

international events

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■ Dealers descend on Florida for the annual fairs season

Anna Brady reports

"PS. Did I mention the weather?"

The chance of UV rays is a major plus point when choosing a fortnight in Florida in the dark days of late January and February – Manhattanites and Mainliners have been visiting second homes in Palm Beach at this time of year since the Gilded Age – but for American and European art and antiques dealers it has come to represent an established indoor trading opportunity.

Traditionally the most diverse and fourth most populous state in the union has shown an appetite for European art and antiques and many British dealers in particular – including the Sunshine State stalwart who provided this tongue-in-cheek postscript – have established a strong client base here over the years.

The Madoff saga of 2008 certainly dealt a blow to this market and rocked confidence (many locals lost much of their wealth) but the mood recovered.

"Last year there was a surge in interest and confidence over the previous year," observes London-based illustrations dealer, Chris Beetles, an exhibitor at the *Palm Beach Jewelry, Art & Antique Show*, "In 2012 I was probably subjected to 20-30 spontaneous conversations about the Madoff effect - he cut a swathe through Palm Beach. But in 2013, not one."

The British dealers who make a very significant investment in travel, accommodation and shipping will be hoping for more of the same this year.

The list of events in Florida at this time of year is a long one but a handful include an international dimension.

After New York's *Winter Antiques Show* (January 24 to February 2), activity shifts south and in February activity centres on Palm Beach and Miami with three major art and antiques fairs running back to back – *The Original Miami Beach Antique Show* (January 30-February 3), *The American International Fine Art Fair* (February 4-9) and *Palm Beach Jewelry, Art & Antique Show* (February 14-18).

And then there is the newcomer – *Miami Art and Design Fair* (February 14-18), a new event this year that is a collaboration between David and Lee Ann Lester of IFAE (organisers of AIFAF) and the SNA, who are behind the *Paris Biennale* and co-organise *New York's Salon: Art + Design*.

See *News* for more details of this event but here's a taster of what will be on offer at the other three.



Above: "We've exhibited at the Original Miami Beach Show for well over 20 years and foresee doing so for the next 20!" says Guy Burton of London jewellers Hancock's.

"It's an unbelievable fair full of everything and anything and you can make the most wonderful discoveries. It is predominantly a trade fair and we go with very serious buying intentions, but private jewellery collectors and buyers, with a keen eye and in the know as to how extensive this show is, also regularly attend.

Guy added that Hancock's usually make strong sales as well as buying, getting their year off to a good start: "Dealers from every corner of the world visit the show, whether they are exhibiting or not".

Hancock's will exhibit this c.1945 bombe style ring by Suzanne Belperron, Paris, pictured here along with the original drawing. It is set with a central sapphire of over 6ct with pavé diamonds and cabochon sapphires surround set in platinum, and priced in the region of £145,000.



Above: another London dealer who has been exhibiting at Miami Beach for over 20 years is S&J Stodel, run by Stephen and Jeremy Stodel who specialise in Chinese Export silver. They believe that its success lies in its location and timing.

"It is one of the first international fairs of the year and it attracts so many dealers and enthusiasts because it is likely, though not guaranteed, to be good weather in Southern Florida" says Stephen, "Consequently there are many Europeans as well as visitors from most of the other States.

He also agrees that it is a good buying opportunity for the trade too: "Things are beginning to change somewhat but historically it has been a fair where, if one wasn't successful with sales, it could still be a good trip because of the buying opportunities.

"It could be said that it is a lot like Olympia was – or Earls Court in the early days – when it first started".

S&J Stodel's stock this year will include this Chinese Export silver jardiniere, made by Hung Chong, c.1890, priced in the region of £9000.

ORIGINAL MIAMI BEACH ANTIQUE SHOW

January 30-February 3

Miami Beach Convention Centre

www.originalmiami-beach-antiques-show.com

The Original Miami Beach Antique Show is on a scale like no other indoor antiques fair. This 53 year old monolith housed in the Miami Beach Convention Center features around 1000 exhibitors from across the world, and runs from January 30 to February 3 (There is also a jewellery conference from January 28-29).

It is organised by US Antique Shows and not surprisingly considering the number of exhibitors, the range covered here is vast – American, European, Asian, furniture, objects and art. But always to the fore is silver and, even more so, jewellery. Many British jewellers exhibit but, exhibiting or not, it's a key calendar date for the jewellery trade.

to mention the weather

THE PALM BEACH JEWELRY, ART & ANTIQUE SHOW

February 14-18

Palm Beach Convention Center
www.palmbeachshow.com

Scott Diament of the Palm Beach Show Group continues his rise in the US antiques fairs scene, with the acquisition in October of his first New York event, the Avenue Show now to be renamed the *New York Art, Antique & Jewelry Show*.

This became the tenth PBSG fair, joining fairs in Los Angeles, Dallas, Naples, Chicago, Baltimore and, of course, his first fair in Palm Beach.

Now in its 11th year, *The Palm Beach Jewelry, Art & Antique Show* moves into the Palm Beach County Convention Center just as AIFAF closes and runs from February 14-18, over Presidents' Day Weekend.

Now matured, it has established a reputation as a slickly-run event and has grown to some 180 exhibitors

It shares some exhibitors with AIFAF, among them arms and armour dealer Peter Finer, Chinese art specialist Michael Goedhuis (both from London and both exhibitors at the new *Miami Art and Design Fair*, on at the same time), Imperial Fine Books from New York, modern art dealers Imperial Fine Books from Indianapolis and Palm beach antiques dealer and auctioneer A. B. Levy.

Although the majority of exhibitors are American, there is a sizeable British contingent of some 16 dealers, among them: art dealers Waterhouse & Dodd and Haynes Fine Art of Broadway; Hatchwell Antiques, known for their aeronautica; period furniture specialist William Cook; jeweller Moira of New Bond Street, London and Marilyn Garrow Fine Textile Art. Interestingly, the British Antiques Dealers Association (BADA) will also take a stand this year.

The fair kicks off with a preview party on Friday, February 14, in aid of Hope For Depression Research Foundation.



Left: London period furniture dealers **Butchoff** this year celebrate 50 years in the business and for the first time, they will participate in an American fair, *The Palm Beach Jewelry, Art & Antique Show*.

"We have a strong US client list, built through decorators and collectors that we have met in London over many years. Because of this we have been considering exhibiting at a fair in the US for a while and it seemed that our 50th anniversary was a good moment to take the plunge to expand our network across the pond", said owner Ian Butchoff of the decision, "In addition our closest links are with the East Coast and many of them head to Florida to escape the winter."

Among the selection of 19th century French and English period furniture Butchoff will take to the fair is this *bonheur du jour* by English furniture makers Holland and Sons, c.1860.

The Louis XV style cabinet in bois citronnier and purpleheart woods features hidden velvet-lined compartments, set behind Sèvres porcelain plaques depicting French characters, with gilt bronze mounts and secret document drawers. It is priced over £100,000.

Right: "I first did the Palm Beach fair with the Palm Beach Show Group about ten years ago when they were in their infancy, and though I liked them and enjoyed the fair, did little business," says **Chris Beetles**, a London based art dealer who is best known for his extensive stock of illustrations and cartoons, so often underappreciated compared to more 'serious' art.

But he returned to the fair three years ago to much better fortunes and it's an event he likes very much: "They are pleasing to deal with and very professional. They get a good crowd into the Convention Center; real people in big numbers and very buzzy. The care homes of Florida are now no longer papering the show!"

Last year he found clients for both the traditional watercolours and illustrations associated with his name, but also for his "83-year-old contemporary star Keith Grant" whose work took over half of his stand. This year his stock will include this pen and ink work by Aubrey Beardsley, titled *La Beale Isoud*. The 3¼ x 2¾in (8.25 x 7cm) work, formerly in the collection of Mark Samuels Lasner, is priced at £17,500.



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Left: *In the Park* by the Spanish painter Francisco Miralles y Galup (1848-1901), oil on canvas, c.1885, 16 x 13in (41 x 34cm), a mid five-figure sum from **Thomas Colville** at Palm Beach.