

FROM: PEN AMERICAN CENTER
588 Broadway, Suite 303
New York, NY 10012

CONTACT: Rubenstein Communications, Inc.—Public Relations
Alison Hendrie / 212 843-8029 / ahendrie@rubenstein.com
Kristen Bothwell / 212-843-9227 / kbothwell@rubenstein.com

**AUCTION OF FIRST EDITION CLASSICS ANNOTATED BY THEIR AUTHORS
RAISES \$1 MILLION TO BENEFIT PEN AMERICAN CENTER**

**Philip Roth's *American Pastoral* Top-Seller at \$80,000,
Underworld by Don DeLillo Fetches Second-Highest Bid of \$57,000**

First Editions/Second Thoughts Auction Held Last Night Christie's New York

New York – December 3, 2014 – Sixty-one of America's greatest writers and fourteen world-renowned artists revisited their most influential works for an auction to benefit PEN American Center, the largest branch of the global literary and human rights organization PEN International, held last night at Christie's in New York City.

First Editions/Second Thoughts (FEST), an auction of one-of-a-kind books and artists catalogues, raised \$1 million to support PEN's work to defend free expression and aid persecuted writers worldwide. *American Pastoral* by **Philip Roth** was the top-selling work with a hammer price of \$80,000. Other top bids went to **Don DeLillo's** *Underworld* (\$57,000), Roth's *Portnoy's Complaint* (\$52,000), **Tony Kushner's** *Angels in America* (\$32,000), and **Robert A. Caro's** *The Power Broker* (\$26,000).

Leading the annotated works of art were **Ed Ruscha's** *Past Stuff* (\$40,000) **Robert Gober's** *Sculpture + Drawing* (\$22,000), and **Julie Mehretu's** *Grey Area* (\$20,000).

Through annotations including notes, essays, drawings, photographs, letters to the reader, and inserted memorabilia, each contributing author and artist transformed a first edition of their own classic work into a distinct new artifact for the auction. A similar auction of books annotated by their British authors, held last year in London, brought in \$690,000 for English PEN.

“Every novel is a record of its author's acumen when the book was written. Post-publication edits may improve a book, but they also take it out of its time,” said **Michael Cunningham**, whose annotation of *The Hours* sold for \$21,000. “I made notes and observations instead. I tried to recreate the world—the rather local world—in which I wrote *The Hours*, which was a bit like going to see my younger self at a zoo.”

Cunningham was one of 14 of the 75 contributing authors and artists who attended the live auction at Christie's last night, including **Paul Auster, Rita Dove, Louise Erdrich, Malcolm Gladwell, Jay McInerney, and Paul Muldoon**. The sum of Tuesday evening's bids raised just

under \$920,000, and a generous donation from an anonymous supporter brought the total raised to \$1 million.

“As these annotated books are dispersed, with all the notes, drawings, photographs and talismans they contain, each winning bidder becomes the keeper of a small piece of literary history,” said PEN Executive Director Suzanne Nossel. “We are moved tonight by the incredible efforts of the contributing artists and authors. The new, original works of annotated fiction and art are in themselves a celebration of the creative freedom that the auction’s proceeds will go to defend.”

“Christie’s is proud to serve as host of this historic auction of unique literary treasures and to give so many book lovers a chance to view and bid on these authors’ and artists’ thoughtful reflections on their own work,” said Steven Murphy, CEO of Christie’s. “We are especially pleased to help PEN American Center raise money to continue its mission of defending free expression and fostering literary pursuits.”

Additional lots for sale at PEN’s First Editions, Second Thoughts Auctions included contributions by authors **Woody Allen, Eric Carle, Junot Diaz, Gillian Flynn, Toni Morrison, Marilynne Robinson, and Stephen Sondheim.**

PEN supporter and acclaimed New York City gallerist **Sean Kelly** expanded the scope of the lots by inviting fourteen artists, including **Glenn Ligon, Richard Serra, Marina Abramovic, and Kiki Smith** to reimagine a monograph or significant catalogue of their work to benefit PEN.

For a complete list of sale results, visit

<http://www.christies.com/lotfinder/salebrowse.aspx?intSaleid=24758&action=paging&pg=1>

Photos from the event are available for media download at

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rzqpg0gyckv9bq1/AADCNJAZBF0gFn1KtSX9Xh-Ra?dl=0>.

###

About PEN American Center

PEN American Center is the largest of the 140+ centers of PEN International, the world’s only international association of writers working to defend free expression and protect persecuted writers. PEN International was founded after World War I to dispel national, ethnic, and racial tensions and to promote understanding among all countries. PEN American Center, founded a year later in 1922, works to advance literature, to defend free expression, and to foster international literary fellowship. Its 3,500 distinguished members carry on the achievements in literature and advancement of human rights of such past members as James Baldwin, Arthur Miller, Susan Sontag, and John Steinbeck. <http://www.pen-auction.org>

About Christie’s

Christie’s, the world’s leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2014 that totaled £2.69 / \$4.47 billion, making it the highest half year total in Christie’s history. 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 has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers around 450 auctions 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 \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters, and Jewellery. Private sales in the first half of 2014 totaled £498.9 million (\$828.2 million).

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India, and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai, and Dubai. <http://www.christies.com>

About Sean Kelly Gallery

Since its founding in 1991, Sean Kelly Gallery has been highly regarded internationally for ambitious, intellectually driven exhibitions. The original list of artists represented included Marina Abramović, Joseph Kosuth, and Julia Sarmento, who exemplify the gallery's commitment to important and challenging contemporary art. In 2012 the gallery moved to a 22,000 square-foot space designed by award-winning architect Toshiko Mori in the rapidly developing Hudson Yards neighborhood. The move facilitated the gallery in mounting increasingly ambitious, museum-quality exhibitions and expanding its roster of artists, which includes Antony Gormley, Laurent Grasso, Rebecca Horn, Idris Khan, Kehinde Wiley, Alec Soth, and Mariko Mori. As the gallery continues to grow, its commitment to its artists and standards of excellence remains unchanged.