

For Immediate release – January 2013

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Copley Fine Art Auctions | The Winter Sale 2013

BOSTON, MASS- Copley Fine Art Auctions' \$1.7 million January 21, 2013 sale of sporting art and antique decoys fired on all cylinders with all four cover lots selling and setting more than half a dozen new world records. Of the 363 lots offered an impressive 90% found buyers.

The auction took place at Wallace Hall in New York with Copley and Keno Auctions once again sharing the venue to kick off Americana Week. The sale saw participation from more than 260 live, telephone, online, and absentee bidders. Copley welcomed art lovers and collectors on the Saturday prior to the auction at their third annual Scotch and Smoked Salmon Preview Party. The event set the tone for the rest of the week, with a huge turnout of over 400 previewing the wide array of auction items.

"I was impressed with the amount of action and the level of interest from new buyers in this auction," Chairman and CEO Stephen B. O'Brien, Jr. remarked. "Even though it was a smaller auction in terms of number of lots offered, many items went through the roof."

Part one of the sale was highlighted by the Philip R. Goodwin (1882-1935) oil, titled *October Hunting* (\$125/175,000). The work, featured as the frontispiece in *Scribner's* October 1911 issue, was highly sought after by a number of bidders, eventually selling for \$161,000, the second highest price ever for the artist's work at auction.

The Lynn Bogue Hunt (1878-1960) market bounced back with all three of his works offered going above their high estimate. *Grapes and Grain* (\$10/20,000) brought the highest price at \$28,750, followed by *Ruffed Grouse in the Wild Grapes* (\$8/12,000) at \$13,800, and *Big Buck* (\$2/4,000) coming in at \$4,025.

Copley continued to be a dominant seller of Carl Rungius (1869-1959) works, and although they did not feature one of the artist's larger canvases that they have become known for selling, the two smaller oils offered shot through their \$8/12,000 estimates with each going above their high at \$13,800 and \$18,400, respectively.

Paintings by Harry Curieux Adamson (b. 1916) who recently passed away, continued to show strength, with *Medina County Impressions* (\$20/25,000) reaching far above its high estimate, realizing \$43,125, just shy of a new world record.

The estimate on Percival Leonard Rosseau's (1859-1937) *Irish Setters* was on point, landing squarely within its \$30/40,000 estimate at \$34,500.

Active bidding drove Bonefish and Tarpon Trust artist of the year, Brett J. Smith's (b. 1958) *Bone Try*, to \$9,775, well over its \$4/6,000 estimate. A watercolor by the artist titled *Rock Creek Bridge* also reached over its high estimate of \$5000, bringing \$5,750.

The iconic Ansel Adams (1902-1984) photograph, *Grand Tetons and the Snake River, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming, 1942* (\$40/60,000) performed well bringing \$54,625.

Prints were strong starting with the first lot of the sale, a Richard Bishop (1887-1975) *Map of Well-Known Saltwater Gamefish* (\$4/600) that brought \$3,450, nearly six times its high estimate. The John James Audubon (1785-1851) *Dusky Duck* Havell edition print landed within its \$18/24,000 estimate at \$20,700. Chromolithographs by Ogden Pleissner (1905-1983), Aiden Lassell Ripley (1896-1969), and A. B. Frost (1851-1928) all performed above expectation with the top lots being Pleissner's *Hillside Orchards Grouse Shooting* and *Woodcock Cover*, each estimated at \$5/700, and going for \$2,875; Ripley's *Covey by the Cabin*, which sold for \$2,300 on a \$2/400 estimate; and a group of five shooting prints by Frost (\$1/2,000), which brought \$4,312, more than double the high estimate.

Bronzes performed well, with William Koelpin's (1938-1996) *Bear Country* going well over its \$15,000 high estimate and tying the world price of \$20,700, set by Copley in their Winter Sale 2012 with *Storm Warning*. Also of note was the Harry Wickey (1892-1968) baseball bronze (\$2,5/3,500), which set a world record for the artist at \$8,625, over twice its high estimate.

The top book lot of the sale was the rare edition of William J. Mackey, Jr.'s *American Bird Decoys*, which realized \$1,380.

In session two of the sale, Copley's decoys showed strong results with 9 of the top 10 lots finding buyers. With their strong showing in this sale Copley continued their dominance of the high end market, now having sold 10 of the top 12 decoys since 2009.

The cover lot of the sale, an important Augustus Aaron Wilson (1864-1950) preening eider drake decoy (\$150/250,000) settled within estimate, selling for \$172,500 setting a world record for an eider by any maker.

The Mason Decoy Factory (1896-1924) Salesman's Sample Robin Snipe, estimated at \$18/24,000, brought \$20,700. Just a few lots later, the exceedingly rare tern by Obediah Verity (1813-1901) topped its \$20,000 high estimate coming in at \$21,850.

The redhead drake by A. Elmer Crowell (1862-1952) saw competitive bidding, which drove the price over the \$20/40,000 estimate to \$43,125. Other working decoys saw solid results as well, with the golden plover (\$25/35,000) going near the high estimate for \$34,500. The dowitcher by the maker split the uprights, bringing \$46,000 on a \$40/50,000 estimate. The Canada goose (\$10/15,000) went above its high bringing \$16,100. Crowell decoratives showed signs of weakness with a deluge of carvings continuing to hit the market.

Three of the finest Harry V. Shourds (1861-1920) shorebirds known to exist did exceptionally well selling near or above their highs, with the Hudsonian curlew (\$22,5/27,500) bringing \$26,450, the robin snipe (\$12,5/17,5) bringing \$17,250, and the yellowlegs (\$10/15,000) \$16,100.

The Charles Schoenheider, Sr. (1854-1944) pintail pair soared past their \$25/35,000 estimate bringing \$54,625.

The Ward brothers (Lemuel T., 1896-1983, and Stephen, 1895-1976), broadbill drake estimated at \$30/50,000 went above estimate landing at \$51,750 and setting a record price for a Ward bluebill.

Southern decoys continued to show strength a few lots later in the sale, with Ira Hudson's (1876-1949) turning bluebill drake (\$50/70,000) setting a world record for a Hudson bluebill carving, coming in at \$48,875.

Contemporary carver Mark McNair (b. 1950) continued to be in demand. The top lot from the maker was the terns mounted on a crab float, which reached over its \$4/6,000 estimate realizing \$6,900.

Fishing related items and miscellany also had an impressive showing, with the Edward Vom Hoffe (1846-1920) reel blowing past its \$100-\$200 estimate, selling for \$2,645; the Richard Bishop (1887-1975) dies and pins bringing over double their \$2,000 high estimate at \$4,600; a collection of muskie floats (\$1/2,000) bringing \$4,025.

Commenting on the sale, O'Brien remarked, "It was exciting to see some strength and momentum in the market. All four cover lots and virtually every item big and small sold. I think our specialists Kathryn Robinson (Fine Art), Colin McNair (Decoys), and Jim Parker (Decoys) did a terrific job bringing some exceptional and interesting lots to market."

Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC is already preparing for its 2013 Sporting Sale, which will be held in July, with consignments accepted through the end of April. For a free confidential auction estimate please call 617.536.0030 or email info@copleyart.com. A full list of official prices realized from Copley's 2013 Winter Sale will be available at www.copleyart.com February 1. All prices include a 15% buyer's premium.