

Seven New World Records Set at John Moran Auctioneers' June 15th California and American Paintings A

Pasadena, CA-- John Moran Auctioneers set seven new world auction records for American artists at their June 15th Fine Art Auction, the second of three such sales scheduled for 2010. They also established themselves yet again as the top house for sales of works by Joe Duncan Gleason (1881 – 1959), achieving a new second place record for the marine specialist with the sale of “Ships that Pass” for \$115,000 (all prices include the 15% buyer’s premium).

The Gleason arrived fresh to the market, consigned by the descendants of the original owner who had commissioned it directly from the artist in the 1930’s. Principal Auctioneer John Moran and Art Sales Director Katie Halligan were delighted to discover the painting at one of Moran’s monthly walk-in Valuation Days, a free appraisal clinic conducted at the company offices in Southern California. A dynamically composed example of Gleason’s fascination with historical sailing vessels and his obsession with nautically accurate detail, the depiction of two brigantines exchanging salutes went on the block with a pre-sale estimate of \$30,000 – 50,000. Mr. Moran brought down the gavel only after a protracted bidding war between a floor bidder and the ultimate winner, an international client who bid via telephone.

John Moran Auctioneers now holds ten out of the top twelve auction records for Gleason, including the world record of \$161,000, established in February 2007 with the sale of “Avalon (Catalina Harbor)”. Moran’s also bested their own seventh place record for the artist on the 15th with another of his depictions of historical vessels, “Their Last Port,” showing three schooners as they lay retired in a Seattle dock, circa 1937. This work realized \$34,500 (estimate: \$20,000 – 30,000).

The new world records set on the 15th are led by the \$18,400 realized for a scene of placer miners by William F. Chadwick (1828 - *). Chadwick painted the work detailing mining operations during the height of the California gold rush, producing a rare contemporary document of this pivotal moment in history. Though little is known about Chadwick, the painting’s high quality, along with collectors’ always-strong appetite for gold rush scenes, inspired the spirited bidding that propelled the final bid past four times the pre-sale estimate of \$3000 – 4000.

“Redwood Grove at Big Trees, Santa Cruz, CA” set a new record for Lorenzo Latimer (1857 – 1941) when it achieved a final price of \$12,650, and has an interesting history of its own. The dramatically lit oil, retaining its original carved frame and offered for \$5000 – 7000, was reputedly given to the consignor’s family by Latimer himself in exchange for a set of clothes as he ran through the streets of San Francisco, taking refuge from the destruction of the 1906 earthquake and fire.

John Moran established a new top price for Carl Sammons (1883 – 1968) as well. His 24 x 30 – inch oil landscape of sun-bleached California hills, offered for \$6000 – 8000, fetched \$11,500. This was one of two exceptional works by Sammons in the sale, the other being a desert landscape with a broad sky, “Desert Clouds”, which also performed well, realizing \$8050 (estimate: \$6000 – 8000).

Depictions of antique transportation continue to capture collectors’ imaginations. Two such works in the auction established new top records for Wilfrid T. Mills (1912 – 1988) and Raymon A. Price (1901 – 1957). Price, a graduate of Los Angeles’s Chouinard Art Institute, was a commercial artist whose work appeared in magazines such as *Sunset* and *Touring Topics*. His watercolor of a New York trolley car in a windy, snow-blanketed street, “Horse-drawn Harlem,” found a buyer at \$3450, setting a high bar for the first recorded sale of a work by the artist at auction. Mills had previous auction records, but the work offered at Moran’s on the 15th far exceeded those. His oil of a yellow Los Angeles trolley car (Photo 5) brought \$7475, several times the estimate of \$1000 – 1500.

John Moran has routinely established auction markets for talented American artists such as Mills and Price, and did so again on the 15th for Pasquale Giovanni Napolitano (1901 – 2001). The Naples, Italy-born sculptor, whose work is held in the collections of the LA County Museum and the De Young Museum, arrived in Los Angeles in 1912 and studied at the Otis Art Institute under Julia Wendt and Tolles Chamberlain. Moran’s realized \$1700 for his plaster bust, the head from the original casting of a seven-foot sculpture, of California mission founder Father Junipero Serra, (estimate: \$1000 – 1500). The auction also established yet another new top price, for the artist Ruth Alexander, a Laguna Beach painter active from the 1930’s through the 1950’s.

George Spangenberg (1907 – 1964) is another artist whose market John Moran has driven to new heights, currently holding his top two records. They achieved success again on the 15th, selling Spangenberg’s exquisite eucalyptus landscape, “Balboa Park” for \$6900 (estimate: \$4000 – 6000).

John Moran’s third and final California and American Painting Auction of 2010 is scheduled for October 19th and will also feature Western works, Regionalist and California Style watercolors and California and American Impressionists. Paintings already consigned include a Southern California ranch landscape by Charles Reiffel (\$20,000 – 30,000) and a panoramic Bay of Naples view by Herman Herzog (\$30,000 – 50,000).br />

John Moran’s next Antiques and Decorative Arts Auction will take place July 20th. This two-session sale promises to be one of the highlights of Moran’s 2010 sale calendar, and includes American and Continental fine art in addition to silver, porcelain, glass, clocks, bronzes and Continental furniture.

All of John Moran’s Auctions are held at the Pasadena Convention Center at 300 E. Green St in Pasadena, CA. Bidding is available from the floor, by telephone, absentee or online at www.Artfact.com. For more information, or to view catalogues, please visit www.johnmoran.com.

All of John Moran’s sales are held at the Pasadena Convention center in Pasadena, CA. For more information about this sale, or for consignment inquiries for future sales, please call 626-793-1833 or email to info@johnmoran.com.