

For Immediate Release

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RECENT DISCOVERIES AND IMPORTANT WORKS LEAD CHRISTIE'S FALL AMERICANA SALE

Important American Furniture, Folk Art, Maritime Art and Prints
September 25

New York – On September 25, Christie's New York will hold the sale of *Important American Furniture, Folk Art, Maritime Art and Prints*. A magnificent high chest that descended in Philadelphia's Biddle-Drinker family and an exceptionally bold and dynamic example of Edward Hicks's renowned *Peaceable Kingdom* series highlight the sale.

Two eighteenth-century high chests are magnificent survivals of eighteenth-century craftsmanship.



Made in Philadelphia and Newport, each is a powerful representation of colonial America's distinct regional preferences and each is a recent discovery in the field of American furniture. With its bold and meticulously carved ornament, the Biddle-Drinker family high chest illustrates the epitome Philadelphia design and the masterful artistry of its makers, the carver Nicholas Bernard and the cabinetmakers, Henry Clifton and Thomas Carteret. An important addition to the known oeuvre of this triumvirate of woodworkers, this high chest also stands as a critical document of the development of the form in Philadelphia during the 1750s and early 1760s. Embellished with exquisitely carved details, the high chest displays a rare combination of artistic splendor, impeccable craftsmanship, pristine condition and historical importance. Its eighteenth-century finish has been left undisturbed and reveals the original full height and depth of the bolding rendered carving on the shell drawers, cartouche, rosettes and legs.



With an emphasis on curvilinear lines and restrained carving, a second high chest embraces the Newport aesthetic and provides a dramatic contrast to the Philadelphia example (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). A previously unknown work, the high chest displays construction details that support an attribution to Christopher Townsend, one of the two founders of the famous Townsend-Goddard dynasty of cabinetmakers that dominated the Newport furniture trade during the eighteenth century. Adorned with slender cabriole legs, pad feet and an innovative carved shell, the high chest is an early manifestation of the celebrated shell-carved furniture of Newport.

This masterful version of *Peaceable Kingdom* from the distinguished collection of J. Irwin and Xenia S. Miller leads the folk art section of the sale (estimate: \$4-6 million). Hicks painted more than sixty five versions of *Peaceable Kingdom* from about 1818 until his death in 1844. His desire to paint as a vocation was shunned by the Quaker society, and these paintings served as painted sermons-- a reconciliation of his religious fervor and his artistic talent. The paintings were often given as gifts, if not expressly painted for friends, neighbors and relatives. Executed at the height of his career, this powerful composition embraces the parable of Isaiah in a magnificent scale and full imagery.



Descending directly through the family of the two sitters, the *Portrait of John and Hannah Maria Pickett* is an exciting discovery and addition to Ruth Whittier and Dr. Samuel Addison Shute's body of work (estimate: \$120,000-180,000). This rare depiction is one of only three double portraits of children by the Shutes known to exist. This painting evokes a particular sensitivity characteristic of the Shutes' portraits of children. Other highlights include *The Paddle Steamboat Rip Van Winkle* by J. and J. Bard, *The Steamboat Daniel S. Miller* by John Bard, *The Screw Tug Ivanhoe* by Antonio Jacobsen, and other distinctive examples of Americana.

The sale also includes an extremely rare “Monhegan Island” style Redbreasted Merganser Drake, circa 1900, by Augustus Aaron Wilson (estimate: \$100,000-150,000). This decoy is one of three known from a specific rig, which was purchased from a fish shack in Cape Porpoise, Maine. A rigmate to this decoy has been described as one of Wilson’s greatest creations in the book *The Great Book of Wildfowl Decoys* by Joe Engers.



Auction: *Important American Furniture, Folk Art, Maritime Art and Prints*

September 25

Viewing: Christie’s Rockefeller Galleries

September 20-24

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*Estimates do not include buyer's premium

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Images available on request

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More information about Christie's sale of *American Furniture* can be found on www.christies.com. All lots from the sale can be viewed online along with full catalogue descriptions on Lotfinder®, which also allows clients to leave absentee bids. www.christies.com provides information on more than 80 sale categories, buying and selling at auction, complete auction results, and Christie's international auction calendar.