



Selection of jewellery from Christie's sale of 20th century jewellery on October 15th. The pair of Georges Fouquet Art Nouveau earrings, in plique-a-jour enamel and opal, (second from bottom of picture). Sold for £12,425. (Price includes premium.)



Victorian aquamarine and diamond brooch, circa 1890. Sold for £1,034 at Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



A late Victorian hardstone cameo brooch. Sold for £1,656 at Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



Late Victorian diamond and half-pearl bar brooch, circa 1880. Sold for £940 at Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



Selection of jewellery from Christie's jewellery sale of September 3rd. The Edwardian diamond and onyx brooch (towards the bottom left of the picture) sold for £580, the late 19th century to early 20th century diamond and pearl cluster brooch/pendant (centre towards the top of the picture) sold for £760 and the Edwardian diamond and half-pearl necklace (beneath the brooch/pendant) sold for £1,242.50. (Prices include premium.)

Introduction to Jewellery Part 2

The second of a two-part feature. See also the second part of our *Price Guide to Jewellery* on pages 4-9.

by **Brenda Greysmith**



Bonhams' 10.10.02 sale. A Cartier Art Deco diamond bracelet. Sold for £66,050. (Price includes premium.)

Antique jewellery can reflect the fashions and the art movements of past times and still appeal as something to be worn today. Most of the jewellery which comes up for sale nowadays dates from Victorian times or later. Earlier jewellery, in particular pieces using valuable gemstones have been broken up and remade in the latest fashion. Despite this there's a huge choice, some pieces reflect passing fashions, some remain timeless.

Earlier items can still be found at reasonable prices. One example is 'paste' jewellery (set with imitation stones of glass). Popular in the eighteenth century, the 'gems' could be made to any shape or size. It has survived in larger quantities than the 'real thing' because paste pieces were rarely broken up for reuse.

Another cheap alternative was brightly polished steel. It was highly fashionable in the decades surrounding 1800, with interest not confined to those who couldn't afford precious metals. A pair of cut steel chandelier earrings, circa 1750, sold for £410 at Bonhams' jewellery sale in July, one of six cut-steel lots which each sold for that price or less. Cast iron is a further, somewhat surprising jewellery material. Produced by the Prussian Royal Iron Foundries from 1806 onwards, it was called Berlin iron and resembled delicate black lace.

Flowers and fruit have been popular motifs for jewellery throughout the centuries, but particularly so in the middle years of the nineteenth century when they reflected the Romantic Movement. Originally, these pretty Victorian pieces would have symbolic meanings attached to

the specific plants depicted. Such subtleties may be lost to us today but naturalistic designs still appeal. A late Victorian diamond flower-spray brooch sold for £375 at Bonhams in July, while an Edwardian flowerhead and leaf design diamond and pearl necklace sold for £1,242.50 at Christie's in September. One particularly popular item of jewellery in the 1860-80s was the locket and, while some Victorian jewellery might seem over elaborate to us now, the locket still retains its appeal. Several turn of the century examples have come up for sale recently and found favour with modern buyers. An enamel and half-pearl locket circa 1910 went for £375 at Bonhams in July.

Victorian times also saw a vogue for 'novelty' jewellery. Sporting motifs were popular such as tennis rackets or fishing tackle. There were also hunting items which might include parts of the animal, claws or teeth. These have a more limited market. Another sector now viewed very differently is mourning jewellery (at its height in the 1870s). Some buyers today are still drawn to its shiny black jet and black enamel.

Victorian taste also enjoyed Renaissance motifs. AWN Pugin designed jewellery in this style. Serious antiquarians and collectors sought examples of the 'real thing', but many very convincing fakes were produced to satisfy demand. Design horizons were also broadened by the Great Exhibition of 1851, which popularised jewellery made with materials from around the world. The period also saw archaeological discoveries which triggered jewellery based on ancient motifs. Greek and Etruscan designs were the most influential, but the Assyrians and Egyptians also provided inspiration. A late Victorian Etruscan style hinged bangle and pendant suite (circa 1890) went for £880 in Bonhams' July jewellery sale.

There were other overseas influences too. The Indian jewellery at the Great Exhibition was highly praised by the influential designer Owen Jones while a fashion for all things Japanese followed another exhibition in London in 1862. Both Indian and Japanese jewellery was sold in London and the styles were a particular specialisation of the ground-breaking department store Liberty when it opened in 1875. Liberty had its own range of Cymric silver jewellery, influenced by Celtic motifs and the Art Nouveau style. Art Nouveau brought innovation to jewellery, moving it away from symmetrically set gemstones to more painterly designs, often enhanced with enamels. Natural motifs were given a design twist, often influenced by Japanese art. The best known Art Nouveau jeweller was Rene Lalique, whose research into enamels and glass allowed him to create a new vocabulary of materials. Prices for Lalique are high but there were other fine exponents, such as Fouquet, Gaillard and Wolfers, whose work can be relatively more affordable (though still much sought-after). A pair of enamel and opal earrings by Fouquet, for example, were included in Christie's sale on October 15 and sold for £12,425.

Less sinuous was the work of London-based CR Ashbee. Influenced by medieval design, he founded the Guild of Handicraft in 1888 to promote traditional craft skills. Of those artists involved with the Arts and Crafts Movement, the jewellery of May Morris (daughter of William) is notable. Other interesting but less well known names are Henry Wilson and the husband and wife team Arthur and Georgie Gaskin, who started hand-making jewellery in 1899, mostly in silver decorated with enamel and semi-precious stones. It was the Art Deco movement, however, which really brought a radical departure in jewellery, mixing abstract geometric forms with the influence of Indian, Oriental and Egyptian design. Typical pieces include long earrings (to accompany the new short hair cuts), and long necklaces with a matching pendant or jewelled tassel. New discoveries of diamonds in Africa expanded the supply of precious stones, and black and white pieces (diamonds contrasted with black onyx) were particularly chic.

Art Deco jewellery seems much more of the modern world to us now and its sophistication and relative simplicity ensure strong appeal. At the top end of the market are items like the Cartier bracelet sold by Bonhams in October for £66,050. Cartier is not always so expensive. A diamond and carved gem ring by the maestro went for £1,835 at Christie's in July. And it's still possible to buy nice pieces by unknown designers from that period at reasonable prices. In September, an Art Deco sapphire and diamond brooch went for £822 at Bonhams, while a diamond clip brooch went for £1,795 at Christie's.



Victorian garnet and pearl brooch, circa 1880. Sold for £635 at Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



From Bonhams' sale on October 10th, an early Victorian diamond flowerhead brooch. Sold for £4,465. (Price includes premium.)



A Belle Epoque sapphire, diamond and enamel brooch, circa 1910. Sold for £1,448 in Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



From Bonhams' jewellery sale of October 10th, an Edwardian diamond pendant showing Art Nouveau influences. Sold for £3,760. (Price includes premium.)



Late Victorian garnet, pearl and diamond cluster brooch. Sold for £664 in Bonhams' September sale. (Price includes premium.)



Selection of jewellery from Christie's sale of September 3rd. The 19th century sapphire and diamond horseshoe brooch sold for £3,865.50 and the Edwardian diamond and sapphire oval cluster brooch sold for £2,209. (Prices include premium.)