



20thC English School, Abstract in grey and black (thought to be a farmyard scene), canvas 24 x 30in, unsigned but No. 64 to reverse of canvas and unframed. Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent. Aug 07. HP: £3,300. ABP: £3,881.



Elizabeth Blackadder (1931-) etching with aquatint, Cat & Anemones 1989, Cat 49, signed, 21/50, 14 x 16in. Gorrings, Lewes. Oct 07. HP: £1,200. ABP: £1,411.



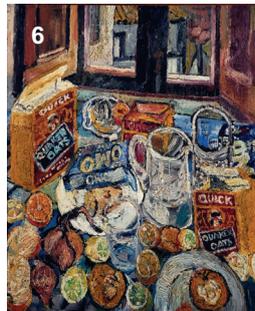
John Bellany, oil on canvas 'Woman with hat', signed, 30 x 24in. Great Western Auctions, Glasgow. Feb 07. HP: £3,900. ABP: £4,587.



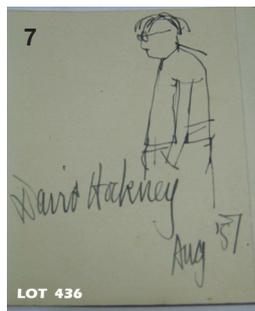
Dame Laura Knight (1877-1970) pencil drawing, 'Wild Strawberries, Switzerland', signed and dated 1932, 14 x 10in. Gorrings, Lewes. Apr 07. HP: £1,300. ABP: £1,529.



John Bratby (1928-1992) oil on canvas, Flags, signed, 16 x 18in. Gorrings, Lewes. Apr 07. HP: £1,900. ABP: £2,234.



John Bratby, oil, Breakfast, 28.5 x 23.5in, unsigned, framed. Hartleys, Ilkley. Oct 07. HP: £8,200. ABP: £9,645.



David Hockney, pen and ink self portrait on card, signed 'David Hockney Aug 57', 10 x 10cm, unframed. Brown & Co, Brigg. May 07. HP: £4,100. ABP: £4,822.



Tracey Emin b1963, 'Sixty a Day Woman', lithograph printed in colours, signed, dated 1986, No 14/18 in pencil, 55.4 x 75.5cm, unframed. Rosebery's, London. Jan 07. HP: £850. ABP: £999.



Josef Herman (1911-1999) Man with Dog, oil on board, 15 x 19.5cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £1,900. ABP: £2,234.



Sir Kyffin Williams RA, 'A farm in Welsh mountains', monochrome wash drawing, signed with initials, 30 x 45cm. Halls Fine Art, Shrewsbury. Apr 07. HP: £3,200. ABP: £3,764.



Frank Brangwyn (1867-1956), watercolour, Ditchling Mill, initialled, 9.75 x 12.5in. Gorrings, Lewes. Jun 06. HP: £2,200. ABP: £2,587.



Sir Frank Brangwyn, watercolour, Dancer with Figures, inscribed, label verso ex William De Belleruche Collection, 6.75 x 10in, gilt frame. Hartleys, Ilkley. Oct 07. HP: £850. ABP: £999.



Henry Moore (1831-1895) Kelp Gatherers - A Grey Morning, signed & dated 'H. Moore. 1874' bottom left, inscribed with title, signed, dated 1874, inscribed with artist's address 4 Sheffield Terrace - Kensington, W, on a label attached to stretcher, oil on canvas, 41 x 81cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £10,800. ABP: £12,703.



Walter Goodin (1907-1992), Bridlington Harbour with yachts and fishing vessels, signed on board, 15 x 17in, gilt frame. Dee Atkinson & Harrison, Driffield. Jul 07. HP: £1,850. ABP: £2,176.

## The Current Art Market

by Chris Murray

The UK art market is fascinating at the moment. At a time when many areas of the antiques and collectables market are not doing as well as they would like, it's doing well. And not just at the top end of the market, which is a world of its own, but at virtually all levels. Things, it seems, have never been so good. Auctions and art fairs attract large numbers of buyers, many of them new to the market, and prices rise steadily. Whether this will continue in the face of predictions of a slowdown in the economy will become clear over the course of the year.

One notable aspect of this buoyant market is the comparative success of modern and contemporary art, despite dire predictions about the impact of re-sale rights. And not only works in the more traditional styles, but also those in the modernist and avant-garde vein. A few years ago, a semi-abstract work by an unidentified British artist would have struggled to reach £200 (unless it was big and colourful and ideal as décor for a company's reception area). So £3,300 for (1) is, to say the least, intriguing.

Well-established twentieth-century British artists of all periods continue to climb steadily, though generally without any sudden or unexpected leaps. Typical are Elizabeth Blackadder (2), John Bellany (3), Dame Laura Knight (4), Edward Seago. Another familiar figure, John Bratby (5), has had mixed results. Over the last few years there have been several works doing the rounds that frankly, being sketchy and facile, do little to enhance his reputation or, consequently, his value. £1,900 for an artist of his stature is a poor result. Clearly the market still favours his more familiar 'kitchen sink' crowded table tops (6).

More or less affordable works by the securely established David Hockney (7) can still be found; and, now that she is increasingly part of the establishment, there is growing confidence in the former bad girl of BritArt, Tracey Emin (8).

Two artists closely associated with Wales have also performed as expected, and present a telling contrast in style, market profile and values: Joseph Herman (9) and Kyffin Williams (10), who died two years ago. Some have questioned whether the high prices paid for Williams can be sustained, but there are no signs of a downturn. We are so familiar with the prints of Frank Brangwyn that it's easy to forget that he was a highly accomplished watercolour painter. (11) is a good example of his more finished style. By contrast, (12) is a wonderfully free and spontaneous sketch of a dancer, its style perfectly suited to its energetic subject.

In marine studies, a Henry Moore (13) was a good result at £10,800. At a far more modest level, there have also been quite a few harbour scenes by the east coast artist Walter Goodin on the market (14), averaging out at between £1,500 to £2,000, his other subjects (landscapes and hunting scenes) selling for much less.

One of the most spectacular recent results was for a collection of watercolours and sketches (15) by Lady Anne Blunt (1837-1917). She was a noted traveller and the finely executed images were mostly of the

Middle East and India. The estimate was £400-600, the result £24,000. Other albums of her sketches sold at the same sale for £19,000 and £22,000. Good quality nineteenth-century travellers' sketches have been collectors, and the sale as a whole had a Byronic element (she was a granddaughter of the poet), but that still doesn't quite explain the result.

The very strong British tradition in animal painting has been in evidence, with a superb Munnings (16) reaching a wholly expected £15,000. A little less expected was the £10,500 for Frederick Elwell's study of a man and horse in a stable (17), a work steeped in the nostalgia for a lost rural life of early twentieth-century Britain (shades of *Lark Rise to Candleford*). His Continental landscapes usually achieve around £1,000. His scenes of English life can reach several thousand. There was also a wonderful study of a terrier by John Emms (18), all the more vivid for being a sketch, and a humorous nineteenth-century painting (19), which, though 'satirical' in intent, was done with a keen understanding of the subject, as I think the hammer price suggests.

Many of the Russian works that have been coming onto the market over the past years have not performed particularly well. It's still easy to find a fine landscape or character study for under £1,000, especially if you are fond of high-keyed palettes. It may take some time for the market's knowledge and confidence to improve markedly. But a few figures have begun to soar, and none more so than Sergey Marshennikov, a young artist who is skilfully marketed. He has based his career entirely on dreamy, soft-focus nudes that have more in common with Playboy centrefolds than with Degas or Bonnard. Still, Russell Flint did well enough out of a similar formula. Marshennikov's works have recently reached around £3,000 at auction (which itself is considerable), so £6,200 (20) marks a decided quickening of pace. Vintage Russian art is not as common but may well have a longer shelf life: it's certainly what the Russian themselves are after nowadays. A lithograph by Leon Bakst (21), one of the 'Paris Russians,' reached £4,400, a landscape by Ivanovich Zarubin (22) £1,150, even though it was very small and the panel clearly split.

The maxim that quality tells was illustrated by (23). American works don't do particularly well in the UK, and this was unattributed. But it's beautiful if somewhat melancholy image, strongly reminiscent of nineteenth-century French ruralism (a huge number of American artists studied in Paris). Another appealing figure study, of a very different kind, was (24), by the little known Florence Katherine Mayer, an exquisite portrait of a young girl showing all the quiet elegance of Edwardian painting.

There are always a few real bargains, and I'll end with just two. The first was a small oil by John Buxton Knight (25). Some of his works have reached substantial figures, but on the whole I think he's often strangely undervalued. This fine landscape, whose treatment of reflected light is strongly reminiscent of Sisley's Impressionism, was for me a real snip at only £529. The second (to return to the animal theme) was a strong little horse by the Victorian painter George Paice, which, considering present prices for some rather poor stuff, was surely far too low (26).



**15**  
*Lady Anne Blunt (1837-1917) interesting small collection of watercolour drawings and sketches, mostly by the artist incl: Escort with the Berak of Ibn Rashid 1879, Skeykh Obeyd Garden, Hyderabad 1884; Near Calcutta, 22 x 36cm and smaller. (30) Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £24,000. ABP: £28,230.*



**16**  
*Sir Alfred Munnings (1878-1959) oil on canvas laid on card, The Artists White Pony 'Augereau', indistinctly signed, 15.5 x 21.5in. Gorrings, Lewes. Apr 07. HP: £15,000. ABP: £17,643.*



**17**  
*Frederick W Elwell (1870-1958), Going to Work, a study of a man leading a work horse out of a stable, signed on panel, dated 1918, 19.25 x 23.25in, painted frame. Dee, Atkinson & Harrison, Drifffield. Sep 07. HP: £10,500. ABP: £12,350.*



**18**  
*John Emms (1843-1912) 'Faellel', a smooth-coated fox terrier, a study signed and inscribed bottom right, oil on canvas, 20 x 15cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £1,800. ABP: £2,117.*

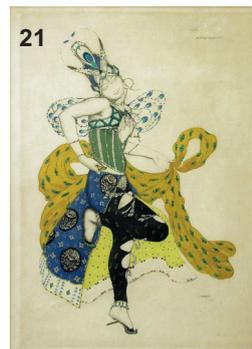


**19**  
*19thC satirical dog painting, oil on canvas. Richard Winterton Auctioneers, Burton on Trent. Nov 07. HP: £3,000. ABP: £3,528.*



**20**  
*Sergey Marshennikov (Russian), 'Luxury', oil on canvas, 45 x 90cm, signed, framed. Lots Road Auctions, Chelsea. Mar 07. HP: £6,200. ABP: £7,292.*

Prices quoted are actual hammer prices (HP) and the Approximate Buyer's Price. (ABP) Includes an average premium of 15% + VAT. These images are only a sample from our extensive database.



**21**  
*Leon Bakst (1866-1924) Costume Design for Madame Trouhanova in the Ballet 'La Peri', coloured lithograph, 1911, numbered 65/100, 48.3 x 35.5cm. Sworders, Stansted Mountfitchet. Feb 07. HP: £4,400. ABP: £5,175.*



**22**  
*Victor Ivanovich Zarubin (1866-1928 Russian), oil, Moonlit scene with cottages beside a lake, board 5.5 x 8in, signed in Cyrillic and dated 1913 (bears Russian label pasted to rear of panel, panel cracked to upper part), in gilt moulded frame and glazed. Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent. Feb 06. HP: £1,150. ABP: £1,352.*



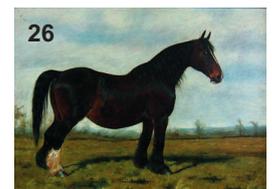
**23**  
*American School, oil on canvas, The Iris Cutter, indistinctly signed, 30 x 20in. Gorrings, Lewes. Oct 07. HP: £9,000. ABP: £10,586.*



**24**  
*Florence Katherine Mayer (Exh 1907-1926) Portrait of Hon. Miss Schreiber, Marlesford, Woodbridge, signed and dated 1915 bottom left, indistinctly inscribed on fragment of a label attached to back board, watercolour; 75 x 47cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £1,750. ABP: £2,058.*



**25**  
*John Buxton Knight (1843 - 1908), a riverside hostelry with figures and boats, signed, 12.75 x 19in, gilt frame. Dee Atkinson & Harrison, Drifffield. Jul 07. HP: £450. ABP: £529.*



**26**  
*George Paice (Exh. 1881-1897) Princess of Thule (22,319), portrait of a bay mare, signed and dated '98 bottom right, inscribed with title along the bottom, 49 x 26.5cm. Bearne's, Exeter. Nov 07. HP: £300. ABP: £352.*