

# The outstanding 19th c. Aesthetic Movement porcelain collection of Helene Fortunoff will be auctioned online, April 23rd

*The online-only auction, starting at 6 pm Eastern, is officially titled [The Fortunoff Collection of 19th Century Aesthetic Movement Porcelain](#) - 243 lots in all*

WOLCOTTVILLE, INDIANA, UNITED STATES, April 1, 2024

[/EINPresswire.com/](#) -- Anyone who grew up in the New York-New Jersey metropolitan area will recognize the name Fortunoff, the high-end retailer of housewares, silverware, lighting fixtures and jewelry. Few are probably aware, however, that the matriarch of the Fortunoff family, [Helene Fortunoff](#) (1933-2021), was a passionate collector of fine antique ceramics.



Pair of rare Worcester porcelain Renaissance Revival pate sur pate moon flasks, circa 1875, the white ground bodies decorated with a cobalt blue panel of Italianate masks and more. (est. \$5,000-\$7,000).

Now, the entire collection that Helene assembled with her second husband [Robert Grossman](#) will come up for bid in an online-only auction slated for Tuesday, April 23rd, starting at 6 pm Eastern time. The sale, comprising 243 lots, will be conducted by Strawser Auction Group. Online bidding will be via [LiveAuctioneers.com](#). Absentee and telephone bids will also be accepted.

A preview is available by appointment only on Tuesday, April 23rd, from 3-5 pm, in the Strawser Auction Group facility located at 200 North Main in Wolcottville, Ind. For an appointment, call 260-854-2859 or 260-336-2204; or, you can send an email to [michael@strawserauctions.com](mailto:michael@strawserauctions.com).

The auction is officially titled [The Fortunoff Collection of 19th Century Aesthetic Movement Porcelain](#), reflecting the main focus of the collection. Helene had a passion for Japanese design and collected Japanese lacquer pieces. The specific styles in the auction were mostly inspired by Japan, including important pieces designed by the Father of Modernism, Christopher Dresser.

“Although very large, the collection was very specific based on the highest quality, rarity and

strength of design," said Nick Boston, a dealer who first met Helene and Robert in January 2007 at the New York Ceramics Fair and went on to sell them many of the pieces in their collection. "Helene had an eye for quality. Her background in jewelry passed on to her taste in porcelain."

Mr. Boston called the collection "without a doubt the finest collection of Aesthetic Movement porcelain in the world," one that focused mainly on Minton and Royal Worcester's 'Japan' range, first introduced in 1862, and items from British manufacturers Copland, Royal Crown Derby and Coalport, "basically companies who were supplying Gilded Age US homes in the 19th century."



Pair of circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement foo dogs, each decorated in blue and white with 22-ct. gilding, perched on a faux Japanese style hardwood stand (est. \$800-\$1,200).

Numerous pieces in the auction are expected to vie for top lot honors. Chief among them is a pair of rare Worcester porcelain Renaissance Revival pate sur pate moon flasks, circa 1875, the white ground bodies decorated with a cobalt blue panel of Italianate masks, scrolls, caryatids and fantastic animal heads and each with a large panel of pate sur pate flowers (est. \$5,000-\$7,000).

“

The collection was very specific based on the highest quality, rarity and strength of design. Helene had an eye for quality. Her background in jewelry passed on to her taste in porcelain.”

*Nick Boston*

A pair of hard-to-find Mintons Aesthetic Movement Moon vases, circa 1875 and 10 inches tall, the sang de bouef grounds decorated with a 22-carat gilded Japanese style central design of a crane amongst prunus, each with two small shaped handles, has an estimate of \$2,000-\$3,000.

A large, circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement moon flask decorated with blue and white Japanese style fauna and a 22-carat gilded butterfly, all against a black ground with a 22-carat gilded scrolling dragon to the neck, should fetch \$1,500-\$2,500. The pair to this moon flask was donated by Ms. Fortunoff to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, where it now resides.

A circa 1862 Minton exhibition tazza, probably designed by Leon Arnoux with puce ermine, designed for display at the London International Exhibition 1862, has a pre-sale estimate of \$1,500-\$2,000. The stem is modelled as three parian back-to-back storks supporting a shallow dish nicely painted in bright enamels against a 22-carat gilded ground in the style of Owen Jones.

A pair of circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement moon flasks decorated in Japanese style, heron and fauna all in the Imari palette, both with two square sectioned lobed handles and all upon on a faux hardwood style base, 12 inches tall, is expected to finish at \$1,500-\$2,500.

A rare Mintons Aesthetic Movement cabinet plate, circa 1875, designed by Christopher Dresser, the white ground body within a wide turquoise border of enameled panels and geometric ornament and a center of sprays of flowers, 9 ½ inches tall, has an estimate of \$800-\$1,200. Similar examples of the plate were produced for the Paris International Exhibition of 1878.

A pair of circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement foo dogs should bring \$800-\$1,200. The opposing pair are each decorated in blue and white with 22-ct. gilding and modelled as a foo dog with paw on a ball, all perched on a faux Japanese style hardwood rectangular pierced stand.

A pair of circa 1880 Mintons Aesthetic Movement Gilded Age moon flasks, each with celadon ground bodies and a large bronzed and 22-carat gilded circular panel of Japanese style pomegranates amongst leaves and branches, with Chinese style square section handles and gilded lid, all upon faux hardwood stands, the only known examples, should hit \$700-\$900.

A circa 1875 Mintons Aesthetic Movement bottle vase designed by Christopher Dresser, the turquoise ground body decorated in a faux cloisonné stylized Chinese motif, 9 inches tall, has an estimate of \$300-\$500. Also, a pair of circa 1875 Mintons Aesthetic Movement vases, the yellow ground bodies decorated with 22-carat gilded flowering branches, should command \$400-\$600.

A pair of circa 1890 Royal Crown Derby Neoclassical vases, the pink ground bodies having a rectangular panel of Greek athenium and swag, with two angular handles and a flared top, all on a square pedestal base, 8 inches tall, is expected to change hands for a reasonable \$400-\$600.

A pair of excellent quality Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement moon flasks, circa 1875, each decorated in the Japanese Shibayama style depicting birds and blossoms against a speckled



Large, circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement moon flask decorated with blue and white Japanese style fauna and a 22-carat gilded butterfly, all against a black ground (est. \$1,500-\$2,500).

ivory ground, both with square section faux bronze handles, all upon faux hardwood style bases, purchased at the New York Ceramics Fair 2002 from Mr. Boston, should realize \$1,500-\$2,000.

A scarce pair of circa 1880 Coalport Neoclassical vases, the red ground bodies decorated with 22-carat gilded palmettes, swags and bands of stylized flower heads with a tall thin neck and all upon a circular base, standing 6  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches in height, carries a pre-sale estimate of \$400-\$500.

A pair of circa 1875 Royal Worcester Aesthetic Movement moon flasks, each one decorated with Japanese style polychrome enamels depicting butterflies and fauna, with two 22-carat gilded square section lobed handles, all on a faux hardwood style base, should sell for \$1,000-\$1,500.



Helene's son David said he can trace the collection to its very beginnings when his mother and Robert were entertaining someone from the Fine Arts Society who noticed a moon flask that had been in the family for ages. "He identified it as Christopher Dresser," David recounted, "and he offered to buy it on the spot. This got Helene's attention right away and she had to learn more."

She started to research Christopher Dresser and went to a porcelain show in New York. "That's where she met Nick Boston," David said. "Robert had noticed a moon flask similar to one he remembered from someone's library in England. This drew them to the booth. Helene ended up buying out Nick's entire booth and their friendship and Helene's interest was forever solidified."

Robert and Helene found a new hobby they could enjoy together and it could be an activity they pursued on their travels. The couple sought out antique dealers wherever they travelled, making purchases in England, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, among other places. As Robert once remarked, "Wherever the British had lived, they were sure to have left some porcelain behind."

"Helene's collection, and the way it was beautifully displayed, was like the interior of a jewelry box," Nick Boston said. "This is what these pieces were designed for, for the Gilded Age homes. The great 19th century New York designers and decorators, the Herter Brothers designed

homes, for Vanderbilt for example, to look like the interior of a jewelry box. Helene accomplished this, cabinet after cabinet beautifully displayed and beautifully lit. It really was a sight to behold.”

Helene and Robert donated portions of their collection to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Yale University and the Art Institute of Chicago. “For a collector to have their collection displayed in a major museum is the highest accolade,” Mr. Boston said. “Helene was a visionary. She had incredible taste and was a very generous philanthropist. Her foresight and generosity have left a most incredible legacy in the world of 19th century design and ceramics. Magic happened.”

To view a flipbook of the auction, click on this link: [The Helene Fortunoff Collection - FlipBooklets](#)

The Strawser Auction Group is always in the market for quality items for future auctions, especially majolica, Fenton, Pickard, Mt. Washington, R.S. Prussia and related merchandise. To consign a single item, an estate or a collection, you may call Michael Strawser at (office): 260-854-2859 or (cell): 260-336-2204; or, you can email him at [michael@strawserauctions.com](mailto:michael@strawserauctions.com).

To learn more about the Strawser Auction Group and the sale of the Helene Fortunoff porcelain collection slated for Tuesday, April 23rd, visit [www.strawserauctions.com](http://www.strawserauctions.com).

# # # #

Strawser Auction Group  
Strawser Auction Group  
+1 260-854-2859  
[email us here](#)



Large, rare Mintons Porcelain Vase and Cover c.1885, the yellow ground body decorated with enameled sprays of flowers, with a 22ct gilded lid, all on a large 22ct gilded ornate pierced base (est. \$300-\$500).

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/700373377>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

