

The Rise of Antique Jewellery

The recent rise in antique jewellery sales can be seen as a response to mass consumerism with a need for products which are individual and non-identical.

Jacque Gray, owner of jewellers, Grasilver, who specialise in Scandinavian design, states that now “women are more interested in buying good quality iconic pieces that are one-offs and not mass produced”.

Sporting antique jewellery has become more popular with women combining modern and antique pieces. Lynn Lindsay of the London-based Wimpole Antiques notes: “They are very versatile and play to the individual taste. We see clients who purchase an antique choker to wear with a modern chain or an antique ring to wear next to a modern ring with matching colours and stones.”

Anthea Gesua, founder of Anthea A G Antiques recommends going to antiques fairs, such as the upcoming [Winter Art & Antiques Fair Olympia](#) where she and over 100 of the UK’s top antiques dealers will sell their stock for six days. She says: “It’s perfect if you are looking for antique jewellery as the goods are vetted*. She cautions: “When there is no independent vetting, be aware of older reproduction jewellery. Make a beeline for those dealers who are members of trade associations LAPADA and BADA.”

Buying from a dealer who is a member of a trade association means you can trust in the quality. “Not all antique pieces are as valuable as others, so always look out for good craftsmanship,” urges Anshul Rakyan, proprietor of A Rakyan Collection Ltd. “Of course only buy if you know you will wear the piece, as this is the most important reason. If you love the piece, and the price feels right, do make the purchase. With these one-off products, once they are gone they are gone.”

Invest in one piece and make it the best you can afford. A retro gold bracelet makes a big statement and can be dressed up or down suggests Gesua who also advises looking out for jewellery from the important 'houses' such as Cartier, VCA, Boucheron, Bvlgari and Tiffany.

“Bracelets are popular now especially wide cuff ones from the 1940s and 1970s” agrees Lindsay of Wimpole Antiques, a regular exhibitor at the Winter Art & Antiques Fair.

Lindsay points out that Vivianna Torun Bulow-Hube original pieces are very sought after at the moment with the 50 year anniversary working with Georg Jensen.

Rakyan believes, however, that every woman should have one or more piece in their collection from the Art Nouveau and Art Deco era. He makes the point that jewels from 1900 to 1930s (sometimes also 1940s) were created at the height of jewellery-making, not only in the way that they were made, but also for their designs. “These eras of Art Nouveau and Art Deco are very special”, he says.

He continues, “Generally, we like antique pieces that contain nice gemstones (be it Kashmir sapphires, Burmese rubies, old-mine emeralds, natural pearls, old-cut diamonds), because these stones are rare and the quality that you can get in older pieces is, generally speaking, not found in newer pieces. So, for us, a combination of nice gemstones combined with the intricate design and craftsmanship of the past (sometimes also by the famous makers that made these pieces) would be the best pieces to look out for.”



Gesua has another pearl of wisdom regarding engagement rings. She advises that when buying an engagement ring always spend as much as you can as it may be

the only piece of jewellery you will own for a while before homemaking, housekeeping and children take over!

But, she also praises earrings, which 'dress the face', as a good investment option. Wimpole Antiques has noticed trends for easy to wear pieces which can go from day to night. For example, there is a movement towards brooches recently. They are now being worn in various ways such as on the hip or on a hat or hung on a chain or choker.

As well as the fashion for brooches, Jackie Gray observes: "the trend is for vintage mid-century



modern pieces where the effect is timeless and looks as modern today as it did back in the 1960s."

She says that there is also still a tendency towards a silver or a space theme with Bjorn Weckstrom Lapponia pieces (as worn by princess Leia in the first Star Wars film) which looks set to continue and thrive, especially with the 40th anniversary coming up this year.



Rakyan agrees that for the last few years now, retro has been coming back into fashion and still is, but also says, "We can now see that the intricate work of the Victorian period is becoming popular again. While retro covers bold and chic fashion statements, Victorian and Art Deco jewels cover the intricate and fine workmanship." Gesua adds that Early Georgian jewellery is still charming and very collectible too.

Ultimately, tastes differ and it's very much about personal preference and individual style which is the beauty of antique jewellery. There is a wealth of pieces from different eras. So it comes down to budget and a dedication to hunting out that special piece that catches the eye.

Anthea A G Antiques, A Rakyan Collection Ltd, Grasilver and Wimpole Antiques are all exhibiting at Winter Art & Antiques Fair Olympia taking place 31 October – 5 November. Other jewellers at the fair include Horton Antiques and John Joseph.

www.olympia-antiques.com

* There is a very strict vetting process in place whereby everything is checked by independent experts to ensure that every piece for sale is genuine and correctly labelled.