

## Press Release

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Courtney King  
(212) 606-7176  
Fax: (212) 606-7381

# SOTHEBY'S TO OFFER ORIGINAL JEWELS FROM THE "A TREASURE'S TROVE" COLLECTION



New York, New York – On October 17, 2007, Sotheby's will offer six of the original 12 jewels from a real-life treasure hunt that took place in 2004-5 with complex clues to the jewels' locations embedded within the text and pictures of the from the "A Treasure's Trove" children's book,

written and illustrated by Michael Stadther. Unique 18-karat gold tokens with symbols of each of the jewels, modeled after the forest creatures in the book, were hidden in the knotholes of trees on public lands across the continental United States. Nation-wide, thousands of ‘trovers,’ as the treasure hunters called themselves, searched to find the tokens, which could then be presented to Stadther in exchange for the matching jewel. The jewels six being offered are the Grasshopper, Ant, Bee, Firefly, Spider and Beetle. The exhibition will be open to the public beginning on October 12<sup>th</sup>. The combined estimate for these items is \$258/345,000\*. The “A Treasure’s Trove” Jewels will be sold as part of Sotheby’s sale of Important Jewels on October 17.

The book, “A Treasure’s Trove: A Fairy Tale about Real Treasure for Parents and Children of All Ages,” was released in November of 2004, selling hundreds of thousands of copies and landing on the *New York Times*’ best-seller list for children’s books. The book narrates an intriguing tale of the devastating darkness that has taken over a forest and its creatures, only to be released by a man’s love for his wife and the bravery of a loyal pet. This classic fairytale illustrates the battle over greed and sorrow and strongly emphasizes the kindness of the heart. Stadther materialized the story by creating the 12 jewel-encrusted creatures and designed an elaborate treasure hunt for readers of all ages. Each treasure hunt was separate and unique, and each jewel was carefully chosen or created by the author Michael Stadther, who emphasized that the craftsmanship of each piece should be of the finest quality. With the exception of the Grasshopper, which was created at an earlier date, all of the jewels being offered were especially designed by Michael Stadther and made by master jeweler Robert Underhill, who specializes in one-of-a-kind custom pieces. Each piece in the collection was appraised by Donald A. Palmieri, G.G., and was accompanied by a report from the Gemological Appraisal Association Inc. The jeweler and many of the ‘trovers’ plan to attend the auction.

Robin Wright, specialist in the Jewelry department at Sotheby’s, said, “Sotheby’s is very happy to be selling six of the original 12 jewels from the ‘A Treasure’s Trove’ collection; not only because the exceedingly interesting story behind the book by Michael Stadther and the real-life treasure hunt that drew thousands of ‘trovers’ with unbridled enthusiasm, but also because of the value of the jewels themselves. All of the jewels are beautifully executed and set with excellent quality colored stones and diamonds, some with moveable parts that seem to give them lives of their own. Each of these jewels has a unique story, and anyone that has read the book or perhaps tried to solve the clues that led to the treasure’s location could now own one of these beautiful jewels for themselves.”

The **Spider** is composed of an extremely rare and valuable 6.36 carat Kashmir cushion-shaped sapphire and an oval diamond of yellow color weighing 21.23 carats, mounted in 18 karat gold and platinum. It is estimated to sell for \$150/200,000. The Spider was found in West Virginia by two families from Arizona.



The **Firefly**, pictured below (est. \$75/100,000) was found by a Berkeley college student in the Chinaberry Campground at Foss State Park, located in western Oklahoma. The insect, realistically-modeled with outstretched wings, is set with various gems, including a 1.44 carat oval alexandrite at the head, an oval ruby of 5.91 carats at the body and two round diamonds of yellow color, weighing .73 carats at the tail and the legs further set with small round diamonds weighing .21 carats. The wings are applied with opaque black enamel and the jewel is mounted in platinum and 18 karat gold.

The **Grasshopper** (est. \$10/15,000) is realistically modeled with head and body set with 86 round green garnets, the neck and legs set with 25 old European-cut diamonds weighing approximately .50 carats. The eye is set with a cabochon ruby and the jewel is mounted in gold and silver as a brooch, with detachable fitting. The Grasshopper token was found in Pleasant Valley, NY by three strangers from New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



The **Bee**, pictured on page 4 (est. \$6/8,000) was executed with movable wings of blue plique-à-jour enamel. Its head is set with 47 pavé black diamonds weighing 1.55 carats; the body and eyes are set

with 67 round yellow diamonds weighing a total of 1.48 carats. The work is completed by a baroque cultured pearl of natural black color, measuring approximately 16.5 by 13.5 mm. The Bee token was found by a couple from Texas in Santa Rosa, NM.



The **Beetle** (est. \$12/15,000) was found in Interior, SD by two former college roommates from Massachusetts and Oregon. This intricate work, with hinged gold wings, opens to reveal a pierced interior panel surmounted by a floral cluster set with a cushion-shaped tanzanite of 9.61 carats, encircled by 12 round diamonds weighing 3.68 carats. The head is pavé-set with 263 round black diamonds weighing 8.20 carats. The legs and underside are set

with 176 round diamonds weighing 7.86 carats, the eyes set with two round diamonds of yellow color, mounted in 18 karat gold and platinum.

The **Ant** (est. \$5/7,000) is set with three oval spessartite garnets on the body, weighing a total of 15.09 carats; the legs, eyes and body are decorated with a total of 204 round diamonds weighing 4.01 carats, mounted in platinum and 18 karat gold as a brooch. The Ant token was found in Moab, Utah by two ‘trovers’ who formed a partnership on the internet from Texas and Georgia.



\*Estimates do not include buyer’s premium.

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**For More Information, Please Contact the Press Office, 212 606 7176**