

American Traders and British Private Buyers Boost Sales at NEC Antiques Fair

ANTIQUES FOR EVERYONE
NEC, BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND B40 1NT
30 October – 2 November 2008

The return of high spending American trade buyers heralded a turning point for many of the 350 exhibitors at the Antiques for Everyone fair at the NEC, Birmingham from 30 October – 2 November 2008. After four busy days many exhibitors reported selling quantities of stock for export after American buyers toured the fair buying a range of pieces including period furniture, folk art, metalwork, kitchen antiques, needlework, boxes and much more. Equally as important, private collectors from across the UK also turned out in force and accounted for a large number of sales of paintings, sculpture, jewellery and collector's items.

Exhibitors across the two-section fair were surprised and delighted by the huge daily footfall of visitors, among them many younger faces that are especially welcomed by exhibitors looking for new buyers. After a hectic first day, with visitors from America, Italy, Germany, France and Turkey, a wave of optimism spread around the fair as exhibitors found their worst fears of recession replaced by feelings of confidence in the future.

'It's been a fantastic fair,' said Mark Goodger of **Hampton Antiques**, the tea caddy and box specialists from Staffordshire. 'It is so refreshing to sell across the board on every day. We've sold many of our best pieces, including three tortoiseshell boxes to the American trade on a very busy opening day.'

W. & B. Antiques from Portobello were equally delighted with business, describing the fair as their best ever NEC fair on record, selling all their best pieces including large furniture, boxes and decorative accessories to three American traders. Similarly, **Erna Hiscock and John Shepherd** from Kent, who specialise in early samplers, folk art and ceramics, enjoyed one their most successful fairs to date, also selling to American buyers. Solihull-based furniture specialist **Yoxall Antiques** described the fair as the best for many months after selling several large items of furniture to private buyers. Also selling keenly were furniture dealers **Walter Moores & Sons**

from Leicestershire, **Compton House**, also from Leicestershire and first time exhibitor **Barnhill Trading Co.** from Cheshire, turning their business towards the private market and meeting new clients.

Among the art and sculpture specialists, **Callaghan Fine Paintings** from Shrewsbury reported a very successful fair after selling paintings by Eugene Gailen Laloue, Marcel Dyf, Antoine Bouvard and others, in addition to a number of sculptures by Benson Landes (three each in the region of £10,000), and Carl Payne (for £22,750). **Rowles Fine Art** from Welshpool were equally pleased, selling a number of high-priced oil paintings including a pair by Alfred de Breanski. Also selling paintings were **Ryland Fine Art** from Yorkshire (including a full length figure study by Abbey Altson for £20,000), **Graham Bentley** from Warwickshire, selling 19th and 20th century watercolours, and **Phoenix Fine Art** from Cheshire, selling early English watercolours. **Books Illustrated**, the Salisbury dealers in illustrations, were very pleased with several major sales that included works by Arthur Rackham and Louis Wain. Also pleased with sales were contemporary art dealers **Jo Bennett** from Manchester, **Tara Heineman** from the Midlands and **Neville Fine Art** from Hampshire.

In other areas, many specialists found keen buyers. **Hickmet Fine Art** from London made a number of sales of Art Deco bronzes to customers old and new, **Garret & Hurst** from Sussex sold a number of French bronze sculptures to new and regular clients, so too **Hazlehurst Antiques** from Kent; and also **Steve Kember**, the musical box specialist from Kent who enjoyed record sales. **Garth Vincent** from Lincolnshire, specialising in early arms and armour, was delighted with business, so too **Catherine Hunt**, the Chinese ceramics specialist from Cheltenham.

James Strang, the Scottish dealer specialising in Scottish Arts & Crafts, sold across the board and commented: 'It's been a revelation to find so many keen spenders. I have a strong degree of confidence that the future for the antiques market may be a lot brighter than we anticipated just a few days ago.'

The Antiques for Everyone fairs are organised by Clarion Events Ltd and take place every spring, summer and winter. The next Antiques for Everyone Fair runs from 16th – 19th April 2009.

Organisers: Clarion Events, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham B40 1NT.

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