

Press Release

CHRISTIE'S

For Immediate Release

January 5, 2010

Contact: Erin McAndrew
Sung-Hee Park

emcandrew@christies.com
spark@christies.com

212.636.2680
212.636.2680

CHRISTIE'S ANNOUNCES AMERICANA WEEK 2010

**SALES OF IMPORTANT AMERICAN FURNITURE, FOLK ART, SILVER
AND CHINESE EXPORT ART IN NEW YORK JANUARY 21-25, 2010**



New York - Christie's is delighted to announce details of Americana Week 2010, a series of public viewings and sales devoted to fine and rare examples of American artistry and craftsmanship. Included in the week are sales of *Important American Silver* (January 21), *Important American Folk Art, Furniture, and Decorative Arts* (January 22), and *Chinese Export Art* (January 25). With over 450 lots, including a number of rare survivals from the 18th and 19th century and many items never before offered at auction, the Americana series of sales are expected to achieve a combined total in excess of \$4 million.

Rare Double Portrait by Ammi Phillips (1788-1865)

The lead highlight of the Americana Week sales is an exceedingly rare, full-length double portrait of *Theron Simpson Ludington (1850-1922) and His Older Sister Virginia Ludington (1846-1865)* by the

prominent 19th century American portrait artist Ammi Phillips (*pictured page one, center*, estimate: \$300,000-500,000). Unknown among Phillips works until earlier this year, this dynamic, even humorous portrait of two young siblings has been passed down through generations of the Ludington family of Goshen, CT until the present day. Phillips was commissioned sometime around 1852 to paint the family's members, which included formal portraits of the children's parents, *Theron Daniel Ludington (1826-1900)* and *Eleanor Bailey Ludington (1826-1863)*, also to be offered in the sale (estimate: \$12,000-18,000).

The full-length double portrait of the children is unusual for its departure from the conventional poses Phillips typically employed in his formal single portraits. Here instead, in a moment of playfulness and insight into the sibling's relationship, the artist depicted the younger boy leaning away from his older sister to hug the shaggy dog by his side, while a small grey cat bites at a single strawberry that has fallen from the bunch in Virginia's hand. While hundreds of single portraits by Phillips survive today, only a small number of full-length double portraits of this type are known to exist – a measure of rarity that is sure to attract collectors.

Important American Silver

Christie's is pleased to announce the January 21 sale of *Important American Silver* as the first auction in the Americana Week series. Leading the sale is an extraordinary collection from the First Parish Church in Beverly as well as silver from other private collections and exceptional pieces from Tiffany & Co.

Property of the First Parish Church in Beverly

Beverly played a central role in the nautical history of the Revolutionary War, serving as the naval headquarters for the Colonial forces, and is often referred to as the "Birthplace of the American Navy." The silver, through its donors, represents virtually every aspect of early New England history, bringing to life the important theological, political, and intellectual movements of the Colonial and Federal Periods. Silver, equivalent to currency in the 17th and 18th centuries, was originally given to the Church in the spirit of financial support, and it is hoped that the sale of these bequests will help preserve this extraordinary and historical institution. As in most collections of

American church silver, the eight pieces from First Parish Church in Beverly were given by members of the Church for use during Communion and often bear the inscription of the donor.



Many of the pieces in the sale are historically important in that they have direct ties to patriot and silversmith Paul Revere. Leading this collection is an important and monumental silver ewer, mark of Paul Revere, Boston, *circa 1798 (pictured page one, left; estimate: \$200,000-300,000)* and a pair of silver

communion dishes, one with mark of Paul Revere, Boston, *circa* 1801 (*illustrated above left*, estimate: \$70,000-100,000). In keeping with the New England tradition of using domestic silver forms as communion vessels, Revere chose a design normally used for coffee ewers or claret jugs to serve as wine flagon for the church. At 15.5 inches high, it is one of the largest examples of silver by Paul Revere. The communion dishes were purchased by the Pastor, Deacon Benjamin Cleaves and Deacon Robert Roundy in 1801 and are also recorded in a rare surviving bill from Paul Revere dated April 22, 1801.

Additional Highlights

The sale also features a rare silver miniature caudle cup, mark of John Hull and Robert Sanderson, Boston, *circa* 1665 (*illustrated right*, estimate: \$150,000-250,000). John Hull (c.1624-1683) and Robert Sanderson (c.1608-1693), the first working silversmiths in North America, became the Colonies' first mint masters when the Massachusetts Bay Colony established a mint in 1652. In that year, they established a partnership producing silver objects as well as coins, most notably the famous "Pine Tree" shilling. Only 30 surviving pieces of hollowware and six spoons have been recorded from their 31-year partnership; the recent discovery of this cup by a Massachusetts family, descendants of the original owners, adds a 31st object to this group. While five full-size caudle cups survive, there is only one other miniature or "toy" caudle cup by these makers that is currently in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Other highlights include an excellent selection of silver from Tiffany & Co. including a silver black coffee pot, 1880-1891, designed by Charles Osborne with the characteristic spiraled pearling (estimate: \$8,000-12,000); a silver centerpiece bowl exhibiting the stylized marine imagery, 1881-1891 (estimate: \$15,000-25,000); and a rare silver flatware service engraved with Japanese motifs, *circa* 1870 (estimate: \$60,000-90,000).

Important American Folk Art, Furniture, and Decorative Arts

On January 22, Christie's will present *Important American Folk Art, Furniture and Decorative Arts* in a two-session sale of over 275 items. A lead highlight is a Chippendale carved and figured mahogany scalloped-top tea table from Philadelphia (pictured right; estimate: \$100,000-300,000). Superbly designed and elaborately carved, the table features ball-and-claw feet, acanthus leaves on the knees, a scalloped top, and a fluted pillar, making it one of the most expensive models of the form available in the city at the time. Based on distinctive details in the carvings, experts suggest the table was most likely crafted *circa* 1770 in



the shop of the renowned cabinetmaker Benjamin Randolph (1721-1791) and carved by Richard Butts, who is credited with some of the most exquisite examples of 18th century carved Philadelphia furniture known today.

Queen Anne Carved Walnut Compass-Seat Stool

Devoted collectors of early American antiques will recognize the great rarity of the Queen Anne Carved Walnut Compass-Seat Stool (pictured left; estimate: \$300,000-500,000), one of only a handful of such pieces to emerge from 18th century Philadelphia. With its serpentine shape, shiplap



construction, and trifold feet, the stool is possibly the mate of a similar example sold in September 2008. Last offered at auction more than 30 years ago, this beautifully preserved stool is believed to have been owned by members of the Waln family of Philadelphia and Walnford, NJ, who were descended from the renowned cabinetmaker Joseph Armitt (d.1747). Offered with the item is an accompanying early 19th century silhouette labeled “Mrs. Waln when Miss Morris”, believed to be Sarah Morris (1788-1862), wife of Jacob Shoemaker Waln.

Among the additional highlights of 18th century furniture is a Chippendale Carved Mahogany Dressing Table with original brass hardware, an exceptional example of Salem cabinetmaking that dates from 1765-1785 (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). Featuring a graceful cyma-shaped apron, carved pinwheel designs, peaked knees, and ball-and-claw feet, the table is believed to be the mate of a high chest-of-drawers now in the collection of the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. It was consigned by the estate of Mary Frances Bowles Couper, a prominent philanthropist and antiques collector, and a close friend of Miss Ima Hogg, who donated her collection of Americana and her home, Bayou Bend, to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Additional furniture highlights include a Queen Anne Carved Mahogany Balloon Seat Side Chair from 18th century Philadelphia that was originally owned by Benjamin Franklin and later housed at George Washington’s Mount Vernon estate (estimate: \$20,000-30,000); a Chippendale Mahogany Dressing Table with carving attributed to Nicholas Bernard and Martin Jugiezy, two of the most prominent craftsmen working at the height of the Philadelphia Rococo style (estimate: \$40,000-60,000); and a Classical green-painted and stencil-decorated Cane-Seat Settee attributed to Baltimore’s John and Hugh Finlay or one of their contemporaries, *circa* 1820 (estimate: \$20,000-40,000).

Historic Americana

A highly decorated scrimshaw whale tooth (both sides pictured right; estimate: \$30,000-50,000) conveys both the heroism and loneliness of life aboard a 19th century whaling ship. As noted by engravings on the tooth, the scrimshander was a crewmember aboard the whaling ship *Superior* from Sag Harbor, NY. Among the finely-detailed drawings on the tooth are the *Superior* with her three masts, an American eagle and banner inscribed with the word “*Liberty*”, and a design of intertwined hearts and roses with the dedication *Amelia/ What are*

the riches of the world without thee/ When this you see, think of me”. At the base of the tooth, an image of a massive whale’s tail upending a boat full of men is flanked by the mottoes “*In God We Trust*” and “*Bold Yankee Whalemén*”. The attribution to the whaleship *Superior* is significant; in 1848, it was the first American ship to venture into the Bering Strait to hunt bowhead whales, effectively opening a new chapter in whaling that brought over 250 hunting ships to the area within three years.



Another highlight of the Americana section is a personal keepsake that belonged to one of America’s most revered presidents, Thomas Jefferson. Conceived as a *memento mori*, the keepsake is an engraved gold watch key containing a braided lock of hair belonging to Jefferson’s deceased wife Martha Wayles Jefferson (pictured left; estimate: \$40,000-80,000). Born in 1748, Martha Jefferson died at age 33 of complications following childbirth, and Jefferson never remarried. A devoted collector of watches, Jefferson likely commissioned the watch key in the years following her death. Scientific analysis has confirmed the braided lock of auburn hair encased in the watch key is consistent with a sample of Martha’s hair housed in the collection of the James Monroe Museum and Memorial Library.

A Skull-And-Bones Ballot Box, 19th century

Among the more unusual items the sale is a 19th century ballot box in the form of a skull and cross bones inscribed with the name ‘*THOR*’ that is believed to have belonged to a member of the Skull and Bones Society, one of the oldest and most prestigious secret societies in the United States (estimate: \$10,000-15,000). The ballot box is offered with an accompanying black book embossed with the name ‘*Edward T. Owen/1872*’ on the front and the numerals 322 on the back and lists society member names from 1831-1877, as well as a selection of approximately 50 photo portraits. As an artifact of the 19th century-era society – when member names were routinely published by the

society itself – the ballot box and documents offer a rare glimpse into an organization now shrouded in secrecy.

Chinese Export Art

Christie's is pleased to offer the sale of *Chinese Export Art* on January 25 in New York. The sale features over 100 works of art and is led by a group of exemplary dinner services, armorial porcelain, and decorative ware.

Leading the sale are three extensive dinner services including a crested and initialed dinner service all bordered with fruiting grapevine, circa 1795 (estimate: \$30,000-50,000); a famille rose and underglaze blue part dinner service, circa 1775 (estimate: \$30,000-50,000), all colorfully enameled with a garden scene; and a selection from the Dewitt Clinton Service, circa 1796-1810, with estimates ranging from \$4,000 to \$8,000.



Armorial porcelain was commissioned by titled European families and bore the mark of excellence. The sale features an exceptional pair of Dutch market semi-eggshell porcelain soup plates, circa 1734 (*illustrated left*, estimate: \$15,000-25,000) each finely painted in the center with the arms of van Hardenbroek of

Utrecht; a pair of famille rose and underglaze blue armorial chargers, circa 1723 (estimate: \$4,000-6,000) with the arms of Townshend all in color; and an English market armorial tureen, cover and stand, circa 1775 (estimate: \$4,000-6,000) with the arms of Ludlow of Shropshire.

Superb vases include a large pair of famille rose baluster vases and covers from the Qianlong period (*illustrated right*- estimate: \$10,000-15,000) and a massive famille rose vase (estimate: \$9,000-12,000). The sale also features a fine pair of famille verte goblets, Kangxi period (estimate: \$4,000-6,000) and a large pair of famille rose court lady candleholders, Qianlong period (*pictured page one, right*; estimate: \$20,000-30,000).



A further selection of Chinese export from *The Collection of Benjamin F. Edwards III* will be offered the following day on January 26, 2010. **For more information, a separate press release is available.**

Auctions: Americana Week 2010

Important Silver

January 21 at 10am

Important American Folk Art, Furniture, and Decorative Arts

January 22 at 10am & 2pm

Chinese Export

January 25 at 2pm

Viewings: Christie's Rockefeller Galleries

January 16 - 25, 2010

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2008 that totalled £2.8 billion/\$5.1 billion. For the first half of 2009, art sales totalled £1.2 billion/\$1.8 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's conducted the greatest auctions of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and today remains a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 sales annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$80 million. Christie's has 53 offices in 30 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in emerging and new markets such as Russia, China, India and the Middle East, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

#

Images available on request

The complete e-catalogue of this sale is available online at www.christies.com