

# The season's best SALES

As autumn arrives, leading regional auction houses are leaping into action, offering a sparkling array of high quality antiques and collectables to furnish our homes and feed our passions, says **Caroline Wheater**



**LEFT** A Garrard antique sapphire and natural pearl pendant, which converts into a bracelet and a brooch, sold for £52,000 at Lawrences last autumn.



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT** A silver gilt monteith, c1695 and estimated at £8,000-£12,000, is up for sale in Dreweatts' Fine Silver and the Art of Dining sale this September; a 19th-century female nude oil painting by William Etty sold for £4,940 at Cheffins' Fine Sale earlier this year; a late 18th-century mahogany and oak lined chest recently sold at Tennants Fine Sale for £19,320.



**A**fter the heat and holidays of summer, a breeze of expectation blows through the auction world as the busy autumn season gets underway. All around the country, leading regional auction houses will prepare catalogues, organise previews and answer questions that come from interested parties. Jane Tennant, director of family firm Tennants in Leyburn, Yorkshire, describes the buzz: 'Traditionally, autumn has always been a fantastic time for top tier auctions. Inevitably, people have been away or relaxing with their families over summer, but in September there's a "back to school", "back to business" feeling.'

Across the board, the most popular collecting fields will be well represented, from pictures, porcelain and objets d'art to furniture, rugs and jewellery. The emphasis is on quality and craftsmanship, with estimates beginning at £150 and going up

to £50,000-plus for the most sought-after pieces. James Nicholson, deputy chairman at Dreweatts, comments: 'Autumn is the most important season, with curated sales held between September and November. Many important pieces are saved by auctioneers and vendors specifically for autumn events.'

At Tennants and Lawrences (to name but two), 'Fine' sales are grouped together over consecutive days, so that buyers interested in home furnishing, decorating and collecting can bid across a variety of fields over a short timescale. Watch out for special talks too, programmed to complement sales. Joy McCall, Lyon & Turnbull's Lalique specialist, has the last word on why autumn is such a special time: 'With Christmas approaching, there's an eagerness to find the perfect gift. As the days get shorter and colder, there's also all the more reason to think about what you're surrounding yourself with at home.' If this is how you're feeling, look no further...

## Lawrences, Somerset

*Olympia Auctions, Jewellery & Watches, 14th October*  
Spanning the 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries, this renowned sale attracts sellers to consign top quality antique jewellery and watches, with estimates ranging from £200-£20,000-plus for very special things. Amongst the 150 lots up for sale will be a collection of Art Deco brooches, prized as much for their wearable, chic designs as for their historical significance, since this year is the 100th anniversary of the Art Deco period's beginnings in 1925 at the Paris Exposition. Jewellery specialist Miranda Bingham reflects: 'The current market for exceptionally designed, quality period jewellery is buoyant, while diamonds remain the most sought-after stones.' There's also a growing interest in vintage watches, particularly those by Cartier, the French jewellery maison that is currently the subject of a blockbuster exhibition at the V&A. [lawrences.co.uk](http://lawrences.co.uk)

## Dreweatts

*Fine Silver and the Art of Dining, 23rd September*  
Dreweatts holds five dedicated silver sales each year, two of which are highly curated and staged in autumn and spring. The upcoming 400-lot event celebrates over 450 years of the silversmith's art, with an accent on using antique silver at the dining table. Says deputy chairman and silver specialist, James Nicholson, 'The sale includes early pieces from the 16th and 17th centuries for the academic connoisseur, plus exuberant 19th- and 20th-century British, French and Continental table centrepieces for lavish dining settings.' Items have been consigned from British country houses and private collections, with estimates from £300-£20,000; big name makers featured include Paul Storr and David Willaume II. As part of the sale, Dreweatts will demonstrate how to blend period silver with luxe porcelain dining services by the likes of Meissen and Herend. [dreweatts.com](http://dreweatts.com)

Auction prices quoted include Buyer's Premium and VAT. Photographs courtesy of Cheffins; Dreweatts; Swindlers; Canterbury Auction Galleries; Lawrences; Bellmans; Lyon & Turnbull; Woolley & Wallis; Tennants

## Cheffins

*The Fine Sale, 17th & 18th September*  
Over 600 lots will jostle for attention at Cheffins' quarterly sale: ceramics, furniture, paintings and collectables, spanning the ancient world through to the 19th century. Says director, Brett Tryner, 'We'll be offering a number of things from private collections across the country, many of which are fresh-to-market.' Like catnip to savvy buyers, this category includes an array of porcelain from a Norfolk country house, among them pieces by Sèvres, Meissen and Chamberlain Worcester. Also in the cache is an important Russian figure made at Moscow's Gardner Porcelain Factory, founded in 1766. There'll be a tantalising fragment of the English Civil War, too; a newly discovered portrait of original nepo baby, Richard Cromwell, son of Oliver Cromwell, who served unsuccessfully as Lord Protector of the English Commonwealth before the monarchy was restored. [fineart.cheffins.co.uk](http://fineart.cheffins.co.uk)

## Tennants, Yorkshire

*The Autumn Fine Week, 14th & 15th November*  
Antiques lovers and collectors book their holidays in the Yorkshire Dales to coincide with Tennants' Autumn Fine Week. Presenting four auctions in two days, this is a fantastic opportunity for private buyers to bid for things across markets, including art, period jewellery, traditional furniture, rugs, ceramics and clocks from Britain, Europe and Asia. Many of the lots come from private collections across the country. 'We'll have over 1,000 lots of art and antiques up for sale, so there really will be something to suit everyone, from specialist collectors to buyers seeking useful pieces to furnish their homes with,' says Tennants' auctioneer and director, Jane Tennant, third generation of the family firm. A programme of specialist talks on antiques and art adds an educational note to proceedings. [tennants.co.uk](http://tennants.co.uk) ►





**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT** A late 19th-century miniature Japanese Satsuma miniature jar, estimate of £1,500-£2,500, and a 200-year-old articulated Japanese *jizai okimono* model of a snake, estimate of £3,000-£5,000, both at Woolley & Wallis' Japanese Art auction; a Bridget Riley gougache, entitled *Short Sequence, Study for Painting*, sold for £45,500 at The Canterbury Auction Galleries in 2024; portraits of Sir James Fortescue Flannery and Lady Flannery by Henry Jamyn Brooks, est £10,000-£15,000 for the pair, at Bellmans.

**Woolley & Wallis, Wiltshire**  
*Japanese Art, 12th November*  
 'As the Chinese art market starts showing signs of stagnation, Japanese art is enjoying a vibrant renaissance,' says Alexandra Aguilar, Woolley & Wallis' Asian art specialist and an expert on the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*. Alexandra expects to offer up to 400 lots in this sale, dating from the 5th to the early 20th centuries, with estimates of £150-£15,000. The majority of items, however, will date from the Meiji era (1868-1912), when most Japanese art was exported to the UK. Expect to see pieces that showcase Japanese craftsmanship, such as prized Satsuma ware by artist Yabu Meizan. Another increasingly popular field that will be well represented is *jizai okimono*: fully articulated models of animals, such as snakes, crabs and insects, crafted from intricate metal pieces; creations by the Myochin family of armourers are particularly sought after. [woolleyandwallis.co.uk](http://woolleyandwallis.co.uk)

**The Canterbury Auction Galleries, Kent**  
*Fine Art & Antique Auction, 3rd & 4th October*  
 A veritable cornucopia of art and antiques tempts bidders into the auction house's atmospheric Canterbury saleroom, which dates to 1911. Directors David Parker and Cliona Kilroy hold six major sales every year, and regularly achieve London prices for high-end items while managing to keep plenty of quirky, affordable offerings that characterise mid-size auction houses. This October, around 1,000 lots will be up for grabs, with estimates from £150-£50,000. One highlight is a collection of carved antique breadboards consigned from a specialist museum. Elsewhere, bid for Chinese antiquities, Cartier and Rolex watches, and mid-century ceramics and furniture. 'Contemporary art is one of CAG's specialities; previous sales have included works by Ivon Hitchens and Bridget Riley,' adds Cliona. [thecanterburyauctiongalleries.com](http://thecanterburyauctiongalleries.com)

**Bellmans**  
*Old Master, British and European Art, 15th October*  
 Whether you're already an art buff or are thinking about starting a collection, the twice-yearly, traditional art sale at Bellmans is a great place to go. Run by specialist Michael Grist (ex-Sotheby's), it offers around 250 lots – portraits, landscapes and domestic scenes, estimated from £200-£20,000. Says Michael: 'This sale is a richly varied selection of works from the 17th to the early 20th century, with an emphasis on quality and draughtsmanship. The subject matter gives a fascinating window onto days gone by.' From the 19th century, expect to see a pair of portraits by British artist Henry Jamyn Brooks, a notable portrait painter of the time; plus another by US artist Eastman Johnson, considered 'the American Rembrandt', who co-founded the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Antique watercolours are currently very affordable, making them a good entry-level buy. [bellmans.co.uk](http://bellmans.co.uk)



**FROM LEFT** This 20th-century opalescent Perruches bowl is from Lyon & Turnbull's Lalique sale in October, estimate £2,000-£3,000; thirteen carved bird sculptures by Guy Taplin, including three swans and five curlews, will be up for grabs at Sworders' 400-lot 'Ken Bolan – Nature Follows Form' sale in September.

**Lyon & Turnbull, Edinburgh**  
*Lalique, 30th October*  
 Lyon & Turnbull is the only auction house worldwide to hold standalone, biannual sales of René Lalique glass. They are run by specialist Joy McCall, who brings more than 30 years' experience in the auction world, and a knowledge of the history and collections of Lalique that's second to none. She says of the field: 'The long-established nature of the market gives buyers confidence that they're not buying something fashionable today and unsaleable tomorrow. A key factor lies in the quality of the glass, and Lalique has always been made to the highest standards.' Interested buyers can bid on glass boxes, scent bottles, vases, jewellery, tablewares and more, in a truly dazzling array of designs and colours, with estimates from £300 to £20,000-plus. Ahead of the auction, all lots will be on view at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, London SW1. [lyonandturnbull.com](http://lyonandturnbull.com)

**Sworders, Essex**  
*Ken Bolan – Nature Follows Form, 24th September*  
 Back in the 1990s, Talisman, an antiques hub sited in an old Dorset brewery, was dealer Ken Bolan's pride and joy: the place where he traded sculpture, garden statuary and Continental antique furniture sourced from places like France and Scandinavia. His next outlet was in London, but with Brexit, then the pandemic, he found the dealing world changed. 'My joy was interacting with clients and their homes, but this is no longer the case, with internet-based sales dominating.' Instead, Ken's focus has shifted to regenerating 140 acres of woodland and meadow, so he's selling remaining stock and some personal favourites at Sworders. The 400-lot sale leads with an Elisabeth Frink mosaic, *The Monkey and the Dolphin*, est £300,000-£500,000. Also watch out for a flock of Guy Taplin carved wooden birds and some dreamy Scandi pieces, with estimates from £200. [sworders.co.uk](http://sworders.co.uk)



## AUCTION KNOWHOW

### PREPARE TO BID

Before you bid on an auction lot, you'll need to join an online bidding platform such as [the-saleroom.com](http://the-saleroom.com), or register to bid with an individual auction house, providing personal details and payment method in advance.

### ENJOY THE PREVIEW

Auction previews take place a few days before a sale, when you can visit the auction house in person to see things and talk to specialists. This is not always practical, however, and many auction houses offer virtual viewings or page-turning online catalogues.

### UNDERSTAND HAMMER PRICE AND ADDITIONAL CHARGES

The price you pay when the auctioneer's hammer comes down is called the 'hammer price', which represents a legal transaction between seller and buyer. Bear in mind that each lot is also subject to a Buyer's Premium charge, plus VAT. A typical Buyer's Premium including VAT (payable on most things except books and maps) is between 25% and 30% of the hammer price. In the case of paintings, engravings, sculptures or ceramics by a living artist, or one who has died in the last 70 years, if they sell for £1,000 or over, you'll also be charged a royalty of 4% of the hammer price as part of the Artist's Resale Right (ARR) scheme. A single ARR royalty is capped at £12,500.

### BRING YOUR BUY HOME

Most auction houses allow you to pick up items in person. Alternatively, they will send them out by post or delivery for larger pieces, which you will be charged extra for.