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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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RAGO'S TO HOLD MAY 17, 2008 AUCTION OF POST-WAR AND CONTEMPORARY ART

- **RARE WARHOL "MOTHER GOOSE"**
- **EARLY WORKS BY PETTIBONE**
- **80s/90s HEAVYWEIGHTS**
- **MID-CENTURY AND CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY**
- **NEW/EMERGING ARTISTS**
- **DRAWINGS, SCULPTURE, MASTERPRINTS**

Lambertville, NJ Rago's finest and strongest group sale of Post War and Contemporary art comes to auction on Saturday, May 17, 2008 at Noon, capping the week of New York area sales.

"Rago's is about significant and challenging modern and contemporary art at any price point. This sale exemplifies our outlook." says Meredith Hilferty, Director of Fine Art. "The works we have accepted, when taken as a whole, comprise our best group auction to date. Buyers who are in the market this week will want to figure Rago's into the mix."

The auction opens with 100+ lots of paintings, drawings and sculpture.

Buyers of Pop will find a number of works to grab their attention. Among these, the sale features two drawings by Andy Warhol for the Myths portfolio, *Mother Goose* and *Howdy Doody*, the former extremely rare, as it did not ultimately become part of the portfolio. There is also a 1982 drawing of John Gould, Warhol's muse and greatest love.

Rago's continues to find and feature early work by appropriation artist Richard Pettibone. This sale contains three: *Andy Warhol, Marilyn Monroe 1964* from 1968; *Roy Lichtenstein, Aloha 1962* from 1968; and *Jasper Johns, The Disappearance II 1961* from 1967. Mike Bidlo's *Not Pollack* is another appropriation chosen for the sale, created in 1983.

Session One is rife with artists whose reputations were forged in the 1980s and 1990s. From the Nuova Scuola Romana come two works by Piero Pizzi Cannella, a mixed media piece and a work on paper, both from 1988. Martin Wong and Donald Baechler, Rago favorites from New York's downtown 80s art scene return. The auction house is selling Wong's *Jodie Foster, An Expert Tells Why Fans Turn Fanatic* and two untitled 1989 works on paper by Baechler. Radical Joseph Beuys returns, too, with *DDR Radikal Kubismus* (and other works in Session Two). Julian Schnabel makes a first appearance with monumental, scarified oil on tarpaulin from 1986. Also on the block: a bold oil wash on paper by Eric Fischl; a color field sketch in oil by Gunter Förg; the mixed media riff *Blacknuss* from Radcliffe Bailey; two large oils by Anton Henning; as well as an untitled drawing from David Dupuis (lot 77).

Rago's support for young and emerging artists (which began with its watershed auction of Kenneth L. Freed's collection) grows stronger with each sale. Two among the many highlights: an acrylic by Chris Johanson and Keegan McHargue's *Envious Me*. The auction also includes work by Hiroto Murakami, Emi Avora, Rebekka Brunke, Tim Lokiec, Nick Mauss, Tracy Nakayama, Amy Gartrell, Royal Art Lodge, Fran Holstrom and Clara Desire - many of these artists offered for the first time at auction.

Strong work by women artists is a notable aspect of the sale, including collages by Anne Ryan and Nancy Spero; mixed media works from Jane Hammond, Amy Sillman and Lenore Tawney; a crayon drawing by Elizabeth Murray; work by Sharon Loudon and Portia Munson (lot 56).

Also worthy of special attention: sculpture by Lynda Benglis, Richard Nonas, Vong Phaophanit and George Stoll; abstract expressionist works by Theodore Stamos and John Saccaro; a signature phantasmagorical dog from Roy De Forest; drawings by Yuri Masnyj, Benjamin Degen, Mauro Piva, Graham Little and Matt Mullican; and work from David Salle, Yun-Fei Ji, Jae Ko and James Brown.

Session Two embraces works on paper, prints and photographs.

Fine prints and multiples abound. Warhol is well represented in this session, too, here by the screenprints *After the Party*, *Jackie II* and *Electric Chair*. Also noteworthy among other masterprints are *Shipboard Girl* by Roy Lichtenstein, 1984 by Ed Ruscha, Jim Dine's *Wallchart I* and *Sun's Night Glow*, *Floating Three-Way Plug* by Claes Oldenberg, *Sinjerli Variation II* from Frank Stella, David Hockney's *Anne Seated in Director's Chair (State 1)* and six works from Alex Katz. And there is more: prints and multiples by Ellsworth Kelly, Bruce Nauman, Robert Rauschenberg, Robert Motherwell and Robert Mangold, Christopher Wool, Gerhard Merz, and two works by Kiki Smith. Also featured are Jeff Koons' popular multiples *Puppy* and *Balloon Dog* and *Ghetto Collector* by Francis Alÿs.

Rago's made a broad and strong cut when choosing the photography for the sale, with well over fifty lots on the block. Contemporary works loom large. There are portraits by Nan Goldin, Carrie Mae Weems, Dawoud Bey, Ryan McGinley, Jason Salavon, Hannah Starkey and Kiki Smith; landscapes and cityscapes, including two by auction newcomers Chen Qiulin and Jocelyn Lee; homoerotic works from a number of artists, including Robert Mapplethorpe and Herb Ritts; nudes by Jock Sturges and (also new to the secondary market) David Stetson and Yoshihiko Ueda; and experimental works from Sigmar Polke, Hiroshi Sugimoto and the Starn Twins. Also here: Thomas Ruff's explorations of "the surface of things" and Jochen Gerz's depiction of violence and "the other" in *It was Easy #2*; work by Willie Doherty, Fischli & Weiss, Jack Pierson, Candida Hofer, Richard Hamilton, Robert Gober, Christian Marclay and, offered for the first time, Miranda Lichtenstein.

The sale takes in photography from the 1940s to the present day. The mid-century offerings here include work from Hans Christoph Haacke, Arthur Siegel, Arthur Fellig (Weegee) and Carl Van Vechten. Take note, too, of three important photo sets: Elliott Porter's *Intimate Landscapes*, 1954-1977; Sean Scully's *Mérida*; and the rare Joel Meyerowitz series *Bay/Sky/Porch*, *Provincetown*, 1979 which includes prints from many missing negatives.

Exhibition Preview

Saturday, May 10 through the morning of Saturday May 17 at Rago Arts and Auction Center, midway between New York City and Philadelphia (near Princeton, NJ). Telephone, absentee, online bidding available for those unable to attend. Doors open at 9 a.m. the morning of the sale.

Auction Contact Information

Meredith Hilferty: 609-397-9374 or meredith@ragoarts.com



From left:

- Lot 296: SEAN SCULLY, *Merida*, 2001 (from the complete portfolio of 16 C-prints) \$15,000-20,000
- Lot 52: ANTON HENNING, *Nu Rose, No. II*, 1993 \$20,000-30,000
- Lot 106: KEEGAN MCHARGUE, *Envyous Me*, 2003 \$5,000-7,000
- Lot 5: RICHARD PETTIBONE, *Andy Warhol, Marilyn Monroe 1964, 1968* \$60,000-80,000

Catalogues

Printed catalogues are \$20 each online at ragoarts.com or by calling (609) 397.9374. You can e-mail a request to info@ragoarts.com and view a complete online catalogue at ragoarts.com.

Notes for the Editor

High-resolution images available.

More information online at ragoarts.com.

About Rago Fine Art Auctions

Rago Fine Art Auctions, formally established in 2003, is the fastest growing auction division at Rago's. We are committed to significant art at any price point, with an emphasis on the 20th Century and on developing a secondary market for emerging and mid-career artists. We are excited by all forms of visual expression: painting and sculpture, drawings, prints and illustrated books, installations, photography and video. It's a point-of-view that has attracted much exceptional and interesting art from the department's first record-breaking sale to single-owner collections from Kenneth L. Freed, Joshua Smith and Eileen and Marvin Reingold. Rago's hold six regularly scheduled fine art sales each year: Post War and Contemporary Art in May and November; 19th and 20th C. American and European Art in February and September; and Modern art, in conjunction with Sollo Rago Modern Auctions, in April and October. Rago's has built its professional reputation on achieving outstanding prices at auction for its clients and attention to their goals as sellers is of paramount importance. Our clients enjoy direct access to partners and experts throughout the valuation, consignment and auction process. A 30-person staff assures a high standard of service to both sellers and buyers.

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