

Here Are the Top 11 Booths at TEFAF New York

From bespoke booths to canapés, TEFAF New York is in fine form.

Eileen Kinsella and Rozalia Jovanovic, October 21, 2016

The first-ever New York edition of the European Fine Art Fair, or TEFAF, was off to a lively start today with throngs of viewers descending on the completely overhauled—to the point of being unrecognizable—67th Regiment Armory on Park Avenue.

Those who have visited the long-running TEFAF fair in Maastricht in the Netherlands are familiar with the signature lavish floral displays (especially the tulips!), the museum quality artworks, and the cushy carpets and canapés.

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TEFAF did an amazing job of bringing that flair to the Armory, even transforming the signature dark, wood-paneled walls by draping the halls with white cloth fabric.

TEFAF organizers also brought the makings for a lavish party—with an ample supply of cocktails and bites in every aisle—not to mention roving oyster shuckers outfitted with steel buckets and iron mesh gloves, who walked around offering bivalves to the well-heeled crowds.



An oyster shucker waits on guests at the VIP preview of TEFAF New York. Courtesy of Eileen Kinsella.

Despite a downpour earlier in the day, and some grumbling from exhibitors about last-minute hiccups, collectors, art world VIPs, and just plain-old VIPs turned out in droves for the four-hour afternoon preview. artnet News spotted former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg, television anchor Anderson Cooper, former Metropolitan Museum of Art director Philippe de Montebello, collector Ronald Lauder, and contemporary art dealer David Zwirner roaming the aisles.

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The stunning array of art on view ranged from antique maps to rare books, Old Masters, antiquities, American furniture, 18th-century French furniture, Impressionist paintings, and rare jewelry, to name just a few of the genres. Dealers we spoke with—many of whom show at the annual Maastricht event as well—were extremely enthusiastic about the fair's New York debut.

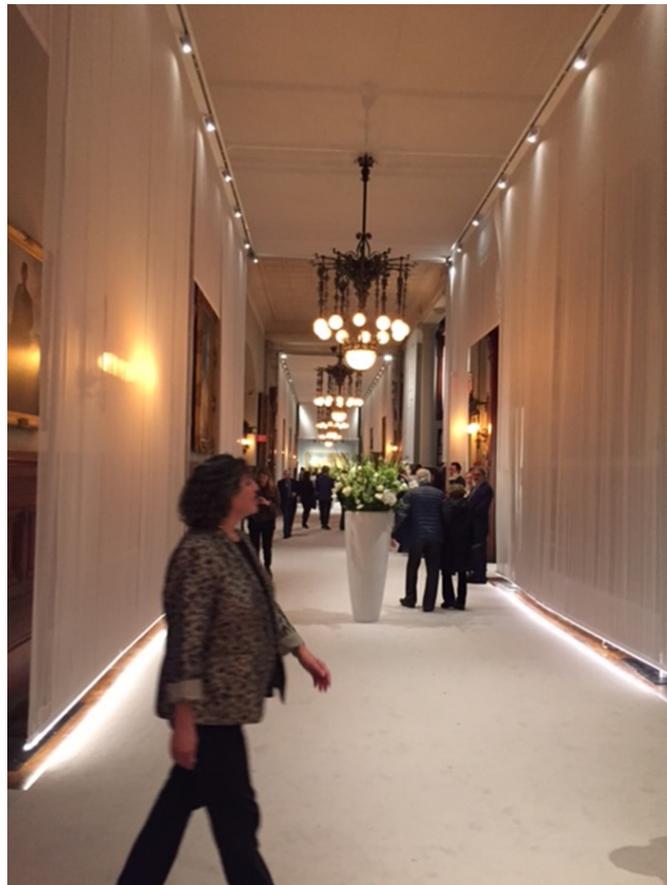


The signature TEFAF Tulip display. Courtesy of Eileen Kinsella.

Our picks for the top 11 exhibitors at the fair:

1. Agnews, London
2. Axel Vervoordt, Antwerp
3. Bowman Sculpture, London
4. Colnaghi, London

5. Dickinson, London
6. Hirschl & Adler Galleries, New York
7. Maison Gerard/Carolle Thibaut Pomerantz, New York
8. Richard L. Feigen & Co., New York
9. Richard Green Gallery, London
10. Robilant + Voena, London
11. Moretti Fine Art, London



“As we’ve already found here, it pulls in people who don’t travel to Europe,” said Benedict Tomlinson, director of London gallery Robilant + Voena, noting several contemporary art collectors—some with advisors—who had already come through the booth by early afternoon.

The gallery’s bold display included classic paintings of Saint Jerome and a plaster portrait of Caroline Bonaparte alongside postwar Italian art from Lucio Fontana. “There’s great potential for new clients, namely contemporary art buyers who can afford to buy but may be intimidated by historical works. We’re trying to encourage education.”

“I’m so pleased to see young people looking at old art,” remarked Michel Cox-Witmer, a collector and TEFAF board member, who serves as US ambassador to the fair in Maastricht.

TEFAF board member Jonathan Green (of Richard Green Fine Paintings in London) said there was a real broad push for younger collectors. “I believe in the New York market,” he said. The booth, situated close to the entrance, featured a stunning selection of paintings, ranging from Old Masters such as Pieter Claesz and Joos de Momper to works by Impressionist and Post-Impressionist artists Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Vincent van Gogh, along with many other blue-chip names.

Dealer Axel Vervoordt’s gallery took over a historic room on the second floor of the Armory, which is part of a new initiative; the upper floors are not typically used for fairs. Since paintings could not be nailed to walls, notes Noach Vander Beken, a classical archaeologist who works with the gallery, they were inspired to transform the room into a “collector’s cabinet” complete with a library and paintings resting on easels, alongside large, wooden urns, which, it was explained to artnet News, were once used to store wine because they would change color if wine were poisoned—presumably by one’s enemy or enemies—and thus served as an ancient “security” or “alarm” system of sorts.

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Elizabeth Feld, managing director of Hirschl & Adler galleries, one of a handful of galleries showing American art and furniture, explained that the gallery hoped “to infuse a little local color” into the fair. The booth features a stunning Robert Henri painting of a woman reclining, along with a surprisingly elegant portrait painting of a woman by George Bellows (better known for his action-shot-like depictions of male boxers sparring in the ring) and a beautiful, tranquil Edward Hopper painting of boats, alongside rare furniture pieces by Tiffany. “It’s a small stand,” said Feld, “so we have choice things that represent American art and decor.”



Richard L. Feigen’s bespoke booth was

designed by internationally renowned interior designer Juan Pablo Molyneux. To achieve a three-dimensional environment, Molyneux applied theatrical techniques that worked with lighting and projection to the booth design, creating the illusion of standing on an Italian hillside looking out over the sea. With this entirely new approach Molyneux created a unique environment that amplified the masterworks on display. It reflects TEFAF’s goal of placing historical art in a new and different perspective that redefines its relevance.

The artwork on view included a 17th-century portrait of a gentleman by Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velazquez that was going for \$12 million. “I didn’t even know it existed,” said Dr. Patrick Lenaghan, curator of prints and photographs at the Hispanic Society of America, enthusiastically. The booth also contained an exquisite painting, circa 1342, of Saint Dominic by Bernardo Daddi.

Other standouts at the fair included Moretti Fine Art of London, which had works ranging from \$600,000 to \$3.9 million, including a **Guido Reni** priced at over \$1 million.

Bowman Sculpture, also of London, had a rare statue of **Auguste Rodin’s** iconic *The Thinker*, one of 52 existing works in the edition, most of which are now in museums, explained Willoughby Gerrish, head of modern and contemporary sculpture. Prices of work in the booth ranged from \$18,000 to \$2.6 million for the Rodin, which comes from a private collection in Europe. With 2017 marking the centenary of Rodin’s death, the gallery is planning a major exhibition next June.

At Daniel Crouch Rare Books, a rare 16th-century map (ca. 1531) made of seven goatskins, and priced at a hefty \$10 million, was drawing a crowd and creating serious buzz.

And at Agnew’s, a private collection was the source of an improbable suite of Pre-Raphaelite works, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s stunning watercolor *Proserpine*, a portrait of Jane Morris, the wife of artist William Morris.

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