In the Masterpiece mix

Cross-collecting is key to a fair gaining enthusiastic new fans of winning format

by Frances Allitt

During Masterpiece London, Zoe Karafylakis Sperling of Hauser & Wirth, the international modern and contemporary art gallery, reflected that the event made for a change from the gallery's typical large, frenetic, contemporary art fairs.

"This is very civilised," she said. "It has given us many opportunities to talk to people, some of whom we already know as existing clients. We've been watching the fair for a few years and thought that this was the right time to join."

Among the other fairs the gallery attends are various editions of Art Basel, run by MCH Group, which earlier this year became Masterpiece's majority shareholder. And before Masterpiece opened there was speculation that Hauser & Wirth's participation was a step towards altering the fair.

Cross-collecting

But Hauser & Wirth's attendance did not represent a fundamental shift in the end - bagging a top stand position in the heart of the fair, it threw itself into the cross-collecting ethos, sharing objects with 18th and 19th furniture



- 1. This George II writing table, reputedly supplied by Thomas Chippendale to Viscount Townshend of Raynham Hall, sold at the stand of Apter-Fredericks to an English collector for a price in excess of £100,000. The c.1755 mahogany table is 2ft 8in (81cm) tall.
- 2. E&H Manners sold this 1771 West Country harvest jug from Barnstaple or Fremington, Devon. Measuring 12% in (32cm) high, it is incised with the royal arms within the garter and surmounted by the crown and GR for George III. It is inscribed: Now is the time the Reepers Sweat, the Corn is Ripe and must Be Cut. then fill me full with Good Strong Bear for that is Good your harts to Chare... John Briant 1771. It was offered for a price in the region of £28,000.
- 3. Among the sales from Wick Antiques was this c.1890 walnut carving of a man with a donkey's head, 4ft 6in (1.36m) high, which was ticketed for a price in the region of £30,000.
- **4. Robert Young** sold more than 30 pieces of primitive folk and vernacular art, such as this rare Channel Islands marriage chest-on-stand printed with stylised tulips and floral motifs from c.1750, 3ft 2in (97cm) high. It was offered for a price in the region of £50,000.

Some dealers noted that sales, particularly for their biggest-ticket stock, were perhaps lower or slower than in previous years.

E&H Manners, which offers pieces priced into the six figures.

