

business and we own our stock, so we have a long-term vested interest in whatever we have to sell.' David's paintings are beautifully framed by specialists, gleaming with gold leaf and wall-ready.

Auctions are another great source of art for novice collectors, with timed online auctions (similar to the way eBay works) the least intimidating type of sale to dip into. Mallams' Affordable Modern Art timed sale is held in August and February, offering around 150 lots that date from 1900 to the present day, with prices ranging from around £40 to £200. Max Fisher, 20th-century art specialist at Mallams, says: 'It's all done with the click of a button, so there's no mystique of the auction process to deal with. People do buy for ►

Japanese Print Gallery; © Graham Turner; Lay's; Freya Milton

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE

FROM TOP Works by Carla Kranendonk at the Rebecca Hossack Art Gallery, Affordable Art Fair; *Flowers in the Window*, Anthea Craigmyle, £4,800; *Pears and Blackberries*, £5,500, Mary Fedden, both at Freya Milton.

FACING PAGE, FROM LEFT *Tago Bay near Ejiri on the Tōkaidō* from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, Katsushika Hokusai, POA, Japan Print Gallery at London Original Print Fair; *The Green Sarong*, Rose Hilton, sold for £380 (plus buyer's premium) at Lay's.

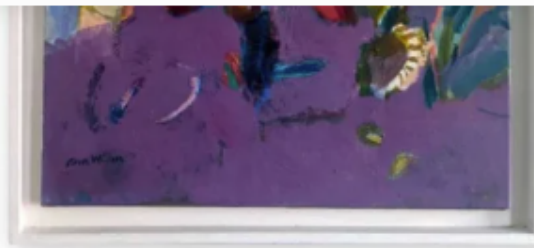
Miniature masterpieces

Start your art collection with small works by big names

This November will be the 10th anniversary of Art on a Postcard (AOAP), the timed online auction founded to raise money for The Hepatitis C Trust. Initially, artists were asked to create an anonymous, postcard-sized work of art for auction, which made the bidding process particularly piquant. Nowadays, artworks are attributed to artists and the big names continue to donate – Grayson Perry, Julian Opie, Andrew Cranston, Vanessa Garwood, Antonia Showering and Shaquëlle Whyte among them. To date, AOAP has raised over £2.5million for the Trust and has recently run similar auctions for other worthy causes, such as War Child and International Women's Day.

The barnstorming initiative is the brainchild of filmmaker Gemma Peppé, who spends her year combing art schools and Instagram for new talent, as well as approaching established artists around the world for contributions. The online auctions are open for two weeks and all bids start at £50, sometimes going up to as high as £11,000 for a very sought-after or fashionable artist's work. Says Gemma: 'High-profile artists are happy to do it if it's a cause that they like, while for emerging talent – art graduates and outsider artists – it's a great platform for others to discover them and to own a bit of their work before they are priced out of the market. These auctions allow you to be a prolific collector of contemporary art on a small scale.' If you're not lucky enough to win one of the 650 or so postcards up for grabs, box-sets of greetings cards featuring the best artworks are sold throughout the year.

Find out more about upcoming auctions and buy greetings cards at artonapostcard.com



investment at our sales, but mostly they want to spend money on something they like.' As you become more familiar with auctions, you can gravitate to bidding live at Mallams' Modern Art & Design sales, where average artworks go for around £600-£700, so more of an outlay.

If there's a particular artist you're interested in, Max advises setting an alert on the-saleroom.com: if something by that artist comes up for sale at an auction house around the country, you'll be sent an email. You could also focus on developing a good relationship with an auction house that specialises in a favoured category, for instance Cornish, Scottish or East Anglian art. Lay's Auctioneers in Penzance holds five Cornish Art sales a year, and Caroline Lay is in charge of them. 'A great thing for budding collectors to do is to make friends with the auctioneers and cataloguers. Go to the pre-sale viewings, introduce yourself, say that you're looking to start a collection or ask questions about particular artists. These are incredible events, with pictures hung from floor to ceiling. It's like being in a gallery but even more intense, as you browse 450 lots.'

If you're hunting bargains or entry-point works, Caroline advises looking at artists who are peripheral to the main schools of art in the area, which in Cornwall's case are the Newlyn, St Ives and Lamorna colonies. 'Barbara



WHERE TO BUY

Affordable Art Fair
affordableartfair.com

Freya Mitton
freyamitton.com

Kitoe Contemporary
kitoecontemporary.com

Lay's Auctioneers
davidlay.co.uk

London Original Print Fair
londonoriginalprintfair.com

Mallams
mallams.co.uk

Messum's
messums.com

Roseberys
roseberys.co.uk

Hepworth and Ben Nicholson are out of most people's reach, but look instead for pieces by Denis Mitchell who worked for Hepworth for years and was a sculptor in his own right,' she suggests. In the field of pictures and prints, artists such as Tony Giles and Rose Hilton would have known these earlier St Ives figures as young adults, but their paintings and prints are much more affordable; a small gouache painting by Giles might make £400 at auction, while Hilton's paintings go from £2,000. The drawings and etchings of Karl Weschke, a former German POW in the Second World War, are also a good bet, costing £300-£500. Remember that Buyer's Premium will be applicable, and that royalties (known as Artist's Resale Right or ARR) are payable on artworks sold for the equivalent of €1,000 or above, if the artist has been dead for less than 70 years.

Lastly, there's the vast realm of 'antique art' – oil paintings, watercolours, Old Masters, drawings and prints spanning the 16th to the 19th centuries that are auction house staples. 'Old Masters are more accessible than you would think,' says Roseberys' specialist Charlotte Russell, who's in charge of three sales a year. 'While the museum names are very expensive, there are other artists from the same context who would have moved in the same milieu, but are far more affordable.' She adds that if you're interested in the really big names, such as Albrecht Dürer and Rembrandt, then start small, looking for works on paper – drawings and etchings – that cost in the low thousands of pounds. 'At Roseberys we see a huge variety of things – Dutch and Italian works; lots from Britain, too. Among them you can find absolute bargains, and that's why auctions are exciting.' ■