

Art market  
Feature

## London's ailing June art season is heating up, thanks to homegrown efforts

Beleaguered by Brexit, this year, record auctions and a promising crop of fairs and events are helping to boost the week

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Treasure House Fair in 2025  
Courtesy of The Treasure House Fair

A sultry heatwave greets London's summer art moment, as [Treasure House Fair](#), [Studiolo](#) and [Classic Art London](#) open against the backdrop of the end-of-term Modern and contemporary auctions.

London's June season is not what it was before the [Brexit referendum](#) of exactly a decade ago—there are far fewer fairs. The auctions too have been rather a damp squib in recent years, but not in 2026. This year the [Lewis collection](#), formed by the British billionaire Joe Lewis and his daughter Vivienne, will be the most valuable single owner collection ever offered for sale in the UK. It is being sold at Sotheby's on Wednesday night (24 June) with an estimate of £150m to £200m. Highlights include Modigliani's *Nu assis au collier* (1917) estimated in excess of £45m.

Christie's might have scrapped its summer Modern and contemporary art evening sale way back in 2017, but this year it will offer 106 contemporary works from the collection of Anita and Poju Zabłudowicz. The group, including works by Rose Wylie, Damien Hirst and Philip Guston among many others, will be dispersed via a live sale this Thursday (25 June) and an online auction which runs until 30 June (overall estimate in excess of £15m).



A dark blue velvet dog house, around 1775, reputedly created for Marie Antoinette's dog Pompon. Exhibited by Mallett Antiques at Treasure House Fair, priced at £35,000  
© Mallett Antiques, London/ New York

### **Treasure House Fair**

After MCH Group cancelled Masterpiece London fair in 2023 (the Switzerland-based Art Basel parent company bought it in 2017), two of Masterpiece's original co-founders—Thomas Woodham Smith, an antiques dealer, and Harry Van der Hoorn, the owner of the stand builder Stabilo—decided to relaunch a smaller fair in its literal place at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Now in its fourth edition, Treasure House Fair runs from 24 to 30 June. The layout has been rotated 90 degrees, Woodham Smith tells *The Art Newspaper*, to allow for more growth in future years, although for 2026 there are 60 exhibitors, down from 72 last year.

“It's going to look absolutely fantastic but at the same time, I think we have to acknowledge that it's a difficult economic time for the trade across the board,” Woodham-Smith tells *The Art Newspaper*. “So, we've a lot of wonderful new exhibitors, but also a lot of people have withdrawn.”

Some of these withdrawals are down to the fact that dealers everywhere are feeling the pinch and fairs—especially one like Treasure House, in an expensive purpose-built structure—are an enormous outlay (Woodham-Smith says that, despite rising material costs, fees have been kept the same as last year).



A 16th century Limoges enamel convex portrait of a bearded man by Leonard Limosin, £48,000 with Foster & Gane  
Courtesy Foster & Gane

But alongside those financial constraints is a broader generational shift going on within the trade, contributing to this churn: a third of exhibitors are new for 2026, meaning 32 from last year have not returned. “I think that there is a big change coming about in the trade—a lot of the old, established Masterpiece and even Grosvenor House [fair] dealers have either retired or you know not doing quite so much and we’ve got a very much younger generation of dealers coming in and they are very interesting,” Woodham Smith says. He mentions the well-known Pimlico Road-based interior designer and antiques dealer Rose Uniacke, a Treasure House exhibitor who mixes 20th-century pieces with older finds, as “a very big influence” upon a number of younger dealers, including first time exhibitor Ed Foster of Foster and Gane, and Joe Chaffer of Vagabond Antiques, who also showed last year. Woodham-Smith thinks “the Bond Street and St James’s dealers who [once] dominated the trade” are now being succeeded by a new wave of antiques dealers, like Chaffer and Foster, “who are mergers of periods, but have a very clear line of taste, and are dealing at the top end. I think that’s the next big thing.”

Foster, who worked for Uniacke before going into business with his mother Val a decade ago and regularly exhibits at The Decorative Fair in Battersea, says: “Gradually our client base has moved more towards the private collector and the array of spectacular pieces on show at Treasure House has proved it to be an attractive hunting ground for that sort of buyer.” His stand will include a characteristically eclectic mix ranging from a 16th-century Renaissance Limoges enamel portrait by Leonard Limosin (£48,000) to a 1950s limestone bas relief wall panel by Sylva Bernt (£120,000).

Another of the 20 new exhibitors this year is the Hampshire-based art dealer Jenna Burlingham Gallery, also a regular Decorative Fair exhibitor. This is the first summer fair the gallery has done since it was founded 16 years ago, and it will exhibit Modern British works by the likes of Ivon Hitchens, Sandra Blow, Patrick Heron and Ben Nicholson. “We always particularly enjoy exhibiting alongside a range of disciplines—from antiques and design to jewellery and rugs,” Burlingham says, adding that Treasure House “offers this diversity”.

## **Classic Art London**

Alongside Treasure House run the second editions of both the gallery trail Classic Art London (22 June to 3 July) and the one-day group exhibition Studiolo (26 June).

Classic Art London was launched last year to fill the void left by London Art Week (cancelled in 2024) by Pippa Roberts and Silke Lohmann, who had previously overseen press and marketing for London Art Week for seven years. This year the event has 16 participants across Mayfair, St James's and Cecil Court, specialising in Modern to Old Master works, though they skew towards the latter.

The dealers involved "are keen to support the London art world" and they see CAL as "an opportunity to focus their own marketing attention on important selling exhibitions and engage with international curators and collectors" Roberts says. She adds: "We are living in challenging times globally, but it's not all doom and gloom in London nor when it comes to the pre-contemporary art market. Most of our dealers have reported a really good start to the year, and have already seen interest in their forthcoming exhibitions, both from the international market and UK collectors. Many US institutions and collectors have RSVPed for events and are also actively participating in them."

CAL's talks programme has been expanded this year, from 20 to 30 events, most of them free. "After our Turner at 250 talk last year, there were immediate calls for Constable at 250 this year and we are thrilled that Christopher Baker is moderating this talk again [on 25 June] with some of the best Constable specialists to join him in Annie Lyles, Susan Owens and Emma Roodhouse," Lohmann says.

As the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence takes place the day after CAL finishes, Ben Elwes Fine Art has organised an exhibition called One People, Two Shores: Anglo-American Art in the Age of Revolution (22 June to 11 September) which includes works by Benjamin West, John Singleton Copley and John Taylor, three American "geniuses" (in Benjamin Franklin's words) who travelled to England.

Alexander Clayton-Payne will show five previously unknown drawings by Constable, dating from around 1806 to 1815 (opening on 26 June) and other exhibitions include Elizabeth I: Queen & Court (Philip Mould & Company), Vino Veritas: The Visual Rhetoric Of Wine (Colnaghi London), which mixes archaeological finds with Old Master painting and sculpture, looking at the function and symbolic meaning of wine since Ancient times, and an extensive exhibition of works on paper by British women artists, dating from 1780 to 1920, at Karen Taylor Fine Art. "I am determined to increase the visibility of the numerous women artists whose work has been lost from view, due to the numerous obstacles which they have had to overcome," says Taylor whose show includes landscapes by Harriet Lister and portraits of dancers by Laura Knight.

## **Studiolo**

Having debuted in Spencer House last year, the one-afternoon, one-evening selling event Studiolo will take place within the College Garden and Cloisters at Westminster Abbey this Friday 26 June, in collaboration with the interior and architectural design studio Ben Pentreath. The event was founded by Sebastien Paraskevas and Alesa Boyle, and is directed by Amelia Tomlinson, previously the director of London Art Week. Exhibitors this year include the antiquities specialist Madeleine Perridge (who has launched on her own after working for the now-closed Kallos Gallery), the arms and armour dealer Peter Finer, Daniel Crouch Rare Books and the veteran Old Master dealer Johnny van Haften.

Five galleries are returning from last year; nine are new. While the concept stays the same, the event “has evolved to suit the venue,” Tomlinson says—galleries can bring more than two objects as there is more space and outdoor sculptures will be displayed in College Garden.

The London-based sculpture specialist Stuart Lochhead will show his tripartite gallery exhibition centred around a rediscovered depiction of *The Presentation in the Temple* (around 1510) by the Brussels painter Valentin van Orley, priced at around £1.5m. The painting is accompanied by two sculptures made in Flanders in the 15th century—a bronze of Saint Francis (around 1480), attributed to the Brussels founder Renier van Thienen, and a limestone figure of a Deacon Saint (around 1410-1430) from the workshop of Claus de Werve.

“I love the concept, a way of showing art in a different context and make it exciting,” Lochhead says of Studiolo. “I thought it had a really good buzz about it last year. Of course, the great venues are a huge draw, and the short time that it’s on pushes people to visit. You either go then, or not at all.” He adds: “I don’t know what can really be achieved in a day [in terms of sales], but the idea is that it showcases the exhibitors and London. It’s a longer-term thing.”

Tomlinson declines to outline fees but says that Studiolo offers “a competitively priced alternative to the traditional fair model. And unlike other events which are structured as a base price ‘plus’, we have done our best to create a pricing model whereby almost all costs required are included.”

As for future plans, Tomlinson says Studiolo’s third edition “will be taking place this autumn in a new location, and 2027 is already shaping up to be unforgettable.”

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