

Bonhams' Books Auction Charts The American Experience Dec. 2

NEW YORK CITY — Bonhams' American Experience: 1630–1890 auction of printed and manuscript Americana will take place Thursday, December 2. Simulcast to San Francisco, the 300-lot auction will be a multi-million-dollar sale with individual estimates ranging from the low hundreds to six figures.

The auction offers the collection of well-known San Francisco-based bibliophile Bruce E. McKinney, a collector who has made it his mission to demystify the rarefied world of antiquarian books. McKinney, the founder of a website devoted exclusively to book collecting, has included acquisition information and insisted on a no reserve auction.

McKinney's selection of rare books, pamphlets, manuscripts and early maps and prints chronicle the country's colonization and move westward over a period of nearly 300 years.

One of the highlights is a book featuring among the finest maps and views made of the Mississippi and Ohio River Basins (\$80/120,000). Titled *Voyage dans l'Amérique septentrionale*, the work by Victor Collot features two text volumes and an atlas containing 32 engraved plates by Tardieu.

New World/Colonial standouts include the first detailed map of Massachusetts, in William Wood's *New England's Prospect* from 1635 (\$30/50,000); a first edition of John Smith's rare and final work, *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New-England*, 1631 (\$50/80,000); and a rare printed diary of an Englishman living in lower Manhattan in the 1670s: Charles Wolley's *Two Years Journal in New-York* (\$25/35,000).

The Revolutionary War category includes a group of five rare pre-Revolutionary pamphlets authored by Samuel Adams and others, originally owned by the reviled Boston

Commissioner of Customs (\$15/25,000), a privately printed first-hand account from an officer in the American Revolution, John Simcoe's *Journal of the Operations of the Queen's Rangers* (\$50/70,000), and a copy of the Treaty of Paris in which the United States is first acknowledged by the British to be a sovereign nation (\$40/60,000).

Western Exploration highlights include Thomas Hutchins' large map of the Midwest, compiled from surveys he made during the French & Indian Wars and published in 1776 (\$30/50,000), and a first edition of Lewis & Clark's history of their expedition, with a fresh and fine map (\$70/90,000) along with several other rarities relating to Lewis & Clark.

Also crossing the block will be copies of George Catlin's *North American Indian Portfolio*, 1844, with 25 hand colored plates (\$100/150,000) and McKenney and Hall's *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (\$60/80,000), the two most famous color plate books on American Indians.

Rounding out the offerings, divided by states, are the first book devoted wholly to Texas, Friar Juan Antonio de la Pena's *Derrotero de La Expedicion en la Provincia de los Texas*, 1722 (\$30/50,000) with the first published view of San Antonio; a Florida rarity — Bartram's *A Concise Natural History of East and West Florida of 1775* (\$50/70,000); and the first book to describe an overland journey to California: *The Personal Narrative of James O. Pattie of Kentucky*, published in 1831 (\$30/50,000).

After a preview in San Francisco, preview will be in New York November 28–December 2. Preview will take place at Bonhams, 580 Madison Avenue, October 30–November 1. For additional information, www.bonhams.com/newyork or 212-461-6530.

Engagement Rings, Jewelry At Freeman's Dec. 7 Auction

PHILADELPHIA, PENN. — 'Tis the season for engagement: 2.2 million couples get married each year and a quarter of those proposals occur during November and December. A shopping source for the perfect ring could be at Freeman's auction on Tuesday, December 7, which will feature jewelry designers such as Bvlgari, Cartier, Chanel, Christian Dior, and Tiffany.

Kate Waterhouse, the jewelry specialist at Freeman's, is excited by the collection of engagement rings that will be offered at this auction, saying, "We have a really incredible range of rings, in terms of size,

color, clarity and price; each a unique and beautiful piece."

Rings will cross the block with estimates, ranging from \$3,000 to \$120,000. Highlights include a 1.5-carat Old European-cut diamond in a classic platinum setting (\$3/5,000), a five-carat Old European-cut diamond engagement ring (\$18/22,000), a five-carat emerald-cut diamond in platinum setting (\$35/45,000) and a 11.7-carat diamond engagement ring in platinum setting (\$120/220,000).

Freeman's is at 1808 Chestnut Street. For information, www.freemansauction.com or 215-563-9275.

Spain Buys Newly Discovered Bruegel

MADRID (AP) — Spain's Culture Ministry says it has bought a previously unknown masterpiece by Sixteenth Century Flemish painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder discovered recently by the Prado Museum.

A statement on the ministry's website said the Prado's board of trustees had agreed to purchase "The Wine of Saint Martin's Day" for euro 7 million (\$9.8 million). The signed work was owned by private collectors.

The Prado announced last month that the painting was a Bruegel after months of study and restoration.

The painting, dated between 1565 and 1568, depicts a crowd scrambling madly to get a sample of the year's first vintage from a barrel.

The Prado has just one other Bruegel the Elder painting. Prior to the latest find there were just 40 signed Bruegels in existence.

US Marshals Auction Sells Off Spoils From Madoff's Lavish Life

BY VERENA DOBNIK
ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK CITY (AP) — Anyone wanting to walk in the shoes of fallen financier Bernard Madoff was in luck November 13: Thousands of belongings from his New York City penthouse, including his used shoes, went on the auction block.

An anonymous bidder paid the highest price of the auction — \$550,000 — for a 10.5-carat diamond engagement ring that belonged to Madoff's wife, Ruth. The winning bid topped the \$300,000 minimum presale estimate.

Ruth Madoff's French diamond earrings fetched the next highest price. Valued at \$100,000 to \$137,500, they went for \$135,000 to an undisclosed buyer.

The man who became a symbol of greed and deceit on Wall Street also had a lavish collection of watches. One of his vintage steel Rolex "Moon Phase" watches sold for \$67,500, topping a \$60,000 estimate.

The sale started in the morning at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers, with an auctioneer from Texas-based Gaston & Sheehan rattling off lots at a tongue-twisting speed for more than six hours.

Buyers responded at fever pitch.

They raised their hands to signal a bid — accompanied by bloodcurdling shouts from bidspotters marking a winning price.

Their swaggering style — as if herding bulls instead of selling Madoff's artsy ones — seemed appropriate for an auction of the belongings of a Wall Street trader who cherished the winning bull in every form. He bought statues and paintings of them and even named his boats "Bull," "Sitting Bull" and "Little Bull."

A leather bull footstool — including a tail that had broken off — sold for \$3,300, against an estimate of \$250/350.

While many of the more than 400 lots included luxury items, the Madoffs' penthouse did have touches of culture.

A 1917 Steinway grand piano from their living room went for \$42,000 — six times the minimum estimate of \$7,000. The buyer was an 81-year-old Long Island real estate executive.

"I've got loads of pianos, but this one has history — it'll make an interesting conversation piece," said John Rodger, an amateur pianist who will keep the Steinway in his home in East Islip.

An oil painting by the late American artist Frederick Carl Frieseke sold for \$47,500, against an estimate of \$20/45,000.

The Manhattan sale is the last auction in New York of Madoff belongings. A third and final auction is to be held in Florida to sell off items from a Palm Beach home that went for more than \$5.5 million last month.

Madoff was arrested two years ago and quickly admitted his scheme. Investigators said he used billions of dollars in cash from new investors to pay old ones, cheating charities, celebrities and institutional investors.

US marshals seized every-

thing in the Madoffs' Manhattan apartment and Long Island beach house: worn socks, new monogrammed boxer shorts, Italian velveteen slippers bearing the initials "BLM" in gold embroidery. All of it was being sold — with morbid fascination for mundane articles from the couple's daily life that also were on the block, from bed linens, clothing, cookware and luggage to intimate items like cuticle scissors and bottles of shampoo.

Besides bulls and fine watches, Madoff loved shoes. He owned about 250 pairs, many never worn — made in Italy, France, Belgium and England.

The disgraced 72-year-old convict is behind bars for life in a North Carolina prison, and his wife was ordered to leave their homes.

Despite their vast wealth, the Madoffs didn't seem to make much room for houseguests.

The auction included their

early Nineteenth Century bed with fabric hangings and "intense sun fading" (\$8/11,400).

"Just \$500?" the incredulous auctioneer, Bob Sheehan, said of the first bid, adding, "This was the only bed in the whole house, I'm not kidding! \$500? My God, it's not a pullout."

It sold for \$2,250.

Sheehan conducted the auction for the US Marshals Service, which hoped to make at least \$1.2 million off the sale. Proceeds will go to more than 3,000 clients Madoff swindled in a multibillion-dollar Ponzi scheme.

US Marshal Roland Ubaldo said a total for the sale would not be available for several days, but he believed it would surpass the amount the government hoped for.

A New York auction last year of Madoff's property raised \$1 million. The Manhattan penthouse went for \$8 million, and his yacht and boats also were sold.

Blackwood March To Offer Appraisal Day November 20

ESSEX, MASS. — Auctioneer and appraiser Michael March will conduct a free fine art and antiques appraisal day at Blackwood March Auctioneers and Appraisers on Saturday, November 20, from 10 am to 2 pm.

Attendees may bring up to three items; welcome are American and Continental art-

works, Asian items, nautical antiques, old toys, textiles, porcelains, Oriental rugs and diverse accessories. Photographs of larger items are ok.

Blackwood March Auctioneers and Appraisers is at 3 Southern Avenue. For more information, 978-768-6943 or www.blackwoodauction.com.

UK Ministers Reveal Tastes Through Art Choices For Offices

BY JILL LAWLESS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LONDON (AP) — It's a tricky question for a British politician — which of the government's thousands of pieces of art do you put on your wall?

When it comes to paintings, members of Britain's Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition favor landscapes, battle scenes and portraits of their illustrious predecessors.

The government art collection holds more than 13,000 works by British artists from the Sixteenth Century onwards, including pieces by Hans Holbein, John Constable and J.M.W. Turner. Many are in storage, while others adorn government buildings and British embassies.

A lawmaker has published a complete list of works that ministers have chosen from the government's vast art collection to hang in their offices.

Obtained by opposition Labour Party legislator Tom Watson under Freedom of Information legislation, it shows that the new government has more conservative tastes than those of the previous Labour administration, which championed conceptual "Young British Artists" like Tracey Emin and Damien Hirst.

"Most of our ministers are harking back to a bygone age where everyone knew their place," Watson said.

Welfare Minister Iain Duncan Smith, a former army officer, has decorated his office with half a dozen depictions of historic battles, while junior defense minister Andrew Robathan has selected portraits

of military icons Admiral Horatio Nelson, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Kitchener, alongside scenes of the Battle of the Nile and the Spanish Armada.

Several ministers have chosen portraits of politicians from bygone centuries, including prime ministers Robert Peel and William Pitt, and scenes of the buildings around Parliament.

Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt and his junior minister Ed Vaizey fly the flag for modernity with works by contemporary British artists including Emin, Mark Wallinger and Yinka Shonibare.

Energy and climate change secretary Chris Huhne has a watercolor of Antarctic icebergs by David Smith — perhaps to remind him what is at stake in his job.

And Treasury chief George Osborne reveals a sense of humor with Grayson Perry's "Print for a Politician." The work by Perry — a Turner Prize winner who also makes appearances as his alter ego Claire — is a 7-foot-long etching of a war-scarred land.

Next year an exhibition at London's Whitechapel Gallery will put some of the works on public display together for the first time.

**Show Managers
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