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### **Birds Take Flight At Copley's Winter Sale 2015**

CHARLESTON, SC - On February 12, 2015, Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC (copleyart.com) successfully auctioned over five hundred and sixty items of American art, antique decoys, and sporting collectibles in Charleston, South Carolina. With a sell-through rate of 94% and a sale total of over \$1.8 million, the Winter Sale furthered Copley's dominance in the field.

As over 40,000 visitors descended on Charleston for the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition weekend, Copley found robust bidding across numerous fields including paintings, prints, folk art, decoys, and vintage fishing tackle. Over 500 individuals participated via Invaluable and Bidsquare, and hundreds of additional bidders registered in person and for absentee and telephone bids.

Copley's owner and principal Stephen B. O'Brien, Jr. commented, "We would like to thank everyone who participated in this outstanding event. Bidding was strong across all categories, as shown by the numerous world records set. The Copley team was happy to escape the blizzards of Boston, and we look forward to returning to Charleston for next year's Winter Sale."

The top lot of the auction was A.B. Frost's *Quail - A Covey Rise* watercolor, which shattered the previous world record for the artist selling for \$180,000 on a \$40/60,000 estimate. *Fall Woodcock Shooting*, also a part of Frost's Shooting Pictures folio, had stood at the previous record for over twenty-five years after selling at Sotheby's in 1989.

Paintings by esteemed dog artist Edmund Osthaus sold well, including a rare self-portrait in oil that went for \$87,000 on a \$20/40,000 estimate. A watercolor by the same artist depicting two setters sold for \$15,600, almost doubling its \$5/8,000 estimate. Noted British artist Sir Alfred J. Munnings' oil portrait of the horse *Traveler*, estimated at \$80/120,000, sold for \$96,000, and a watercolor depicting Swans in Flight by American impressionist and Boston member of The Ten, Frank W. Benson, sold for \$30,000, within its \$25/35,000 estimate.

Each item among the notable offering of original John James Audubon double elephant folio prints sold, with highlights including \$72,000 for the *Snowy Owl* (\$60/90,000 estimate) and \$39,000 (\$30/50,000) for the *Great White Heron*.

Copley continued to find success with works by equine and polo artist Paul Desmond Brown, as sixteen of the twenty-one lots by the artist sold within or above estimate. The group was led by the watercolor *Steeplechase*, going for \$4,800 on a \$4/6,000 estimate, and *Misty Morn*, a foxhunting watercolor, which sold for \$3,900 on its \$800/1,200 estimate.

Sporting art results by classic, noted artists remained consistent, with New England artist Ogden M. Pleissner's *Head of the Pool - Fosse au Fer* going for \$34,440, almost doubling its low estimate of \$18/24,000. An upland bird shooting oil by Aiden Lassell Ripley, *The Pond Cover*, sold for \$90,000, at the high end of its \$60/90,000 estimate. Additional works by the artist also sold well, landing within and above their estimates, with a rare fox hunting watercolor going for \$26,400 on \$18/24,000 and a classic winter grouse watercolor selling for \$16,800 on its \$14/18,000 estimate.

Lynn Bogue Hunt's *Leaving in Haste - Mallards* oil went for \$7,800, above its \$5/7,000 estimate, and contemporary sporting artist John Swan's oil *Grouse in Snow* brought \$7,995 to an internet bidder, within its \$6/9,000 estimate. A brilliantly colored watercolor by John Whorf exceeded its high estimate, selling for \$7,800 on \$3/5,000, and a quail hunting scene by Chet Reneson went over its high when it sold for \$6,000 on a \$2/4,000 estimate.

With the significant proceeds from Michael Stidham's *Silver King Circle* set to go to the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, the painting set a world record when it sold for \$12,000, well above its \$8/10,000 estimate. A grouping of three oil paintings by David A. Maass saw strong interest and good results, with each selling for \$9,600.

World record results were also set for artists Edgar Burke, Roger S. Cruwys, Eric Kaposta, and Phillip Brown Parsons, and Richard Plasschaert, with items by these artists exceeding expectations and estimates.

The top decoy lot was Nathan Cobb's swimming brant, which sold for \$81,000 on its \$80/120,000 estimate. The second highest decoy lot was A.E. Crowell's curlew, landing at \$63,000, soaring past its \$35/45,000 estimate. A racy red-breasted merganser drake by George Boyd proved to be a good buy, selling for \$54,000 on its \$60/90,000 estimate. An early black duck by the Ward brothers of Maryland brought \$12,000, squarely within its \$10/15,000 estimate, and a decorative pair of wigeon by Lemuel T. Ward sold for \$11,400, within the \$8/12,000 estimate. The top North Carolina decoys were a canvasback pair by Edward R. "Ned" Burgess which sold for \$15,600 on a \$4/6,000 estimate, more than doubling the high.

The top shorebird was a ruddy turnstone by New Jersey maker Daniel Lake Leeds, which neared the high estimate (\$25/35,000), selling for \$33,000. During the sale, auctioneer Peter Coccoluto mentioned the rarity of ruddy turnstone gunning decoys. Both Bunn/Bowman shorebirds performed well, with the willet going for \$28,800, near its high estimate (\$20/30,000), and the dowitcher selling squarely within estimate for \$21,600 (\$15/25,000). Daniel Demott's black bellied plover raced past its \$3/5,000 estimate, ultimately selling for a healthy \$7,800.

A long-tailed duck attributed to Connecticut carver Benjamin Holmes more than doubled its high estimate, bringing \$4,200. Allen J. King miniatures performed well, with a ruffed grouse

selling for \$2,040 and a woodcock tripling its high estimate (\$6/900) and selling for \$2,706. A rare and folky decoy whooping crane from the Central Flyway proved popular as it sold for \$10,800, well above its high estimate (\$6/9,000). A number of carvings by World Champion carver Randy Tull found strong bidding, with the top lot a swimming wigeon that brought \$4,560, well above its \$4/600 estimate.

Decorative objects offered by Copley found ready buyers, with exceptional results including a pair of life-size duck andirons selling for \$3,600 on a \$6/900 estimate and two Abercrombie & Fitch Prohibition-era flasks bringing \$2,760, well above their \$2/300 estimate.

The top duck call of the auction was carved by Ezra Cochran of Arkansas. This exquisite piece nearly doubled its low estimate, selling for \$3,997.50 to an online buyer (\$2/3,000). A call made by William E. "Buck" Boyd sold for \$3,382.5 to another online bidder, above its \$2/3,000 estimate, and a duck call carved by Claude C. Stone of Missouri sold for \$1,920, nearly four times its high estimate (\$3/500).

Copley's exceptional selection of vintage fishing tackle brought dealers and collectors from around the country. Bidding was spirited, with the top E. Everett Garrison rod, a model 201, 7ft., 2/2, with serial no. T 7 1 selling for \$6,900, multiples over its estimate. The top rod by maker Harold S. "Pinky" Gillum was an 8 ft. 6 in., 2/2, serial no. I 945 that sold for \$5,100, and the top rod from the E. F. Payne Rod Co., made for Abercrombie & Fitch Co., 8 ft., 3/2, sold for \$3,300.

Reels also found strong competition among the assembled bidders, with the top reel, Stanley Bogdan's Model 0 Salmon Fly Wheel, bringing in \$3,690. The top reel made by the Hardy Bros. Ltd. of Alnwick, England sold for \$960.

Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC is preparing for its 2015 Sporting Sale, which returns to Plymouth, Massachusetts in July, with consignments accepted through April 15 or until full. For a free confidential auction estimate please call 617.536.0030 or email [info@copleyart.com](mailto:info@copleyart.com). A full list of official prices realized from Copley's 2015 Winter Sale will be available at [www.copleyart.com](http://www.copleyart.com). All prices include a 20% buyer's premium (23% for online bidding), and all record prices cite AskArt.com.

#### Images to Include:

Arthur Burdett Frost (1851-1928), *Quail - A Covey Rise*, 1895, watercolor, 14 by 22 inches, Estimate: \$40/60,000, sold for \$180,000

Nathan Cobb Jr. (1825-1905), *Hissing Brant*, c. 1890, Estimate: \$80/120,000, sold for \$81,000

A. Elmer Crowell (1862-1952), *Curlew*, c. 1930, Estimate: \$35/45,000, sold for \$63,000

Edmund Henry Osthaus (1858-1928), *Self Portrait with Three Setters*, 1911, oil on canvas, 21 3/4 by 29 1/2 inches, Estimate: \$20/40,000, sold for \$87,000

Aiden Lassell Ripley (1896-1969), *The Pond Cover*, 1947, oil on canvas, 27 3/16 by 40 1/8 inches, Estimate: \$60/90,000, sold for \$90,000