

TOP of the LOTS

From a glass Roman drinking horn to a collection of Mouseman furniture, there is much to enchant collectors this winter

A trio of pieces of English sporting history from the 1966 World Cup goes under the hammer at the north Yorkshire auction house **Tennants** on December 9.

A FIFA World Cup winner's medal, won by Lancashire-born midfielder Alan Ball, who at 21 was the youngest member of the winning squad, has an estimate of £80,000-£120,000, while his No.7 shirt has an estimate of £30,000-£50,000. His World Cup cap also goes under the hammer with pre-sale expectations of £15,000-£25,000. Ball sold his medal and cap at auction in 2005, when they were bought by the owner of Bolton Wanderers, businessman and philanthropist Edwin 'Eddie' Davies (1946-2018).

Below The World Cup winners' medal has an estimate of £80,000-£120,000



Left Ball's No.7 shirt is expected to make in the region of £30,000-£50,000

Below The cap was bought by Bolton Wanderers' owner Eddie Davies in 2005

Three flagons of rum from the last ever batch issued to Royal Navy sailors by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) each has an estimate of £1,500-£2,500 at Maidenhead auctioneer **Dreweatts'** sale on December 8.

The tradition of giving sailors a daily rum tot started with the Royal Navy's West Indies Squadron in Jamaica in 1655 and ended in 1970 – the date the flagons' current owner purchased them directly from the MOD.

Dreweatts' head of wine and spirits, Mark Robertson, said: "For five centuries British sailors gathered together from 11am-12pm for 'Up Spirits', the serving of their allocated tot of rum made up of an eighth of a pint of more than 50 per cent ABV. While regular sailors' rum was mixed with lime juice and hot water, officers were permitted to drink theirs neat."



Above The flagons were the last to issue the traditional rum tot

A drawing by John Constable (1776-1837) appearing on the market for the first time in 40 years has an estimate of £8,000-£12,000 at **Halls** of Shrewsbury's sale on December 7.



Inherited from a collector who bought it at London dealers Agnew's in 1979, the drawing is of a tree on the banks of the River Stour in Constable's birthplace of East Bergholt. Dated April 20, 1821, it was sketched on the same day the artist wrote a letter to his wife, Maria, in which he records calling on a neighbour in the village, praising the hot cross buns as "quite acceptable".

Halls' fine art director, Gerry Berwyn Jones, said: "The letter is a charming insight into this man's character, who comes across as warm, humane and engaging."

Above Halls' art expert Alexander Clement with the Constable sketch

A red chalk on paper study of an embracing couple by British artist George Frederic Watts RA (1817-1904) has an estimate of £500-£800 at Surrey-based auction house **Ewbank's** sale on December 9.

Portraitist, sculptor and landscapist Watts was widely considered to be the greatest painter of the Victorian era, earning him the title of "England's Michelangelo".

With his wife, Mary, a talented garden statuary designer, the couple founded the Watts Gallery and Artist Village in Compton near Guildford.

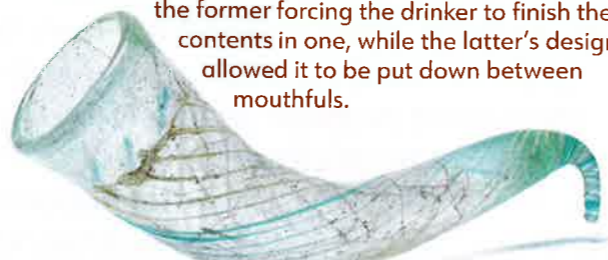


Right *Les Amants* is expected to fetch £500-£800

A Roman glass drinking horn, known as a rhyton, has an estimate of £25,000-£35,000 at **Bonhams'** antiques sale on December 8.

Dated to the late 3rd-mid to 4th-century AD, the delicate green glass vessel was part of a collection assembled over 30 years by the Dutch glass enthusiast and expert Nico Bijnsdorp.

Rhytons were made with either an open or closed tip, the former forcing the drinker to finish the contents in one, while the latter's design allowed it to be put down between mouthfuls.



Above The 1,700-year-old glass drinking horn is expected to make £25,000-£35,000

A collection of 40 pieces of furniture by Robert 'Mouseman' Thompson, and an eclectic mix of 19th and 20th-century furnishings make up part of a downsizing sale in January from life-long Yorkshire collector – and "Mouseman obsessive" – David Lamb.

The auction at **Sworders**, Stansted Mountfitchet in Essex on January 17-18 is one of a series of sales of the collection taking place in 2023.

Lamb used a works bonus to buy his first serious piece of art in 1984 – a Bridget Riley gouache from the gallery Karsten Schubert London.

He said: "My dad exploded when he found out what I had done. But that picture has been a source of pleasure for almost 40 years and is probably the best financial investment I have ever made."

Mouseman also became another of Lamb's obsessions as his collection grew. He said: "I love craftsmanship. And indestructibility. And the power of a brand. The Mouseman story is charming and the furniture beautifully made. It fits within just about any decor, withstands daily use and steps up to the most special occasions. People love to sit around it and spot his trademark mouse. But I am overrun with mice now."

Post-war silver

Mouseman's light oak furniture provided an ample foil for Lamb's collection of post-war silver from some of the leading British makers and Australian-born silver and goldsmith Stuart Devlin, whose death in 2018 has seen a number of pieces appear on the secondary market. One of his silver-gilt bowls with a 'pebbled' body, marked for London, 1969, has an estimate of £250-£350.

Art pottery also features in the sale, including a yellow-glazed dog bowl made as a one-off for Liberty & Co. by CH. Brannam of Devon. It has a guide price of £250-£350.

While selling pieces to downsize, Lamb will continue to collect. He said: "This won't be the end of my collecting. My new house has just enough space and the occasional blank wall to allow me to explore what's next."

The David Lamb collection is part of Sworders' two-day design sale on January 17-18, for more details go to www.sworders.co.uk



1 A pair of Mouseman oak dining chairs has an estimate of £800-£1,200 at Sworders' sale **2** A Mouseman oak blanket box has an estimate of £600-£800 at the sale on January 17-18. **3** A Mouseman oak cow stool is expected to make £300-£500 in January **4** A Mouseman wardrobe has an estimate of £4,000-£6,000 **5** A silver-gilt bowl, by Stuart Devlin, London 1969, decorated with a 'pebbled' body, on a low foot, 10cm diameter, 5cm high, has a pre-sale estimate of £250-£350 **6** A Longines gilt and rosewood bedside clock, 1970s, with a calendar aperture, raised on three lug feet, 5.8cm wide 6.5cm high, is expected to make £100-£150 **7** A set of 10 Mouseman oak dining chairs has an estimate of £2,500-£3,500 at the January sale