

TEFAF 2019: The talking points

The influence of its new international iteration in New York and the demands of collectors mean that the venerable Maastricht art fair is inviting and embracing change. Malcolm Cossons looks at the key developments at this year's edition

The New York factor

TEFAF returns to Maastricht from 16–24 March for its 32nd edition, and this year the *grande dame* is reinvigorated. Of the nearly 280 exhibitors at the fair, 38 are appearing for the first time and span fine art and furniture to jewellery. Thirteen feature in the modern section.

[...]

The new and improved vetting procedure

A longstanding commitment to ensure the finest works appear in Maastricht, combined with TEFAF's international expansion, has led the fair to revise its vetting procedure. Academics, curators, conservators, conservation scientists and independent scholars will now be used at the expense of those experts with commercial interests.

'As our organisation has grown as a global structure, it made sense for use to look at these procedures and make sure they were standardised,' says Nanne Dekking, Chairman of the TEFAF Board of Trustees.

'It is now TEFAF's global policy to remove commercial interest from the vetting procedures... For me, provenance and authenticity have always been important for the international art world; what we are seeing now is a growth in demand for proof of such highly valued concepts. Collectors and buyers are savvy and are justified in interrogating the provenance and authenticity of a work of art.'



Master of the Acquavella Still Life (alias Bartolomeo Cavarozzi), *Still Life of Fruit with Three Figures of Children (Allegory of Autumn)*. Oil on canvas. 73.5 x 144 cm. Courtesy Robilant + Voena

The significance of both can be seen in the careful reassessment of one of the highlights shown by picture dealer Robilant + Voena. *Still Life of Fruit with Three Figures of Children (Allegory of Autumn)* was previously ascribed to the 17th-century Italian school, but the gallery, working with leading scholar of Caravaggesque paintings Cristina Terzaghi, have reattributed it to Bartolomeo Cavarozzi (1587-1625).

The value of establishing this level of authenticity has always been of 'great importance', maintains Director Benedict Tomlinson. 'The reputation of a dealer can be swiftly curtailed should there be any question as to the veracity of the authenticity. With the advance in technologies for the decoding and analysing of artworks there will be both greater demand for watertight authentication as well as the ability to provide just that.'

Read the full article at <https://www.christies.com/features/TEFAF-2019-The-talking-points-9741-1.aspx>