

Fine Art Flies, Seuss Taxidermy Surprises At DuMouchelles

Auction Action In Detroit, Mich.



The rarity of white jade helped drive the result on this group of three Chinese jade pendants, two of which were white. A Chinese buyer prevailed over competition and bid the group to close at \$11,160 (\$150/300).



A buyer in the United States paid \$43,400 for Sir Thomas Lawrence's "Head of a Child," done in oil on canvas. It had provenance to a London gallery, and collections in both Akron, Ohio, and Washington, DC. It was the highest selling work in the sale (\$2/3,000).



A dozen Tiffany sterling silver service plates, each measuring 11 inches in diameter and each bearing a standing deer crest, brought \$10,540 from an American buyer (\$2/3,000).



An American buyer paid \$7,440 for this Chinese blue and white porcelain basin with unglazed and unmarked base (\$200/400).



Review by
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Photos Courtesy DuMouchelles



DuMouchelles noted similarities in a landscape rendered on the back of this Chinese lacquer panel with inlaid stones and carved teakwood to the Chinese artist Tang Yin. The provenance on the substantial piece, which measured 42½ by 36 inches, included a Muskegon, Mich., estate and a Brussels, Belgium, dealer. Estimated at \$10/20,000, it sold within estimate, for \$16,120.



Catherine Page recalled this carved giltwood bull's-eye mirror to be "a stately can piece." It sold to a local buyer for \$8,680 (\$800-\$1,200).

DETROIT, MICH. — DuMouchelles conducted its annual December auctions December 16-17, when 843 lots of varied antiques, fine art, collectibles and jewelry were offered. The house reported a total of \$817,383.

"We are very thankful to complete our 2021 season. We had strong support from our customers with spirited bidding resulting in 93 percent of lots sold," said Robert "Bob" DuMouchelle. His colleague, Joan Walker, said, "Our sale was spirited. We had a large audience of internet bidders making for healthy competition. It was a successful auction and a wonderful end to a successful year. We have premium merchandise and our customers have responded by high participation."

The top two works in the sale were from an Ohio seller and both had provenance to Frost and Reed, Ltd., of London, Mrs. Louis A. Witzman of Akron, Ohio, and Richard Walton Edwards Jr. of Washington, DC. An unfinished oil on canvas painting of the head of a child by Sir Thomas Lawrence (British, 1769-1830) was unsigned but was illustrated in *Sir Thomas Lawrence*, a 1989 monograph on the artist by Kenneth Garlick. DuMouchelle's

appraiser and cataloger, Catherine Page, commented on the importance of the presence of the artist's brushstrokes in the upper right quadrant of the work, a feature she said made it possible to assess how the painter worked. Measuring 23¾ by 21½ inches, the work was estimated at \$2/3,000; it sold to a buyer in the United States for \$43,400.

The other painting with the same provenance was a still life of fruit and flowers attributed to Dutch artist Michiel Simon (1620-1673). According to Page, efforts were made in the 1960s to firm up the attribution on the 46-by-30-inch oil on canvas work, including examination by a curator at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the Netherlands Institute for Art History, and paint analysis at the Smithsonian. Estimated at \$30/50,000, it made \$31,000 from a buyer in the United States.

A pair of Nineteenth Century Meissen porcelain covered urns stood 22 inches tall, a size that Page noted was "of admirable scale," with delicately painted applied bugs. An American buyer paid \$18,600 for the pair, which came from the Brighton, Mich., estate of Renate Gilmore.

Gilmore's estate presented the opportunity to buy other treasures, with 140 lots offered across both days of sale. Other highlights from her collection included a portrait of a young woman by Angelo Asti (French, 1847-1903) that outpaced its estimate with a selling price of \$4,650, and a single 17-inch-tall Meissen covered urn with lushly applied fruit and floral forms for \$2,480. On the first day of the sale, a pair of garden planters each with lovely verdigris patina and three satyr legs topped works from her estate, at \$4,650 and a set of four gilded terracotta Evangelists by Professor Eugenio Pattarino (Italian, 1885-1971), for \$3,100.

Interest on Chinese works was strong. A Chinese inlaid lacquer panel inset with carved jade, teakwood and semiprecious stones, including quartz, amethyst and lapis lazuli realized \$16,120 from an international buyer. The top lot on the first day of sales was \$11,160 for three

Made locally, staying locally. This Pewabic Pottery earthenware bottleneck vase stood 8½ inches tall and had been made by Pewabic Pottery founder, Mary Chase Perry, probably for a museum. It was consigned by a "prominent Metro Detroit collector of Pewabic Pottery and brought \$9,300 (\$3/5,000).

The most unusual grouping within the sale were 16 lots of hand painted cast resin "Unorthodox Taxidermy Sculptures" by Theodor Seuss Geisel (Dr. Seuss), which were made in limited editions between 1999 and 2014. This "Blue Green Abelard," numbered 103 from an edition of 375, brought the highest price of any offered, selling to an American buyer for \$14,880 (\$4/6,000).



pieces of Chinese jade pendants, two of which were white while the third, which was of a darker color, had a 14K gold chain attached. The rarity of white jade was one of the factors that drove interest in the lot, which sold to a Chinese buyer. Among Chinese porcelains, an unglazed and unmarked blue and white basin with scrolling floral designs finished at \$7,440, nearly 20 times its high estimate.

The most unusual section of the sale was a group of 16 hand painted cast resin taxidermy works of Dr. Seuss figures that were



A Lithuanian buyer paid \$8,680 for Arbit Blatas' "Jardin du Luxembourg," which had provenance to friends of the artist (\$4/6,000).



Offered by a Metro Detroit-area seller who had rarely touched it, this 103-piece Wedgwood porcelain service for 12 in the Queensware pattern found a new home in the United States for \$5,270 (\$500/700).

issued posthumously in limited editions. The seller set out to create a complete set and is one of the most complete sets to come to the market in recent times. Each piece carried an estimate of \$4/6,000 — for an aggregate low/high estimate of \$64/96,000; all but two of the taxidermies sold for a combined total of \$76,260.

The top lot of the Seuss taxidermy collection was his "Blue Green Abeland," which was issued in 1999 in an edition of 375. It brought \$14,880 compared to the \$7,440 achieved by the "Goo-Goo-Eyed Tasmanian Wolghast," which was made in an edition of 850 in 2007. Page said interest in the group was primarily from the United States.

A Tiffany Studios ten-panel tulip lamp that came in on a free appraisal/consignment day was dated to circa 1898-99 and featured its original oil lamp base, which had subsequently been electrified. It came from a metro-Detroit area family that had been known to DuMouchelles for at least 60 years; it will be staying in the area to a local buyer who paid \$13,640 for it.

Other pieces that will be staying in the area include a rare Pewabic Pottery earthenware bottleneck vase that was made between 1908 and 1920 by Mary Chase Perry, the founder of Pewabic Pottery. The vase featured Perry's characteristic iridescent glaze over green matte glaze, as well as other more unusual colors. Page pointed out that cloth tape on the underneath

that was marked "M2" indicated the piece had been designated for a museum. It brought \$9,300, nearly twice its high estimate.

Also staying local is a large (54 by 44 inches) carved and giltwood bull's-eye mirror, Twentieth Century, that Page said had a scale and dynamism that was particularly impressive when viewed in person. Estimated at \$800-\$1,200, it finished at \$8,680.

The same price was realized for "Jardin du Luxembourg" by Arbit Blatas (Lithuanian/American, 1908-1999), which sold to a buyer



"That was so cool," Catherine Page said of this Tiffany Studios ten-panel tulip lamp on its now electrified oil lamp base. Consigned by longtime local DuMouchelles clients, it brought \$13,640 from a metro Detroit area buyer (\$15/20,000).



This rosewood chair and ottoman, designed by Charles and Ray Eames for Herman Miller, came from a Port Huron, Mich., private collection. Thanks to the original owner's records, the firm could confirm the 1978 date of manufacture. Perennial favorites whenever these pieces come to market, interest pushed it to \$8,060, from an American buyer (\$4/6,000).

in Lithuania. According to Joe Walker, Joan's son and a third generation DuMouchelle, the Blatas painting "represents one of the finest of his works to come on the market in several years, and the subject is iconic; this work represents Blatas in the prime of his career." He noted that the provenance to friends of the artist contributed to the auction result, which eclipsed most of Blatas' recent auction prices.

Silver and porcelain table settings are often popular sellers at this time of year, when entertaining is on the minds of many people. A set of 12 Tiffany sterling silver service plates that retained their original canvas sleeves each bore the crest of a standing deer; estimated at \$2/3,000, the set finished at \$10,540 to an American buyer. Also staying in the United States is a 103-piece Wedgwood porcelain service for 12 in the

Queensware pattern. It was consigned to DuMouchelles by a Metro Detroit area seller who was pleased with the \$5,270 price realized, a multiple of ten times its low estimate.

DuMouchelles' next sale is scheduled for January 20-21.

Prices quoted include the buyer's premium as reported by the auction house. For more information, www.dumoart.com or 313-963-6255.



This pair of Neoclassical-style bronze garden planters from the Renate Gilmore estate stood 35 inches tall and featured a very attractive verdigris patina. The tripod satyr-form base was particularly distinctive, and the pair found a new home in the metro Detroit area for \$4,650 (\$800-\$1,200).



"What's admirable about those was the scale," Catherine Page said of this pair of Nineteenth Century Meissen porcelain covered urns with pierced forms and floral and vine motifs further embellished with applied bugs. An American buyer was not deterred by some repairs and paid \$18,600 for the two, which stood 22 inches tall (\$600-\$1,000).



"That was a favorite during the preview. It had very bright colors that really stood out," Catherine Page said of this Agra carpet, made in Northern India, that came from a Bloomfield, Mich., home. It found a new home in the United States, for \$10,540 (\$4/8,000).

This still life of fruit and flowers was attributed to Michiel Simon (Dutch, 1620-1673) and had been on the market at Christie's, Manson & Wood in 1944, then with Frost & Reed in London. Efforts were made in the 1960s to attribute it. It brought \$31,000 from a buyer in the United States and was the second highest result of the sale (\$30/50,000).

