

AUCTION REVIEW

25 September 2014

Autumn Auctions at Koller Zurich, 15 to 20 September 2014

Strong results for extraordinary antiques

The Koller auctions from 15 to 20 September 2014 culminated with the sale of a writing desk by André-Charles Boulle for the record price of CHF 3 million and brought about several other surprising sales. The Book auction concluded with three sales in the six-digit range. The "Astronomicum Caesareum" by Peter Apian sold for CHF 660 000.

Furniture

3 million for the "Bureau-Plat" by André-Charles Boulle

The sensational result of 3 million Swiss francs obtained for the writing desk by the French cabinetmaker André-Charles Boulle was the highlight of the furniture auction (Lot 1078). This is the highest price ever paid for a piece of furniture at an auction in Switzerland and one of the highest prices ever paid for a piece of furniture world-wide. A private collector from London outbid three telephone bidders and an interested party in the auction hall.

Other coveted lots of this auction concerned objects of various styles from different time periods. Among the Empire furniture was the important console "aux griffons" by F.H.G Jacob-Desmalter, which found a new owner for CHF 210 000 (lot 1278).

Marble and bronze figures were likewise high in demand. The Greek bronze figure of Zeus from the 5th century B.C. was auctioned for CHF 294 000 (lot 1016). The ca. 80 cm tall marble figure of Actaeon with club, skin, horn and dog, which was created by Barthélemy Blaise in 1786, sold for CHF 180 000 (lot 1253).



BUREAU-PLAT „AUX TÊTES DE SATYRE“, Régence, by A.C. BOULLE, Paris, circa 1720. Sold for CHF 3 million

Books & Autographs

"Astronomicum Caesareum" by Peter Apian sold for CHF 660 000

The Book auction featured no less than three bids in the six-digit range. The top lot was the "Astronomicum Caesareum" by Peter Apian from 1540, which sold for CHF 660 000 (lot 402). In addition to being one of the most attractively printed works of the 16th century, this book is considered to be the last important work of Ptolemaic astronomy.

The second highest bid of the auction, namely CHF 408 000, went to Isaac Newton's "Philosophiae naturalis principia mathematica" from 1687 (lot 353). With this work, Newton laid the cornerstone for the Law of Universal Gravitation and Classical Mechanics.

David Robert's six-volume work with 238 colored lithographs of historical subjects from Palestine and Egypt, published in London between 1842 and 1849, fetched CHF 220 000 (lot 386).



PETER APIAN
Astronomicum Caesareum.
Ingolstadt, 1540.
Sold for CHF 660 000

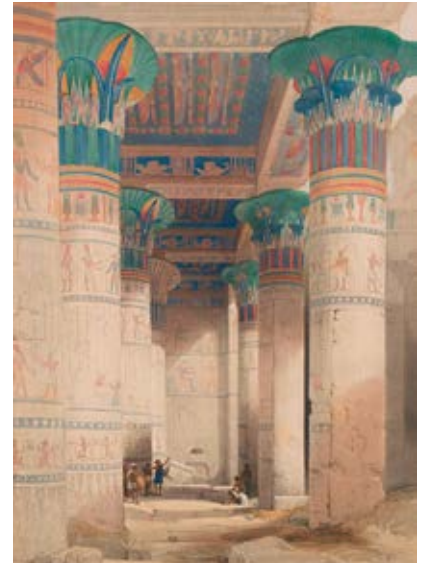
Old Masters

Matthias Stomer and Jan Brueghel dominate the Old Masters auction

The ca. 1.1x1.5 m painting of the evangelists Mark and Luke with their attributes, lion and ox, which Matthias Stomer created as the counterpart to “Matthew and John with eagle and angel”, was the top lot at Koller’s Old Masters auction and sold for CHF 432 000 (lot 3029). This work was formerly part of the Trafalgar Galleries and subsequently became part of a European private collection.

With four works by Jan Brueghel sold at the auction, the Flemish master was without a doubt the star of the auction, both in numbers of lots and in total amount. A 20x26 oil on copper painting depicting the Holy Family resting on the flight into Egypt, from 1594, fetched CHF 396 000, the second highest price obtained at this auction (lot 3040). The tondo “A farmhouse by a stream” from 1610 sold for CHF 300 000 (lot 3049).

The winged altar (triptych) by the so-called “Swiss Master” brought about a surprise. This masterpiece, depicting the coronation of Mary, Saint Bernhard and Saint Agnes, the Annunciation, and Saint Anne with the Virgin and Child, was estimated at CHF 60 000 to 80 000, and achieved CHF 180 000 (lot 3005).



DAVID ROBERTS
The Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt & Nubia.
London, 1842-1849.
Sold for CHF 224 400

19th century Paintings

Russian paintings high in demand

Once again, harmoniously composed paintings by the St. Petersburg artist Ivan Fedorovic Choultse were among the highlights of the auction for 19th century paintings. A winter landscape featuring Lake St. Moritz was sold for CHF 228 000, a sunset over the Adriatic changed hands for CHF 180 000 (lots 3225 and 3222). The “Portrait of a lady with coconut jewellery” by the Russian painter Konstantin Egorovich Makovsky was another top lot at the auction and fetched CHF 126 000 (lot 3202). The highest bid at the auction went to the oil “Les danseurs de Castel-Gandolfo” by Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot, created ca. 1855/60, which achieved CHF 256 000 (lot 3256).



MATTHIAS STOMER
The evangelists Mark and Luke. Oil on canvas.
113x154 cm.
Sold for CHF 432 000

(Detail)



JEAN-BAPTISTE CAMILLE COROT
Les danseurs de Castel-Gandolfo.
Circa 1855-60. Oil on canvas.
Sigend: Corot. 39x55 cm.
Sold for CHF 256 000

(Detail)

Porcelain, Faience & Glass and Silver

Many bidders from all over the world

The top lot of the Porcelain auction was a Meissen figure of an “Augustus Rex” great crested grebe, manufactured ca. 1734 after a model by J.J. Kändler, and was acquired by an American collector for CHF 144 000 (lot 1800).

The Silver auction delighted with several Russian objects. A silver-gilt “kovsh”, a traditional Russian drinking vessel, by the Moscow master Alexej Iwanow Wichljajew, changed hands for CHF 60 000 (lot 1758), and a St. Petersburg lidded goblet from 1768 sold for CHF 12 000 (lot 1928).

Jewellery & Watches

More and more women bidders

The trend that an increasing number of women are actively bidding at the Jewellery auctions is continuing. The top lot of the Jewellery & Watches auction was the casual-elegant diamond ring with a step-cut diamond weighing 10.5 carat, created by Majo Fruithof, which sold for CHF 108 000 (lot 2177). A solitaire ring with a brilliant-cut diamond weighing 3.2 carat achieved CHF 90 000 (lot 2195).

Old Master Drawings & Prints

Quality sells

The 1903 pencil and charcoal drawing by the Viennese artist Adolph von Menzel, depicting a couple on a bench in a park, was one of the top lots of the Auction for Old Master Drawings & Prints, and sold for CHF 9 600, i.e. above its estimate (lot 3514). Swiss works were also high in demand, in particular those by Alexandre Calame. His chalk on blue paper, depicting a mountain landscape in the vicinity of Bordighera, estimated at CHF 2 500 / 3 500, fetched CHF 9 600 (lot 3483).



AUGUSTUS REX GREAT CRESTED GREBE,
Meissen, circa 1734.
Sold for CHF 144 000



DIAMOND RING, MAJO FRUITHOF
Sold for CHF 108 000



ADOLPH VON MENZEL
Couple on a bench. 1903.
Pencil and charcoal on paper.
16x9 cm.
Sold for CHF 9 600



Images (Dropbox)
Results

Contact: Silvana Ghidoli, ghidoli@kollerauctions.com