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KOVELS ANTIQUES AND COLLECTING

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PHOTO CREDIT: Woody Auction

PHOTO CAPTION: Multicolor glass panels,
gilt trim, and embellishments like the coin
medallions on this jar give Royal Flemish art
class its regal look.

Art Glass

The Mt. Washington Glass Company was one of the most important American art glass makers of the 19th century. The company started in 1837 as the Mt. Washington Glass Works in South Boston. Later, it moved to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where it operated until it merged with the Pairpoint Manufacturing Co. in 1894.

While it was in operation, Mt. Washington made art glass in many colors and finishes, like two-tone Amberina and Burmese, often embellished with gold and enamel. Its crown jewel may be the appropriately named Royal Flemish, which features panels of multiple colors outlined in gold. It was made by 1889, but the company did not patent it until 1894. Maroon is often one of the featured colors; shades of peach, pink, yellow, cream, and translucent white also appear.

The glass is further embellished with designs like flying birds, flowers, or mythical creatures. Decorations were meant to evoke the exotic or antique. Royal Flemish was rarely marked, unlike some Mt. Washington glass lines, which doesn't worry collectors; it is usually unmistakable.

Making Royal Flemish glass was a complicated process, so it was not copied by other companies. Even today, it has not been reproduced. This makes it all the more valuable. The covered jar shown here, decorated with medallions inspired by ancient Greek and Roman coins, sold for \$2,280 at Woody Auction.

Q: I bought a Japanese woodblock print at an estate sale. There is a handwritten note on the back that reads "Framed June 1962." I like the print, but I do not know much about this category of art. Because the marks are in Japanese, it has not been easy to find much about them through an Internet search. How can I find out if it is an old print by a known artist and what it may be worth?

A: Japanese woodblock prints have been popular collectibles for centuries. They became available in the West in the late 19th century. Generally, if you have a Japanese print and want to find out more information or a value, it is worth contacting an expert if the



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print is over 30 years old. If yours was framed in the 1960s, it certainly qualifies. If there is a museum in your area with a collection of Asian art, they may be able to help you identify your print, the artist, and its age, but not its value. Remember that prints, including Japanese woodblock prints, can be reprinted over many years. Look for books on Japanese prints, also called ukiyo-e, at your library. Many auction houses and dealers that sell artwork deal in Japanese prints and may be able to help you evaluate yours. There are some auction houses like the Ukiyo-e Gallery that specialize in them.

TIP: Never use hot or cold water on glass. Use dishwashing liquid, a soft toothbrush, and warm water. Rinse, then dry with a terrycloth towel.

CURRENT PRICES

Carnival glass, Harvest Grape, compote, marigold, scalloped rim, flared base, Indiana, 1960s, 8 1/2 inches, \$30.

Textile, piano shawl, sky blue, ribbon, macrame border, diamond lattice, fringe, hand knotted, 1920s, 105 x 39 inches, \$115.

Auto, sign, Goodrich, Guide Post, round, red and white, Slow Down, Safety First, porcelain, 20 inches, \$480.

Bottle, Star Whiskey, cone shape, brown amber, ribbed, applied handle, embossed oval, mold blown, open pontil, W.B. Crowell Jr., New York, c. 1850, 8 inches, \$770.

For more collecting news, tips and resources, visit www.Kovels.com

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