

INFORMATION: MID-20th-CENTURY ASHTRAYS

I have often been asked about a good investment in art and design -- find something with little appreciated value, at the moment, and hope others will feel the same way down the road. "Buy what you like" to avoid risk. Look for intrinsic value. Find something that is at once rare and ubiquitous.

Have a sense of humor or passion for the eccentric.



Half or more a century ago, people smoked as if their life depended on it. Utilitarian objects were carefully design with this activity in mind. The craft and design industries created objects that were functional and had a sensibility which reflected the times: wonderful playful shapes with colorful glazes or enameled finishes in oranges, harvest yellows or avocado greens. The innovation: simplistic cut-outs on the edges for holding the body of the cigarette while it continued to burn without going out or the freestanding protruding forked stand in the center of the disc. The specificity of these elegant and forgotten objects display their function better than most objects.