

Q&A : Sydney L. Moss

15 June 2024

As the oldest family-owned Asian art dealership in the Western world, Sydney L. Moss is excited to showcase its passion for Chinese arts at The Treasure House Fair this June, including painting, calligraphy and objects in "the scholar's taste". It also specialises in Japanese art forms most beloved of serious collectors: netsuke, lacquer, inro and other sagemono, tea ceremony utensils, sword furniture and temple sculpture.

Why are you participating in The Treasure House Fair this year?

We were part of the inaugural edition of the fair last year, and liked its size and its stated mission to be a more boutique, curated art fair, which would take itself more seriously than Masterpiece – the fair it replaced in the London Art calendar.

What are you most looking forward to exhibiting during the event?

We are very excited to show our Japanese sculpture highlights: real rarities of the 13th and 14th centuries – works almost never available outside of Japan. Our extensive Inro and Netsuke selections are probably the finest in the world. We'll also be exhibiting an early 13th century 11-headed Kannon sculpture attributed to the master Zen'en, and a 14th century sculpture of the rain god Uho Doji, very rare indeed and originally removed in 1880 from the entry sub-temple to Byodoin, in Uji. Finally, we're delighted to share a striking six-fold screen painting, byobu, depicting Shoji enjoying themselves drunkenly by Kawanabe Kyosai. She was the daughter of the famed Kyosai – subject of a recent Royal Academy exhibition – and painter of many of his late works.

Below: Uho Doji 14th Century



Below: Kyosui Shoji Screen



How did you first learn about The Treasure House Fair?

I discovered the Fair three months before its first iteration in June 2023 from other dealers, and then the organisers, while exhibiting at TEFAF Maastricht. We had previously decided not to participate in London fairs unless there was something special about them, since we have a very lovely gallery in Mayfair. However, the scale and scope of Treasure House – populated by dealers I respect – led me to want to participate.

What advice would you give to people visiting the Fair for the first time?

Because the fair is of a manageable size (compared to TEFAF – which is wonderful but huge), a visitor should slow down and focus seriously on anything that speaks to them. They will find new dimensions to it, as dealers tend to bring some very special things there.