarter ‘town’ pieces. They had an excellent opening day and a good close on Sunday to private buyers, with business from both stands. Sales included an C18th mahogany bureau bookcase, a pair of Edwardian walnut benches, a large black lacquered chinoiserie cabinet c1920, two sets of dining chairs, one C18th set in walnut, and one of ‘country’ chairs. Prices ranged up to £6000.

Penny Fawcett of Tilings Antiques had a very good Fair, selling a wide variety of smaller traditional “classic” furniture, “plain brown and useful”, in prices up to £2000.

Guy Dennler made satisfactory sales to private clients, including a sofa table (ticket) £5850, an Irish walnut chest (ticket) £5850, a Regency mahogany work table (ticket) £3250, a very good tôle tray c1820 (ticket) £3750, a walnut chest on stand dated c1730 (ticket) £5850, and a pair of commodes (ticket) £5450.

Antique Eyes sold a number of traditional pieces priced to around £1500 as well as a number of decorated lacquered items.

## Pictures

Brendan O’Brien enjoyed a very good Fair with an excellent opening day, which included the sale of a good set of Chinese paintings to an American ex-pat couple, priced around £10,000. He commented on the number of American buyers, and said that the calibre of all visitors to the Fair was very good.

The Hollywood Road Gallery were very pleased with sales; figurative contemporary pieces sold particularly well. It was observed that despite many clients living very close to their Chelsea premises, they only visited the Gallery at the Decorative , as they perhaps preferred to select art with the benefit of seeing pieces in context with the eclectic range of furnishings at the Fair.

Contemporary French artist Annik Le Page sold particularly well. Two works were sold to Le Manoir Aux Quatre Saisons and three more to private buyers. Prices for her work range from £1600 to £2500. Other sales included several works by English contemporary figurative artist Mark Pearson, from £300 to £800. A large C20th scene of a botanical garden by Danish artist Rasmussen also sold for £2,800.

## Decorative Objects & Collectors Items

Elliot & Snowden enjoyed an excellent opening day and were very pleased with the Fair; sales included a rare, large C17th Spanish embossed leather trunk for a four-figure sum. Also sold a 1930-1950’s mosaic, probably Italian or French, of Botticelli’s Birth of Venus.

Goodeye Design, at their 2nd Fair, were very pleased, sold extremely well to private buyers, mostly couples, and had to re-stock their selection of C20th table centrepieces (sculpture, glass, silver) during the week. They sold their most important item on the first day, a silver sculpture by Italian designer Sabatini, priced just over £3000, with many other sales at around £1500.

Geoffrey Breeze sold a large number of sword canes and ivory-topped canes to collectors, and sold consistently throughout the week. Was very pleased.

On Reflection sold their most expensive mirror to a couple who had been walking their dog in the park and decided to pop into the Fair. The C19th Italian gilt mirror with palm leaf from sold for £4000. Their very decorative Venetian mirrors also sold well.

Jonathan Swire reported continuing strong sales in decorative natural history objects. Ammonites of all sizes (from £28 to £1100) were selling very well. Their stock of painted furniture also sold well. A C19th limed pine chest of drawers and an Irish limed pine buffet sold for iro £1000 each.

Esprit du Jardin sold to a good mix of private and trade buyers. Sales included a large 1920's painted metal gazebo priced over £2000, and statuary priced from £1000 to £3000.

### C20th Specialists

Philip Thomas was very pleased with the Fair and sold extremely well. His unusual C20th design pieces were particularly popular with decorators who were looking for something a little different. A large Italian circular brushed steel and glass coffee table by Willy Rizzo sold for iro £2600, a Danish armchair designed by Nana Ditzel in 1958 sold for £1200 and a French gilt metal and marble centre table made by Maison Jansen c1964 sold for £3200.

Fiona Macdonald had a fantastic Fair. Her shop is now empty and she will have to restock extensively. A number of buyers from Pimlico Road visited and bought early on the opening day, returning to buy more on Sunday, on the strength of how well they had done on Saturday. Her best pieces, a 1960s walnut desk and an Art Deco macassar ebony desk sold to very good dealers.

Newcomer to the Fair, Bella Handsome, was pleased with the level of sales of their post-war stock. A large cherry wood G-Plan bookcase sold very quickly on the opening day for £650 to a private buyer swiftly followed by a nest of circular steel and glass tables for iro £400. Other sales included a large pair of C19th silk and wirework Persian panels for £1250 and a French 1950s painted simulated leather desk light for £500.

Berg Brothers also had a good Fair with many sales of furniture and larger items as well as lighting and accessories.

De Parma sold consistently, including a 1940's Italian parchment and walnut low sideboard.

### Textiles

Diane Kane at Linge de Bery had as very good opening day, and overall not a bad Fair. Sales were made across the board to trade and private customers in prices from £25 to £1000, including a pair of Aubusson pillows for around £1000.

Questions? Don't hesitate to call Pippa Roberts (020 7923 3188) or Laura Colborn (020 7381 1981) to find out more about the Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fairs.