

TREASURE HOUSE FAIR

FOURTH EDITION OF TREASURE HOUSE FAIR CELEBRATES 90 YEARS OF BRITISH SURREALISM

Landmark Exhibition reveals
SURREALIST MASTERPIECES
FROM SOUTHAMPTON CITY ART GALLERY
brought together for the first time in decades



Royal Chelsea Hospital, London
24-30 June 2025



London, 27 January 2025 - In June, **Treasure House Fair** - London's flagship summer art event – will return to the historic Royal Hospital Chelsea for its fourth edition. Alongside presentations from 70 internationally acclaimed art and antiques dealers, the fair will unveil a landmark exhibition of surrealist masterpieces from **Southampton City Art Gallery**, rarely shown together until now.

Surrealism burst onto the British scene in June 1936 with the rip-roaring success of the International Surrealist Exhibition in London¹. Ninety years on (almost to the day), Treasure House Fair will commemorate that seminal show with a display of works by British Surrealists **Roland Penrose** and **Paul Nash**, trailblazing women artists **Eileen Agar**, **Ithell Colquhoun**, and **Edith Rimmington**, and celebrated figures of the movement, such as **Paul Delvaux**.

Staged in a dedicated exhibition space within the main hall of the fair, the show will offer a rare glimpse into the remarkable collection of Southampton City Art Gallery. Brought together for the first time in decades, these national treasures have been carefully held in reserve while the Gallery has undergone a major restoration programme, supported by Southampton City Council and The Department for Culture, Media and Sport MEND fund which is administered by Arts Council

¹ Led by David Gascoyne and Roland Penrose, the International Surrealist Exhibition ran at London's New Burlington Galleries from 11 June to 4 July 1936. Featuring over 390 works by 68 European Surrealists and a rising English group, the show attracted more than 23,000 visitors over the course of three weeks.

England. The Gallery will reopen on 7 March 2026 with a new exhibition by acclaimed British artist Emma Richardson.

Councillor Alex Winning, Leader of Southampton City Council, said: "Southampton is incredibly proud of its fantastic art collection and we are delighted to be sharing and celebrating these Surrealist works, inspiring visitors to June's Treasure House Fair and showing what Southampton has to offer to visitors and local people all year round. As part of our long-term growth plans, we will be looking to secure more investment in Southampton's cultural infrastructure which plays such an important role in the vitality of the city."

Thomas Woodham-Smith, Director and Co-founder of Treasure House Fair: "In June 1936, as Roland Penrose, David Gascoyne, André Breton and a near-apoplectic Salvador Dalí -encased in a deep-sea diving suit - unveiled the International Surrealist Exhibition, a group of visionary British dealers were simultaneously preparing the third edition of The Antique Dealers' Fair, the world's first vetted fair and precursor to Treasure House. Together, these two events bore witness to the effervescence and creative energy that have always set London's art scene apart. Ninety years later, Treasure House Fair stands as proof that this spirit endures and we are thrilled to present Southampton City Art Gallery's unrivalled collection of British Surrealism, with many works exhibited together for the first time in many decades."

NOTES TO EDITORS

THE TREASURE HOUSE ART FAIR

London's pre-eminent interdisciplinary art fair, The Treasure House Fair was founded in 2023 by Thomas Woodham-Smith and Harry Van der Hoorn – the co-founders of *Masterpiece* (2009-2022). Brought to life in less than six months following the closure of *Masterpiece*, the fair's first edition set in the beautiful grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea offered a fresh and bold remastering of London's traditional summer fair, with a promise to preserve the event's international renown for expertise and exceptional quality. Pursuing a tradition of summer art fairs in London going back to 1934, the fair is testament to the strength of the British art market and the fact that London remains a unique destination for international art collectors

A "treasure house" of the rare and the beautiful, the historic and the cutting-edge, the interdisciplinary art fair blends items of quintessentially British character with hand-picked treasures from around the world. From the jewellery house that crafted Their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla's wedding rings, to young art dealers breaking new ground in the international art sphere, the fair will showcase galleries



Roland Penrose, *Good Shooting (Bien Vise)*, 1939, Oil on Canvas. © Lee Miller Archives, England 2026. All rights reserved. www.leemiller.co.uk

working at the apex of their disciplines. All vetted by independent experts, the carefully curated works on display will take the visitors on a journey through millennia of mankind's creativity, from Antiquity to today.

SOUTHAMPTON CITY ART GALLERY

Southampton City Art Gallery's renowned art collection spans eight centuries and traces the history of European art from the Renaissance to the present day. The core strength of the collection is British twentieth century and contemporary art with strong clusters of Post-Impressionism, including the Camden Town Group, Surrealism, St Ives, and a significant number of works by Turner Prize winners and nominees. The collection was built and continues to grow, in accordance with its founding principles, with direct involvement from both the National Gallery and Tate.

Housed in the stunning Art Deco City Art Gallery, which opened in 1939 within the first Civic Centre of its kind in Britain, the collection was made possible by the legacy of Councillor Robert Chipperfield. He wanted the people of Southampton to enjoy and be inspired by the visual arts, and set up a trust fund to purchase a nationally important collection which continues today, supported by other generous gifts and bequests.

THE SUMMER ART FAIR IN LONDON: A 90-YEAR-OLD TRADITION

The Treasure House Fair hails from an esteemed tradition of summer art fairs in London, with the 2026 edition marking the 92nd anniversary of the establishment of the *Antique Dealers' Fair* – known from 1970 as the *Grosvenor House Art and Antiques Fair*, founded in 1934. Held at the elegant five-star Grosvenor House Hotel on Park Lane, the *Antique Dealers' Fair* was the premier event of its time, showcasing the very best of the national trade. From 1937, the fair enjoyed the patronage of The Royal Family, with Queen Mary as its first royal patron, followed by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and later Princess Alexandra.

After 75 successful years, *Grosvenor House Art and Antiques Fair* was discontinued in 2009, with its heir, Masterpiece, opening its doors for the first time in 2010. Set in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, *Masterpiece* quickly established itself as one of world's leading cross-collecting fairs and a salient feature of the UK art market. *Masterpiece* announced its closure in early 2023 ahead of the 14th edition of the fair.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

Designed by Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of St. Paul's Cathedral over 300 years ago, The Royal Hospital Chelsea is a Grade I listed heritage site nestled on the banks of the River Thames. The home of the Chelsea Pensioners – The British Army veterans in their distinctive red coats – since 1692, the Hospital is renowned as the host venue of distinguished events such as the Royal Horticultural Society's annual Chelsea Flower Show.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

TREASURE HOUSE FAIR

4th Edition - 24-30 June 2026

Royal Hospital Chelsea

South Grounds London, SW3 4SR

Treasurehousefair.com

PRESS

Press Preview: 24 June, 11am

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