

The Telegraph

# LUXURY



American enamel, ruby and diamond spider brooch, \$1,600

# The fine art of 1stdibs

*Maria Doulton talks to 1stdibs founder Michael Bruno about building the perfect platform for magpies to indulge their jewellery fantasies*



BY MARIA DOULTON

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“The fun part is browsing,” Michael Bruno, founder of [1stdibs](#) website tells me as he drives to Manhattan from his country house. Bruno is referring to the dangerously addictive and engrossing pleasure of merrily scrolling and clicking through the 1stdibs website, and in particular the jewellery section, where I have lost many an hour on a rainy winter weekend in a jewellery-induced haze. “There are new things on our site every week. It’s like the world’s best jewellery show taking place every day,” explains Bruno.

Referred to as the world’s largest market place for rare and desirable objects, 1stdibs began life as a resource for professional interior decorators and architects wanting to source, say, a Louis XIV dining table or a Victorian chandelier for their office in New York or New Mexico. Bruno, who early on in the game understood the power of the Internet, started photographing items from the Paris flea-markets that he liked and after convincing sceptical stall dealers, put them online for decorators in the USA to see and buy.



Victorian Roman revival cameo earrings with hardstone agate cameos of ladies in profile with filigree and granulation in 15k gold, \$18,500

[Enlarge](#)

Over the past 14 years the site has expanded to include fine art, fashion, jewellery and watches, a natural evolution for a website with a discerning, deep-pocketed clientele who understand the delights of objects with the ability to enrich your life. And it is unlikely that you really need any of the tempting wares on the website – something a collector will understand.

Bruno is involved in selecting the dozens of dealers from around the world who place pieces on the 1stdibs website, but he leaves the final selection and vetting to his team of jewellery experts. The advantage of shopping on 1stdibs is the back up given by the website and of course the wide, yet finely calibrated net it casts.

This week I quite like the look of a pair of [Victorian Roman Revival Cameo earrings](#) at \$18,500 (£11,000) and a David Webb Zebra bracelet (authenticated with original certificate) for \$55,000 (£32,800) or an [American Spider Brooch](#) with a glossy enamel abdomen and ruby eyes for \$2,800 (£1,670). And I could *easily* add to my wish list the vivid blue and green [Tiffany Schlumberger Peacock bracelet](#) with enamel at \$13,500 (£8,050).

You can also browse by “creator”, and one click reveals seven jewels by the famous French early 19th century jeweller Suzanne Belperron and 50 odd pieces by Seaman Schepps. And with this amount of information in one place, 1stdibs turns browsing beyond an addiction and into an education. And that is enough justification for me.

**1STDIBS**

[www.1stdibs.com](http://www.1stdibs.com)

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