

# US fairs specialist aims to ‘build a bridge’ between independent events after taking on London role

by Laura Chesters

The *Treasure House Fair* has hired US fairs specialist Helen Allen as its development director.

Allen is *The Winter Show*'s executive director and will continue in this role alongside her new post at the London fair. She will oversee the expansion of the Royal Hospital Chelsea event's exhibitor base and activities, with a focus on enhancing its presence in North America.

Allen will also oversee partnership and sponsorship activities, working with Harry Van der Hoorn (*The Treasure House Fair* co-founder and owner) and Thomas Woodham-Smith (co-founder and director). Allen began

discussions with Van der Hoorn in early March and joined the team after meetings at TEFAF Maastricht with both Van der Hoorn and Woodham-Smith and the agreement of the board of *The Winter Show*.

## Collaborate to win

Allen said: "The idea was to build a bridge between these two independent fairs and grow international connections. It was the perfect opportunity for both shows. Building this bridge enables both to have a year-round presence as they are six months apart."

She said at this stage, three months ahead of the next *The Treasure House Fair*, she will be creating the solid ground work for the 2024 edition while looking ahead toward 2025.

Allen added: "I will be



Image: Olga Minrova

Left: Helen Allen joins *The Treasure House Fair* team.

With the global expansion of the larger fair organisers, including *Frieze* and *Art Basel*'s parent company MCH Group, Allen believes it is important for the independent organisers and shows to collaborate to build the overall market and discuss how to help each other.

The inaugural *The Treasure House Fair* took place last summer and the next event, scheduled for June 26-July 2, features 70 exhibitors (up around 30% on last year) and takes place across 32,300 sq ft (3000 sq m) of exhibition space (also an increase of 30%).

Allen has many years' experience in art events, having run *The Winter Show* (the longest consecutively running

art and antiques show in the world) for the past six years, as well as with Ramsay Fairs, where she was executive director for nine years.

She also previously worked at Christie's in both Rome and New York, at The Metropolitan Museum, and was associate professor at Sotheby's Institute of Art for five years.



**This enables both fairs to have a year-round presence as they are six months apart**



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