WMODA
WIENER MUSEUM OF DECORATIVE ARTS

ARTHUR WIENER – FOUNDER & BENEFACTOR

Arthur Wiener acquired his first piece of pottery in 1965 when he traveled to London, as a young college graduate, armed with Frommer's seminal guidebook Europe on $5 a day. He blew his daily budget on a Royal Doulton character jug of Merlin the magician, which caught his eye in a china shop window because of the Star of David image on the handle. Merlin certainly cast a spell on Arthur as he went on to become an avid collector of Royal Doulton figures and character jugs. In the early years, Arthur scoured antique shows where he met specialist Royal Doulton dealers, including Ed Pascoe and Arron Rimpley, who have helped him build his collection. Arron has worked with Arthur for over 25 years and facilitated the museum opening at his Gallery of Amazing Things.

In addition to his vast collection of Royal Doulton figures and character jugs, Arthur became fascinated with the art pottery produced at Doulton's Victorian studios in Lambeth, London and Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, including impressive exhibition pieces for the world fairs of the 19th and 20th centuries. The largest piece in the collection is a colossal 6 feet tall Doulton Faience vase, commissioned by the Gaekwar of Baroda. Arthur then began acquiring ceramic art from the British Arts & Crafts movement and exploring European design from the Art Nouveau and Art Deco periods.

Arthur's collection comes right up to date with contemporary ceramic art from the Ardmore studio in South Africa and he is very happy that his acquisitions have helped uplift this remote rural community.

In recent years, Arthur has become passionate about American studio glass, notably the work of Dale Chihuly and the Hot Glass gallery at WMODA boasts a spectacular forest of Chihuly's Macchia and Ikebana designs, alongside his Persian and Venetian forms.

In 2014, with his home and storerooms overflowing with his treasures, Arthur decided to open the Wiener Museum of Decorative Arts to share his love of ceramics and glass with a wide audience. His remarkable legacy has created a unique educational and cultural resource in South Florida and an important new study center for British and European ceramics and American studio glass.

"I want to share my love for the fired arts and leave a legacy to educate and inspire future generations about the importance of art in our lives and culture" Arthur Wiener.

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