

**LONDON ART WEEK 'ART HISTORY IN FOCUS' OCTOBER 2020**

**ONLINE DISCOURSES AND IN-GALLERY EXHIBITIONS**

**Themes include Women Artists and The Impact of Framing & Presentation**



Rosalba Carriera (1675-1757), *The Virgin in Prayer*, pastel on paper, **Stephen Ongpin Fine Art**; Prunella Clough (1919-1999), *Deserted Gravel Pit*, c.1946, oil on board, **Osborne Samuel**; Maria Verelst (1680-1744), *Portrait of Anne Blackett (d.1783), Mrs John Trenchard, later Mrs Thomas Gordon*, c.1723, oil on canvas, **Philip Mould & Company**

During October 2020 London Art Week's new Digital platform at [www.londonartweek.co.uk](http://www.londonartweek.co.uk) will present 'Art History in Focus', a series of themed erudite and enlightening discourses online and exhibitions in galleries. In the spotlight will be the work of significant women artists of the past 400 years, as well as women in the world of art such as gallerists, collectors, curators, scholars and art dealers. The impact of the framing and presentation of pictures is another theme to be explored. Articles and essays will be published on the London Art Week website, and talks and events are planned throughout the month, involving art historians, museum curators and expert dealers.

On 3 October, the National Gallery, one of London Art Week's museum partners, opens its long-awaited exhibition on Artemisia Gentileschi, the Baroque artist who has recently risen in public renown. Yet there are a great many equally important women artists who practised independently and earned a living from art, and by whom works are known back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and continuing through the Old Master period. One of the founding members of the Royal Academy in London was the Swiss artist Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) and yet it is hard to find examples of her work in public collections today. London Art Week, which went online in July 2020 and involves more than 50 of the world's finest art galleries from London and the UK, France, USA, Italy and Germany, seeks to bring greater recognition to the names, lives and works of women painters and sculptors who were applauded in their lifetime, but with the passing of time have since been forgotten or glossed over in books and studies, or omitted from exhibitions. Many of the works by women artists to be discussed are offered for sale through London Art Week dealers.

In the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the English painter Maria Verelst (1680-1744) was a leading portraitist who mingled with high society. Erudite and accomplished, Maria anticipated the gradually growing status of female artists such as Rosalba Carriera (1673-1757), Clara Wheatley (c.1750-1838), Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) and Élisabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842). Although comparatively little of her work is currently recorded, her known paintings are consistently delicately handled with exceptional finesse. A fine portrait by Maria Verelst will be featured in an exhibition of women artists by London Art Week participant Philip Mould & Company.

Two female sculptors, born in the same year, also come under the spotlight. Marie-Anne Collot (1748-1821) was a French Enlightenment sculptor; a pupil of the famous sculptor Etienne-Maurice Falconet (1716-1791) she went on to work for the Russian Empress Catherine the Great. Collot specialised in portraits, many of which can be found in the Hermitage museum in St. Petersburg. English sculptor Anne Seymour Damer (1748-1828) also became famous and was much admired by her contemporaries, including the great collector and art connoisseur Horace Walpole, who was her godfather. Damer exhibited at the Royal Academy and her work is well represented in museums.



Félicie de Faveau (1799-1886) was a French sculptor whose singular art is as rare as it is personal. Inspired by the Middle Ages, Dante and Walter Scott, de Faveau was brilliantly showcased in a recent exhibition devoted to her work held at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris in 2013. Sculptures by this artist are currently on the market with London Art Week dealers Stuart Lochhead and Didier Aaron: the latter gallery offers this delicate *Portrait of Anne Lindsay (1803-94) c. 1840*. Like a sculpted jewel, the portrait is worked in high-relief white marble on a Turquin bleu marble plinth (shown left).

Among 20<sup>th</sup> century women painters to be featured is Prunella Clough (1919-1999). Working in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Clough was one of Britain's finest artists, with a devoted following, and was honoured with a Tate Gallery retrospective in 2007. The subjects of her paintings were the objects that surround us daily, the ordinary and mundane, aspects of daily life mostly overlooked by other artists, but which she studied in her still life paintings. Her favoured sites included factories, industrial wastelands and indeterminate landscapes. Clough worked within the emerging genre of post-war Realism vigorously promoted by her friend and critic, John Berger. A number of her works are offered by LAW exhibitor Osborne Samuel.

This October, with attention on Artemesia Gentileschi at the National Gallery and the world's art market in action online, London Art Week hopes to contribute to the greater understanding and appreciation of work by women artists. For collectors it presents opportunities, since exceptional works of art by significant women artists are typically undervalued by the market in comparison to those by their male contemporaries.

The presentation of art is also an important subject under discussion. Few of us walk into a museum or art gallery – or collect art for ourselves – and think about how works of art have been presented to us. In the first of a series of online talks that explore issues surrounding the presentation and display of artworks in museums, galleries, and domestic contexts, Matthew Reeves, a Director at Sam Fogg, will be looking from a curatorial and conservational perspective on historic picture frames. Often as important as the paintings they complement, frames can be works of art in their own right, and getting them right can make or break how we read the paintings they contain. An example, shown right, is a 16<sup>th</sup> century Aedicula frame made in Venice. It is from London Art Week participating dealer Enrico Ceci Cornici Antiche, based in Modena, Italy.



In taking London Art Week online for Summer 2020, the event website has evolved as an exciting new platform on which to share news, virtual events and academic articles looking at art of the past

5,000 years from antiquity to modern times. It harnesses the collective knowledge and expertise of participating dealers, auction house specialists, museum partners as well as contributing art historians and critics.

FUTURE DIARY DATE:

**London Art Week Winter** will take place from Thursday, 26th November to Friday, 4th December 2020. Plans for this year's Winter edition include gallery exhibitions and exhibitions on the London Art Week Digital platform as well as online talks and events, and the second LAW Symposium.

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