

International TEFAF

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WALKING THE ISLES OF THE EUROPEAN

Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) in Maastricht the comment most frequently heard was “Mooi”—the Dutch word for “beautiful.” This year’s sleek gray-scale color scheme punctuated with banks of orange tulips was the perfect backdrop for the museum-quality collections offered by the world’s top dealers. It is *the* destination for anyone serious about buying the best.

According to TEFAF officials, the 2006 fair was the most successful in a number of years. Expanded in size from past years, there were 218 leading art and antiques dealers from fifteen countries; twenty-eight of whom were new to the show. Among the 84,000 visitors—a record for the fair—was TEFAF’s millionth patron. Crowds of collectors, connoisseurs, onlookers, and over 125 museum curators and directors came through the doors. Among the people who traveled to Maastricht were those who arrived in the more than 169 private jets during the show’s run.

“This is the show to which all others aspire,” was a common response from collectors and dealers when asked about the fair. The sheer number of masterpieces and works by blue-chip artists was astounding. Galerie Jan Krugier Ditesheim & Cie of Geneva showed seven Albert Giacometti bronze sculptures, along with works by Ingres and Paul Klee and a room full of Picassos. A monumental 70-inch-high pair of Tiffany & Co. silver candelabras—approximately 3,033 troy ounces—rotated on plinths in the booth of Marks of London. In celebration of the 300th anniversary of the birth of Johann Joachim

Kändler, the chief modeler at Meissen, New York’s Michelle Beiny, Inc. offered a pair of exquisite porcelain bittorns (1735) priced at €5 million.

This year the fair anticipated more new buyers of Asian art and so placed a new emphasis on this area of collecting. Their instincts were correct, and among those to benefit was Grace Wu Bruce Co. Ltd. of Hong Kong, who returned this year after a hiatus from the show. Among their sales of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Ming furniture was a Pingtoun table sold to a new collector. One of the more visually arresting booths was that of Vanderven & Vanderven Oriental Art, a founding member of TEFAF. Among their sixty sales to a diverse international clientele was a Kangxi plate purchased for €200,000 by an American collector. After the show a pleased Floris van der Ven said

“Each day seemed as busy as the next—there was certainly no mid-fair slump—with sales steadily throughout the fair.”

Within the first fifteen minutes of the fair’s opening, antiquities dealer Jean-David Cahn of Switzerland sold his most important sculpture, a Greek life-size marble statue of a draped goddess, possibly Aphrodite, circa fourth–third century BCE, for around €440,000. We had reserves on it several times over,” said Yvonne Yiu, a representative of the gallery. They also sold a fourth-century BCE grave stele, a third-century AD Roman head, and a first-century AD Roman torso on the first day.

To accommodate the growing interest in the fields of twentieth-century and contemporary art, this section now encompasses a quarter of the floor plan. Waddington Galleries, London, achieved sales of between \$4 and \$5 million on works that included *A-Z Box of Friends and Family* (1963) by Joe Tilson. New exhibitor Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, Illinois, sold *La Joconde aux Clés* by Fernand Léger for just under \$1 million.

INSET: Samian ware vessel from the first–second century AD. Priced at €45,000. Courtesy of Galerie Harmakhis, Brussels.



TOP: Salander-O'Reilly offered *Apostle James the Major*, signed by Rembrandt van Rijn and dated 1661. Off the market for the past sixty years, it is one of the artist's last major paintings in private hands. Priced at approximately €33 million. Photography by Loraine Bodewes.

CENTER: At the crossroads of “Fifth Avenue” and “les Champs Elysées,” one of three main intersections on the floor of TEFAF. Photography by Loraine Bodewes.

BOTTOM: A connoisseur looks appreciatively at a rare composite North Italian, Milanese half armor, circa 1590, offered by Peter Finer. Photography by Loraine Bodewes.



Vandervan & Vandervan Oriental Art sold over sixty items in all price ranges, including one of their large Tang dynasty Bactrian camels with rider for around €175,000. Courtesy of Vandervan & Vandervan Oriental Art.



In Gagosian Gallery's striking white booth, a couple admire Lichtenstein's *Leda and the Swan*. Behind them is a Calder mobile, which sold to a new client for approximately \$2 million. Photography by Loraine Bodewes.



Noortman Master Paintings was asking \$2,700,000 for *Paris Marché à la Volaille à Gisors* (1889) by Camille Pissarro, which sold to a private collector. Courtesy of Noortman Master Paintings.

European paintings from the middle ages through the nineteenth century were shown in many booths. Didier Aaron & Cie, Paris, offered an 1813 landscape by Alexandre Hyacinthe Dunouy as well as a tender image of the *Virgin with Child* (1635) by Jacques Blanchard. Moretti, of Florence, offered Canaletto's circa-1740 *Grand Canal from Palazzo Flangini to the Church of San Marcuola*, considered by experts

the best Canaletto on the market.

TEFAF is famous for its offerings of Old Master paintings, prints, and drawings. Among Richard Green of London's numerous sales was a battle scene entitled *The Morning Gun* by Willem van de Velde the Younger, signed and dated 1673. Johnny van Haeften, from London, sold nine paintings over the first four days, including Jan van der Heyden's *The Hofstede*

Wolf en Hoeck on the Purmer for £1.4 million. After the show, Mr. van Haeften reflected, "I thought it was a wonderful fair, with many new and exciting faces this year." Among the paintings at Switzerland's David Koetser Gallery was a rediscovered Frans Hals, *Portrait of Pieter Jacobsz. Olycan* (1629), priced at €10.5 million.

In celebration of the 400th anniversary of Rembrandt's birth, several of the master's works were on sale. Noortman Master Paintings, The Netherlands (which sold twenty-four works within the first four days), offered *Portrait of a Man in a Red Doublet* (1633) for €27 million, and Salander-O'Reilly of New York offered Rembrandt's *The Apostle James the Major* (1661), for approximately €33 million. H. Rumbler, Germany, and David Tunick, New York, were among several galleries that offered Rembrandt etchings. Gebr. Douwes Fine Art of Amsterdam and London featured twenty-six in a specially designed booth.



Mallett & Son, London, offered a rare, early eighteenth-century thirty-inch-high blue and gilt japanned quarter-striking bracket clock by James Debaufre, England, circa 1730 (€250,000). Retaining most of its lacquer decoration, we were told it was the only one in blue to appear on the market in thirty-eight years. Courtesy of Mallett & Son.



A magnificent still life of flowers painted by Jan Brueghel the Younger, circa 1626, was shown at Jonny van Haeften's booth. The bouquet was comprised of 116 varieties of flowers. Priced at £1.9 million. Courtesy of Johnny Van Haeften Ltd., London.

TEFAF 2007 Show Dates

March 9–18, Maastricht Exhibition and Congress Centre, Maastricht, The Netherlands.

Commenting on the splendor of the fair, the buying audience, and the overwhelming number of museum-quality collections, arms and armor specialist Peter Finer of London summed it up perfectly: "I am always staggered by the wonderful things my colleagues bring. This show is both physically and mentally exhilarating, with a very intelligent and appreciative audience." @