



INTERNATIONAL



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Antiques and The Arts Weekly
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Sworders Sells Jan Finch Collection

STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET, U.K. — On November 9, Sworders conducted a mostly no-reserve auction, “Instinct, Scholarship and Curiosity: The Jan Finch Collection,” offering nearly 400 lots from the stock of the South Kensington dealership Finch & Co and from her own personal collection. Finch (1952-2021) specialized in “the unusual and the mysterious over the purely commercial,” according to fellow dealer Ted Few, and the lots available exhibited the exquisitely eclectic eye that saw Finch through more than four decades of business. Finch’s collection varied from taxidermy and natural wonders to ethnographic arts and ancient artifacts, and everything in between. The sale totaled \$346,694.

The highest achieving lot was a French prisoner-of-war ship model of a 48-gun frigate of the Royal Navy, made circa 1820. Mounted on a galleried marquetry base and housed in its original mahogany display case, the model was inlaid with bone on its hull, masts, deck and even its miniature figure-head. The model’s provenance included information possibly linking it to prisoners at Portchester Castle in Fareham, Hampshire, which was used as a prison during the Napoleonic Wars and housed more than



Carved with symbols of power and honor, this “apa’apai” wood club (detail) achieved \$12,078.

7,000 French prisoners during this conflict. The ship bid to \$29,838 and went to a private collector in the United States.

Second in the listings was a Western Polynesian “apa’apai” ironwood war club from the Eighteenth Century, which beat its way up to \$12,078 and is now part of a private collection in Ireland. Despite or perhaps adding to its intended purpose, the club was delicately carved throughout with 15 zoomorphic and anthropomorphic glyphs. According to the Royal Museums, Greenwich, UK, these carvings “[honor and control] an object, telling a story at the same time as it



This bone-inlaid and marquetry ship, made by French prisoners of the Napoleonic wars, sailed to \$29,838.



Believed to be worn by the “Queen’s dwarf” Sir Jeffery Hudson, these diminutive trousers stepped up to \$10,657.

Auction Action In Stansted Mountfitchet, U.K.

serves to both shield and advertise its ‘mana’ or power.”

Another top lot was a pair of embroidered silk trousers believed to have been worn by Sir Jeffery Hudson (1619-1682), also known as “Lord Minimus” and the “Queen’s dwarf” as a favorite of Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I. Hudson stood at just 19½ inches yet fought with the

Royalists in the English Civil War. He fled with the queen and court to France but was expelled after killing a man during a duel. Shortly after he was captured by Barbary pirates, enduring 25 years of enforced servitude. Hudson did not return to court following the Restoration and was imprisoned for his Catholicism in England, dying about two

years after his release. The trousers, a souvenir of Hudson’s better days, sold for \$10,657 to a private Belgian collector.

Prices quoted with buyer’s premium as reported by the auction house, using exchange rates listed on date of sale. Sworders’ Fine Interiors auction will take place on December 6. For more information, www.sworders.co.uk.

Artemisia Gentileschi’s 1616 Nude To Be Digitally Unveiled

BY TRISHA THOMAS

FLORENCE, ITALY (AP) — Art restorers in the Italian city of Florence have begun a six-month project to clean and virtually “unveil” a long-censored nude painting by Artemisia Gentileschi, one of the most prominent women in the history of Italian art.

Swirling veils and drapery were added to the “Allegory of Inclination” some 70 years after Gentileschi painted the life-size female nude, believed to be a self-portrait, in 1616.

The work to reveal the image as originally painted comes as Gentileschi’s contribution to Italian Baroque art is getting renewed attention in the #MeToo era, both for her artistic achievements but also for breaking into the male-dominated art world after being raped by one of her art teachers.

Her work was featured in a 2020 exhibit at the National Gallery in London.

“Through her, we can talk about how important it is to restore artwork, how important it is to restore the stories of women to the forefront,” said Linda Falcone, coordinator of the Artemisia Up Close project.

“Allegory of Inclination” originally was commissioned for the family home of Michelangelo



Restorer Elizabeth Wicks works on the “Allegory of Inclination,” a 1616 work by Artemisia Gentileschi, in the Casa Buonarroti Museum, in Florence, Italy, Wednesday, November 9, 2022. Restorers have begun a six-month project on the “Allegory of Inclination” using modern techniques including x-rays and UV infrared research to go beneath the veils painted over the original to cover nudities and discover the work as Gentileschi painted it (AP Photo/Andrew Medichini).

Buonarroti the Younger, the great-nephew of the famed artist. The building later became the Casa Buonarroti museum, and the painting was displayed until recently on the ceiling in a gilded frame. When lead conservator Elizabeth Wick removed the painting in late September, a shower of 400-year-old dust

was released.

Wick’s team of restorers is using ultraviolet light, diagnostic imaging and X-rays to differentiate Gentileschi’s brush strokes from those of the artist that covered the nudity. The public can watch the project underway at the museum through April 23.

Restorers won’t be able to remove the veils because the cover-up was done too soon after the original, raising the risk that Gentileschi’s painting would be damaged in the process.

Instead, the restoration team plans to create a digital image of the original version that will be displayed in an exhibition on the project opening in September 2023.

Gentileschi arrived in Florence shortly after the trial in Rome of her rapist, during which the then-17-year-old was forced to testify with ropes tied around her fingers that were progressively tightened in a test of her honesty.

She also had to endure a physical examination in the courtroom behind a curtain to confirm that she was no longer a virgin. Eventually, her rapist was convicted and sentenced to eight months in prison.

“Somebody else would have been crushed by this experience,” Wick said. “But Artemisia bounces back. She comes up to Florence. She gets this wonderful commission to paint a full-length nude figure for the ceiling of Casa Buonarroti. So, I think she’s showing people, ‘This is what I can do.’”

While in Florence, Gentileschi also won commissions from the

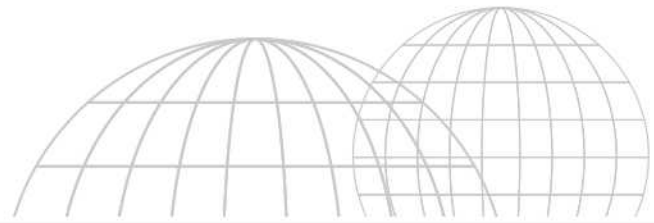
Medici family. Her distinctive, dramatic and energetic style emerged, taking inspiration from the most renowned Baroque painter of the time, Caravaggio. Many of her paintings featured female heroines, often in violent scenes and often nude.

She was 22 when she painted “Allegory of Inclination,” which was commissioned by Michelangelo Buonarroti the Younger. Another member of the family, Leonardo Buonarroti, decided to have it embellished to protect the sensibilities of his wife and children.

“This is one of her first paintings. In the Florentine context, it was her debut painting, the same year she was then accepted into the Academy of Drawing, which was the first drawing academy in Europe at the time,” Falcone said.

With the younger Michelangelo as her patron, Gentileschi gained entry to the cultural milieu of the time.

“She was able to hobnob with Galileo and with other great thinkers. So this almost illiterate woman was suddenly at the university level, producing works of art that were then, you know, appreciated by the Grand Duke,” Falcone said. “And she became a courtly painter from then on.”



V&A Acquires, Conserves Karl Lagerfeld's Rare Wedgwood Tea & Coffee Set

LONDON — The Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) has announced that a rare tea and coffee set designed by Paul Follot for Wedgwood and the accompanying set of design drawings has been acquired for the V&A Wedgwood Collection and is now on display in Barlaston, Stoke-on-Trent. The set was previously owned by Karl Lagerfeld and was acquired from his estate. No other examples of the pattern or even the shape are known to exist.

Catrin Jones, chief curator, V&A Wedgwood Collection said: "This glamorous Art Deco set is a rare and unusual example of Paul Follot's designs for Wedgwood, reflecting the tastes of its collector, fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld, known for his love of monochrome as well as his interest in ceramics. These extraordinary pieces and their design drawings fill an important gap in the V&A Wedgwood Collection, and are a wonderful example of the Wedgwood company's tradition of working with innovative artists to create its designs, and of inspiring taste-



The Campanula coffee and tea set that once belonged to Karl Lagerfeld. It has been acquired by the Victoria & Albert Museum from the designer's estate.

makers such as Karl Lagerfeld."

Paul Follot (1877-1941) was a French designer of luxury furniture and decorative art objects. After World War I he became a director of the Pomona Studios for the fashionable Paris department store Le Bon Marché. During the 1930s he was co-director with Serge Chermayeff of Waring & Gillow's French furniture department. In about 1911, Follot was recommended to Cecil

Wedgwood, one of the partners of the Wedgwood company, by French retailer Georges Rouard — himself a champion for artist-craftsmen who ran a luxury goods shop, À la Paix — and completed a number of designs, none of which were manufactured until the early 1920s. Many of these designs were very labor-intensive for Wedgwood to produce, so were only made in small quantities and

are now very rare.

The Campanula tea and coffee set, and design drawings, represent a very significant contribution to the V&A Wedgwood Collection as only a very small number of Wedgwood products were made in the Art Nouveau and Art Deco styles. Among the drawings is a design for an unusual Pomona queensware centerpiece, which was also crafted by Follot for Wedgwood. The drawings are an important addition to the V&A Wedgwood Collection's archive, offering an insight into the unusually complex design process for this set. They show the journey from concept to production: Follot's note on several of the drawings, "avant réduction," suggests the scale of the drawings represents the size of the product before the clay shrinks as it is fired in the kiln.

The set was owned by Karl Lagerfeld, the mercurial creative director for Chanel until his death in 2019. Lagerfeld was an insatiable collector for most of his life, with a passion for the elegance of the decorative arts

of the Eighteenth Century to the modernity of Art Deco to the contemporary designs of the Twentieth Century advertising. The set was probably used by the designer as it shows some signs of wear. The V&A's conservation team cleaned the pieces, including the gold decoration which had some tarnishing, and repaired a small crack. One of the lids belonging to the teapot is missing but a project is in early-stage development with the Wedgwood factory to determine whether they could recreate this piece.

The set was acquired thanks to the generosity of several organizations and individuals. It was purchased with the support of the V&A Americas Foundation through the generosity of the A. Alfred Taubman Foundation at the recommendation of William and Ellen Taubman, The Friends of the National Libraries, The Decorative Arts Society 40th Anniversary Fund, and Simon Wedgwood.

The Victoria & Albert Museum is on Cromwell Road. For information, www.vam.ac.uk.

Amid The War Ruins In Ukraine, Banksy Seeds Art

BORODYANKA, UKRAINE (AP) — Amid the ruins of war, the flowerings of art.

A delicate painting of a gymnast doing a handstand has popped up on the wall of a wrecked building outside of Kyiv and appears to be the work of the British graffiti artist known as Banksy.

Banksy posted photos on his Instagram page of the artwork in Borodyanka, northwest of Ukraine's capital.

The town was the target of shelling and fighting in the early stages of the Russian invasion, which turned apartment buildings into charred, bombed-out hulks.

The mural of the gymnast is in black and white and is painted so she looks like she is doing her

handstand on the crumpled remains of concrete blocks that poke out of the blackened wall. Towering above her are the gutted, blown-apart innards of what were once apartments.

Another mural in the town — of a small boy doing a judo throw on a man — also looked like it might be Banksy's, although that wasn't posted on his Instagram page.

President Vladimir Putin of Russia is a judo practitioner.

A Banksy-like painting, also in black and white and again not confirmed as his by Banksy himself, also appeared on the wall of a war-damaged building in the town of Irpin, on Kyiv's northwestern outskirts.

It shows a rhythmic gymnast doing a pirouette with a ribbon, over a gaping hole in the wall.



An artwork by British street artist Banksy is seen on a destroyed-by-fighting building in Borodyanka, Kyiv region, Ukraine, Sunday, November 13, 2022 (AP Photo/Andrew Kravchenko).

Gold & Treasures: 3,000 Years Of Chinese Ornaments

PARIS — L'École, School of Jewelry Arts presents through April 14 an exhibition showcasing more than 3,000 years of goldsmithing work in China, through a selection of masterpieces from the Mengdiexuan Collection.

A Taoist text from the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) reveals the importance of gold during that era: "Gold is the most valuable thing in all the world because it is immortal and never gets rotten. Alchemists eat it, and they enjoy longevity" (Wei Boyang, alchemist). Since the Fifth Millennium BCE, gold has held a power of fascination and has been used by talented craftsmen to create jewelry and ornaments with a strong symbolic value.

Following a first exhibition at L'École Asia Pacific in Hong Kong last spring, the exhibition arrived in Paris, where it will be on view until April 14. Replete with various symbolic meanings that are deciphered throughout the exhibition, these ornaments span more than 3,000 years of Chinese history.

All are part of the exceptional private Mengdiexuan Collection, focused on Chinese art, that L'École, School of Jewelry Arts in Paris presents for the first time to the public in Europe.

The exhibition is organized around three main themes: The first part offers an introduction from a scientific and gemologi-



Hairpin with dragon motif, Qing dynasty, 1644-1911, gilded silver, gemstones.

cal point of view on the material and the properties of gold: what is gold? where is it found? What type of gold is used to make jewelry? Thanks to the displays composed of nuggets, crystals and ancient jewelry, the exhibition explores all these different aspects.

The exhibition then focuses on the savoir-faire (craftsmanship), with several major techniques: hammering, chasing, casting, granulation, gold wire and filigree, setting and inlay. The displayed necklaces, bracelets, earrings, hairpins, brooches and belt buckles take us on a journey to the Chinese Empire through Central Asia, the Eurasian Steppes, Mongolia and the Himalayas. The exhibition covers a period of more than three millennia, from the Shang dynasty (about 1500-1046 BCE) to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911) and presents ancestral skills

that still fascinate us today.

Finally, the exhibition highlights the power of symbols in Chinese art, which displays a rich and diverse iconography embodying happiness, longevity, rank, prosperity and, more generally, auspiciousness.

The ornaments from the Mengdiexuan Collection offer us a glimpse of this symbolic wealth. By bringing art history, savoir-faire and materials into dialogue, the exhibition resonates with the mission pursued by L'École, School of Jewelry Arts since its creation in 2012, with the support of Van Cleef & Arpels, that of promoting the many dimensions of the art of jewelry through courses, talks, workshops, exhibitions, publications and research.

L'École, School of Jewelry Arts is at 31 Rue Danielle Casanova. Visit www.lecolevancliefarpels.com/fr for information.