

# Ceramics and glass collection leads inaugural sale at new Australian auction house Gibson's

The collection of a man described as “a passionate supporter of the decorative arts” will feature in the inaugural sale at a new Melbourne saleroom.

Tom Derbyshire  
08 Aug 2018



A pair of late 19th century Minton pâte-sur-pâte bleu celeste ground vases estimated at Aus\$1500-2500 in the inaugural sale at Gibson's auction house in Melbourne on August 12.



Bronze medal illustrated by LC Wyon and struck at the Sydney Mint for an exhibition ahead of the 1855 Paris Exhibition, which is estimated at Aus\$1200-1500 in the inaugural sale at Gibson's auction house in Melbourne on August 12.

Gibson's first auction on August 12 will offer ceramics and glass amassed by Dr Robert Wilson, who, says the saleroom, is also acknowledged as “one of the most significant benefactors to the Decorative Arts Department of the National Gallery of Victoria” (NGV).

Jennifer Gibson, former head of decorative arts at now defunct Australian auction house Mossgreen, founded Gibson's in June. The new business, which is co-owned with an investment partner, is planning 12-15 sales of art, antiques and jewellery a year.

“It is an honour to be entrusted with the auctioning of our first major collection, that of the late Dr Robert Wilson, as our inaugural sale. This is such an interesting and eclectic collection,” said Gibson.

Many of the ceramic pieces in the collection are Minton. Gibson picked out lot 20 from the sale, a pair of vases estimated at Aus\$1500-2500, as a “fine example of Minton pâte-sur-pâte”. She added: “This pair of late 19th century Minton pâte-sur-pâte bleu celeste ground vases are similar to the pieces that Dr Robert Wilson donated to the NGV.”

The Gibson’s sale catalogue says Dr Wilson (1945-2017) studied science at the University of Melbourne but later “followed his love of 19<sup>th</sup> century art and music” as general manager of radio station 3MBS FM. Before joining the staff at the NGV he spent some time in politics with Race Mathews, minister for the arts.

It adds: “For many years he steadily gifted works from his remarkable collection of 19th century ceramics and glass, including Minton and Thomas Webb.

"While a large proportion of his collection was gifted to the NGV in his lifetime, a significant representation of his many years as a keen collector remains and includes a wonderful selection of ceramics such as Worcester, Copeland, Burmantofts, Doulton and Minton, fine art and a world-class collection of Great Exhibition and Exposition pieces.”

## **Early Oz exhibition**

An unusual item in Dr Wilson’s collection in the August 12 sale is a 3in (7.5cm), 176g bronze exhibition medal illustrated by LC Wyon and struck at the Sydney Mint, which is estimated at Aus\$1200-1500. The obverse shows Britannia introducing France to Australia; the reverse is a cyclic depiction of the reaping of natural products in New South Wales.

The catalogue states: “What makes this an unusual item in the collection is that there were only 96 of these medals produced, with the exhibition held as a prelude to the 1855 Paris Exhibition, indicating how far Australia had come in its short history and at the height of the gold rush when it was the wealthiest colony in the British Empire.”

## **Melbourne base**



*Jennifer Gibson, head of new Melbourne saleroom Gibson's Auctions, which holds its inaugural sale on August 12.*

Gibson’s is based in the Melbourne suburb of Armadale, nearby to the former Mossgreen headquarters.

Further ex-Mossgreen staff joining the new saleroom are Patti Sedgwick (jewellery), Deanna Baxter (single-owner sales) and Elliott Hughes (auctions manager and decorative arts specialist).

<https://www.antiquetrade gazette.com/news/2018/ceramics-and-glass-collection-leads-inaugural-sale-at-new-australian-auction-house-gibsons/>