

Fad Buying

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

There are many factors that influence the market and the price you pay for your collectable item.

One of the strongest influences on the art and antique market is fashion. I was recently doing a talk up in Queensland to a group of art gallery trustees when I was asked about an artist's work and would it be a good investment. There is no simple answer to this question.

If everybody in the art world is buying that artist's work then I suggest the price may rise too quickly. This is true not only of the individual artists but for a particular style or type of art. At the end of the 1980's the traditional Australian art market, and in particular the Heidelberg School, was very much the flavour of the month. It was during this period that we saw the first Australian painting selling for over one million dollars.

Now there is nothing wrong with that style of art and it has some of the best examples of our home grown art. But as that style became more popular and there were more buyers, the price got pushed higher and higher.

This cycle of collecting a particular style of art or antique eventually turns the corner and can even head down. Traditional Mahogany or Cedar furniture is certainly on a down at the moment. This is more to do with the way we live than the item itself. We just don't have the dinner parties any more, and many of you have done away with the traditional dining room as it does not fit with our life styles.

But what that all means is there are some excellent items out there half the price they were 5 years ago.

Next week: To clean or not to clean - that is the question?

Warren Joel

Warren is a third generation auctioneer and valuer specialising in Art, Antiques and Collectables, accredited by the Commonwealth in 2002 different areas of collectables.

www.byjoel.com.au