
MICHAAN'S AUCTIONS

Auctioneers & Appraisers

PRE SALE PRESS RELEASE!

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Auction:
Estate Auction
Featuring fine art, decorative arts, Asian art and jewelry
May 9, 10am (PST)

Previews:
May 2-3 and 8
Day of sale and by appointment

Location:
Michaan's Auctions
2751 Todd Street
Alameda, CA 94501

May Property Travels Art Deco Era to "Hong Kong Harbor"

Highlights comprise geometric Art Deco brooch, Elizabeth Keith's "Hong Kong Harbor," Tuan bronze "Prelude to a Kiss" and deco box featuring Reginald A. Wymer original art

Jewelry lots in the May auction will be plentiful, with over 130 available to the bidding public. Gemstones, jades, pearls and corals will be held at sale, alongside maker names such as Rolex and Tiffany & Co. Unique lots of interest are evidenced in a 9 karat rose gold cigarette case as well as a 14 karat yellow gold Mason's award ribbon. Period picks include a collection of Victorian black onyx, moonstone, diamond, enamel and gold jewelry, as well as this month's highlight, an understated, yet quite lovely Art Deco brooch (lot 069, \$300-400). The period piece of a carved black onyx rectangular plaque is sparsely adorned, letting geometry and sharp color differentiation take precedence. The openwork plaque holds two full cut accent diamonds, as well as geometric red and green enamel enhancements and foliates motifs. The brooch remains in a beautifully lustrous, glass-like appearance, set in an 18 karat yellow gold and platinum mounting.

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The May Asian sale section includes decorative items, literature, jewelry and various artworks. One such artwork in the sale is Elizabeth Keith's (1887-1956) "Hong Kong Harbor" as lot 203 at an estimate of \$800-1,200. The soothing evening image is of traditional fishing boats on calm waters reflecting the lights of a developed mountainside. The print is of a refined impression, nicely displaying the clean color contrast of the shadowy evening touched by glimmers of light. Keith, a self-taught British artist born in Scotland, came to be influenced by the Japanese culture upon her travels there. Her sister had married an English publisher living in Tokyo, where she visited for what was supposed to be a short vacation. The Japanese culture and arts came to cast a spell on the then 28-year-old Keith and she ended up staying for nine years. This exposure became the catalyst for a succession of Japanese inspired artworks held within Keith's catalog. During her first year there, Watanabe, a Shin Hanga publisher, saw some of her exhibited works and encouraged her to translate her image of the East Gate in Seoul into a woodblock print. In the following years, Watanabe published more than one hundred of her woodblock prints, proving to be successful in Japan, London and New York. Keith's woodblock prints continue to be rare and desired, as their production was often kept quite low, some in editions of only thirty or fifty copies.

Approximately 80 lots make up the fine art portion of Michaan's May estate auction that includes oil paintings, watercolors, serigraphs and etchings primarily from American and European artists. However, a bronze sculpture by Vietnamese artist Tuan (b. 1963) titled "Prelude to a Kiss" is the feature lot of the sale section (lot 390, \$1,500-2,000). The sculpture depicting lovers in an embrace measures approximately 38 x 34 x 18 inches and sits upon a tiered black marble base. A standing male cradles a female upon her left side, supporting her leg and outstretched arm as if in an elegant dance. Her splayed arms rest on what appear to be wings from the front view, executed in a modern, geometric style as viewed from the back. The embracing lovers gaze adoringly at one another, with the male cloaked in nothing more than a cascading loincloth. Tuan's sculptures pay a visual homage to the notion of "Existential Balance" in both subject matter and aesthetic. Tuan personally conceived his artistic outlook as "Existential Balance," meaning to bring together elements in art that highlight and celebrate the importance of balance in human existence. He has stated, "Once we embrace the true meaning of balance, we can come to terms with our own existence." In touching upon themes such as the masculine and feminine as well as rough and smooth textures in "Prelude to a Kiss," the sculpture speaks to the balance that is at the heart of Tuan's artistic ideology.

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Auction collections of decorative pieces abound in the May sale, with a range of objet d'arts presented by celebrated artisans. Various Roycroft Arts & Crafts hand hammered copper items will be sold alongside delightful figure collections. These include Art Deco pottery frogs as well as Rookwood, Van Briggle and Cowan assortments of a nude, turtle, bisque monkey, duck and elephants. The sale selection continues with Rookwood pieces, such as a flambé urn, trays and additional figures up for auction. A multi-lot collection of Gouda pottery is listed at estimates of \$400-600 per lot as well. Rounding out the May decorative mentions is a bronze statue of the Roman god Mercury, fashioned in a lively sprint of a pose.

However, taking center stage in the decorative arts category is a unique bird's eye maple table box whose hinged cover features an original 1935 watercolor by British artist Reginald Augustus Wymer (1849-1935). The painting, titled as "Coldstream Guards 1760" upon the lower left, depicts uniformed guards in full regalia milling about a courtyard at St. James's Palace. The box, once gifted, contains a note within stating it was purchased as an antique when the buyer was stationed in England in 1942. Wymer has been regarded as a premiere military illustrator, with an accurate attention to detail in the realms of both British and Continental uniforms. The Reginald Augustus Wymer box will be sold on Saturday, May the 9th as lot 624 at an estimate of \$400-600.

The illustrated auction catalog will be posted online at www.michaans.com when it becomes available. Previews for the May Estate Auction will be held on May 2nd and 3rd as well as May 8th and 9th, the day of sale. For general information please call (510) 740-0220 ext. 0 or e-mail info@michaans.com. Michaan's Auctions is located at 2751 Todd Street, Alameda, CA 94501.

About Michaan's Auctions

Michaan's Auctions is a leading full service auction house on the West Coast. Specializing in the appraisals and sale of antiques and fine art, Michaan's has specialists in the fields of Furniture and Decorative Arts, Modern, Contemporary Art, European and American Paintings and Prints, Jewelry and Asian Works of Art.

Established in 2002, Michaan's Auctions holds up to thirty sales each year attracting a broad base of buyers and consignors from all over the world. With one of the largest facilities in Northern California and the Bay Area's lowest buyers premium Michaan's offers buyers and sellers the opportunity to preview and bid on many unique and desirable property. Some of these pieces realized world record prices. In 2005 A.D.M. Cooper's oil painting, Three Graces 1915, sold for a record \$21,060 and an Eduard Gaertner oil, German City Street Scene 1831, sold for \$266,000.

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Michaan's has built its reputation on its ability to accept single items, groups or entire estates with its "no risk consignment policy" free of hidden fees and charges. Michaan's specialists are dedicated to staying current on the latest issues and developments in the market and are committed to providing personalized and professional attention throughout the entire auction process.

For a full listing of upcoming auctions or to view a complete catalog, please visit www.michaans.com.