

Contacts:

Erika Oman
(954) 474-7560

Erika@ragoarts.com

Miriam Tucker
(609) 397-9374 x141

mtucker@ragoarts.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 2007

**LONGSTANDING FRIENDSHIPS, RARE AND IMPORTANT COLLECTIONS
OF 20TH C. DESIGN AT SOLLO RAGO MODERN AUCTIONS IN APRIL**

Lambertville, NJ – Tommi Parzinger created one-of-a-kind tables, casework and lighting for the Manhattan apartment of his friend, interior designer Nancy Chase. Paul Evans designed and built sculpture and furnishings for the Bucks County home of William Goldman. Harry Bertoia created three monumental sound sculptures in gong form as part of a 1976 exhibit in Bergen; his patron and friend, gallerist Kaare Bernstsen, has consigned them here.

These extraordinary single owner collections are work that ranks among Parzinger's, Evans' and Bertoia's best. On the weekend of April 21 and 22, John Sollo, David Rago and Meredith Hilferty will present these collections in a sale of approximately 900 lots of fine Modern decorative art, fine art, and furnishings.

The property of Nancy Chase is the first single-owner collection of Tommi Parzinger furnishings to come to auction. It also represents a lifetime of professional exchange and close friendship with Parzinger and his partner, Donald Cameron. Parzinger's clean and elegant lines, his play on traditional forms are evident throughout. John Sollo considers the armoire the single best piece of Parzinger he has seen – the definition of high-style modernism, with lacquer painstakingly applied in twelve coats and a form that draws on Chinese furniture but has a scale and elegance that are pure Parzinger.

Built from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s at the height of Paul Evans' studio designs, the William Goldman collection is notable for not only its excellence but also its range of Paul Evans designs. There are exceptional, unique examples of almost every Paul Evans style. Mr. Goldman, who was Paul Evans' attorney, asked the designer to create his office interior and gave Evans carte blanche with only one stipulation—that it be his best work. The results are extraordinary and include a nearly eight-foot vertical two-door Sculpture Front cabinet, one of only five made.

Sollo Rago's single owner collection of Harry Bertoia's work comprises three sounding sculptures – all gongs – of various forms. They were created for a 1976 exhibit of monumental sounding sculptures in Grieg Hall in Bergen, Norway. Rectangular Double Gong "Orion," Three Split Gongs (exhibited as one work) and a spectacular standing Double Gong on self-plinth (for indoor or outdoor use) will be sold, along with photographs of Bertoia and a DVD of the 1965 film *Harry Bertoia's Sculptures* with a Bertoia sonambient score, by Bertoia's friend, collaborator and fellow Cranbrook faculty member Clifford West.

"Single owner collections allow for a rare glimpse into artists' and designers' work," says John Sollo. "It is quite amazing to have three in a single sale, let alone three such as these - works of this

caliber and with such personal provenances just don't come along that often. All credit goes to the remarkable individuals who knew the worth of these artists long before most of the world took notice."

The work of George Nakashima is a cornerstone for Sollo Rago, but this sale is notable for the number of exceptional pieces. In particular, there are two magnificent coffee tables, one with an exceptional buckeye burl top and the other with a sinuous English oak burl top. "These tables—the beautiful wood, the flawless selection—are what Nakashima is all about," says John Sollo.

Exceptional works by studio craftsmen include a piece of bench seating with storage made by the founding father of the studio furniture movement, Wharton Esherick, in a Cubist style from padouk wood. Other examples include rarely seen furniture by Art and Crafts craftsman Frederick Harer, a magnificent suite of silver-leaf furniture by Phillip Lloyd Powell and an exceptional ovoid leather and satinwood desk by the master furniture maker David Powell.

A relatively recent, but increasingly important component of Sollo Rago's sales is contemporary craft. This sale includes a whimsical tribal table of maple by Judy Kensley McKie, an exotic wood three-legged vanity by Wendell Castle and science fiction-inspired lighting by Ed Zucca.

Modern and Contemporary Art will be featured throughout the sale with a variety of paintings, sculpture, prints and photographs worthy of both serious collections and remarkable interiors. In addition to the Bertoia gongs, there are a number of other Bertoia works at a range of price points including a miniature spray and three table-top bronze panels from the early 50s. There is also a spectacular hanging wall sculpture from the 1950s. Sollo Rago is also excited to be offering the works of important American artist Rex Ashlock for the first time at auction. Ashlock was part of the Manhattan art scene in the 1950's, friendly with Willem de Kooning and Franz Kline. The influence of Mark Rothko is particularly evident in his color field paintings. There is an exciting group of work from the graffiti artist LAII - paintings on found objects such as mannequins and vases, as well as canvas, are all featured. Also on sale are works by Sol LeWitt; Andy Warhol; Richard Hambleton; Weegee; Michael (Corinne) West; Ralph Rosenborg; Josef Albers; Roy Lichtenstein; Ellsworth Kelly; Richard Estes; and Larry Zox.

Ceramics figure prominently in the sale with works by Otto and Gertrude Natzler, Beatrice Wood and Axel Salto. Ceramic works from the 1970s and 80s are exceptional for their range of artistic experimentation including a teapot by Richard Notkin which combines social critique and sculpture, a FrogWorld sculpture by David Gilhooly, an early geometric work by Ken Price, and a monumental Betty Woodman winged vase. Also of note: a collaborative series of ceramic sculptures by Hui Ka Kwong and Roy Lichtenstein.

We also draw your attention to an Isamu Noguchi pierced table in aluminum, number nine from a series of 18, fine selections of European design including one of Josef Hoffmann's most iconic designs for the Weiner Werkstätte, a brass loop-handled coupe. There are excellent offerings of Piero Fornasetti's and Gio Ponti's work including a signed uniquely colored Grecian style corner cabinet and a number of case-pieces by Ponti for M. Singer and Sons. Several European post-modern offerings include a monumental room divider/lamp entitled *Stanton Mick*, one of Philippe Starck's first commercially produced pieces.

The Sunday sale, as ever, provides buyers with great design at a wide range of prices. Paul Evans, George Nakashima, Harry Bertoia, a selection of classic mid-century modern and a stand-out collection of furniture by Carmen Spera anchor the day's selections.

The Rago Arts and Auction Center will be open for preview from Saturday, April 14 through Friday, April 20 from noon until 5pm, from 9am on the mornings of the sale and by appointment. The catalogue will be available in early April, online at ragoarts.com and in print for \$35. Call 888-RAGOARTS or visit www.sollorago.com to pre-order a copy. For further information call (609) 397-9374 or email info@ragoarts.com.

About Sollo Rago Modern Auctions

Sollo Rago Modern Auctions was established in 1998 by John Sollo and David Rago, two of the country's leading experts in the sale of in 20th century design. Its sales place it shoulder-to-shoulder with Sotheby's in New York as a leader in the astoundingly vital market for Modern furnishings, fine, and decorative arts. Sollo Rago Modern is the first auction house to champion the great Studio Craftsmen George Nakashima, Paul Evans, and Wharton Esherick, the first to promote the growth of Modern ceramics, and the first to return to the designs of 1970's. It is also responsible for the resurgence of interest in the great Post Modern studio designers, including Wendell Castle, Albert Paley, and Judy McKie. Much of the most important work sold at auction by Esherick, Bertoia, Evans, Nakashima, Albert Paley, Vladimir Kagan, Tommi Parzinger, Richard Devore, and Beatrice Wood (among many others) has been sold by John Sollo and David Rago. Sollo Rago Modern Auctions holds two sales a year in the spring and fall at the Rago Arts and Auction Center and can be found online at sollorago.com.

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Images:

Lot 100: TOMMI PARZINGER Exceptional mahogany armoire with brass (or bronze?) hardware, parquet pattern to yellow-lacquered doors, and interior drawers and shelves.
Est. \$25,000 – 35,000

Lot 240: PAUL EVANS Rare monumental two-door Sculpture Front vertical bar of welded and painted mixed metals with copper patchwork and red painted interior storage space, 1966.
Est. \$80,000 – 120,000

Lot x: HARRY BERTOIA

Lot 2: GEORGE NAKASHIMA Minguren I coffee table with an exceptional free-edge Buckeye burl top with natural occlusions on walnut base, 1981.
Est. \$80,000 – 120,000

Lot 133: RICHARD NOTKIN Stoneware teapot, 1999.
Est. \$7,000 – 9,000