

ANTIQUES TRADE GAZETTE
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Dealers' diary

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Focus on first of famous six wives

Wedding gift for Catherine of Aragon stands out as one of the highlights at the latest *Frize Masters*

by Gabriel Byrne

A manuscript linked to the ill-fated union between Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII leads the highlights at this year's *Frize Masters* in London.

Produced in Paris in a 1506, *The Hours of Catherine of Aragon* was made as the Spanish princess prepared to wed the new king of England. It includes a betrothal miniature and portrait of the couple, depicted in gold, red and black as they receive the blessing of a guardian angel.

Probably commissioned by Catherine's sisters as a wedding gift, the book of hours was produced in the Paris workshop of Jean Pichon and features 21 miniatures, 18 of them full-page, together with a fully illustrated calendar. The Latin manuscript, written on vellum for the Use of Sarum, follows the Salisbury liturgy that became standard across medieval England.

In 20th-century provenance includes the London collector Dudley Meyle Colman, who exhibited it in 1948, and later private collections in the US and Switzerland. Dr Jim Gutter has now offered it at Sotheby's.

The Basel dealer is one of 137 galleries from 27 countries at the 2025 edition of *Frize Masters*, led by new director Emanuele Tarico. The fair runs from October 15-19 in Regent's Park, alongside its sister event, the contemporary-focused *Frize London*.

Tarico takes charge at a testing moment for *Frize*, under new ownership, competing in a crowded global market still under post-Brexit pressure. She bills *Frize*'s hallmark "active dialogue" between historical and contemporary material - a conversation she wants to keep "open to new voices". She added: "The breadth of cultural framing is what sets *Frize London* and *Frize Masters* apart."

Solo spotlight

That framing takes shape in *Frize Masters*' "curated sections",



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1. Miniature depicting Catherine of Aragon and Henry VIII kneeling before a guardian angel from *The Hours of Catherine of Aragon*. Sotheby's. Am. from Dr Jim Gutter. Rare books in *Frize Masters*.

2. Orland and the ruins of the temple of Vespasian and the Temple of Castor and Pollux, priced £28,000. From *Vagabond's* German-inspired presentation.

3. Midge Gill's printed ink go cart from 1962, part of *The Gallery of Everything's* 100 work display in *Frize Masters* with prices from £750 to 10,000.

4. An ancient Egyptian goddess, attributed to the Greywacke Master, dated to reign of Amenhotep III, priced in seven figures by David Aaron.



take on how he might have presented objects today".

Among the works on show are Grand Tour models, a re-enactment of Soane's interiors. *Vagabond* is presenting a pair of mid-19th-century Siena marble examples of the Temple of Vespasian and the Temple of Castor and Pollux, carved at the Vatican workshops in Rome and priced at £28,000.

Strong showing

Antiquities emerges as a strong category at this staging, with several dealers using the fair to showcase recent finds. Unveiled under the title *A Golden Kelsowall*, the centrepiece of David Aaron's stand is a Late Period Egyptian bust in greywacke, dating to the reign of



which this year includes *Spotlight*, a series of solo presentations of work by 20th-century artists. Among them is the first commercial showing of works

by British artist Midge Gill (1902-1961). An East End mystic once championed by the spirit world-obsessed Arthur Conan Doyle, Gill created highly detailed drawings in tronie-like states. She claimed her hand was guided by a spirit named 'Myr Innocent', producing works filled with tightly packed lines and mysterious imagery.

The Gallery of Everything's is displaying more than 50 rarely seen works on paper, priced from £750 to more than £30,000, alongside a campaign by The Museum of

Everything to secure the artist's place in UK public collections.

Meanwhile, a new 'Invitation-only' section, *Reflections*, debuts this year, dedicated to decorative art and objects designed to "encourage conversations across art history, media and time". Inspired by the idiosyncratic displays at Sir John Soane's Museum and Kettle's Yard, it includes *Vagabond*, whose founder Joa Chaffar admits the invitation has prompted him to "approach an exhibition a little differently - exciting but also quite challenging".

For his stand, Chaffar is focusing on the early 19th-century architect Soane: "Soane's world is so broad, spanning eras and styles, yet there's a thread that runs through it - a kind of 'Soane-ness' that's hard to pin down but instantly recognisable."

Rather than recreate Soane's arrangements, *Vagabond* offers "a reflection of his collection, and our