



Jewels including Burmese ruby from US industrialist family at Adam's



Auction house also has Kashmir sapphire ring and rare Cartier Art Deco clock for sale Precious jewellery and high-end watches can be great investment options for savvy buyers who like to wear their wealth on their wrists or fingers, around their necks, or hanging from their ears.

Auction houses often come upon such valuable heirloom pieces and Adam's next Fine Jewellery and Ladies' Watches auction on Tuesday, May 12th, includes jewellery being sold by a descendant of the American industrialist Armour family.

The collection was owned by Lola Hughes Sheldon (1869-1953), the wife of Jonathan Ogden Armour and daughter-in-law of Philip Danforth Armour snr, founder of the eponymous Chicago meat packing and food production company. Such was the exceptional quality of her jewellery collection that it attracted the attention of associates of notorious Chicago crime gang leader, Al Capone. "She insisted on the return of her most sentimental pieces and remarkably the robbers obliged," explains Claire-Laurence Mestrallet, director of jewellery and watches at Adam's auctioneers.

Mestrallet selects a rare 18th century hardstone and gem-set cane handle (€8,000 – €12,000) as "the jewel of this collection". It was made in France during the era when canes replaced swords as a prestigious accessory for fashionable gentlemen. This extraordinary piece takes the shape of a dolphin, which is holding a carved agate Moorish figure wearing a gold turban and jewelled bracelets. Suggesting that it should be bought by a museum, Mestrallet says a very similar piece from Louis XVI's Winter Palace was exhibited at the Moscow Kremlin Museum in 2021.

A Burmese ruby and diamond dress ring (€12,000 – €18,000); a rare Cartier Art Deco rock crystal, enamel and diamond set clock (€20,000 – €30,000); and a late 19th century French gold and



sapphire desk clock (€8,000 – €12,000) are other highlights from the collection.

18th century hardstone and gem-set cane handle (€8,000 - €12,000) at Adam's Fine Jewellery and Ladies' Watches auction

Readers of this column will remember that Adam's sold four rare Kashmir sapphires in 2025, the first of which attracted global attention in May 2025 and made the record price of €660,000 for a sapphire sold in Ireland. Now, Adam's is selling another of these blue gem stones which were mined between 1882-1887 in the rugged Zanskar mountains. This Kashmir sapphire is placed in the centre of a cluster of diamonds on a ring and has an estimate of €50,000 – €90,000.

Two pieces of jewellery with so-called “fancy coloured” diamonds are also for sale at the Adam's jewellery auction. Natural fancy coloured diamonds – formed through the presence of trace elements – can be yellow, pink, blue or green. A single stone diamond ring with a pear-shaped diamond with a colour certified to be “fancy intense yellowish brown” has an estimate of €30,000 – €40,000, while a diamond pendant with a cut diamond with a colour certified to be “fancy intense yellow” has an estimate of €55,000 – €65,000.

Meanwhile, the certified natural saltwater pearls inset into a pair of early 20th century pearl and diamond pendant earrings (€25,000 – €35,000) are another highlight. Naturally occurring pearls form as a defence against an irritant to the oyster or mussel, while cultured pearls are formed when an irritant is manually inserted into the mollusc to promote the production of the mother-of-pearl.

Rare Cartier Art Deco rock crystal, enamel and diamond set clock (€20,000 - €30,000)

Late 19th century French gold and sapphire desk clock (€8,000-€12,000)

Certified natural saltwater pearls inset into a pair of early 20th century pearl and diamond pendant earrings (€25,000 - €35,000)

O'Reilly's Jewellery auction on May 13th has about 30 pieces of jewellery made by the late Dublin goldsmith, Declan Killen. Killen started out making handmade diamond rings, but then turned to making jewellery inspired by Celtic and natural world motifs in sterling silver and gold.

He was commissioned to make a Newgrange themed brooch for Queen Elizabeth II for her first State visit to Dublin in 2011. He was subsequently commissioned to create a set of 1916 cufflinks for American president, Barack Obama on his visit to Dublin in 2016.

Late Dublin goldsmith Declan Killen who ran his jewellery workshop on Fade Street in Dublin from 1985 until shortly before his death in 2025

Widely appreciated for his craftsmanship and kindness, he ran his jewellery workshop on Fade Street, Dublin 2, from 1985 to shortly before his death in 2025.



“He was known for his modernised Celtic and abstract design pieces,” says Natasha Bernon, gemmologist with O'Reilly's auction rooms on Francis Street, Dublin. The auction includes an opal and diamond set pendant mounded in 18 carat white and yellow gold with an 18 carat gold chain (€6,000 – €9,000).

Finally, a jewellery and accessories auction from Adam's Blackrock opens for bidding on Wednesday, May 6th and continues until Wednesday, May 20th. Items range from Edwardian to contemporary jewellery, including antique transformable necklaces, tennis bracelets and pieces by Tiffany & Co and Cartier. There are also designer belts, scarves, headbands, eyewear, and other vintage pieces from luxury designers. Public viewings of the lots goes ahead from May 15th – 18th in the lower ground floor of 13 Kildare St, Dublin 2.

What did it sell for?

18 carat gold violin brooch

the 18 carat gold violin brooch (€1,000-€1,500) at Morgan O'Driscoll's jewellery& watches auction

Estimate: €1,000 – €1,500

Hammer price: €950

Auction house: Morgan O'Driscoll

Gold and gemstone bracelet

gold and gemstone mesh bracelet set with multi-coloured gemstones and diamonds (€12,000-€18,000) at Morgan O'Driscoll jewellery&watches auction

Estimate: €12,000 – €18,000

Hammer price: €12,000

Auction house: Morgan O'Driscoll

Trees in Sunlight, Hans Iten

Trees in Sunlight by Swiss-born, Belfast based, Hans Iten (1874-1930) with an estimate of €1,000-€1,500 at Morgan O'Driscoll art auction

Estimate: €1,000 – €1,500

Hammer price: €3,200



Auction house: Morgan O'Driscoll

Bank of Flowers, Andrew Nicholl

Bank of Flowers watercolour on paper by Belfast-born Andrew Nicholl (1804-1886) with an estimate of €3,000-€5,000 at Morgan O'Driscoll art auction

Estimate: €3,000 – €5,000

Hammer price: Not sold

Auction house: Morgan O'Driscoll

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