



Capital events this winter

This season's London gallery shows brighten the gloom with a selection of fine paintings, contemporary photography, ceramics and art from ancient civilisations

WITH the canapé season now in full swing, it is going to be hard to do justice to all the gallery shows in London let alone elsewhere, although several will run on into, or even through, January, which may enliven that rather drab month. I mention a few here, not in order of importance or even preference, but by date of closure.

Despite his name and spending much of his career in Paris, Alfred Stevens (1823–1906) was actually a rather famous Belgian. His considerable success was offset by poor financial management and, after his death, he was forgotten in France, according to his champions at John Mitchell Fine Paintings, Avery Row, W1 (www.johnmitchell.net), because he was not French. It was also to do with changing fashion and because his style falls between the Pre-Raphaelites and his friends the Impressionists. However, he was a very fine painter and his time is coming again.

The Mitchell show of 22 works, to December 16, includes one of his 'Mappemonde' series at £185,000. I would suggest that, as the series began in 1860, the young woman contemplating the Americas on the globe (**Fig 3**) has received news from the French campaign in Mexico. Other works range from £20,000 to £50,000.

Also until December 16, the Sulger-Buel Lovell Gallery in Southwark, SE1 (www.sulger-buel-lovell.com), has a show of very impressive photographs by David Lurie of urban life in Cape Town. The gallery specialises in contemporary art from the African continent and the African diaspora.

Until December 23, Jonathan Cooper's gallery in Park Walk, Chelsea (www.jonathancooper.co.uk), will glow with Tim



Fig 1 above: Seated Nude by Euan Uglow. At Piano Nobile. Fig 2 right: Egyptian necklace. With Rupert Wace

Hayward's remarkable watercolours of birds and some animals. As the gallery puts it: 'Hayward approaches his subject with an accuracy born of years of study, and a dramatic intensity that is cinematic in spirit.'

In Crown Passage, between King Street and Pall Mall, SW1, Rupert Wace Ancient Art (www.rupertwace.co.uk) has scoured cupboards and drawers for more than 100 objects from ancient civilisations to tempt refined present buyers. Highlights include Roman bronze animal brooches (**Fig 4**); Egyptian faience amulets, including a collection of miniature frogs; Danish Neolithic flint and stone tools; and wearable ancient jewellery, including rings, necklaces (**Fig 2**) and pendants.



This year, to complement the antiquities, beautiful black-and-white photographs by Robert McCabe of the 1950s excavations at Mycenae and copies of the recently published *Mycenae from Myth to History* are also for sale.

It would be wise to check Christmas closures



Fig 3 above: 'Mappemonde' by Alfred Stevens. With Mitchell Fine Paintings. Fig 4 below: Peacock brooch. With Rupert Wace.

for exhibitions continuing into the New Year. One such is Piano Nobile's celebration of 'Daisies and Nudes' (**Fig 1**) from William Coldstream (1908–87) and his pupil Euan Uglow (1932–2000), which continues to January 14, 2017, in Portland Road, W11 (www.piano-nobile.com).

Also until January 14, Dutko, the Paris Art Deco gallery now also established in Davies Street, W1 (www.dutko.com), has

recent work by Béatrice Casadesus, a contemporary French artist. The title, 'Pluies d'Or', comes from the dribbles of gold,



Pick of Paris

I list a few Paris shows here, because I hope to go there before the great Rembrandt exhibition at the Musée Marmottan closes on January 23 and will try to make time to see some commercial galleries as well. To January 10 at the Galerie Vauclair, 24, rue de Beaune on the Rive Gauche, and their stand in the Marché Paul Bert-Serpette, Saint-Ouen, Laurence and Denis Vauclair are showing eclectic late-19th-century furniture and furnishings selected by the artist Valentine Pozzo di Borgo, as well as her exotically perfumed candles (www.galerie-vauclair.fr).



Also on the Rive Gauche, to January 30, Galerie Mendes, rue de Penthièvre, has 'Un Siècle en Blanc et Bleu', 17th-century Portuguese ceramics (above) inspired by the China trade (www.galeriemendes.com).

like golden raindrops, that give her large, abstract canvases light, warmth and colour. Although relatively new to London, Casadesus has built a formidable reputation for more than 30 years in Paris.

I find Sara Flynn's porcelain pots (**Fig 5**) at Erskine, Hall & Coe, Royal Arcade, Old Bond Street, W1 (www.erskinehallcoe.com), to January 12, quite simply beautiful. As Emma Crichton-Miller says in her catalogue essay: 'They delight the eye with their precise asymmetries, the swoops and turns, the nips and tucks, the peaks and bulges, rims and ridges.' Each is unique and, in Flynn's own words, 'with every pot I learn something. I can never see myself getting bored with these possibilities'. There are also a few of her new bronze sculptures on offer.

Fig 5: Porcelain pots by Sara Flynn. With Erskine, Hall & Coe



Sculpture? Furniture? Sometimes one, sometimes both, the witty and whimsical work of Claude (b.1924) and the late François Lalanne (1927–2008), generally known as Les Lalannes, has many important collectors around the world, especially since the 2009 Saint Laurent sale in Paris. Until January 26, Ben Brown, Brook's Mews, W1 (www.benbrownfinearts.com), is showing about 30 pieces, including new work by Claude (**Fig 7**). Earlier pieces blend his bold animal sculptures with her more delicate flora and fauna to provide their own fantasy creatures, which often also serve as functional storage spaces.

Robilant + Voena is the leading dealer in the Caravaggio-esque paintings by the European artists who flocked to Rome in about 1600 and fuelled an artistic revolution instigated by Michelangelo



Fig 6 above: Manfredi's St John the Baptist. With Robilant + Voena.

Fig 7 left: Recent sculpture by Claude Lalanne. With Ben Brown



Merisi da Caravaggio (1571–1610). Naturally, it has taken the opportunity of the National Gallery show to mount its own 'In Pursuit of Caravaggio' at its Dover Street, W1, premises to January 27 (www.robilantvoena.com).

Caravaggio was in Rome from 1592 to 1606 and, although he took no pupils and ran no workshop, his powerful, anti-Classical style ensured that his influence was widespread. The show offers 12 works by, so to say, leading followers, including three by Bartolomeo Manfredi (1582–

1622): *St John the Baptist* (**Fig 6**), *Saint Jerome* and *Head of the Baptist*. All three present biblical subjects in a new manner for the time, with an astonishing realism and extreme violence. Giovanni Baglione's (1566–1643) *Judith with the head of Holofernes* is a further perfect example of this aspect of Caravaggio's legacy.

Also included in the exhibition is the recently rediscovered *Allegory of Music* by Antiveduto Grammatica (about 1569–1626), one of his very few signed works.

Out of Town: Christmas shows of gallery artists continue at the Jerram, Sherborne, Dorset (www.jerramgallery), to December 21 and the Fosse, Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire (www.fossegallery.com), to December 31.

Next week Mahler's Second comes first