

# Q&A

the russian, eastern and oriental art fair

**Why should a dealer choose your fair to present his best stock this summer rather than any other?**

“ *The Russian, Eastern & Oriental Fine Art Fair* focuses on fine art from some of the richest countries in the world. We are accepting applications from quality specialists in Russian, Byzantine, Persian, Asian and Oriental fine art and our extensive marketing and PR will be targeting serious collectors of these genres.

This does mean that we have to be selective over who we do and do not accept. Specialists in Oriental items from Ming to Meiji, Indian, Himalayan, Persian and Byzantine pieces are welcome to apply – although at this stage stands are very limited. Successful applicants will reap the benefit of our intensive international marketing campaign to core target markets.

Our fair catalogue will be a sumptuous, hardbound publication covering the history of Russian, Byzantine, Persian and Asian art. It will not be discarded by collectors. ”

**Who is already signed up for the event, and what type of businesses do you think would be ideal for your show?**

“ Important icons proved particularly popular last year. Indeed, the first item sold after just a few minutes was a major icon for a price well into six figures.

Icons will again be a strong part of the fair this year, although at the time of writing we only have space for one more icons specialist.

**Paretsky Icon Gallery**, Berlin and **Made in Russia**, USA will both present some stunning examples, with pieces dating back to the 11th Century.

**Sphinx Fine Art** from London will show important 19th century Russian paintings, including a stunning work by Natalia Goncharova – the world's most expensive female artist; **Jacques Monasch Gallery** from Moscow and Amsterdam, together with **John Barks** from the UK and **Lazare Gallery** from the USA will display a range of 20th century and Soviet Realist paintings; **Sydney Moss Ltd.** and **Kevin Page** from London are among the specialists showing important Oriental antiques. **Shapero Rare Books** from London will display a wide range of antique Russian and Oriental works of art, while **Oc-Eo Art** from the UK will show paintings by major Vietnamese and Georgian artists.

Traditional and Modern Indian art is offered by a number of galleries including **Art 1821** from Norwich and **Kings Road Gallery**, London with some major Indian artists including Sacha Jafri, S.H.Raza and M.F. Husain.

Middle Eastern works are offered by European specialists including **Svenska KonstGalleriet** from Sweden.



**Peter London**  
Fair Director

**The many faces of the Russian, Eastern and Oriental Art Fair. Clockwise from left:**

Natalia Goncharova stage design for the Firebird from **Sphinx Fine Art**, London.

Maqbool Fida Husain (b.1915 India) Kirti Stambh of Emperor Ashoka, 2007 from **Kings Road Gallery**, London.

A Pavliuk, Sportwomen of Dynamo 1957, from **Jacques Monasch Gallery**, Moscow.

Our Lady of Bogolyubovo c.1750 from **Paretsky**, Berlin.

Contemporary art comes from selected specialists such as **X-Power Gallery** from Beijing, Paris and Beverley Hills, who will showcase the works of Lee Sun-Don, the only artist from Taiwan to have been shown at the Venice Biennale, while **Tanya Baxter Contemporary**, **Salon Contemporary** and **Catto Gallery** from London will present important works by leading contemporary artists from Russia, China and India.

We have several leading jewellery specialists, including **Moiseikin** from Moscow whose fabulous creations have been acquired by Premier Putin and President Medvedev among others.

One of his pieces contains 4000 diamonds! ”

**What can visitors expect to see when they walk into your venue? What ambience and what special features are you planning?**

“ Well, unlike other organisers, we do not have the luxury of starting with a blank canvas in a marquee or exhibition hall. However, we do have the benefit of one of the most stunning and beautiful Art Deco complexes as a backdrop.

The Fair has its own dedicated entrance on Piccadilly via the graceful Art Deco ballroom doors. In the foyer, they will be greeted by glittering mirrors, Eastern tapestries and major items of Oriental sculpture, furniture and ceramics

Descending the grand staircase to the first level, visitors are introduced to the Contemporary section of the fair and a showcase for the 30 finalists for the Eastern Art Prizes – the winners of which



will be announced at the Royal Private View on Wednesday, June 9.

On the lower level, the ballroom foyer, stunning jewellery mixes with modern art, sculpture and carpets, before visitors enter the main ballroom, where a glittering array of Russian and Oriental fine art spanning the last 1000 years is presented by leading international specialists. ”

**What makes your fair a unique event in the London fairs calendar?**

“ We are the only fine art fair in Europe (probably the world) to focus on fine art from across the Eastern world.

Hotels are being eschewed by many organisers as the cost per square metre of space is often prohibitive. However, we have managed to secure one of the largest and most glamorous exhibition spaces in central London, while still offering our exhibitors excellent value.

Our focus is very specific and that alone attracts enormous press attention. Three television stations covered the 2009 fair and we expect even greater coverage this year. ”

**What makes London a special venue for art and antiques events, and how do you think the city might gain from the mix of new fairs planned for this summer?**

“ Being a Londoner myself and having run art galleries in London for many years, I am naturally biased, but it is now a fact, whether our NY cousins like it or not, that London is the capital of the

art world. There are a number of new fairs planned for London this June, in addition to the re-branded Olympia – and I welcome every one of them.

Collectors descend on London from all over the world for specialist sales of Russian, Asian, Modern and Contemporary art, so it is a natural progression to have some of the world's leading art fairs in London at the height of the Summer Season.

The *Summer Olympia* had been in decline for a number of years – as much a result of market forces as the performance of the organisers. The fair needed someone like David Lester with the courage and vision to make broad scale changes to save the event and secure its future. I believe those who stick with it will reap the benefits of a very astute organiser with a proven track record.

Caroline Penman's alternative event in Kensington might be smaller and lack the cachet of a glamorous venue, but the fair does attract well-heeled locals and is a very suitable alternative for dealers looking to exhibit in London on a budget. Caroline's *West London Fair* at the same venue was always a favourite of mine in my days as an exhibitor.

Anna and Brian Haughton launch *Art Antiques London* the same week as our own event. They are highly experienced organisers and will have an impressive exhibitor line up.

*Masterpiece London* looks an exciting project – a cross between Grosvenor House and the Millionaire's Fair in Moscow and should attract much attention in the international press. *Masterpiece* looks set to be an event of which London can be truly proud. ”

**What possibilities do you see for joint promotion of London as a summer capital for art and antiques?**

“ Well... I have tried, but without much success, to suggest this.

However, I fully respect the decisions of everyone involved in the busy fairs calendar regarding marketing and joint promotion.

Although we do a good deal of in-house PR and publish London's only dedicated fine art magazine, we are contracting much of our PR to a very established and respected company in this field. Maybe they will have better luck!

We are pleased to offer complimentary full page advertisements in our Fair catalogue to all the fairs taking place in London this summer. We will also give equal coverage to all the June fairs in the summer issue of *Art in London*.

We will certainly make our clientele aware of all other events taking place in June and sincerely hope that some level of communication and co-operation can be established to promote the fairs season in London as a major attraction to fine art collectors the world over. ”