

# Shopping, Texas-Style

Dallas's art bounty complements a beckoning antiques mecca.

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**M**ention Dallas and images of high fashion and opulent living arise. It's therefore no surprise that this sophisticated style capital houses a panoply of world-class art galleries and antiques shops. In the Southwest, this city is *the* mecca for antiques; in particular, the metroplex is known as an important destination for inveterate Francophiles. Yet today's scene is richer and more varied than top-of-the-line Louis XV and Louis XVI: Now, Continental, English, mid-century, Art Deco, Asian and, most recently, French 1940s play into the mix.

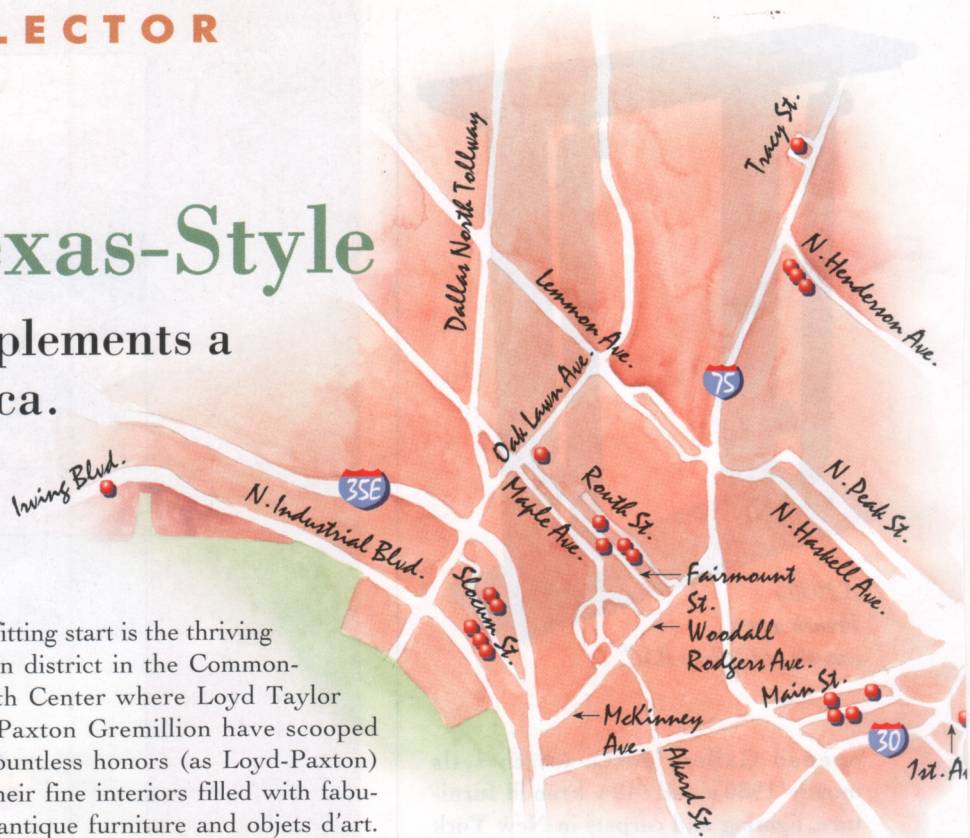
Alongside the antiques boom, "Big D's" art world has exploded. Within the last five years, numerous cutting-edge contemporary spaces have opened. Many of the newly launched galleries represent Texas-based talents—hotly collected artists who attract a broad and increasingly national audience.

A fitting start is the thriving design district in the Commonwealth Center where Loyd Taylor and Paxton Gremillion have scooped up countless honors (as Loyd-Paxton) for their fine interiors filled with fabulous antique furniture and objets d'art. Last fall, they further expanded their antiques empire by teaming up with San Francisco dealer Ray Parker Gaylord of Charles Gaylord Antiques to form Dallas-based **Trigon**, 3137 Irving Boulevard, Suite 313. Pristinely restored, Trigon's inventory is diverse and dazzling, each piece carefully displayed, its description and provenance meticulously recorded. On a recent visit, the offerings ranged from an ornately carved late 19th-century Chinese cinnabar throne to a spectacular silver mid-19th-century canopied four-poster bed from the Indian kingdom of Pataki. Expect prices five figures and above.

Five minutes away, the largest concentration of design district dealers is found on Slocum Street, a veritable

beehive of shops and amply sized showrooms. Begin at **Legacy Antiques**, No. 1406, an abundant resource for 19th-century French and Continental items. Highlights include an exquisite French crystal and gilt bronze tantalus set, circa 1860, for \$7,000, and an ornately carved French 19th-century Henry II-style oak sideboard for \$12,000.

Next door, **Joseph Minton Antiques**, No. 1410, focuses on the upper end of Italian, French and English works from the 17th through 19th centuries. Minton's recent selections ranged from a rare 19th-century Boulle inlaid inkwell with gilt-bronze figural mounts (\$2,200) to a 10-foot tall, 18th-century French walnut *bibliothèque*



## TRAVELING COLLECTOR



*Clockwise from above: Bronze mechanical organ, at Orion Antique Importers; a Chinese throne, at Trigon; a Napoleon III mantel, at Inessa Stewart's Antiques; and "Dorilla," 1913, by John William Goddard, at the European Art Gallery.*



from a chateau near Nice (\$40,000).

Across the street at **Orion Antique Importers**, No. 1435, the exceptional also reigns. Owner David Stevens, a Dallas antiques denizen since 1975, is known for investment-quality furniture as well as a stellar chandelier selection. He buys directly from France and Italy, finding such extraordinary furniture as a late 18th-century Directoire bronze mechanical organ, attributed to Pierre Philippe Thomire, which Stevens reveals is "similar to one given to Josephine by Napoleon." This special instrument is listed at \$100,000.

**Connie Williamson Antiques** at No. 1313, Suite 102, reflects the owner's jewelry background. A carefully chosen inventory of 18th- to early 20th-century French pieces emphasizes finely detailed furniture with exquisite bronze mountings.

Williamson's neighbor, **Le Louvre French Antiques**, Suite 105, is a great bet for choice architectural. "We're known for our fountains, doors and gates," says the owner, Annick McNally. Here, you can purchase 19th-century French stone fountains for \$1,800 to \$16,000 or choose from pairs of 18th-century gates, from \$4,000 to \$14,000.

Fifteen minutes by car, the lively Knox-Henderson retail corridor is another antiques must. Here the look is English, flavored with Continental. Two top purveyors are **Kent-Stone Antiques**, 2819 North Henderson, and **Nick Brock Antiques**, 2909 North Henderson. A diversity of styles, countries and time periods are represented by Kent-Stone's handsome room settings. This compelling eclecticism yields such treasures as an 18th-century English Georgian mahogany mirrored secretary. Neighbor Nick Brock also delights in the unusual, culling mostly from Texas sources. Brock's recent finds include a Georgian marble mantel ornamented with a sculpture of Medusa, at \$28,000, and a 16th-century carved Italian desk for \$22,500.

Uptown, art holds sway. Begin at **Pillsbury & Peters Fine Art**, 2913 Fairmount Street, which just celebrated its second anniversary, showing such 20th-century heavy-hitters as George Segal, Al Held and Magdalena Abakanowicz. The gallery also specializes in mid-career artists with strong Texas ties, including Houston-based Sharon Kopriva, known for her sculptures and paintings depicting mummies, at \$1,000 to \$20,000, and internationally exhibited James Surls, famed for totemic wood sculptures, from \$15,000 to the low six figures.

At 2722 Fairmount, the 19th century reigns supreme at the aptly named **Victorian Gallery**, one of the country's first art spaces (established in 1970) to showcase Victorian art. A recent high point: Italian 19th-century master Eugenio Zampighi's charming domestic scene, "First Born" (\$59,000). One block away, **David Dike Fine Art**, 2613 Fairmount, has carved out an important niche showing historic Texas figures. Since 1986, Dike's been exhibiting a virtual who's who of 19th- and 20th-century Lone Star painters, from five- to six-figure landscape masters Robert Wood, Porfirio Salinas and Julian Onderdonk to classic members of the 1930s to '40s era Regional