

# LA GAZETTE DROUOT

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# EDITORIAL



**Céline Piettre**  
EDITORIAL MANAGER

It's the last one! La Gazette Internationale is publishing its final issue, ending a long adventure begun in 2011, which ventured as far afield as China – with issues published in Mandarin at the time under the leadership of Stéphanie Perris, which could be viewed for free. But our readers needn't worry: they will be able to go on reading us in English. Starting in May, La Gazette Drouot will be moving decisively into the digital age with the launch of a new bilingual website, as the current site has reached its limits in browsing terms. Here they will naturally find announcements of the main public auctions within and outside France, as well as the latest news of the art market, a focus on prominent figures and content ever-more slanted towards the international. To assist us with this new departure beyond our linguistic borders, we have New York gallery owner Howard Greenberg and curator Flavin Judd (son of the Minimalist art leader), and we take a look at the Latin American art market in Europe. So see you soon online!

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PRICES INCLUDE BUYER'S PREMIUM

# Gien: the greatness of a factory

7 AND 8 APRIL

Three hundred and sixty-one pieces, all from the Gien factory's workshops make up the substantial menu of this sale. No fewer than two days will be needed to disperse the collection assembled by Jean-Marie and Chantal Jacquet-Gaultier at their house in the Nantes region. Through this top-rank selection, we rediscover the excellence of a factory that for some two centuries has been successfully producing decorative designs, both inspired by the past and reflecting the artistic movements of the time. The story began in 1821, when an Englishman, Thomas Hulm, known as "Hall", the owner of a factory in Montereau, moved to Gien, taking over the buildings of the former Couvent des Minimes. He soon began producing his first pieces in limestone earthenware, also called "pipeclay". It was only in 1853, after several changes of ownership, that decorations imitating 18th-century styles began to

appear. In around 1867, the "Saxe" and "Marseille" models attracted much attention under the trademark G.G. & Cie, the initials of the new company "Geoffroy, Guerin & Cie". But Gien's golden age truly started in 1878, the year when the factory received a gold medal at the Universal Exhibition in Paris, thus establishing an international name. After that, the innovations that made it famous followed in succession, including translucent glazes and Longwy-style enamels, Persian and Japanese motifs and the use of barbotine. At the same time industrial production really took off with sanitation products and wall tiles (including the bevelled tiles of the Paris metro). Best-sellers during the first few decades were earthenware pieces decorated with patterns inspired by Italian majolica; if mass-produced, they were hand-painted with an opulent decoration, often intertwining foliage and putti. This style is well

**Ulysse Bertrand** (1851-1941), pair of trumpet vases with sea gods, unique pieces in glazed ceramic with an entirely painted surface, one with Neptune and the other with Amphitrite, Gien holograph trademark, signed; h. 58, diam. 32 cm. Estimate: €6,000/10,000.





**Adrien Thibault** (1844-1918), "Francis I" orangeade service, c. 1879, glazed ceramic with an Italian Renaissance decoration, Gien holograph trademark and monogram: "AT".  
Estimate: €1,200/1,500.





illustrated here by a creation from around 1879 by the designer Adrien Thibault: a highly colourful "François I" orangeade service with twisted handles (€1,200/1,500).

## Unique pieces

The originality – and merit – of the Gien factory lay in encouraging its decoration painters to give free rein to their imaginations. The result was ceramics that were truly treated like paintings. One of these virtuosos was Ulysse Bertrand (1851-1941), who designed a pair of trumpet vases "with sea gods" acquired directly from the artist's family (€6,000/10,000). In around 1900, the head of the workshop also embellished a flat flask with a mythological scene on one side and a view of a bivouac during Charcot's polar expedition on the other. This unique piece can be snapped up at €3,000/5,000. These objects were often produced as one-of-a-kind pieces, and the Jacquets focused on them when they were buying – to such an extent that they make up 90% of the lots on offer in this sale. Impressionism is a distinct feature with Dominique-Adolphe Grenet (1821-1885), who introduced the barbotine technique. You can buy a large fan jardinière he produced in the Barbizon style, dating from 1879, in glazed barbotine (€1,500/2,500). Meanwhile, in 1872, the decorative artist "J. Blu" created a "Warwick" jardinière, where each side features a landscape in a large painted cartouche: England's Warwick Castle on one side and children at play on the other (€3,000/5,000). Three decades later, sensitive to the latest trends in the decorative arts, the Gien factory picked up on Art Nouveau straight away, as here with a remarkable basin, which was highly acclaimed at the Universal Exhibition of 1900 (€2,000/3,000). "Encouraging living artists who were passionate about earthenware also meant doing our duty as collectors," says Jean-Marie Jacquet-Gaultier. For example, in 2008, the couple asked the Portuguese artist Manuel Cargaleiro (designer of the famous blue and yellow tiles in the Champs-Élysées metro station) to make a pair of fuseau vases. Signed, dated and with dedications, they can now be had for around €1,500. **Philippe Dufour**

■ Saint-Herblain, Château de la Gournerie, Rouillac auction house.

