



'Lido Lady' a novelty dish (£7,475) and an 'Applique Blue Lucerne' plate (£6,900), both designed by Clarice Cliff. February 2000. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'Age of Jazz,' a double dancer table centre-piece designed by Clarice Cliff. (£10,925) May 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



A Poole Pottery Leaping Gazelle TZ pattern vase (£632) and a bookend modelled as a Springbok designed by John Adams. (pair £1,380) February 1999. Courtesy of Christie's South Kensington.

## British Art Deco Ceramics

by Michael Jeffery, Head of 20thC Decorative Arts,  
Woolley & Wallis Auctioneers, Salisbury



'Applique Orange Lucerne' a Conical shape part coffee set designed by Clarice Cliff, circa 1932. (£10,350) February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'Sunray' a 358 shape vase designed by Clarice Cliff. (£2,070) February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.

The ten years from 1925 to 1935 can be viewed as the most important and influential decade of the twentieth century for design. It was the period that has come to be termed Art Deco. Although it developed slowly as a reaction to the Art Nouveau free-flowing style of the turn of the century, the Art Deco style arrived at the 1925 *Exposition des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Modernes* held in Paris. This exhibition also provided the movement with its now familiar name, although the term Art Deco was not used until the 1960s. Exhibiting at this truly international event were designers including Rene Lalique, Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, Jean Dunand and Sue et Mare. The British Pavilion, although less *avante garde*, included pottery by Carter, Stabler & Adams, Poole.

Art Deco style is a product of influences as diverse as Egyptology, African Tribalism, Cubism and the contemporary enthusiasm for the new technology of the 1920s and 1930s. Instantly recognisable, Art Deco design uses linear and geometric shapes and often a strong, bold palette. Common schemes of decoration are deer such as gazelle and antelope and clusters of stylised flowers.

Although it is tempting to think that many of the British ceramic designers visited Paris in 1925 it is more likely that the information of the new style was received secondhand through reports in newspapers and/or journals such as *The Studio*. Designers including Susie Cooper (born 1902) and Clarice Cliff (born 1899) were just starting out on their careers that would blossom into some of the most instantly recognisable designs of the period between 1930 and 1935.

Driven by strong collector's clubs, specialist Art Deco fairs, new books and ever more specialised sales at auctions the market

is generally very strong. At the forefront is Clarice Cliff, a phenomenon in her day and now a collectable market in her own right. Her work, all individually handpainted is much sought, fuelled by a professionally run Collectors' Club. The highest prices, paid for very strong Art Deco patterns and shapes such as the Age of Jazz figures, the Liner vase and an Applique Lugano charger consistently reach over £10,000 at auction. More common items such as a Conical sugar sifter decorated in the instantly recognisable Crocus pattern have moved up from £350 to between £450 and £550 in the last three years. Other factories such as Crown Devon, Carlton Ware and Shelley do not reach such high levels although for a top of the range Art Deco example interest is strong.

### More Information

On the 2nd April Woolley & Wallis Auctioneers of Salisbury held a special Clarice Cliff and Art Deco sale. This was timed to coincide with the Art Deco exhibition at the Victoria & Albert museum and included over 350 lots of Clarice Cliff and 100 lots of various Art deco ceramics, glass and bronzes. The sale included a beautiful Flame Leaper bronze and Ivory figure by Ferdinand Preiss, estimate £25,000-35,000. For future sales or more information contact Michael Jeffery on 01722 424500 or [michaeljeffery@woolleyandwallis.co.uk](mailto:michaeljeffery@woolleyandwallis.co.uk)

Christie's South Kensington will be organising a specialist Art Deco sale on 15th October. Contact Daniel Gallen on 020 7321 3015. Art Deco 1910-1939 at the Victoria & Albert Museum, South Kensington will be the largest Exhibition on the subject for some 30 years. The Exhibition runs until 20th July. See pages 40 and 41 for an Exhibition review.





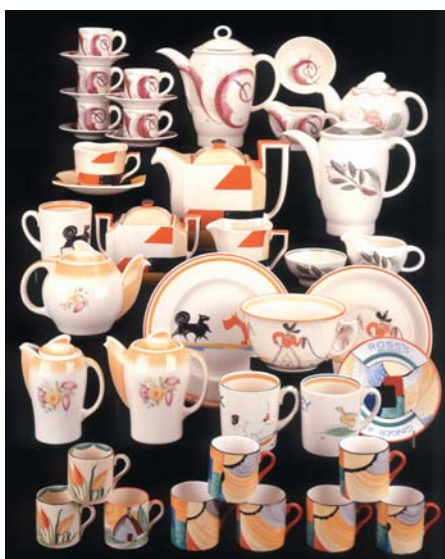
'Rainbow Fan' a Carlton Ware vase. (£5,750) February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'Orange Block' a Shelley bone china coffee set for six designed by Eric Slater. (£1,150) February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'Negligee' a Royal Doulton figure produced between 1928-1938, estimate £500-700. Sale price unknown. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



A selection of Susie Cooper's designs including a cube shape tea set, circa 1932. (estimate for set for six £3,000-4,000) June 1997. Sale prices unknown. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'House and Bridge' a Stamford shape teapot designed by Clarice Cliff. (£1,380) February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



'Applique Windmill' a Conical shape part tea set designed by Clarice Cliff. (£14,100) May 2000. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



A selection of Poole Pottery including a 'Fuschia' pattern vase (estimate £200-300) and a 'Leaping Gazelle' TZ pattern charger. (estimate £300-400) Sale prices unknown. Courtesy of Christie's South Kensington.



'Tennis,' a 269 shape vase (left £1,610) and 'Football,' a 342 shape vase (right £6,325) designed by Clarice Cliff. February 1999. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.



A selection of Wedgwood designed by Keith Murray including the rare black and bronze basalts (£1,000-2,000 each) and two black basalt animals designed by John Skeaping, circa 1935. (£300-500 each) Sale prices unknown. Courtesy Christie's South Kensington.