



10 highlights from The Winter Antiques Show in New York

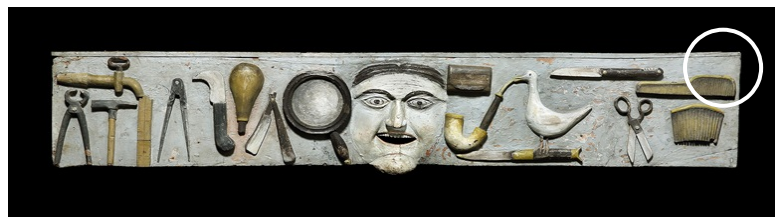
We set the former *New York Times* columnist Wendy Moonan the daunting task of selecting standout works from the biggest antiques fair in the US.

Here is what she chose

The 63rd Winter Antiques Show in New York (January 20–29) opens the New Year's social season, drawing collectors from all over the United States. The fair no longer focuses on Americana — despite this year's excellent loan exhibition from the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum in Williamsburg — and also now allows contemporary work to be shown.

Although the new format makes trends harder to discern, folk art trumped 18th-century English furniture, and 21st-century design art fared stronger than mid-century French furniture, with Americana, art glass and 21st-century porcelain also enjoying popularity. 'There's a good buzz and everybody seems to be doing well,' said Peter L. Schaffer of A La Vieille Russie, the New York antiques gallery. 'People seem to be in a good frame of mind.' These are the pieces that caught my eye.

1 | Robert Young: 19th-century trade sign



French trade sign, with engraved date 'Avril 1843', presumably for a hardware store, at Robert Young Antiques

Veteran London dealer Robert Young has always shown the most novel examples of English and European folk art, and Americans love his taste. This year at the show he had had a rare figurative French hardware store trade sign, dated 1843. A man's grinning face, perhaps the owner's, in the centre is flanked by the wares he sells: scissors, knives, hammers. But what is eye-catching are the anomalies, such as a goose smoking a pipe. 'It's the only one we've ever seen,' said Young. 'It's very rare. We could have sold it ten times.' The sign sold early on.



Jules Leleu, 'Fireworks' cabinet, circa 1946. Mahogany with Mother of Pearl and ebony inlay by Messenger, gilt bronze details and ornaments.
Photograph courtesy [Maison Gerard](#)

Manhattan dealer Maison Gerard has long specialised in the work of mid-20th-century French furniture designer Jules Leleu. This refined mahogany one-door Leleu cabinet from 1946 is called 'Fireworks' because of the way in which vines of ebony marquetry shoot up from the base in spirals, just like fireworks, each festooned with inlaid mother-of-pearl blossoms. 'It is so exceptional that I think it may have been used to teach apprentices in the war years how to do inlay,'

explained gallery director Benoist Drut. 'So much inlay would have taken at least 750 hours.'

3 | Joan Mirviss: Kawase Shinobu celadon bowl



Kawase Shinobu (b. 1950), *Celadon Platter*, Flower-shaped celadon platter with two pinches, circa. 1990. Porcelaneous stoneware with celadon glaze. 3 1/2 x 14 7/8 x 13 1/2 in. Image courtesy of [Joan B. Mirviss Ltd.](#) Photography by Richard Goodbody

Joan Mirviss, a long-time New York dealer in Japanese antiques, was one of the first to start showing contemporary Japanese art as well, and the very first artist she chose was the potter Kawase Shinobu. Since then, she has given him five shows and sold 350 of his works. At the WAS show she had a shallow, flower-shaped, delicate celadon bowl with two pinches on its rim, circa 1990. 'Perfecting celadon is a very complicated procedure, but he is a master at it,' said Giovanni Bottero, the gallery assistant.

4

Nathan Liverant and Son: Walnut Queen Anne highboy

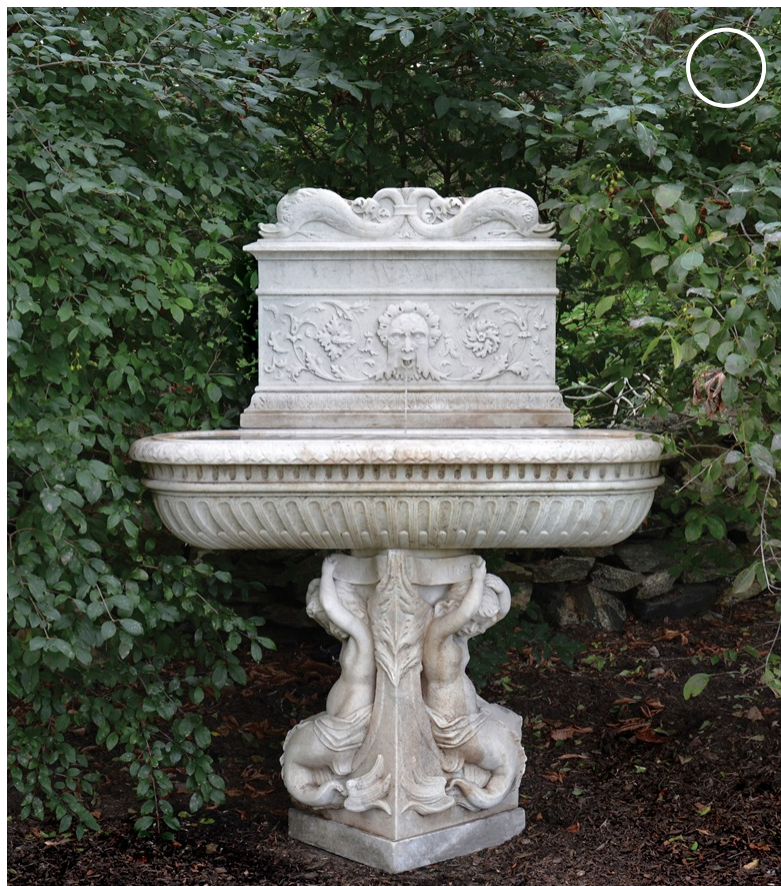


Queen Anne walnut flat-top highboy with a deeply scrolled apron, circa 1750, from the North Shore of Massachusetts, possibly Salem, at Nathan Liverant and Son

Based in Colchester, Connecticut, Arthur Liverant is a highly respected, third-generation dealer in American antiques, the grandson of Nathan Liverant, who founded the firm nearly 90

years ago. Liverant sells only 'best in type'. His walnut Queen Anne highboy, with original cast brass hardware, is a classic and sold early on at the fair. 'It was probably made in Salem due to its unusual, exuberant, deeply scrolled apron and the fine carving of the sunburst,' Liverant explained. 'It was at Mount Vernon for the last 100 years, but when they realised it came from New England and George Washington wouldn't have had one like it, they de-accessioned it.'

5 | Barbara Israel Garden Antiques: Wall fountain



A composite antique stone fountain with 19th-century components in the front and a Renaissance marble slab at the back, circa 1485, engraved

with dolphins, foliage and the words 'Lava Mini' ('Wash Your Hands'),
at [Barbara Israel Garden Antiques](#)

[Barbara Israel](#), a by-appointment dealer based in Katonah, New York, sells mostly 19th-century garden ornaments, sculptures and fountains, so you can imagine how surprised she was on the day before the opening of the show when the Winter Antiques Show team of appraisers identified the back of her composite fountain as definitely dating from the Renaissance, circa 1485. 'They knew immediately from the asymmetrical foliage swirls and the style of the dolphins,' Israel explained.

6

Carolle Thibaut-Pomerantz: Inca Dufour wallpaper



Inca Dufour wallpaper at [Thibaut](#)

Thibaut, a longtime Paris specialist in antique wallpaper, is sharing a booth with London dealer David Gill, who has furnished the space with Paris designer Mattia Bonetti's contemporary furniture. Bonetti also created wallpaper just for the booth in honour of Thibaut-Pomerantz (called 'Carolle Lines') to offset his contemporary pieces and her antique papers, including a Dufour panel from 1818 depicting a colourful, stylised Inca king picking a tropical fruit in a luscious jungle. 'It's just like the work shown in the recent exhibition [Philodendron: From Pan-Latin Exotic to American Modern] at the Wolfsonian museum in Miami,' Thibaut-Pomerantz says.

7

Todd Merrill: Beth Katleman's *White Rabbit*



California artist Beth Katleman's porcelain mirror sculpture *White Rabbit*, 2016, at [Todd Merrill Studio](#)

New York dealer Todd Merrill sells cutting-edge 21st-century design art. At the show he was exhibiting four contemporary women artists, including Beth Katleman, a woman known for her sly humour. Her newest work, *White Rabbit*, is a mirror inspired by 18th-century Chinese Chippendale mirrors and Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. Here she combines Rococo opulence with pop culture. Instead of birds or Chinese figures, she has festooned the mirror with porcelain

comic-book figures and movie characters such as Larry from The Three Stooges. ‘My art responds to the surreal times in which we live,’ says Kattleman.

8 | Olde Hope Antiques: *The Old Covered Bridge* by Grandma Moses



Grandma Moses, *The Old Covered Bridge*, 1943. At [Olde Hope Antiques](#)

[Olde Hope Antiques](#) has long ferreted out the best examples of American folk art. Here we have an iconic, very large Grandma Moses painting of a New England covered bridge in winter that is dotted with mica accents in the snow on the roof and trees. ‘She lived on the New York–Vermont border, but these scenes are all out of her imagination,’ commented Patrick Bell, co-owner of Olde Hope Antiques in New Hope, Pennsylvania. ‘They are amazingly pleasing — and this one is

not kitschy like some.’ It also has a perfect provenance — it came from Mrs. Ida A. Wiley, who bought it directly from the artist in 1943.

9 | Cohen & Cohen: Chinese export punch bowl



Porcelain Chinese export punch bowl with European figures inspired by a theatrical print of 1749 depicting an actor playing ‘Coriolanus’ on stage at Covent Garden, at [Cohen & Cohen](#)

It’s rare to have an 18th-century punch bowl depicting European figures, but this is just the kind of discovery that the best dealers in Chinese export porcelain, like [Cohen & Cohen](#), make. After three years of research, the Cohens found a theatrical print from 1749 of the wildly popular English actor James Quin on stage as Coriolanus, after which this bowl is painted. ‘Theatrical subjects on porcelain are extremely rare, and no other use of the Coriolanus image is known,’ said Michael Cohen. ‘In 40 years I’ve never seen one.’ It sold immediately.



Pin in the form of a dragonfly featuring diamond body with peridot and diamond wings, *en tremblant*, set in silver and gold, at [A La Vieille Russie](#)

The venerable [New York antiques gallery A La Vieille Russie](#) is best known for its Fabergé jewellery and objets d'art. It had a fantastic Fabergé hard stone hippo at the fair, but one real standout was a peridot dragonfly brooch from England, circa 1890. It has translucent peridot wings, *en tremblant*, set in silver and gold, and ruby eyes. 'Dragonflies were extraordinarily popular in Victorian times, possibly because they were thought to bring good luck,' explained Peter L. Schaffer, one of the gallery's co-owners. 'It's funny though — today bugs in general are very saleable, and dragonflies are the most saleable of all.'