

# luxury briefing

---

*Boodles talk about that million pound necklace*  
**NET-A-PORTER** launch The **NET SET** *Aquascutum* move back into made-to-measure **Harrods** launches **Tartufi & Friends** *Fortnum & Mason* opens new beauty department **La Mamounia** partners with artist **Julien Marinetti** *Four Seasons* unveils private jet **Mikimoto** in macaroons *The growth of Mount Street* Plus: Q&A with **David Lewis, MD Sunseeker Sales Group**

---



## LIMITED EDITIONS



## *Bronze sculpture*

# A DURABLE INVESTMENT

Today one cannot open a newspaper or highlife magazine without reading about a new world record for a work of art at auction. It seems all the smart people are in on the action but as an outsider to this often confusing world how can one - with certainty - put one's toe in the water?

**W**hen buying art purely for pleasure, what one likes is obviously important, but with an eye on investment finding an art advisor who you trust is essential. The new collector has three choices: auction, agent or established art gallery. The big auctioneers or 'art supermarkets' have considerable expertise in some areas but one should not take it for granted that this is across the board. Today also there are many art agents, some good, some not so good, so it is important to look at their track record and also price results for the work they are proposing you buy. In today's technological world a large amount of information is readily available online but help will be required in analysing what it all means.

If you have decided on an area you wish to pursue then you would be well advised to seek out the leading dealers in this field - after all, they must be doing something right if they are still in business! Should bronze sculpture appeal, then the Sladmore Gallery was established by my mother back in 1965. Today we continue to sell top examples of 19th and early 20th century sculpture. Naturally over the last 50 years prices have increased but it is important to look at which artists have appreciated the most and which sculptures.

Without fail it is always those works within an artist's oeuvre that are the best that will appreciate in value the most and these are known in the trade as 'trophy' pieces. This is true across all works of art, paintings, furniture etc.

In the sculpture field my three top investment picks would be a key work by Auguste Rodin, Rembrandt Bugatti and Francois Pompon respectively. All three sculptors are very well known and have had recent museum shows - essential for an increase in academic and public awareness which in turn has a positive effect on price. Take for example Rodin's wonderful model of Jean d'Aire (one of the Burghers of Calais) and we can chart an auction increase over the last 15 years from \$50,000 to \$500,000. That's a ten times increase which is partly due to a reliable authentication service appearing for Rodin's work from 2007. This is another important factor in buying any major art work - expertise adds value.

My mother first sold an example of Bugatti's sublime Walking Panther in 1969 for £1800. As sleek as any of his brother's race cars it has long been the 'trophy' piece for any animal lover. My first sale of this model in 1982 realised £25,000 and today for a fine quality example, in excess of £400,000 would be required. Here we have the iconic work from the leading artist in his genre which recently featured in major museum show providing an almost 20 fold increase in just 30 years. A similar return would have been achieved for Pompon's marble Polar Bear, an emblematic sculpture from the 1920's. Lifetime bronze examples will also have provided a wonderful return, despite the plethora of fake versions which appear almost monthly at auctions around the world.

Unlike art agents or auctioneers, an established dealer is prepared to invest in the purchase of stock which shows a real commitment and belief in the market and his or her product. As a principal I naturally want to share in the upside of my own well informed purchases but I am also secure in the knowledge that over the last 35 years my most loyal clients have made far more than me.

Perhaps I should just close my doors and hang on to everything!



## LIMITED EDITIONS

**SLADMORE GALLERY – Director Edward Horswell, and his enduring fascination with the art of bronze sculpture. 2015 marks its fiftieth anniversary**

Edward Horswell has been a world authority for more than twenty years on the work of Rembrandt Bugatti (elder brother Ettore designed the cars) greatest genius of animal sculpture, as well as the whole genre of ‘animaliers’ flourishing in the late 19th and much of the 20th century.

He has collaborated on and loaned works to the major international museum exhibitions of Bugatti’s work. There were two Bugatti celebrations last year, at the Mullin Automotive museum in California and the National Gallery in Berlin. Both curators acknowledged their debt to the expertise of Edward Horswell, Director of Sladmore.

Edward grew up at Sladmore Farm in Buckinghamshire, where his parents formed an extensive menagerie of animals and exotic birds, alongside a related sculpture collection. That collection developed into a gallery in London, originally dealing in nineteenth century ‘animalier’ bronzes. Today, under Edward Horswell’s direction, the gallery has expanded its twentieth century department to include the works, not just of Bugatti and his followers, but those of other modern masters, such as Rodin, Degas, and Maillol.

A charming story describes how Edward was first enchanted by the ‘animalier’ Rembrandt Bugatti as a boy of twelve when he saw a live barn owl, on a high shelf of the drawing room at home, roosting under the outstretched wing of a Bugatti pelican sculpture. The owl understood the unique vitality and ‘reality’ of Bugatti’s work. The Sladmore now has two galleries in London, Jermyn Street for 19th and 20th masters, and a small stable of contemporary artists. The Sladmore sister gallery in Bruton Place, off Berkeley Square, represents such contemporary masters as Nic Fiddian-Green (monumental horses’ headso and Mark Coreth (bronzes of endangered species of tiger, lions and elephant, observed in the wild, collected by the Royal Family among many other distinguished art lovers who value wildlife).

*“When buying art purely for pleasure, who you trust is essential”*



Auguste Rodin -  
Jean d'Aire,  
1887

Francois Pompon -  
Polar Bear (marble),  
1923

Rembrandt Bugatti -  
Walking Panther,  
1904

