AROUND THE GALLERIES

Master Paintings Week and Master Drawings Week come together under the umbrella of London Art Week – and with the inclusion this year of sculpture, the summer season in London promises something for everyone. Imelda Barnard

3 Choupatte (très grand), 2008
Claude Lalanne (b. 1924)
Bronze and copper
127.7 x 129 x 92cm
© The artist
Photo: Ben Brown Fine Arts, London

4 Bassa IV, 1990
Eduardo Chillida
(1924–2002)
Corten steel, hit 1.28m
Ordovas, London

whose eclectic sculptures draw on classical antiquity, Surrealism and the baroque. Exhibiting their celebrated bronzes alongside recent commissions by Claude (François-Xavier died in 2008), their work’s fantastically nature is evident in Claude’s Choupatte (très grand) of 2008, an enlarged cabbage sat on a pair of skinny chicken legs (Fig. 3).

In conjunction with its 40th anniversary, Whitford Fine Art celebrates Belgian artist Joseph Lacasse (15 May–28 June), with a show that also announces Whitford’s representation of the artist’s estate. Lacasse died in 1975, and this is his first London exhibition since the early 1960s. Born in 1894, he experimented with abstraction while still a teenager in Belgium – indeed, his intuitive, sensitively painted works predate Kandinsky’s seminal 1912 manifesto, ‘On the Spiritual in Art’.

Forming a satisfying parallel with Sculpture Week is the exhibition ‘Chillida: From Iron to Light’ (5 June– 27 July) at Ordovas. London’s first edition dedicated to the artist in 20 years, it will feature steel and alabaster sculptures alongside works on paper and archival material. One of the four sculptures exhibited on the gallery’s ground floor is the forged steel work Bassa IV (1990; Fig. 4), which references Chillida’s interest in public sculpture, abstraction and the monumental.

June Calendar

Joseph Lacasse
Whitford Fine Art, London
15 May–28 June
www.whitfordfineart.com

Chillida: From Iron to Light
Ordovas, London
5 June–27 July
www.ordovas.com

Les Lalanne
Ben Brown Fine Arts, London
20 June–21 September
www.benbrownfinearts.com

Masterpiece
Royal Hospital Chelsea, London
27 June–3 July
www.masterpiecefair.com

Master Paintings Week
Various venues, London
28 June–5 July
www.londonartweek.co.uk

Master Drawings and Sculpture Week
Various venues, London
28 June–5 July
www.londonartweek.co.uk

panel, A smelting works in an open landscape. Edgar Degas is the focus at James Faber which exhibits an exceptional charcoal and graphite sketch. This early work, entitled Head of a Man (1856–58), is defined by its soft technique and intense register of emotion, prefiguring the artist’s later exploration of dancers in the 1870s (Fig. 1).

The inclusion of sculpture adds an additional and welcome dimension to this year’s fair. The sculpture of Ukrainian artist Archipenko is on display at Daniel Katz Gallery. Demonstrating an affinity with Egyptian art, Archipenko’s work was also swayed by the advent of Cubism; he lived in Paris between 1908 and 1920, where he experimented with abstraction, forging dynamic sculptural forms – seen in the elegant 1913 figure, Female Torso. Sam Fogg, meanwhile, presents a relief from a 19th-century walnut altarpiece. Known as the Swooning Virgin, this exquisitely carved piece is dated around 1450, and is believed to have formed part of the central Calvary scene of a monumental Brussels altarpiece.

With all eyes on London it’s no surprise that the city hosts a number of exciting exhibitions. Ben Brown Fine Arts opens a major retrospective on the work of the husband-and-wife partnership known as Les Lalanne (20 June–21 September),