

# dealers' dossier



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reports

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## CADA's spring at the palace

IT has been in negotiation for a while, but now it's official.

The **Cotswold Art & Antique Dealers' Association (CADA)** will be holding their first ever fair in the spring, in the impressive surroundings of Blenheim Palace from April 20 to 22.

This will also be the first art and antiques fair at Blenheim, **below**, the Oxfordshire stately pile currently home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough.

The fair will take place in The Colonnade, The Marlborough Room and The Orangery.

The majority of CADA's 37 members will be taking part, most of them also BADA and LAPADA members.

They include **Architectural Heritage, Catherine Hunt Oriental Ceramics, Hampton Antiques, John Noott Galleries, The Titian Gallery, John Howard** and **Christopher and Angela Legge Oriental Carpets**.

More on the fair in a future issue.

For more information, contact CADA on 07831 850544 or 07855 443913

[www.cotswolds-antiques-art.com](http://www.cotswolds-antiques-art.com)



# Everyone or the elite? The National NEC question

**CONSIDER *Antiques for Everyone* and *The National Fine Art & Antiques Fair*, both owned by Clarion Events and held at Birmingham's NEC.**

The former is an all-encompassing, no-frills tri-annual event, which prides itself on a broad price range and large numbers through the door.

The other is a smaller and unashamedly more expensive annual affair, with a smarter appearance to appeal to a 'higher-worth client' and lower lighting which softens the gaping space of the huge exhibition hall.

Although the fairs have the same organiser in **Tiffany Pritchard**, and share some of the same dealers, they are intentionally targeted at different audiences.

*The National Fine Art & Antiques Fair* is clearly marketed as a more exclusive event, and its next fixture is from January 18 to 22 in Hall 11 of the NEC. This will be the 22nd fair of its kind at the NEC, although the event was restricted to LAPADA members only until 2004, when entry was opened out to non-members and *The National Fine Art & Antiques Fair* in its present form was born.

As mentioned last week, for the first time a number of LAPADA directors will take a large shared stand exhibiting items of their stock as a show of support for the event, under the banner of the *LAPADA Directors' Collective*.

At the time of writing (a week before Christmas) around 55 dealers had signed up, the same as last year, although some last-minute additions are expected in the first weeks of January.

In 2011, the diminished exhibitor tally at the fair was noticeable, and Tiffany Pritchard said: "We struggled with exhibitor numbers and I think this was because many dealers hadn't had a good autumn trading. This, combined with the snow before Christmas, knocked confidence in the market at the end of 2010."

However, despite these qualms, some solid business was done and this is still widely thought of as the top fair outside London, despite its smaller size.

For many years the National was in late January, but it was moved forward last year to avoid a clash with the *Decorative Fair* at Battersea, although this is quite a different animal and there is probably more possibility of crossover among exhibitors at the two fairs than among the visitors.

While the London trade do visit, the NEC fairs' main draw is clients who live outside the capital, for whom visiting London is too much bother. For them, the



**Above:** a George III gentleman's dressing table in mahogany by Gillows of Lancaster, with the original Wedgwood bidet bowl, c.1790 – £4500 from **W.R. Harvey Antiques**.

National is a calendar staple.

On average, the National attracts around 8000 visitors, roughly half that of AfE, but general opinion is that they tend to be serious buyers with more money to spend.

This year, there will be one new exhibitor, **Camburn Fine Art**, who are based in France and deal in European contemporary watercolours and drawings.

**Peter Bunting Antiques** from Derbyshire (period furniture and works of art) and **Neptune Fine Art** of London (Modern British art, particularly Lowry and Fedden) are also returning after a few years away.

This is a vetted and datelined fair, and although some exhibitors also stand at the AfE fairs, quite a few do not, such as period furniture dealer **W.R. Harvey** of Witney, jewellers **Wimpole Antiques** from London and pictures specialist **Haynes Fine Art** of Broadway.

There is quite a broad mix here, but largely within a traditional vein. Regular exhibitors include period furniture dealers **S&S Timms** from Bedfordshire, **Melody's Antiques**, Chester, and **Saunders Fine Art** from the West

# 10 Questions

## TIM & BETSAN BOWEN

Tim Bowen Antiques,  
Carmarthenshire, West Wales  
[www.timbowenantiques.co.uk](http://www.timbowenantiques.co.uk)



### 1. What do you deal in?

We collect...I mean sell, Welsh country furniture and folk art.

### 2. How long have you been dealing?

Tim for over 20 years and Betsan since "retiring" from London in 2005.

### 3. What was your first job?

Tim – porter in an auction room. Betsan – a smart London property company.

### 4. Do you do any fairs?

Only Towy Antiques Fair in Carmarthen, which keeps us in touch with our local customers and throws up some new customers every now and again.

### 5. What has been your best buy?

An exquisite 17th century Welsh oak chair bought from a smart Cotswold dealer.

### 6. And your biggest mistake?

Not buying the exquisite 17th century Welsh oak chair when we first saw it for half the price!

### 7. What is the biggest threat, in your opinion, to the trade at the moment?

Us, the trade, being too pessimistic, there are always opportunities.

### 8. Guiltiest pleasure?

Sneaking off with a cup of coffee and my ATG on a Tuesday, when I should be helping with our three young children aged 4, 2 & 1, walking dogs or other domestic tasks!

### 9. Any advice for those starting out in the trade?

Don't expect it will make you rich but follow your heart. It still is a great way to live.

### 10. Which person, dead or alive, do you most admire and why?

In the antiques world, Roger Warner.

If you are a dealer and would like to be featured in 10 Questions email [annabrad@atgmedia.com](mailto:annabrad@atgmedia.com)



Midlands with pictures.

There is traditionally a good following for Art Nouveau and Deco pieces here, and frequent exhibitors in the field include **Solo Antiques** of Lancashire with bronzes and glass and **Hickmet Fine Art** from London with a broad range of sculptures from the period, specifically Deco dancers.

Other repeat exhibitors include London silver dealers **Stephen Kalms & Malka Levine**; **Brian Watson Antique Glass** from Norwich; **Story Clocks** of Yorkshire with period longcase and mantel clocks, and, as usual, quite a few jewellers, such as **Plaza and Shapiro & Co** from London and **Jean Bateman** from Warwickshire.

Finally, many will have been saddened to learn of the sudden death last month of **Garth Vincent**, the Lincolnshire-based arms and armour dealer who was a regular on the UK fairs circuit. It is heartening to learn that **Garth Vincent Arms & Armour** lives on as his son, **Dominic**, carries on the business and will be standing at the National.

[www.thenationalfair.co.uk](http://www.thenationalfair.co.uk)



**Above left:** *Venus au Bain* by Christophe-Gabriel Allegrain (1710-95), a 2ft 7in (79cm) high bronze priced at £5900 by **Benton Fine Art** at the National fair.

**Above:** Civil War period harquebusier's armour, c.1642-60, is priced at £6500 on the stand of **Garth Vincent Arms & Armour**, which is now headed by **Dominic Vincent** following Garth's sad and unexpected death.

**Below:** at the National fair, Leicestershire animal portrait specialists **Blackbrook Gallery** will ask £14,500 for 'Satirist' *Winner of the Great St Leger Stakes, Doncaster 1841, ridden by Bill Scott (1797-1848)*. The 2ft 4in x 21in (71 x 53cm) oil on canvas is by Harry Hall (1813-82), a prolific producer of portraits of racing personalities and racehorses.



## Paul gears up to go digital during Master Paintings week

IT'S no use hiding from it – granny is now Googling and your eight-year-old may well be giving your credit card a battering on eBay as you read.

Whatever your business, the internet is obviously becoming evermore powerful, and for art and antiques dealers, having a good web presence is crucial.

As more and more information is made available online, increasingly dealers are exploring the option of digital catalogues.

Tapping into this market is **DigitisedArt**, a company launched in the summer by online entrepreneur **Paul Evans**. Its first major project is *Master Paintings Week 2012*, which will create a digital platform for participating galleries and auction houses instead of a traditional catalogue.

All participants will be given a free account to upload and manage five pictures, while the *MPW* organisers will manage the entire site.

The images will be used as a resource for the marketing material, website and a new mobile application for iPhone, Blackberry and Android, which can be constantly updated by the individual exhibitors.

Part of the idea is that visitors will also be able to use this mobile application to locate galleries and events.

This is, of course, very useful for those who have a compatible phone, although obviously less so for those who don't and would rather use a printed map.

Someone else embracing the internet and the world of social media is London silver dealer **Elliott Lee**, who last year started the *Art, Antiques & Design Blog* with the aim of creating, in his words, "an impartial interactive forum for industry members" and to encourage the sharing of thoughts and ideas.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the social media phenomenon is how open people are prepared to be, often giving their name to forthright opinions which they might hesitate to go on record as saying to a publication such as *ATG*. Certainly the platform that Elliott has created includes some surprisingly candid comments from a number of the contributors.

"Since the blog was introduced in June, during *Summer Olympia*, it has received nearly 10,000 individual views and comments from colleagues, collectors and industry members, both nationally and internationally," says Elliott.

[www.olympiafineartandantiquesblog.wordpress.com](http://www.olympiafineartandantiquesblog.wordpress.com)