

Sales Across the Board at Spring NEC Fair

ANTIQUES FOR EVERYONE
NEC, BIRMINGHAM B40 1NT
27 – 30 March 2008

Evidence that fine art and antiques appeal to collectors of all ages was provided at the Antiques for Everyone fair at the NEC, Birmingham, 27 – 30 March 2008, when an eighteen-year-old young man made his first serious purchase, spending in the region of £5,000 for a sculpture by Benson Landes.

The sculpture belonged to Callaghan Fine Paintings, the Shrewsbury gallery, who specialize in works by Landes. Proprietor Daniel Callaghan was delighted to sell to such a young collector, whom he described as keen to spend an amount of inheritance money on a work of art with investment potential. Landes specialises in ballet subjects and the young man's grandmother had been a ballerina. After touring the fair in search of a suitable purchase, the young man alighted on Callaghan's large stand. Callaghan Fine Paintings enjoyed a successful fair, selling a number of 20th century paintings and sculpture.

With approximately 340 exhibitors from across the UK, Europe and America, Antiques for Everyone is the UK's largest indoor, vetted antiques fair and a major international event for collectors and dealers.

The fair opened to an enormous queue that took more than half-an-hour to disperse, generating an immediate 'buzz' that continued throughout the four days of the fair.

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'Hussar on Horseback, a fine bronze sculpture by the Italian artist Raphael Nannini, circa 1910. Sold by Hazlehurst Antiques from Kent for £3,900.

Sales of ceramics were strong across all areas. Stuart Parish of Barling Fine Art from Essex sold two vases to the same collector for £24,000 and said: 'There is always a customer with the money for the right pieces, no matter what the economic outlook.' Meanwhile, Brad Dover of Jupiter Antiques from East Sussex described the fair as a 'truly great event' with near record sales of porcelain.

Many other specialists were also delighted, notably Catherine Hunt from Cheltenham specialising in Chinese Blue & White; John Newton from Humberside, specialising in Continental porcelain, who also sold two pieces to a new Turkish collector from Istanbul, A.D. Antiques from Staffordshire, specialising in Art Nouveau and Arts & Crafts Studio pottery, Alan Finney Antiques from Staffordshire, Andrew Muir from Halesowen, specialising in Clarice Cliff, MVS Antiques from Solihull; David & Sally March Antiques from Bristol, specialising in early porcelain; and Juno Antiques from London from whom Haydn Hansell said: "It was a very successful event for us, and the first time we have shown at the NEC".

In other areas, period furniture and clocks proved to be selling on price and quality. Exeter dealers Henson Antiques were forced to borrow pieces to fill their stand before the weekend; newcomers M. & J. Duncan Antiques from East Sussex sold a Regency extending dining table for around £12,500, among other pieces; Northern Clocks from Manchester sold two early longcases and other examples, and Mark Seabrook Antiques from Cambridgeshire, specialising in oak and country furniture, sold several cabinets, an oak dresser, a coffer and other items large and small. Le Style 25 from London was satisfied with sales of Art Deco furniture, which is now shown by several dealers at the fair and proving ever more popular. Also pleased with furniture sales was S. & S. Timms Antiques from Bedfordshire, who sold a set of chairs of around £15,000 on opening day, John Shepherd from Kent, who sold the widely publicised 'Bronte box' for £1200, Mike Melody Antiques from Cheshire, The Hayloft from Surrey and Tim Saltwell Antiques from West Sussex.

Fine art is always popular at the NEC fairs and more than fifty galleries show regularly. Watercolours proved most in demand this spring with several specialists very pleased with business. Phoenix Fine Art from Cheshire declared 27 sales that included a small drawing by J.M.W. Turner. Other art dealers pleased with sales included Graham Bentley from Kenilworth, Hartley Fine Art from Surrey, Books Illustrated from Salisbury and Baron Fine Art from Chester.

Around other specialist areas, Steve Kember, the musical box dealer from London, enjoyed a most successful fair, Richard Price, the London clock dealer and Antiques Roadshow expert making his debut, was pleased with business and declared his intention to show at the NEC again; bronze sculpture specialist Hazlehurst Antiques from Kent, sold several higher priced pieces, so too Garret & Hurst Antiques from East Sussex, also with French sculptures, from Sussex. Garth Vincent, the arms and armour specialist from Grantham, was very pleased with sales, Tempus Antiques from Surrey, specialising in watches, sold to regular collectors, while Fu Ts'ang Lung from South Yorkshire, specialising in Chinese collectables, found new and regular clients. Jewellery also proved popular with many specialists reporting a good fair.

The special Feature Display, **Mao: Art for the Masses**, belonging to antiques dealer and Chinese specialists Peter and Susan Wain, attracted a great deal of interest not only among visitors but also from museum curators around the country who arrived to view this important and unique collection.

The next Antiques for Everyone fair at the NEC takes place from 24 – 27 July 2008.

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