

THE WINTER SHOW

We asked exhibitors at the Winter Show to highlight one exceptional object in their booths and describe it as they might to an interested collector. Here are the things they chose, along with their comments.

BARBARA ISRAEL GARDEN ANTIQUES

This pair of truly exceptional and rare marble benches boasts a particularly interesting provenance. They date to around 1880 and are carved with delightfully expressive grotesque masks, robust acanthus leaves, and clusters of fruit. They would have been made in Italy for the export market, at a time when the fashion for classical Italianate garden ornament was at its peak in America.



Indicative of hand-carved pieces, the benches are nearly identical in design, but vary ever so slightly in the way the foliate tendrils are rendered. Once owned by Charlotte Dorrance Wright, the Campbell's Soup heiress, and her husband, William Coxe Wright, a champion tennis player, the benches long graced their storied 1934 Mainline Philadelphia estate, Ravenscliff. When the estate was sold at Christie's in 1978, the benches found their way to Edgemoor, the River Edge, New Jersey, estate built for William Weir in 1912. Recently and happily, they came into our stewardship. Carved on the fronts and sides only, these benches would be perfectly placed in a formal spot on either side of an entrance or pathway.

KELLY KINZLE ANTIQUES

We have a pared down booth this year for the Winter Show with just a handful of interesting and rare objects. One is this small but powerful, extremely rare harvest jug made by potter Charles Decker (1832–1914) at his Keystone Pottery in Washington County, Tennessee. The highly articulated features include modeling around the eyes, long nose and heavy mustache, beard and sideburns and a handle and two spouts, resembling but surpassing the other two known face jugs by Decker. In outstanding, original condition, it is made of salt-glazed stoneware with cobalt details, dates from c. 1875, and stands 12 inches high.





DEBRA FORCE FINE ART

Hero and Leander is a direct carving by Robert Laurent (1890–1970), the pioneering modernist sculptor's preferred method. The artist let the natural shape of the mahogany guide his composition, with the figures of Hero and Leander emerging from the wood in rounded forms. Hero faces upward at the front of the composition with Leander's arms reaching around her torso, his head resting on her shoulder. The simplified forms of the facial features as well as the stylized lines in the hair of both figures show the influence of cubism and folk art that characterize Laurent's mature style. The artist carved sweeping forms along the base to indicate the water surrounding the two lovers.

This sculpture descended in the artist's family and was included in the Whitney's 1946 Annual Exhibition of Contemporary American Sculpture, Watercolors, and Drawings and in the 1972 Robert Laurent Memorial Exhibition, which traveled to several venues. Dating from 1942, it measures 19 inches high by 22 inches wide, and 14 inches deep.

THISTLETHWAITE AMERICANA

It is rare to find a large-scale weathervane of a sulky race. This example is in stunning condition but the story behind the horse is what is so fascinating. The horse depicted is the mare "American Girl" and was one of the finest standardbred racers of her day. She was a Bay-colored filly born in 1862 in Peekskill, New York. "Weak-jointed, loose-gaited, worst-looking, crooked-legged filly that was ever foaled in Peekskill," but she grew into an outstanding specimen of a standardbred horse. She was owned by William Lovell, of New York City, and was valued at \$25,000. American Girl raced between 1868-75 and won 52 races. She tragically died on the track, but her likeness will always be remembered in this J. W. Fiske weathervane.





JAMES ROBINSON, INC.

The epitome of Victorian era ethereal elegance, this wire-worked, silver-set diamond and 18kt gold and sapphire bangle bracelet stands strongly on its own. Within a bridge of chased silver edges, the arabesque curvilinear grillwork allows the antique cut diamonds to float within milgrained settings, centered by eight oval cornflower-blue faceted sapphires. Made in England circa 1875, it is exemplary of sophisticated Darwinian fashion.



SPENCER MARKS, LTD.

This Tiffany & Co. parcel-gilt sterling ice cream service is from the dinner service ordered from Tiffany & Co. by "Silver King" John Mackay c. 1878. Singular in its importance to American silver, and the most incredible silver service ever made by Americans, the full set comprised approximately 1,250 pieces. It took Tiffany & Co. over a year and much of its workforce, at some point or another, to create it, and it was part of the firm's award-winning display at the 1878 Paris World's Fair.

John Mackay was a part owner of the Virginia City, Nevada, mine that included the Comstock Lode, the largest vein of silver ever discovered in the United States. The lode started producing in the early 1870s, and by the mid-1870s Mackay was exceptionally wealthy. He and his wife, Marie Louise, had the service made from more than a half-ton of their Comstock Lode silver. The resulting "Mackay Service" helped make Tiffany & Co. the legendary company it is today.

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CHARLES CLARK

This bronze Regency sinumbra lamp by the English firm Phipson and Lambley exhibits one of the most unique designs encountered in this lighting form. Supported on its outstretched wings, a beautifully rendered dragon has coiled itself around the lamp standard. The scales are wonderfully articulated and gradually diminish in size until they reach the pointed tip of the tail. The head of the dragon has a menacing expression, showing its sharp teeth and the prongs of its forked tongue. A beautiful patinated finish with gilt highlights complements the details, and a fine frosted cut-glass shade tops the lamp. The entire form is indicative of the Regency period's love of the exotic as exemplified in the fanciful interiors at the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. "PUBLISHED BY PHIPSON AND / LAMBLEY MAY / 10 1834" is stamped under each of the dragon's wings. It stands 33 ¼ inches high.



HIRSCHL & ADLER GALLERIES, INC.

This extraordinary double portrait of two children of the Cannon family of Norwalk, Connecticut, is a recently discovered painting by the Connecticut folk artist Jonathan Budington (1779?–1823). Measuring 45 7/8 by 36 1/8 inches and dated 1795 (twice), Portrait of the Cannon Children remained in the family of the sitters until the present day.

Budington is one of the most notable Connecticut naïve painters of the late 18th century. All his known works are of Connecticut subjects, with about half of them from the Fairfield County area. Budington was active from at least 1792 to 1802. Though details of his career are scarce, he is an important early exponent of the "Ralph Earl school" of Connecticut portraiture. Ralph Earl (1751–1801) was active throughout the state and worked in Fairfield County from 1788 to 1798. His portraits were thus well represented in Fairfield County homes, and there can be little doubt that Budington was aware of them. What distinguishes Budington's work from Earl's is his naïve conception and playful, often whimsical, execution. The recent discovery of this double portrait marks an important milestone in the study of this poorly understood artist.

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S. J. SHRUBSOLE

This fine and elegant silver tea urn of 1790 by London maker Edward Fernell has a highly unusual and interesting provenance. Engraved “The Gift of Queen Charlotte to Julie de Montmollin,” it was given by Queen Charlotte, consort of George III, to Julie de Montmollin, a young lady from a prominent Swiss family who was the French and needlework tutor to the Royal Princesses. That in itself—a gift from the queen to a female member of the royal household—makes the piece a great rarity, but more interesting still is the likely reason that the princesses’ needlework tutor got such a lavish gift. Needlepoint was the central activity of a group of women (including, most prominently, the queen) who were interested in improving the lives of young women and girls, and who met to discuss ideas about education specifically while doing needlework. This group, the Bluestockings, was really the first group of women advocating for a woman’s right to an education. Central to the group would have been the recipient of the urn, Julie de Montmollin, a beloved member of the queen’s household. It stands 23 inches high.

LILLIAN NASSAU

Lillian Nassau LLC is reimagining Tiffany Studios for a new audience by pairing iconic Tiffany lamps with mid-century modern design, a concept pioneered in the 1960s by Edward Wormley, a designer and friend of Mrs. Nassau, who displayed Tiffany lamps in his showroom alongside the starkly modern furniture he designed for Dunbar. At the show we are exhibiting Tiffany design with a carefully considered collection of mid-century furniture by George Nakashima, Phillip Lloyd Powell, Wendell Castle, and others. A highlight is this hand-carved cherry screen by James Martin dating from the 1970s, paired with a Tiffany Lotus lamp of c. 1906. The openwork cellular structure of the screen complements the sculptural geometry of the leaded glass shade’s stylized foliate motif, showcasing the successful adaptation of natural forms through the hand of the artist-craftsman, regardless of stylistic period.



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BERNARD GOLDBERG FINE ARTS

In 1952, Jacques Lipchitz's New York studio was destroyed in a fire where many plaster models were lost. Devastated by the loss, Lipchitz commemorated the blaze with a series of sculptures depicting a phoenix feeding a nest of small birds that are surrounded by flames but remain unharmed. An ancient symbol of hope and renewal, the phoenix rising from the ashes embodies Lipchitz's enduring sense of optimism despite the tragedy of the fire.



LEVY GALLERIES

Here's a teaser: two mahogany posts from the Samuel Bridgham and Elizabeth Paine Bridgham Federal bed, made in Providence, Rhode Island, c. 1800, which will be seen assembled at the show. It will be displayed with portraits of the original owners, Samuel Bridgham (1774–1840) and his wife, Elizabeth Paine Bridgham (1776–1853) painted by Samuel Lovett Waldo. Samuel Bridgham served in the Rhode Island General Assembly for nineteen terms including two as Speaker. In addition, he served as the first mayor of Providence when it was incorporated as a city in 1832; and, as a graduate and trustee of Brown University, he served as its chancellor from 1828 to 1840. Assembled, with its painted white pine headboard and maple rails, the bed measures 84 inches high (without the tester), 56 inches wide, and 76 inches long. The portraits, still in their original frames, measure 35 ¾ by 28 ½ inches.