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ART BASEL &
MASTERPIECE
PREVIEWS

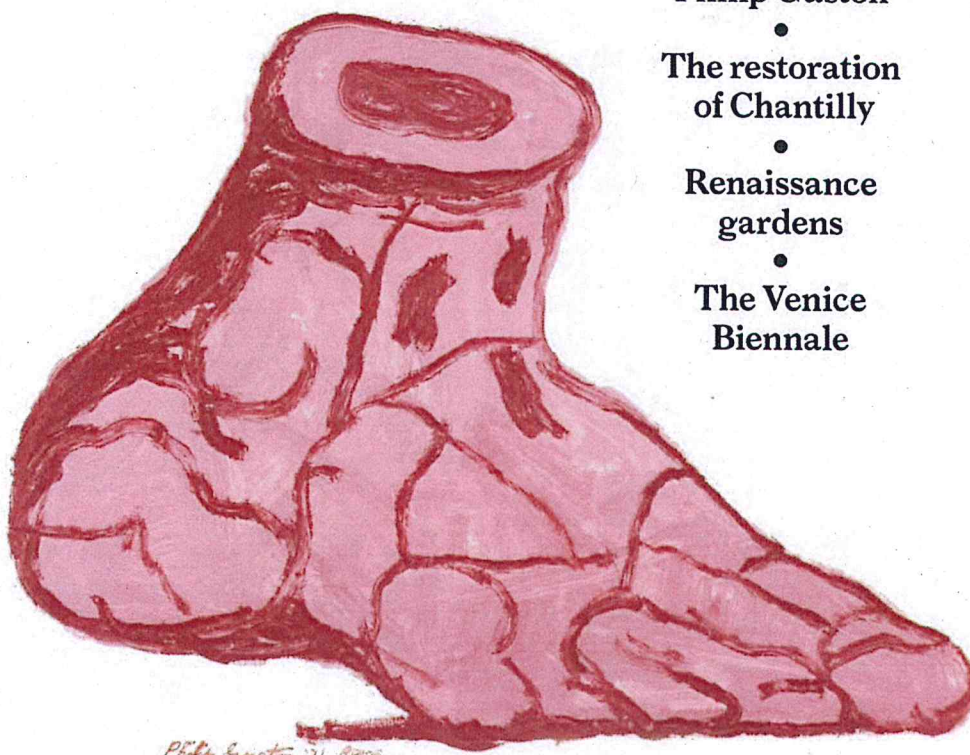
A Lasting Footprint

The legacy of
Philip Guston

•
The restoration
of Chantilly

•
Renaissance
gardens

•
The Venice
Biennale





PREVIEW
MASTERPIECE LONDON



- 1 *Nature morte au compotier*, 1943
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Oil on canvas, 46×61cm
Courtesy Simon Shore
- 2 *View in the Andes, Mt Chimborazo*, 1880
Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900)
Oil on canvas, 38×56cm
Collisart
- 3 *Annette Venise*, c. 1960
Alberto Giacometti (1901–66)
Bronze, 46.5×26.5×12.7cm
Simon C. Dickinson Ltd
- 4 *Four Hearts*, 1983
Andy Warhol (1928–87)
Silkscreened enamel and
diamond dust on canvas
35.6×35.6cm
Leila Heller Gallery

FAIR PREVIEW

Fairs' fare

Apollo previews some of the highlights at Masterpiece London and Art Basel

WRITER BEN LUKE

MASTERPIECE LONDON

Within an increasingly crowded fair calendar, Masterpiece London has found its feet in just four years. The message at the heart of this event is a simple one: here you can find top-quality works of art and design, dating from antiquity to the present day. Three years before the launch of Frieze Masters, Masterpiece welcomed everything from antique pottery to medieval statuary, Impressionist painting, modernist furniture and motoring design.

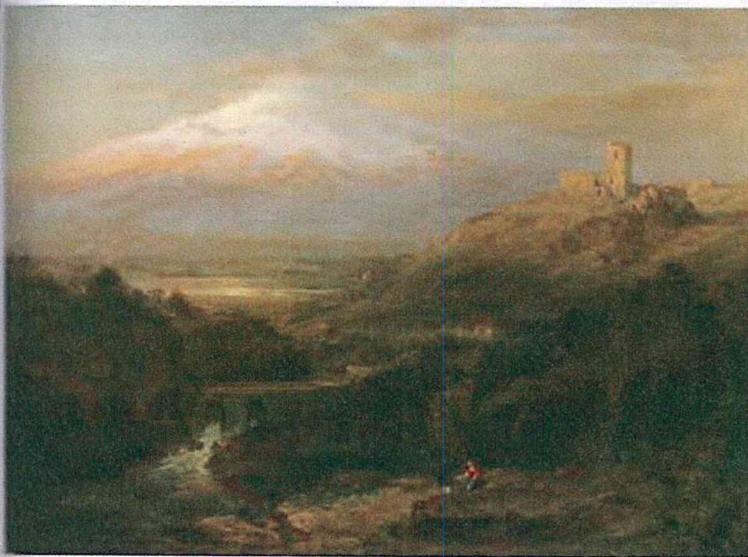
Some 150 galleries are exhibiting at this year's fair (27 June–3 July), 20 of them for the first time. Alberto Giacometti's *Annette Venise* (c. 1960; Fig. 3), shown by Dickinson, is an undoubted highlight among the strong showing of 20th-century art on display. The Swiss

sculptor met Annette Arm in Geneva in 1943 and married her six years later. In those early years he painted and drew her frequently, but only in a small work of 1946 did he capture her in sculpture. This bust is later – one of 10 he made of Annette in the 1960s – and, like Giacometti's heads of his brother Diego, it is notably larger and more intense than many of his works, reflecting the intimacy Giacometti brought to depicting those close to him.

The year that Giacometti and Annette met, 1943, also saw the beginning of another celebrated artistic partnership. Picasso met the young French painter Françoise Gilot in Paris that spring, and in the 10 years that followed, Gilot became one of his greatest muses, frequently pictured as a classical goddess or, in numerous paintings, as a woman-flower. Though she is not depicted in *Nature morte au compotier* (Fig. 1), offered by Simon Shore, she is clearly evoked. The



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from the relatively little-known Hearts series by Andy Warhol, begun in the late 1970s. Here, Warhol creates highly coloured backgrounds, often reminiscent of the hallucinogenic hues of his Sunset prints, and silkscreens over them a single colour that marks out heart shapes. *Four Hearts* (1983; Fig. 4) comprises a pink surround printed over a background that morphs from blue to green and yellow, its confectionery-hued exuberance enhanced by the diamond dust Warhol used copiously at the time.

Paris-based Galerie Boulakia is bringing two very different abstract paintings to London. Just before his death in 1985, Jean Dubuffet painted an intense series of works entirely freed from the restraints of representation. *Idéoplasme I* (1984), with its loops and scribbles of black, orange and red, reflects the raw energy Dubuffet brought to his last paintings. Similarly impressive but more restrained is a wonderful Joan Mitchell diptych of 1976, a typically lyrical painting reflecting that balance of emotion and memory of landscape in Mitchell's work.

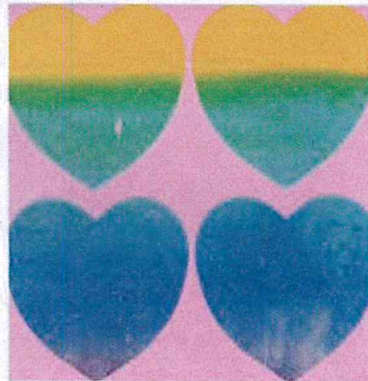
In establishing that link to the observed world, rather than emphasising purely formal concerns, Mitchell could be said to have more in common with British abstraction than with the work of many of her American peers; two linchpins of abstract painting in Britain, Adrian Heath and William Scott, have untitled paintings at Osborne Samuel. Both were connected to the St Ives scene which flourished after the war in Cornwall, but each emphasised different strands of abstraction. Scott said his work could be abstract, but would frequently return to figuration; he could never accept the idea of being a 'non-objective' artist. Heath, meanwhile, was resolutely abstract in his work, even if the landscape or the female body informed it. Scott's untitled painting at the fair reflects a characteristic order and poise, with two rectangles in white and grey dividing the canvas, and ovals in white and black occupying them (Fig. 6). Heath's is freer, more improvised in nature, with accents of red, white and blue amid sweeping areas of black and a bare patch of canvas.



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painting was done on 14 June 1943, as Picasso tells us in the date above his signature, and the Spaniard had met Gilot in May, when he took a bowl of cherries to her table in Le Catalan restaurant. In this otherwise monochrome painting, cloaked in a gloom typical of his wartime paintings, the vivid, bodily red of the cherries sings out. The elliptical *compotier* clearly resembles Picasso's painterly code for the vagina, particularly with the cherry stems' evocation of pubic hair, and the glass alongside the *compotier*, tilted so that its mouth becomes a semicircle, is decidedly phallic. The painting is plausibly a document of Picasso's desire for Gilot; as she detailed in her memoir *Life With Picasso* (first published in 1964), in June 1943, the artist was in the midst of his attempts to seduce her.

A busy Picasso ink drawing of three heads made in 1967 is presented at Leila Heller Gallery's stand, alongside two works



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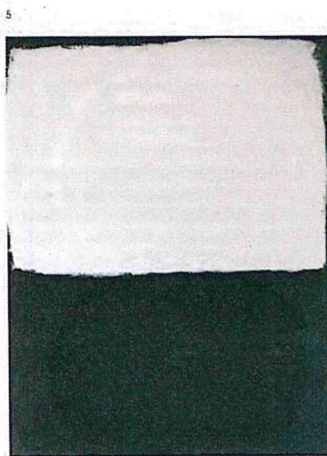


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Alongside its 20th-century works, Galerie Boulakia also brings a painting of Kew Gardens by Camille Pissarro back to London. Pissarro visited Kew in 1892 and made 10 paintings there; this example captures the gardens' Italianate campanile in the distance as black swans and ducks on a pond fill the lower half of the composition. *Cypresses and Pines* (1913), a John Singer Sargent painting on Trinity House's stand, drew considerable acclaim when it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1914, and no wonder – Sargent perfectly captures the gentle late afternoon heat in the Italian countryside, as a cowherd dozes in the foreground. A far grander landscape vision features in Frederic Edwin Church's *View in the Andes, Mt Chimborazo* of 1880 (Fig. 2), in which the Ecuadorian mountain looms almost like an apparition in the distance, in contrast to the verdant river landscape described in the foreground. Though the painting, on sale with Collisart, is modestly scaled at 38cm wide, its composition recalls one of Church's most celebrated epics, *Heart of the Andes* (1859) in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Among Masterpiece London's sculptural highlights is a late 15th-century Virgin Annunciate by Niccolò di Giovanni Fiorentino (active 1467–1506) through Sam Fogg. Trained in the workshop of the elderly Donatello, Niccolò was a central figure in bringing the Renaissance to Dalmatia, then a Venetian colony, and now Croatia. The dealer is also showing a charming 14th-century *Palmesel*, a sculpture of Christ on a donkey that would have been wheeled along in the recreation of Christ's entry to Jerusalem that begins Holy Week in Germany (Fig. 5).

A monumental marble bust of Alexander the Great, attributed to Bartolomeo Cavaceppi (c. 1716–99), is shown by Tomasso Brothers, as part of an exhibition that pays homage to the antique. Hewn from fine-grained marble, the sculpture is modelled after an almost identical bust in the Capitoline Museums in Rome. Many 18th-century workshops, including that of Cavaceppi, are known to have owned copies of this bust, and as a



5 *Palmesel*, c. 1350–1400
Middle Germany, possibly
Franconia Wood with
polychromy, 96×34×82cm
Sam Fogg

6 *Untitled*, 1959
William Scott (1913–89)
Oil on canvas, 112×86.5cm
Osborne Samuel



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result, casts of the sculpture were widely circulated. The original is thought to date from the reign of Emperor Hadrian, since it closely follows, in both style and technique, the *Apollo Belvedere* (120–140 AD).

Two elaborate 18th-century pieces stand out among the antique furniture, one of which is this George I japanned bureau bookcase (Apter-Fredericks; Fig. 7). The fashion for Asian furniture developed in the late 17th century as Britain increased its trade links to the East, and japanning evolved as the English way of imitating Japanese lacquer designs. Characteristically, the bookcase features intricate images of flora and fauna, buildings and picturesque figures. Another Asian-influenced piece of furniture, a serpentine commode from around 1760, features at

Frank Partridge's stand. Rather than imitating Asian craft, it repurposes Chinese lacquer screens in the style which later became known as coromandel, after the port in India from where the screens were exported. The commode is the work of Pierre Langlois (1754–1810), one of the leading cabinet-makers of the time in London.

Conceived in 1987, Marc Newson's Pod of Drawers is one of the key items of modern furniture on display (Fig. 8). One of the Australian designer's earliest pieces, this bulbous cabinet is formed from hundreds of aluminium panels hammered on to a fibreglass structure (Geoffrey Diner Gallery). Scott Burton's perforated aluminium settee and chairs are another highlight on the dealer's stand. Initially a critic and performance

7 Bureau bookcase, c. 1725
Chinoiserie on green lacquer
234×100×60cm
Apter-Fredericks

8 Pod of Drawers, 1987
Marc Newson (b. 1963)
Aluminium panels on fibreglass
with wood feet, 128×71×46cm
Geoffrey Diner Gallery



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artist in the 1970s, Burton spent the last decade before his death in 1989 exploring the zone between sculpture and furniture. These minimal, undulating forms, made in 1988–89, were some of his last works.

Another rippling shape is Verner Panton's Free-Swinger chair, a prototype of which is at Sebastian + Barquet. Made in 1983, Panton's design is a variation on Marcel Breuer's classic B64 – the celebrated cantilevered free-swinger made with tubular steel; Panton's version here is cast instead from a single piece of blue transparent acrylic. The New York dealer is also showing David Hockney's little-known designs for chairs made in the early 1990s, with extravagantly curved armrests and blue velvet upholstery. They bear the hallmarks of Hockney's painting style, taking on a bodily form and being spatially distorted so that they appear to sit up almost like a cubist depiction of a chair. Few objects could be a more apt symbol of Masterpiece's appeal. **A**

Masterpiece London is at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, London, from 27 June to 3 July. Visit www.masterpiecefair.com for more information.