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Antenna: 7 hot trends for 2016

The decline of the art fair, growing interest in women artists and the emergence of treasures from the sea — Meredith Etherington-Smith looks into her crystal ball for the year ahead

1. Fair enough?

I think an important trend this year will be the gradual subsidence of the art fair and its satellite events. Miami? Quiet. Frieze? Samey, although Frieze Masters was much better in 2015. Largely an excuse for sponsors to splash out on parties for the same, small group of collectors, the art fair is in danger of being reduced to just another Warhol or Hirst in a temporary, white exhibition stand. Of course, the art world is much more interesting and varied than that. Art in shopping malls (<http://hk.k11.com/en/Home.aspx>), perhaps? It's already happening in Hong Kong and China (<http://theartnewspaper.com/news/chinese-billionaire-to-build-17-shopping-centres-and-fill-them-with-art-/>) so it's surely only a matter of time before we get to see art in more interesting environments in the US, Europe and beyond.

2. More women



Elaine de Kooning, *Bullfight*, 1959. Oil on canvas. 77 5/8 x 131-1/4 in. Denver Art Museum: Vance H. Kirkland Acquisition Fund. Courtesy Mark Borghi Fine Art, New York, NY. © Elaine de Kooning Trust

A big trend for this year will be a renewed interest in a wide variety of women painters of the 20th century. For some time, any such list would have included [Louise Bourgeois](http://artist.christies.com/Louise-Bourgeois--13194.aspx) (<http://artist.christies.com/Louise-Bourgeois--13194.aspx>), [Frida Kahlo](http://artist.christies.com/Frida-Kahlo--29392.aspx) (<http://artist.christies.com/Frida-Kahlo--29392.aspx>), [Cindy Sherman](http://artist.christies.com/Cindy-Sherman--44298.aspx) (<http://artist.christies.com/Cindy-Sherman--44298.aspx>), [Barbara Hepworth](http://artist.christies.com/Barbara-Hepworth--26705.aspx) (<http://artist.christies.com/Barbara-Hepworth--26705.aspx>) and [Yayoi Kusama](http://artist.christies.com/Barbara-Hepworth--26705.aspx) (<http://artist.christies.com/Barbara-Hepworth--26705.aspx>) — the Japanese artist I always think of as the polka-dot princess — but not many others.



Chantal Joffe, *Anne in her Study*, 2015. Oil on board. 40.8 x 30.5cm. Courtesy Victoria Miro

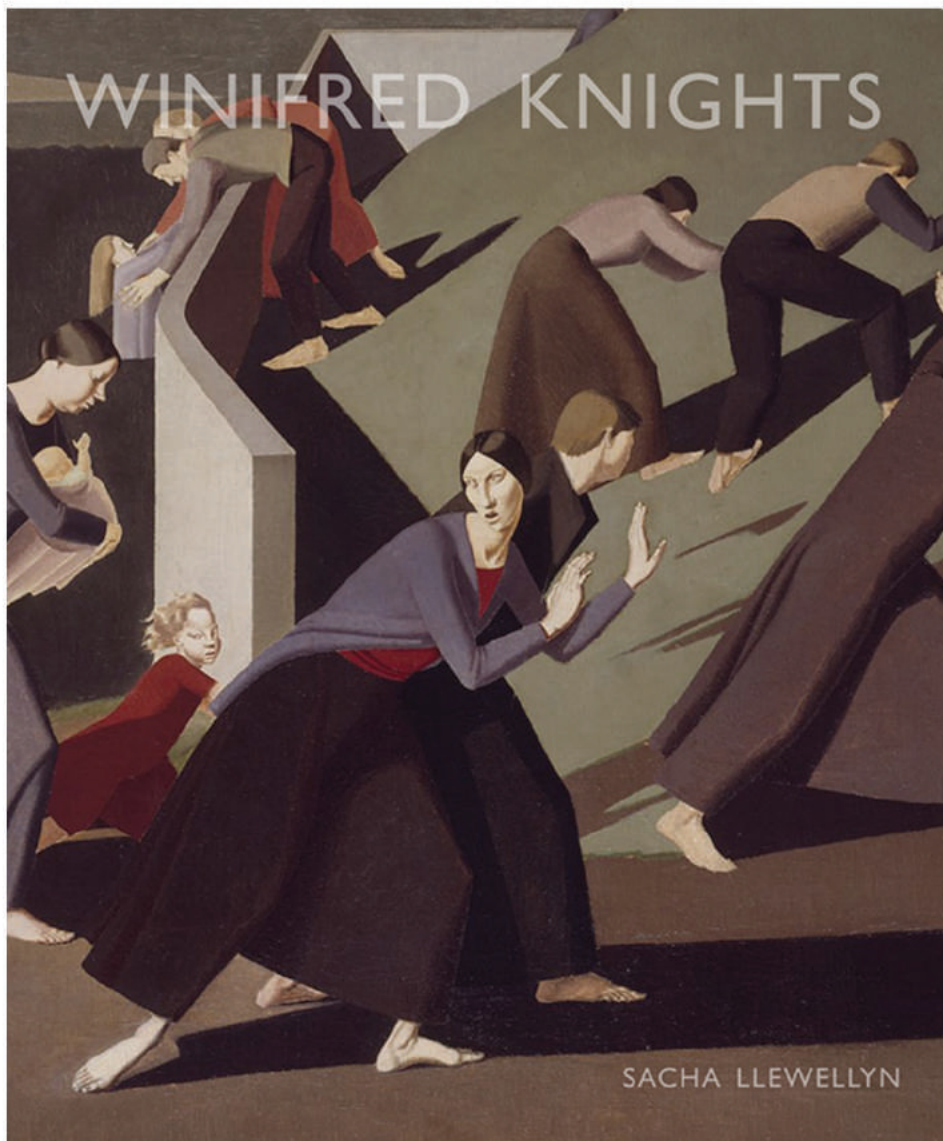


Chantal Joffe, *Brunette in Stripes*, 2015. Oil on board. 30.5 x 40.7 cm. Courtesy Victoria Miro

The good news is that the list is now set to expand. From 1 April, London's Saatchi Gallery is shaking things up, celebrating its 30th anniversary with an exhibition of work by 14 female artists, including Alice Anderson and Soheila Sokhanvari — whose *Moje Sabz*, a taxidermy horse straddling a 'jesmonite blob', is pictured at the top of this page.

Elsewhere, Victoria Miro is presenting works by Chantal Joffe (<http://www.victoria-miro.com/exhibitions/487/>), from 22 January to 24 March while, in America, female Abstract Expressionists including Elaine de Kooning, Lee Krasner, Joan Mitchell and Helen Frankenthaler are the stars of *Women of Abstract Expressionism* (<http://denverartmuseum.org/exhibitions/women-abstract-expressionism>), a major show of more than 50 works at the Denver Art Museum that opens in June. From July, Georgia O'Keeffe and her sinister flowers (<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/georgia-okeeffe>) will bloom at Britain's Tate Modern.

3. The British are coming



Winifred Knights (<http://www.lundhumphries.com/collections/category-modern-british-art/products/75469>) by Sacha Llewellyn (Lund Humphries, May 2016)

Modern British Art is enjoying a deserved renaissance, with artists who have languished for years once more attracting collectors. Chief among said forgotten artists is a female painter — two trends for the price of one. Winifred Knights is being shown at the Dulwich Picture Gallery (<http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/2016/june/winifred-knights/>) in June, and there's a handsome book by Sacha Lewellyn (<http://www.lundhumphries.com/collections/category-modern-british-art/products/75469>) (published by Lund Humphries) that accompanies this first major retrospective of her work. Personally I think this is just the start, and the life and works of English neo-romantic artists are going to attract much more attention.

4. The rise of non-Western art

We need to encourage new, entry-level collectors to dip their toes into different pools — which is why you ought to visit the Brisbane Asia Pacific Triennial (<https://www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/about/our-story/apt>), on until 10 April at the Queensland Art Gallery. You won't find a huffy, diva-like curator constructing messages to the art world out of bark paintings, but you will encounter wonderful and hugely varied discoveries from around the Pacific Rim. Nine years ago this was where, for instance, I first saw the work of Ai Weiwei (<http://artist.christies.com/Weiwei-Ai-58276.aspx>) in the form of an installation; no one had heard of him before.

Nigerian art is very much on the radar at the moment — just look at Lagos-based artists Peju Alatise (<http://www.pejualatise.com>), who works in cloth, or Yusuf Grillo. Galleries such as London's Jack Bell (<http://www.jackbellgallery.com/>) and October Gallery (<http://www.octobergallery.co.uk/>) have taken note, and the success of shows such as Touria El Glaoui's 1:54 Contemporary African Art Fair (<http://1-54.com/new-york/>) (returning to New York in May, and to London in October), is bringing hot new painter to international attention all the time.

5. Treasures from the sea



Greek (Corinthian) helmet. 7th-6th century B.C.
Bronze. Height: 22.5 cm © Museo archeologico
regionale di Camarina



A diver brings a Greek helmet to the surface ©
Giovanni Di Stefano, Museo archeologico regionale
di Camarin

Now, here's a coincidence — two major exhibitions this year concern themselves with Sicily, not as a mafia redoubt but as a vital crossroads of the ancient world, visited by the Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs and Normans. But the island off Italy is not the only trend here. Diving archaeology is a fairly new discipline and it seems to be paying dividends. First, divers found a lost Egyptian city named Heracleion (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g_nr2OdM0YI), and now eyes are turned on what lies beneath the waters of Sicily.

The first exhibition is at the British Museum, and will mark the official opening of the post-Neil MacGregor era (although apparently he had a lot to do with it). The show doesn't have a title yet but is being co-curated by Sicily specialists Peter Higgs and Dirk Booms. The Ashmolean, under the leadership of its energetic young director Alexander Sturgis, is ahead of the game, putting on *Storms, War and Shipwrecks — Treasures from the Sicilian Seas* (<http://www.ashmolean.org/exhibitions/details/?exh=129>) from 25 June. It will show more than 200 spectacular and unusual objects rescued from the bottom of the sea.

6. The return of flat-pack architecture

Flat-packing is not a modern phenomenon designed to send grown adults into a frenzy of fury. Emperor Justinian (circa 482-565) sent Byzantine 'flat-pack' churches around the Mediterranean to encourage the spread of Christianity, with large boats laden with prefabricated marble church interiors sailing to sites in Italy and North Africa. You will be able to see one such flat-pack cathedral — which spent well over a thousand years on the seabed — reconstructed at the Ashmolean Museum's exhibition (above).

Along similar lines, the mid-20th-century pop-up designs of Jean Prouvé are attracting renewed attention from contemporary designers. At Design Miami, [Galerie Patrick Seguin showed mobile military housing designed by Prouvé in 1939](#) (<http://www.patrickseguin.com/en/exhibitions/2015/design-miami-2/>) — the only surviving example of his “4 x 4 Demountable Military Shelter”. Richard Rogers, whose Y:Cube is aimed at providing affordable housing, is among those experimenting with Prouvé’s prototypes.

7. Museums getting (much) bigger

New wings are added like the flying buttresses of Gothic cathedrals at Tate Modern, which already has around 5 million visitors a year, and in New York, where the Met celebrates its modern and contemporary art holdings with its move into a [Marcel Breuer-designed building on Madison Avenue and 75th Street](#) (<http://www.metmuseum.org/visit/the-met-breuer>). Not an extension, per se, but handy, nonetheless.

Main image at top: Soheila Sokhanvari, *Moje Sabz*, 2011. Taxidermy, Fibreglass, Jesmonite blob, automobile paint. Courtesy Saatchi Gallery