



INTERNATIONAL



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Ken Bolan's Personal Collection—

Sworders To Auction September 24



The work of Guy Taplin (b 1939) has long been a favorite, and a veritable menagerie of the sculptor's carved and painted birds is included in the sale. Sworders photo.

SHAFTSBURY, DORSET, UK — Art and antiques from the personal collection of Ken Bolan come for sale at Sworders in the autumn. The September 24 sale, titled Ken Bolan: Nature Follows Form, features 400 lots from the legendary dealer.

Bolan has bought and sold antiques and design objects for more than 50 years. He recalls as a boy pressing his nose against the window of his local antiques shop to marvel at its contents inside. When, having left school at 15, he followed a love affair from London to Bern, he opened his first shop in Switzerland in 1973. Soon he would have four stores and a thriving import business selling English antiques into Europe.

An international outlook became key to Bolan's style and stock in the 1980s and 90s, when, trading from a 10,000 square foot brewery in Dorset, the "Talisman" brand was born. Sculpture, garden statuary and Continental furniture became its signature look. Looking back, he describes it thus:

"Traveling always influenced my buying, because it was such

an experience back then. You didn't have the internet or mobile phones. The only way you could discover and learn was to just get out there. France was a great source for many years. Sweden was a fabulous discovery in the mid 80s. And I was quite brave. I was also going to places like India and China with absolutely no knowledge of what I was going to find."

Bolan was part of that pioneering generation of dealers from the 70s and 80s who primarily bought on instinct rather than with a reference book.

Over the years, his "eye" has refocused to follow opportunities and trends in the market. From the English country house look to the fashion for painted furniture and latterly the rise of vintage and post-war material, he has "always been aware of a change in the air."

Many items in the September 24 sale come with anecdotes relating to more than 50 years of dealing. "One piece that Bolan describes as 'dear to [his] heart' is an Eighteenth Century polychrome painted Danish cupboard dated 1772. It last came



A remarkable mosaic panel by sculptor Dame Elisabeth Frink (1930-1993) once adorned the swimming pool of Woolland House. Sworders photo.

up for auction in the late 80s or early 90s in Copenhagen when Bolan had just built an extension to the family home. 'It was going to dominate the room so the whole family looked at it and we all decided that, yes, we liked it.'

Following a bidding battle, it cost a mighty £20,000 plus premium but was soon on a truck to the West Country where it has been for close to 40 years. "Sadly, it won't fit in my current house — that's why it's now for sale," said Bolan. It carries an estimate of £4/6,000.

The work of Guy Taplin (b 1939) has long been a favorite and a veritable menagerie of the sculptor's carved and painted birds is included in the sale. Numbering 13 pieces, including three of the artist's trademark swans and five curlews, this represents the largest group of

sculptures by the artist offered at auction for some time. They are expected to sell for sums between £600 and £4,000 each.

A remarkable mosaic panel by sculptor Dame Elisabeth Frink (1930-1993) once adorned the swimming pool of Woolland House, her Dorset country estate. Ken first met "Lis" when she visited his shop in Bath in 1986. "At that time, I had just begun buying Swedish painted furniture, which she absolutely adored. Over the next few months, after discovering my old brewery in Gillingham, she bought numerous painted items from me, and we developed a close friendship."

Following Frink's death in 1993, Ken assisted her son, Lan, with the sale of the furnishings at Woolland and later made the new owners an offer on the "The Monkey and the Dolphin" mosa-

ic (based on the Aesop fable), that Frink had designed, circa 1987. It was subsequently professionally removed, restored and mounted on an approximately 4¼-by-3-meter (14¼-by-10-1/8 foot) aluminium corrugated framework, that would allow the mosaic to be laid back into a swimming pool or positioned upright as an artwork. It is thought to be the only mosaic Frink created and among the largest pieces she ever made. "It's all original. All the work you see is her work. We haven't had to rebuild it," said Bolan. This important piece leads the sale with an estimate of £300/500,000.

Viewing will be at The Studio, Berrywood Lane, Donhead Saint Mary, Shaftsbury, Dorset, UK, from September 20-23. For information, www.sworders.co.uk.



An Eighteenth Century polychrome painted Danish cupboard dated 1772. Sworders photo.

London Transport Museum Acquires Banksy Work



The artwork on display at London Transport Museum.

LONDON — An artwork by Banksy, which first appeared on the door of a Transport for London (TfL) signal controller cabinet in Croydon in October 2019, has been acquired by London Transport Museum for preservation and is now on display.

The artwork depicts a rat hanging from the arm of a clock and appeared in front of the artist's pop-up showroom installation, Gross Domestic Product. It was featured in a video posted by Banksy on Instagram in October 2019.

The door of the signal controller cabinet, which still housed the technology for nearby traffic lights and tram signals, was carefully removed by Transport for

London to prevent theft or damage of the artwork and to ensure the continued safe operation of the transport network.

To recreate the original context of the artwork, it has been mounted onto an identical cabinet body and has been accessioned into London Transport Museum's collection for preservation and display.

Elizabeth McKay, director and CEO of London Transport Museum said: "Banksy's work always sparks a reaction — whether it's funny, political or makes you think — and people really connect with it. Banksy's art is part of the city's story, loved by Londoners and visitors alike. Whilst this artwork could not remain in its orig-

inal location, it's fantastic to display it here in the Museum for visitors to enjoy it up close."

London Transport Museum cares for more than 2,500 original artworks and 34,000 transport posters created by artists and designers who have influenced how people see London. This is the Museum's first acquisition of a contemporary street artwork by a globally recognised artist like Banksy. Adding a Banksy to the London Transport Museum's displays is just one of the many ways the Museum is using creativity to tell the story of London's transport.

The London Transport Museum is in Covent Garden. For information, www.ltmuseum.co.uk.