

APOLLO

THE INTERNATIONAL ART MAGAZINE

PREVIEW

Winter Show

Emma Crichton-Miller selects her highlights of the fair



1. *Husch Husch, der schönste vokal entleert sich* (Quick Quick, the most beautiful vowel is V), 1985, Meret Oppenheim (1913-85), produced by Cleto Munari, 18ct gold, hardstones, 16cm (length of bar), Didier, London (£08,500)



2. Anna Jadwiga Zamojska, 1791, Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), black chalk on grey prepared paper, 50.2 x 39.2cm, Lowell Libson & Jonny Yarker, London (in the region of £200,000)

Now in its 68th year, the Winter Show (20-30 January) in New York is America's leading art, antiques and design fair. It marks the start of the year's global fair merry-go-round, fielding a select group of 69 galleries from across the globe who specialise in fine and decorative art from antiquity to the present. The variety is dazzling – this year's offerings at the Park Avenue Armory range from the marble bust of a Hellenistic king and a Maori *hel-tiki* carved from nephrite to a 'Commodore' Roadster from 1929. Significantly, the fair is a fundraiser. All proceeds from general admission fees and the net proceeds of the opening-night party and other special events benefit the East Side House Settlement, a community-based organisation serving the Bronx and northern Manhattan.

The US and non-US galleries neatly complement each other. This year Koopman Rare Art, London's pre-eminent antique silver dealer, is presenting a spectacular piece of Regency silver: a Shield of Achilles (based on the shield in Book 18 of the *Iliad*) designed by the artist John Flaxman and executed by Philip Rundell of the royal goldsmiths Rundell,

Bridge & Rundell in 1823. Only five examples of this design were ever realised. One was owned by George IV; this one, by the Duke of Cumberland, later King of Hanover. It had been lost to view for most of the 20th century, latterly in a private Belgian collection, until it was sold at Sotheby's in 2007.

S.J. Shrubsole, founded in London in 1912 before opening premises in New York in 1936, has become one of America's leading antique silver dealerships, offering a mix of American and European silver alongside jewellery. Meanwhile, taking a thematic rather than geographic approach, Didier from London specialises in artists' jewellery. It has a prototype of a piece titled *Husch Husch, der schönste vokal entleert sich*, made in 1985 by the Swiss artist Meret Oppenheim after she had bought back and restored the work which had inspired it (Fig. 1). This was a painting she did in 1934 and dedicated to Max Ernst – briefly, in Paris, her lover. The painting, which will be included in an Oppenheim survey at MoMA in New York in October, depicts a fluffy ball linked by chain to a rod balancing six shapes. These are rendered as hardstones in the necklace. Martine Haspelslagh, one of Didier's directors,

explains that Oppenheim began her artistic career with jewellery, creating the fur bracelet which inspired the well-known Surrealist sculpture *Fur Breakfast* of 1936.

Nathan Liverant and Son, based in Colchester, Connecticut, will display a Queen Anne-style bonnet-top chest-on-chest-on-frame made from cherry (1775-90; Fig. 3). The elegant form identifies it as belonging to 'The Willard Group' of furniture, named after Daniel Willard, who commissioned a high-boy in 1783 from the craftsmen of Wethersfield, Connecticut. According to Arthur Liverant, these pieces 'were very influential on Connecticut furniture. The cabinetry [of that US state] is very individualised because the cabinetmakers had the opportunity for individual expression and interpretation, unlike in the urban centres.'

The fair overlaps with the Americana sales at Sotheby's and Christie's, which makes it a congenial event for galleries specialising in the field. The Connecticut dealership of David A. Schorsch and Eileen M. Smiles, American Antiques, which usually brings a mix of artworks and objects, is this year mounting a specially curated exhibition of

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3. Bonnet-top chest-on-chest-on-frame, 1775-90, Wethersfield, Connecticut, cherry with eastern white pine, Ht 208.3cm. Nathan Liverant and Son (price on application)



4. Othello, c. 1870, Pietro Calvi (1833-84), white marble and bronze with dark brown patina, Ht 91cm. Bowman Sculpture, London (£350,000)

Shaker furniture and design juxtaposed with traditional American folk art, with an accompanying catalogue. Exhibits include an oval fingered carrier, probably from New Lebanon, New York, c. 1850, made from maple, pine and hickory, with its original sun-yellow paint.

Arlie Sulka, owner of the legendary Lillian Nassau gallery specialising in Tiffany glass, is also using the opportunity of the fair to make a statement. Alongside an array of distinctive Tiffany lamps – a unique Virginia creeper lamp and a Turtleback chandelier, for instance – she will show some of the mid-century studio furniture she has been collecting since acquiring the gallery in 2006. Most spectacular perhaps are a pair of doors by Wendell Castle, the famous Rochester-based studio furniture maker, sinuously carved from walnut and zebra wood, with smoked mirrored glass and brass. These were commissioned for the boardroom at the headquarters of the publishing company Gannett, also based in Rochester, New York. Two music stands – one by Wharton Esherick, another by Castle – a piece by Japanese-American master George Nakashima and sculpture by French-American modernist sculptor Robert Laurent will

complete the ensemble. 'Everything looks great together,' Sulka comments. Milord Antiquités from Montreal will offer a European contrast, a luxurious parchment-wrapped daybed designed by André Arbus in Paris (1937-40), the mattress upholstered in sensuous velvet.

Several European galleries have seized the opportunity to showcase masterpieces in this grand Gothic Revival setting. Bowman, London-based specialists in works by Rodin, will show, alongside reduced-scale casts of two of his most famous sculptures (*The Thinker* and *The Kiss*), Henry Moore's bronze working model (1978) for his monumental marble sculpture *Thin Reclining Figure* (1979-80). Most startling, however, is a bust of Othello inspired by Ira Aldridge, the first black actor to play the Shakespearean tragic hero, modelled from bronze and carved from marble by the virtuoso Italian sculptor Pietro Calvi (c. 1870; Fig. 4). London-based drawing specialists Lowell Libson and Jonny Yarker, meanwhile, are offering a recent discovery: a highly finished drawing by Angelica Kauffman, portraying the Polish aristocrat Anna Jadwiga Zamoyska (1791; Fig. 2). Yarker

says this is 'the most significant Kauffman that has appeared in the last 30 years', a drawing made in the year the great artist turned 50, when she was enjoying renown as a portrait painter in Rome. The drawing is the grandest of a series of studies for a large multi-figure painting commissioned by Count Andrej Zamoyski, and now lost. Yarker suggests Kauffman is on the cusp of being recognised as 'the leading neoclassical painter she was'. London-based gallery Colnaghi, meanwhile, returns us to the source, offering a late Hellenistic or early Roman imperial larger-than-life-sized portrait bust of a Hellenistic king. Whether depicting an actual ruler or an invented ancestral likeness it offers, as the gallery says, an example of 'traditional Hellenistic royal portraiture at its best'.

Emma Crichton-Miller is an Apollo columnist.

The Winter Show takes place at the Park Avenue Armory, New York, from 20-30 January (www.winterantiquesshow.com).