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From a Roly-Poly chair to a 15th-century illuminated manuscript made for the King of France: five highlights from Tefaf Online

Our pick of items that are for sale via the fair's online platform, which replaces the IRL fair which had been scheduled to run this week in Maastricht

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Time has lost all meaning. Can anyone remember what time of year art fairs are meant to be held? So many delays, cancellations and “postponements” to the following year (cancellations in all but name). Rinse and repeat.

And seemingly for every missed date, there has to be an online viewing room.

So Tefaf Maastricht, the Dutch dowager duchess of the art fair world traditionally held in March, opens its second online edition—from 9-13 September (preview 8 September)—when the postponed event would have taken place. Its cancellation, perhaps, is a relief for those of us who would have had to go from Maastricht to Basel to Frieze London, although it will be a long time before many Old Master and antiques dealers (Maastricht’s mainstay) will get a big international fair.

Tefaf declined to give details of overall sales at the first online edition last November, although a spokesperson pointed to notable sales made by Di Donna Galleries (a \$5m Vilhelm Hammershoi titled *Interior with a Woman Standing*, 1913), Appliat-Prazan (Karel Appel’s *Le petit bonhomme du désert*, 1950, price not disclosed) and ArtAncient (Bust of a Young Herakles, Late Hellenistic period, price not disclosed).

But around 255 galleries, with specialities ranging from antiquities and Old Master paintings to contemporary ceramics and jewellery, will take part in Tefaf Online. While most older works really benefit from in-person viewing, here is a jpeg taster of a few highlights to browse.

Life of St. Radegund illumination (15th century), Jörn Günther Rare Books, €880,000



The Life of St. Radegund (around 1496-98), illuminated manuscript on vellum Image courtesy of Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books AG

St. Radegund (518-587) became queen of France in 540 when she (unluckily) married Clothaire, King of the Franks, and she devoted herself to serving the poor and infirm. Much later, she escaped her cruel husband and founded a convent outside Poitiers. She was made the patron saint of women and of Poitiers, which is where this manuscript was illuminated by the Master of St. Radegund. The manuscript is of particular historical importance as it was made in the 15th century for Charles VIII, the King of France.

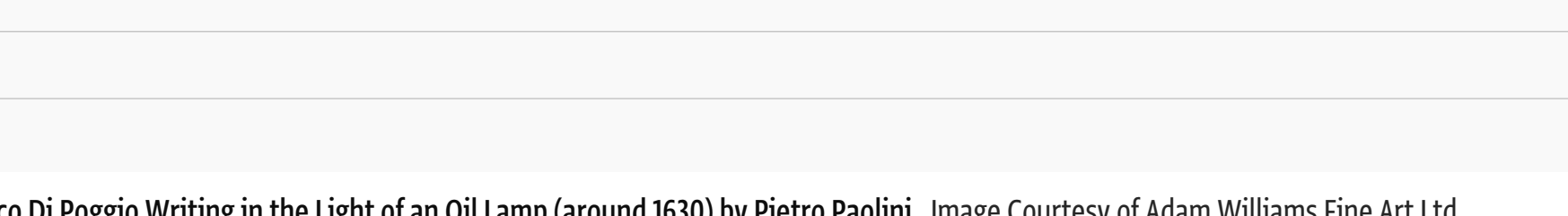
Christ and a Sleeping Apostle from an Agony in the Garden group (around 1450), Sam Fogg, \$125,000



A Sleeping Apostle from an Agony in the Garden group, Alpine Region Courtesy of Sam Fogg

This pair of terracotta three-quarter life-size figures, representing Christ in prayer and Peter the apostle asleep, would have been part of an Agony in the Garden scene (since destroyed) which would have decorated the façade of a church or cathedral in the Alps. Such multi-figure groups were known as Ölberggruppen (oil-mountain ensembles) and popular in the 15th century. The figures have round bases, indicating they would originally have sat in a landscape of some sort, and are thought to have been in a private collection in Vienna by 1920, later in the collection of Reinhold Hofstätter, Vienna, until 2012.

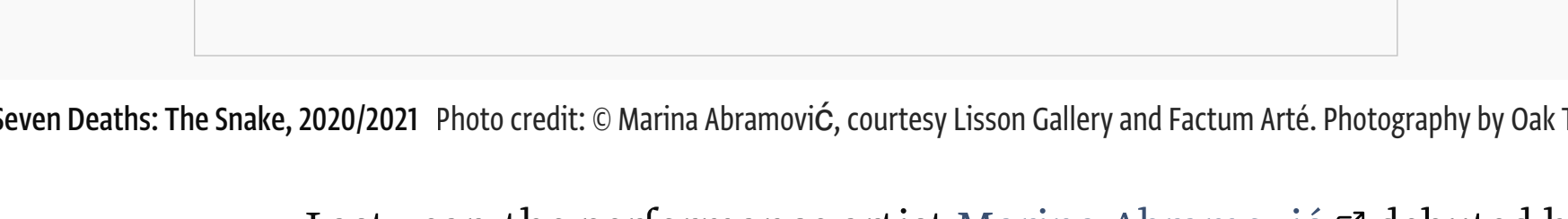
Pietro Paolini, Portrait of Francesco Di Poggio Writing in the Light of an Oil Lamp (around 1630), Adam Williams Fine Art, \$950,000



Portrait of Francesco Di Poggio Writing in the Light of an Oil Lamp (around 1630) by Pietro Paolini Image Courtesy of Adam Williams Fine Art Ltd.

Born in the Tuscan city of Lucca in 1603, Pietro Paolini applied dramatic Caravaggesque lighting and realism to more intimate, domestic scenes, such as in this portrait of Francesco Di Poggio. The identity of the sitter has recently been established by the gallery—when the work sold at Sotheby’s in New York in January 2020, it was described simply as a *Portrait of a Man Writing by Candlelight*. The expert Nikita de Vernejoul was responsible for identifying the sitter as Francesco Di Poggio, a poet and writer from a notable family from Lucca, who is seen here with inkwell, quill and a statuette of a female nude.

Marina Abramovic, Seven Deaths: The Snake (2020/2021). Lisson Gallery, €300,000-€400,000.



Marina AbramovicSeven Deaths: The Snake, 2020/2021 Photo credit: © Marina Abramović, courtesy Lisson Gallery and Factum Arté. Photography by Oak Taylor-Smith

Last year, the performance artist [Marina Abramović](#) debuted her live action opera, *7 Deaths of Maria Callas*, a tribute to the artist’s obsession with the Greek soprano, an obsession which continues at Lisson Gallery this September with two exhibitions by Abramović exploring her Callas fascination. Her “immersive cinematic experience” *Seven Deaths* will be supplemented by a series of seven, dramatic carved alabaster self-portraits. Three of these—*The Snake*, *The Breath*, and *The Mirror* (2020/2021)—are included in Tefaf Online. Shown here is *The Snake* in which Abramović poses as Desdemona being strangled by a snake.

Faye Toogood, Roly-Poly Chair/Moon (2016), Friedman Benda Gallery, \$45,000

Faye Toogood, Roly-Poly Chair/Moon (2016)

Faye Toogood, Roly-Poly Chair/Moon (2016) Courtesy of Friedman Benda Gallery

The British designer Faye Toogood has an apt surname—she is a true polymath with ample talent in sculpture, architecture, fashion and furniture design. This is one of her signature designs, the Roly-Poly Chair, which is part of Toogood’s *Assemblage 5*, inspired by a visit to Henri Matisse’s Chapelle du Rosaire de Vence. In this example, which is in an edition of eight, the sandcast bronze piece is covered in silver nitrate. Examples of Roly-Poly chairs in other finishes are held in the collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Denver Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Victoria Melbourne and the Philadelphia Museum of Art, among others.

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