



ANTIQUES TRADE gazette

THE ART MARKET WEEKLY

koopman rare art



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Export stop for Fromanteel's £3m longcase

by Laura Chesters

The UK government has issued a temporary export bar for a Fromanteel longcase clock dating to c.1660.

The earliest surviving purpose-made longcase clock in an architectural ebony-veneered case was the subject of a recent private sale.

The application to export was made by Winchester dealership Carter Marsh. That process has been put on hold in the hope that a buyer in the UK can be found. Including fees and VAT, the sum to be raised is £3,009m.

The price would make this among the most expensive English Golden Age clocks ever sold – only a small number of deluxe grande sonnerie clocks by Thomas Tompion have made more.

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Dawsons invests in larger premises

Dawsons Auctioneers is relocating to a larger new premises and plans to hold all its sales as live online-only without room bidding.

It will move into the new venue at Cordwallis Park in Maidenhead, Berkshire, close to its current saleroom, in mid-January.

The firm has invested £500,000 in the 12,000 sq ft facility which is four times

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Above: a watercolour study of seven feathers inscribed *Drawn by Miss Biffin, 6th August 1812* was sold at Sworders together with a handbill, c.1811, advertising her as an attraction 'During The Races'. It says 'Miniature Likenesses painted on Ivory in a very superior manner' are priced at three guineas each.

The £9000 tribute to the talented Miss Biffin

A rare work by Sarah Biffin (1784-1850), the early 19th century artist born without limbs, sold for £9000 at Sworders on December 15.

The 4 x 4½in (10 x 12cm) watercolour study of feathers inscribed in pen *Drawn by Miss Biffin, 6th August 1812* was sold together with a Georgian handbill advertising her as an attraction 'During The Races'.

Born near Bridgwater in Somerset with the congenital deformity phocomelia, Biffin (1784-1850) taught herself to write, paint and hold scissors using her mouth.

From the age of about 13, she earned £5 a year touring the country as part of Emmanuel Dukes' travelling show painting portraits and keepsakes using a brush that she pinned to her shoulder.

Broadsides and handbills printed in advance of her arrival in the cities of England, described her as 'the eighth wonder' or 'the limbless wonder'.

Formal education

However, in her 20s Biffin did receive formal artistic instruction. At St Bartholomew's Fair in 1808 she was introduced to William, 16th Earl of Morton, an encounter that led to professional instruction by William Marshall Craig, aristocratic patronage and ultimately recognition by the Society of Arts and the Royal Academy.

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COOPER FAIRS 2022

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The Cotswolds Decorative, Antiques & Art Fair
Westonbirt School, Tetbury, Glos
22-24 April / 12-14 August

The Annual Buxton Decorative, Antiques & Art Fair
The Buxton Pavilion Gardens
19-22 May



The Pavilions of Harrogate Decorative, Antiques & Art Fair
28-30 January / 10-12 June / 21-23 October

Leading
Provincial
Events

The Chester Decorative, Antiques & Art Fair
Chester Racecourse
29 April-1 May / 7-9 October

