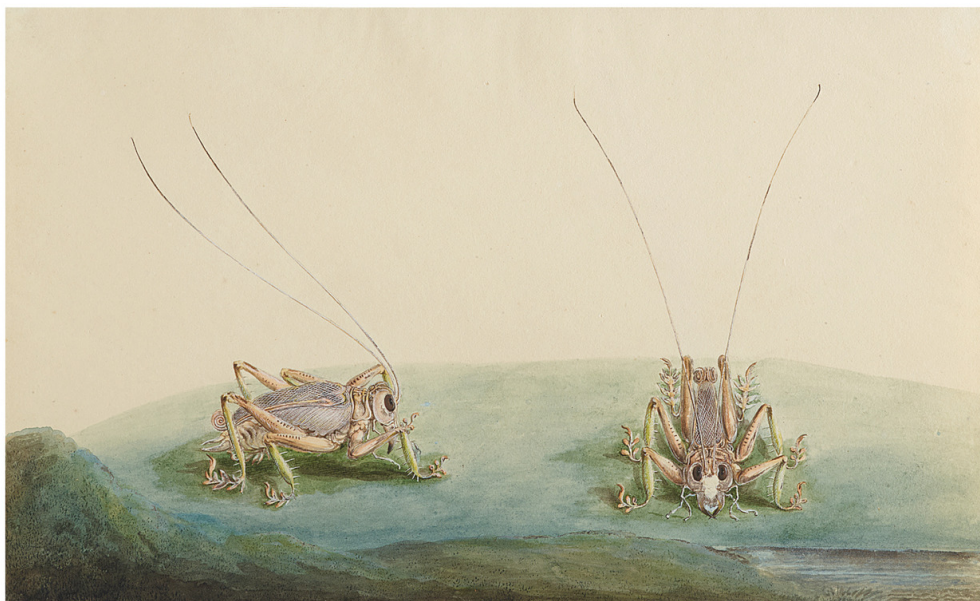


Around the Galleries

Asia Week New York

While other events are contracting, this New York mainstay remains a force to be reckoned with, writes *Samuel Reilly*



1. *Studies of a grasshopper*, 1801, Sita Ram (fl. 1810–20), pencil and watercolour, 19 x 30.5cm

Since the city's dealers in Asian art first joined forces in 2009, Asia Week New York (AWNY) has been distinguished by its emphasis on connoisseurship – and by the number of curators from museums across the United States, Europe and Asia it attracts. For Brendan Lynch – of the London-based dealership Forge and Lynch, and now overseeing his second edition as chairman of AWNY – a key part of his remit has been capitalising on this strength, developing AWNY into a kind of 'year-round cultural hub'. It publishes webinars, 'an active media programme in Chinese and English' and a weekly newsletter with 5,000 subscribers, appealing not only to 'curators actively building collections' but also to connoisseurs and non-specialist audiences.

Its core business, though, takes place each March – a moment when the city takes stock of the wider market for Asian art around the world, and of New York's position within it. This year (13–21 March), the roster is driving up towards pre-pandemic numbers – there

are 27 galleries, up from 24 last year, and six auction-houses, offering everything from ancient ritual objects to contemporary art.

Contemporary art, says Lynch, is the big growth market worldwide – especially among collectors under 40 – and the specialists at AWNY are particularly well-placed to present new talents from across the continent. A highlight at Ippodo Gallery is a work of 2023 by the innovative Japanese lacquer artist Terumasa Ikeda, its exterior shimmering with thousands of tiny ingrained numerals; Joan B. Mirviss, meanwhile, offers a glazed stoneware 'comma pattern' vessel by Morihiko Wada (c. 2004).

More traditional fare comes courtesy of Carole Davenport, who offers an arresting mask by Deme Yukan, a carver of the early Edo period, for the Noh play *Yamanba*. Francesca Galloway presents a fine depiction of a zebra, painted by a Mughal court artist in the 17th century using opaque pigments and gold on paper, while at Carlton Rochell Asian Art is a 16th-century Tibetan copper alloy icon

of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion. Lynch himself is especially excited by a work by Sita Ram, who accompanied his patron Lord Hastings, the governor-general of India from 1813–23, on a 17-month tour of the country from Calcutta to Punjab; most of the 200 watercolours he produced are now in the British Library. Forge & Lynch offer an earlier and distinctly charming study of two grasshoppers (1801; Fig. 1).

The Asian art market has had to confront various storms in recent years – the tariffs imposed on Chinese art by the last Trump administration may be repeated and perhaps accompanied by similar ones on India this time around – but this event appears in good shape to weather them. As Lynch suggests, 'Well-documented works of art from the great cultures of Asia will continue to be highly desirable amongst collectors and museums.' **A**

Asia Week New York takes places at various venues and online from 13–21 March (asiaweekny.com).