

FINANCIAL TIMES

Melanie Gerlis JUNE 30 2023



Works on display at the first Treasure House fair

London's inaugural mixed-category Treasure House fair (June 22-26) was rougher around the edges than its swanky predecessor, Masterpiece — literally, as the surrounding lawns, exhausted by the previous month's Chelsea Flower Show, remained unturfed. But many of the fair's 52 exhibitors praised organisers Harry Van der Hoorn and Thomas Woodham-Smith for getting it going at all. "London was crying out for this, it is important to keep a fair here at this time," said Kathleen Slater, director at the ceramic specialists Adrian Sassoon. She reported "particular interest" in its antique Sèvres porcelain, priced from the low thousands to £145,000.

This reflected the fair's more old-school feel, something that Woodham-Smith says is intentional. "Masterpiece was more about luxury partnerships, this is more like Grosvenor House [a traditional London fair that closed in 2009]. This is a different fair for a different time," he says.

Footfall was disappointing — "there were not as many people through as we had thought," Woodham-Smith said midway — but he expects that an increase in exhibitors next year, up to about 80, plus being a more established fixture, will help to spread the word. Most of this year's exhibitors back him. "If they can do this in just four months, imagine what they could do with a year's run-up," said Maureen Diner, co-owner of the Washington, DC art and design specialists Geoffrey Diner Gallery.