



The line of beauty

Drawing Now and the Salon du Dessin provide ample reason to visit Paris

IN January, I had a stimulating two days in Paris as a guest of the organisers of the Drawing Now contemporary fair, which will take place in the old market building at the Carreau du Temple from the 28th to the 31st this month. The fair, launched in 2007, has expanded in unexpected directions.

We were put up in the 48-room Drawing Hotel in the rue de Richelieu, opened in 2017 by the fair's founder Christine Phal, who has a keen eye for property as well as art. In the reception area and basement she and her daughter, Carine Tissot, also ran the Drawing Lab, which offers four exhibitions a year as well as the space, equipment and support for anyone to drop in and draw.

One feature of the hotel is that the corridors and rooms of each floor have been decorated by different artists. The success of these projects and the growth of the fair—this year with 71 contemporary dealers from 15 countries, 16 of them new—testifies to French enthusiasm for drawing.

So, too, does the continuing success of the Salon du Dessin, in its 28th outing from March 27 to April 1 at the Palais Brongniart, with 20 French dealers and 21

from nine other countries. The two fairs complement each other well, even though the Salon now includes contemporary galleries.

This year, the Salon has produced an English version of the handbook and it must be congratulated on its quality. As usual, there will be a large number of special exhibitions and events in and beyond the two fairs and it will be frustrating for visitors with limited time. Here is a small preview of the fairs; I hope to include more items after my visit.

The Salon

Johann Goll van Franckenstein (1722–85) was a German banker who set up in Amsterdam and made a fortune.

His house on the Herengracht and country house at Velsen near IJmuiden became meeting places for connoisseurs because of his collection of Dutch Golden Age landscape drawings, such as this 6½in by 9½in fruit-picking scene in pencil and wash (*Fig 2*) dated 1670, by Herman Saftleven (1609–85). The collection informed the design of the park that Goll laid out at Velsen. He was himself a topographical draughtsman, but became blind later in life. This is with Onno van Seggelen of



Fig 1: Egon Schiele's Standing Woman Covering Face with Both Hands is with Wienerroither & Kohlbacher of Vienna

Rotterdam, who also has examples of Goll's own work.

The son of Polish immigrants, Sam Szafran has lived for more than 50 years in an old Parisian apartment, with worn wooden

steps and black-and-white-tiled landings. An orphan, he was sent to live with 'a particularly sadistic uncle who pretended to throw him down the stairs,' according to the French Academician Jean



Fig 2 above: Fruit-picking scene by Herman Saftleven. With Onno van Seggelen. Fig 3 right: Staircase by Szafran. With Stephen Ongpin



Clair. 'Since then, to escape the vertigo resulting from this early ordeal, he has concentrated on forging tools to help him cope with this foundational *horror vacui*.'

Thus the staircase drawings that are now so popular. This 23¼in by 27¾in example (Fig 3) is with Stephen Ongpin of London.

In his 17¾in by 12¾in pencil, gouache and watercolour *Standing Woman Covering Face with Both Hands* (1911), Egon Schiele (1890–1918) accentuates the angularity of the elbow and the shoulder (Fig 1).

As the Schiele specialist Wienerroither & Kohlbacher of Vienna who offers it remark: 'The woman's long fingers hide her eyes to avoid the gaze of the artist and the viewer—to no avail, since she has been seen in many exhibitions around the world.'

Brussels dealer Eric Gillis offers a striking self-portrait of about 1905 by Louis Anquetin (1861–

1932). Recently discovered among a lot of drawings from the studio, it is in brown ink on vellum and measures 8¾in by 13¾in. The dealer notes that the drawing simultaneously reveals and hides the face, making a 'deconstructed self-portrait—illustrated with precision and focusing on the eyes—that is extremely modern, almost abstract'. It is also very Old Masterly (Fig 4).

The New York gallery Rosenberg & Co brings Memphis-born Maysey Craddock's speciality: watercolour and gouache works on sewn paper bags, which are based on her photographs of shifting landscapes. They are 'intricate renderings of the intersection of man and nature, conjuring an atmosphere of absence and reclamation', such as this 11¾in by 12¼in *Shadow of Lost Trees* (2013) (Fig 5).

Drawing Now

One of the many heartening aspects of Drawing Now is the way that the work of many contemporary artists (might one say 'draughtsmen' inclusively?) links to the past without being enslaved to it.

Susan Schwalb, shown by Patrick Heide of London, uses Renaissance techniques of metal and silverpoint to create

Fig 4 left: Louis Anquetin self-portrait. With Eric Gillis. Fig 5 below: Maysey Craddock's *Shadow of Lost Trees*. With Rosenberg & Co



Fig 6 above: *Harmonizations #9* by Schwalb. With Patrick Heide.

Fig 7 right: *Formalizing their Concept: Luis Camnitzer's Coca-Cola Bottle filled with Coca-Cola*, by Martí Cormand. With Josée Bienvenu



compositions that are entirely of today. In her 18½in square *Harmonizations #9* (2016), she uses gold, brass, silver, copper, aluminiumpoint, graphite and black gesso on paper (Fig 6).

The New York gallery Josée Bienvenu focuses on an artist from Barcelona, Martí Cormand (born 1970), who certainly can draw, but there is wit as well as skill in his 14½in by 11½in *Formalizing*

their *Concept: Luis Camnitzer's Coca-Cola Bottle filled with Coca-Cola* (Fig 7).

Next week A stately boar

Pick of the week

Anyone interested in drawings is likely to come into contact with Peter Bower. He is the great expert on what lies beneath: paper. He has encountered a problem in



his current research into George Stubbs's papers and working methods. Stubbs drew throughout his career, but most of the drawings have disappeared. It has been calculated that there were about 575 in his 1807 studio sale, but the whereabouts of only a handful are known.

A few passed through the hands of collectors, including this study of a lion and lioness, pencil on blue paper, shown here in an old image, which was Lot 170 in Part 1 of Sotheby's Ingram sale, October 21, 1964, bought by E. Griffiths and not seen since. Mr Bower hopes that, if more of these drawings and sketchbooks resurface, his research will assist in their correct attribution.

Anyone with any information should contact Peter Bower (020-7732 0125; peter.bower@btconnect.com).