



# ANTIQUES TRADE gazette

THE ART MARKET WEEKLY



A gothic ivory table casket c.1330 sold for £1.2m at Lyon & Turnbull on May 20.

## A glory of the chivalric age

The Five Centuries sale at Lyon & Turnbull in Edinburgh on May 20 included a sensational example of medieval art – a 14th century French gothic ivory casket or coffret. Ten minutes of bidding that began at the top estimate of £50,000 estimate ended at £1.2m.

A glory of the chivalric age, this is one of only nine complete secular ivory coffrets known. Probably made in Paris c.1330, it is intricately carved in bas-relief with narratives relating to courtly literature. On this coffret, that measures 10in (25cm) across, the panels appear to

relate to the famous medieval romance *Tristan and Isolde* and the Arthurian legend *Queste del saint grail*.

To the lid (pictured left) is a scene of 'wild men' fighting to conquer a castle (and again defeated and in chains on the back panel), a popular motif in medieval imagery akin to the winning of a lady's heart. The brass brackets, straps and handle are later additions.

The casket comes with an impeccable provenance from Tornaveen House in Aberdeenshire. Its history can be traced back to 1615 where it is described in the genealogy of the Bairds of Auchmedden in connection with Thomas Baird, a friar of a monastery in Besançon, Burgundy. Family history suggested it had been made (rather than acquired) by Thomas Baird leading the vendors to erroneously believe it was 17th century.

The final price with a 25/20% premium was close to £1.45m. It was L&T's first seven-figure lot on UK soil (and the most expensive work of art sold in Scotland) although in 2016 the firm went to Hong Kong to sell a Xuande (1426-35) mark and period blue and white stem cup for £3.1m.

Roland Arkell



## Maastricht fair 'online only' for 2021

by Laura Chesters

TEFAF Maastricht 2021 has been cancelled due to the ongoing effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The international art and antiques fair had been moved from March to September this year but the decision has now been taken to cancel the event.

In a statement the organisers said: "After careful consideration of current global circumstances, The European Fine Art Foundation (TEFAF) has made the decision to cancel the in-person component of TEFAF Maastricht 2021."

TEFAF Online 2021, will run from September 9-13 instead of the physical event.

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## Art Market Participants must register by June 10

HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) has again warned the art market that businesses must register under the 5th Money Laundering Directive by next month.

Known as 5MLD, this regulation took effect on January 10, 2020. It requires auction houses, art galleries and dealerships to conduct stricter due diligence on buyers who purchase works of art above a threshold of €10,000.

The regulation requires Art Market Participants (AMPs) – anyone trading in or acting as an intermediary in the trade of works of art that sell for above the threshold – to register with HMRC

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**Newark Antiques & Collectors Fair - is BACK!** **THURS 3 & FRI 4 JUNE** **IN LINE WITH COVID GUIDELINES**

**THURS & FRI** NEWARK & NOTTINGHAMSHIRE SHOWGROUND, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NG24 2NY  
 Thursday 9am - 6pm £20 (Thurs ticket allows entry on Fri) Friday 8am - 4pm £5

WE TAKE CARD PAYMENT AT THE GATE 01636 702326 • www.iacf.co.uk **iacf** OR BUY TICKETS ONLINE enquiries@iacf.co.uk

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## Pick of the week

### Finders keepers: bronze hoard brings £185,000

A hoard of Romano-British bronzes, discovered by metal detectorists in North Yorkshire last year, sold at Hansons for £185,000 last week.

Unearthed in the district of Ryedale, the four items comprised a 5in (13cm) high bust, a statuette of Mars on horseback, a horse-head knife handle and a pendulum.

They were offered as single lot with a £70,000-90,000 estimate.

While Hansons received several private offers before the sale, four bidders (three on the phone and one online) competed for the lot when sold in Etwell, Derbyshire on May 20. It was eventually knocked down to the London-based dealer David Aaron for a sum that topped £240,500 with buyer's premium.

The bronzes were found by two metal detectorist friends in May 2020 approximately 20 miles north of York (the Roman city of Eboracum) and not too far from the Roman Fort at Malton. The works were almost certainly buried together as a single deposit in the closing decades of the second century AD. The burial of the items may

relate to the closure of a rural temple or shrine.

The hoard had been taken to York Museum and recorded through the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme. The proceeds of the sale will be shared between the finders and the landowner.

All four elements would have been high-status objects. The bust, with the hair and beard flamboyantly curled and the face featuring large lentoid eyes, was deemed a finely crafted example of the native Romano-British style. Around 20 bronze heads of this type (it may represent the emperor Marcus Aurelius) are known from Roman Britain.

Auctions of such recently-dug works may soon be a thing of the past as the UK government is soon expected to widen the Treasure Act to include important finds made in base metals like bronze, copper or tin.

Currently these items do not fit the legal definition of Treasure and instead come under the remit of the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

Alex Capon



Above: the Ryedale ritual bronzes were found 20 miles from York in May 2020. The assemblage consists of a 5in (13cm) bust thought to represent Marcus Aurelius, a horse and rider figurine probably representing the god Mars, a zoomorphic knife handle in the form of a horse protome and a conical surveyor's plumb bob or pendulum.



## Precious metals

On Friday, May 21, Michael Bloomstein of Brighton was paying the following for bulk scrap against a gold fix of:

\$1877.65 £1531.25 £1321.30

### Gold

22 carat: £1168.80 per oz (£37.58 per gram)

18 carat: £956.29 (£30.75)

15 carat: £796.91 (£25.62)

14 carat: £743.78 (£23.92)

9 carat: £478.15 per oz (£15.37 per gram)

12 Month High: ▲ £18.32

12 Month Low: ▼ £14.91

### Hallmark Platinum

£23.00 per gram

### Silver

£16.05 per oz for 925 standard hallmarked

12 Month High: ▲ £17.65

12 Month Low: ▼ £11.51



Left: Kelmscott Manor was the inspirational Cotswold retreat of William Morris.

### Making Kelmscott 'Heaven on Earth'

A funding call for the restoration of the Cotswolds retreat of William Morris is being led by the antiques trade.

The 'Heaven on Earth' project (a reference to how Morris described his rural idyll at Kelmscott Manor) began in 2019 when the house was closed for repair and the construction of a new Learning Building.

The location is owned by the Society of Antiquaries and the funding campaign is chaired by dealer Martin Levy of Blairman and BADA Friends is supporting the campaign as part of its 30th anniversary.

Levy told ATG: "Despite many interruptions resulting from the pandemic, huge progress has been made over the past 12 months. The new learning centre sits seamlessly in the old farmyard and sensitive conservation work continues apace. The

Campaign Group is, meanwhile, seeking additional funding for ongoing educational projects once the manor opens to the public in 2022." Donors can become a Companion of Kelmscott Manor (£500) or a benefactor (£5000).

### Interpol app aid to identify stolen items

The International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) has launched an app 'to better protect cultural heritage'.

ID-Art app has been created to help identify stolen cultural property, reduce illicit trafficking and increase the chances of recovering stolen works and artefacts.

Jürgen Stock, Interpol secretary general, said it will allow users mobile access to the Interpol database of stolen works of art and report cultural sites potentially at risk.

### Auction house funds placements

Christie's has partnered with Change 100 (a programme run by pan-disability charity Leonard Cheshire) to fund two paid work placements in 2021 for university students with disabilities.

They will be based at its London King Street headquarters (or virtually) from June, and will run for three months.

Christie's will also fund two placements in public museums, The Tate and National Galleries of Scotland, in association with Change 100.

### Walpole's French royals return home

A group portrait of Catherine de' Medici with four of her 10 children - first bought by Horace Walpole and hung in his London home in 1774 - has returned to Strawberry Hill House 247 years later, thanks to the Acceptance in Lieu scheme.

The arrangement, brokered by Sotheby's, settles £1m in tax.

The 6ft 5in x 4ft 5in (1.98 x 1.37m) picture, dated to 1561, is by the workshop of French court painter François Clouet

(1510-72). It depicts de' Medici with her arm around and holding the hand of Charles IX, her third son, who was crowned king of France in 1560, aged just 10. Also included are his brother, the future Henry III, Duke of Anjou, his sister, Marguerite de Valois, the future Queen of Navarre; and François-Hercule, Duke of Anjou and Alençon.

Catherine de' Medici acted as regent during the first three years of Charles IX's reign.

Dr Silvia Davoli, the curator at Strawberry Hill House, said the image reflects the substantial influence Catherine held over the political life of France and the control and guidance she exercised over her son's rule.



Above: a group portrait of Catherine de' Medici is rehung at Strawberry Hill House.