

DECORATIVE FAIR: Needling Away At the Designer Market Spring Fair, 22-27 April 2008, features selling exhibition by Fine Cell Work

The Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair at The Marquee, Battersea Park, London SW11 continues to go from strength to strength, having just experienced its busiest fair to date (in January). The Fair was awash with leading interior decorators looking to buy the best in unusual period design (see *Notes overleaf*).



The organisers are delighted to announce that the Spring Fair Foyer will feature a colourful display and selling exhibition of textiles by Fine Cell Work, a Registered Charity that teaches needlework to prison inmates and sells their products on their behalf. Many well-known designers, such as Kaffe Fassett, Melissa Wyndham, Sandy Jones and Nina Campbell are associated with the charity, and the Foyer display will include items made to designs created by them exclusively for Fine Cell Work.

The Fine Cell Work display will include tapestry and suzani-style cushion covers, patchwork quilts and other exciting ideas, all for sale, that will be hard to resist taking home to add a special zing of colour to a decorating scheme.

Decorating is what the Decorative Fair is all about: more than 130 exhibitors take part at the event, bringing a wonderful array of stock from traditional English furniture to fabulous 'fifties lighting and mid-century modern design. Dealers are careful to select stock which appeals for its practicality, price and character – these one-off items can't be found on the high street and can add a wealth of individual style to a home.

Trends from the last Fair, evidently appealing to the designer market at present, include:

- chrome Anglepoise and over-sized industrial-type metal lighting
- sofas and chaises longues of all periods, of more unusual design (especially with original upholstery)
- large-scale furniture (extra large cupboards, chests, tables, chairs)
- smaller, decorated mirrors, especially with silvered frames
- chandeliers of all sizes
- chinoiserie and japanned items
- late Victorian/early C20th leather seating in traditional style, but of unusual form, sold well

Up and coming: lots of early 20th century Heals furniture was spotted at the last Fair. Its simple designs based on the Arts & Crafts style, often executed in pale wood (young oak, etc) gives it a very modern and light look. At present these are very reasonably priced items, and are sure to go up in value.

Visiting the Decorative Fair couldn't be easier: located via Chelsea Bridge Gate in Battersea Park outside the Congestion Charge Zone, there is free parking in front of the Marquee (at busy times such as opening day & weekends, use the river-side Pay

& Display). Or, use the free Renault shuttle service from outside the Sloane Square Hotel which runs daily every 15 or so minutes to the Marquee and back.

Well-behaved dogs are welcomed. The Battersea Park Zoo (next door to The Marquee) is a great place to entertain children before, during or after visiting the Fair!

DATES: Spring Fair, 22-27 April 2008
Autumn Fair, 30 September-5 October 2008
Winter Fair, 20-25 January 2009

ENDS

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NOTES

Event: The Spring Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair
Date: Tuesday 22-Sunday 27 April 2008
Venue: The Marquee, Battersea Park, London SW11
Tickets: £8.00 including catalogue (which allows free return to Fair)
Transport: Sloane Square Tube – a complimentary Renault shuttle service runs from the Sloane Square Hotel to the Marquee every 10-15 minutes during open hours.
Open: Tuesday 12pm – 8pm
Wednesday, Thursday 11am – 8pm
Friday 11am – 7pm
Saturday & Sunday 11am – 6pm
Organisers: Harvey (Management Services) Ltd
Enquiries: +44 (0)20 7624 5173
Website: www.decorativefair.com
(Tickets will be sent out to Press prior to the Fair)

Fine Cell Work

Fine Cell Work is a Registered Charity that teaches needlework to prison inmates and sells their products. The prisoners do the work when they are locked in their cells, and the earnings give them hope, skills and independence.

Savings reduce the likelihood of offenders returning to crime. Prisoners often send the money they earn from Fine Cell Work to their children and families, or use it to pay debts or for accommodation upon release.

The inmates are all taught by volunteers from the Embroiderers Guild, the Royal School of Needlework and the world of professional design. Once trained, they can be responsible for difficult commissions done to deadlines, and support other inmates who are still learning.

www.finecellwork.co.uk

Decorator & Designer Quotes

Stephen Bayley, Design & Cultural Commentator

We strict-observance Modernists are wary of antiques, preferring the new to the old, but I rarely miss The Decorative Antiques Fair. Why, if I'm not looking for antiquities, do I bother? The answer's simple: I'm looking for well-designed objects that transcend time. If you keep your eyes open, there are still a lot about. If something looks good and works well, it doesn't matter how old it is.

Suzanne Marland, Furnisher for Spink Property

As a purchaser of contemporary and period furniture, art and decorative works, who travels and buys throughout Europe, Battersea can produce a few real gems amongst the more decorative pieces - and conveniently, on my doorstep.

Michael Nicholas, Michael Nicholas Design

As with previous Battersea fairs, I was interested by the mix of new and old and the chance to see quirky items that provide a "twist" to completing a contemporary decoration project - Battersea is certainly a culmination of the more interesting suppliers in London.