Benefit Shop Auction Sets A High For A Folky Fazzino

Auction Action In Mount Kisco, N.Y.



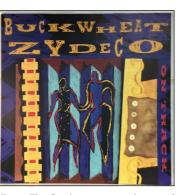
Handily outperforming its \$300/600 estimate at \$1,778 was this oil on canvas painting by Michele Harvey, "Hadley, MA," showing a small country town surrounded by farmland, green mountains and blue sky with detailed clouds.

MOUNT KISCO, N.Y. — Auction records for artists are routinely set — and broken — at large auction houses in New York City, so it is not often when a smaller auction house in the suburbs is able to achieve record prices; but on April 18, the Benefit Shop Foundation got to do exactly that in its monthly sale.

Featuring a striking selection of fine art, the auction was led by a rare and early folk art oil painting by Charles Fazzino (b 1955), dated 1983. The 13-by-11-inch painting depicted people on a farm, a hot air balloon and a horse-drawn wagon filled with hay and riders. The consignor's parents purchased the painting while Fazzino was living at home in New York with his parents. The artist is better known for his silkscreen serigraph 3D-style constructions that he turned to later in his career.

The top auction price for a work by Fazzino was \$1,500, said Benefit Shop owner and founder Pam Stone, and in this sale, buyers pushed the price to \$5,715 with the painting going to an art collector online.

"It was an exciting auction. We



Joe Taylor's recreation of the album cover of Buckwheat Zydeco's "Hey Joe," made for Tower Records' Los Angeles store, sold for \$2,413.

had an inkling this painting was going to do well based on the presale interest we were seeing, but we had no idea we would set an auction record."

Another standout was a limited edition stone lithograph portfolio by renowned artist, Käthe Kollwitz (German, 1867–1945), comprising 23 lithographic reproductions of the artist's work, going well above the \$500–\$1,000 estimate to fetch \$2,857 from an online buyer.



This limited edition stone lithograph portfolio by Käthe Kollwitz (1867–1945), comprising 23 lithograph reproductions of the artist's work, did well above its \$500–\$1,000 estimate to fetch \$2,857.

The portfolio traveled with the consignor's family from Germany to Norway and then New York.

Several other artworks also performed well, including an energetic contemporary painting by Joe Taylor recreating the cover of Buckwheat Zydeco's Hey Joe album and measuring about 6 by 6 feet, selling for \$2,413. It was painted for Tower Records' Los Angeles store. A surprise performance was an oil on canvas painting by Michele Harvey, titled "Hadley, MA," showing a small country town surrounded by farmland, green mountains and blue sky with detailed clouds. It bested its \$300/600 estimate to realize \$1,778.

Besides fine art, Benefit Shop Foundation's auctions usually feature a choice grouping of Oriental rugs. Leading this sale were an antique multi-toned



A rare early folky oil on canvas, signed Charles Fazzino, 1893, set an auction record price for the artist at \$5,715.



This ornately sculpted artist signed chess set, signed Piero Benatti, doubled high estimate to realize \$1,016.

Oriental carpet runner, 170 by 38 inches, which earned \$1,524, triple its high estimate, and an antique Russian handmade wool runner, 196 by 42 inches, selling comfortably over estimate at \$635.

Rounding out the auction standouts were an ornately sculpted artist-signed chess set, signed Piero Benatti, that doubled high estimate to bring \$1,016 and a pair of Lalique art glass crystal vases with female nude forms amid a grape design motif, in frosted and clear glass, 9 inches tall, that sold for \$635, far above its \$50/100 estimate.

The monthly Red Carpet sales feature choice collections of antique, Midcentury Modern, brand furnishings, sterling, china, crystal, jewelry and fine art. With a mission of "to donate, to discover and to do good," the foundation is a non-profit, and all auction proceeds support community organizations. Consignors get a tax deduction, the buyer gets a great deal and local non-profits get much needed funds. Prices, with buyer's premium, are as reported by the auction house. For information, www.thebenefitshop.org or 914-864-0707.

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Raymond Smith's Road Trip Photos At Bruce Museum

is finally coming to the Northeast.

GREENWICH, CONN. — An exhibition of black and white photographs by New Haven, Conn., photographer Raymond Smith is on view at the Bruce Museum through June 3. "In Time We Shall Know Ourselves" is organized and circulated by the Montgomery (Ala.) Museum of Fine Arts and features 52 photographs, most of which are vintage prints.

Smith was inspired by the photographs taken in the American South in the 1930s by Walker Evans, a teacher and mentor of Smith at Yale University, as well as by Robert Frank's The Americans, 1958. In the summer of 1974, Smith embarked on a photographic expedition of his own, traveling with his friend Suzanne Boyd in an aging Volkswagen from New England through the South and into the Midwest, where he camped and photographed people and places he encountered during the three-month journey. Intending to write a PhD thesis in American studies, Smith instead channeled his intense curiosity about his country and its inhabitants into a suite of portraits, works that are at once down-toearth, melancholy and filled with surprise. For decades, Raymond Smith's photographs remained unknown. After mounting two small exhibitions locally, in 1974 and 1975, Smith pursued a career as a seller of rare books on art, architecture, design and photography, through R.W. Smith Bookseller, the New Haven business he continues to operate. In 2009, a curator of photography at the Yale University Art Gallery encouraged him to publish his work, a project that in turn led to an exhibition in 2014 at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts. After traveling to six other major museums in the South, Smith's exhibition of road trip photographs

Smith's work may have been inspired by Walker Evans and Robert Frank, but "In Time We Shall Know Ourselves" stands as an independent statement about America and about photography in Smith's times and places.

The Bruce Museum is at 1 Museum Drive. For information, 203-869-0376 or www.brucemuse-um.org.



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"Fotomat Girl, Louisville, Ky." by Raymond Smith (American, b 1942), 1974, gelatin silver print, Lent by the artist



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