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Auction Guide

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SPRING 2021

Swann Galleries® Auction

Highlighting Women’s Contributions

Swann’s sale celebrating women’s achievements achieves strong results.

This July, Devon Eastland, senior specialist of early printed books at Swann Galleries, turned her attention toward a special sale, Focus on Women, highlighting the contributions of those who identify as women in diverse fields that have shaped human history. The sale featured lots such as first editions, manuscript material, archives, and works on paper by historically significant writers, scientists, and artists from various fields ranging from before 1800 through the contemporary era.

Buyers responded positively, resulting in a resounding success for Swann. Not only did the auction realize sales totaling $333,893 on estimates of $167,250–$5,000, but out of 178 lots, 136 were sold, achieving a 78-percent sell-through rate

"The experience of gathering, valuing, and cataloguing material for Focus on Women surprised me," Eastland said. "Something about the process of getting it all together and looking at books, art, manuscripts, and ephemera through this lens changed the material itself in my eyes."

For example, Eastland said that "Sarah Farn's True Love, a Story of English Domestic Life (1891), a presumed first-and possibly only-edition of the work of a Black woman scholar, is "nonexistent" on the rare book market and "rare" even in libraries. This made the book difficult to estimate, but it ultimately realized a price of $8,750 on an estimate of $1,000–$2,000.

Eastland said cataloguing women’s work in the sciences was particularly eye-opening and satisfying, especially in the case of three glass-plate astronomical photographs (1891), which realized $6,888 on an estimate of $1,500–$2,500, and A.F. Pollard’s Henry VIII in a Guild of Women Binders Exhibition Binding (1892) realizing $15,250 on an estimate of $5,000–$7,500.

Notably, the Memphis Museum of Art purchased several items, including a set of five photos of trans women by Morris Clayton’s photo album (c. 1893–1993, sold for $8,750). These photos documenting the lives of trans persons, linking the person to the material, is "nonexistent" on the rare book market and "rare" even in libraries. This made the book difficult to estimate, but it ultimately realized a price of $8,750 on an estimate of $1,000–$2,000.

One of the biggest successes from the auction was a first edition quarto of the third part of Juana Inés de la Cruz’s Fama, y Obras Posthumas del Fenix de Mexico Decima Musa, Poetisa Americana (1700), which sold for $18,250 on an estimate of $5,000–$7,000, and nine Guerrilla Girls text posters, which sold for $3,500 on an estimate of $200–$400.

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Early Exploration Rarities

An Americana collection with a little something for everyone.

On Aug. 28, at 10 A.M. CT, Potter & Potter Auctions in Chicago will be hosting its first live sale since the onset of the pandemic. Bidders are also welcome to participate as absentees through a variety of online modalities detailed on the Potter & Potter Auctions website.

Up for sale are rare books, maps, photographs, and other collectibles from American history. Chris Brink, director of fine books & manuscripts at Potter & Potter Auctions, said that the upcoming sale is typical of his auction house in that it has a wide variety of artifacts and price points.

“We cater to both the seasoned collector, and somebody who is just starting to get into collecting,” Brink said. “We have auctions with books that sell for $500, and of the river, to see if either could be taken by France. The work he produced was some of the most detailed cartography of the region during that time period. The complete map, issued on four separate engraved plates, has only even been offered at auction once in the past 100 years. Brink estimates the sales price at somewhere between $15,000 and $20,000.

A second item of note is an album of 224 albu- men-printed photographs by William Henry Jackson. Jackson that sell for $1,000, and there are 224 photos in this album,” Brink said. “He is widely considered one of the most important western American photographers of any century and we think this broad range of work will attract various types of col-lectors.”

The album is expected to sell for somewhere between $10,000 and $15,000.

A final item Brink highlighted was Atlas sive Cosmographicae Meditationes et Fabricati figura, an atlas created by cartogra- phers Gerard Mercator and Jodocus Hondius in 1632. With 179 engraved maps from all over the world, Brink expects the rare work to sell for an estimated price between $18,000 and $22,000.

Photograph by William Henry Jackson (American, 1843-1942). Part of album of 224 albumen silver prints of picturesque scenery along the “Santa Fe Route” railways.

Pride of Place Pieces

Heritage Auctions to sell iconic works of genre fiction in October.

This fall, Heritage Auctions’ Rare Books department will hold an online auction featuring genre-defining works from the Gary Munson Collection. The October 14 auction will feature highlights from Munson’s impressive collection of horror and fantasy, which boasts a broad range of items from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries.

“Mr. Munson, who passed away recently, was a long-time and extremely dedicated collector of genre fiction, with a special emphasis on stories in the fields of supernatural, apparitions, horror, fantasy, ghosts and also had large holdings of mystery and detective, science fiction, and action-adventure,” said James Gannon, director of rare books at Heritage Auctions.

One highlight is an 1818 triple-decker first edition of the Gothic classic, *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, as well as a first edition and the first pirated edition of John William Polidori’s *The Vampyre*, both copies published in 1819.

The sale will also feature the first appearance of Edgar Rice Burroughs’ *Tarzan of the Apes* in *The All-Story Magazine* in October 1912 and a first edition in a dust jacket published in 1914. Meanwhile, a first edition of J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy from 1954–1955 will also be offered. Other notable items include an inscribed and signed copy of H.G. Wells’ *The Time Machine* (1895) and Franz Kafka’s *Die Verwandlung* (1915). The sale will also feature many editions of Thea von Harbou’s *Metropolis*, including some signed by Harbou and at least one signed by her husband, director and filmmaker Fritz Lang. The auction will take place at 11 A.M. Central on October 14, with approximately two weeks of Internet bidding prior to the live event. The auction will be conducted entirely online on Heritage’s industry-leading "HeritageLive!” platform.

Parts of Munson’s collection will also be offered in Heritage’s illustration art sale on October 4. “Important fantasy artwork from the Gary Munson Collection includes extremely rare book, magazine, cover, and interior art work by the greatest artists to ever work in the field,” said Todd Hignite, vice president at Heritage Auctions. “Among the many highlights are two of the most important Edgar Rice Burroughs book covers by his greatest illustrator—and pioneer in the field—James Allen St. John, covers by the greatest science fiction pulp illustrator Frank R. Paul, as well as *Weird Tales* pulp magazine covers and interior illustrations by famed illustrators Virgil Finlay, Hannes Bok, and Lee Brown Coye.”

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More of Munson’s collection will also be offered in the Heritage Rare Book department’s December signature auction, numerous sales in 2022, and in the comics department’s weekly Internet auctions. “Offerings from Mr. Munson’s collection will appeal to a broad range of genre and literature collectors looking to add premium pieces to their collection,” Gannon said. “The iconic nature of many titles will be coveted by high-spot collectors looking for pride of place pieces.”

Peggy Caruthers, in charge of consignments and the director of custom content at Journalspace, Inc., has produced this section in consultation with Mr. Munson and his family.

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The Gary Munson Collection
of Horror and Fantasy

Heritage Auctions to sell iconic works of genre fiction in October.
A Graham Greene Collection

An upcoming sale focuses on the venerable author’s early work.

On Sept. 30, 2021, Forum Auctions will host a sale focused on works by author Graham Greene, with 40 to 50 lots available. Many of the items up for auction are from World War II and before, representing a diverse range of rare books and manuscripts written by the prolific English author.

“This is the type of sale that will attract those who are particular fans of Graham Greene, but also those who are drawn to rare books from celebrated authors in general,” said Max Hasler, book specialist for Forum Auctions. “Greene has so many books that were key pieces of the English fiction landscape, and this is something we are really excited about.

Opening up to the public,” Hasler said, “this auction offers a first edition of The Power and the Glory, the story was a pointed caricature character’s name and to alter some of the character’s habits in order to avoid litigation.”

The uncorrected proof copy of Stamboul Train is expected to sell for somewhere between £4,000 and £4,500.

A final item that will generate excitement is an American first edition of Brighton Rock, which Hasler believes is the author’s most well-known novel. Of note on this first edition is an impressive cover design by George Salter. Hasler anticipates that item selling for between £2,000 and £2,500.

Stamboul Train, Uncorrected proof copy, 1932. £3,000-4,000.


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Five Years of Highlights at Forum Auctions

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Please contact Rupert Powell r.powell@forumauctions.co.uk for a free auction valuation.
The Collection of Barry Moser

Hindman to offer renowned artist’s personal collection in November sale.

This November, Hindman will auction items created and owned by renowned woodcut artist, illustrator, and operator of Pennyroyal Press, Barry Moser. The sale, called Selections from the Studio & Personal Archive of Barry Moser, will begin at 10 a.m. Central on November 10—the second day of the books and manuscript department’s two-day sale. The sale will represent all of Moser’s major works, and will include limited editions, trade editions, books in sheets, suites of prints, original drawings, ephemera, and watercolors,” said Gretchen Hause, vice president and senior specialist of the books and manuscripts department at Hindman.

One of the highlights of the sale is works relating to the Pennyroyal Caxton Bible (1999), which Moser worked on for more than four years with a team of scholars and craftsmen. “Moser’s woodcut illustrations are striking. The Pennyroyal Caxton Bible is the only twentieth century Bible with illustrations for every book of the Old and New Testament executed by a single artist, and is, in fact, the first since Gustav Doré’s Bible published in 1866,” Hause said. In addition to a copy of the Bible, Hindman will also offer material relating to its publication, including a full suite of illustrations, two canceled woodblocks, original drawings, and several books Moser used for research during the production of his Bible. Two of the most iconic works from the Pennyroyal Press are Moser’s illustrated editions of Lewis Carroll’s Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass (1982). Hindman will offer these in sheets, along with trade editions, an engraving block, the books Moser used while researching the work, and a framed suite of original proofs for some of the most iconic prints from the work, including a placard that says, “Drink me.”

The collection rounds out the story of Barry Moser the artist, bookwright, fine press printer, typographer, and illustrator,” Hause said. “It is such a privilege to offer Barry’s collection on his behalf. He is one of the most significant woodcut artists of the twentieth century, and having the opportunity to work on his behalf has been one of the great privileges of my career.”

While it is uncertain if the house will be open for in-person bidding, collectors will have numerous ways to participate in the sale, as the auction will take place live and online via Hindman’s Internet platform, the Digital Bid Room. Absentee and telephone bidding will also be available.

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