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## Amy Scanlon, head of Modern and Contemporary art at Swords of Stansted Mountfitchet, discusses her affection for Bawden prints

**What do you like most about Bawden prints?**  
Edward Bawden is one of my favourite artists and with Swords' proximity to where he lived and worked, I have been very lucky to see some wonderful pictures by him over the years.  
While I have handled some stand-out original works, it is actually his prints I like the most.  
I enjoy his use of line and design – especially his glossy linocuts with their bold marks and use of colour. There is a quirkiness to his style and a playfulness to his subjects; his people and animals often bear comical expressions. Bawden prints are a bit of fun!

**How prolific was he as printmaker?**  
He was a dedicated printmaker honing his craft for over 60 years which resulted in a prolific output.  
There are over 200 designs in various mediums. He was a talented lithographer and also made etchings and engravings, but it is for his linocuts that he is best known.  
Many of his prints are from relatively small editions of just 75, but recent works we have sold have varied from edition sizes of 25 to 500 prints.  
Swords' link to the Great Bardfield artists mean we probably see more than most, but his prints are regularly on the market throughout the country.

**Which subjects are most sought after? Do you have a personal favourite?**  
The most sought after, and also the work I would love to own, is the impressive *Brighton Pier*. Unfortunately for me, this has regularly made £15,000 at auction.  
At 4ft 9in (1.45m) wide, the sheer scale makes it



Above: Amy Scanlon of Swords together with an array of works by Edward Bawden.

very striking but it is also the unusual composition of the pier framed by the rooftops of the pavilion and a Regency house that adds to the attraction.  
Another large work, *Liverpool Street Station*, is the second most popular subject and in recent years *The Road to Thaxted* has also gained traction. We sold one at Swords for £8000 in April 2022.  
Another personal favourite is the 1974 linocut *Tyger! Tyger!*. This monochromatic pattern is very impressive as the beast appears to come to life in the work as he stalks along the narrow format of the print.

**Is date important in the market?**  
Bawden was producing prints from the 1920s, but it is the 1950s and early 1960s examples which tend to be the most successful artistically and often achieve the highest prices at auction.

**Would you say Bawden prints are quite expensive relative to his original works like his watercolours?**  
Yes, I would say that compared to many artists, his prints are comparatively expensive in relation to his paintings. He was a very talented printmaker, and his

prints can be more dynamic and striking than some of his original works. Although multiples, they are sought after by collectors and deserve the commercial interest they receive.  
That said, Bawden watercolours are gaining in value. We recently sold the watercolour, gouache, ink and pen *A Snowy Day, High Street, Great Bardfield* for £19,000.  
It was signed and dated 1955 and part of the Bawden exhibition held at The Minorities, Colchester in 1973.

**Who are the buyers in this market?**  
Many of our buyers are fans of the artist looking to increase their collections, but we also get clients new to Bawden who are purchasing the work because the subject matter has meaning to them.  
This has been the case with images of recognisable London landmarks, such as St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and Covent Garden markets and also a print that we regularly see in the saleroom – *Audley End* – a favourite of our local Essex buyers.



**Left: Floral Hall, Covent Garden** is one of Bawden's best-known prints. Issued mid-career in 1965, this copy from the signed edition of 75 sold within estimate for £1400 at Ewbank's in Woking on January 26.  
The artist's *Six London Markets* series made two years later were prepared as linocuts but later transferred to plates by Curwen Prints and printed as offset lithographs instead.  
This signed copy of the *Covent Garden Fruit Market* lithograph, **right**, also from an edition of 75, was offered as part of Swords' April 25 sale where it took £2400.

