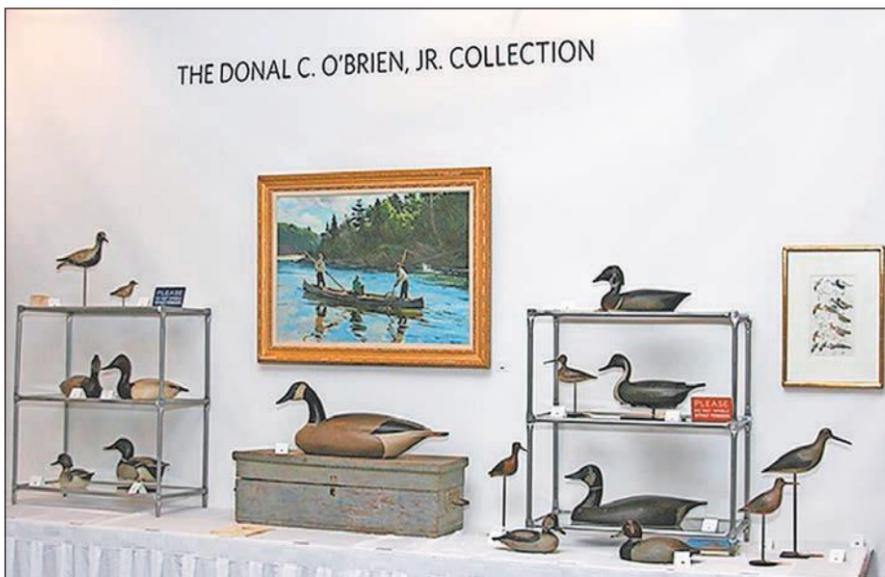


Copley's 'White Glove' Sporting Sale Attains \$4.8 Million, Sets Records



The white-glove sale of the Donal C. O'Brien Jr Collection (Sessions I-II) in July posted another seven decoys over the \$100,000 mark and set new records.

PLYMOUTH, MASS. — Copley Fine Art Auctions realized \$4.8 million in sales at the Sporting Sale 2017 July 27–28. The two-day sale was more than 92 percent sold by lot, extending Copley's robust track record, and the sold lots achieved an impressive 118 percent of their high estimate.

Sessions I and II of the Donal C. O'Brien Jr collection of important American sporting art and decoys were 100 percent sold, with an average price per lot of more than \$27,000 per decoy. This smashed the average price per lot from the sale of the distinguished collection of Dr James M. McCleery in 2000.

Nineteen world auction records were achieved for artists or decoy makers in this historic sale. Eight items sold for six-figure

prices, including seven decoys and one painting. There was robust bidding across all categories, including paintings, prints, folk art and antique and contemporary decoy carvings.

Copley's owner and principal, Stephen B. O'Brien Jr, said, "We had two great days of pinnacle works featuring the best the field has to offer. The O'Brien collection has always embodied excellence, and over the coming decades, it will continue to symbolize the very best. As a result, buyers showed up in force to our inaugural 'white glove' sale."

Three out of the five O'Brien cover lots more than doubled their average estimates. The top lot and top decoy of the sale was the Thomas Chambers wood duck drake



Stephen O'Brien Jr inspects some of the decoys in the gallery.

which sold for \$270,000, more than doubling its estimate (\$80/120,000) and setting a record for the carver and also a national record for any Canadian decoy.

The next highest decoy lot was the pintail drake by John English, which brought \$246,000, shattering the old record for the maker and leading Delaware River region decoys (\$80/120,000). The Canada goose by Charles E. "Shang" Wheeler shot to \$198,000, smashing the world record for this important carver as well as for the Connecticut region, and the Crowell plover sold for \$174,000. Great decoys with strong provenance and exceptional form led Copley's most successful sale in the company's 11-year history.

All five cover lots of the Sporting Sale Ses-

sions III and IV saw competitive bidding, with three landing within estimate and two climbing over their estimates. The preening goldeneye drake by A. Elmer Crowell surpassed its high estimate of \$80,000 and sold for \$90,000, and the Bunn/Bowman running golden plover rose above its high estimate of \$30,000 to \$48,000.

The 104 decoy lots of Session I of the O'Brien collection all found buyers, with a vast majority exceeding their high estimates.

Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC is preparing for its Winter Sale 2018 which returns to Charleston, S.C., in February, in conjunction with the Southeastern Wildlife Expo. For information, www.copleyart.com or 617-536-0030.



Kate Sasanoff

Lust, 1990

acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48 inches

Contemporary work by living artist enters art market (also see *The Gallery Interview* in this section)

Images available upon request:

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