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THREE PIGEONS

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A RARE SET OF FOUR COMPTON POTTERY STONEWARE "SEASONS POTS"

c.1910, by Archibald Knox, bearing the Compton Pottery marks, RESERVED each tazza with an inset coved rim and a body ornamented with large ribbon-ties and each bearing a Celtic knot "mon" with stylistic representations of the English Rose, the Thistle, the Pomegranate and the Primrose denoting the respective season, each raised on a turned spreading foot,

DIMENSIONS: 35cm (13^{3/4}") High, 56cm (22") Wide, 56cm (22") in Diameter, 27cm diameter the foot

PRICE: £9,600

STOCK CODE: 47184



HISTORY

Archibald Knox (b.1864-d.1933) was an internationally celebrated artist and foremost designer for Liberty & Co. in London. He was born and lived most of his life on the Isle of Man which strongly influenced his work.

In 1897 he left the Island to teach in an art school in London. During this period his association began with Liberty & Co. catering to an upmarket clientele with exclusive designs. His work for Liberty included designs for metalwork, jewellery, fabric and wallpaper designs and ceramics and garden pots.

He has long been considered a pioneer of modern 20th century design, with his work bridging arts and crafts, Celtic revival, art nouveau and modernism as can be seen in these pots.

Liberty & Co.'s first *Book of Garden Ornaments* declared *"Never before, in this country at least, has the Garden Pot been treated as an item, per se, of decorative skill"*. Engaging the services of leading designers such as Knox and Mary Fraser-Tytler, Liberty's commissioned a wide variety of terracotta garden ornament. These pots demonstrate Knox's personal abstracted variation of the Celtic entrelac or "knot" which can be found on a number of his designs.

The Compton Potters' Arts Guild who made the urns to Knox's designs, was an art pottery founded by, and based at the Surrey home of Scottish artist, Mary Fraser Tytler whose husband was painter George Watts.

She followed the Home Arts and Industries Association, and spearheaded design at the turn of the century with friends and collaborators including: Edward Burne-Jones, Walter Crane, Alexander Fisher, William De Morgan, Phoebe Traquair and Archibald Knox.

The outputs of the Compton group resulted in the formation in 1899 of the Compton Potters' Arts Guild. The innovative terracotta garden ornaments produced by the group, were recommended by Gertrude Jekyll and expanded into a production centre of their distinctive wares ranging from large terracotta garden pottery to smaller household figures, jugs and plaques.

Knox's "Seasons Pots" do appear on the market from time to time – either singly or in pairs. They are more usually in a terracotta colouration as opposed to the "buff" colour of these and they rarely seem to come with the raised foot. To get a complete set of four, on their feet is unheard of.

"KNOX: Order & Beauty" is a large exhibition from Easter 2025 celebrating the work of Archibald Knox at the Manx Museum in Douglas on the Isle of Man and will form part of a wider Isle of Knox campaign, with associated events, walks and talks taking place in 2025 and early 2026.