

The Telegraph
Collectors crazy in love with Beyonce favourite
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Art market focus *Colin Gleadell*



For sale at last: 'miracles' from the Middle Ages

Religiosity is comparative in reference to works of art. A silk-screen painting of Jackie Kennedy by Andy Warhol, for instance, is not rare, as he did a number of them, but there is one in which the painting has been made in reverse. As with stamp collecting, the odd one out commands the higher price.

When it comes to medieval art, no such comparisons can be made. Examples are simply rare in themselves, so rare that it has taken Sam Fogg, a specialist dealer in medieval works of art, 20 years to assemble some 70 objects for sale. His exhibition, which opens later this month, is the first selling exhibition of medieval English art anywhere in the world.

The reason examples are so scarce is their

religious nature. Before the Renaissance, most art served a religious purpose. But when the Reformation, many religious works of art were destroyed. Mercifully, many portable works, such as illustrated manuscripts, were saved, finding safe haven in Europe. A few sculptures were buried. Some stained glass was out of reach, and survived in situ.

Exceptional medieval works of art command large sums, as evidenced by a recently discovered Lewis chess piece, believed to be one of the original hoard of Lewis Chessmen in the British Museum and expected to fetch £1m at Sotheby's next month.

Fogg's exhibition also demonstrates how undeveloped the market for medieval English art is. The fragments, or 'miracles of survival' as he



Religious rarities: stained glass from York, above, and a sculpture from the early 15th century, left

describes them, which make up his show include tiles from £500 and stained glass from £4,000. Secular art objects include intricately decorated brooches and buckles, water jugs and glass.

A late 14th century stone gargoyle of a kneeling man, originally in the Lady Chapel of York Minster, was previously discovered in the Sixties in their mason's yard, where it was bought for just

£10. It is now on sale for £30,000.

Most expensive in the exhibition are the illuminated manuscripts. They have a developed market and can reach as much as £100,000.

The exhibition also hopes to establish that English art of the medieval period was not the poor cousin of its continental counterparts, as has been previously thought. Many of the

influences are traceable to European patronage. Matthew Reeves, the gallery curator, believes the exhibition demonstrates England's historical place within European culture as "a thriving hotbed for artists, whose surviving works tell the story of immigration, trade and cross-cultural exchange". Something to think about, perhaps, when embarking on Brexit.

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London galleries plumbing the depth of talent from the African, American, South American and Indian continents were reaping dividends last week.

At Stephen Friedman Gallery, Deborah Roberts, the 56-year-old African-American, made her UK debut with a solo show of mixed-media collages. Roberts is collected by Beyoncé, and was recommended to Friedman by Yinka Shonibare, the British artist, who already shows at Friedman. By the end of opening night, dozens of her works, priced from £20,000 to £79,000, had been sold.

Buyers were major international private and public collections, said the gallery.

Last week, David Zwirner, the New York dealer, hosted a bustling crowd in his Mayfair gallery to pay homage to



Identity: When You See Me by Deborah Roberts

keep his prices stable.

Murillo currently has a show at Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, and is favourite to win this year's Turner Prize.

At Zwirner's London gallery, his richly coloured abstracts on canvas, linen and velvet are priced between £253,000 and £335,000. All have been sold.

At the Grosvenor Gallery, meanwhile, an exhibition of Indian and Pakistani artists who worked in Britain in the post-war era, including Ram Kumar and Francis Newton Souza, sold half its works on opening day.