

france

■ Back to work with all to play for as Paris Left and Right Banks prepare for autumn



Anne Crane
reports

THE long summer break is a particular French phenomenon, so much so that 'the return to work' merits its own phrase in the gallic lexicon.

La Rentrée signifies the return to school and back to business. This is as true for the art world as any other part of French life.

After several weeks of closure, the owners of antiques shops and galleries and the auctioneers return from the beach and get back in the saddle.

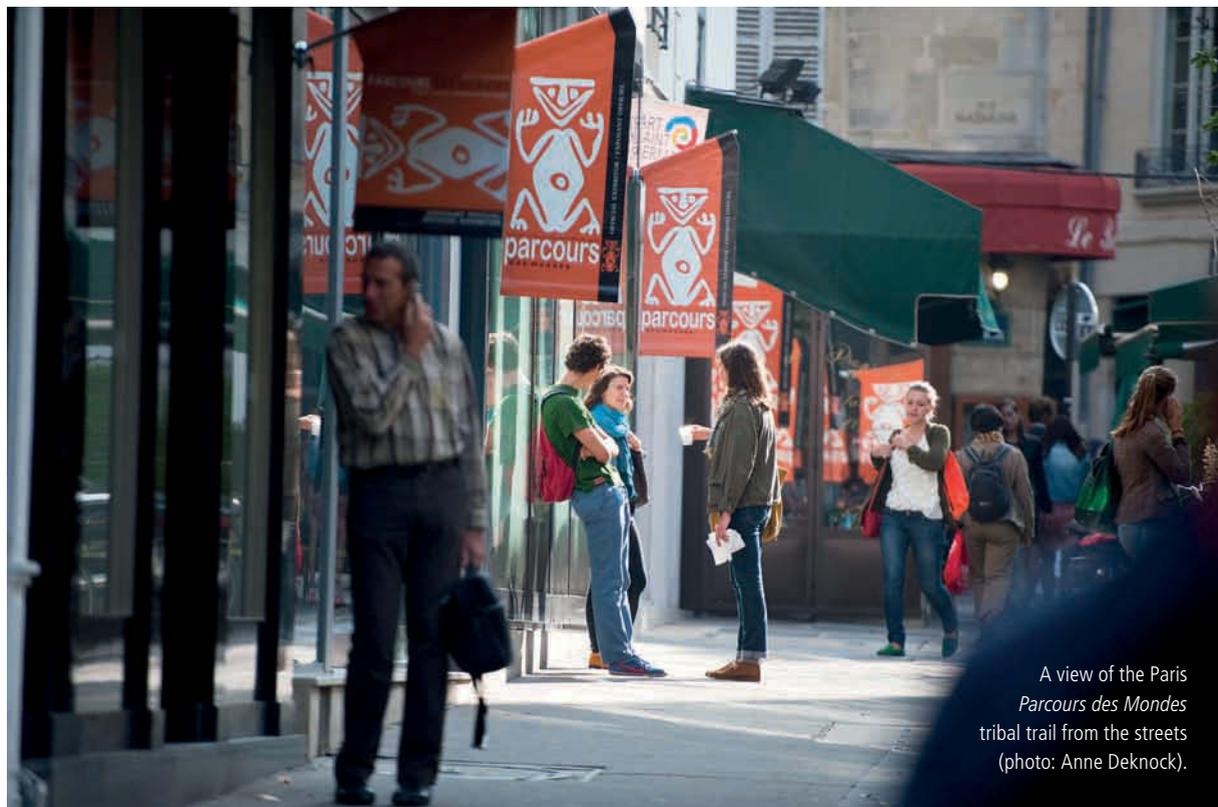
In the Parisian art market calendar, the first autumn shoots tend to manifest themselves among the dealing fraternity. Alternate years see a flurry of activity around the *Biennale des Antiquaires*, but an even earlier harbinger is the annual *Parcours des Mondes* or tribal art trail pictured **above right**.

This takes place at the beginning of September on the Paris Left Bank in the cluster of old narrow streets packed with antiques shops between the Seine and the Boulevard Saint Germain (see map on facing page. For a full interactive map of tribal and Asian art participation visit parcoursdesmondes.com).

STREET LIFE

One of the attractions of the whole *Parcours* experience for the visitor is the density of resident dealers in the galleries on streets such as the rue de Seine or the rue des Beaux Arts, swelled each year by tribal specialists from overseas who hire space in adjacent shops.

It combines the intimacy of the gallery experience with the critical mass you



A view of the Paris *Parcours des Mondes* tribal trail from the streets (photo: Anne Deknock).

Play over, now back to Paris Parcours

might find at a sizeable specialist fair.

The tribal trail has grown over the 14 years to become one of the biggest draws worldwide in this market sector and, as outlined in our preview on pages 54 and 55, it expands further this year with the addition of Asian specialists.

Just over a week later, the same Left Bank area provides the setting for the *Parcours de la Céramique*.

French ceramics dealers join forces to cross-promote and welcome visitors to see what is on offer in the fields of European porcelain, Renaissance and later pottery, Middle Eastern and Chinese

ceramics, leavened with a dash of contemporary wares. Ten years ago this was a more formal stand-fitted ceramics fair held in a dedicated location (the Hôtel Dassault was one past venue).

However, problems finding a suitable venue and the close proximity of most of the participants in the streets known as the Carré Rive Gauche resulted in the adoption of a street-trail format.

This year's timing coincides with a new exhibition at the Sèvres Museum and both are discussed on page 56.

Next year, with the *Biennale des Antiquaires* going annual (see ATG

2199), September's dealing scene might look rather different as many dealers across Paris use this as an opportunity to capitalise on cultural footfall in the city.

LOOKING RIGHT

It is an interesting geographic phenomenon that while you can find dealers and galleries on both sides of the Seine, these days Paris auctioneers only operate on the Right Bank.

Until French law opened up competition to foreign auctioneers, nearly all auction activity was based in the Drouot auction cooperative on the eponymous street.

A number of firms, including Sotheby's, Christie's, Artcurial and Piasa, are now based in the fashionable area bounded by the Champs Elysées and the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

Traditionally, the Paris auction scene and that of greater France does not crank into full action until late September.

However, on page 57 we take an early look at what the visitor to France can see in the salerooms this autumn.

■ Beyond the capital, September is peak time for a host of brocantes and braderies (street and flea markets) offering a huge variety of antiques and bric-a-brac of all kinds all around the country.

See our French fairs and markets preview on pages 62-63.

ATG'S FIVE GO-TO PLACES FOR SEPTEMBER IN FRANCE

TRIBAL ART

1 Parcours des Mondes (Tribal Art Trail), see pages 54 and 55.

When: September 8-13

Where: Saint-Germain-des-Prés, various galleries

Number of exhibitors: 84

■ parcours-des-mondes.com

2 Musée du Quai Branly, see page 55

Where: 37 quai Branly, 75007 Paris

When: permanent collection of Tribal Art but showing until September 20: *The Inca and The Conquistador*

■ quaibranly.fr

CERAMICS

3 Parcours de la Céramique, see page 56

When: September 22-27

Where: Carre Rive Gauche, various galleries.

Number of exhibitors: 24

■ parcoursdelaceramique.com

4 Sèvres – Cité de la Céramique, see page 56

Where: Place de la Manufacture; 92310 Sèvres.

When: Permanent collection of Sèvres Porcelain. Showing from September 16 to January 18: *La manufacture des Lumières. La Sculpture à Sèvres de Louis XV à la Revolution*

■ sevresciteceramique.fr

ANTIQUES AND BRIC-A-BRAC

5 Lille Braderie (famous street market), see pages 63-64

Where: in the streets of Lille

When: September 5-6

■ lilletourism.com

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EARLY 20TH CENTURY VIEWS OF NEW BRITAIN

Left and right: New Zealand-born **Michael Evans**, who is based in Dijon, has been doing the *Parcours* for three years. Photography of early tribal material is one of his specialities and every year he brings a selection.

For his 2015 show on the rue Guénégaud, he has a fascinating group of 10 early 20th century prints of the inhabitants of New Britain taken by Josef Reiss, a German photographer.

Reiss was employed by the Hensheim company, based in Rabaul in New Britain when it was still a German colony, to photograph the plantations and administrators, but he had a more personal interest in the indigenous peoples.

Evans is showing 10 from an album of 54 photographs that came originally from the collection of Walter Baumann, a scholar on German Pacific colonial history, via the Dortmund dealer Ulrich Kortmann.

"Most of the photos are of the people in everyday life," says Evans. "Most are posed, standing or sitting, some are in groups some with dance costumes in ceremonies," like the man posing here (right). All are silver prints and are quite yellow in hue "which was done on purpose for effect", adds the dealer.

They are to be sold as a collection priced at €8500.



Time to follow the tribal trail

Right: this 3ft 6in (1.2m) high Hampatong carved wood guardian figure comes from a cave in Borneo and is 1000 years old. **Thomas Murray** from California is showing it as part of a themed exhibition on the rue des Beaux Arts devoted to Classic Dayak Art that includes textiles, sculpture and other works from Borneo ranging from archaic periods to the early 20th century. The figure is priced at €125,000.

Photo: Don Tuttle



THE *Parcours des Mondes*, Paris' tribal art trail set in the streets around the Saint-Germain-des-Prés dealing district, celebrates its 14th anniversary this year.

Eighty-four guest and resident galleries bring their wares to the French capital from September 8-13.

Anyone who has visited this vibrant event will be familiar with the babel of languages when collectors, curators and dealers from around the world converge on this network of narrow streets.

They come to buy, swap stories and discover what is going on among the specialist tribal art dealers who, like the visitors, come from all four corners of the globe.

Half the exhibitors are from outside France, with particularly strong contributions from Brussels, another major centre for tribal art (15 dealers); the US (12) and the UK (7).

SHIFT OF EMPHASIS

What's new this year? The biggest and perhaps most inevitable innovation is a change of emphasis to include much more material from Asia.

It has resulted in a tweak to the title of the event, which is now sub-headed *Asian Art Fair* as well as *Tribal Art Fair*, and the presence of Asian art specialists has pushed the number of participants up by around 20%.

"Opening up to Asia is a natural evolution," says *PDM* director **Pierre Moos**. "It's a response to a growing

"...now you can also see a broader Asian input, from Japanese prints and screens or Samurai armour to Tibetan bronzes"

interest from dealers and collectors who are organising more and more exhibitions on China, Japan, Nepal and Indonesia."

It is also, of course, an understandable refinement from a commercial standpoint to capitalise on Asian purchasing power.

So, while visitors will be familiar with a complement of Indian and Indonesian material from previous stagings, now you can see a broader Asian input, from Japanese prints and screens or Samurai armour to Tibetan bronzes.

That said, the more traditional tribal

arenas of Africa, North America and Oceania still make up the lion's share of this show.

Themed exhibitions, usually accompanied by catalogues, are a popular feature of the *PDM*. Head to the rue de Seine for **Galerie Dodier's** display of 50 ceremonial spears from the Bismarck Archipelago, New Guinea and Vanuatu used by warriors and dancers, titled *Of Dance and of War*.

Meanwhile, on the rue Mazarine resident dealers **Galerie Noir d'Ivoire** will show a collection of Yoruba artefacts including examples of Ibeji (twin) figures.

With provenance and early context being increasingly important in the field of ethnographic study and collecting, visitors will appreciate **Michael Evans'** display of early 20th century photographic portraits of the indigenous peoples from Melanesia, discussed **above**.

■ parcours-des-mondes.com

Right: **Jacaranda Tribal** from New York who are exhibiting on the rue Mazarine at Galerie Espaces 54 will be showing this 9½in (24cm) high carved wood Dan mask with a fibre coiffure at *Parcours des Mondes*. The mask, which comes the Ivory Coast or Liberia and dates from the late 19th or early 20th century, is priced at €50,000.

Photo: James Worrell





in Paris again

MUSEUM VISIT

If you have time left to spare after a packed tour round the *PDM*, it is always worth visiting the Musée du Quai Branly, the specialist ethnographical museum set up in 2006, which has been instrumental in training the tribal art spotlight on the French capital.

As well as the permanent collections displayed over its many floors, there is a last opportunity to catch their latest special exhibition, *The Inca and The Conquistador*, presenting Inca and Hispanic objects to highlight the contrasts between the two worlds.

THE HOUR HAS COME

While the spotlight falls on ceramics and tribal art in September, the Left Bank dealers' quarter is, of course, home to galleries in many disciplines, as anyone who looks at the carrervegauche.com dealers' website can see.

Galerie Delalande, for example, deal in scientific and marine instruments, tobacco-related artefacts, and other collectors' items.

They moved this year from Louvre des Antiquaires complex on the Right Bank, where they had been for 37 years, to a gallery on the rue de Lille in the heart of the Carré.

Next month, from October 7-31, they are devoting a special selling exhibition to antique hourglasses, which in days gone by were very important as portable time-measuring instruments.

The 90 specimens on sale (prices range from €2000-3000 up to €40,000-50,000) show the variety of materials used for their creation. Examples in tortoiseshell, amber, mother-of-pearl, boxwood and ivory as well as gold and silver, are on offer. Pictured **above right** is an English hourglass from c.1750 with a silver frame.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue in French, English and Italian.

■ delalande-antiques.com



DEALER'S VIEW: MICHEL THIEME

Amsterdam dealer **Michel Thieme** is the sole Netherlands representative among this year's *Parcours des Mondes* exhibitors. This is his fourth year at *PDM*, showing at Art is You on the rue des Beaux-Arts. Thieme (pictured **below**) gives *ATG* his views on the event and how the market has responded over the years.

ATG: As a guest exhibitor from outside France, what do you see as *PDM*'s particular attraction?

MT: I do not see it as a particularly French thing, more as an international happening, the best and most interesting of its kind, with buyers from all over the globe meeting in Paris.

ATG: Do you take any particular type of material to show in Paris?

MT: Every year I try to bring a selection of objects that are totally new to the market; things that have not been seen before, like fresh fish from the ocean.

ATG: How do you think the event has changed over the years? Has the visitor and exhibitor profile become more international?

MT: At first it was one of many shows, but now it has developed into the best of its kind, leaving the rest far behind. With the quality and also the volume of quality improving, it has become stronger and stronger, attracting collectors from further and further away.

ATG: Have you noticed any change in the tastes and demands of customers?

MT: I do not know if it is a *Parcours* thing, but traceable provenance and research is more and more appreciated by buyers.

I would say that people are no longer shy to ask for real proof of what the dealers are claiming. It is very easy to make up a fake provenance with an old telephone book and some imagination, but to prove that a provenance is true is a different thing entirely. I feel that people have a right to traceable provenance information when they are willing to lay down their money for a work of art.

Sometimes dealers will say that they cannot give this information because they want to protect their source. If you ask me, most of the time this is not true. I also think that dealers should document restoration better and share this openly.

ATG: Are there any ways in which you think the *PDM* should develop?

MT: Well, it shouldn't become too big and it also should not take place more than once a year. Because of the internet, our potential buyers are already being overwhelmed with invitations for exhibitions and auctions.

If we do not keep *PDM* exclusive it could lose its exciting vibe and become one of too many events happening each year.

■ michelthieme.com

Right: this rare 10in (26cm) high, 19th century *Korwar* or ancestor figure from Geelvinck Bay, New Guinea, in wood with glass beads, is one of Michel Thieme's recent sales.

Photo: Jan van Esch



Photo: Vincent Mentzel

