

Bertoia's welcomes 2023 holiday season with festive Nov. 17-18 Annual Fall Auction of fine toys, banks, trains and seasonal antiques from important collections

*Featured: Cast-iron mechanical & still banks, spelter banks, sensational European tinplate toys, aviation toys, superlative Christmas, Halloween & other holiday antiques*



VINELAND, N.J. – Antique toy collectors never have to wait till December to celebrate the traditional gift-giving season. All of their Christmases come at once, at Bertoia's Annual Fall Sale of toys, holiday antiques and more. This year's edition, slated for November 17-18 features a dizzying array of exquisite European and American toys, trains, airplanes, and both mechanical and still banks from premier collections.



European toys will be on full display, with all forms of transportation – land, sea and air – well represented. A large grouping of early German boats includes a fabulous Marklin paddle wheel-er, a near-mint Marklin battleship, an enormous Radiguet gunboat, and several other awe-inspiring vessels. Grand automobiles, including limousines by Marklin, Carette and Gunthermann, will line up alongside race cars by Distler and Tipco. A great-looking 1895 Bing fire engine adds even more charm to the blue-chip Continental fleet.

A luxe assortment of lithographed tinplate toys includes a dozen motorcycles from KiCo, M&K (Muller & Kadeder) and Fischer, as well as boxed Lehmann 'cycles. Other Lehmann toy highlights are led by a coveted Primus roller-skater, a Berolina auto, and Ampol Artic explorer. The latter two toys are accompanied by their very rare original boxes. Other tinplate toys include comic character-themed figures, a Vielmetter Clown Artist with 6 cams, a boxed Distler Porter, and a Fleischmann Deep Sea Diver. An abundance of penny toys will be on hand to tempt the many collectors who never tire of the diminutive tin whimsies that were sold on European street corners well over a century ago.





A select grouping of Japanese robots and other toys will roll across the auction block, including a stellar ASC Tremendous Mike with its crisp original box, a sought-after Nomura Walking Batman, and a boxed Bandai Atom/Astro Boy. Among the Japanese automotive toys to be auctioned are several race cars, with a fresh-to-the-market near-mint and boxed Yonezawa Atom race car adding retro style to the fleet.

The approximately 150 still and mechanical banks to be sold are anchored by the collection of the late Heath Hurlbert, who was an active member of the MBCA. The Hurlbert mechanicals include a superb example of a Shepard Hardware Mason bank, a white Owl Turns Head, a Circus bank, Hoopla bank, Ives Snapping Bulldog, and many others. A small but very choice grouping of still banks features a Two-Faced Indian and wonderful painted Songbird – both by A.C. Williams – and a variety of painted building banks.





Antique bank enthusiasts won't want to miss the chance to bid on Part I of the Jim and Genia Willett collection of colorful German spelter still banks. The Willetts spent decades amassing their whimsical, ornately detailed banks, which rate very highly for condition.

The Bob Davis collection of airplanes and aeronautical toys (see profile in Oct. 2023 *Antique Toy World*) includes dozens of lithographed and hand-painted tinsplate rarities, from primitive Ernst Plank pusher planes to Gordon Bennett-inspired Gunthermann productions. As one would expect of a collection as advanced as Bob's, there are also numerous examples of aviation ephemera, posters and prints, and other go-alongs.





Collectors of cast iron will have the option to bid on prized items across several categories, including mechanical and still banks, door-stops, horse-drawn toys, and vehicles. Automotive highlights include a nice Hubley Packard Straight-8, several Arcade autos, a rare Vindex Rapid Delivery truck, motorcycles, utility trucks and more.

High-stepping horse-drawn toys are ready to march and entertain, starting with a large white Bandwagon and other examples from the Hubley Circus series. An ultra-rare Hubley Firehouse will be offered – only the second of its type ever to appear in the marketplace – as well as a Pratt & Letchworth Burning Building and an Ives Firehouse.





Figural cast-iron doorstops are expected to capture a broad audience, given the variety of themes and consistently pristine condition seen throughout the selection. Notably, the grouping includes a few remaining hold outs from Jeanne Bertoia's decades-old collection, including a Hubley Giraffe, Rhumba Dancer, and Spanish Guitar Player. Also highly rated are a Bradley & Hubbard Standing Rabbit and Monticello House.

Those who love pressed steel toys and pedal cars will be treated to airplane pedal cars from the Bob Davis collection as well as several automotive cars, large trucks, a Keystone Packard Coast-to-Coast Bus, and a Sturditoy Fire Pump No 7. Additionally, there is a virtual motor pool of boxed Smith-Miller trucks, some of which retain their original packaging and have never been opened.





The Philadelphia toymaker Schoenhut leads the wooden toy category with favorites that include an Abbott's Milk Wagon, Alderney Dairy Wagon, and Hood's Dairy Wagon. Circus and Teddy Roosevelt Safari figures will be sold alongside several large Schoenhut tents. Among the other early wooden toys are an incredible Fire Brigade Ladder Wagon, several sets of 9-pin skittles, and antique Erzgebirge (Germany) figures.

A large single-owner private collection from New York City was the source for more than three dozen lots of European toy soldiers and figures by Heyde, Mignot and other manufacturers. The highlight of the group is, without question, a complete Heyde set of The Triumph of Germanicus, with chariots, gladiators, trumpeters, Greek and Roman cavalry and infantry figures; plus a menagerie of animals that includes elephants, hounds, and bears with their handlers. Few complete sets of its type are known to exist.





A full day has been allocated to Christmas, Halloween and other holiday antiques. Several large collections have been consigned to Bertoia's, and the many hundreds of pieces will be divided between the November sale and a spring 2024 auction event. The November selection will certainly impress, as it boasts dozens of Santa Claus nodders – some as tall as 3ft – assorted Christmas candy containers, belsnickles, feather trees, Dresdens, glass ornaments and more. The Halloween portion of the sale rivals any seen in past auctions hosted by Bertoia's, so that's quite an endorsement. Prepare to be treated, not tricked, by witches of various size, devil heads, costumes, noisemakers, ephemera and so much more.





The holiday section is also the perfect showcase for Steiff and other stuffed animals, automata, fine dolls, and other special treasures Santa might have left under the Christmas tree for some lucky child of the late-19th or early 20th century.

But that's not all. Bertoia's was delighted to make room in the November sale for top-quality country store and advertising items from the Ray Burgess collection, including a beautiful Hires Root Beer embossed tin sign and a Cherry Smash soda fountain dispenser.





