

New Antique Show for Canada's Capital Welcomed by Ottawa Collectors and Dealers

November 2019 saw a more traditional show enter the scene: The National Capital Antique, Art and Design Fair. **BY SHAUN MARKEY**

When Ernest Johnson of Ernest Johnson Antiques envisioned a new antique show in Ottawa, his objective was to create an event that returned to more traditional roots and in so doing differentiated it in the marketplace. Johnson wanted to stage an antique show with *only* proven antique vendors. And that's what he produced. *The National Capital Antique, Art and Design Fair* was held the weekend of November 8th at the

Tudor Hall meeting facility in Ottawa's south end.

After the event, Johnson said: "I felt our industry needed to present itself in a way that showed it's best side, and by all reports the first annual National Capital Antique, Art and Design Fair and its participants successfully accomplished that. I'm pleased to say that plans are already under way for next year's event".

In organizing the Fair, one of Johnson's first moves was to enlist the support of the *Canadian Antique Dealers Association (CADA)*. Johnson is a long time member of the Association and acted as the CADA coordinator of the show. Several CADA members participated as vendors.

Johnson set high standards for the Fair. It was held at an upscale commercial meeting facility. Most importantly it was a "vetted" event, which meant that a team of experts inspected the booths before opening to ensure the offerings and descriptions were accurate. The vetting team included myself and well-known collectors and dealers including Alvin Cameron, Bill Dobson, Don Hewson, Ingo Hessel and William Reeve.

Twenty dealers from Ontario and Québec participated in the Fair. The offerings included formal, country, art (both academic and folk art) glass, silver, china, jewellery, mid-century modern, objet d'art, Inuit and indigenous items and probably the best collection of Peguenat clocks to ever grace an antique show. There were no reproductions, crafts or repurposed items allowed of any type.

The Fair kicked off with an opening night reception with refreshments, h'ors d'oeuvres and live chamber music from a trio of talented students from *Canterbury High School*. The opening was well attended and positive comments were made about the look and feel of the event. Attendance was modest on Saturday and Sunday yet dealers still recorded significant sales.

CADA President, Fred Rizner of Cherry Hill Antiques (Grafton, Ontario) who had a booth at the Fair, had high praise for Johnson's leadership. "Ernest Johnson's new fair in Ottawa was a visual masterpiece with an eclectic combination of quality and variety. From Elleke and Willem Claassen's wonderful collection of the finest in antique furniture to Robert Poirier's 20th century collection of vintage clothes and decorator items, the show had something for everyone."



Another feature of the Fair was a presentation about 19th century Ontario pottery and redware by Moe Johnson and two Discussion Groups: one about Chinese export porcelain led by Ron Whate, Vice President of the Canadian Ceramic Circle, and one about folk art wood carvings by collector Don Hewson. Whate and his colleague Judy Deegan, President of the Canadian Ceramic Circle, also conducted a well-attended porcelain "identification" booth during the run of the show.

All of the dealers worked long and hard to construct interesting and



8 French, nineteenth century Boulle bonheur du jour in the booth of J. Taylor Antiques. The desk boasted a brass and scarlet tortoise-shell inlaid top above two similarly inlaid doors and drawers over a velvet writing desk on cabriole supports with sabots. Circa 1870. Tagged at \$6,900. It sold. **9** The exquisite sculpture *Vent du Nord* by Jean-Julien Bourgault (1910-1996) priced at \$6,000 in the booth of Karine Belzile (Chic Shack Antiques). It sold to an Ottawa collector. **10** Jewellery pieces sold by Samantha Howard of Samantha Howard Vintage included this piece by Finnish designer Björn Weckström (b. 1935) for Lapponia Jewelry and tagged at \$1,195.

8

compelling booths. Elleke Claassen of Elleke Claassen Arts, Antiques and Interiors (Kingston, Ontario) set the tone for the entire show with her stunning booth of antique furniture and accessories. It was the first display collectors saw when they entered. Chief among her pieces was a beautiful 18th century Dutch cupboard. Completely original and crafted in stunning Cuban mahogany, the cupboard opened to reveal a desk inside. It was priced at \$24,500. Overall, Claassen was pleased with her sales, which included an 18th century French barometer which sold to the trade.

I've mentioned the collection of clocks in the booth of Tim Clark's Old Tymers Antique Clocks, Watches & Repairs (Kingston, Ontario). His booth was expertly staffed by Jolene Tycholiz, who was helpful and knowledgeable about all the beautiful clocks and watches in their display.

Wallack's Gallery (Ottawa, Ontario) had a booth with interesting art and sculpture pieces including a stunning oil on canvas by Joseph Plaskett (1918-2014), *Sunflowers and Bullrush* priced at \$18,000.

Michael Kamoff-Nicolosky of Times Past Antiques, also of Ottawa, had an attractive booth with showcases and shelves filled with smaller antiques, silver, lamps, sculpture and accessories. Among his highlights was the sale of a pre-1896 Russian icon tagged at \$1,600.

Julian Taylor of J. Taylor Antiques (Hamilton and Brantford, Ontario) sold several items including a French-made *Boulle* ladies' writing desk dating to 1870 and tagged at \$6,900. The desk was packed for the trip home, when a customer called and bought it. Taylor commented that the Fair "was the best show we've ever done."

Brian Davies, Brian Davies Antiques & Fine Art (Knowlton, Québec) wrote saying that he sold mainly smaller items including a Lalique vase, several pieces of Georgian silver, an A. J. Casson screen print and Persian tiles including a 17th century Damascus tile fragment. He is also in post-show negotiations to sell a ceinture flechée and a "tudric" clock for Liberty's by Archibald Knox. In his follow up email Davies wrote that "Ernest (Johnson), his team and CADA did a fantastic job as the show looked first class. I would do it again just to get that vibe from a well oiled event."

Barry Ezrin (Barry Ezrin Antiques and Appraisals, Moffat, Ontario) wrote that his highlights were the sale of "some modernism, namely a cool Danish couch and chair designed by Arne Vodder for Cado c. 1970."

Among his sales, Ed Haldorsen (Bytown Vintage, Ottawa, Ontario) put a sold sticker on an American Federal bird's eye maple and mahogany, two drawer stand with an original finish for \$1,600.

Samantha Howard (Samantha Howard Vintage) enjoyed a successful show. In an email, she said her favourite piece of jewellery was one by the renowned Canadian mid-century modernist jewellery designer, Walter

Schluep, which received much attention at the show and sold the next day. Howard also had a Scandinavian modernist jewellery collection at the show, "I sold a great and substantial piece by Finnish designer Bjorn Weckstrom for Lapponia," she said. It was tagged at \$1,195. Howard also sold a good piece of Kosta Boda, Swedish glass. Done for the Artist Collection by Bertil Vallien, it was a large 'Tornado' vase, tagged at \$325.

Adrian Tinline (Adrian Tinline Antiques of Bowmanville, Ontario) sold an interesting stretcher-based harvest table in over-paint to the trade, an elaborate wall shelf and folk art.

Ernest Johnson Antiques (Ottawa, Ontario) sold a \$4,000 Regency games table which Johnson said was the best example he'd ever owned.

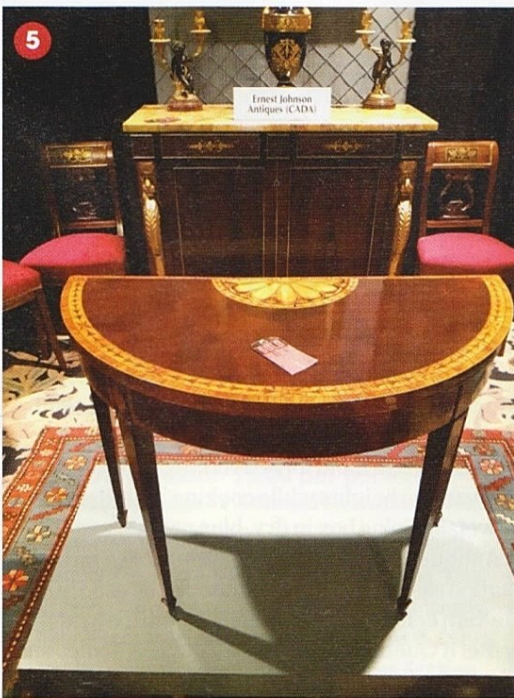
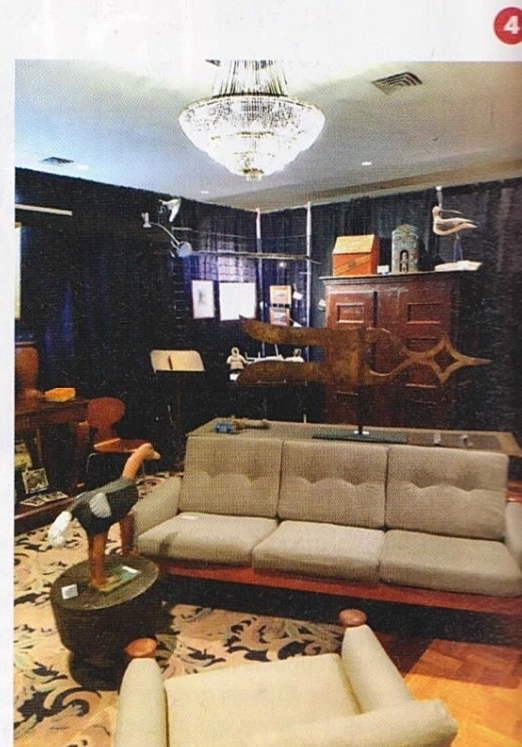
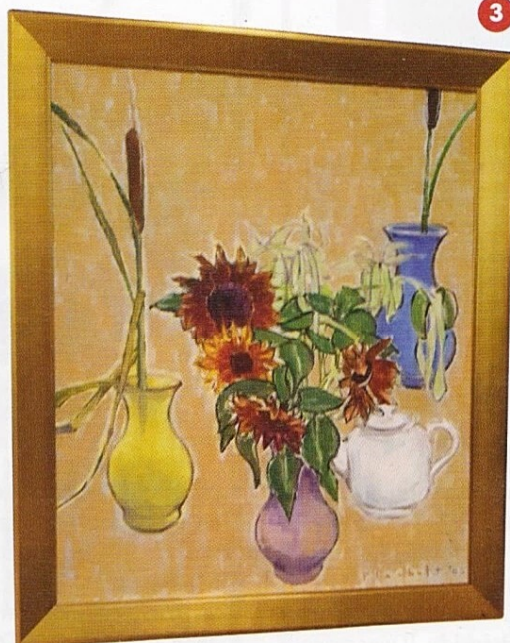
Peter Baker (Peter Baker Antiques of Knowlton, Québec) sold various small items. In addition, he placed a sold tag on a circa 1930 indigenous-made oar tagged at \$425. It was in original paint and decorated. He also sold an English wainscot armchair in oak with a panelled back and original dark surface, dating to the 1680-1720 period. It was tagged at \$2,500.

Karine Belzile (Chic Shack Antiques, St. Basile Le Grand, Québec) sold an impressive bronze sculpture by the artist/sculptor Jean Julien Bourgault (1910-1996) of the famous Bourgault family of woodcarvers from St. Jean Port Jolie, Québec. Jean Julien Bourgault's *Vent du Nord* sculpture in bronze was produced by the Fonderie d'Art d'Inverness, Inverness, Québec. It was exhibited at the Jean Paul Riopelle/Jean Julien Bourgault joint exhibition held in Montmagny, Québec in 1991. The piece was tagged at \$6,000 and sold to an Ottawa collector. Belzile sold a hand forged "crémaillère" used in early fireplaces to hold pots at various heights while cooking. She also recorded the sale of an early dovetailed pine box in dry, blue paint.

Steven Blevins (Blemora Antiques, Bracebridge, Ontario) sold a rare and delicate child's hand-loomed sash or ceinture flechée priced at \$3,500. Blevins also sold a small, late 19th century model toboggan with two riders, made by the *Naskapi* of Northern Québec, tagged at \$3,200. The bodies and faces of the riders were made of wood and their clothing made of tanned hide, as was the parfleche bag in the bow of the toboggan. Their snowshoes were of a woodland design and made of bent wood, hide and thread with tufts of dyed wool along the edges.

All participating dealers were quick to praise the new event and were optimistic that it would grow in stature over time.

So, the National Capital Antique, Art and Design Fair is now a reality. It was well organized, had excellent dealer participation, attracted several hundred collectors and customers who bought quality items in significant numbers. This was a solid beginning and a base upon which to build a new and significant antique event in Canada's Capital.



1 An 18th century Dutch cupboard in Cuban mahogany with oak secondary woods featuring an interior desk. Original condition. Elleke Claassen Arts, Antiques and Interiors – \$24,500. **2** Jolene Tycholiz of Tim Clark’s Old Tymers Antique Clocks & Watches stands amid a collection of Pequegnat clocks. **3** Oil on canvas, *Sunflowers and Bullrush* by Joseph Plaskett (1918-2014), Wallack Galleries – \$18,000. **4** View of the booth Barry Ezrin Antiques and Appraisals. In the foreground, the couch and chair designed by Arne Vodder (1926-2009) for Danish manufacturer Cado, circa 1970 that sold. **5** The Regency games table in the booth Ernest Johnson Antiques at \$4,000. The best example he’d ever owned! It sold. **6** Peter Baker of Peter Baker Antiques had a superb booth filled with country furniture and accessories. The circa 1930 indigenous made oar tagged at \$425 is in the back right corner. It sold. **7** Ed Haldorsen of Bytown Vintage recorded the sale of a beautifully made American Federal bird’s eye maple and mahogany two-drawer side table which he tagged at \$1,600.