

IMPORTANT AMERICANA AT SOTHEBY'S

21 & 22 January 2011



21 December 2010 – Sotheby's auction of Important Americana will be held on 21 & 22 January 2011 in New York. The first day of the sale offers silver, prints and Chinese export porcelain, including works with truly exceptional histories. Day two of the sale begins with a selection of stoneware assembled by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Hochberg, featuring 103 pieces that have not been seen in public in over 20 years, and continues with furniture, folk art and carpets, led by **An Important Searls Family Chippendale Highly Inlaid Cherrywood and Mahogany Chest of Drawers, Attributed to Nathan Lombard, Sutton, Massachusetts, circa 1800** (est. \$250/700,000*). Sotheby's Americana Week sales continue with the dedicated auctions of Important Americana from a Private Collection in the afternoon of 22 January, which features American furniture and clocks, Paktong and English pottery, and Property from the Hascoe Family Collection: Important American and English Furniture, Fine & Decorative Arts on Sunday the 23rd**. All Americana Week sales will open for exhibition at Sotheby's York Avenue Galleries on 15 January.

21 January 2011 – 10am & 2pm

The first day of the Important Americana sale is led by exceptional examples of American silver, including **The Joseph Jefferson Cup: A Massive American Silver Presentation Cup, Modeled by W. Clark Noble, Cast by Gorham MFG. Co., Providence, RI, 1895-96** (est. \$100/200,000). Joseph

Jefferson was a great American actor who became enormously popular in the second half of the 19th century. His biggest success came with a dramatic interpretation of Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* that he created and toured with internationally. The Joseph Jefferson Cup was modeled in plaster by William Clark Noble, famous for his monumental compositions, and depicts several of the actor's most popular characters including "Old Rip Van Winkle." The net factory price was set at \$2,100 when it was completed, the cost of a three-floor house in Providence at the time.



Another highlight of the silver on offer is **An American Silver, Copper, and "German Silver" Scale Model of Independence Hall, John Dean Benton, Philadelphia, 1875**, commissioned by Philadelphia self-made financier, railroad and shipping magnate Edward Collings Knight to commemorate the Centenary of the Declaration of Independence (est. \$100/200,000). The large model is complete down to the smallest detail: the East Room (Independence Hall), for example, contains a model of the table on which the Declaration was signed, the chair of the

President of Congress, and engraved portraits of George Washington and the signers.

Tiffany & Co. designer Paulding Farnham invested heavily in the Ptarmigan Mines in British Columbia around the turn of the century, and designed **The Ptarmigan Vase: A Monumental Copper, Silver and Gold Mokume Vase, circa 1900-05** at the time to celebrate what he hoped would be a highly lucrative venture (est. \$80/120,000). Although the vase does not bear a Tiffany mark, the complexity of its manufacture would have required that it be made in the Tiffany factory in New Jersey. Through intense research, Sotheby's has also discovered that the five signatures at the base can be traced to master craftsmen who worked for Tiffany during the period, four of which are listed as important contributors to the 1900 Paris Exposition. As Tiffany & Co. did not permit their master craftsmen to sign their wares, these signatures provide an amazing insight into the lives of men who created some of the most spectacular turn-of-the-century American silver.





In addition to the strong group of works by John James Audubon on offer, the prints in the first day of the sale are led by **The Bloody Massacre (Brigham Plate 14)** by Paul Revere (est. \$150/200,000). The engraving from 1770 is a depiction of the Boston Massacre on 5 March of that year. Another engraving with a virtually identical composition was produced and sold by Henry Pelham seven days after Revere's, and at the time it was assumed that Pelham had copied the Revere plate. In fact, it was Revere who copied Pelham's design, and rushed to produce the work in order to expeditiously foment the passions of his fellow patriots in opposition to the British Crown. The present copy was owned by John Freemont Hill, governor of Maine from 1901-05. The work is documented as having hung in the governor's mansion in Augusta, and has descended in the family since.

The day's offerings also include approximately 40 lots of Chinese export porcelain, featuring **A Rare Blue Enamelled and Gilt 'Fitzhugh' Pattern Part Tea Service** (est. \$10/15,000) and a good group of blue and white Kangxi period porcelains.

22 January – 10am

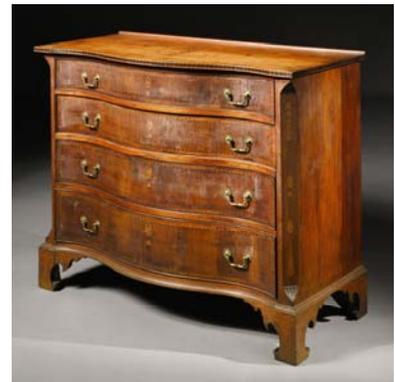
The second day of the sale begins with American stoneware assembled by Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Hochberg. The Important Americana exhibition marks the first time in over 20 years that the 103 pieces have been on public view. The works are led by **An Important Salt-Glazed Stoneware Four-Gallon Jug Decorated with a Standing Horse with Fences**, J & E Norton, Bennington Vermont, 1850-59, which set an auction record for American stoneware when it sold in 1986 (est. \$60/120,000). The unique qualities of the work include the unusually large area that the horse covers on the vessel, and the precise detail and painterly manner in which the horse is depicted. The jug is one of only three Bennington vessels depicting a horse, and is one of the finest Norton



pieces in existence. Another highlight is **An Important Salt-Glazed Stoneware Cobalt-Blue Incised Heart-Shaped Inkwell, Decorated with a Pair of Love Birds above the Initials AM with Stylized Flowers and Leaves**, New York, 1728-65 (est. \$20/100,000). Based on the new technology of XRF testing, as well as remarkable research on sherds from the Crolius-Remmey kiln waster site at the African Burial Ground in downtown New York City, it is likely that the inkwell was made in New York by one or more of the Crolius-Remmey potters.



The sale continues with American furniture, led by **An Important Searls Family Chippendale Highly Inlaid Cherrywood and Mahogany Chest of Drawers, Attributed to Nathan Lombard, Sutton, Massachusetts, circa 1800** (est. \$250/700,000). An exuberant New England interpretation of the Federal style, this serpentine cherrywood chest of drawers retains its original finish and epitomizes the height of workmanship in rural Massachusetts. Few other comparable American chests are known with a shaped front and ambitious inlaid decoration of this exceptional quality. The piece has descended in the Searls family, who were in Pomfret, Connecticut by 1846. Hon. Charles Edwin Searls, whose mother Carol Matthewson Searls likely owned the work, was elected Secretary of State in 1881.



The furniture on offer features an unusually large group of bonnet-top and flat-top high chests of drawers from both New England and Philadelphia, as well as a remarkable selection of chests and tables. The high chests are led by **The Winslow Family Very Fine Queen Anne Bonnet-Top Mahogany High Chest of Drawers, Attributed to Benjamin Frothingham, Charlestown, Massachusetts, circa 1770** (est. \$80/160,000). Emphasizing form over ornament and retaining its original hardware, this high chest is a handsome example of the Queen Anne aesthetic. The tall architectonic form, richly figured façade and fine carving indicate that it is a product of an accomplished shop. Several distinctive regional characteristics, such as the spiral-twist finials, are found on furniture made in eastern Massachusetts. The chest is nearly identical in design to a mahogany chest at Winterthur signed by Benjamin Frothingham Jr. of Charlestown, leading to the attribution.

Another furniture highlight is **An Important Chippendale Carved and Figured Mahogany Five-Leg Serpentine-Front Games Table, New York, circa 1760** (pictured right, est. \$150/350,000). The hinged top opens to reveal a yellow damask playing surface fitted with candle reserves and wells. A **Very Fine and Rare Chippendale Carved and Figured Maple Slant-Front Desk, possibly New Hampshire, circa 1790** is a rare example of blockfront shell-carved furniture from New England, with a unique design influenced by contemporary Massachusetts and Rhode Island furniture (est. \$60/200,000). The desk is illustrated in Albert Sack's *Fine Points of Furniture* as "one of the great masterpieces of curly maple furniture and a study in bold original design."





American folk art in the sale is led by Ammi Phillips's **Portrait of a Rosy Cheeked Young Girl in a Pink Dress** painted *circa* 1832 (est. \$175/225,000). A closely-related portrait of a child with dark hair, also wearing a pink dress and painted by Phillips *circa* 1832, is in the Edward Duff Balken Collection of American Folk Art at Princeton University. The present portrait is also closely related to that of James Mairs Salisbury in the collection of the American Folk Art Museum in New York, painted *circa* 1835. Each of these examples is part of a series of portraits painted of seated children during Phillips's 'Border' period from 1830-1835.

Additional highlights of the American folk art on offer include the earliest known image of **President James Madison's House, 'Montpelier,' Orange, Virginia** (pictured right, est. \$40/60,000). This very early and unique watercolor is attributed to Anna Maria Thornton, the wife of Dr. William Thornton, architect of the United States Capital in Washington, DC. Along with Monticello and Drayton Hall in Charleston, South Carolina, Montpelier is among the earliest examples of American Palladian architecture. A rare and important **Fishing Lady/Shepherdess and Piper Canvaswork Picture, done by Polly Burns, Boston, circa 1768** is one of the earliest and most extravagantly-worked schoolgirl embroideries done in the mid-18th century in pre-Colonial Boston by the daughters of Massachusetts's most prestigious families (est. \$60/80,000).



**** Americana Week 2011 – Full Calendar of Sales**

Important Americana

21 January – 10am & 2pm

22 January – 10am

Important Americana from a Private Collection

22 January – 2pm

Property from the Hascoe Family Collection:

Important American and English Furniture, Fine & Decorative Arts

23 January – 10am & 2pm

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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