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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bird Dogs Point the Way at \$1.4 Million Copley Winter Sale 2017

CHARLESTON, SC - Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC (copleyart.com), the nation's premier sporting art auction house, realized over \$1.4 million in sales at The Winter Sale 2017, held at the American Theater on February 17th in Charleston, South Carolina. The sale was 91% sold by lot, extending Copley's stellar track record, and the sold lots achieved 91% of their high estimate.

All five cover lots saw very competitive bidding, with two landing within estimate and three climbing over their estimates. Twenty-five items sold for five-figure prices, including sixteen decoys and nine paintings. There was robust bidding across all categories, including paintings, prints, folk art, and antique and contemporary decoy carvings.

Copley's owner and principal Stephen B. O'Brien, Jr., said, "There was no question that broader markets had an impact on this sale. We saw some of the most competitive bidding in seven years. All facets of the sale were exceptionally strong with the possible exception of the Benson watercolors. Though his *Wood Duck* sold for \$37,200, the highest price for any of his watercolors since 2011, it is clear that it is a buyer's market when it comes to Benson at the moment."

The top lot and top decoy of the sale was the Herrick-Ward Yellowlegs, which sold for \$90,000, well over its \$50/70,000 estimate. The next highest decoy lot was the McCleery Golden Plover by Charles Sumner Bunn or Bill Bowman, which brought \$69,000, within its \$50/70,000 estimate, and a rare swan by Charles Birch sold for \$60,000.

Two painting lots revealed that works of hunting dogs in action continue to be in high demand. Two pieces by Edmund Osthaus outperformed their estimates to become the top painting lots of the sale; *Pointer and Quail* sold for \$63,000 on a \$30/50,000 estimate, and *On Point* brought \$44,400, above its \$25/35,000 estimate. In 2008 Copley set the world record for the eminent sporting dog artist Edmund Osthaus when they sold *Pointer with Quail* for \$230,500.

A selection of John Henry Dick watercolors from a private collection in Virginia got the auction off to a strong start. A work depicting painted redstarts and warblers more than tripled the high estimate when it sold for \$2,520 on a \$600 estimate, as did a painting of olive warblers with a butterfly, which sold for \$2,280 on a \$600 high estimate. Several lots later, four shorebird pen and ink drawings brought \$1,800, well over their high estimate of \$400.

An English fox hunting scene by George Goodwin Kilburne saw very active bidding on the phones and internet. Kilburne's oil painting titled *The Beaufort Meeting at Frocester*, which dates from 1904 and depicts one of the oldest and most famous hunts in the United Kingdom, sold for \$32,400, more than quadrupling its high estimate of \$6,000.

Oystercatchers, a commanding, semi-abstract oil on canvas by Ewoud de Groot, shot past the high estimate of \$10,000 and hammered down for \$13,200, setting a world record at auction for the contemporary Dutch artist. While Frank E. Schoonover's *Trappers on the Lake* received

attention, it did not find a buyer with the \$100/150,000 estimate, as perhaps the interested parties found the estimate a bit aggressive.

Frank W. Benson's *Wood Duck*, the frontispiece for William Brewster's 1937 book *Concord River*, sold for \$37,200. Anders Leonard Zorn's etching titled *Augustus Saint Gaudens II* was hugely successful, surpassing its high estimate of \$6,000 and bringing in \$7,200. Early American artist Frederick Stone Batcheller's oil painting of woodcock and quail brought \$7,380, and noted wildlife artist Bob Kuhn's little gem depicting lions sold for \$19,200.

Tails, an oil painting by Bonefish & Tarpon Trust's (BTT) 2017 Artist of the Year John Swan, brought an impressive \$12,000. Once again, proceeds from the sale will benefit this conservation organization. A very generous anonymous donor agreed to a matching gift of up to \$10,000 on this work. The funds generated from the sale of this painting will fund much-needed research on bonefish, tarpon, and permit, along with their sensitive ecosystems.

O'Brien, who is also a BTT board member and avid tarpon and bonefish angler, added, "We are indebted to John Swan for producing an exceptional work that the market responded to. This is one of the highest totals that a BTT Artist of the Year work has brought in its ten year history."

Works by other contemporary sporting artists also sold well, with Brett J. Smith's oil painting *One Step Pool* bringing \$10,200, nearly double the high estimate of \$5,500, and Thomas Aquinas Daly's watercolor *Casting at West Falls Pool* brought \$5,843, well over its high estimate of \$3,000. This was the second highest price for a Daly watercolor after the world record Copley set in 2012 for the artist. Gary E. Neel's painting of a pheasant set a record for a single watercolor by the artist, selling at \$1,200.

Paintings and bronzes from the Estate of Joyce and Larry Huffman, founder of Legendary Whitetails, were 100% sold by lot. Bronzes overall held strong, as David LeRoy Schaefer's *Eagle Catching a Fish* brought \$1,500, well over the high estimate of \$900. A pair of hunting dog bookends, after French artist Jules Moigniez and stamped "Tiffany and Co.," went over the high estimate of \$2,500 and sold for \$3,690. Marilyn Newmark's diminutive pony bronze, *First Meeting*, rang in at \$1,140.

Fishing items, particularly fly rods, exceeded estimates. Two H. L. Leonard rods sold for more than five times the high estimate of \$600, bringing in \$3,300. An E. F. Payne Rod Co. bamboo fly rod hammered down at \$2,520, more than double its high estimate of \$1,200. Additionally, Canadian carver and fisherman Thomas Brayshaw's fish carvings performed well, with a "priest" carving of a brown trout bringing \$1,800, double its high estimate of \$900, and his steelhead trout carving selling for \$8,100.

After over two hundred fine art and fishing lots, impressive auctioneer Peter Coccoluto continued straight on to decoys without a break. A desirable offering of miniatures got off to a strong start as the auction room remained full, with action coming from phones, floor bidding, and internet platforms. The second session began with a collection of George H. Boyd miniature carvings performing within or above their estimates, including a black duck pair that sold for \$3,900, and a Lincoln wood duck that brought \$2,160.

A selection of miniature carvings by Maine maker Robert Morse saw steady interest. A purple finch sold for \$1,680, surpassing the high estimate of \$600 by more than double, a blue jay also more than doubled its high estimate of \$600, bringing in \$1,320, and a cardinal doubled the high estimate and brought \$1,200. A miniature downy woodpecker saw active bidding between the floor, internet, and phone bidders. The carving ultimately sold for \$960, above its high estimate of \$600.

Shorebird carvings did well, particularly birds from the Grant Nelson Collection. The top-performing decoy from the Collection was the Herrick-Ward Bunn/Bowman yellowlegs, which started a bidding war from numerous factions before narrowing down to a phone bidder and a gentleman on the floor. It eventually sold for \$90,000 to the determined bidder in the room. As the McCleery Bunn/Bowman golden plover sold to the same bidder for \$69,000, a spontaneous round of applause came from onlookers.

Other top shorebird results include the Noah Bernard Sterling wading greater yellowlegs pair, which brought \$27,600, and Ira D. Hudson's greater yellowlegs, originally out of the William H. Purnell, Jr. Collection, which brought \$19,200. These landed within or above their estimates. Copley perennially attracts top decoys with impeccable provenances and this auction was no different.

The Ward Brothers' outstanding life-size flying mallard pair brought \$36,000. Also by the Ward Brothers, a bluebill pair came in above the high estimate at \$9,600. A. Elmer Crowell's rare willet sold for \$15,600. Two A. G. Fox rig plovers soared above their high estimates of \$2,500, with one bringing \$5,400 and the other \$3,900, while a James "Corb" Reed widgeon drake came in at \$1,800, well over its \$800/1000 estimate.

Richard Wistar Davids' early sleeping pintail drake pitted floor bidders against five phones, and ultimately went to a bidder in the room for \$30,000, surpassing the high estimate of \$25,000 and setting a new world record for the maker. Crowell's miniature wood duck, though a later model, saw vigorous floor, phone, and internet bidding and went to a floor bidder for \$1,920, exceeding the high estimate of \$1,500. A preening canvasback drake by Charles Ralph Wells saw a moment of levity as O'Brien tried to go the wrong way with bidding. Ultimately this lot brought \$1,920, well over the high estimate.

There was solid interest in contemporary carver Mark S. McNair's works, many of which sold to internet bidders. A shoveler drake went for \$2,400 and a ruddy duck sold for \$1,353. Both lots were above their high estimates. Works by William Gibian also received strong interest across all bidding platforms, as lots were won by three different phone bidders and each exceeded its high estimate. Anthony G. Murray's two pintail pairs brought in \$2,040 and soared above the high estimate of \$1,200.

The Important Turned-head Carriage House pintail drake was one of the top selling decoys, bringing in \$28,800 and soaring past the high estimate of \$20,000. Charles S. Schoenheider, Sr.'s standing hollow pintail drake performed well and sold for \$28,800, landing between the estimates for this decoy. John Macanney's ruddy turnstone more than doubled its high estimate of \$5,000 and hammered down at \$10,800. William Roberts' ruddy turnstone also exceeded the high estimate of \$1,500 and sold for \$2,400.

Copley provided the convenience of online bidding through Bidsquare as well as the sporting art industry's first native app, Copley Live. The sale featured items from the Collections of Richard and Lynn Gove, the Estate of Joyce and Larry Huffman, Ernest and Carolyn Kramer, Blair Ledingham, Grant Nelson, Shane Newell, John T. Ordeman, William H. Purnell Jr., and William B. Webster III.

Copley Fine Art Auctions, LLC is preparing for its Sporting Sale 2017 which returns to Plymouth, Massachusetts in late July, with consignments accepted through April 15 or until full. For a free confidential auction estimate, call 617.536.0030 or email info@copleyart.com. A full list of official prices realized from Copley's Winter Sale 2017 is available at www.copleyart.com. All prices include a 20% buyer's premium (23% for online bidding), and all record prices cite AskArt.com and *Decoy Magazine*.

Images to include:

Charles Sumner Bunn or William "Bill" Bowman (1865-1952 and 1824-1906), Yellowlegs, c. 1900, Sold for \$90,000

Charles Sumner Bunn or William "Bill" Bowman (1865-1952 and 1824-1906), The McCleery Bunn/Bowman Golden Plover, c. 1900, Sold for \$69,000

Edmund H. Osthaus (1858-1928), Pointer and Quail, 1892, oil on canvas, Sold for \$63,000

Charles Birch (1867-1956), Swan, c. 1920, Sold for \$60,000

Edmund H. Osthaus (1858-1928), On Point, oil on canvas, Sold for \$44,000

Frank W. Benson (1862-1951), *Wood Duck*, 1937, watercolor, Sold for \$37,200

The Ward Brothers, Lemuel T. and Stephen Ward (1896-1983 and 1895-1976), Outstanding Life-Size Flying Mallard Pair, 1936 and 1937, Sold for \$36,000

George Goodwin Kilburne (English, 1839-1924), *The Beaufort Meeting at Frocester*, 1904, oil on canvas, Sold for \$32,400

Richard Wistar Davids (1825-1863), Early Sleeping Pintail Drake, c. 1850, Sold for \$30,000

Carriage House Rig Pintail, c. 1890, Sold for \$28,800

Bob Kuhn (1920-2007), Lions, watercolor, Sold for \$19,200

Brett J. Smith (b. 1958), *One Step Pool*, oil on canvas, Sold for \$10,200