

John Moran Auctioneers Announces Inaugural Two-Session American and European Fine Art Sale

- 100-lot European Session highlighted by a major work by Frederic Arthur Bridgman
- 200-lot American Session to feature a select group of top California and American painters
- Works from the mid-17th century to the late 20th century consigned from private collections

Pasadena, CA – John Moran Auctioneers is delighted to announce their April 17, 2012 Fine Art Auction, a major sale featuring a spectacular large work by Orientalist painter Frederic Arthur Bridgman (1847 – 1928). The event will mark a new chapter in the history of the family-owned house. For the past forty years collectors and connoisseurs nationwide have known Moran’s as an important venue for sales of California and other regional American Impressionist schools. Answering demand from a growing and increasingly global market while continuing to build upon their success in their traditional specialty, Moran’s is expanding their fine art sale’s content to include European works dating from the 17th to the mid-20th century, to be offered alongside American and California works in a separate, same-day session.

The debut European session is brilliantly led by the Bridgman painting, ‘’Arabian Street Scene’’. Bridgman was born in Alabama but is more strongly associated with France. He moved to Paris as a young man, studying in the studio of pre-eminent French Orientalist Jean-Leon Jerome. Under Jerome’s influence he chose to specialize in scenes of the Middle East, and made numerous trips to Spain and North Africa, particularly Algeria and Egypt. His detailed depictions of the region’s scenery, architecture, people and costumes earned him immense popularity and a reputation as the most talented American artist in the genre. With interest revived in part by recent major museum exhibitions and scholarly studies, works by Bridgman are again enjoying a buoyant market, appreciated for their technical mastery and recording of a fascinating world that has largely disappeared. Created at the peak of Bridgman’s career in 1882, the ‘’Arabian Street Scene’’ is a theatrically staged piece hosting a large cast, serving up the feast of exotic imagery and fanciful effects that collectors of Orientalism crave. With bravura contrasts of light, color and texture, Bridgman guides the viewer’s eye through the dusty street in a procession of deeply receding planes from one group of figures and animals to another, each group forming a vignette telling its own story within the whole. A large work measuring 34 x 53.5 inches, the mesmerizing ‘’Arabian Street Scene’’ arrives at Moran’s from an important private collection in San Marino, CA where it has been held for several generations, and is offered with an estimate of \$300,000 - \$500,000.

Moran’s sale abounds with opportunities for collectors of 19th century European art to acquire classic works by notable artists at all price points, including an oil depicting a guitarist serenading a lady on a veranda by Gabriel Puig Roda (1865 – 1919 Spanish) (estimate: \$4000 – 6000), an ornate interior scene by Jean Paul Sinibaldi (1857 – 1909 French) (estimate: \$3000 – 5000), and a snowy scene of Russian Cossacks, ‘’War and Peace’’, by Constantine Stoiloff Baumgartner (1850 – 1924 Austrian) (estimate: \$4000 – 6000). Italian artist Vittorio Reggianini (1858 – 1939), known for his lighthearted depictions of luxuriously dressed women in well appointed interiors, is represented in the sale by a nicely detailed example, in this case a lady with a greyhound, for \$50,000 – 70,000. Two monumentally large canvases, one by

Edmund Blume (1844 – 1911 German) measuring 122 inches by 84 inches, and a slightly larger work by Jean Jacques Scherrer (1855 – 1916 French), depict, respectively, a deathbed confession to a priest, and a French Revolutionary scene of M. Duval d' Esprememil confronted by the Mayor of Paris. Each carries a conservative pre-sale estimate of \$3000 – 5000, representing remarkable value per yard.

Earlier works in this session include a 1676 oil portrait of a noblewoman by Dutch artist Caspar Netscher (1639 – 1684), offered for \$25,000 – 35,000, a depiction of John the Baptist, Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea by Jusepe de Ribera (1588 – 1652, Spanish), a work attributed to the Circle of Jacopo Amigoni (Estimate: \$10,000 – 15,000), and a work attributed to Nicolaes Maes (1632 – 1693, Dutch) (estimate: \$6000 – 8000).

At the other end of the historical spectrum is a typically lush work by Belgian painter Adrien Jean Le Mayeur de Merpres (1880 – 1958), who drew inspiration from the Indonesian island of Bali where he resided from 1933 – 1958. Transfixed by the largely unspoiled beauty and intact culture of the Indonesian island, making many portrayals of the natives and their rituals, particularly dancers. Moran's is offering one of his signature portrayals of women dancing amongst tropical flowers and foliage, consigned from private collection, for \$100,000 – 150,000. Two ink-on-paper drawings are by the German/American caricaturist and political satirist George Grosz (1893 – 1959). Grosz joined the anti-war, anti-capitalist Dada movement in 1917 and within a short time was known as a leading social critic. A controversial figure who made daring use of imagery, he was prosecuted for blasphemy and offences against public morality and his fame consequently increased. Moran's is offering his 'Spaziergang des Erotomanen' ('Promenade of the Erotomaniac') with an estimate of \$12,000 – 18,000 and a scene of figures in a street for \$20,000 – 30,000. Both drawings were consigned from a Los Angeles, CA collector who acquired them in the 1970's. Additional modern European highlights include an ink drawing by Jean Cocteau (1889 – 1963 French) titled 'Modern Face' (estimate: \$1500 – 2000) and a gouache by Joan Miro (1893 – 1983 Spanish).

Austrian-born but strongly associated with his adopted city of Cincinnati, Ohio is Magic Realist painter Henry Koerner (1915 – 1999), whose 1950 tempera painting 'Contemplation' is a highlight of the American Session. Moran's achieved notable success with another Koerner from the same time period, consigned from the same private collection of friends of the artist, when they sold his 'Under the Overpass' in June, 2011 for \$252,000. 'Contemplation' is a smaller but very evocative work, and is expected to realize \$10,000 – 15,000. Another mid-20th century highlight is a pen-and-ink drawing by Saul Steinberg (1914 – 1999) titled 'Don't Stir Without Noilly Prat' (estimate: \$4000 – 6000).

In all the American Session will offer 200 select paintings, drawings and prints, including and works by Julian Onderdonk, William P. Silva, Thomas Hart Benton, and Sydney Laurence (1865 – 1940, Alaska), whose atmospheric mountain landscape featuring an eagle soaring high over a river is offered for \$30,000 – 50,000. A 1920 painting by the North Carolina artist Percival Leonard Rosseau (1859 – 1937) is a fine example of his specialty subject of sporting dogs in landscapes, portraying two pointers, 'Denwood Joe and Kirk's Masters Boy', poised in a Barbizon-style autumn landscape. The 25 by 32-inch oil is expected to fetch \$20,000 – 30,000.

The top California Impressionists for whose work Moran's has regularly achieved record prices are well represented, including William Wendt, Maurice Braun, Colin Campbell Cooper, Alson Clark, Seldon Connor Gile, Jack Wilkinson Smith and Edgar Payne, with prices starting at \$1,000. One of the leading lots in this category is a magnificent

William J. McCloskey twelve-apple still life, offered for \$80,000 – 120,000. Other standouts include a small oil by Laguna Beach resident Anna A. Hills, of small children and a dog wading in the surf on a beach, loosely painted in her much-admired palette knife technique and bearing a 1929 inscription from the artist and her sister to their niece, from whom the present owner acquired it (estimate: \$6000 – 8000). A 30 by 40-inch landscape of rolling hills resplendent with poppies and lupine is one of the largest paintings by Carmel painter Mary DeNeale Morgan to appear on the market in the last few years (estimate: \$15,000 – 20,000).

Moran’s two-session April 17th Fine Art Auction will be held at the Pasadena, CA Convention Center. Full sale catalogues will be posted at www.johnmoran.com 2 -3 weeks prior to the sale. Bidding is available from the floor and via absentee, telephone or online. Registration is free and all are welcome.

Moran’s is currently accepting consignments for other upcoming auctions, including their May 8, 2012 Antiques and Fine Jewelry Auction. For their full schedule of Fine Art, Antiques and Jewelry auctions, and further information about current sales, please visit their website or contact their offices at 626-793-1833 or email info@johnmoran.com.